

Children Matter

News Bulletin

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September 2018



Summer 2018



Age UK Staffordshire: As you will have seen from recent communications from our organisation, preparations are well underway for the merger of Age UK South Staffordshire with our neighbouring Age UK Brand Partners in North Staffordshire and Burton Upon Trent.

Naomi Pay, currently Chief Executive for Age UK South Staffordshire, will be the Chief Executive of the merged countywide organisation from 1st October 2018 and Head Office will be based at the Roller Mill in Penkridge. There will still be a local presence in all 3 areas and there is a commitment that local presence will be maintained across the county.

Peter Bullock, Chief Executive of Age UK North Staffordshire, has been planning on retiring since last year and will retire at the end of September. Jane Ingram, Interim Chief Officer of Age UK Burton will be returning to her substantive role of Head of Community Services.

Naomi Pay is looking forward to the challenge of being Chief Executive of the merged organisation and the partnership is committed to creating one sustainable organisation to increase our offer of services to older people, their families and carers. Meanwhile, it is 'business as usual' and services will not be affected as a result of the merger.



Children Matter Team Manager appointed



During the first half of this year, Children Matter Project Organisers and senior managers from both North and South Staffordshire Age UK's held a series of one-day workshops with external facilitators. The aim was to look at how the project can develop when current Big Lottery funding comes to an end next summer.

A business development plan is emerging as a result of this work and a proposal to appoint a part-time team manager to help implement the plan was approved by the Lottery in the summer.

Subsequently, Helen Simpson, one of the two North Staffordshire Project Organisers, successfully applied for the new role, and has been in post since the beginning of September. With the launch of the newly-merged Age UK Staffordshire charity from 1st October, Helen will manage the cross-county Children Matter staff team, and will be working with colleagues to help sustain Age UK's volunteering scheme in Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent primary schools for the future.

Children Matter - Learning Together: Volunteer Celebrations



Our Spring Volunteer Meeting in South Staffs coincided with Volunteers Week in June 2018. We had a very useful meeting attended by volunteers from across the south of the County. It was also lovely to be able to present those who attended with thank you certificates and some long service certificates for those who have completed over 5 years!



The last newsletter was jam packed with all the amazing work which went into the Children's Writing Competition so we are a little late to share the last North Staffordshire volunteer networking event. In March we arranged for 30 of our volunteers to attend a day out at World of Wedgwood, including a museum tour, designing a plate and most importantly – lunch and the chance to meet each other!

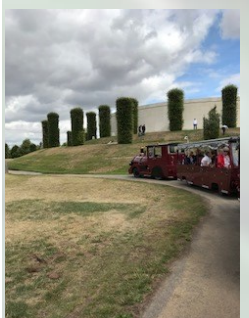
The day was a huge success as you can see from the photo and all the volunteers were later given a small plate with their design – here we have Marian Thompson with her completed plate.



10 Year Celebration Event at The National Memorial Arboretum



To celebrate the milestone 10th Anniversary of the project we organised a trip to the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas on Wednesday 1st August. The trip was attended by 65 volunteers from across the county with North Staffs volunteers arriving by coach from Hanley. We enjoyed a thought provoking land train trip around the memorials followed by a delicious afternoon tea and visit to the Landscapes of Life Exhibition.



Children Matter - Learning Together: Volunteer Celebrations



In other news....

A Lasting Legacy for a Lottery Legend

Our very own 'Lottery Legend', Jack Neville celebrated his 95th Birthday and 8 years of volunteering with the Children Matter Project in 2018! When we visited the Arboretum in August, Jack was proud to show us a memorial which is very close to his heart as he was a Grove Original.

Jack started off his career in the Air Force, serving between 1939 – 1953 as a flight engineer, and was stationed all over the World. He joined the Halton Grove RAF apprentice scheme aged 16 and was fondly known as one of Trenchard's Brats. To help the National Arboretum, Jack and his colleague Bill Woodward helped to develop an area dedicated to all of the RAF apprentices. If you visit the Arboretum you will find the amazing dedication near the heart of the Arboretum, just by the land train stop. There is even an information point with Jack's voice recorded on the box – giving people extra information.



Training Update:

Our Entrust training sessions for Year 3 have been arranged for:

27th September 2018: Hanley

24th October 2018: Wightwick

12th March 2019: Stafford

Further information about venues and times will be emailed soon.



Positive Steps:

Big Lottery Funding ended for Positive Steps at the end of June but we have been able to continue the activities with funding from Garfield Weston.

The project provides seated exercise classes and graded walks across Southern Staffordshire – Lichfield, Cannock and South Staffs Districts and Tamworth Borough.

The walks range from 30 minutes to in excess of two hours on varying terrains. The walks are open to people of all ages and abilities and the project is accredited by Walking for Health and are free of charge.

The classes which are delivered in community venues and sheltered accommodations provide opportunity for older people in the community to meet, socialise, make new social links and increase their physical health and overall wellbeing. You can ring Sue Blower on 01785 788482 to request a walk programme or have a look on the website <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/southstaffs/activities-and-events/>



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