



Welcome to the Active and In Touch Newsletter for Volunteers and Members.

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Working hours: Monday, Tuesday 8.30am – 5.30pm,
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Richard Phelps working in and for the community

Many volunteers and members will immediately recognise Richard, who has lived in Frome all his life, and who has been a member of Active and In touch for three years. Recently, he has been involved in planting seven fruit trees in Frome's Dissenters' Cemetery. Located on Vallis Road, the cemetery is a Private Trust, founded in 1851 by the Protestant Dissenting Congregations of Frome and is still a place where loved ones, war heroes and more distant ancestors can be both mourned and researched into. Originally a place for all Non-Conformist congregations in Frome, it eventually became the resting place for, at the last count, 6,200 townspeople. Joseph Chapman Junior, Frome Architect and Monumental Sculptor resurveyed the site in 1881 and the plans from that date still survive. Upon his death, he was buried there in 1900.

Richard, along with other members of A&IT, spent a couple of happy hours on a very cloudy day, planting the trees in a straight line. He



Richard, Dougie and a Park Warden

enjoyed the experience very much and if there was the opportunity to do so, he would like to be involved in a similar activity again. Richard would encourage people to visit The Dissenters' Cemetery, (please note, however, that applications for permission to photograph graves and memorials, other than by family members, should be addressed to The Trustees' Secretary, Frome Dissenters' Cemetery, Vallis Road, Frome BA11 3EH). Richard is not a novice to gardening and planting trees as he has done some smaller tree planting along the Mendip Way, working alongside Alex Hart from Shared Earth Learning, whilst also working at Mells Walled Garden. In addition to tree planting, Active and in Touch has a number of connections with The Dissenters' Cemetery. Charles Wood, who was an extremely committed and active Frome citizen, including being Chairman of A&IT until his death in 2018, is buried there. Dougie Brown, Director of Service worked alongside Jim Parsons - who is in charge of operations and was honoured this year with a Mayor's Civic Award for his "dedication and passion" in helping to restore the Cemetery - to have the twelve Commonwealth Graves there recognised with a plaque. A&IT volunteers have also been involved in painting railings, in line with Jim's vision of creating a space where people can go for peace and reflection and also to pick fruit. Along with the input of Helen Viner, Trees' Project Manager for the Town Council, who leads Frome's Wild about Trees project this is a wonderful example of community collaboration, encouraging community stewardship, making a real difference to the environment and extending green spaces in an important area which is accessible to family, friends and visitors.



Richard enjoying Tuesday Group

Welcome to Michael Auton.

We are extremely fortunate that Michael Auton, who has already attended a Trustees' meeting via zoom, will be supporting Active and In Touch over the course of the next few months.

Michael has already started to work on the plans and content for the "Above and Beyond" Appeal which will be launched during National Loneliness Week (13th – 17th June). The focus of the appeal will be to solicit donations and hopefully recruit new volunteers for both the befriending service and Frome Community Drivers.

Michael is also keen to make inputs to parish magazines / publications covering communities within a radius of 5-6 miles from the centre of Frome where people living on their own may be lonely. This could include rural communities such as Beckington, Corsley, Berkley, Dilton Marsh, Lullington, Buckland Dinham, Great Elm, Mells, Whatley, Nunney, Coleford, Holcombe and Leigh upon Mendip. If you can help Michael with any of the above, possibly by giving him a contact name or number or via your time and support in his endeavours, please do make contact with him. He can be contacted via the A&IT Office in the Town Hall, where he is based every Tuesday.

Hopefully, too, there will be an article about Michael in May's Newsletter, where you will be able to find out more about him and the progress he is making.

And Finally, a message from Gwen Corbet and Di Roberts

You may have read this information in an e-mail from Di and Gwen, and so if you already have the date firmly in your diary, apologies.

Dear Volunteers,

From May 11th, we are going to hold a Volunteer get together, once a month on the second Wednesday in the month.

We haven't met all our volunteers in person yet, due to Covid and would really love the chance to talk to you all and this is a chance for you to see us and talk through any concerns you may have about the member you are helping and to meet each other as well.

We also realise that a lot of you, help people who are elderly, who may need help as their circumstances change, deterioration of health being one of the issues. A lot of these issues should be taken up by family, but this isn't always the case and as some of you have experienced, the burden of helping more falls on yourselves. We want to reiterate to you, that you can always call or email us, and we will help in any way we can. We have access to the Health Connectors and can ask them to reassess people if needs be to get more care.

As you know, we are here for you to contact, whenever you have any questions or concerns, and please pop in and see us if you are passing by the town hall - especially on a Monday as we are all usually in the office! A cup of tea awaits!

We are also looking into asking a Bereavement counsellor to come to one of the drop ins as well, to give advice, as some of you have been befriending for a while and ties are made with the members, and it is hard when one of our members dies, and we want to support you as much as we can.

So, we will email you again nearer the time, but if you are able to come and say hello, please put the date in your diary! Our office is on the first floor of the town hall, and there is a lift if anyone has an access issue.

Active and in Touch Monthly Volunteer Get together!

May 11th at 4pm

1st Floor

Frome Town Hall

Christchurch Street West

Thank you from us all for everything you do for Active and in Touch. We hope to see you soon!