

# IMPACT

DECEMBER 2021



rcc

[RURALCC.ORG.UK](http://RURALCC.ORG.UK)  
[@YOURRCC](https://twitter.com/YOURRCC)



#LCCA2021

# WELCOME

## FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

It somehow seems hard to believe that another Christmas is upon us. Despite the long hard days of lockdown, and the slow and steady months of recovery, for all of us at the RCC the last year has swept by in what seems like an instant. As for many in the charity sector, the last 12 months has been one of the busiest periods for the RCC in living memory. Despite many challenges and sleepless nights, opportunities have arisen for the Charity that we could never have foreseen pre-pandemic. Not only have we been able to widen the reach of some of our existing work, we have also opened new doors and taken bold steps into completely new areas of charitable activity and impact.

Our first major success of 2021 came in the form of a much needed extension to Work.Live.Leicestershire (WiLL) which is now funded by the European Social Fund

and the National Lottery Community Fund until 2023. Despite the much publicised boom in job vacancies across the UK, this does not mean that everyone is now finding it easy to get into work. All the barriers that WiLL was set up to tackle still exist and we are delighted to have a bigger and better team in place to help even more people overcome them.

The extension of WiLL was quickly followed by us securing new resource to expand our work to support better mental wellbeing in rural communities. This came in the form of grants from NHS Charities Together for our new Changing Connections project, and from Leicestershire County Council for activities to boost peoples mood and help them increase their mental resilience.

We often joke between us that running a charity is akin to a game of whack-a-mole, especially when grappling with the endless cycle of securing project funding. Our next mole to whack is securing the future of Rural Coffee Connect. Funded until March, our project to tackle loneliness is arguably our most successful and well loved project ever. Because of this we exit 2021 with the focus and determination not just to keep the project running, but to make it even bigger and better.

**Wishing you a very merry Christmas!**



**Sam Howlett**

**Kevin Butcher**

A group of people are gathered around a dining table, enjoying a meal. In the background, a Christmas tree is visible, adorned with warm, glowing lights. The scene is intimate and festive, with people's hands and arms visible as they interact with the food and each other. The table is set with various dishes, including a roasted chicken, a bowl of nuts, and a pepper mill. A lit candle adds to the warm atmosphere.

# STRONGER TOGETHER

With your support we can  
do even more to tackle  
issues and disadvantage  
in your local community.

[RURALCC.ORG.UK/JOIN](https://ruralcc.org.uk/join)

rcc

SUPPORT US TO SUPPORT YOUR COMMUNITY

# CELEBRATE



## The RCC is celebrating being finalists in two categories at the Leicestershire Community Champions Awards.

Having been nominated along with 25 other charities, all of us at the RCC were over the moon to be chosen one of just five finalists for the Charity of the Year Award at the 2021 Leicestershire Community Champions Awards. As if that wasn't great enough, Sam Howlett (one of our Executive Directors) was very flattered to be short-listed as one of just three finalists for the Charity Employee of the Year Award.

Sadly, we weren't lucky enough to end up winning an award on the night, however we all had a fantastic evening celebrating with the winners, all of whom were amazing and very well deserved. Despite not winning, the occasion gave us some great exposure for the Charity and a donation of a fifth of the money raised by the Furnley House Foundation on the night.

After the event Sam Howlett said "For the RCC to be short-listed as a finalist (from over 25 nominations) is fantastic recognition of the dedication and hard work we all put in as a team. It also shows just how far we have come as a charity in terms of our focus, impact, reach, and profile. If we keep pushing ourselves, you never know, next year we could be taking home the trophy!"



Leicestershire Community Champions Awards are organised by the Furnley House Foundation. More details can be found on their website.



[furnleyhouse.co.uk](https://furnleyhouse.co.uk)





**“To be shortlisted as finalists is fantastic recognition of the determination and impact of our team.**

SAM HOWLETT (RCC EXEC DIRECTOR)



# OPINION



**We were so heart warmed by the nomination someone wrote about the RCC for the Leicestershire Community Champions Awards that we couldn't resist sharing it.**



I would like to nominate the RCC for the wonderful work they do to support the less visible issues facing rural communities. In a gentle but determined manner the Charity has tackled two big hurdles facing people living in rural areas. These are loneliness and mental well being, the unspoken pandemic that effects so many people and has been exacerbated by Covid 19.

Their work has involved the introduction of a wonderful new project, Rural Coffee Connect. The Charity purchased and then organised the conversion of a van into a mobile free coffee venue for villagers to gather and see a friendly face both from their own community and from the lovely charity workers. In addition to this simple idea of meeting for a coffee the charity has used the venture to sign post people to other networks and areas of help and support with many issues as well as loneliness. For many this has been their only chance to meet others and have a coffee and informal unloading of everyday troubles.

The RCC has worked tirelessly through out the pandemic planning and setting up new ways of helping and supporting people with mental health issues. The very nature of lockdown and all it denies us has seen an explosion of an already big cohort of people feeling sad, hopeless and depressed. The charity has achieved so much not only in reaching out to sufferers, but by highlighting mental health and putting it on the agenda of local communities through training and workshops. In particular the RCC has focused on Loneliness and Suicide Awareness training, enabling the knowledge and expertise of national organisations to reach the depths of rural Leicestershire and Rutland. Such work needs to be applauded as it may well enable earlier recognition and intervention to save lives or greatly improve quality of life.

Like so many the RCC team has had to learn new ways of working in almost impossible situations, but unlike many of us they have used the climate to enhance and develop their commitment to help and support others. The RCC team should be celebrated for the way that they have continued to reach out and offer a listening ear and practical solutions to the less obvious but deeply felt things that effect us all.

# TELL US **COMMUNITY PULSE CHECK**

**Complete our short survey to help our charity support your community to emerge stronger from Covid-19.**

At the RCC we are working with local authorities and other key partners to help communities emerge from restrictions safely and ensure that the needs and priorities of local people and groups are understood and appropriately supported. To help with this our charity is completing a pulse check survey every couple of months with people and groups across our network.

We use the information we gather to help shape our own charitable services and to provide intelligence to a number of networks and partners coordinating the response to the pandemic and supporting our national recovery. These include the national Voluntary & Community Sector Emergencies Partnership, Leicestershire County Council, local health providers, and the Local Resilience Forum for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland. You can **view the results of our last survey** at any time on our website.

**Please complete yours today:**

**[HTTPS://FORMS.OFFICE.COM/R/UD1EBZ9GWZ](https://forms.office.com/r/UD1EBZ9GWZ)**



**rcc**

38:03  
159  
8830

# rural coffee connect

connecting people one cup at a time

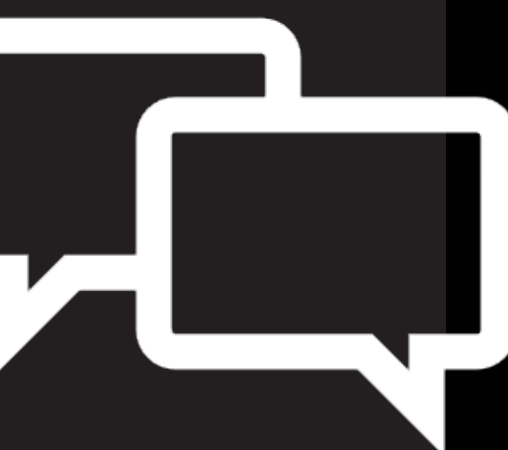


Our Rural Coffee Connect barista coffee van travels around rural Leicestershire and Rutland popping up a safe and friendly space for people to enjoy a cup of coffee, chat, and build connections in their community. We offer our coffee without a charge, however as they always say, "there is no such thing as a free lunch (or coffee!)". All we ask for in return for your drink is a smile and a chat. Recently we have visited some care homes where we have seen a huge benefit to residents. At Queens Park Care Home in Glen

Parva we got residents out to connect with their community over a cuppa and gave them the chance to try activities and games such as tossing the bean bag in the target area or colouring in.

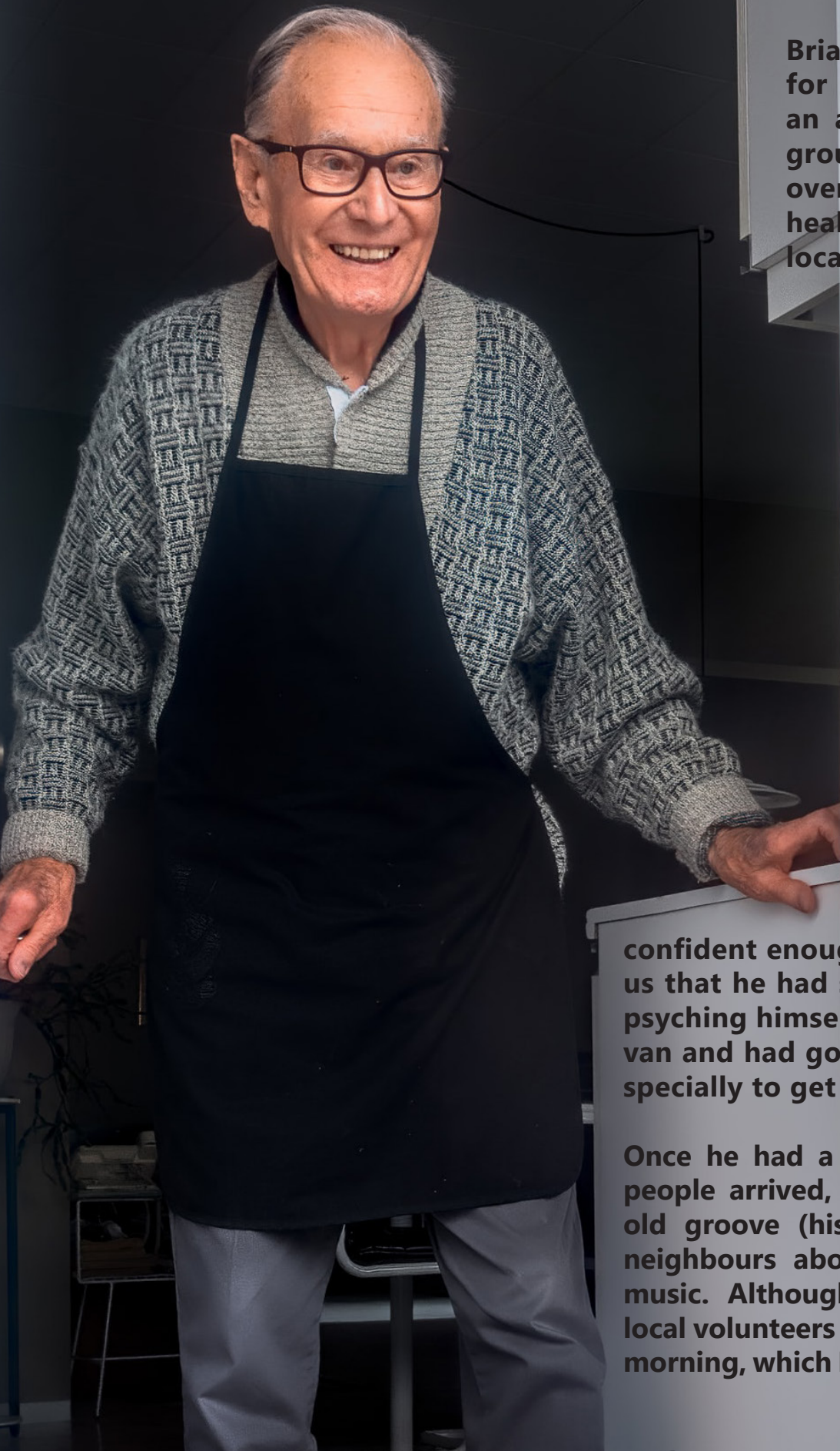


PEOPLE HAVE TOLD US HOW MUCH IMPACT OUR VISITS HAVE MADE IN THEIR COMMUNITY. BELOW IS A MOOD BOARD OF SOME OF MOST COMMON WORDS WE HEAR WHEN CONNECTING WITH PEOPLE THROUGH RURAL COFFEE CONNECT....



Volunteers wellbeing  
Awareness  
Isolation Lockdown  
Active  
Together In-touch-training Free  
Mental Local-issues Community  
Quality Barista Lonely  
Friends  
Loneliness Mood  
boosting Delicious Connecting  
Rural Useful Missed Motivation  
Cuppa Warmth Legacy  
Coffee Chat people  
Social support  
Mood-boosting





**Brian has lived in his village for over 30 years. Once an active member of local groups and organisations, over the last five years, ill health and the sad loss of local family and friends has led to him becoming more withdrawn and isolated. Undergoing treatment for cancer just before lockdown, Brian shielded on his own at home for most of the pandemic.**

**Brian arrived before the coffee was even hot at our last visit planned to his village. He apologised to us for being so early and explained that he had seen us from his window on previous weeks but had not felt confident enough to come out. He told us that he had spent most of the week psyching himself up to come out to the van and had got up very early that day specially to get ready.**

**Once he had a drink, and a few other people arrived, Brian quickly found his old groove (his words!) chatting with neighbours about his passion for folk music. Although it was our last visit, local volunteers plan to continue a coffee morning, which Brian is excited to attend.**

## **BRIAN'S STORY**



**COMMUNITY  
FUND**

# GOOD WILL

**IT'S THE MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR! A TIME TO REFLECT ON ALL THAT WE ARE THANKFUL FOR AND WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED. HERE AT THE WORK.LIVE.LEICESTERSHIRE PROJECT WE FEEL LIKE WE HAVE HAD A CRACKING YEAR!**

We have recruited new members into our little outreach family, they have gelled so well and have absolutely smashed it, a big thank you to all the outreach team for their hard work this year.

Our engagement has been very successful this year, covering areas such as Countesthorpe, Great Glenn, Whitwick, Bagworth and Ibstock. Our engagement has consisted of more of our traditional outreach with doing drop ins in community libraries and village halls. We have also been working with our colleagues on the coffee van and tagging along with them to promote our opportunities with The Work.Live. Leicestershire Project further. It's been great to be able to get back out there and be having face to face conversations with the public and a free cup of coffee (of course!) Along with the face-to-face outreach that we have been going from strength to strength with our internal

partners on the project and our external ones too!

We have made many new connections with services across Leicestershire this year and hope to make many more in 2022! Without blowing our own trumpet too much, we feel it's safe to say we are becoming strong provision for unemployed people of Leicestershire to help them back into work, education, and training!

Keep your eye out for us in the new year, we plan to be working in the areas of Stoney Stanton, Lutterworth, Syston, Fleckney, Asfordby and Melton Mowbray.

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS  
FROM THE WILL TEAM!**



This project is funded by the European Social Fund and the National Lottery Community Fund  
\*Participants must meet all eligibility criteria to be considered for entry onto the programme



**Why wait to access support?**



**Make finding employment  
your New Year's resolution!**

**Go to [workliveleicestershire.org.uk](https://workliveleicestershire.org.uk) now...**

Connect with our team by calling **01455 856 318**  
or email **[contactus@workliveleicestershire.org.uk](mailto:contactus@workliveleicestershire.org.uk)**

# SUCCESS



changing  
connections

---

**OUR NEW CHANGING CONNECTIONS PROJECT, SUPPORTING PEOPLE IN MELTON & RUTLAND WHO MAY BE OVER ACCESSING HEALTH SERVICES, IS ALREADY STARTING TO MAKE QUITE AN IMPRESSION IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES.**

We caught up with Sarah Callister and Tracey Pollard to find out how the project is progressing. Sarah said "we are really pleased that the project is already ahead of schedule on our two year delivery plan". Tracey added "It's been great speaking to so many people in and around Melton and Rutland and understanding how we can help and support them and improve their health and wellbeing. We've been out and about in the community with our Coffee Connect Van and met some fabulous people, we've helped people attend local lunch clubs, join local walking and volunteer groups and generally just helped them to get out into their local community and enjoy their lives more".

The level of support provided by the project so far has varied from simply finding a phone number for someone to order a food catalogue, a helping hand with organising transport to a local club or group, or more complex issues such as arranging mental health support, home care and evening classes. Every person is supported on a 1:2:1 basis, with an understanding of their needs and capabilities, with the hope that as their confidence and mental health improves, they are able to continue their journey to better wellbeing without the support of the project or reverting to old ways.

As one of the seven grants delivered through a partnership between three local NHS Charities, Leicester Hospitals, Raising Health and East Midlands Ambulance Charitable fund the Changing Connections project is a big step towards supporting people in the community who have felt lonely, isolated and vulnerable during the Covid-19 pandemic.

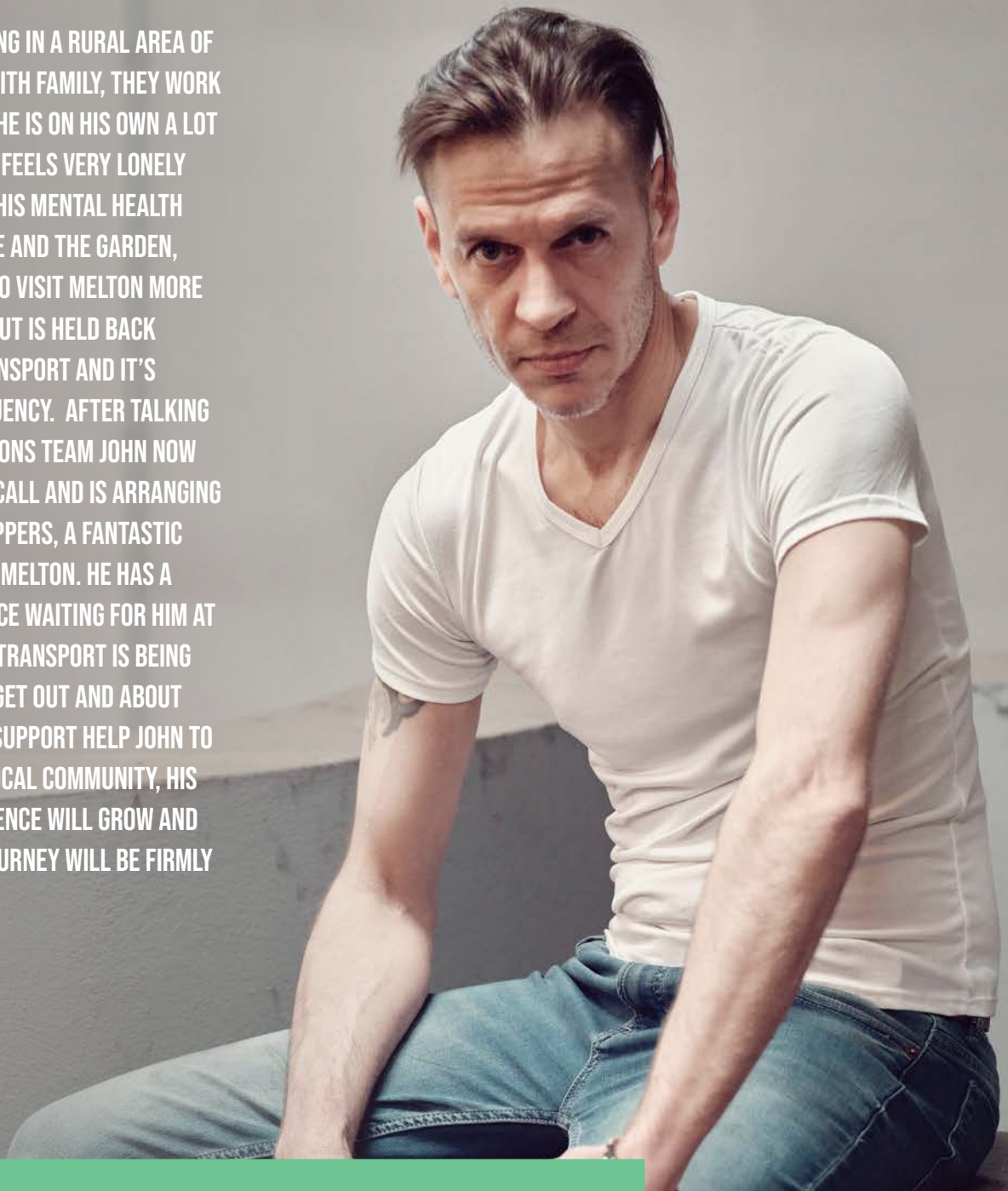
We know that Christmas is a fabulously festive time for most, but for some we understand that it can be a very lonely and isolating time, so please, if you, your family or friends would like support in your local community, contact Sarah or Tracey:

**SARAH - 07597 722444 OR [SCALLISTER@RURALCC.ORG.UK](mailto:SCALLISTER@RURALCC.ORG.UK)**

**TRACEY - 07752 183044 OR [TPOLLARD@RURALCC.ORG.UK](mailto:TPOLLARD@RURALCC.ORG.UK)**



JOHN IS IN HIS MID 30'S LIVING IN A RURAL AREA OF MELTON. WHILST HE LIVES WITH FAMILY, THEY WORK LONG HOURS WHICH MEANS HE IS ON HIS OWN A LOT THROUGH THE WEEK AND HE FEELS VERY LONELY AND ISOLATED, INCREASING HIS MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES. JOHN LOVES NATURE AND THE GARDEN, WALKING AND WOULD LIKE TO VISIT MELTON MORE (HE LOVES SNOOKER TOO!) BUT IS HELD BACK BY THE LACK OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND IT'S UNRELIABILITY AND INFREQUENCY. AFTER TALKING TO THE CHANGING CONNECTIONS TEAM JOHN NOW RECEIVES A WEEKLY PHONE CALL AND IS ARRANGING A WALKING BUDDY FROM PEPPERS, A FANTASTIC MENTAL HEALTH CHARITY IN MELTON. HE HAS A VOLUNTEER GARDENING PLACE WAITING FOR HIM AT A LOCAL BEAUTY SPOT, AND TRANSPORT IS BEING ARRANGED TO HELP HIM TO GET OUT AND ABOUT MORE. NOT ONLY WILL THIS SUPPORT HELP JOHN TO BE MORE INVOLVED IN HIS LOCAL COMMUNITY, HIS CONFIDENCE AND INDEPENDENCE WILL GROW AND HIS HEALTH & WELLBEING JOURNEY WILL BE FIRMLY UNDERWAY.



# HELPING JOHN



changing  
connections



NHS CHARITIES  
TOGETHER



LeicesterShire and Rutland's  
Community and Mental Health Charity



NHS

East Midlands Ambulance Service  
NHS Trust



# UPDATE

Having taken on the lead in coordinating the Hinckley & Bosworth Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) Partnership earlier this year, we were delighted to host our first Partnership Form in September. We had over 30 people in attendance, giving us the opportunity to introduce our team, update attendees on the aims and purpose of the Partnership, and relaunch the hugely popular VCS Making a Difference Fund.

Future forums will be led by VCS groups and other support partners, offering themed talks, case studies, and best practice examples of different VCS activities, projects and events. The next forum meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 16th March, 11am – 12pm where Voluntary Action Leicester will give a presentation on how to manage volunteers working remotely.

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE FUND

Making A Difference offers community grants of between £500 to £3,000 to kick-start new projects within the VCS network (volunteer & community sector) or to boost the impact of VCS groups across Hinckley and Bosworth Borough. Funded by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council and administered by the RCC, it offers a quick and easy way to apply for a small pot of funding for your community project or constituted "not for profit" charity or voluntary group benefiting or operating within Hinckley & Bosworth. Unfortunately, Parish Councils are not eligible for this funding pot.

We are pleased to say that over £10,000 of grants have already been awarded by our Grant Panel which includes elected members from Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council and representatives of the local VCS.



## VOLUNTEERING

As the lead member of the VCS Partnership we have a role to encourage and support volunteering in the Borough. So far we have been focusing on connecting existing charities and voluntary groups with local people interested in volunteering using a simple "matchmaking" approach. Volunteering has so many potential benefits including meeting new friends, helping others in your community, confidence building, offered, being a part of the community, learning new skills, making a difference, taking on a challenge and much more.

If you live in the Borough and would like to give some time to volunteering, please get in touch via our website. We can link you with a wide range of volunteering opportunities inside and outdoors and from as little as 2 hours.

[RURALCC.ORG.UK/HBBC-VCS-PARTNERSHIP](http://RURALCC.ORG.UK/HBBC-VCS-PARTNERSHIP)



## MEET PATRICK

Patrick is using volunteering as a way to gain work experience. He is giving his time at The Atkins Building in hinckley as a Gallery supporter. His volunteering includes assisting with building and hanging Atkins Gallery displays and exhibitions.

**“VOLUNTEERING HERE HAS HELPED ME TO GAIN CONFIDENCE. I ENJOY BEING PART OF A TEAM AND MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN A CREATIVE WAY. I’M THE THIRD GENERATION OF MY FAMILY TO WORK IN THE ATKINS BUILDING. YOU CAN FEEL THE HISTORY OF THE PLACE”**

# VOLUNTARY HEROES

The RCC team has been coordinating the volunteer vaccination marshals at Hinckley Leisure Centre on behalf of Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC) since July this year.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers we have worked with for their dedication and support during the Covid 19 vaccination roll out in Hinckley & Bosworth so far. With every person these amazing volunteers have helped to receive a vaccination they are directly helping to save lives across our community. Every person we have spoken to has had nothing but appreciation and praise for the friendly, helpful, and supportive approach every volunteer has brought to the role.

It is an incredible achievement and testimony to their commitment, that so many scheduled vaccination clinics confirmed over the

last year have  
*(continued)*

Thank  
you

Hinckley & Bosworth  
Borough Council  
in collaboration with

THE VOLUNTARY &  
COMMUNITY SECTOR





# VOLUNTEER VOICES...

**“I LOVE MEETING NEW PEOPLE ON EVERY SHIFT AND BEING VALUED BY THE COMMUNITY FOR MY SUPPORT OF THE VACCINE ROLL OUT”**

*(continued)* been able to go ahead, with volunteer support. An incredible 85,000 vaccinations have now been administered at the volunteer supported site to residents from Hinckley & Bosworth and the surrounding rural areas.

As the pace of the booster roll out started to increase rapidly as we approached winter, it became clear that as a charity we simply don't have the resource or capacity to meet the demand this was placing on our services. As a result we took the tough decision back in late October to give notice to step back from supporting the administration of volunteer marshal shifts when our current contract ends later this month.

Whilst we will no longer be involved in volunteer coordination beyond our last clinics on 18th December, it is by no means the end of the essential and valued role local volunteers play for HBBC. The time, commitment and support of volunteers is needed now as much as ever and we wish them all well in their future contribution to the local effort.



**“I’VE FOUND VOLUNTEERING AS A CLINIC MARSHAL TO BE A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE AND I FEEL THAT I HELP TO MAKE THE EXPERIENCE A HAPPY ONE, ADDING TO PEOPLE’S DAY”**



# HALLS TOGETHER

**WE ARE WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH WARWICKSHIRE RCC TO ENSURE THAT PEOPLE RUNNING VILLAGE & COMMUNITY HALLS ACROSS LEICESTERSHIRE, RUTLAND, WARWICKSHIRE AND SOLIHULL HAVE ACCESS TO ALL THE INFORMATION, ADVICE, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT THEY NEED TO CONFIDENTLY MANAGE A WELCOMING, SAFE AND EFFICIENT FACILITY.**

## HAVE YOUR SAY IN OUR VILLAGE HALL SURVEY

As we approach the end of 2021, we would like to ask all village and community halls in Leicestershire & Rutland to complete our short 8 question survey.

The purpose of this survey is to help the RCC develop our Halls Together service to best support your needs over the next 6-12 months. In addition, the survey will help to identify those village and community halls interested in working with us and the Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Local Resilience Forum to develop some new information and support resources for village and community halls that would like to better prepare for future emergencies like Covid-19.

**[HTTPS://FORMS.OFFICE.COM/R/WNNFIWCZAI](https://forms.office.com/R/WNNFIWCZAI)**





# JOIN OUR FACEBOOK GROUP

Since the launch of our new Halls Together Facebook Group we have 92 representatives join up from across Leicestershire, Rutland, Warwickshire and Solihull. Set up as a closed group just for those involved with village and community halls, particularly trustees and other key volunteers, its purpose is to enable you to share your experience of running community buildings, learn about new resources and policy development, ask questions, and discuss shared experiences and topics of interest.



## @HALLS TOGETHER

## GET INVOLVED IN VILLAGE HALLS WEEK

Village Halls Week is a national campaign, highlighting the contribution of England's 10,000+ village and community halls. This year ACRE is asking you to commit to....



**Do something different!**



**Something for everyone**



**Celebrating and supporting the arts**



**Beacons of hope for a more sustainable future**

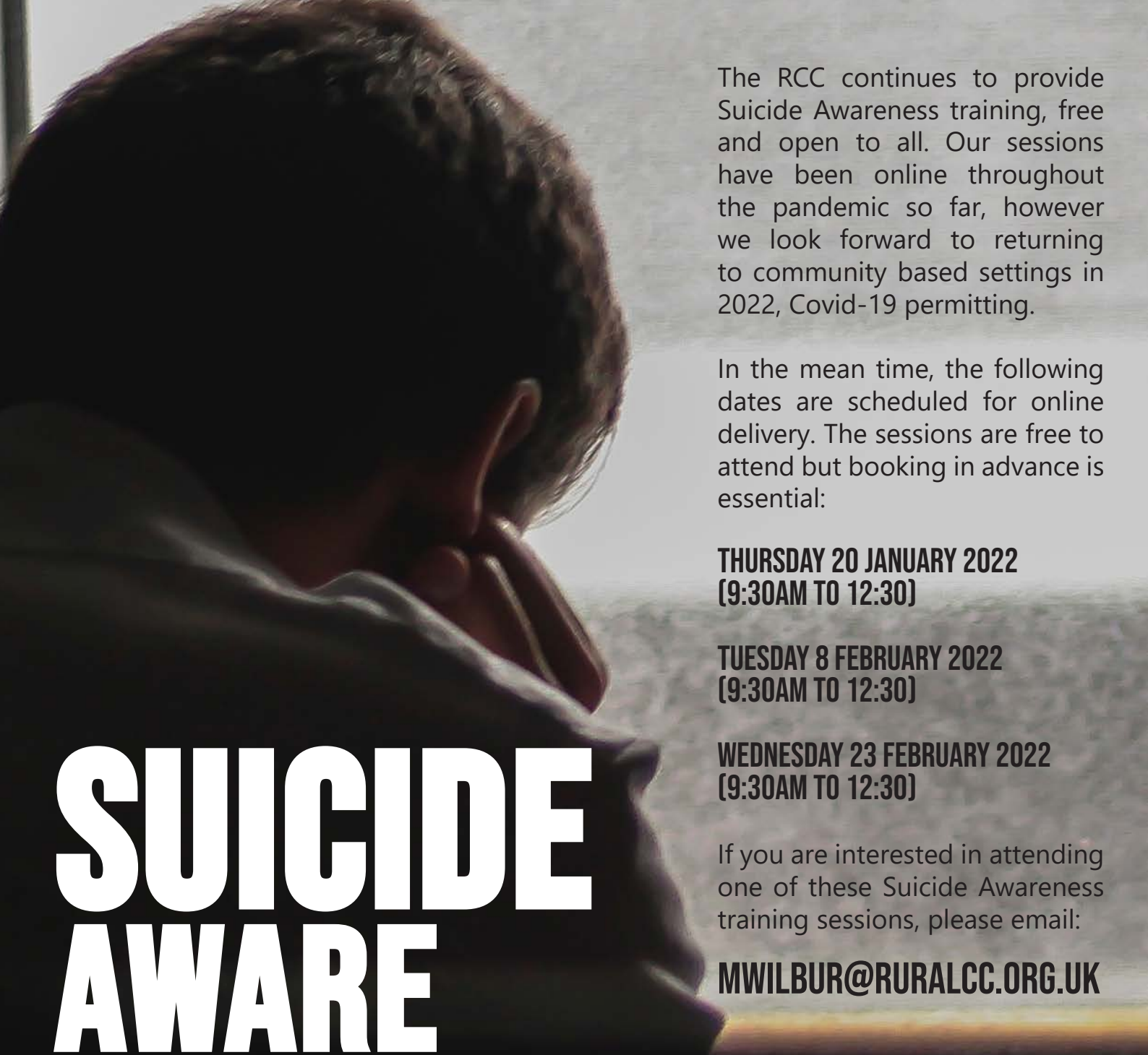


**Financial resilience**



**Village Halls Week**  
24-30 January 2022

Innovating for the future  
#VillageHallsWeek



The RCC continues to provide Suicide Awareness training, free and open to all. Our sessions have been online throughout the pandemic so far, however we look forward to returning to community based settings in 2022, Covid-19 permitting.

In the mean time, the following dates are scheduled for online delivery. The sessions are free to attend but booking in advance is essential:

**THURSDAY 20 JANUARY 2022  
(9:30AM TO 12:30)**

**TUESDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2022  
(9:30AM TO 12:30)**

**WEDNESDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2022  
(9:30AM TO 12:30)**

If you are interested in attending one of these Suicide Awareness training sessions, please email:

**MWILBUR@RURALCC.ORG.UK**

# SUICIDE AWARE

**OF THOSE WHO DIE BY SUICIDE IN THE UK, 75% ARE MEN.**

Yet we know that, as a group, men are less likely to talk about their emotional and mental health and are less likely to seek help. We need urgently to talk about this to counter the stigma that can be a barrier towards help-seeking. Mental health, physical health and social connectivity go hand in hand; therefore, those who either run or attend local groups or clubs may be well-placed to spot the early signs of distress amongst their friends, teammates, members - and so can be key in encouraging help-seeking.

**START A  
CONVERSATION**

**SUICIDE  
is preventable**

**StartAConversation.co.uk**

**rcc**



HM Government

**NHS**



**From 10 December,  
you must wear a face covering  
in most indoor settings including  
shops, unless exempt.**

# GOAL DIFFERENCE

The RCC was really pleased to support the launch of Goal Difference Leicester hosted by Leicester City in the Community at the King Power Stadium. Goal Difference is a 10-week wellbeing initiative using football themes and stories as a foundation to help people who struggle with a variety of mental health, wellbeing, and social problems.



EX LCFC CAPTAIN STEVE WALSH TALKING AT THE LAUNCH OF GOAL DIFFERENCE LEICESTER ABOUT HIS OWN MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING FOLLOWING HIS RETIREMENT FROM FOOTBALL.



TEAMS FROM THE RCC AND LEICESTER CITY IN THE COMMUNITY HOPE TO SUPPORT EACH OTHER IN THEIR SHARED MISSION TO IMPROVE MENTAL WELLBEING ACROSS LEICESTERSHIRE.



# GOAL DIFFERENCE LEICESTER

STARTING TUESDAY 18TH JANUARY  
WEEKLY UNTIL 29TH MARCH

GOAL DIFFERENCE IS A FOOTBALL-THEMED MENTAL  
HEALTH AND WELL-BEING SUPPORT SERVICE FOR  
ADULTS

TIME: 10.30am-12.30pm

COST: Free

VENUE: 1884 Sports Bar, King Power Stadium, LE2 7FL



GOAL DIFFERENCE  
BCALM

TO REGISTER YOUR INTEREST  
EMAIL: [MATT.BRAY@LCFC.CO.UK](mailto:MATT.BRAY@LCFC.CO.UK)  
PHONE - 07712 322 990



**LEICESTER CITY**  
IN THE COMMUNITY

# MERRY CHRISTMAS



THE MA  
CHRIS  
AT WINSTA





MAGIC OF  
CHRISTMAS  
MANLEY HOUSE

from all at the **rcc**



rcc

RURALCC.ORG.UK

RURAL COMMUNITY COUNCIL (LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND)

UNIT S09, THE ATKINS, LOWER BOND ST, HINCKLEY, LE10 1QU

TEL: 01455 856330 | EMAIL: [INFO@RURALCC.ORG.UK](mailto:INFO@RURALCC.ORG.UK) | WEB: [RURALCC.ORG.UK](http://RURALCC.ORG.UK) | SOCIAL: @YOURRCC

REGISTERED CHARITY: 1077645 | COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE: 3665974