



**Message from Chris Stephens, SWVG Coordinator**

It has been quite a busy few weeks with AMC being quite busy and crowded. I think this is partly due to the 50 new asylum seekers moved from Cardiff into accommodation in the High Street. This increased the number of asylum seekers in Southampton from about 130 to 180.

One of our clients has taken voluntary return to Cameroon. Another two have got leave to remain which is really great.

In February I signed an agreement with AMC that SWVG would become an equal partner in AMC management committee with St Andrews Church, the Red Cross and CLEAR. Before then we were an observer, so I personally feel we now are in a stronger position as we have an equal voice.

AMC are exploring having a “welcomer” at AMC - a person who would meet and greet any new asylum seeker and signpost them to the various groups. It has successfully been piloted by Gwen Collins over the last few months and the plan is to have two people who would do it.



Working hard at the allotment

**SWVG Allotment**

With spring just around the corner the allotment is at last taking off. A small group have started to clear the first patch and have put some plants in.

**Calling all 'green fingers'**

We have room for many more clients - no experience necessary -and also need a Southampton based visitor who can help with the organisation of the group.

Please contact Lesley Mackinnon (07981808477) or Claudia Glyn (07751213735).



## Training

**21 April 2018, 9am - 4.30pm**  
Highfield Church Centre

On Saturday 17th March, Claudia Glyn and Sue Turner ran the Part 1 Training for new volunteers at Winchester University. It was a very successful morning and we now have 9 new recruits who are keen to get involved as soon as possible by joining different groups and becoming visitors.

The Part 2 Training for all new members will take place at Highfield Church Centre, Southampton on 21st April from 9.00am to 4.30pm. We welcome anyone who would like to come along and join us; experienced visitors seeking a refresher, or other members.

If you would like to come, please contact Angela Sealey: [angela-sealey@ntlworld.com](mailto:angela-sealey@ntlworld.com).

## Pub Quiz

**10 April 2018, 8pm**  
The Art House Café, 178 Above Bar St,  
Southampton SO14 7DW

We are organising an SWVG fundraising pub quiz. It will take place on the 10<sup>th</sup> April (8pm) at the Art House Café (178 Above Bar St, Southampton SO14 7DW).

### Dates for the Diary

**9 April** - General Meeting

**10 April** - Pub Quiz

**21 April** - Part 2 Training

**9 June** - Football Tournament

**14 October** - Fundraising Walk

## April General Meeting

**9 April 2018, 7pm - 9pm**  
Avenue St Andrews Church

Our meeting in April will focus on access to healthcare for asylum seekers. Dr Rachael Marsh, Public Health Registrar in Wessex, and Ilaf Moslawy, Medical Student at the University of Southampton, run training for healthcare professionals about entitlement and barriers to NHS care for refugees and asylum seekers. They are adapting their training to be suitable for SWVG visitors and other members who are interested, so that we can learn exactly what should be made available to those we try to support. The rules are complex and have recently changed. Understanding the current rules is particularly important for our visitors so that they can argue on behalf of asylum seekers who are being denied healthcare to which they should be given access, as well as knowing when asylum seekers cannot receive treatment free of charge. All welcome at the meeting at Avenue St Andrews from 7pm to 9pm.

## Going the extra mile: Fundraising Walk

**14 October 2018**  
Test Way

Why not join us for a walk along the Test Way and raise funds for SWVG? It's a chance to get outdoors and enjoy our beautiful countryside. You can sign up now for the sponsored walk on Sunday 14 October.

Romsey Test Rotary Club run the popular annual event, providing marshals, first aid, water and toilets. Last year, more than 700 walkers took part to pull in the pounds for their chosen charities. The Rotary Club will keep 20% of what you raise, so 80% will go to SWVG.

With five distances to choose from (5, 8, 11, 16 or 25 miles), there is a walk to suit most fitness levels whether you want a relaxed Sunday stroll or a more challenging hike.

Why not ask family and friends to walk with you to boost your fundraising? If you are interested, please let Sue Jessup know on [smjessup01@gmail.com](mailto:smjessup01@gmail.com) and check [www.walkthetestway.org.uk](http://www.walkthetestway.org.uk) to register and for further information.

The deadline for material for the April Newsletter is 20 April 2018. Please send contributions to Naomi Hartley at [naomihartley1@gmail.com](mailto:naomihartley1@gmail.com).