



WERRINGTON COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER GROUP



The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service



Background

1. In 2008 two residents, Jean and Betty, undertook consultation as to what developments residents would like
2. Others joined them to help to deliver realistic initiatives forming a small group which became the Werrington Community Volunteer Group covering:-
 - A quarterly Village Life Magazine
 - The monthly Werrington Lottery
 - An annual Scarecrow Event
 - The annual Christmas lights switch-on
 - The annual Poppy Installation and Remembrance Sunday afternoon tea
 - The Children & Young Persons Support Group providing a weekly youth club
 - The Kids2Kidz initiative supporting distressed families in the Staffordshire Moorlands
 - Werrington in Bloom





From then to today

1. In 2015 Staffordshire County Council (SCC) announced the plan to move 23 of the 45 County Managed Libraries into community management
2. We submitted a successful bid to take over management of the Werrington Library because of:-
 - The loss of Library Services
 - The loss of the only public photocopier and publicly accessible computers in the Village
 - A vision to develop a Community Hub
3. We attended a planning meeting with all other interested community groups in October 2015
4. In North Staffordshire just Werrington and Blythe Bridge were in the first tranche (2016)
5. Werrington became a Community Managed Library (CML) on 14 May 2016
5. The renamed Werrington Library & Wellbeing Centre is now the base for all of our activities





How we operate

1. The Werrington Community Volunteer Group (WCVG) is the over-arching organisation and has a monthly committee meeting with 7 members. It oversees all initiatives other than the most high profile, the Werrington Community Library & Wellbeing Centre (WCL&WBC)
2. This too has monthly committee meetings, having 9 members and a separate constitution. There is a lot of commonality between the two committees based on a core group of people
3. Both monthly committee meetings focus on progress and exception reporting
4. Being a registered charity, 5 of the WCL&WBC committee members are also the Trustees
5. There is no hierarchy in either group, all volunteers have equal status and scope to be “leaders” for projects/initiatives
6. Grant funding is only used for capital projects and not on-going revenue/operating costs.
7. We did utilise Covid-specific monies for a bespoke Covid Response Support Programme which provided; counselling, therapeutic art, resource sign-posting, and respite care





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Developing the Wellbeing Programme

1. The adjoining former Children's Centre was only used on one afternoon per week for a Baby Clinic
2. Consequently, we developed a programme to cover a range of health and wellbeing events, support activities and advice sessions.
3. A garden area at the front was put in with the help of the Youth Offending Institution and funded by ASDA. This was recently repurposed to a Garden of Reflection
4. We added a storage unit on spare ground at the back to house all of our equipment and supplies, funded by the (then) Big Lottery with help from the Lovell Homes Community Fund
5. Due to the success of the Programme, more accommodation was required to continue expansion. This led to the Garden Therapy Lodge development with 3 lodges also at the back – 2 for meeting/activity rooms and 1 as a dementia/disabled-friendly toilet facility
6. A patio area, artificial turf, hanging baskets and pots continue the horticultural theme
7. The project was funded by the National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund and the Disability Facilities Grant and led to the WCL&WBC charitable status



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Wellbeing Programme content

1. Is informed by Patient Participation Group (where possible)
2. Utilises our contacts, ideas and priorities
3. Is enhanced by suggestions from, and awareness raising by, the Village Surgery



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Highlights

1. We were granted the Queen's Award in 2018 following a nomination from the Village Surgery
2. The expansion of the facilities - the site is now at full capacity
3. As at end of August, we have delivered over 2,600 sessions involving a range of providers- statutory, voluntary and independent
4. We get positive feedback from users and providers
5. We have had tremendous support from all staff at the Village Surgery
6. We have increased Library membership from 800 to 5,000 despite national decline
7. A Community Shop was established with donated items and has expanded over time
8. Volunteers find it rewarding and supportive, not something that we had initially considered.
9. We have links with the Village Hall to offer a comprehensive programme - and further parking
10. We also link to Werrington Primary School in terms of the physical environment, which has led to grassroots football, coaching and walking football
11. We were the CML Representative for Staffordshire County Council submission – Local Government Chronicle Council of the Year Awards 2022. (SCC was one of 5 shortlisted)





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Finally...

1. Get in touch
2. Come and visit
3. Please help yourself to a copy of our Summer 2022 Village Life Magazine, September Wellbeing Programme and the list of activities held to date



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