

# The 'Three Musketeers'

## Celebrating National Friendship Day, 30th July 2018

Ray Thompson turns 90 this Summer but you wouldn't know it when you see him jumping around helping other members of the Winsford Community Compass group! Sprightly Ray talks fondly of how much he enjoys coming to the Monday morning group held at The Dingle, where he enjoys chatting to his friends George and Derek.

Together they are affectionately called the 'Three Musketeers' by the rest of the group because they always sit together and

swap stories. Ray shares that the Community Compass group has really made a massive difference in his life and he looks forward to his weekly get togethers with his fellow musketeers.

The Community Compass group is run by Yvonne Boyle and Simone Cobbold.

**Visit [www.community-compass.org](http://www.community-compass.org) or call 01606 827131 for more information.**



Social Prescribing Coordinator Jackie Brown (back) with George, Derek and Ray

## Save the dates!



**SATURDAY 11<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2018**

**Support diversity and celebrate our LGBT community at Chester Pride this August**

Join us at Chester Pride where we will have a 'Vintage Pride' marquee in the main area. For the parade we will be walking together in 70s and 80s outfits to reflect our vintage pride theme.



Led by the Sir Simon Milton Foundation, Silver Sunday celebrates the value and knowledge older people contribute to our communities while combatting loneliness and isolation.

This year, along with Storyhouse and Age UK Cheshire, we will be hosting a 'Love Later Life' festival day at Storyhouse, Chester. Keep a look out on our website for more details.

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

# Discover Brightlife Podcast



Our podcast series 'Discover Brightlife' captures the heartfelt stories of those who have suddenly found themselves facing life alone over 50.

Age UK estimates there are 1.2 million people who are chronically lonely in England – that's one in 20 adults. The cost of loneliness and its impact on health is something Dr Jonathan Griffiths, Winsford GP and Chair of NHS Vale Royal CCG is keen to explore.

***"Being lonely is associated with an increased risk in developing coronary disease, heart disease and stroke. It's comparable risk factor for early death is smoking 15 cigarettes per day."***

Doctors nationally are being encouraged to recommend the importance of staying active to patients showing signs of isolation.

The podcast series uncovers inspirational stories – such as that of sprightly 90 year old Audrey Thomas from Malpas who, after finding herself isolated following a series of health complications, discovered a talent for poetry and fine art.

***"I always believed I couldn't even draw a line straight, then at 89 there I am sketching!"***

She cites recently appearing on Page 3 of the Chester Chronicle, having her story told in America and appearing on BBC Radio as proof that it's never too late to learn a new skill in life.

From local churches, pubs and day care centres to village halls – all corners of the Cheshire community have been engaging and expressing their support to help the Brightlife project be a success in challenging social isolation for the over 50s.

At the core of the project is the passion of social prescribers who work tirelessly in Malpas, Winsford and areas of Chester to find the people who need a helping hand, listen to what they have to say and tailor the right answer for them – for their interests and locality. Brightlife's work in the rest of Cheshire West and Chester is to encourage people to be aware of social isolation and loneliness.

**Listen to Chris McClelland discussing 'Discover Brightlife' with Mike Sweeney on BBC Radio Manchester**



***Listen on [www.youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)***



## Discover Brightlife Podcast Episodes

1. The Importance of Laughter
2. Diagnosing Loneliness
3. Reconnecting the Lost and Lonely
4. Audrey At 90, now Artist and Poet
5. Carers, Caring and Being Cared For
6. Connecting 360
7. From Sex Over 50 to Popping Into Church...

To listen to our podcasts visit:  
[www.anchor.fm/discoverbrightlife](http://www.anchor.fm/discoverbrightlife)



## Great Get Together events bring crowds to Storyhouse in memory of Jo Cox, MP

Communities came together in a display of unity during the Great Get Together at Storyhouse, 22nd - 24th June. More than 120,000 social gatherings took place across the country.

There were performances from Chester's Silver Singers and Holt Village Voices led by James Sills, and in the studio theatre, comedy Paradise Lodge about dementia. Throughout the weekend people had the opportunity to share a memory in the pop-up Share a Memory booth and also share their thoughts on film about loneliness.

Workshops included bird box and bug hotel making, crafts, conversation through food, painting, jewellery making, dance, theatre and improv. comedy. Event goers had the opportunity to talk about their sporting memories with Active Cheshire plus Virtual Reality displays including swimming with sharks.

Watch our Great Get Together video on [www.brightlifecheshire.org.uk](http://www.brightlifecheshire.org.uk)



## Digital Buddies meet the Queen

The Queen and Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, officially opened the £37m Storyhouse Cultural Centre in Chester and the Digital Buddies were among a select number of local organisations to be invited.

Digital Buddies is a group of older people who meet weekly with volunteers who help them to use their phones, laptops and tablets for everyday activities. The Brightlife funded project is run by Chester based social enterprise 'Here and Now'.

"At Here and Now we work to bring socially isolated people together in a friendly and relaxed environment. We realised a lot of the older people were interested in learning how to use technology – a few had been given tablets and mobile devices by younger family members – and so we came up with the Digital Buddies project and applied to Brightlife for funding." Heather Backstrom, Here and Now



## Sporting Memories Café

A social group, for people with dementia or memory loss, providing reminiscence and light physical activities for older sports fans.

At the Sporting Memories Café people can meet to share sporting experiences and reminisce through photos, film and familiar objects.

- Wednesdays at Chester Football Club, 11am – 12pm
- Thursdays at Wesley Church, 11am – 12pm
- Fridays at the Hospice of the Good Shepherd, 11am – 12pm

Contact Sarah Tilling on **07720 592784** or email [teamwest@activecheshire.org](mailto:teamwest@activecheshire.org) for further information.

## New Over 50s Lunch Club at Vicars Cross Community Centre

Our Senior Screen sessions at Vicars Cross Community Centre film club have proved to be successful with our 70 participants at the last event. As well as dedicated Silver Screen films, there is a new Over 50s Lunch Club which will be launched on Friday 14th September. There will be a buffet lunch and an introduction to mindfulness. Book early to avoid disappointment.

Venue: Vicars Cross Community Centre, Thackeray Drive, Vicars Cross, Chester, CH3 5LP.

Contact 01244 342268 or e-mail [vxcc@greatboughtonparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:vxcc@greatboughtonparishcouncil.org.uk)



**Keep a look out for the latest events in your area on our website - [www.brightlifecheshire.org.uk](http://www.brightlifecheshire.org.uk)**

This newsletter is also available in large print. Call 01606 884444 to request a copy.



@lovebrightlife

**Brightlife**



/BrightlifeCheshire

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Brightlife is a partnership led by Age UK Cheshire  
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