

# **VOLUNTEER** news

## **Thank you to all our wonderful volunteers!**

*Dear Volunteers*

*The strength of the efforts and commitment of volunteers always amazes me. Your continual support for the work, aims and purposes of SCDA makes it possible for us to provide the wide-ranging services needed for the benefit of our community.*

*This energy and activity, the application of skills and time have been critical in the unprecedented and challenging circumstances of the current pandemic and lockdowns.*

*The Trustees are fellow volunteers – and all volunteers are integral to the SCDA family. Your efforts in keeping the delivery of essential services running are greatly appreciated.*

*On behalf of the Trustees, I am taking this opportunity to express our gratitude and thanks.*

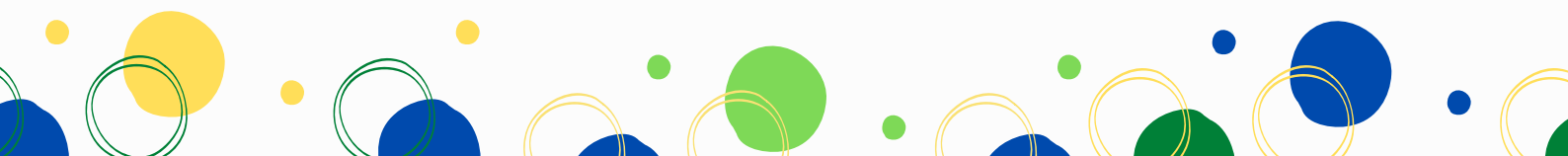
*John Cornish, Chair of Trustees SCDA*





# Remembering pre Covid times!

## Summer Event 2019



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***Dear Valued Volunteers***

***In more normal times we would be celebrating at an SCDA Volunteers Summer Event – enjoying each other's company and sharing good food!***

***While we are not able to enjoy a get together just yet, this Volunteers Newsletter gives a flavour of the range of activities you undertake within SCDA and is an opportunity to celebrate everything you do.***

***We simply could not offer the services we deliver without you. Your action and experiences vividly show the difference volunteering makes in our communities.***

***Your stories also show what a difference volunteering can make to us as individuals and how rewarding it can be.***

***Heartfelt thanks***

***Penny Shimmin, Chief Executive***



# Paula, shops volunteer

**"My name is Paula and I work as a volunteer for SCDA in the Lewes shop.** I walked through the door of the shop in Lewes 4 years ago, not realising how much of a life changer this would be. Overworked and suffering from chronic stress, I was at rock bottom and had lost all confidence. It was not easy for me where I was then to start working in the shop – I was afraid of making mistakes; I could not remember how to do the most basic of tasks. Sometimes getting up in the morning and stepping out of the front door felt insurmountable.

The experience of working in a supportive and caring environment at the SCDA shop has been completely transformative. **I feel that what I do is valued and it has given me purpose and direction.** I have been able to regain confidence and learn new skills. I can't believe how lucky I am to work with people as kind and caring and skilled as my manager, and my colleagues across the organisation. **Working in an organisation which really cares about people helps me to give back to the community in a small but significant way.** I have worked in professional settings for 30 years but have never experienced the level of support that I have found at SCDA. **I feel very proud to work with such an extraordinary team of people."**





# SCDA Shops

Our shops remained closed throughout the lockdown periods, but one or two **volunteers continued to keep an eye on the shops**, bringing in donations and keep the shop windows tidy, a **very special thank you** goes to them!

Each time we reopened, **our volunteers rose to the challenge** of emptying the shops of the old stock. Hours were spent sorting the donations, steaming the clothes and washing boxes full of toys and household items before they could be displayed ready for sale.

This was all done with a smile on their faces and a can do attitude that all volunteers bring with them every time they arrive in the shop. **We definitely could not have reopened so quickly if it hadn't been for their hard work and dedication to SCDA.**



This is that special time of the year when we are able to celebrate our volunteers contribution to our work and to say a big Thank You to each and every one of our shop volunteers for the huge contribution they make to our charity and their local community.

**It is a privilege to work alongside them each and every day and I am looking forward to being able to celebrate face to face with them all very soon.**

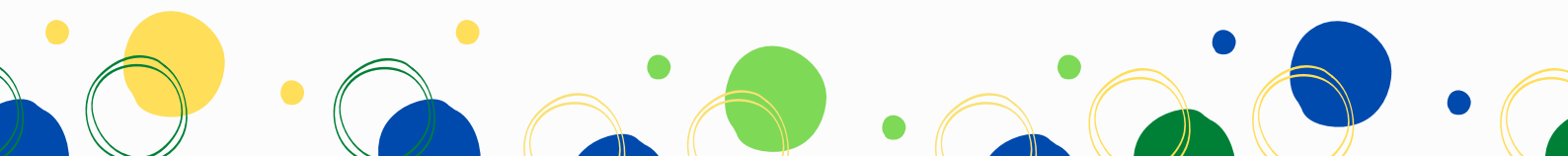




***"It's the best thing I've ever done and it is a wonderful feeling to play even a small part in helping out those who need a bit of TLC." Claire, Community Supermarket Volunteer***

***"I have been volunteering for the past six years with SCDA and find it very rewarding knowing that you can help them with their food situations, and I am sure some of the clients also enjoy a chat, especially if they are on their own. Many people volunteered during the pandemic and it would be nice to think this could carry on." Barbara, Community Food Volunteer***

***"Great to be part of a team of like minded people, meeting every week and having a feeling of doing something worthwhile. Love the camaraderie and meeting local people. I look forward to my weekly meet up." Joy Ashton, Community Supermarket Volunteer***



# Graham, Community Food volunteer

"I have been **a member of the Peacehaven Community Supermarket** for about six weeks, after being referred by the very supportive 'Let's Get Working' scheme at SCDA.

A while ago, I had seen a clip on the local news about a Community Supermarket that was up and running in the South East, and thought it was an excellent project.

I was also given a very useful book of affordable healthy recipes and each of the frozen items I took home had their recipe on them, which I could then make at home.

**I look forward to going each week, as all of the volunteers are so kind and helpful and always have time to have a quick chat while they are with you.**

I had only just moved into Peacehaven before the pandemic started, so I hadn't had a chance to get to know many people from the area and **each week through the conversations I have, I learn something new about our community.**

In the past I have worked in the catering Industry, so I asked if I could volunteer in the kitchen.

I had some life changing illness a few years ago so **I was really pleased when I was given the opportunity to join in on Denton Island.** It's a great experience working with them, very rewarding and I am learning a lot from the excellent team there."





# Community Food



**The Friends Of Newhaven Food Bank were established in 2019** to fundraise and raise awareness, holding collection days at local supermarkets, hosting fundraising concerts and applying for small grants.

But **Sally, Vanessa, Christine and Adam** are much more than just fundraisers!

**Sally leads a team of cookery volunteers** in the kitchen, producing a delicious range of frozen meals, desserts, salad boxes and baked goods, which are distributed through our community supermarkets and emergency food parcels. **Adam has helped to coordinate delivery days during the busiest period we have ever experienced**, ensuring that our team of drivers are loaded up and ready to go each week.

**Vanessa is always generous with her time**, whether its packing bags or supporting clients at Newhaven Community Supermarket, whilst **Christine is a much valued member of the Advice & Inclusion team**, supporting clients over the phone.

**Thank you Sally, Vanessa, Adam and Christine for all of your hard work and dedication!**

**Seahaven Community Food supports over one hundred households a week** to access fresh, affordable food via our two community supermarkets, an emergency food parcel delivery service and meals cooked at Denton Island Community Kitchen.

**None of this would be possible without the hard work and commitment of a team of over 50 volunteers!**

Whether you want to meet new people or gain a new skill, if it's a stepping stone to employment or if you just want to make a difference, we hope that volunteering means as much to you as it does to us. **Thank you to every single person who has turned up and leant a hand and helped to put food on the tables of people in our community – we are so grateful for everything you do.**





# NYPF



Since 2010, the **Newhaven Young People's Forum** has been a voice for local young people. The aims of the NYPF are to provide feedback on youth provisions locally; highlight what local young people want and need and establish youth-led projects for their peers.

Present day NYPF is a new cohort of young people who are in the early days of creating new projects and recruiting more members. Currently, they are working on a peer support group for youth members of the LGBTQ+ and Allies in Newhaven. (Photo above is from 2019.)

**NYPF are looking for new members, aged 11-18 years old**, who live or go to school in Newhaven. If you have anyone in mind, **contact us on:** [nypf@sussexcommunity.org.uk](mailto:nypf@sussexcommunity.org.uk)

# Our Volunteer Counsellors

**We currently have 18 volunteer counsellors** working for our Affordable Counselling service. All counsellors working in the service are either qualified or in the later stages of their training and have been carefully chosen because of the quality of their training and experience. They are trained to listen to their clients and as person-centred counsellors, they help clients work out what's right for them.

Our counsellors are invaluable – we couldn't run the service without them and we are pleased to be able to support their training.

**We cannot thank our volunteer counsellors enough for their huge commitment and dedication to the service.**

Over the last year they have had to move all counselling online or over the phone, which creates a different dynamic to the work and each counsellor has risen to the challenge, undertaking additional training where necessary and ensured a smooth transition and quality service for all our clients.





# Strength in Numbers Volunteers



Our Strength in Numbers project volunteers, **Jane and Christine** have played a **vital role** in ensuring the well-being of clients during an exceptionally busy time for the service. **They have been the friendly voice** at the end of the phone, checking in with clients and providing updates to the community navigators.

We have recently distributed energy vouchers to the community. **A huge task, that was made much easier with the help of Jane who dedicated many hours to allocating the vouchers to clients.**

Our wonderful social media volunteer, **Maya** has helped to develop and run our social media pages. This has played an important part in promoting the Strength in Numbers service and allowed us to reach out to a wider audience.

**A huge thank you to our volunteers from the team for all your hard work and dedication during what has been an extremely busy time for the service.**



# 'Join Together'



The **Join Together befriending service** has over **70 volunteers** based across the county.

The volunteers are matched with someone who is feeling lonely or isolated and provide a telephone call weekly to help people feel more connected with their community.

Many of our service users who have received a call from a volunteer expressed feelings of hopelessness before they were matched and being part of this project has made a real difference to their lives.

**Over a third of those that were referred to the service told us that they had little or no contact with anyone at all**, ever...no one...(take a second to let that sink in) one lady told me how she didn't pay a water bill so they would phone her to have a chat.

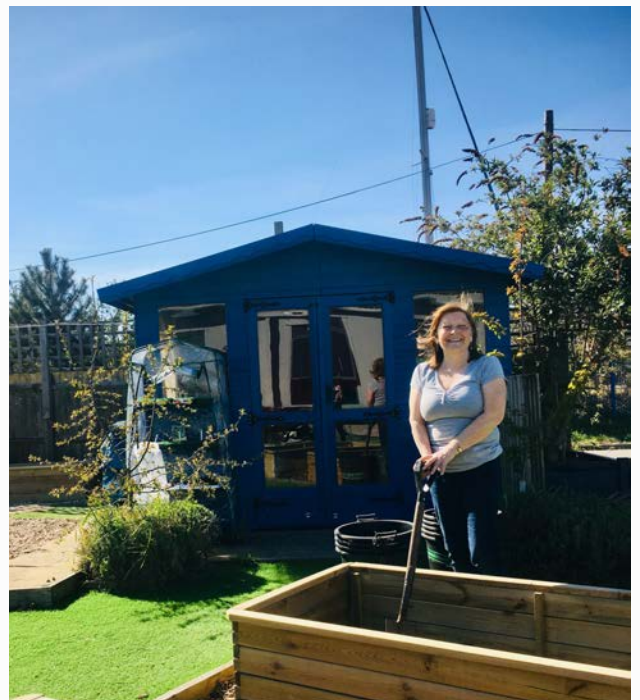
All of our volunteers are reaching people who really need human connection and are helping to make a meaningful difference to their lives.

## ***Families***

Our **family group volunteers** have the most **amazing skills** at assisting families who attend our groups. They all have a background in Early Years and come up with such amazing ideas!

**Our groups simply could not run without their valuable insights** into child development.

The heart of any successful group is their ability to see when a parent or child may need some additional support and the skills that they show in supporting, guiding and encouraging are second to none.





# WILLINGDON TREES

Volunteering plays a central role here at WTCC, with **47 community volunteers**, contributing hugely to what we are able to offer the local community. Great examples include **Ella, who helps to run the Crafty Trees Family Craft Club** and the Trees Toddler Allotment. During lockdown, when the club wasn't able to meet, Ella created and gave craft packs to local families. And **Rose** helped at our community events and then put her hand up to be **one of our Help Point volunteers during the first lockdown**.

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Our Toddlers Allotment is such a joy – both for us volunteers and the families. We love watching the toddlers' faces when they squish soil in their hands, seeing their excitement when they pick tomatoes or hunt for bugs and insects!

**Rose, WTCC volunteer**

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Our Willingdon Trees Family Café team are amazing - **Faye, Dee, Mary W, Mary M, Rachel and Leanne** have given up hours and hours of their time to prepare, cook and **serve over 880 health lunches** plus organise play activities for families struggling during the school holiday periods. All of them do so much more too. **Mick runs our Friday Club for over 55's** and is also active in the Community Garden. He also deserves a shout out for helping to dig 200 holes in preparation for local school children to plant saplings! **He describes his volunteering with us as “a joy”**.

Our volunteers at Willingdon Trees really are a fantastic team with real community spirit! There are many I haven't named here who contribute so much - **a sincere thank you to you all!**



# Hailsham

The Community Allotment in Hailsham has **16 volunteer members** who help to water, weed and keep the plants in great shape ready for harvest! Some of the members tell us that it has been an absolute lifesaver, especially in the periods of lockdown when they were able to go up there individually.

The **expertise that the volunteers have has been invaluable** and our community has learnt so much from each other in these difficult times.



# Bexhill



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We were recently contacted by Whitebriars Care home, who were keen for residents to go out in the tri-shaw. Myself and Annie took four residents out on a sunny day in June a few weeks ago. We all had a great time, lots of comments about how great the tri-shaw is, and we had feedback that residents had a really good time. The tri-shaw gives passengers a chance to take in and enjoy the scenery, and also chat and reminisce about old times.

**Cheryl, Trishaw volunteer**

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# Jenni, Let's Get Working volunteer

**Jenni joined Let's Get Working (LGW) as a participant in March 2019,**

seeking help in finding appropriate learning and work that was in line with her long term goal of becoming a cook.

She received funding for a Cook Leader Award Course and was successful in gaining paid employment in this field in June 2019 and exited the project soon after. Jenni was proactive as a participant and found the time to **volunteer at numerous Newhaven Community Garden Events** and helped in creating fresh meals for the Food Bank via the Grub Club while moving forward with her own progression. In addition to the above, **Jenni had always had a passion for writing**, reading and editing and had been busily writing her novels from home throughout her journey with us.

During the first lockdown, LGW created a menu of virtual courses and activities that were available to participants to access from home. Jenni stayed with LGW as a **Volunteer Community Messenger** after her support ended and has, with support, facilitated the **weekly delivery of a 'Let's Get Reading' Virtual Workshop** where Jenni encouraged the participants to critique, contrast and discuss their findings in a safe and secure group setting.

Jenni now has her own works for sale on Amazon and her novel 'McCleod - Bloodline Part One' has recently been published in Horrified Magazine!

**So, just a great big thanks from us at Let's Get Working for all you have done and continue to do in your community Jenni. You are appreciated!**





# GSA/Recycle volunteers

**Dave was one of our participants and is now a volunteer.** He has a lifetime of experience in manufacturing and building, which makes him very useful around the workshop! Although not a cycle mechanic, his experience means he has come up with novel solutions to problems. And his ability to source machinery for the workshop is legendary!



**Paul is an engineer** and is looking to become a mobile cycle mechanic. He has attended frame and wheel building courses. Volunteering at Recycle gives him the experience he needs if he is to work in this industry. The variety of bikes and problems we get in the workshop will prove useful in his future career.

**Phil came to us as a way to keep himself busy** and not lose the working habit after redundancy. He is a regular cyclist on and off road. He's since gone on to get a job with the post office and recently spotted a large cache of unused bike parts that were being thrown away. These parts were for servicing the post office's fleet of bikes, which are no longer used. A handy contribution to the workshop!

**Many thanks to all our volunteers!**

