



Community Matters



In this issue:

pg.04 Celebration of Success

pg.06 Party in the Park

pg. 15 Festival Time

Welcome to Community Matters



With the sun comes fun, and this summer our Community Investment team have had a wonderful couple of months supporting many initiatives across London and the South East.

We've climbed great heights with young carers, we've forged pathways for wheelchair users, we've encouraged elderly to get out and about and Rosie spent a day partying in a park!

Continuing to invest our passion into communities we have racked up a staggering 12,542 staff hours, supporting over 203 initiatives which has a far reaching benefit to around 18,500 people.

Community Matters is a great uplifting read that captures the very essence of what we as an organisation feel very passionately about - making a difference in our communities.

We feel very privileged to play such a big part in communities and in sharing these stories, we hope you feel a sense of our enjoyment.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Graca Machado".

Graca Machado, Customer Experience Director

What's in this issue...

- | | | | |
|----|------------------------|----|------------------------|
| 03 | TPAS Talk | 11 | Award Winning |
| 04 | Celebration of Success | 12 | Thirsty Transformation |
| 05 | Run Rennie, Run Rennie | 13 | Educating Ethan |
| 06 | Party in the Park | 14 | Working Life |
| 07 | Bespoke Benches | 15 | It's Festival Time |
| 08 | Love Thy Neighbour | 16 | Projects Revisited |
| 09 | Community Spirit | 17 | The Three Rs |
| 10 | Sunnyside Sale | 18 | It's a Party |

So far.....

£658,030

added value
provided through
sponsorships,
training and
hours

12,542

staff hours
devoted to
community
initiatives

69

community
facilities
improved

34

apprentices
employed in
trades and admin
positions

203

community
initiatives
supported

18,774

people engaged
through community
events

TPAS Talk



As new members of the leading tenant engagement experts, TPAS, we were recently invited to speak at their London and South East regional meeting in Crawley.

Claudette and Hannah went along to speak to tenants and landlords about our approach to Customer Experience and Community Engagement.



member
tpas

It was a great opportunity to share our experience of how our customer journey mapping has put the voice of the customer at the heart of our journey to help us continue to improve our service.

There was also time to discuss our community investment initiatives and some of the volunteering opportunities we offer our customers.

We are really looking forward to developing our relationship with TPAS and will be attending the next regional meeting in Essex later this month.

Ready, Steady, Cook

The Trinity Centre welcomed the support of our very own Sous Chef Neal (complete with magenta pinny), to help in their busy kitchens, preparing meals for the homeless.

The Winchester based charity work with vulnerable and homeless people providing a place they can go to gain shelter and meals with a strong sense of a community feel.

Neal Allison, Community Investment Manager helped alongside Waitrose and Winchester Business Collective.

The day consisted of preparing, cooking and serving homemade healthy food to over 50 covers.

In order for them to make food, they rely on the generosity of local supermarkets to donate ingredients each day for them to cook. It's then up to the creative chefs to prepare the meals depending on what produce they receive that day.

The work that the centre does for the homeless community is so valuable, as for many it's the only meal that they receive. Speaking to one service user, we discovered that he had walked five miles to get to the centre!

We continue to build and support the charity by helping with events such as their yearly 'Big Sleep Out', donating winter clothing and giving support to their job club through providing mock interviews.

Celebration Of Success

We recently hosted an event at our Waltham Forest office to mark the success of the contract, thanking everyone for their hard work and dedication.

Four years into our partnership with Waltham Forest Council, we continue to work corroboratively to deliver a great service that improves homes and makes the borough a better place for residents.

Sharing in the celebration from Waltham Forest Council was Chris Grace, Osborne Chairman, Andrew Osborne and Chief Executive, Andy Steele who received a site tour before enjoying the sizzling BBQ.

Earlier this year the success of our partnership was highlighted when we were shortlisted in the UK Housing awards for 'An Outstanding Approach to Repairs and Maintenance'.

Managing Director of Osborne Property Services, Nick Sterling, who also attended the celebration commented 'I am very proud of the efforts and the commitment of our people that has developed a great working partnership with Waltham Forest Council'.



Dress to Impress



The rain couldn't dampen spirits as we supported Dacorum Borough Council in their celebrations for the Queen's 90th Birthday!

Together we joined the Adeyfield community to enjoy local entertainment, inflatable fun and stalls from local businesses and community groups.

Our team sponsored the 'Royal Dress Up' which saw the King and Queen of Hearts, Snow White and a Beautiful Purple Princess win the competition for the three different age groups.

The vast parade of Royal costumes made judging a difficult task but with help from local Councillor Bert, we eventually chose the winners!

Fun in the Sun

We supported London Borough of Waltham Forest Council's community estate fun day in Aldriche Way.

The fun day encourages community cohesion between local residents, businesses and Waltham Forest councillors and was well attended.



With live music, activities and an array of food stands, families had plenty to see and do. It wasn't long before an orderly queue formed into our gazebo where children could have their face (or arms) painted, proving a very popular attraction to the event.

The warm weather attracted many including local Mayor, Cllr Peter Herrington and Waltham Forest's Community Safety Officer, Khemba Ankhrah who thanked us for the hard work. 'Thank you for the support, you played a massive part in a very successful event for our residents.'

We have previously worked with Waltham Forest on projects such as 'Love Your Neighbour', Woodside School veg beds and mock interviewing; all contributing to community engagement.



Run Rennie, Run Rennie

Rennie Grove Hospice Care is a charity providing care and support for patients diagnosed with cancer and other life-limiting illness.

This remarkable charity gives thousands of patients the choice to stay at home, surrounded by their families and friends. during their treatment.

After supporting their Hemel 10k and fun run last year our team were keen to be part of the day again.

We provided after race refreshments for the runners and cheered them past the finish line, giving out well deserved medals and water.

Well done to Dean, one of our plumbers, who ran the race and finished in great time but more importantly with a winning smile!



Jenny Howells, Event Fundraising Manager said 'Thank you so much for all of your help. You did a great job and it would not have been the same without the Osborne team.'

Party in the Park

Winchester City Council held their annual 'Party in the Park' in Stanmore and we went along to support them and to join in the fun.

The event which attracted families and local residents from across the far corners of the county, promised to be 'bigger and better' and guests were not disappointed.

The free event featured lots of stalls and fun activities for the whole family including keep fit, zorbing, scooting and dance shows. There was even the chance to come face to face with pigs, llamas, rabbits and goats in the visiting petting zoo which we sponsored. It was Larry the llama who stole the show as he cuddled up to the Mayor of Winchester, Cllr Jane Rutter for a photo.



It wasn't just the animals that caught the eye of the guests, our mascot Rosie attended too; she met with families and was in high demand to have her photo taken.

The annual event encouraged many local companies and businesses to showcase their services to the local community.

FirstBite was one of the popular stalls that caught the eye of the public due to its encouraged interaction.

The innovative company use surplus food to make wholesome, healthy meals for vulnerable people and groups. The stand encouraged a healthy lifestyle by offering fresh smoothies and exercise using their 'Smoothie Bike.'



Community Investment Manager, Neal Allison commented 'What a great day! With so many activities, there really was something for everyone. We are always keen to support events that encourages people to come together and Party in the Park certainly did that.'



Bespoke Benches

The 'Leaving Prison Behind' Initiative from HACRO, led by Tony Franklin, brings groups of offenders together to involve them in project work around the community. Through the group activity Tony can also mentor the team members and help iron out personal problems.

After the fantastic support the group gave us during the refurbishment of the Hemel Stags Rugby Club last year, we called upon them for help again in April! After completing planned works at Runham Road, our team were keen to repair and spruce up some communal benches on the road. The voluntary group from HACRO used the carpentry skills they have been developing with the charity to build us two bespoke benches which they constructed on site, removing the old rotten wood at the same time.

The benches now look great so a big thank you goes to the HACRO volunteers! We will be revisiting the site to do some gardening around the benches during the Summer.



The Road Back to Work

South Hill Centre, in partnership with South Hill Church, run a number of activities, courses and events for people in the local community. One of their key services is the free employment support they offer with a dedicated team of volunteers who give advice and guidance on job searches, CV's, application forms and confidence boosting sessions.

Our team volunteer at the centre once a month to help with the job club, engaging with and helping attendees. An executive group has recently been established by the centre for professionals who have found themselves out of work and searching for a new job. Our Customer Experience Director, Graca Machado, went along to give a talk to the group in May to speak about her own experiences and what the individuals should expect from their search for a new position.

It was very well received and those present commented on how useful it was to hear about modern day application processes in executive positions.

Prop Protection



Blue Apple Theatre Company in Winchester received help from us and Oliver Connell, who joined forces to build a storage unit for their props and costumes.

Blue Apple, founded in 2005, provide a programme of drama and dance sessions tailored for people with learning disabilities, to enhance confidence and improve physical and mental well being.

Since its inception, the company has collected various costumes and props which were previously stored at a local school. However, due to growth and development the school needed the space back.

We teamed up with Oliver Connell, a construction company specialising in concrete bases and groundwork to construct a storage unit to house all theatre items.

The first stage of the project was preparing the concrete foundation to make the structure long lasting and sturdy. This was laid and left to set before any other work could be completed. Soon after, the team returned to finish the shed build.

Nicola Peacock, Blue Apple's Associate Director said. 'I just wanted to formally thank Osborne, and the team from Oliver Connell. The shed is hugely beneficial as we have no other storage facility. Without storage space we would have to hire items on every occasion, which would be more than we could realistically afford to do.'

We look forward to re visiting to paint the shed with help from the Blue Apple cast!



Love Thy Neighbour

Supporting the newly formed Hungerdown St Egberts Way Tenants, Residents, Leaseholders Association (TRLA) in their first event, we went along to help the residents of Waltham Forest by completing a 'Love Your Neighbourhood' project to assist in the clean up.

Our team armed with litter picking sticks and hi-vis jackets to keep the residents safe, joined the team in their rubbish run.

This for a first event, not only made a positive difference to the appearance of their communal areas but got neighbours together and connecting.

With strength in numbers, the team of volunteers and neighbours collected ten bags of rubbish!

The team was supported by local Waltham Forest councillor Sahahid Mallam and Freya, Waltham Forest's Apprentice Community Investment Co-ordinator helped out at the event.





Flower Power!

We organised and supported our first community event for the new Tenants, Residents, Leasholders Association (TRLA) at St Stephens Court in Waltham Forest.

The TRLA wanted to organise an event to engage the whole community and improve their communal garden.

After meeting with TRLA Chair James Brooke, we spoke with our supply chain partner, MAC Scaffolding who kindly donated recycled boards which would be constructed by our operatives into flower boxes.

Residents of St Stephens Court helped to assemble the boards and got busy planting the bedding flowers, supplied by our partner Aston Group, as well as painting the boxes.

This activity brought people out of their homes building relationships and creating a garden that they together will tender and care for over time.

Whilst we were there we noticed an unloved planter outside the entrance of the court. A quick repair is all it took which we then planted with herbs for residents to use when cooking.



Community Spirit



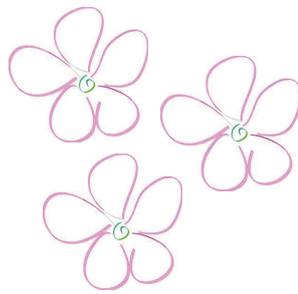
Winnall Community Centre recently received funding for its renovation, a project we were keen to get involved with. Joining the team of Winchester City Council, we went along to help with the decoration of their Learning Suite.

In just two days the Learning Suite was transformed into a warm and welcoming environment.

Tesco generously provided refreshments for the team of volunteers to keep the energy levels high whilst we donated the decorating materials and our painting skills.

Once the centre has been furnished the fresh space will be used for an after school club and job club as well as being promoted as a meeting venue for local businesses to encourage community engagement and cohesion.





Sunnyside Sale

Sunnyside Rural Trust aims to offer their trainees, local adults with learning disabilities, stimulating activities and support in horticultural studies in order to enhance their personal development and improve their quality of life.

Over at their Hemel Food Garden it was time for their annual Spring Plant Sale. This is an opportunity for the public to come along, buy their plants and learn more about the social enterprise which is right on their doorstep.



With the sun shining bright, our Osborne and Dacorum Borough Council Partnership team joined up with Sunnyside staff to run the Kid's Corner activities for the day.

There was lots to do including a Chicken Hunt around the orchard, animal mask decorating, badge making and transfer tattoos. We also sponsored our favourite face painter, Nina, who got creative with lots of flowery face designs, not only the children but the adults too!

Whilst we got crafty with the kids, the DBC Tenant Involvement team captured information from their families on how they would prefer to be communicated with by the council and what would get them out and about and volunteering.

It was great to see the trainees showing their families and friends all the hard work they have been doing at the site.

We also teamed up with the Sunnyside team to help raise their profile at their recent event in The Marlowes Shopping Centre. They had the chance to engage with local families to shout about their services and get them involved! One family adopted one of the Sunnyside chickens and we can't wait to hear what its name will be.



Gemma from Sunnyside got in touch to say thank you.

“We really appreciate you sponsoring the wonderful face painter - the kids loved her! Your enthusiasm and passion for helping the community is inspiring!”

Award Winning

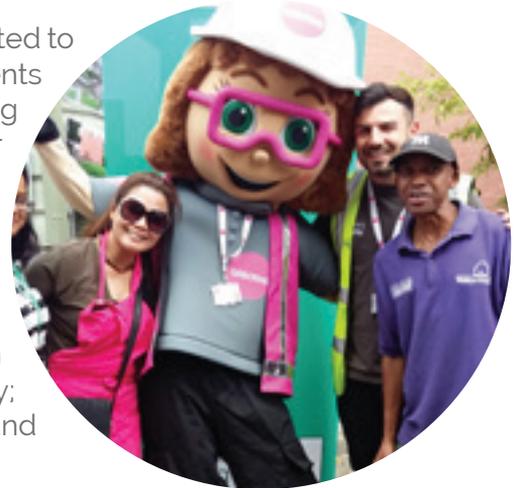


We supported the Hatherley and Westbury House Tenants, Residents, Leaseholders Association (TRLA) summer community BBQ in Waltham Forest.



The TRLA were keen to create an event where new residents and leaseholders could get to know one another in an informal way and reflect back over the garden improvements.

Over recent years we have contributed to their communal garden improvements by constructing herb planters, veg beds as well as donating a shed for their community items so an event in the garden felt very apt.



Freyja and Neal helped the community to set up the event and supplied guests with fun activities to take part in throughout the day. There was something for all the family to enjoy; the Osborne buzzer, water stocks (manned by Neal), a selfie station and a giant football for the little kickers.



Freyja helped the TRLA to create a photo board which she shared with the guests highlighting the before and after shots of the new improvements to the garden space.

The residents teamed together to produce a spread of food fit for a King full of multicultural delights!

Later in the day during the Community Awards, Neal was called to centre stage and presented with an award titled 'Commitment to Community'.

Neal commented 'This award means so much. To be recognised by the people in a community where we have made a positive impact and difference is simply brilliant'.

Waltham Forest Council also showed their support in attendance and enjoyed the celebration of a great community.

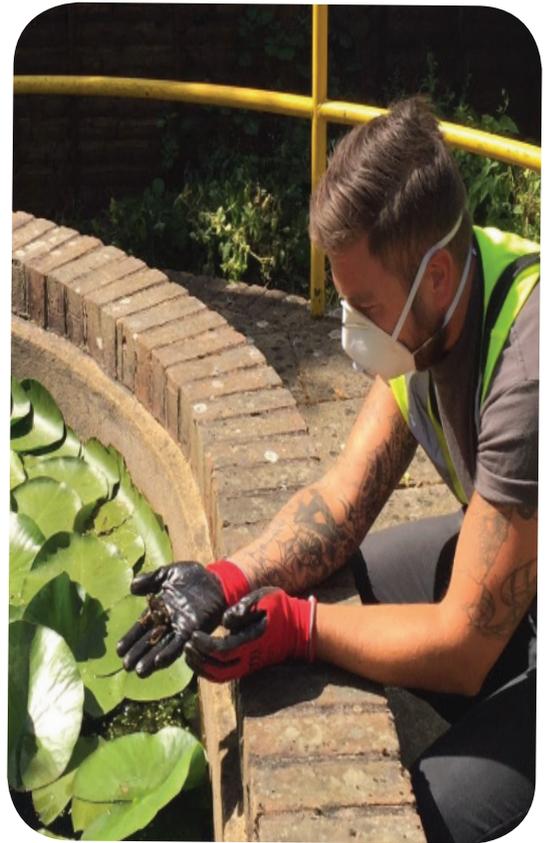
Thirsty Transformation

We teamed up with Britvic, the soft drinks company, for their annual two day volunteer project which was being held at The Hertfordshire Society for the Blind.

The task was to clear the overgrown garden in order for the space to be utilised again by the centre users.

Based in Hemel Hempstead, the blind centre caters for a large majority of senior citizens with hearing, mobility and visual impairments. It aims to reduce loneliness and social isolation, maintain independence and provide assistance with daily living needs, via the provision of help, support and advice.

During the transformation, Britvic and Osborne staff cleared weeds, painted garden furniture and prepared the ground for planting. We supplied the volunteers with PPE whilst sub-contractor Abbey Roofing provided the 12 yard skip for the two days, which was filled to the top-twice over!



Sophia, the Centre's Manager, expressed her thanks to the teams

“ Thank you for all your incredible hard work and brilliant organisation in implementing this project. The garden is looking wonderful! ”

Britvic were happy to have us on board and are keen to develop the relationship further. IT Service Leader, Darren Hadley, said "I found working with you easy and enjoyable and would love the opportunity to work together again."

Osborne Property Services and Britvic hope to return again next year to design and build a sensory garden in one of the areas which were cleared.



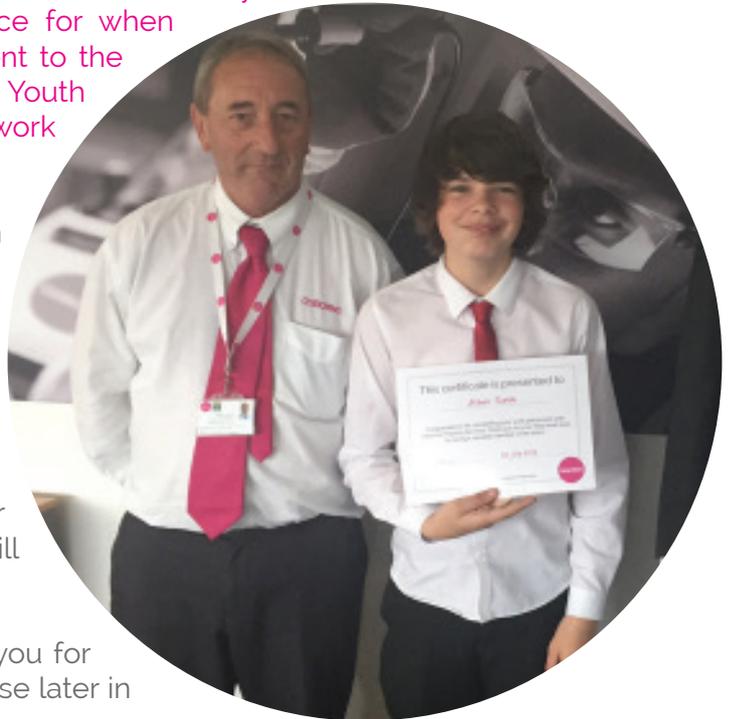


Educating Ethan

Encouraging young people to consider the construction industry and giving them valuable experience and advice for when they leave school is a big part of our commitment to the local community. Through our partnership with Youth Connexions we invite local pupils to join us on work experience placements throughout the year.

We were delighted to welcome Ethan from Longdean School into the team in June for an office placement. During the week he spent time in different departments to gain an understanding of how the contract works. Supporting the administration team, spending a day as a planner, designing and creating some community investment materials. Ethan was such a valuable member of the team; he even taught us that our printer could actually staple documents which will now save us a lot of time!

Ethan got in touch after the week to say "Thank you for this week, I have learnt stuff that I will be able to use later in life".



Career Advice

Almost a year on, we re-visited Longdean School for the Connect Dacorum CV and Interview Advice Day. Joining other facilitators from local businesses, our Community Investment team spent the morning with a group of 15 students from year 10 to help take them through the different activities looking at employability skills, CV and cover letter advice and finally a game of Speed Interviewing.

We were keen to express the importance of employing the right people into a business who not only have the skills, but also the characteristics to fit in with the team and with our brand. It was a chance to give them experience in selling themselves and not feeling embarrassed by it.

By the end of the session we had some fantastic personal statements which really showed off their skills and attributes and the interview practice exposed them to some of the tricky interview questions they may be asked in their search for work!

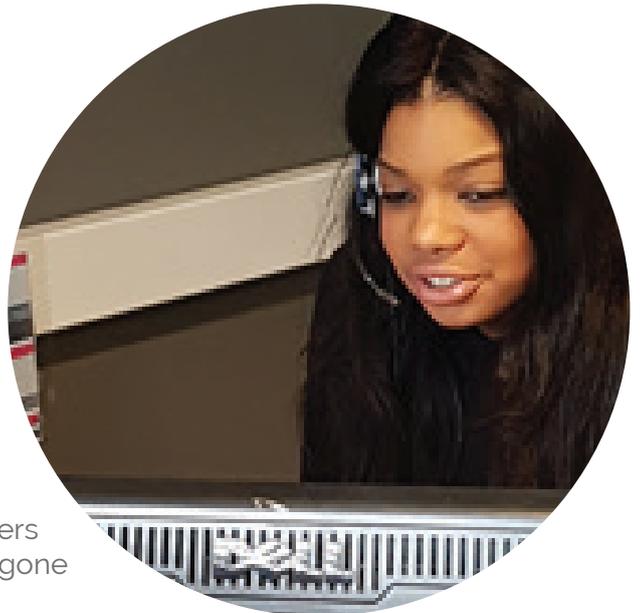


Working Life

In Waltham Forest we have welcomed new people joining our team to gain work experience and an insight to the working world.

Siann Horne, a mum returning to work, joined our office to shadow the Customer Experience team. As a local resident Siann had knowledge, connections and insight into the local area, which was a huge asset.

Just a week into the role, her confidence dealing with customers and her ability to navigate our integrated IT systems hadn't gone unnoticed by her line manager Mubina.



Mubina commented on her hard work. 'I feel very proud and grateful that we were able to give Siann the experience that will help her in a customer focused role.'



I am overwhelmed that Osborne took the time to give me this opportunity. I feel it has supported me to get back to work and

**Work
experience!**

Saffiya and Vindura, two Waltham Forest students came to lend a helping hand to our Planning and Community Investment teams.

The girls were given opportunities to gain real hands on experience and made valuable contribution to our day-to-day business activities.

When they arrived they were taken for a health and safety induction before being given practical experience within the office. Time spent on our call centre meant they had a good understanding of the repairs we support. Following through the process of us scheduling the repair works with an operative, the girls sat with our planners.



The week was action packed as they visited the offices of Waltham Forest Council as well as supporting a Community Investment initiative, helping to deliver the veg bed project at Woodside Academy School.

Vindura and Saffiya expressed their joy at being part of our team for the week. 'Everyone is helpful, friendly and informative. It was a great experience and I have learnt a lot.' Vindura commented.

Saffiya continues. 'I enjoyed the work experience because it was productive. I feel that we had the best experience, it was interesting and helpful.'

It's Festival Time!

We joined a group of volunteers to support the annual Kent Young Carers Festival where young carers have bags of fun, make new friends and build confidence.



Organised by Imago

Community who promote and develop communities within Kent, we joined the group at Bowles in Tunbridge Wells for a two day festival of fun.

Each year children from across the county aged between 5-18, the opportunity to try out new adventurous activities away from their usual caring day-to-day responsibilities.

Our volunteers joined the 72 strong Young Carers who travelled to Tunbridge Wells where they experienced kayaking, skiing, rock climbing and the daring zip-wire.



At the end of an exhilarating day, the young people who had made friends spent the evening around a campfire. We

supplied an array of glow sticks and glasses which created even more fun and laughter.

The festival was hugely successful and it was great to be a part of a team committed to understanding the needs and demands of young carers.



Take a look at some of the feedback from the Young Carers who attended..

“

'It helps me feel better and prove that I'm not the only one

”

“

'Festival gives people like us the chance to go out and have fun without any worries

”

“

'I like being with friends and making new ones

”

Projects Revisited



We love having the opportunity to re-visit some of our community projects to see how they are getting on. Our first stop was Hobbs Hill School where we built the Bug Hotel back in November. Armed with bug scopes, magnifying glasses and a very clever spider catcher, our teamed joined a group of students to go on a bug safari!

Deconstructing the hotel, we managed to take a close look at spiders, a green shield beetle, ladybird, woodlouse, worms, centipedes and other mini beasts. We are going to return next year to plant a wild garden on top of the hotel to attract even more mini visitors.

Then it was time to take a trip to Sunnyside Rural Trust where Osborne, Dacorum Borough Council and local tenants held their volunteer day before Christmas. The team had planted over 400 saplings, donated by the Woodland Trust, to help create a new area of habitat for local wildlife. We were amazed at how much the area had grown and also had the chance to meet the area's new inhabitants – Sunnyside's new family of chickens!

A true sense of pride was felt by the team on seeing the transformed space, which wasn't really in use before the project, and knowing that they had helped make this happen. We are looking forward to paying the chickens another visit soon.



The Three R's

Osborne and partners Dacorum Borough Council have pulled forces to support vulnerable people in crisis. Working with Dacorum Community Trust (DCT) and The South Hill Centre we have been able to donate recycled quality furniture from our empty homes.

Once we have been given permission to clear and donate items to charity, Osborne operatives transport the goods to the charity storage where they are distributed by DCT to local people in need of items to furnish their homes.

This initiative makes a powerful impact by reducing land fill waste as well as making financial savings for DCT who can spend less on furniture and white goods. These savings are then re-invested back into other services.

We are always looking at ways to improve the environment by reducing waste, re-using unwanted items and recycling. If you have an innovative initiative that we can help with, please do get in touch.



Return please



Residents at Florence Longman Sheltered Housing Scheme in Hemel Hempstead had a surprise day 'on the buses', as part of a drive by Osborne and its partners Age UK and The Hertfordshire NHS Community Trust to help tackle social isolation among older people.

Local bus operator Arriva, another project partner, arranged for one of its vehicles to visit the Dacorum Borough Council Scheme to allow the 10 elderly residents to address concerns about using buses.

These include not having time to get seated before pulling off, not knowing bus routes and being worried about getting on with their sticks and walkers. One Resident said after the day: "Today has been an eye-opener for me. I didn't know that there were ramps available to be lowered on buses for easy access!

"I don't use a walker, but I do have knee problems, which makes it hard for me to climb up and down without putting too much pressure on my knee. Thank you for your time and help it is really appreciated."

Following the success of the visit, Osborne Property Services and its partners are working with Dacorum Volunteer Centre to establish a 'Bus Buddies' service in Hemel Hempstead.

This will see volunteer 'Buddies' available on Arriva routes for one day every week to support elderly people get on and off and comfortably in their seats.

It's Party Time

For many Mencap service users, the annual party is their big night out of the year so we wanted to lend a hand to make it extra special. It is a chance to socialise with members from across the borough in a safe environment.

Our team arranged for local band 'Poet and the Beat' to play live at the party and they didn't disappoint. Everyone (including us!) was up on the dance floor for a good boogie to music old and new. Big thanks to the band who gave up their evening for free!



Tracy from the charity got in touch to say, "Thank you so much to you for all you did on Saturday - as always you gave our event that extra special touch. The band were really good and such a lovely group of people."

There was also a DJ, raffle and plenty of food to make sure the night was a success. It was an honour to spend the night with our friends at Mencap and we look forward to the next time we all meet on the dance floor.



Have you seen Rosie?

Rosie, who turned one earlier in the year has been out visiting events and projects across London and the South East.

With the summer sun attracting many families, her diary has been back-to-back as invites have flooded in.

In Winchester she helped our Community Investment team with looking after the animals in the petting zoo that we sponsored.

She also supported the Rennie 10K Run encouraging others to limber up for the race and then meeting them on the finishing line with water and a high five.

Rosie is a huge character and a huge hit in communities where she has engaged with hundreds of families. We look forward to sharing more of her visits in the next issue.



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