



# The LDVG Newsletter

*Supporting our community since 1994*



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Scottish Charity: SC028557

Company No: 203087

## AN UPDATE FROM THE CHARITY MANAGER

Towards the end of March we had to make the difficult decision to close our building and stop all face to face services to protect our members, volunteers and staff in line with government guidelines. Due to the nature of our work, it looks likely we will remain closed for the foreseeable future.

However, this has not stopped the amazing LDVG team from helping their community in any way they can. Some of the team had to be furloughed, but those remaining were set up to work from home and work they did! Thanks to support from the National Lottery Community Led fund, staff were equipped with laptops and mobile phones to ease the transition into home working.

Overnight our call line service expanded from a 5 day a week service to a 7 day a week service. The weekly calls rose from 230 calls a week to a staggering 520+ calls a week, with the staff team making the majority of these calls themselves in the first few weeks! Thanks to the new mobiles, we were able to recruit some of our call line volunteers to support this increasing service, and they took the lead in covering weekend calls to enable staff to have some much-needed time off.

We quickly linked in with the Covid-19 Rainbows Larkhall Community Network, which you can read more about later, and our volunteer drivers have been supporting key staff from the local NHS Distribution Service get to work.



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## AN UPDATE FROM THE CHARITY MANAGER (ctd.)

We now have all but one team member back from furlough and we continue to work hard to look after our members, volunteers and our community. Our Genealogy Group have moved their meetings online (which can be seen in the picture below), our Gardening Group continue to look after our garden and community plots and ran a very successful plant sale, our volunteers have been busy making Harry's Heroes NHS bears, and our Handyperson Volunteers have been carrying out small non-emergency jobs when safe to do so. The newly formed Armed Forces Social Group will very shortly be taking part in comrade calls supported by our staff and AGE Scotland, and from Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> July, our Strutherhill and Birkenshaw shopping bus will resume – with reduced numbers in line with transport guidance.



Our Facilities Officer is working hard to ensure all risk assessments and health and safety requirements are in place, with hand sanitiser and cleaning stations available throughout the building. We are making the most of the building being closed by having the much-needed roof repairs carried out so that the building will be watertight and warm on your return.

We have been fortunate in the great support we have received from our funders – the National Lottery Community Fund Lanarkshire Team, Corra Foundation and Robertson's Trust. As well as the Supporting Communities Funding, we managed to secure a Small Business Grant and have been receiving generous donations from members and the community for which we are very grateful.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff for their outstanding efforts over the last few months. It hasn't been easy and there have been more than a few tears, but they have kept going. We are fortunate to have such a wonderful team of hard-working individuals who always go above and beyond to get things done. I would also like to thank the volunteers who have been able to continue to support us with their time and dedication. We are truly blessed at LDVG!



Keep an eye on our Facebook and Twitter pages for updates to other services as we move to bring everyone back as and when we can. We look forward to the day when we can all be in the LDVG building together again – until then take care and stay safe!

- Sandra, Charity Manager

## SOME HEROES WEAR APRONS

Not even lockdown has been able to stop the Heart of Africa UK team from spreading happiness with their incredible food. With the help of volunteers from LDVG and The Larkhall Rainbows, Heart of Africa have been using our kitchens to prepare delicious lunches which have been delivered to those in the community who need them, throughout the shielding period.



A warm meal cooked with love can mean so much to somebody, especially in a time like this. The response from the community has been heart-warming. These meals have helped over 200 people in the community. So many people have expressed their gratitude to the chefs and volunteers that have made it all possible with hard work and dedication. LDVG would like to join the community in thanking everybody who has made this fantastic service possible. A special thank you goes to Tuoyo, his team and his family for making the meals that have brought delight, comfort and full bellies to so many over the past three months.

We love that we have been able to play a role in providing this service and we are very proud of all those involved. It's this kind of support that keeps our community strong. If you've enjoyed the food or want to try the recipes everybody in Larkhall is talking about, LDVG will be hosting Heart of Africa's Community Cafés once it is safe to do so. Keep an eye out for details.



## MILES WORTH OF SMILES WITH THE KILT WALK

An unfortunate consequence of lockdown has been the cancellation of many fundraising events, including the Glasgow Kilt Walk which LDVG was set to participate in. These events are a fantastic opportunity for Charities across Scotland to raise money for their cause and disappointment turned to joy when the Dundee Kilt Walk was announced as a virtual event.

Staff, volunteers and board members sprang into action. With Sir Tom Hunter promising an extra 50% on top of what was raised, the LDVG Team rose to the challenge with unparalleled enthusiasm. Between the 7 members, the LDVG Team got their tartan on and walked a combined total of over 65 miles and raised well over £3,000. Special mention goes to Laura, who roller skated through her 6 miles, David, who walked over 28 miles in the rain, and Ronnie, who climbed Tinto Hill and Coulter Fell one after the other. The incredible news doesn't end there. Following the event, Sir Tom Hunter announced that he would be doubling his original pledge! This means that a total of £6,894 was raised for LDVG!



This was an amazing result and we want to thank everybody who shared the page and donated to help us smash goal after goal. Your support was heart-warming and far beyond what we could have asked for. Of course, we would also like to take one more chance to thank all the members of the LDVG Kilt Walk Team!

## PARTY THYME WITH PLANT SALE RESULTS

A special thank you to Sandra Thomson, who worked tirelessly to ensure our Plant Sale kept its kudos. The selection of planters, hanging baskets and plants were outstanding (as you can see) and brought in an amazing £635! Everyone was incredibly impressed by the standard of work and many came back for more. A massive well done to Sandra for keeping LDVG and the community vibrant with these lovely displays.



## HARRY'S HEROES ARE AN UN-BEAR-LIEVABLE SUCCESS

Sheena Simpson has been helping us as a volunteer for over a year now, regularly supplying our Tea Dances and other events with delicious home baking. Sheena is also a keen crafter and has been keeping busy during lockdown by knitting and crocheting teddies. When she shared what she had been up to we thought they were so adorable that it was suggested to turn this into a fundraising event for LDVG!



These handsome teddies were named Harry's Heroes in appreciation for the fantastic help Sheena's husband, Harry, receives from the nurses and carers at the care home. Other volunteers got involved and made 37 bears together! The response to them was so positive and they raised a total of over £300! A massive thank you to all the volunteers involved...



Anne Alston  
Helen Buchanan  
Betty Carnihan  
Anne McHolm  
Maureen McNeil  
Islay MacNab  
Sheena Simpson



## HOW YOU CAN GIVE TO LDVG

There are now lots of ways that you can help LDVG to continue making a big difference to the community! Check our website or scan the QR codes for more details.



We are now on Sustainably! This is a free app that raises money for LDVG by rounding up the cost of your online purchases. You can control how much you give, set monthly donations and add gift aid to boost donations by 25%!

You can also support us while shopping online using Easy Fundraising, which contributes a donation to LDVG at no additional cost to you! Easy Fundraising is supported by over 3,600 retailers including Amazon, ASOS and eBay.



We have also recently set up a Just Giving page which you can use to donate to or fundraise for LDVG, contributing to the continuation of all our services.

## LDVG COVID-19 PARTNERSHIP

LDVG are actively involved with the COVID-19 Rainbows Larkhall community network, who have been supporting the community in Larkhall and surrounding villages. LDVG led a funding bid to secure over £81,000 from the Supporting Communities fund and further funding from the Coalfields Trust. Larkhall Community Growers were also successful in securing funding from STV Children's Appeal towards this work. This is a partnership of local organisations including Larkhall Community Growers, Larkhall Christians Together, Community Links, Larkhall Community Council, Larkhall TOA Taxis, VASLan, The Machan Trust, public and private sector and community members. The group:

- host weekly Zoom meetings to coordinate support
- run a Facebook page, WhatsApp group and messenger service to coordinate support
- link with South Lanarkshire Council and the NHS
- update four local elected members
- coordinate local volunteer support
- organise food parcel deliveries, supplementing them with useful items
- supply activity packs (children and adults)
- provide prescription deliveries
- collect food donations and organise food shopping/deliveries
- distribute information leaflets to the community
- offer other support as and when needed
- Run competitions and other exciting events
- Lighthouse Community Support Line, open for anybody over the age of 16 who is struggling to cope. You can reach them by calling 07751 295570



More info available at [www.ldvg.org.uk](http://www.ldvg.org.uk) or <https://www.facebook.com/groups/larkhallrainbows> or you can contact the Rainbows team on 07510 593949.

## SCAM AWARENESS

As many of you will have seen for yourself, profiteering and unfair pricing have been an issue since the beginning of lockdown. We've seen prices soar for in-demand goods like hand sanitiser and PPE. We would like to remind you that you can report such price gouging via the Competition and Markets Authority's website. You can also report issues with receiving a COVID -19 related refund or cancellation and other unfair business practices.

Even though lockdown restrictions on shopping are easing, more people will be looking to online shopping as a safer alternative. While online shopping is invaluable at this time it is important to be conscious of what sites you use as many fake sites have popped up. Here are some warning signs of a fake online store.

- No company number is listed. It is against the law for a company website to not display this so this is a sign that you are dealing with a fraudulent company.
- Invalid or a complete lack of contact information (e.g. number or business address) and no support or information on what to do if you have an issue with your order.
- A very limited range of products that are on sale.
- Negative feedback on review websites or being able to find little to no information for them on these review websites or anywhere else.
- Remember, a deal that looks too good to be true probably is.

When buying online, make sure you do your research before you buy. If you do purchase something online that you think may have been a scam, it's not too late. Contact your bank immediately if you bought it on a credit or debit card or lodge a claim if you bought it via PayPal.

Be aware of scammers that are posing as legitimate online stores. Scammers have been making calls posing as Amazon, claiming that your account is up for renewal and this will trigger an automatic payment. You will be directed to download an app, but this app gives the caller access to your computer or phone. Be cautious. Amazon will never ask you to download an app or require payment or information outside of what you provide on their website.

We understand that some of you may be struggling financially, which can make you more susceptible to scams. Provided below is a list of organisations with free helplines you can contact if you find yourself struggling. You can also scan the QR codes for their website.

Step Change



0800 138 1111

Citizens Advice Scotland



0800 028 1456

The Money Advice Service



0800 138 7777

## IN MEMORIA

As some of you may know, we have sadly lost some of our friends at LDVG. We would like to take a moment to reflect on who they were and what they meant to us.

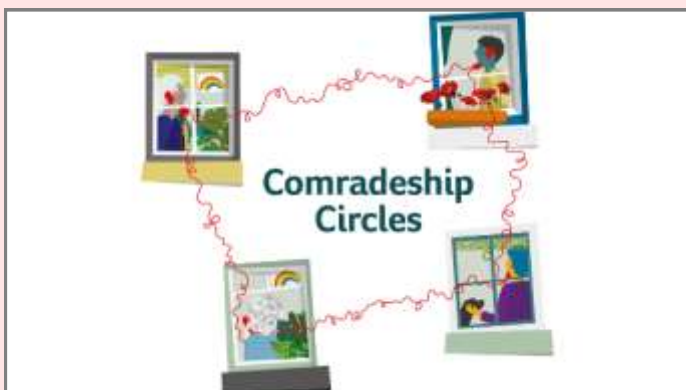
Suzanne Dickson passed away in April at 47 years old. Suzy found much happiness with LDVG, especially with the lunch clubs and tea dances. She was a big personality in the centre, always happy to have a chinwag and share her latest joke.

Sandy Murray passed away on the 11<sup>th</sup> of May at 81 years old. Sandy had been with LDVG for a long time as a member, volunteer and board member, helping LDVG to become what it is now. He gave so much to his community without asking for anything in return. He will be missed by all.

May Bruce passed away on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July at 83 years old. May had been a member of our Call Line for over a year and spoke to many of our volunteers. She was always a joy to speak to and was more than happy to indulge in a good blether.

## COMRADESHIP CIRCLES

Age Scotland has launched its Comradeship Circles initiative. This is for any veteran of the British Armed Forces, aged 50 and above, as well as their partners, widows and widowers. This is a chance to have a weekly phone chat and to get to know other veterans in your community. Phone 0800 12 44 222 if you are interested. Keep in mind that LDVG also has the Armed Forces Social Group, so contact us to be kept in the loop with this group.



## STAY UP TO DATE WITH LDVG

To stay up to date with everything going on with LDVG and its partners, please consider following us on social media. This is where we post updates, host our weekly virtual tea dances and is a great way to stay in touch with us and other members.

Facebook

[facebook.com/LarkhallDistrictVolunteerGroup/](https://facebook.com/LarkhallDistrictVolunteerGroup/)

Twitter

[@LarkhallVolGrp](https://twitter.com/LarkhallVolGrp)

You can also find more information about what who we are and what we do at the following places:

LDVG Site

[www.ldvg.org.uk](http://www.ldvg.org.uk)

LinkedIn

[www.linkedin.com/company/11639116](https://www.linkedin.com/company/11639116)

## NEW GARDEN AREA GETS A GREEN THUMBS UP

We're still thinking ahead to the time when we are all reunited with friends at LDVG. We're so excited that we've had some work done to prepare. With thanks to Ronnie and William at WHN Landscapes, we have closed off the outdoor seating area to make a lovely space for our members to enjoy.



The gardening group will be able to use this trellis to display their work, which will liven up the area even more and we're looking forward to welcoming our members back to