

## volunteer voices

Your news bulletin from KMPT Voluntary services

### Welcome to Volunteer Voices...

This is your July edition, coming to you from our Voluntary services team.

With a continuing pandemic, we've had to stop a lot of our voluntary activities, but we are amazed by the resilience and dedication of so many of you who have continued to show your support.

We have had a busy month with a musical fundraiser conducted over Facebook Live, lots of crafty creations sent to our team and a spot of weeding at Dudley's Patch, amongst many other things!

We cannot wait until we can have you all back fully, but until then, please know that we love hearing from you! Keep sending us your stories of lockdown or any secret hobbies/ talents, so we can share them all with you!

Thank you again for your support - you are all brilliant!



### Musical fundraiser is a huge success!

Although Friends for Mental Health volunteers have not been able to meet in person during the lockdown, they have continued to work behind the scenes and communicate via telephone and email. They have carried on supporting service users and services and we thank them for that!

On 29 May, Iain Spink, Music therapist and Friends for Mental Health trustee, organised an online charity fundraising music event. This was initially to be held at a venue in Whitstable, however it had to be cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic. Being creative and adaptive (as we've all had to learn to be), Iain organised the music event to be online via Facebook. Funds raised were for two charities: Friends for Mental Health and Holding On, Letting Go. The event was extremely successful with people attending from all over the world. It exceeded expectations with Iain and his fellow musicians helping to raise almost £400! A massive well done and thank you to Jo Hook, Alan Prosser, Brendan Power and of course Iain!

The performances can still be watched online - even if you are not a Facebook user: <https://www.facebook.com/FriendsForMentalHealthEastKent/Live/>

If you wish to make a donation, you can do this via <https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/IainSpink>

Find out more about the volunteering opportunities we have at KMPT

### Poetry during a pandemic

Our volunteer Alan, who helps in a cognitive stimulation therapy group (CST), is a poet and shared some of his humorous poems during lockdown. When he met Zoe Young, our Voluntary services co-ordinator, several months ago, he read out some of his poems in the group and she was amazed and amused by them.

They got chatting about them and he explained to Zoe they were just all in a folder not being enjoyed by anyone. Zoe asked if he could share them with her so she could share them with our east Kent volunteers as she's sure people will enjoy reading them.

Here is one of his poems:

A FOXY TALE  
(Pam Ayers style)

I can't understand why man hates me so much  
Is it because I ate the rabbit from his hutch?  
Why does man try to shoot me with his gun  
Is it because I killed the chickens in his run?  
I did take one chicken back to my den,  
It tasted so, so lovely, that big fat hen.  
Perhaps it's just a matter of my bad luck,  
Or is it because I ate his favourite duck?  
I just can't live on man's terms,  
I can't exist on berries and worms.  
I succeed despite man's bolts and locks,  
No wonder they call me the sly fox!  
I hope all men catch something called chicken pox,  
It's not my fault I was born a fox!

If like Alan, you have any secret hobbies or talents, please email them to our Volunteer services team.

### Webb's Garden continues to flourish!

Webb's Garden, which is based at St Martin's Hospital in Canterbury, is a Victorian walled garden and is managed and run by Friends for Mental Health and volunteers. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit us and we went into lockdown, the garden had to close to all visitors and volunteers, and all KMPT's volunteering roles were suspended.

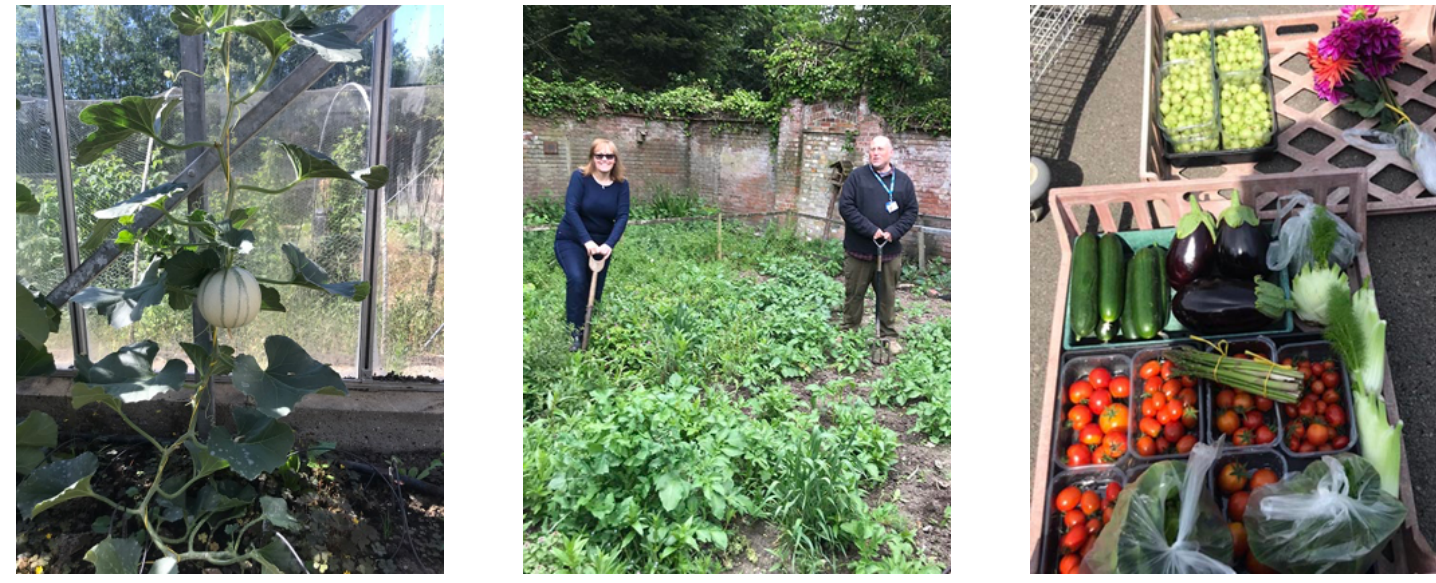
However, we had six amazing volunteers who agreed to come in on a rota basis (so they were not all in the garden at the same time) to keep the plants watered and nurtured so they did not lose all that they had sewn earlier in the year. The team grow fruit and vegetables all year round - which, when ready, are packaged up and taken to the reception at Eastern and Coastal Area Office (ECAO) where staff can purchase them or make a donation. All proceeds go back into running the garden.

This rota will continue throughout the summer and into the autumn. Zoe Young, Voluntary services co-ordinator, and James Pearce, Voluntary services business admin apprentice, go to the garden every Wednesday to link up with the volunteers and collect the produce to take to ECAO reception. Volunteer Martin is at the end of the phone for any queries regarding prices and has been enormously helpful.

Zoe, and her counterpart in west Kent, Stephen, spent a morning weeding in what is known by the volunteers as Dudley's Patch because the weeds were suffocating the potato plants. Thankfully, the potatoes survived and have been available for staff to buy in the last couple of weeks.

Huge thanks and appreciation go to John, Bob, Peter, Ron, Sharon and Gill for keeping the garden going. Without them, the garden would have become a jungle and we would have lost everything.

The volunteers put a lot of time, care and effort into making sure it has remained and continues to be functional and productive.



### Crafty creations

We have a new volunteer driver, Frank, who has been delivering personal protective equipment (PPE) across the Trust. His wife, Paula, then got involved by very kindly put her knitting skills to great use by knitting nine nurse mates. We were asked by the occupational therapy team in Maidstone if we had any volunteers who could make some for our ward staff as a way of trying to boost morale. Frank and Paula delivered these to us, which were passed on to Sue Gadstone who presented them to staff.

We have also been gifted some beautifully sewn hearts, by a lady called Hilary, who donated them to our Mother and Baby Unit. Acts of kindness like Hilary's are so appreciated by all our patients, their loved ones and our staff, so a huge thank you to you Hilary from all of us!



### My Garden

Janet, one of our volunteers, LOVES her garden. So we asked her to write about how she has coped during lockdown, and how her garden helped her through...

*My garden in Chartham is my therapy and my pleasure. Time stands still when I'm in my garden. I have large clock in my conservatory to keep an eye on the time but I forget to look at it when I'm in my garden. Another great pleasure when I'm at the bottom of the garden (which my family call 'The Bonfire'), is the view. I can see Canterbury east trains passing by Chartham Hatch and after dusk when the lights go on I can see the red rear lights of the cars waiting at the level crossing. I have a very tall pampas grass, which, in summer blocks my view of St Mary's Church, but the grasses look lovely in the breeze and the spring - and the birds use them to build their nests!*

Thank you Janet for sharing.

### Chris' film review of 'Circle' (2015)

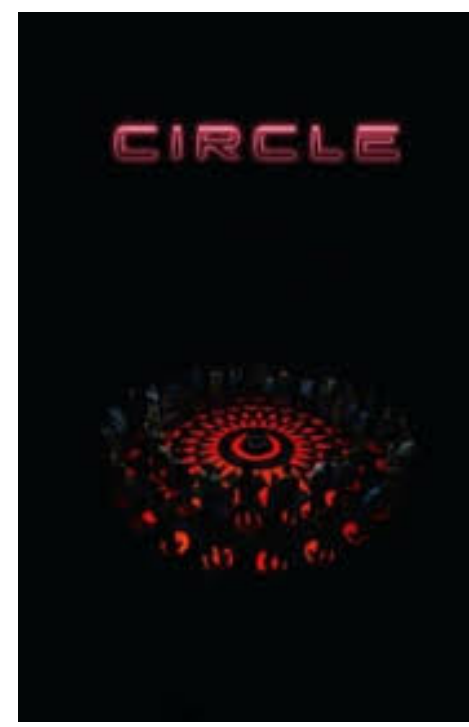
Chris King, one of our volunteers, has been keeping busy during lockdown by finding some cinematic gems on Netflix. Here is his film review of Circle - the 2015, science fiction, psychological horror-thriller...

*Stumbling to find strange sci-fi gems can be a disappointing experience, but sometimes you find something you cannot believe you had never heard of...and Circle (2015) is one those films!*

*Circle is a film set in one room. People are standing on markers and if they leave the marker, they die. There are triangles on the floor that they have control over with their hands, and they get to select one which then points at another human and they die instead of you. At the beginning, no one knows what's going on, and terrible results are caused by this - blame is growing in people. They soon learn that between the shots, they can communicate with each other to work out why this is happening, how to vote and most importantly, how to survive. And this is all just in the first 4 minutes!*

*To say anymore would ruin a lot, and I really cannot think how to... So, if you are someone who wants to escape, go rewatch Lord of the Rings, BUT if you're someone who wants to think and maybe reflect then watch Circle. It's a really good film, that has more mystery than a kinder surprise - I highly recommend it!*

Thank you Chris for sharing your review with us.



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