



MEDIA RELEASE

Mellor Country House charity gets royal recognition

Mellor Country House charity that offers holidays for those most in need, has received a Queen's Awards for Voluntary Service, the equivalent of getting an MBE.

Mellor Country House close to Marple in Stockport hosts approximately 650 people a year and up to half are children. Anyone on low income and in desperate need of a break who would otherwise not be able to afford one, is welcome to book at the house which can accommodate up to 26 people in 12 bedrooms including a disabled suite with spa bath, at any one time. People can stay up to seven nights for as little as £12 per night for adults and £6.50 for children on a self-catering basis.

Chair of the charity, Margaret Powell and house manager, Sharon Adamson, were invited to Buckingham Place to a royal garden party to celebrate their organisation's achievement.

Completely self-funding and with only one paid member of staff, the charity is run by an army of more than 40 volunteers. On receiving the award Margaret Powell said: "We're really proud to receive this award and it's fantastic recognition for all the time our volunteers give us to ensure this house so welcoming for our guests. As Lord Hallam Tennyson, eldest son of the renowned poet, said at the opening of the house in 1907, he hoped *"a blessing would fall on this house of rest which would invigorate not only the flagging pulse but send the light of day into a darkened heart"*.

"Mellor Country House is a very special place and it's our shared passion for it which drives us, as we can really make a huge difference to people's lives. It is down to the hard work of our team of volunteers.

Sharon Adamson, who has been Mellor Country House's house manager for more than 20 years added: In all this time the charity has not changed its ethos and, this wish still rings true today."

There's an increasing number of people in Greater Manchester who cannot afford to put food on the table let alone have a holiday. We provide a restful, relaxing and recreational retreat for some of the region's most vulnerable people. The historic home offers a safe, secure and uplifting environment in a stunning location. The holidays promote health and well-being and can have a lasting impact on people's lives. While children play, parents interact and share their experiences, knowledge and

sometimes even their food. This helps them to solve problems, gives them respite from often a chaotic, unstable and stressful life at home and prepares them to cope better with any difficulties that lie ahead.”

The house was purpose-built in 1907 to provide relaxing and restful breaks in the beautiful countryside of Mellor for those who otherwise wouldn't be able to get away anywhere. Funds were raised by mill owners' wives and originally intended for mill workers. The holiday home has continuously offered accommodation for the poor and vulnerable in the wider community for more than 110 years.

The house is open until the 31st October 2019 then reopens on 1 March 2020. Anyone in serious need from Greater Manchester who would like to stay at heavily subsidised rates (£12 per night for an adult and £6.50 for a child) should call **0161 427 1893** or email mellorcountryhou@btconnect.com to check availability and book.

For more information visit <https://www.mellorcountryhouse.co.uk/>

On August 28th volunteers from Mellor Country House will collect an engraved, commemorative crystal trophy and a certificate signed by Her Majesty the Queen at a special ceremony at Gorton Monastery. They will be presented by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Greater Manchester, Warren Smith and the Vice Lord-Lieutenant, Paul Griffiths DL.

Mellor Country House is one of 35 Queen's Awards for Voluntary Service to be handed out to Greater Manchester voluntary groups, charities and social enterprises, in a record year.

Commenting on Mellor Country House, The Lord-Lieutenant of Greater Manchester, Warren Smith, said: "This charity is a very worthy recipient. Mellor Country House flings its doors wide open for those most in need in our county. These include individuals and families who are financially and socially disadvantaged, as well as groups with learning difficulties, mental health problems and school children from the most deprived parts of Greater Manchester. They offer a homely retreat tucked away in a beautiful part of the region, right on the edge of the peak district. With the support of volunteers, I hope they continue to offer this valuable service for another hundred years.

"This year we had 35, a record number of recipients, more than any other year, and far more than any other county. Since these awards were created in 2002 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Queen's coronation, we have met so many deserving groups who give their time freely for the

benefit of others. I would like to encourage more nominations for social enterprises, charities and voluntary groups in Greater Manchester before the September deadline.”

The Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service is the highest honour that can be bestowed on a voluntary group.

The closing date for nominations for the Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service 2020 awards is 13 September 2019. Organisations who have been operating for at least three years, and whose workforce is more than half voluntary are eligible to be nominated. For information on how to nominate a group for next year, visit: www.manchesterlieutenancy.org or www.gov.uk/queens-award-for-voluntary-service.

Ends

For media enquiries contact Roz Hughes on 07967 800395

Notes to editors:

A stay at Mellor Country House can make a real difference to people’s lives. It can help build confidence and engender a renewed sense of purpose. When the house was opened over 100 years ago, it was designed to be an unpretentious place for working people to rest and restore their health in beautiful surroundings. This has not changed. In addition to the bedrooms, the house also has a disabled suite on the ground floor, a well-equipped shared kitchen, dining room, lounges and children's playroom. The grounds include a secure play area for toddlers, a paved patio with barbecue, and a private lawn area with benches and seating for quiet reflection.