



**Neighbourhood Care Scheme**

**NEWSLETTER 19**

**December 2009**

**SEASONS GREETINGS  
FROM ALL AT THE NEIGHBOURHOOD  
CARE SCHEME**



**Good News**

For the past few months we have been living with the possibility of redundancy and cuts in staff hours in the New Year. At the beginning of November, we received money from the Community Development Foundation's Hardship Fund, which has meant the NCS team can remain together.

## **Sean, the Project Leader, writes:**

**Money.** At the start of November we learnt that we had got a grant from the Hardship Fund set up by the government's Office of the Third Sector to assist voluntary organisations hit by the credit crunch. The grant of £57,000 will ensure that we can keep the staff team together at least until next October. I'm sure that our good track record and NHS Health and Social Care Award helped us to get this grant.

Support from the council or government and from large trusts is essential to our long-term development, but the fact is that we were able to keep our team together until the Hardship Fund grant arrived thanks to the small donations and grants (the pence, pounds, tens and hundreds of pounds) that we have received through the generosity and sweat (see David Harris later) of our supporters. Thank you to everyone for your support. We will continue to need it.

**Statistics and Statistics!** Everyone in the office laughs at me because I am always quoting statistics. Here is another one: since April last year we have matched 143 new volunteers for the first time with scheme members—that's two a week on average. This has required continual hard work from the staff team and a lot of additional help from volunteers and scheme members with publicity and office work. We know this effort is worth it, because of the feedback we get from people.

*"Just to have a chat keeps me in touch with people, especially if I have been on my own all week. I do not go out on my own since my fall."*

This is just one of the responses from our summer survey, in which 89% of members reported a benefit from their volunteer support, while 43% said they felt less depressed. Our volunteers benefit as well: 95% reported a benefit from their volunteering, and 29% said it increased their self-esteem. Here's one response:

*"Volunteering helps put your own problems into perspective. We have also made a real friend in the lady we visit. She's almost become one of the family & she has brought us a lot of happiness."*

It is very motivating to help to create such relationships. Even more motivating, however, is to know about all the people we have yet to help. We are constantly looking at ways of working more effectively. This year (2009-10), our volunteers will provide 8,500 hours of direct support to people—an increase of 63% over 2007-08. This means more people helped. I am particularly pleased that we have begun (see Ruth's report) to provide telephone support to people—this is a direct response to feedback from scheme members. Thank you to everybody who responded to our surveys. They provide us with invaluable information.

**Plans for 2010.** We can look towards next year with some optimism. The scheme won't grow as rapidly as it has done, but it should continue to develop and maintain its vitality. Here are a few of the things we hope to do:

- Review our working methods and become more effective and efficient (for example, by better use of technology).
- Recruit more young volunteers (working with Cardinal Newman School and Active Student at the University of Brighton).
- Increase the number of people who receive telephone support.
- Develop links with other groups supporting older people to see if we can help people be more involved in activities they enjoy.
- Investigate possible areas for future expansion from 2011 (Hollingdean, Woodingdean, Bevendean and Moulsecoomb).

**Our Steering Group.** The Neighbourhood Care Scheme Steering Group plays a very important role in helping to set our strategic direction and in supporting me, the Project Leader. It consists of me, the staff team, volunteers, scheme members, a trustee and representatives from other stakeholders, particularly the council. Several people have left recently and we are looking to strengthen the Group. If you would be interested in joining, please contact me to find out what is involved.

**Thanks.** I could use up pages thanking everyone who has helped us recently. Ruth uses the word "camaraderie" in her article. I would like to thank everyone who helps to make the scheme feel like such a shared endeavour – and say a particular thank-you to Tony Hadley, who retired recently as an Impetus trustee and Steering Group member after nearly a decade. I will miss his support and interest.

### Donations to the Scheme Since April 2009—Thank You!



So far this year our **Pennies into Pounds** campaign has raised £49.97. Please keep saving your bronze coins.



We have received **£3134.90** in donations from individuals

**Naomi, Volunteer Co-ordinator, writes**

To my mind, this has been the busiest and most successful year we have had at the scheme. Highlights for me were winning and being nominated for the awards in the summer.

Plus all the Poets' Corner volunteers we recruited in the summer have all now started, and have been doing great things in the area!

I have been very impressed with everyone's enthusiasm, and feedback suggests that some firm friendships have been made between the volunteers and the people they visit. We interviewed 31 volunteers in the area this year, which was an amazing success.

The response to our recent Queens Park and Hanover publicity drive was equally encouraging and I have enjoyed meeting the new volunteers at interviews and induction training.

I would like to thank my colleagues Sean, Susan, Ruth and Keith and all at Impetus for their support. My thanks also to all our Volunteers for their time and dedication.

I would also like to wish everyone a very enjoyable festive season.

**Ruth, Volunteer Co-ordinator, writes**

As always it's been a busy six months from where I sit! My 2 days a week with the Scheme are filled with interviewing and matching new volunteers, assessing new scheme members, and hearing good feedback about how scheme members and volunteers are getting on.

We have also made several successful phone support matches which means that people who may be unable to go out to visit people can still provide invaluable support via the phone. A perfect example of the different kinds of support coming together is demonstrated by three people who are all involved with the Neighbourhood Care Scheme in different ways. One lady with a visual impairment is visited by her volunteer for a chat or a short trip out, and although she is unable to visit someone in person she now provides phone support to another older person who is virtually housebound.

This 'triangle' is such a good example of the ripple effect of volunteering, and the way in which the roles of volunteer or scheme member dissolve as connections are made and friendships formed.

We were all very pleased to secure the funding from the Hardship Fund and look forward to continuing the work of the Neighbourhood Care Scheme in all neighbourhoods. This wouldn't be possible without the camaraderie I share with Naomi, Sean and Susan, with whom it is lovely to work.

Best wishes for a peaceful Christmas.

## **Susan, the administrator, writes**

The past few months have been difficult for us, as we've not known whether we would have jobs, or our hours would be cut, once the New Year came. We were very relieved when we received a letter saying we had been given money from the Hardship fund.

Even with this influx of money we are looking at ways of cutting our costs. So far this year we have invested in a franking machine, which has cut the cost of our postage. Almost half of our volunteers now receive their paperwork from us by email. Also, we are using a new umbrella organisation for our CRB disclosures. The cost per form is lower and has saved us several thousand pounds.

As a result of the funding leaflet we sent out with the last newsletter we received our first standing order for the scheme, as well as a steady stream of donations. Our Pennies into Pounds campaign continues. I'm very thankful that one of my office volunteers has a shopping trolley because twelve pounds in bronze is very heavy and our bank is not near the office.

Our recruitment drives in Patcham, Poets Corner and Turner/Hanover were very successful. On top of that we get several enquiries a week from people who have found out about the scheme from the internet.

At the beginning of November, very reluctantly we took the decision to put a freeze on taking referrals and recruiting volunteers. We'd received over 100 referrals, who needed an assessment visit and there were another 100 people waiting to be matched with a volunteer. As a result of our recruitment drives, we had 90 people going through the process of becoming volunteers. We were in danger of being swamped by our success. We will start taking referrals and recruiting volunteers again in March 2010.

I want to thank my office volunteers for their work; Keith for the numerous packs that he makes up and Ian for taking our letters to the post office and for the loan of his shopping trolley. Also, I want to thank Sean, Naomi and Ruth for their help and support.

I wish everyone an enjoyable Christmas and a happy New Year.

## **Office closure over Christmas**

The office will be closed over the Christmas and New Year period. We will close at 5pm on Wednesday 23 December and re-open on Monday 4 January 2010.



## Running for the Neighbourhood Care Scheme

David Harris ran the Eastbourne Marathon for the Neighbourhood Care Scheme. David came into the office to present Sean with a cheque for £400. A big thank you to David and all who sponsored him.



Helen Fitzgerald, a supporter of the scheme, is running for us in the Brighton Marathon (26 miles) on 18 April 2010. If you would like to sponsor Helen, please fill in the form below and return it to the office. Please do not send money to the office now. We will be in touch with you after the marathon.

### Sponsor Form

Name:

Address

I would like to sponsor Helen £..... a mile or a total of £.....

I am a UK tax payer and would like to Gift Aid my sponsorship [  ]

Signature..... Date.....

Please return to the NCS office using our FREEPOST address

**Neighbourhood Care Scheme, FREEPOST RLYL-JRXZ-EUYA,  
Intergen House, 65-67 Western Road, Hove, BN3 2JQ**

# **VALENTINE DIVINE**

**A concert of music by the Church of the Annunciation  
Choir under Marcia Bellamy and friends**

**On**

**SUNDAY 14TH FEBRUARY 2010**

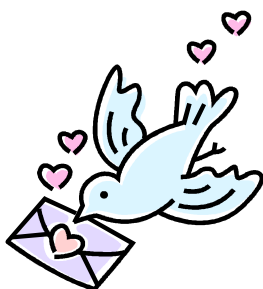
**AT**

**THE CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION,  
WASHINGTON STREET, BRIGHTON**

**TICKETS COST £8 AND £5 (CONCESSIONS)  
REFRESHMENTS WILL BE AVAILABLE**

**PROCEEDS WILL GO TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD CARE SCHEME**

**Tickets will be on sale in January from the church. Ring 681341  
If you would like to reserve a ticket before then please ring the  
NCS office on 775888**



## Being a volunteer and a Scheme Member

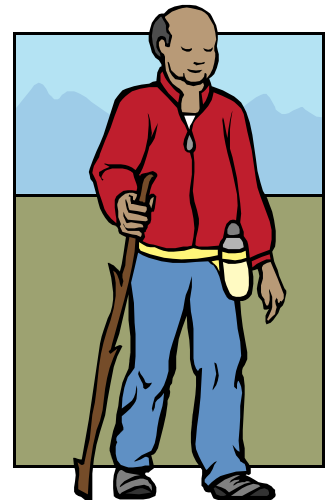
By Dawn Uddin

As a volunteer with the NCS I do telephone support, which I find very rewarding as it gives me more of an understanding of how isolated and lonely some people are. There are some people who have no family, or their family don't live nearby. Some people may get out during the day but they come home to an empty house or flat, especially when the days are short and the nights are dark and cold. It gives me great pleasure knowing that I am here to help and listen to people's woes and also to share their laughter. When they feel low I am here to cheer and humour them, to give comfort and joy, even if it is for only an hour. At least they know that someone cares. Doing this volunteering is rewarding and extremely enjoyable no matter how tiring it can be mentally. It's a confidence-building process and gives good listening skills.

Now for the other side. I am a scheme member because I have a sight impairment. I have a visit from a volunteer for an hour each week. It is really good and I know that there is someone who can help me, because like anyone I have times when I'm feeling low, but I'm a real comedian and like to humour others, especially my volunteer. So far we have done quite a bit within our hour together: talking about any given topic, sharing ideas, going to the shops and sharing laughter. This really helps me to get out and about. My volunteer is a very positive person, and I am grateful to have the support of the NCS. Thank you kindly NCS for putting me on the list for a volunteer to assist me.

## Healthwalks Autumn — Winter 2009

Healthwalks are short, social walks that are led by Volunteer Walk Leaders. They are designed to help people get the most out of walking for their physical and mental health; and also provide a great opportunity to meet new people. They are friendly and supportive, so are particularly beneficial to those who are getting little or no exercise, recovering from illness, or lacking in confidence. All walks are clearly graded so you can see how long they are, and if they include any hills. All the walks are free and are led by trained Volunteer Walk Leaders. Dogs on leads are welcome.



If you have any questions or would like to find out more about Healthwalks ring **01273 292564**

## Christmas Lunch

The following places are providing lunch:

**St John's Centre, Palmeira Square, Hove** is providing lunch in the week before Christmas. Please ring 01273 729603

**Hove Methodist Church, Portland Road, Hove** is providing lunch on Christmas Day. To book a place ring 01273 324600

**Brighthelm Church and Community Centre, North Road, Brighton** is providing lunch on Christmas Day and Boxing Day. Please ring 821512.



## Brighton & Hove Food Partnership

By Julie Green

Brighton & Hove Food Partnership is a membership organisation working for better food for the entire city. It aims to see better access to affordable, fresh, seasonal and locally produced food so that all residents are able to enjoy food that is nutritious and ethically produced. The Food Partnership aims to increase opportunities for people to learn to cook and grow food and gain greater understanding of where our food comes from. Member benefits include regular updates on food issues plus events and opportunities to network with like minded people around healthy eating and local food production. Becoming a member also shows support for the work that we do in making Brighton and Hove a healthy city. For more information about the Brighton & Hove Food Partnership and to become a member (membership is free) visit [www.bhfood.org.uk](http://www.bhfood.org.uk) , email [info@bhfood.org.uk](mailto:info@bhfood.org.uk) or call 01273 431700.





*Sean de Podesta (Project Leader)*  
*Naomi Lacey (Volunteer Co-ordinator)*  
*Ruth McEnergy-Carter*  
*(Volunteer Co-ordinator)*  
*Susan Alderson (Scheme Administrator)*  
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### Our funders

Brighton & Hove City Council  
 Brighton District Nursing Association  
 The Sobell Foundation  
 Henry Smith Charity  
 The Derek and Eileen Dodgson  
 Foundation  
 George John and Sheila Livanos  
 Charitable Trust

The Hardship Fund  
 Tarner Area Partnership Community  
 Chest  
 Tarner and Eastern Road Health Action  
 Group  
 Eastern Road Partnership Community  
 Chest  
 Patcham Community Association

### Brighton & Hove Neighbourhood Care Scheme

We support older people and adults with physical and/or sensory disabilities and carers who live in their own homes by putting them in touch with local volunteers who assist them in a variety of ways. We try to connect neighbours with each other in a positive way. The scheme operates in the Hanover, Queens Park, Coombe Road, North Laine, North Portslade, Regency, Poets Corner/ Vallance, Hangleton & Knoll and Patcham & Hollingbury areas of Brighton & Hove.



A Project of Brighton & Hove Impetus

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