



VOLUNTEER UPDATE AUGUST 2021

I can't believe it's August already! The year is flying by and hopefully we are getting back to some sort of normality.

I'm glad to say that most of our services have now re-opened although of course we are still taking all necessary precautions to protect our staff, volunteers and clients.

- Our Day Centre in Maldon is now open on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday and our Day Centre in South Woodham Ferrers is now open on Friday.
- Our Activity Groups for people with mild to moderate dementia are now running in Harlow, Dunmow and Epping, with another new group in Witham now open. The Witham group is open on a Monday and new clients are always welcome.
- We have increased our counselling provision with funding from Essex County Council, which has enabled us to resource the service properly with administrative support and an experienced counsellor. We have some new volunteer counsellors that have joined us and we are able to provide counselling sessions face to face, via Zoom and telephone. We have re-started face to face sessions in Billericay, Braintree, Shenfield and Maldon and will also be starting shortly in Colchester and Epping.

- Our befriending volunteers are continuing to provide fantastic support for our clients and some face to face befriending has re-started. Befriending volunteers really are a lifeline to our clients who may not otherwise speak to anyone during a week.
- Some of our Young Carers clubs have re-started and will resume again in September after the school holidays.
- The Feeling Good Caring Well team are now providing face to face events for clients. Some of the recent highlights have been visits to Hyde Hall and Hockley Woods.
- We have a new project to support Carers with Covid-19 vaccine information. If you know any Carers that need any advice or information please ask them to email care@affc.org.uk or call us on 0300 7 70 80 90.
- Our GP Liaison Support Officer Sue Wright, is working with GP practices in mid Essex, helping them to identify and support Carers.
- Our Carer and Family Response Lead Louise Barker, is supporting Carers in the Chelmsford area. Louise works with the whole household, not just the Carer or the Cared-for, with the aim of finding solutions and support with issues that involve the entire family.

In addition to all these services, in April we were successful in gaining the Trusted Charity Level 2 mark, which is the highest quality mark possible. The Trusted Charity mark is a quality mark awarded to an organisation after an external assessment and provides external verification of the quality and credibility of an organisation. Staff and volunteers were involved in providing evidence to the assessors of our work. Thank you to our volunteers Jenny Hartley and Sharon Liebeschutz for their input to this.



NEW STAFF MEMBER: FEELING GOOD CARING WELL TEAM

Please meet Dawn Penn, the newest member of the Feeling Good Caring Well team. Dawn said: 'I would like to introduce myself. I am Dawn.

Working for Action for family Carers gives me a great opportunity to share the skills and knowledge that I have gained in the voluntary sector in a caring and supportive environment.

I am looking forward to getting out and about and meeting the Carers and some of our many hard working and supportive Volunteers.

I have experience of caring for a close family member and it was easier some days than others. It was always hard work and left little time for my own needs. Some days I felt a sense of achievement and other days I felt as if I hadn't done enough.

If you know of anyone that could benefit from the project or would like to know more about what goes on, please encourage them to get in touch with the team.

I look forward to meeting you in the near future.

Dawn'

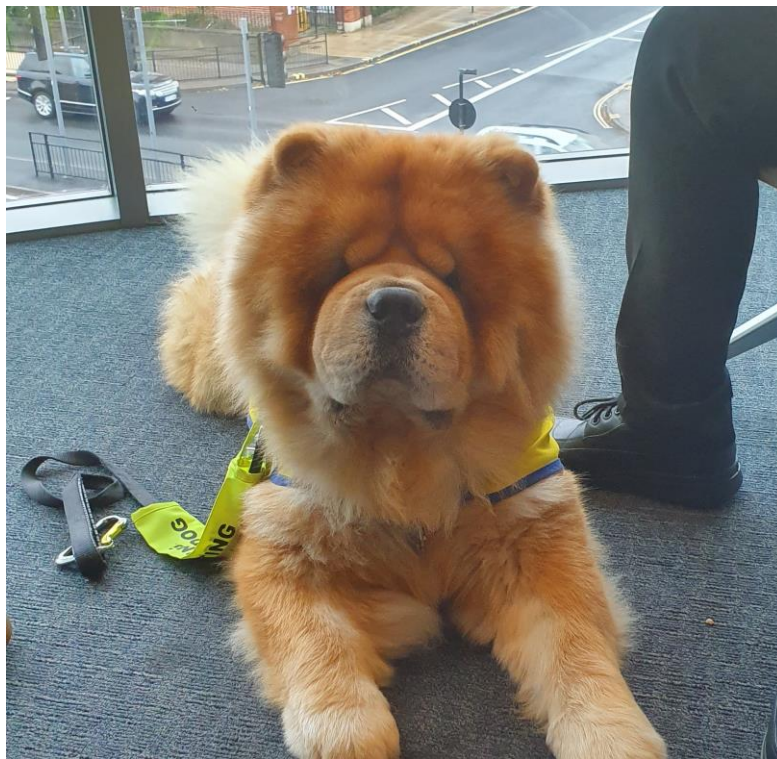
The Feeling Good Caring Well team provide free sessions and activities to support the physical and emotional wellbeing of Carers across Essex, working with trained practitioners and counsellors to provide professional and quality support. They have many events planned across Essex – please see our website at <https://affc.org.uk/services/adult-carers/feeling-good-caring-well> for more details on specific activities and events.



MEET VOLUNTEERS VINCE AND KATO

Vince is one of our befrienders and prior to the pandemic would sometimes bring Kato in to meet our Day Centre clients. Vince and Kato have previously visited our Day Centres at Springfield, Maldon and South Woodham Ferrers.

Kato is a Chow Chow and is 6. He is Vince's pet but was previously a show dog and has been to Crufts twice. Since retiring from the dog show world, he has been a PAT (Pets as Therapy) dog for over 2 years. Vince and Kato will be appearing at a Day Centre near you soon!





CALLING ALL CARERS OF PEOPLE WITH MILD TO MODERATE DEMENTIA

During September/October we are running a project to come and view our Maldon Day Centre and Witham Activity Group to experience some of the activities that we can provide. The following events will be available:

- **Wednesday September 8th – visit to Ulting Wick Garden (a local award winning garden that has appeared on TV) to enjoy the tranquil surroundings. Carers can meet and chat to others in a similar position over a cuppa and cake and go home with a goody bag of activities, information and a small gift to share with their ‘Cared for’.**
- **Wednesday 22nd September – visit to Maldon Day Centre looking at the facilities and experiencing some of the activities on offer. Refreshments will be served in the sensory garden under the canopy (indoors if wet).**
- **Monday 13th October – visit to Witham Day Centre to join in with some of the activities and enjoy refreshments.**

All visits will be 10.30am to 12.30pm. If you know any Carers that would be interested in this please ask them to register their interest by emailing care@affc.org.uk or call us on 0300 7708090.



BEFRIENDERS – ALL AREAS

To provide telephone and home befriending to Carers, older people, people with mental health issues or a learning disability. Full training and support will be given.

YOUNG CARERS SUPPORT GROUPS ASSISTANTS

Offering support to young people (8-18) through a youth group held during term time with occasional school holiday trips. Help is required on a Thursday in Witham between 4.30 and 6.30pm, in Stansted on a Monday and in Dunmow on a Friday, both once a month between 4 and 6pm and in Loughton on a Wednesday once a month between 5 and 7pm.

DAY CENTRE ASSISTANTS – MALDON & SOUTH WOODHAM FERRERS & WITHAM ACTIVITY

GROUP

To aid staff and other volunteers in supporting clients that attend our Day Centres and Activity Groups through encouraging participation in conversation, entertainment and activities. Help is required in Maldon on a Thursday and South Woodham Ferrers on a Friday, both between 10am and 3pm.

ACTIVITY GROUP ASSISTANTS – HARLOW, EPPING, DUNMOW & WITHAM

This role involves supporting people with dementia within an activity group setting. Morning sessions are held between 10 and 12.30pm and afternoon sessions between 1 and 3.30pm. Volunteers are needed in Dunmow on Monday afternoons, Witham on a Monday (both sessions), Harlow on a Wednesday (both sessions) and in Epping on Thursday afternoons.

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