

# The VIC Centre will be officially opened on Wednesday June 25

## Suzanne's walk for VICtory

**A MOTHER of two with chronic heart failure completed a 13-mile hike around Whitworth to raise money for VIC.**

Outreach and community development officer at VIC Suzanne Preston is on borrowed time. While in her 30s she was told her condition was terminal after she had two heart attacks. But she is a fighter.

Suzanne, 52, from Whitworth, finished the 13-mile Whitworth Skyline Walk 2014 in just six hours, thanks to several supporters who provided encouragement.

"I had some really good friends walking with me and that made the journey so much shorter," she said.

"I didn't rush the walk; I just had a wonderful day with the best company in the world."

Suzanne's medical problems started with dilated cardiomyopathy but then it became more complex.

In her 30s, while she was



the manager of the former Springfield Court in Bacup, flu struck the sheltered accommodation and Suzanne contracted it twice, then she got pneumonia. This combination of illnesses caused her heart attacks and left her with a weakened heart.

She said: "I was told it was terminal and I had until Christmas. But I survived Christmas, as a single mum with two children, I had to get back to working full-time but that did more damage."

"I was able to put my son through university but then went into relapse and, four

years ago, started with organ failure because of the medication I was on.

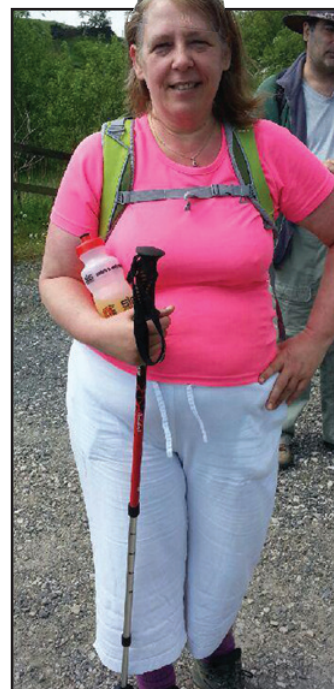
"It was during this major relapse, while I was at rock bottom, that I met Bob Elliott and Darren Horsnell and I joined them working to set up VIC.

"The support from the guys and the passion for the work we were doing gave me a new lease of life."

The unique peer support that comes from within the armed forces community and the founding ethos of VIC helped Suzanne's transition through a challenging time in her life.

Suzanne's health issues and experience of military life - her father was an officer in the Navy who served for over 30 years, her ex husband developed transitional issues on leaving the Army after 17 years - her qualifications and work experience has helped the team to develop VIC and, in turn, VIC has helped Suzanne to turn her life around.

Bob presented Suzanne with a pair of walking boots and a hiking stick and she



joined the VIC walking group that goes on short walks every fortnight.

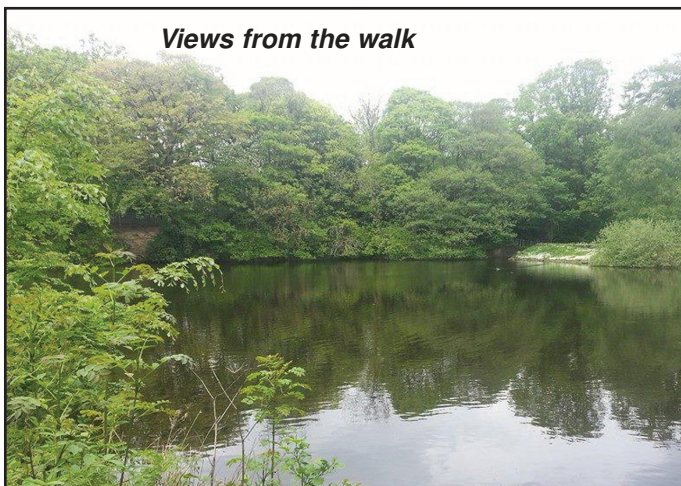
She trained thoroughly for hike walking a couple of miles each day in Healey Dell near her home and longer walks at the weekend.

When she completed the skyline walk she felt on top of the world, but the following day her lungs were congested and she took two hours to get out of bed.

Suzanne said: "I felt like Ninja turtles had stolen my body during the night, and left me with an old broken one."

"I do not regret taking part in the walk. I raised awareness for VIC and I also raised a bit of money."

*Views from the walk*





## Corporate identity

**WE NOW have a collection of different clothing for sale with the VIC logo on – just like the one Steve Butterworth is modelling.**

All clothing is in men and women's fittings and available in a variety of different sizes and colours.

Polo shirts cost £14, T shirts £10, baseball caps are £7.50 and fleeces range from £24-£28.

They are available to buy from the VIC Centre, on stalls organised by VIC and by contacting 01706 833180.

## Art classes and exhibitions

**THE Creative Community Hub, led by VIC Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell, delivered its first art group at Jubilee Court, Haslingden.**

The event was attended by 13 people who learnt some colouring techniques, used water colours and learnt drawing skills.

In future sessions they will be joined by residents of Olive House in Bacup.

The community arts

sessions run every Wednesday from 2pm-4pm and on the fourth week the participants will enjoy a craft day when they will be introduced to card making, flower arranging or ceramic painting.

Local artists will also be working with the group instructing on watercolour and acrylic painting.

Artwork from VIC also went on display at the annual arts and crafts fair at Manchester Road Methodist Church,

Haslingden.

Darren said: "Liz Taylor and I sold three paintings and prints between us."

"I would like to say thanks to Liz, Ian and Derek Tunnicliffe for helping out."

The Art Group has confirmed they will be also be displaying works at an arts and crafts fair at Worsthorne Hall, Burnley, on Sunday August 10.

For further information contact [darrenhorsnell@veteransincommunities.org](mailto:darrenhorsnell@veteransincommunities.org)



**SIX members of VIC enjoyed a five-mile walk along the Leeds and Liverpool Canal in Church and saw a variety of wildlife including geese, horses and swallows. Walks are held every fortnight.**

## Suicide intervention courses

**A TWO-day suicide first aid interactive workshop will be held at the VIC Centre in Haslingden on July 21 and 22.**

The free workshop for care givers in East Lancashire will teach you how to:

- Identify people who have thoughts of suicide.
- Understand how your beliefs and attitudes can affect suicide interventions.

● Seek a shared understanding of the reasons for thoughts of suicide and the reasons for living.

● Review current risk and develop a plan to increase safety from suicidal behaviour for an agreed amount of time.

● Follow up on all safety commitments, accessing further help as needed.

The ASIST — Applied Suicide Intervention Skills

Training — course will run from 9.30am to 4.30pm.

VIC manager Bob Elliott and Positive Futures from Lancaster, delivered a SafeTALK suicide alertness course to 10 people in May.

Further courses will be held in July.

Places are limited to book contact [bobelliott@veteransincommunities.org](mailto:bobelliott@veteransincommunities.org) or call 01706 833180.

## Help training

**FOUR members have completed their NVQ Level 3 in Advice and Guidance though AccRoss College.**

VIC manager Bob Elliott said: "I would like to say a big well done to Suzanne Preston, Steve Butterworth, Darren Horsnell and Peter Webster. It was an outstanding effort to complete this course in such a short time."



## Remembering the fallen

**THANKS to Bacup Stonemason Chislestones the graves of 120 heroes in Bacup Cemetery will be properly marked.**

The company, based on Burnley Road, is producing inscribed headstones for VIC's Operation War Graves 100 project which is funded by a Heritage Lottery grant.

Veterans will complete the project by November and this month they were joined in the work by young members of the Prince's Trust.

## Life skills

EVERY Wednesday at the VIC Centre in Haslingden volunteers will be helping ex-service personnel with one-to-one training.

This includes IT skills, CV writing, job search and general information on employment and training.

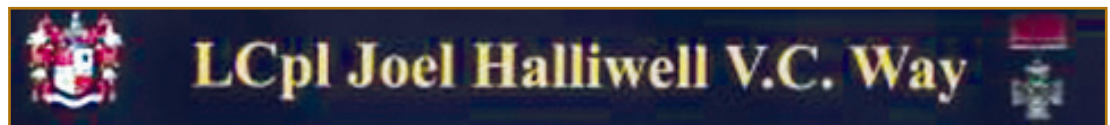
It will run every Wednesday afternoon from 1pm to 3pm.

Contact one of the team members for further information 01706 833180.

## New venue

BLACKBURN with Darwen outreach has been so successful it is on the move.

The service will still be at Darwen Town Hall every Tuesday from 10am to 1pm for administrative duties, but group sessions and one-to-one will now be at Knott Street Community Centre, Darwen, at the same time.



*Pupils from St Mary's in Rawtenstall plant poppies to remember the fallen from the First World War.*

### A STREET in Middleton was renamed after a Victoria Cross hero Lance Corporal Joel Halliwell.

Joel survived the trenches of the First World War and received the military's highest award for bravery after he rode into no man's land under shelling and gunfire on a horse to rescue 10 injured soldiers in May 1918.

The brave soldier returned to his home in Middleton after the war and was landlord at

the New Inn on Long Street.

Corporation Street in Middleton was renamed L/Cpl Joel Halliwell VC Way at a ceremony and members from VIC were in attendance.

VIC runs outreach and activities in Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale. Pictured above right is Piper Stuart Hay, Rochdale Borough Council's commissioning team manager who supports the outreach service. For details of times see the back page.

# What's On and Where



## VIC update

THERE is never a quiet month for VIC and as we prepare to welcome dignitaries for the official opening of the VIC Centre, we are busier than ever.

So much so the outreach in Blackburn with Darwen has relocated its group sessions and we have projects on going all over East Lancashire and Rochdale.

VIC members Darren Horsnell and Steve Butterworth have been working with veterans who are in Buckley Hall Prison to deliver a Level 2 Understanding Health Improvement course.

They ran health chats where they discussed potential lifestyle changes and got the prisoners to look at their lives and how they could make changes for the better regarding drink, drugs, smoking, their environment and healthy eating.

It is hoped that the chats may be introduced on a bi-monthly basis and a proposal is being drawn up for the prison to consider.

Our ongoing project in Bacup Cemetery Operation War Graves 100 is being supported this month by the Prince's Trust.

It is on schedule to be completed in time for Remembrance in November and 120 new memorial stones made by Chislestones in Bacup will be in situ.

We hope as many as possible will be able to join our celebration opening on Wednesday June 25 and look around our centre.

### ROSSENDALE

#### VIC Outreach Services

##### MONDAY-FRIDAY

11am-1pm

VIC Centre, Bury Road, Haslingden, BB4 5PL.

##### MONDAY

10-12 noon

Bacup Library, St James Square, Bacup, OL13 9AH

#### VIC Singing Group

##### THURSDAY

6.30-8.30pm

VIC Centre, Bury Road, Haslingden, BB4 5PL.

#### VIC Art Group and drop-in

##### FRIDAY

11am-3pm

VIC Centre, Bury Road, Haslingden, BB4 5PL.

#### Walking Group

##### THURSDAY

Walks are arranged on the 2nd and 4th Thursday, weather permitting.

### HEYWOOD

#### VIC Outreach Service

##### WEDNESDAY

11am-2.30pm

Heywood Sports Village, West Starkey Street, Heywood, OL10 4TW.

#### Badminton

3pm-4pm

Heywood Sports Village, West Starkey Street, Heywood, OL10 4TW.

Walks will be held fortnightly on **Thursdays** combined with the Rossendale walking group.

### BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN

#### VIC Outreach Service

##### TUESDAY

10am-1pm

Knott Street Community Centre, Knott Street, Darwen, BB3 2RN.

### PENDLE

#### VIC Outreach Service

##### WEDNESDAY

10am-1pm

Ace Centre, Cross Street, Nelson, BB9 7NN.

# Contacts

**VIC – 01706 833180**

#### Manager Bob Elliott

bobelliott@veteransincommunities.org

07961 554 006

#### Outreach and Community Development

##### Worker Suzanne Preston

suzannepreston@veteransincommunities.org

#### Outreach Worker Steve Butterworth

stevebutterworth@veteransincommunities.org

#### Arts and Crafts Co-ordinator Darren Horsnell

darrenhorsnell@veteransincommunities.org

#### War Graves Project Co-ordinator Peter Webster

peterwebster@veteransincommunities.org

#### Combat Stress Helpline

0800 138 1619

#### NHS Military Veterans Psychological Therapies Service (NW)

0161 253 6638

#### The Royal British Legion

0808 802 8080 (7 days a week 8am-8pm)

#### Rossendale Citizens' Advice Bureau

0844 499 4121 (from a landline)

0300 456 2552 (from a mobile)

#### The Samaritans

01706 830999

#### Mental Health Helpline

0500 639000 Monday to Friday 7pm - 11pm

Saturday & Sunday 12 noon to 12 midnight

#### Royal Air Forces Association

01772 426930

#### East Lancashire Single Point of Access

via GP or self-referral

01282 657116

VIC supported by:



East Lancashire  
Clinical Commissioning Group



Supported by NHS Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale  
Clinical Commissioning Group's social investment fund



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