

Welcome to the Christmas 2018 Focus Newsletter!



Chief Executive's Welcome

Welcome to the Christmas Newsletter.

We hope this one will be interesting, it covers many topics like the opening of our new Resource Centre, someone talking to us about dementia and the strategy that Liverpool are trying to develop to support people who may be living with dementia; we've got Margaret doing recipes and gardening tips; Louise Miller is changing her role in the organisation to move away from the Active Vision Clubs into the Fundraising

Coordinator role, and Iain Mitchell has been appointed as the North West Engagement Manager for the Thomas Pocklington Trust and is talking to us about the establishment of sight councils. We'll also have Gill telling us about some of the events and how we can get involved.

This has been a really busy year for Bradbury, we were fortunate in getting the Freedom of the City Award and recently heard that we've been successful in our bid to retain the Liverpool Visual Impairment Contract which means we will work more closely with Christopher Grange to develop an enhanced service for people to include additional technology support.

We've said goodbye this year to Amanda Davidson who's worked for us for ten years in a variety of roles. She felt the time was right for her to move away and concentrate on other things. There's only one Amanda Davidson who was so committed to helping everybody out in every aspect of all of our jobs that at some stage she might let her own job slip because she was helping us. It was

great having her with all her energy and we wish her every success for the future.

Can I take this opportunity of wishing you from all of the staff, Trustees, volunteers and other service users the very best for Christmas and a prosperous, healthy and peaceful New Year.

Phil Longworth
Chief Executive

Keep Fit with Bradbury Fields

Louise Miller starts by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a happy New Year!

Louise always makes New Year resolutions but doesn't always stick to them! One of them is to get fit. This year, if you would like to get fit, come along to the Bradbury Centre as we have a variety of activities that you can get involved in.

On Mondays we have yoga from 4pm until 5pm, just £5 per session. Yoga is adaptive to lots of different abilities so you can be sitting in a chair, standing up, etc. The instructor, Betty, is lovely and can adapt it to meet everybody's needs.

On Wednesdays we have Nia sessions. Nia is a combination of lots of different practices, such as yoga, Pilates and dancing, martial arts, etc. This is at 11am and is £3 per session.

On Thursdays we have a Zumba class at 11am, again £3 per session.

If you are interested in any of these classes, either call Louise or ask to speak to Kim and she can give you more information.

So, New Year, new you!

Resource Centre

Jamal Abdullah does a lot of the community development things so provides lots of information and is responsible for our Be Active service.

He is now running the Resource Centre, leading on the work to help open this, a great achievement for Bradbury and because RNIB have moved out of the city, leaving a gap for us to fill.

RNIB helped us by donating the fixtures and fittings for the new reception area. The furniture looks amazing, the colour contrasting of the furniture and flooring works really well. The extra lighting has been enhanced.

St Vincent's provided us with some rolls of flooring.

The Resource Centre is a lovely open space. We have a welcoming area where equipment can be displayed and demonstrated.

Our dedicated rehabilitation officers can advise you on mobility needs, such as canes.

We have home and leisure services ranging from kitchen items, personal equipment, everyday items to help you make a cup of tea, bump ons, enabling you to try before you buy.

We have talking watches and talking clocks. These are displayed in cabinets.

We have a nice area for you to sit down in a group to look at the equipment and enjoy the shopping experience.

We will give people a choice so you can try before you buy. We want 100% customer satisfaction so you are happy with the items you choose to buy.

The technology centre is an excellent part of this. We have a CCTV (closed circuit monitor that you can read different materials with), British Wireless for the Blind radios on displays which can be demonstrated to you.

We are even getting an Alexa.

All of this is a work in progress and we are getting orders in all of the time.

This year we are having to reorder stock of calendars, etc., which are on display so people can decide on what they actually want.

People can come in to read their post with our CCTV.

If anyone is interested in developing their customer care skills, contact Jamal via the main switchboard, 0151 221 0888, extension 214.

Pop in, have a browse, see what's on offer. We're open from 10am until 2pm Mondays to Fridays but can be flexible.

Liverpool Dementia Action Alliance

Jack Coutts is here as a member of the Liverpool Dementia Action Alliance. He is

also a Dementia Friend Champion which means he gives talks about dementia, spreading awareness.

The Dementia Action Alliance is a group of 68 organisations in Liverpool doing what they can to help make a dementia friendly community in Liverpool, to help people living with dementia to live that bit better.

Members of the Alliance range from big organisations like the Royal Hospital, City Council, John Moores University, businesses like St John's Precinct, small businesses, any type of organisation having an interest in providing services for its customers.

They have lots of contacts with people living with dementia and family carers who form part of the organisation of the Dementia Action Alliance through the group SERF (the Service Users Reference Forum).

The Dementia Action Alliance through its sister body, Dementia Action Liverpool, has been working with the City Council in many different ways and has been commissioned to

go with the Liverpool Clinical Commissioning Group, part of the NHS, to look at the strategy they have for dementia services for the city for the next four years.

This is recognising that because we have lots of expertise in the Dementia Action Alliance and also have the contacts with people living with the condition, are well placed to help them develop their services for the next four years.

They've been talking and listening to many groups of people to get their ideas, thoughts and experiences about what it is like to live with dementia in Liverpool.

They've been finding out what's been working well, what services there are, what people are happy with and not so happy with and could be improved. Also what gaps there are in services, what isn't being done now that needs to be done in the future.

All that information is used to make recommendations as to how the strategy for

dementia services should develop over the next four years.

Some of the messages received tell them that people with dementia and their family carers are getting good services but they don't always get to know about them. They can't always find the information they need. Sometimes it's different services or different quality of services in different parts of the city.

There may be reasons why some people get better services than others. This includes people having difficulty in accessing services for reasons to do with who they are, perhaps they speak a different language and don't understand the information provided, or may not be able to make themselves understood.

People from different cultures who have different approaches to dementia that need to be taken into consideration.

They've also been listening to people with sensory impairments; people from the deaf community who have explained their problems in accessing dementia services

because there aren't interpreters available to them.

They'd also like to hear from people with visual impairments looking at why they may not be able to get the services or an awareness of what help is available or be able to understand what dementia is.

They would like to hear from anyone having either a personal experience of dementia or be aware of a friend or family member having difficulty accessing services, or maybe saying that some things are working well.

Anything that might be useful to feed into the recommendations made to the City Council and the Clinic Commissioning Group to see if we can make life better for people living with dementia in Liverpool.

We know that getting services to help people to live well is an important objective as life does not end when dementia begins, although it can be difficult living with the condition, there are still many opportunities for people to enjoy life to the full if they are able to take

advantage of the services, activities and all of the opportunities that are available in Liverpool and the area.

If you would like to get in touch with Jack Coutts contact him through strategy@dementiaactionliverpool.com or ring him on 07733 294170.

They are happy to hear from individuals and groups and will be happy to come out and talk to groups, listen to them to hear what they say, so they can add your thoughts and views to their recommendations.

Margaret Guppy's Recipe Corner

Cider Casserole – a recipe for 4 people

Ingredients

4 pork chops

Medium onion, sliced

Half ounce seasoned flour

One teaspoon chopped fresh sage

or half teaspoon dried sage
Quarter of pint vegetable stock
Quarter of pint cider, preferably dry cider
An apple, sliced. Use 2 apples if small

Method

Roast the chops in a heavy frying pan and cook until chops lightly browned on both sides (about 10 minutes).

Add onions half way through

Remove chops and onions and place in three pint casserole dish

Drain off most of the fat from the frying pan, add flour, stirring gently for one minute

Add the sage and slowly add the stock and cider, stirring constantly, bringing up to the boil

Place the liquid in the casserole dish over the chops and cook on gas mark 3 (160 centigrade) for one hour

Cut the apples into slices and arrange over the chops, returning the casserole dish to the oven for a further 15 minutes

Enjoy!

Louise Miller

From January, Louise starts a new job! She is not leaving Bradbury Fields, just changing roles from being the Active Vision Club Coordinator, dealing with social media and website. She is moving over to Community Fundraising.

This is quite a change in roles but Louise had recently held our successful Christmas Market and well as our Summer Fete earlier in the year.

She will be looking at doing so much more!

Community fundraising has changed considerably over the years. Louise recollects our elephant collection boxes which used to

bring in a lot of money but sadly they no longer do this as people don't carry change with them.

We need to look at community fundraising in a different way looking at making things more accessible for people so we can continue to keep our services going.

Louise will restructure many things but is looking at us getting into corporates as many businesses have Charity of the Year. She is looking at coming back with a plan, using her contacts.

If anyone has any family, friends, neighbours, etc., working for a large business that has Charity of the Year and would like to get involved, please contact Louise and help us to make those connections because with many of these places it is about knowing someone to get your foot in the door.

Louise is happy to go out to meet the connections made together with her guide dog, Harmony, letting people know about the great work done by Bradbury Fields.

We are looking at having crazy people doing crazy things to raise money!

Louise is looking at setting up an event in the near future to get people who may want to be involved but may not necessarily know in what area, signboard ideas.

She would love to organise a sky dive and is working on Chris from the kitchen to do this!

This year £6,000 was brought in by three people doing crazy things to help raise money for Bradbury Fields.

Good luck to Louise in her new job and thank you to her for what she has done in the clubs.

The clubs will be looked after in the very capable hands of Kim who has been Louise's PA for many years and is known by everybody and is more than capable of taking over and taking the clubs further.

**A Christmas Story
The Forgotten Donkey
by Margaret Guppy**

Tethered to a fence between an inn and a stable, Isaac felt the cold night air penetrate his coarse grey coat.

He was tired and hungry, most of all he longed for a warm bed of straw on which to rest his weary head.

The journey from Nazareth had been long with many difficulties along the way such as unmarked roads and sand storms.

Often the family he travelled with went hungry. Many times they walked through the night because the inhospitable land in which they passed gave them no shelter.

Towards the end of the journey, the woman who rode on his back looked weary and the man who walked with purpose at her side

often spoke of the desperation of ever reaching their destination.

On their arrival in Bethlehem they were met with even more misery. The town was overcrowded with people arriving for the census. Isaac found it difficult to walk through the busy streets.

The woman on his back had become suddenly distressed. Her husband knocked on many doors looking for shelter.

Finally one inn keeper took pity on them and offered them the stable for the night. Any roof was better than no roof at all.

The man took the woman gently to the stable and for a little while Isaac thought he had been forgotten but eventually the man came back and led the donkey through the door of the shelter into the room, removing the pack from his back.

Isaac was so tired he almost fell onto the straw bedding, too tired even to search for something to eat, but sleep would not come.

There was much noise in the stable. The innkeeper's wife came, then servants from the inn; voices became louder and even though Isaac was very tired, he wondered at all the commotion. Eventually he heard the cry of a baby. But even more noise and voices. How as a poor donkey every going to get some sleep!

Through half closed eyes, Isaac saw that the two people he had brought to Bethlehem were now three. A baby had been born which seemed to cause much excitement.

Within a few hours more visitors arrived. Shepherds from the surrounding hills. They told strange stories of voices from the sky telling them to visit the stable.

After some time the donkey finally fell into a troubled sleep unsure of what was happening around him.

Over the next few days Isaac was surprised that they had not been moved on from the stable. The innkeeper and his wife gave much attention to the little family. Isaac was

allowed to continue to rest, eat and drink and much to his delight he began to recover some of his strength.

A few days later three important looking men arrived, all dressed in fine clothes, bearing gifts for this new born baby. Who was this child, thought Isaac, to be treated like a prince? This was too difficult for a simple donkey to understand.

Just when Isaac was getting used to being a lazy donkey, the woman's husband began to prepare to move saying it was too dangerous to stay in Bethlehem. Apart from the new baby and the woman, Isaac would now have to have extra bags to carry on his back, after all wasn't that what a lowly donkey is for?

As they left the city not knowing where the next destination would be, Isaac felt strangely happy to be part of the family that he had travelled many miles with and with whom he had shared many experiences. Who knows where the journey would end but Isaac the donkey felt very privileged to part of this special family.

History did not record the part the donkey played in the Christmas story. Surely the journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem was too far for Mary and Joseph to walk on their own, as what the flight to Egypt. Surely they had need of a donkey.

The next time you look at a crib, imagine that somewhere in the corner, hidden from view, is a forgotten donkey called Isaac who played an important part in the life of the infant Jesus and who was witness to the unfolding story that is Christmas.

Wendy Ko – A Success Story

Phil introduced Wendy Ko, one of Bradbury Fields' service users for some years.

Wendy started with counselling at Bradbury Fields as a service user in about 2012.

Wendy lost her sight loss very quickly. She was in work, had no energy and thought she

just had a virus, just before Christmas about six years ago, and was kept in hospital over the Christmas period. Over only one week she lost her sight due to septicaemia.

Wendy's sight could not be saved.

She no longer enjoys Christmas like she used to as it brings back such unhappy memories for her and is unable to do the things she used to, like decorating the Christmas tree.

Since then she had undergone counselling, did rehab at Christopher Grange and was helped by Dawn Scott at the Bradbury Centre helping her with various skills, such as cooking and housework.

Wendy's used a mix of our services giving her the confidence to do things but in a very different way than she used to.

Wendy says she sometimes gets frustrated, such as when she drops and breaks something and need to clean up the mess!

Counselling helped Wendy to understand that her life was going to be very different but that she would be able to cope.

Wendy is now at the point when she would like to give something back and help others finding themselves in a similar place.

She wants to set up a support group at Bradbury Fields where people can discuss their shared experiences about sight loss. It will be good to get people together as a peer support group.

When Phil first met Wendy she was really quiet and subdued but since then has been on our driving experiences! Phil said he has seen the change in Wendy since the day of her driving experience.

Wendy also attends the keep fit sessions at Bradbury Fields, including yoga and the gym.

She said that you have to eventually force yourself, challenge yourself. At first, she wouldn't go anywhere and had to rely on other people to take her to places.

Wendy has done terrifically well, learning to with her sight loss but not really coming to terms with it.

She has two sons so Christmas is still fun for them and gives her some distraction! Wendy says they get frustrated when she is unable to answer some of their questions such as “what colour is this”.

Thank you, Wendy, for sharing your story with us. It's a credit that you have come through this far but even more so that you want to give something back to people who may be in a similar position as you were in.

If you would like to become involved in Wendy's group, contact her on her mobile, 0790 363 4300 or email wendyko8011@gmail.com .

Margaret Guppy's Gardening Corner

A lot of people buy indoor plants at this time of year.

There are two kinds of cyclamen, indoor and outdoor. Make sure you buy the indoor one if you want an indoor plant because if you put an indoor one outside and an outside one indoors, they will die! The indoor cyclamen is usually a big bigger.

When you are putting a plant indoors, always have a drip tray or saucer at the bottom and water from the bottom to prevent over watering.

You can also grow herbs indoors, particularly in the winter. Keep a couple on your kitchen window ledge. Mint, sage, thyme, and use them when you are cooking.

Don't plant mint in the garden as it is very invasive. Keep it in a pot.

Plants for shade:

Outdoor cyclamen, bergenia, the common name being Elephant's Ears because the leaves look like an elephant's ears! They flower every year.

Skimmia is a shrub that doesn't mind some shade. They have flowers and berries at certain times of the year.

If you have any terracotta pots in your garden, please remember to wrap them in bubble wrap for the winter as the cold weather expands the soils and tends to crack the pots. Wrap the tender plants in horticultural fleece for the winter. This is easy to buy from garden centres by the metre or small packs.

Please don't forget the birds! Any stale cake on the bird table will go down a treat! Margaret has been known to put out Victoria Sponge for her feathered friends!

Lots of berries on the trees this year. I don't know if you know the old superstition that it's a sign of bad weather if you've got lots of

berries on the trees so don't forget your woolly hats and scarves!

Garden Suite

Gill Dottie has now been here for a whole year and is very much looking forward to our Christmas party season.

The first Christmas party of the season was held on Friday 30th November 2018, welcoming the VI sports group, SAVI, for their annual Christmas Bash. They had a karaoke so it was a fun night!

Over the past year we hosted 83 events in the Iris Conservatory along with the monthly quizzes and Jim's Music Nights. We had a golden wedding, 80th birthday party, a vicar's ordination, Christenings, funerals, the Bradbury Walker's Annual Barbeque but the part of the year had to be Louise Miller's Grease themed hen night!

We've also held a few afternoon tea parties which have been very popular with as few as 15 people to as many as 40 people for Suzy McFarlane's baby shower. These are great afternoons with a mix of old China, games being played, etc., and start at around £10 per person.

This year we were fortunate to receive a grant of just over £2,000 from a local Liverpool trust, the Skelton Bounty, who held charities to purchase equipment. The grant enabled us to buy some new outdoor seating and a barbeque which will be used by the Active Vision Clubs in the summer as well as for evening events.

If you know of anyone who might like to hire the Garden Suite, please ask them to contact Gill on 0151 221 0888.

Gill's Auntie Jean, who is in her eighties, held her family party here recently and had it because during the year she had had a major operation and says she had the party to thank all her family and relations for helping her get through it and basically, because she was just

happy to be alive after such a major operation. There were only 40 guests, they hired a light up dance floor which the children absolutely loved, Vince did a brilliant buffet and a good night was had by all.

Looking ahead to next year, so far we have 46 events booked in already but have still got many weekend dates available. So if anybody does want to use us for a family party, then please ask them to get in touch with Gill.

Finally, happy Christmas and a healthy 2019!

Merry Christmas everyone!

Iain Mitchell
Sight Loss Councils

You may remember Iain Mitchell who completed the Utility Warehouse training with Phil and came to talk to us about that some

time ago. He had now moved on to pastures new.

Iain is now officially the Engagement Manager for the Thomas Pocklington Trust. They are designed to reach out to the wider VI community to try to get their voices heard through a series of councils that they want to set up called Sight Loss Councils, run by VI people, for VI people and only deal with the issues encountered by VI people.

Nationally there are three of these councils set up, one in Birmingham, a Black Country one and one in London which is just starting up. We are setting one up in Liverpool; one is being set up in Newcastle and another one in Bristol.

They are looking for ten to twelve people on each Sight Loss Council, people committed to having the voice of VI people heard in their local area.

The main topic discussed is transport issues. Iain gave the example of buses in Birmingham where colour contrast had not been taken into

account. The Sight Loss Council subsequently contacted the bus company who listened and changed the colour of the grab rails.

They then provided visual awareness training to the bus company concerned.

This was really positive and Iain would like to be able to replicate this success across all major cities, making a dramatic impact in the lives of people wanting to get out and about in their local communities.

The Sight Loss Councils have six key fields they want to discuss including

- Transport
- Employment
- Leisure and sport,
- Health and wellbeing
- Technology
- The environment

A whole range of areas that people can engage in if they feel they have something to bring to that topic.

In relation to transport, it would always be useful to work with other consultative groups, they are not looking to duplicate work but to enhance current practice. The stronger we are, the louder our voice will be heard and hopefully the more things can be changed for the better.

Thomas Pocklington are currently funding the Sight Loss Councils, Iain's role is funded by them and he is an employee of Thomas Pocklington, but the intention is that the Sight Loss Councils will stand in their own right with funding from the Thomas Pocklington Trust.

There may come a time that the Sight Loss Councils have to hold Thomas Pocklington to account. That level of independence will allow them to do that.

The Sight Loss Councils allow people to have their opinions but to take them to where they can be heard and listened to, taking it on to the next level.

Anyone who would like to become involved is more than welcome. There is a formal

process but don't be put off – it's more of a discussion.

To contact Iain his email address is iain.mitchell@pocklington-trust.org.uk or telephone him on 07914 770909.

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If you want to receive a fuller version of this newsletter, please contact reception on 0151 221 0888 and you will be sent the audio version.

We hope you've enjoyed this Newsletter and look forward to meeting you again when we present our next Newsletter.