

Three Sisters

Denise, Debbie and Lisa all started volunteering with ACE through their children's school, Windsor Clive and attended the FAST programme, (Families and Schools Together). Following the programme and building a relationship with ACE staff, several of the parents then signed up to a weight management programme with the CF Health Officer and completed an eight week accredited programme, learning about portion sizes, the benefits of being active and reading food labels.



Following this, the parent group then felt inspired to continue to improve their family's lifestyle and to learn more about healthy eating and being more active. The three volunteers since then have developed enormously as 'health ambassadors' in the local community. They then went on a cycling beginner's course, going down to Pedal Power every week for five weeks and continuing to cycle in the local area using the bikes based at The Hub. Since then they have all completed Level 1 Bike Leader training and have led rides in the local community, taking beginners out and making them more confident on a bike.

The group have all also been motivated by the healthy eating activities and have been immersing themselves in any cooking and healthy activities going on in the local community. They have all completed a Level 1 Get Cooking course and the CF Health Officer recognised a skill in them to pass these messages on to peers and to encourage others to make positive changes in their diet, so they were then offered the opportunity to complete a Level 2 Community Food and Nutrition Course giving them the knowledge and confidence to pass these messages on correctly, aligning with Public Health and ACE's messages.

Alongside this, they continued to cycle and recognised the opportunity to encourage more people to walk to places in their local area as well as cycle. The group attended a Walk Leader's course to then be able to lead walks for groups and their own families in the local community. They have since been involved in developing a geocaching network in Ely and Caerau to encourage others to get outside more and discover new things about their local area.

In October 2014, ACE was successful in applying for funding from the Love Food Hate Waste program to run eight, four week cooking on a budget courses across the communities of Ely, Caerau and Fairwater as well as several one off events to promote reducing food waste. Funding also included to pay for three cooking tutors to run the sessions in partnership with the CF Health Officer and CF Health Development Assistant. The three volunteers successfully applied for the posts. They enthusiastically ran the courses, helping with the design of the course, recipes, content,

promotion and delivery, all hugely gaining in confidence through each session. The courses proved so successful that participants have kept in touch with the cooking tutors and most are on a list to complete a Level 1 cooking course. Throughout the courses the cooking tutors were taking it upon themselves to think about what happens next and where participants will go following the courses for advice on meal planning, budgeting tips and cooking/recipe ideas. The volunteers are now set to run a weekly group split into two sections, firstly a meal planning/cooking activity, building on their skills from developing and running the courses as well as knowledge gained from the Level 2 Food and Nutrition course.

The determination and passion from the volunteers for creating a 'healthier' community is ensuring that the CF program is reaching a lot more people and making a huge difference to the way people are eating and exercising every week, by passing these messages onto their peers, schools and families, as well as running courses for new participants. From the experience they have gained, one volunteer has gained employment as a café manager in a family play centre and all volunteers are heavily involved in the development of a Community Café, centred around offering the local community fresh, affordable and healthy food, cooked by health ambassadors of the local community, using surplus food from food suppliers.