

Love Where You Live

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“Volunteers are seldom paid;
not because they are worthless,
but because they are
PRICELESS!”
#LitterHeroes

Welcome to the spring addition of the ‘Love Where You Live’ newsletter. This is our opportunity to say thank you and to acknowledge the incredible impact you are making in the places you live, work and play.

Many of you got in touch to tell us about your stories and the wonderful contributions you make to your community. Please keep these coming in so we can celebrate your



achievements and inspire others to join and make a difference. Don't be shy; your contribution is valuable and deserving of recognition. Therefore we want to hear how and why you got inspired? What keeps you motivated? What tricks or tips do you have for other volunteers?

Please email us at:

volunteers@westsuffolk.gov.uk

The Great British Spring Clean takes place from 20 March to 13 April. It is run by 'Keep Britain Tidy' a charity that has worked tirelessly since 1954 promoting campaigns, awards and events designed to improve the local environment; the Blue Flag Award, Eco Schools and many others. Perhaps most famously of all they introduced the now well known Tidy Man to the country!

West Suffolk Council is supporting the #GBSpringClean and can provide all the equipment and support you need. So if you want your community, school or organisation to be involved find out how we can help:



volunteers@westsuffolk.gov.uk

<https://www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/lwyl/>

Wendy and Zelda from Haverhill have been 'Love Where You Live' (LWYL) volunteers since last spring.

'Zelda and I were walking up in the fields and I was always getting upset about how much rubbish was in the hedgerows. One day, with a friend, I picked up so many beer bottles I could barely lift the bag to take it home. In the end we managed to put them in the glass bank.

We continue to litter pick around the parks and walkways where we live. It's easy to do when you've got a very well behaved dog who sometimes even finds the rubbish for me!

I didn't think of the volunteering side of it at all I just thought I was doing my bit for the community and combining that responsibility alongside walking Zelda which I love doing. In the milder weather we will be back up the farm fields and public footpaths picking up everything that's blown up there during the winter!' **Wendy from Haverhill**



Wendy and Zelma litter picking

Master composters wanted!

FREE Composting Training for new volunteers 10am-5pm Sat 25 April

Are you green fingered or even green minded?

If so you could become a master of the art of composting by joining the happy band of enthusiastic volunteers that are **Suffolk Master Composters?**



Volunteers receive expert training from the Suffolk Waste Partnership and Garden Organic to enable them to act as composting ambassadors - encouraging the public to compost through promotional talks, events and demonstrations. Volunteers are asked to commit to at least 30 hours to helping the scheme - post training. The training is informal and relaxed and no experience is required - all you need is an interest in composting and putting Suffolk's resources to good use! There are 20 places available on the training course - to be held at **Museum of East Anglian Life, Stowmarket, IP14 2BD on 10am to 5pm 25 April**. Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis. Lunch and travelling expenses will be provided.

To find out more and book your place call Craig on 01473 264795 or contact mastercomposters@suffolk.gov.uk

More details of the scheme and training <https://suffolkrecycling.org.uk/reduce-your-waste/home-composting/master-composters>

Rachel and James from Newmarket.

'Every Saturday, my teenage son James and I put on our LWYL hi-vis vests and set off from our home for an hour's litter picking. On the smaller roads, he picks on one side of the road and I pick on the other. The first couple of weeks when we start a new area, it is quite slow, because we are picking up a backlog of litter, but after that we can go much faster. We have been following the same route each week, with the aim of getting as far as the Clock Tower on Newmarket High Street. We have finally managed this for the last two weeks, so James now has plans for us to alternate this route with a new one.

We are both very happy that we are stopping bits of plastic making it into the wider environment, particularly cigarette butts - we have learnt to spot these even when they have changed into anonymous blobs of grey wadding. Once we have litter picked an area for a couple of weeks, I would say that over 60% of the new litter each week is



James working towards his DofE award

cigarette butts – neither of us thought there would be this many and it has made us realise that there is an environmental cost to smoking.

I did wonder whether we would manage to sustain one hour a week, but it hasn't been hard – as James says, "It's relaxing." We both feel very proud of 'our' patch; we think that less litter is being left now that we are picking regularly, and people have told us that we have made a difference, which is great! Litter picking turns out to be a lovely way to get to know people better, because it makes an opening for a conversation. We are litter picking along a busy route and in a bright orange Love Where You Live vest we are very visible.

We originally aimed to go litter picking for three months while James was working for his **Duke of Edinburgh Award**, because it was really difficult to find any organisation that wanted an under-18 volunteer. That three months is over now, but we are carrying on'

Rachel From Newmarket

How it's done:

1. Contact your DofE officer in your school and see if you can do the 'Working with the Environment' challenge.
2. Plan your route and find a resident in your neighbourhood who is happy to monitor your progress and assess your work.
3. Sign up on West Suffolk Council's volunteer form to get your kit. Make a note on your form 'DofE'. Wait for your kit to arrive.
4. Start your challenge!

West Suffolk Council is keen to support young adults who want to achieve their DofE Award. It helps you to develop yourself as a person, improves your organizational skills and it is an opportunity to demonstrate to future employers your employability and skills.



Josh from Bury St Edmunds also chose to achieve his DoE award by 'Working with the Environment'.



3-Generations volunteer together in Mildenhall

Litter picking is a great pastime for the whole family across generations. Grandparents, parents and children can have a couple of hours fun together. A good way to introduce volunteering for children, and teach them to be responsible for the community they live in.

'Sheila and Philip are regular litter pickers on the estate. They collect around four bags a week just at the shops near where they live at St John's Close. They cover all areas around the ward. In the summer they also volunteer for the Clean Up Crew at Glastonbury Festival. Sheila was Caretaker at the St Johns Close Community Centre for many years and Philip worked for a local family run timber merchants. Lovely people!!'

**Cllr Richard Alecock,
Great Heath Ward**

From left to right Cllr Richard Alecock (Great Heath Ward), Sheila Dilley (Grandparent), Michelle Peachey (Mother), Philip Dilley (Grandparent), Cllr Ian Shipp (Kingsway and Market Ward), The Children are Lexie Jackson and Tommy Jackson (Michelle's children)

We want to hear from you...

It is great to read all your stories about how you've decided to become a volunteer, and what's been going on where you live. Many thanks to all of you who contributed to this newsletter and all of you who go out day after day to keep your local community tidy. We would love to hear more of your stories so we can keep you all updated, and inspire others. We would love to use your stories and pictures to promote volunteering on our social media and in the next newsletter. Let us know if you have found something unusual or out of the ordinary! Please share your

experiences and tell us what you get out of volunteering.

You can email us at: volunteers@westsuffolk.gov.uk or

You can upload images here:

https://westsuffolk-self.achieveservice.com/service/volunteering_photos_form

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'Environmental awareness of the next generation is important' The Playhouse Child-care, Haverhill



Mr and Mrs Hooker from Gazeley are two of our 650+ volunteers.



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