

Mablethorpe & Sutton on Sea Leg Club Volunteers show initiative

In November of last year, the volunteers from Mablethorpe & Sutton on Sea Leg Club were awarded the Community Initiative Trophy in the Village Ventures Competition run by Community Lincs and supported by the Lincolnshire Echo. Community Lincs is the new name of the Community Council of Lincolnshire, a registered charity, which has been operating in the county since 1927. It offers practical help and support to ensure Lincolnshire has vibrant, sustainable communities. (www.communitylincs.com)



Left to right: Janice Tinkler, Ann Clarkson, Barbara Scarlett and Mavis Griffiths at Heighington Village Hall receiving the trophy from Councillor Peter Martin-Mayhew (centre), a past winner in this category.

Mablethorpe & Sutton on Sea Leg Club was able to demonstrate how it identified and tackled an issue of wide concern to the residents living in this community. In this case it was helping to set up and run a Leg Club in conjunction with the local District Nursing team.

Because of the large elderly population in this area which is twice the national average, the incidence of leg ulcers and lower leg circulatory problems is high. The Leg Club Model devised by Ellie Lindsay, offers holistic, evidence-based treatment in a non-clinical setting. It is a social model which strives to overcome the social isolation and stigma associated with these conditions. (www.legclub.org)

This is a county-wide competition which recognises the work, effort and enthusiasm of the volunteers. The Leg Club would be unable to operate without its loyal band of volunteers and their goodwill and skills. Utilisation of social capital is intrinsic to all voluntary groups and Mablethorpe & Sutton on Sea Leg Club is no exception. Working in partnership with the District Nursing team employed by the NHS Lincolnshire Primary Care Trust, volunteers freely give their time to staffing the Reception Desk, serving refreshments and running the raffle during the sessions. A Christmas Lunch for members, at a nominal fee, has been provided for the past two years and volunteers also fundraise attending Table Top Sales and taking stalls at local events. Volunteers have given advice on aspects of starting up Leg Clubs. One volunteer not only serves as Chairman of the Leg Club but also as Secretary and a Trustee for the Lindsay Leg Club Foundation.

The skills these people donate are many and varied gained in a multitude of settings:

- ❖ Running a playgroup
- ❖ Organising a voluntary car scheme
- ❖ Serving on local councils
- ❖ Involvement with other organizations either for leisure or work enabling networking
- ❖ Fundraising for other groups
- ❖ Having assets to enable barter ie. One favour for another

Most of the voluntary input is “grey power” from people who live locally. However one younger volunteer regularly undertakes a round trip of 60 miles to attend.

Since starting up in 2005, Mablethorpe & Sutton on Sea Leg Club has gone from strength to strength. It has been well received and supported by the local community. It offers a welcoming environment and operates on a drop in basis each Tuesday from 9.30am to 12.30pm in the Community Hall, Stanley Avenue, Mablethorpe. People can refer themselves but, due to logistics, must be on the practice lists of the GP’s in Mablethorpe and Sutton on Sea.