

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wellies Project Honoured with Prestigious King's Award for Voluntary Service.

The Wellies Project celebrated an incredible milestone this week as it received the **King's Award for Voluntary Service**, the highest accolade for voluntary groups in the UK. The award was presented by HM Lord-Lieutenant of Staffordshire, Sir Ian Dudson, KCVO CBE, at a special ceremony attended by volunteers, supporters, and local dignitaries held at The Sudbury Gasworks on Monday the 6th of January 2025.

The Wellies Project, a Staffordshire-based initiative dedicated to supporting individuals through innovative outdoor and skills-based learning programs, joins an elite group of organizations recognized for their outstanding contributions to communities across the UK.

A Celebratory Ceremony

The ceremony began with the arrival of esteemed guests at 12:30 pm, greeted warmly with light refreshments. At 1:00 pm, Julie White, Founding Director of the Wellies Project, delivered an inspiring introduction, setting the tone for the afternoon.

Volunteers led a heartfelt shared reading, followed by remarks from Amanda Darlington, Head of Adult Learning and Skills at Staffordshire County Council. HM Lord-Lieutenant, Sir Ian Dudson KCVO CBE., then presented the King's Award to Alison Carr and Gordon Matthewson, two of the longest-serving volunteers of the Wellies Project, acknowledging their years of dedication and service.

The event concluded with cream tea, networking, and a celebratory group photo featuring the Wellies Project team with the Lord-Lieutenant.

About the Wellies Project

The Wellies Project provides **therapeutic learning activities involving animals, plants, creativity, and the countryside**, offering vital support to people recovering from mental ill health. By engaging in outdoor and skills-based activities, participants build confidence, learn new skills, and reconnect with their communities in a nurturing and supportive environment.

Stephanie Holmes, Senior Tutor at the Wellies Project, emphasized the importance of their work:

"The work we do at the Wellies Project is about so much more than just learning. It's about

creating opportunities for personal growth, building confidence, and supporting individuals to overcome challenges. Seeing the transformation in those we work with is truly rewarding, and this award recognizes the impact of that work on the wider community."

Quotes:

Julie White, Founding Director of the Wellies Project:

"This award is a testament to the passion, dedication, and hard work of our volunteers and everyone involved in the Wellies Project. It's incredible to see how our shared vision has positively impacted so many lives, and we are deeply honoured to receive this recognition."

Nick Platt, Co-Founder and Director of the Wellies Project:

"The King's Award for Voluntary Service is a proud moment for our team. It reflects the heart and soul of the Wellies Project—community, collaboration, and empowerment. We hope this inspires others to get involved and support the work we do."

Gordon Matthewson, Former Participant and Current Volunteer at the Wellies Project:

"When I first joined the Wellies Project, I was looking for a way to rebuild my confidence and learn new skills. The support I received here changed my life, and it's been an honour to give back by volunteering. This award is a reflection of what the Wellies Project has done not just for me but for so many others."

HM Lord-Lieutenant of Staffordshire, Sir Ian Dudson, KCVO CBE.:

"The Wellies Project is a shining example of the power of volunteering to transform lives. This award is richly deserved and serves as a reminder of the incredible contributions that voluntary groups make to our communities. I am delighted to present this prestigious recognition to such a remarkable team."

How to Get Involved

The Wellies Project welcomes new participants and volunteers to join its life-changing programs. Whether you're interested in volunteering, donating, or taking part in activities, there are many ways to support this inspiring organization.

For more details, visit www.welliesproject.org.uk/get-involved.

Recognition from Staffordshire County Council

Amanda Darlington praised the Wellies Project for its invaluable work, stating:

"The Wellies Project is an amazing example of how grassroots initiatives can transform lives. Their dedication to the community and innovative approach to learning and development make them truly deserving of this award."

To learn more about the King's Award for Voluntary Service, visit the official website: [King's Award for Voluntary Service](#). For details about Staffordshire organizations recognized this year, visit Staffordshire County Council's website: [Staffordshire County Council Newsroom](#).

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