

The Lantern Club, Holmer Green

What is the Lantern Club?

We are a day-care centre for elderly and infirm local residents who benefit from a weekly outing, on Mondays, to an environment that is both sociable and stimulating. We are the only such organisation in the immediate locality and our clients are all very different - we have several octogenarians and nonagenarians who, despite their frailty, are as bright as buttons, but quite a few of our clients experience memory problems and a couple have had strokes. Some of them live alone so really look forward to meeting up, others are cared for by family, sometimes with the support of professional carers. They are brought to the Village Centre by private transport or the Hazlemere and Widmer End Good Neighbours minibus driven by a member of our volunteer team of drivers.

We start the day about 10.30am with the essential cuppa and chat before the first activity. Every other week our very own personal trainer, Carolyn, comes to put us through our paces with gentle stretching and flexing exercises. This helps to maintain mobility - good for clients and volunteers alike!

Everyone really enjoys it and is ready for a delicious freshly-cooked lunch, prepared for our clients by yet another valiant team of volunteers. If Carolyn is not with us we will play board games, cards or dominoes in small groups. We also have occasional craft sessions.

After lunch there is a different activity. Some afternoons a group of singers or musicians will come and entertain us - there are several groups locally who use their time and talents in this worthwhile way and the material they choose always appeals to our clients. Otherwise, if we have been doing exercises with Carolyn in the morning, we may get the games out - we have some large floor games that we play in teams, which always give great amusement. On other occasions our leader will devise puzzles and quizzes which encourage lively discussions and,

often, reminiscences. Everyone is encouraged to join in the activities although individual limitations are always taken into account.

Occasionally we have had speakers who illustrate their material with appropriate items - both Bucks Library Service and the Museum do "reminiscence therapy".

At about 2.45pm everyone is ready to go home, either in the minibus or collected by carers; another busy Monday has gone by during which we hope to have achieved our aim of giving some company, fun and stimulation to our senior and very respected citizens.

We also have an annual outing. We have been on boat trips and visited the organ museum at St Albans. We have also been to the pantomime at Chesham three times which was great fun. We are a registered charity and, like many small charities, are aware of the continued need for financial help. We are always very grateful to individuals and local organisations who generously make donations, and we also fundraise, organising a couple of events a year. Also, apart from our leader, we are entirely reliant on volunteers to run and man the club and at the moment we are particularly keen to expand our volunteer base.

You will find us in the Chadwick Hall, the Village Centre every Monday apart from Bank Holidays and Christmas week. For extra information please contact our Chairman Marjory Mack on 01494 815840.

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