

VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER



4 MARCH 2022 | Issue 3



NEWS

Do you need more PPE?

Leicestershire County Council has PPE stock they need to gift as soon as possible to ensure it doesn't go to waste. This includes protective gloves, aprons, type IIR masks, hand sanitiser, visors, waste sacks, non-sterile gowns, coveralls and FFP3 masks. These items will be free if delivered/collected before the end of March 2022. Contact [Community Focus](#) to express interest.

[Ask VAL - Advice, Guidance & Solutions](#)

Voluntary Action LeicesterShire (VAL) is offering a fantastic opportunity for North West Leicestershire groups and organisations to finally meet up again together face-to-face. We hope that lots of you will be able to attend this session at Castle Donington Community Hub on 29 March, 5.30 - 8.00pm. Community Focus will be attending to support VAL and we look forward to seeing you there!



Community Recovery Worker (CRW)

[Sonia Lear](#) has started as the new CRW for North West Leicestershire and is here to support communities, both people and groups, that have been affected by COVID-19. This might be struggling with isolation, loneliness, lack of confidence, fear of going out, etc. See attachment for further details.

Age UK Leicester Shire and Rutland

has launched its new and exciting Moving Forward Befriending Project and is looking to recruit for part-time positions. Further information can be found [here](#).



EVENTS

Forest Bathing

This programme of multi-sensory, slow Saturday walks through nature is running during March/April. Email [Georgia James](#) or phone 01530 454735 to book. See attachment.

Go Learn - Prenatal Yoga

Three week taster sessions suitable for 3rd trimester will run in Coalville Library from 27 April - 11 May. See attachments.

Long Covid Walk and Talk

New walkers welcome next Wednesday 9 March, Hicks Lodge, near Ashby de la Zouch. Contact [Clare](#) at Hospice Hope for further information. See attachment.

RCC Awards

After two years out, the RCC annual awards are back to recognise and celebrate the work of local communities. Nominations close at the end of March.

Fantastic Females

Check out Coalville CAN's social media - lots of things planned from 8 - 12 March!

TRAINING

Safeguarding Essentials

This online NCVO course will introduce the basics of safeguarding and highlight effective safeguarding practice. Runs 31 March, 10.00am, books up fast!

JTL Construction Traineeship

Do you know a young person aged 16-18 and NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training) who would be interested in a 10 week traineeship in construction, based in Leicester. Contact [Michelle Cree](#) for further information.

FUNDING

[Queen's Platinum Jubilee Grant](#)

This new NWLDC grant is open to parish councils, community groups and schools.

Grants of £250 are available to help communities celebrate this historic milestone. Deadline is 14 April.



[Other NWLDC grants](#)

Don't forget that we have a range of other small grants available. Has your group applied recently?

[Check out](#) Leicestershire County Council's latest funding information bulletin and free, searchable [Leicestershire Funding Toolkit](#).

[Community & Sport Club Recovery Grant](#)

Does your community group, parish council or sports' club need support in recovering from the impacts of the pandemic? You may be eligible for a COVID support grant of up to £500.

[Everyday Heritage Grant](#)

Community and heritage organisations are invited to apply for grants from Historic England for projects that celebrate the built or historic environment near them. Grants of up to £25,000 are available and they are keen to fund smaller grass roots projects of less than £10,000.

[NHS Project Launch Fund](#)

This is a new £2m grant scheme for healthcare in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. Open to anyone who works for the NHS and voluntary sector health organisations. [Watch the promo video](#) to find out more and how to apply.

BUSINESS PLANS

What is a business plan?

Despite the name, a business plan isn't just for businesses. It can be a really useful tool to help groups and organisations plan for the future. You might want to call it a three year plan or a five year plan but essentially it is simply a document that helps your group identify:

- what the need is
- where you're currently at
- what you want to achieve
- what your key issues are
- what you need to do
- when you need to do it
- how you're going to fund it

A business plan isn't a document you write and leave on the shelf. It's a working document and you can change it as your group's circumstances change. It doesn't have to be professional either, it just needs to gather together your thoughts, ideas and plans.



Do many groups have business plans?

When we ran the VCSE survey last year, of the 58 groups who responded, 39% of you shared that you already had a business plan. That points to a lot of local groups missing out on a really useful tool to help plan for the future and set in place the processes to help things run as smoothly as possible.

Where can we get help to write a plan?



Helping people change their lives for the better

The timing is perfect as VAL (Voluntary Action LeicesterShire) is organising a

[FREE 'Introduction to Writing a Business Plan'](#) online training event. This will be held on Thursday 28 April, from 10am - 12pm. This introductory session will give you the confidence and understanding on how to write a business plan for your group/organisation. By the end of the session you will have enough notes to begin drafting your business plan with access to further support from VAL.

ONE KEGWORTH BUSINESS PLAN

We would like to say a big thank you to Julie Cooke, who has kindly agreed to share some thoughts on the business plan that [One Kegworth](#) drew up.

Why write a business plan?

We did a five year plan that is reviewed annually. It helps us clarify our focus and amend if the situation or circumstances change.



What did you include?

Our business plan contains:

- what the need is
- executive summary
- legal status
- our background and history
- information about volunteers and unique factors
- mission statement
- aims and objectives
- key facts about Kegworth
- organisation chart
- resources
- policies
- promotion
- evaluation and monitoring
- funding
- action plan
- SWOT analysis to consider Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats. This gave us focus on where/what we needed to address

Was it straightforward?

Once you have a template then it's pretty straightforward. The group should spend quality time undertaking this exercise as it's going to help you massively later on.

Did it take long?

Just a couple of hours, then it was shared and reviewed. I'd really recommend everyone does one.

What has been the biggest benefit?

It provided a call to action where we needed support.

Any issues?

We cannot always solution the issues. For example, COVID took us all by surprise and we had to modify our plans. In 2020/21 we went from big events to numerous small events. We did a 'Birth to Earth' programme and called it 'Make a Difference'. Our aim was to touch every demographic in Kegworth as people were so challenged in different ways.

Did it lead to any other ideas?

Yes, we realised how powerful and how useful it was to have a document that summed up what your group is all about. So we decided to do an annual impact report, which is a bit like a mini summary of the business plan. It covers what we're about, what's gone on, where there have been issues. It's a great way to provide evidence for funders and when looking for new volunteers. See attachment for One Kegworth's latest Impact Report 2021.



One final piece of advice?

Take advice! Don't reinvent the wheel, ask and listen!! Act on what you discover. And good luck!



Contact Community Focus



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[email us](#)