

Dementia champion volunteers

With 676,000 people estimated to have dementia in England, we are all likely to know someone living with dementia. Despite the condition being more common in older age group, it is not 'just' part of getting old, it is caused by disease of the brain e.g. Alzheimer's disease.

With a large number of our patients being elderly, it is estimated that approximately one in four of our inpatients have a degree of dementia – so we have developed the Dementia Champion volunteer role.

We now have four fantastic dementia champion volunteers, Owen, Tessa, Sharmin, and Leila. Below Owen tells us why he enjoys the role.

“Volunteering at the Addenbrooke's Hospital as a 'dementia champion' is an experience that I find greatly fulfilling and one which has been indispensable to my personal and professional development. Each day offers new experiences and an opportunity to make a tangible difference to someone's well-being. Notably, the 'dementia champion' role enables us to make a meaningful difference to patients and their families, whose needs are often overlooked by society”



We are keen for all our volunteers to have a good understanding of dementia and how best to interact with people with the condition; this is useful knowledge for when volunteering as well as in day to day life.

The next face to face dementia training sessions (open to all volunteers) will be on:

- **Tuesday 9th January 2024 10:00-13:00 - Deakin Centre - Room 15**
- **Friday 17th May 2024 12:30-15:30 - Deakin Centre - Room 15**
- **Monday 2nd September 2024 10:00-13:00 - Deakin Centre - Room 15**

To book a place, please email cuh.volunteer@nhs.net.

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Bird watching near Cambridge... Jill, Comfort Kit Distributor

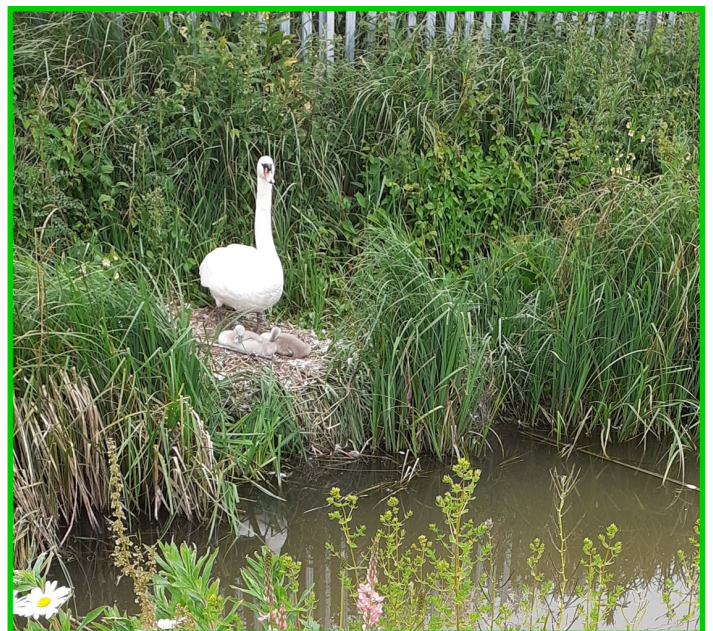
I have particularly enjoyed birdwatching since retiring to Cambridge, joining the U3AC Bird Club and going on outings with them and abroad too. I am fascinated by watching different birds & how they vary in their songs and plumage & how they glide effortless across the sky.

The river Cam has a variety of birds along its banks in the water and cows graze peacefully along its banks with the crows and wood pigeons pecking for worms to feed their young alongside them. Mallards have hatched their young ducklings and keep them close to avoid the rowers on the river. I haven't seen any baby moorhens yet but by the Museum of Technology I saw a brood of 5 cygnets and their parents.

I have been walking along the Chisholm Way each week to watch a swan's nest there. It was just on the other side of the small stream near the railway line. The mother and the father took it in turns to sit for 5 weeks or so on 6 eggs but only 2 hatched. They can be seen on the Cam and streams around it. At night they go back to the nest and hide under her wings, and you cannot see them then. This photo was taken in the early morning when the Mother wisely keeps the cygnets in the nest till the rowers have finished their morning outings.

This spring a kestrel was seen near the railway bridge and chiff chaffs call near the Museum of Technology. There are many swans on the river as well as moorhens and mallard ducks. In the winter black headed gulls come down from the coast and stay on the river. In spring a few remain but most go back again to the coast to breed.

There are herons (see picture below) which fly up and down the river and one was hand-reared by a fisherman and would sit beside the fisherman and his friend waiting for them to catch fish for him. When I was talking to them, they caught a small fish, but a black headed gull swooped down and took it! So, the heron had to wait for its meal. Huw Griffiths took this photo on one of his morning walks on Stourbridge Common. It shows the heron looking hopefully beside a boat!



Bird watching near Cambridge....

Just before the railway bridge on Stourbridge Common there is a large bramble bush and in it are swarms of sparrows noisily fighting among themselves. Further on a kingfisher was spotted by a friend.

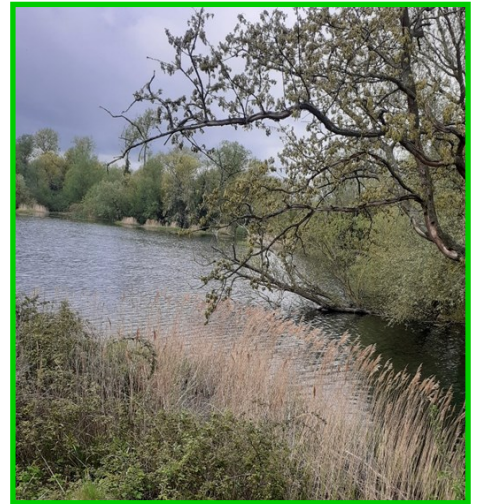


Stourbridge Common is kept wild and I have seen a small egret on it in the past and muntjac deer and babies too. There are also foxes to be seen lurking amongst the trees. Crows frequent the common as well as magpies, wood pigeons, collared doves, black birds, robins, blue tits, and a thrush can be heard singing in the early morning. I also saw a lesser spotted woodpecker on my neighbour's house. The green woodpecker can be heard in the early mornings. In fact, all around Cambridge, birds can be spotted and heard as well at any time of day. The water birds include many mallards both male and female, about 20 swans and several moorhens.

One of the outings, I especially enjoy is going to Paxton Pits (above) near St Neots. It is not too far away, and it has deep gravel pits have been filled with water for water birds and there is a meadow for watching field birds as well as a visitors' centre.

Another of my favourites is Lackford Lakes. It has several hides and I have seen a bittern there and sat and watched a nightingale singing on a bramble bush and kingfishers too.

Welney is a wonderful place to watch birds, both in winter and spring. In winter (which is my favourite time), Hooper and Berwick swans winter there along with pochard ducks, tufted ducks, and many more and there are feeds around midday and 3 p.m. when all the birds flock in front of the huge hide to be fed. The warden describes the swans and ducks, and it is a wonderful place to take children.



I took two small children there one afternoon in summer and there were lots of twitchers as a blue throat (a rare passerine) had been spotted so I took the noisy kids into a small hide in order to not annoy the twitchers. Amazingly, this rare blue throat hopped along in front of our tiny hide!! The children were overjoyed and loudly told everyone where upon, the blue throat flew away!! Children are welcome in all bird watching sites and they have special activities for them during half terms and holidays.

There are several bird watching possibilities not far from Cambridge - Kingfisher Bridge where there is a hide which overlooks wetland areas. Dernford Farm Reservoir near Stapleford, Grafham Water, Milton Park, Hobson's Bird Park Reserve near Trumpington, Trumpington Meadows and Wandelbury just outside Cambridge on the Haverhill Road and the grounds of Anglesey Abbey are also bird watching possibilities. A two-hour drive to the Norfolk coast gives endless possibilities such as Cley and Titchwell.

There are local bird clubs including the RSPB, Cambridgeshire Bird Club and for older people the U3AC which organizes 5 outings a term and is a very friendly group.

A warm welcome to our autumn YPPs

It's that time again! Last week we were delighted to welcome a whopping 84 new volunteers onto the autumn cohort of our Young Person's Programme. This is our biggest YPP intake since before the pandemic and we couldn't be more excited to see these bubbly students grow in confidence and capability over the coming months.

Aged between 16-18, these volunteers will be lending 2 hours of their time after sixth form or college every week between now and December to assist with the evening ward shift. As the days get shorter and the nights get colder, the patients here at Addenbrooke's will appreciate their warm and friendly presence more than ever to brighten the dark evenings on the wards – not to mention their help with dishing out dinners and making cosy hot drinks!

Over the course of the 12 weeks the volunteers will also participate in a series of virtual Healthcare Information Sessions from a range of different clinical and research professionals. We kicked off the programme with a talk from Beth Bradshaw, who volunteered on the YPP herself back in 2015 and is now a senior physiotherapist here at Addenbrooke's! Over the next few weeks the volunteers can look forward to learning about dementia, cardiac physiology, blood transfusion, dietetics, and audiology, to name just a few of the topics on offer.

In November they will also have the fantastic opportunity to gain insight into the many possible pathways to the top of the healthcare game at a mid-programme Healthcare Careers Q&A event, where we will be joined by a panel of senior CUH professionals (including the medical director) to hear about their inspiring journeys to their current roles.

Huge thanks as always to the fabulous team of volunteer mentors who helped give our new YPPs a warm welcome onto the volunteering team, supporting them during their first shifts last week and sharing the tips and tricks they've gathered throughout their own time on the wards.

Well done to all our new volunteers for making such a brilliant start, and we hope you enjoy the rest of your time on the YPP enough to want to continue volunteering when it's over! Thanks for giving your valuable time to help make a positive difference.



Great volunteer opportunity

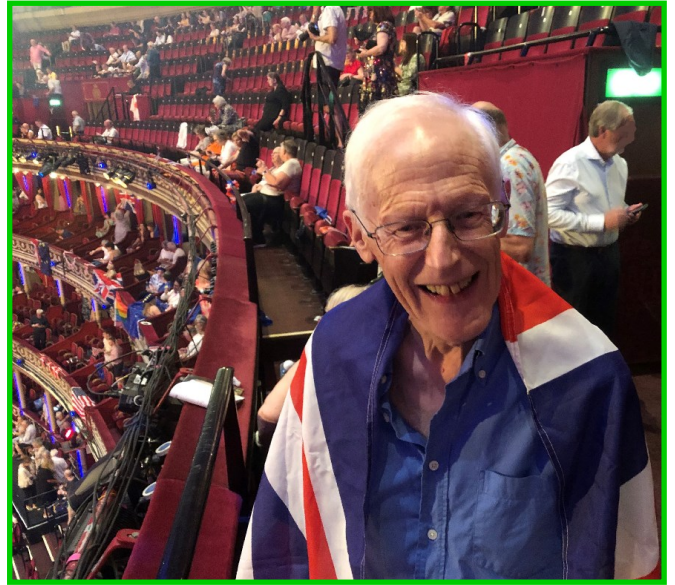
If you'd much rather spend your time outside, we've got just the volunteering role for you. Based at Newmarket Park and Ride, our phlebotomy marshall volunteers help ensure the smooth flow of patients having blood tests. Here's what Sarah said about the role:

"The role is very clearly defined but it does require quite a lot of flexibility and 'thinking on your feet' as well as multi-tasking at times. I think this is really good for my brain! It is also something entirely different from my usual job. If you like meeting a wide range of people, getting plenty of exercise and being outside, this role could be for you."



The Last Night.... Robert, ward volunteer

I love going to the Proms. It's always wonderful music played by world class performers and seats (I'm too old to stand now) are very reasonably priced. You often meet lovely people, and everyone is there for the music, not to be seen. However, getting a ticket for the Last Night is, to put it mildly, difficult. If you book for five or more concerts you can enter a ballot to buy a ticket for the Last Night. Usually some weeks later you get an email telling you that you have failed. In 2016 I was successful and - guess what - this year I was again! So off I went to London in a temperature of over 30. The excitement starts on the way to the Royal Albert Hall when you see people in all sorts of dress ranging from jeans, through black tie to Union Jack waistcoats. There are street vendors selling flags, both Union Jacks to EU flags to keep it non-political. Everyone is so excited and the atmosphere just increases from the moment you go through the bag check. Taking your seat quite early is a good idea so you can watch the audience come in and flags from all over the world being unfurled.



The first half is a relatively serious classical concert when you experience the massive applause, shouts, whistles and foot stamping of deafening proportions. After the interval (during which I always have an ice cream - a tradition that I have created for myself) you move on to the world famous phase. One or two serious pieces are followed by the traditional pieces, which I expect most of you have seen on television.



More and more flags appear, some strange people even wrapping themselves in Union Jacks! This year everyone was asked to wear a wrist band that by remote control lit up at times with varying colours. The effect was stunning. The final piece is Old Lang Syne with everyone joining hands. There is such a feeling of goodwill and friendship.

It carries on as most people walk back to the tube, chatting to total strangers in the street and even on the platform and train. So very un-London!

And, finally, just to dispel one myth, the audience do not sing Rule Britannia and Land of Hope and Glory - they positively yell them out!

A few updates....



Voluntary Services
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CUH Volunteers

We're on the web!
www.volunteering.cuh.org.uk

Mill Road Winter Fair 2023

We're hoping to once again secure a stall at the Mill Road Winter Fair and it would be fantastic if you could join us.



It's a great event with lots of interesting stalls selling gifts as well as tasty things to eat and drink. There's also musicians and dancers so its hard not to feel in the festive spirit when there.

We are looking for volunteers with a little time to spare to help us spread the word about what a great place CUH is to volunteer. Before stepping forward, please bear in mind there will be a lot of standing, and it is an outdoor event in December so it could be cold and wet - we will have a gazebo though.

The Fair takes place on **Saturday 2 December between 10.00 and 16.00** so if you'd like to help for an hour or two, please email cuh.volunteer@nhs.net to let us know your availability. Many thanks!



Boost your immunity

Next time you're on shift, why not take the opportunity to have your autumn vaccinations? The flu vaccine is currently available:

- **07:-00 - 17:30 Monday to Friday in the Concourse**

You will need your CUH ID badge as well as your NHS number which can be found [here](#).

COVID vaccination clinics will also be open from 2nd October. You will need to book an appointment for your COVID vaccine.



Don't suffer in silence

When life is hard, financially, emotionally, or perhaps you need some guidance about consumer issues, there is always someone to talk to.

Health Assured, our employee assistance programme is there to help 24 hours a day, just give them a call on 0800 028 0199 or download their app onto your phone or other device.

