

Local charity launches exhibition celebrating 40 years' support for community groups

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The Resource Centre, which supports over 900 local community groups every year, launched its 40th anniversary exhibition at the Jubilee Library today.

The Centre, one of 27 charities currently being supported by the Mayor, has spent four decades helping local volunteers to run activities and events for their own communities. Kate Page, who has worked at the Centre since 1982, said "Small groups create support networks and give people a sense of belonging, which cannot be matched by any top-down large organisation. For example, a street party run by a group of neighbours is much more than just a day's entertainment. It gives people a sense of pride in their neighbourhood, and a feeling of achievement at having organised an event for their families to enjoy. It also helps residents build friendships with one another, which reduces isolation."

Beryl Tucknott a Resource Centre trustee, has been using the Resource Centre for 25 years. She said "I first came to the Resource Centre in 1991, when we set up Robert Lodge Tenants Association with the help of Mary Mears. Tenants didn't have a voice, and we set up the Association to represent tenants' interests. We managed to get community rooms and a laundry. The Resource Centre helped us with minute taking, bookkeeping and publicity. We wouldn't have been able to set up the Association without them."

The exhibition was opened by the Mayor, Cllr. Pete West, who said: "The Resource Centre has touched the lives of so many people over the years. I truly believe we wouldn't have such a rich and diverse range of community activity without them. For forty years they've been working away in the background, providing groups with the services they need to do their work. I would love to hear the stories people have to tell about their memories of the Resource Centre." The Mayor also invited supporters of the Centre to take part in a sponsored walk on 30th April, which is being organised to raise money for all 27 Mayor's charities. Information about the Mayor's Walk is at www.mayorswalk.eventbrite.co.uk.

The exhibition will be on display in the lobby of the Jubilee Library until 22nd January. It showcases the Centre's 40 years legacy of supporting local groups. It also includes useful information for community organisations, and space for local people to add their own comments and memories.

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