

BEHIND THE VALE

Supporting adults with learning disabilities to live life to the full

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LIZ OCTOBER BLOG

It is impossible not to smile when you read of all the joy that is crammed into the newsletter this month. There certainly has been no slowing down as we enter Autumn and it is great to see that everyone is managing to do more and keep so active, whilst keeping COVID safe.

There is a lovely sense of tradition blending with the new – Sarah's look back over 30 years with OVT makes us realise that the essence of what we all strive to do here never changes, as we focus on supporting individuals to achieve their goals. It is also wonderful to hear that the Disco Queen has returned and is going to be a regular for the next few months, whilst all the great work at our newest site, the HIVE, literally shines a light with all those fantastic lighthouses.

All this activity reminds us of how important fundraising is, so if you can support with one of the activities suggested this month, the OVT calendar, Giving Tuesday or the London Marathon that would be fantastic.

Remember – keep smiling.



All smiles at the OVT exclusive concert put on by local band Exclusion.



30 YEARS OF SMILES

Sarah's 30 years at OVT, told through the moments that made her smile

Where do I start? There has been so many joyful moments over the past 30 years!

I can't quite believe I have had the pleasure of knowing the residents at East Court for this long, some I have known even longer! I met Diran, Cathy, Martine, Michael and Tim at Lufton Manor, a residential college in Yeovil prior to joining Orchard Vale Trust in 1991.



In my early years of working at East Court I spent most of my time encouraging everyone to get active and lead a healthy lifestyle. We used to spend hours at the local leisure Centre, every week I would take different groups to the gym, line dancing, aerobics and Friday afternoon was always spent in the pool for aquafit. We had a lot of fun getting to know the locals and we soon became very much part of the local community.

Taking Jonathan and Pat to church each week was always a highlight for me. Jon would sing at the top of his voice and Pat would serve us all tea and biscuits at the end of the service. Both played such an important role in their community – if we did not go one week they would be so missed and the following week welcomed back with open arms.

It was at this point that I realised we really were making a difference at Orchard Vale Trust and therefore it was worth hanging around to see what would happen next.....

I have countless memories from summer holidays, open days, Halloween parties and Christmas' spent full of festivities and fun. We always welcomed family and friends to join us and I think everyone got the genuine feeling that we were one big family.

As the years have passed, I have had less involvement in the direct care and support but it has always been important for me to feel connected to the people we support. The residents have always known how to have a good time, if I ever come to work feeling blue, they soon turn this around, each and everyone has their own unique skills and qualities that are guaranteed to put a smile on your face.

Life at OVT has always had an air of excitement, hope, happiness and a feeling that anything is possible, making it a pleasure to work here for so many years.

Thank you for 30 happy years, not many people can say that they have worked in the same place for so long and even fewer can say that they have had so much fun. Every day I come to work knowing that someone will make me smile and that is what makes Orchard Vale Trust a very special place!



DISCO DELIGHT

See how we got lost in music this October



What a night! Staff and residents came together at the end of this month to let loose at the debut night of our new monthly OVT discos. They were joined at the local Scout Hut by 'The Disco Queen', who some may remember from the barn dance that we held a few years ago.

We could tell you how much joy this evening brought to everyone who attended, but we think the pictures speak for themselves!

Everyone was able to truly let their hair down and party into the night with karaoke, dancing and general fun. The cherry on top of this already amazing cake was a fully stocked bar with enough refreshments to keep even the latest party goers dancing. When time eventually came for a break to replenish the dancing fuel tank, hot dogs were at the ready and proved to be a great hit. After a top evening, we already can't wait for the next one!

A NEW TRIKER

Last month we spoke to Alice and discovered the joy she has found in riding her recently serviced trike. This month, the triker gang numbers have doubled thanks to fellow resident matt!

"I had ridden bikes before, but the trike experience is quite different. It is much more stable, and I have been able to have a lot more fun. So far, I have been exploring the grounds at East Court alongside Alice. It's great to have a triking partner and it's an activity we both really enjoy."

-Matt





HIVE HAPPINESS

Capturing smiles in photos and poems



Hive HQ has been a busy place this month. We have recently announced the end of our bubbles which means we can ensure a much more flexible approach for the people we support, while maintaining our COVID safety measures.

An activity that really stood out this month was the lighthouse collages. We focused on looking back at our own experiences and using that in a creative project. Lighthouses were made, surrounded or filled with words and phrases that we associate with summer. Each lighthouse had so much character and everyone's personality shone through in the phrases they chose.

We have also introduced a new Photography session on Thursdays. The Hivers focused on capturing smiles for 'World Smile Day', with a selection of selfies, collages and laughter.



Smiles captured during our new photography sessions



BIG ANNOUNCEMENTS



The projects we've been itching to tell you about

Orchard Vale Trust's 2022 Calendar

Give as you gift this Christmas and grab your very own OVT 2022 calendar! In August, we brought you the Beautiful to Me photography competition, and you brought some amazing pictures that we just had to celebrate. So, we put together a full 12 page calendar, highlighting the best snaps and giving you the perfect present for a loved one who wants to keep track of those key dates in style!

Calendars will be sold at £10 each + postage from this week, with all profits going towards providing opportunities for the individuals we support - available on ebay or through direct orders. If you would like to enquire or pre-order calendars, please call Dan Cheney on **07483 126839**.



Giving Tuesday

Giving Tuesday is a global day of giving that encourages people to donate to good causes. In the lead up to the event we will be asking each home for an item that would help them deliver effective and person-centred support. We will then share these items as 'pots' allowing you to fundraise or donate directly towards the item that means the most to you.

Keep an eye out for blogs and stories around the hashtag 'My Giving Story', where we will celebrate those who give time and money to OVT. If you have a Giving Story that you would like to share, please contact daniel.cheney@orchardvaletrust.org.uk



MARATHON OPPORTUNITY

Are you a keen runner looking for the ultimate challenge? We have spaces available for the 2022 London Marathon! To find out more or join Team OVT, please get in touch:

Phone: 01749 671706

email: daniel.cheney@orchardvaletrust.org.uk

