

# LANCASTER MEN'S HUB NEWSLETTER



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## LMH Volunteer of the Year

On 7 June Lancaster Men's Hub attended the biennial Volunteer Achievement Awards at the Midland Hotel in Morecambe. The event was organised by Lancaster CVS and over 100 volunteers from all over the Lancaster and Morecambe area attended for a presentation and buffet. The awards have been running for 20 years and are sponsored by organisations such as the Guy Penn group, Banks Lyon and Lancaster and Morecambe College. The Mayor of Lancaster, the Right Worshipful Roger Dennison, presented the awards, which included categories such as Young Volunteer of the Year, Fundraiser of the Year and the Roger



Sherlock Community Inspiration Award. Our own Treasurer, David Smith, was nominated in the categories Trustee of the Year and Volunteer of the Year in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the internal running

of the Hub and the numerous events and projects that he organises and runs on a regular basis; a great deal of the Hub's current success is due to David. Unfortunately, he didn't win either category on the night but it is a tribute to the community spirit of the district that so many hard-working and dedicated people were recognised alongside him.

## Play Carrom

Carrom is a tabletop game of Indian origin in which players flick discs, attempting to knock them to the corners of the board. Some say it is similar to snooker, while others compare it to Subbuteo. The game is very popular in the Indian subcontinent, and at our elevenses on Friday. We use a couple of traditional Carrom boards with wooden surfaces and the disks have been happily slipping and sliding along the surface with no trouble at all. However, all that changed last Friday when one of our better players decided to sprinkle Talcum Powder on the surface "just like in India for less traction". The result was amazing. The disks became supercharged, and we had to relearn how to play. Needless to say, the guy who brought the talcum powder in won every match that afternoon. If you or a relative would like to join in a game or Carrom then we would love to take you on. Our guys need some real competition.



Don't forget Elevenses, every Friday, 11.00 am at the Cornerstone, Sulyard Street.  
Drop in for a free get-together with refreshments and lunch - and take the opportunity meet our members and find out more about the Hub

## Gardener's Question Time

The UK is experiencing record allotment waiting times as demand grows, unsurprisingly the longest wait is in London, in one case up to 12



years. We are so lucky in LMH to have an allotment on Ambleside Road, Lancaster which is open to everyone. We even have some spare ground available for planting because of an incredible act of kindness by two plot holders who have nothing to do with LMH. We

have had a plot up on the Ridge Estate for a couple of years, but it was difficult to access for some of our members with mobility problems. To solve the problem, we applied for a grant from Screwfix which included paving from the front gate to our plot. However, when we told the other

plot holders of our plans they suggested "moving" our plot nearer to the gate which meant easier access. Moving a plot is difficult so two plot holders kindly suggested



a swap, which we did. Happy days. We are still waiting for Screwfix to approve our application, but in the meantime, we have a brand new plot which needs cleaning, weeding and planting. If you want to help and would like to grow with LMH then hurry on down before this year's planting ends; we have free land waiting to be loved.

## HMP Lancaster Farms

After a Planning Group decision to look at the possibility of offering some support to newly released prisoners from HMP Lancaster Farms, three trustees visited the prison on 12 June to look at the educational and vocational facilities and talk to the staff who handle the end of sentences. The visit was a fascinating glimpse of life in Category C prison and the discussions were very positive. Any Lancaster Men's Hub members who take part in the initiative will need to be vetted and given training by the prison, and the scheme is not likely to start before September. It is not envisaged that the Hub will be offering counselling or specialist services but will try to provide a route into a normal social setting for suitable prisoners who have served their sentences. If anyone would like to talk about the planned initiative then speak to Simon, John or David Mace at the Cornerstone, who will be happy to discuss it with you.

*This will be a new regular feature in the Newsletter*

## Member of the Month

### Hari Gujral

Hari has been a member Lancaster Men's Hub almost from the start, along with his father Aftab, who runs the Sunday afternoon Walking Football and is a member of the Planning Group. Hari is graduate of Aberystwyth University, where he completed a degree in Information and Library Studies. He has worked in Theatre Support where he was involved mainly with disability issues. Hari has made a great contribution to the Hub, working regularly in the Elevenes kitchen, playing Walking Football and contributing his expertise to the Thursday Games Evenings. Hari's speciality is Gaming, both on the board and on computer and his particular favourites are Battletech, a science-fiction game involving giant mechanoids (!) and a fantasy game called Elder Scrolls; Hari has



introduced the participants of the Games Evening to the mechanoids. Hari is tech-savvy, builds his own computers and has a limited knowledge of coding. He especially enjoys the sense of community in the Hub and the chat and camaraderie whilst working in the kitchen.

Want to play Walking Football on Sunday afternoon at the the University of Cumbria. Contact Aftab Gujral throught the website and get all the details - you'll be very welcome.