



Community News

How Rangers are supporting Local Refuges!

Living up to the guiding Promise to “be an active citizen” and to “help others”, 1st Garstang Rangers have taken on the challenge of coordinating the making and distribution of comfort bags to local refuges.

After the initial success of the scheme in Greater Manchester West County, members across the North West Region have taken part in this heart-warming initiative to provide handmade bags containing small toiletries and care items, to people in their times of need. Since 2016, the little bags of comfort have reached over 17,000 bedsides, shelters and refuges, providing some comfort and support. As a result of the kindness spreading rapidly at this time, the leading girls’ organisation in the North West believes they’re on their way to reaching the 20,000 milestones.

After reading about the Comfort Bag Scheme, 1st Garstang Rangers felt inspired to support a local refuge, Safenet.

SafeNet (formerly ELWRA) provides services across Lancashire for victims of domestic violence and abuse. It is a registered charity and joined The Calico Group in April 2011. SafeNet have established a new refuge for women and children in Lancaster where the first 100 comfort bags were delivered on 25th June 2020.

Nina Kennedy (17) has taken the lead on the project as part of the Community Action section towards her Queens Guide Award. The Queens Guide Award is the highest award a young woman between the age of 16-25 years old can work towards in guiding. With the full support of 1st Garstang Rangers, the people of Garstang, friends and family, the guide hut quickly filled with donations and over £100 was donated to help buy additional items needed.



At the end of June, Nina was invited to the new refuge in Lancaster. Nina said “I’ve learnt so much about domestic violence. It is something I hadn’t really thought about before this project, but since being given the opportunity, it is something I have become very interested to learn more”. During the visit, 100 comfort bags were given to the refuge and since this time, over and challenging project and I can’t wait to learn a lot more about this topic as it is so important”.

Alex Atkinson, Head of SafeNet Services said “when someone escapes domestic abuse and comes into refuge they often arrive with very little or no belongings. The ‘comfort bags’ will help create a welcoming environment and bring much needed comfort to families who initially can feel overwhelmed arriving at refuge. SafeNet really appreciate the thought and effort put into providing these bags for SafeNet residents by 1st Garstang Rangers. Thank you for your support”.

Lancashire County Council (LCC) have partnered with a number of other services to raise awareness of help and support available to those affected by domestic violence. Helene Cooper, an LCC spokesperson, said “We would like to say a massive thank you to Nina and all of 1st Garstang Rangers for their support and kind gesture of providing the most beautiful comfort bags filled with essential items for the women and children in Lancashire refuges. Your project will really make a difference to the wellbeing of the residents”

#NOEXCUSEFORABUSE

Local councils, Lancashire Police, support agencies, the NHS and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner have come together to create the #noexcuseforabuse campaign.

The campaign aims to raise awareness and understanding of domestic abuse, the help and support available to victims and perpetrators and how and where people can report their concerns.

The campaign is part of the Lancashire Resilience Forum's countywide response during COVID-19. The Forum is an established group that works closely during 'business as usual' times and then comes together whenever there is an emergency situation in the county.



Nina Kennedy, 1st Garstang Rangers

Domestic Violence and support available

SafeNet Domestic Abuse and Support Services
Tel: [0300 3033 581](tel:03003033581) or connect through livechat at:
www.safenet.org.uk

Lancashire Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme (LDAPP)
Tel: [01254 260465](tel:01254260465) or email: info@bddwa.org.uk

National Victim Support
24 hours Support line [08081689111](tel:08081689111) (free phone line)

Trust House
Tel: [01772 825288](tel:01772825288) or email: support@trustouselancs.org
Referral forms and their return address can be found on their website: www.trustouselancs.org

About Girlguiding...

Girlguiding is the leading charity for girls and young women in the UK, with almost half a million members.

Thanks to the dedication and support of 100,000 amazing volunteers, we are active in every part of the UK, giving girls and young women a space where they can be themselves, have fun, build brilliant friendships, gain valuable life skills and make a positive difference to their lives and their communities.

We build girls' confidence and raise their aspirations. We give them the chance to discover their full potential and encourage them to be a powerful force for good.

We give them a space to have fun. We run Rainbows (5-7 years, 4-7 years in Ulster), Brownies (7-10 years), Guides (10-14 years) and Rangers (14-18 years).
Registered Charity No 306016.
www.girlguiding.org.uk



Nina Kennedy with Helen Gauder, Managing Director at SafeNet Domestic Abuse and Support Services