

OXFORDSHIRE BEFRIENDING NETWORK

Volume 1, Issue 1

MAY 08

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Welcome to the Newsletter

Hello and a warm welcome to this our first new look newsletter. We will be sending this out every month. But it isn't just about hearing from us about what is going on at the Oxfordshire Befriending Network, it is also a place for you to tell everyone your news and views and to get more involved in our work. So if you have something you would like to share in words or in pictures, just let us know using the contact details at the end of this newsletter.

These are exciting times in Oxfordshire. The

Primary Care Trust is currently consulting on the End Of Life Commissioning Strategy – and the results will shape the future of services across the county in the months and years to come. Those of you who attended our AGM back in March will have already heard from Anthony Hughes the project lead, who was our keynote speaker on the day. We do have copies of the strategy available electronically or by post so if you are interested in finding out more then let us know and we will send it to you.



Coming Soon

We are in the process of rolling out two new initiatives. Firstly we have a Criminal Records Declaration which will be sent out to all new volunteers who have an existing CRB check. In time we will be rolling this out to

all our volunteers. Secondly, we have had many requests for ID cards and again we are in the process of sending these out to our new volunteers ahead of making them available to everyone.

Training News

The Spring Oxford training started with 11 trainees on 18th March, facilitated by Isabel. The participants quickly connected with each other through a range of listening exercises, graduating to sharing their own experiences of loss and their own life reviews. On the final day, a current volunteer with experience of befriending someone without speech gave an enlightening glimpse into

what this very challenging situation might be like, as well as into the very tangible rewards that such an experience might offer. The trainees were also able to meet and question a range of other current volunteers (and one befriending partner who was brought in from Henley by her volunteer) to hear about their relationships, and to start formulating their sense of what their

own befriending relationship might be. Thanks as ever to all volunteers, partners and staff who so ably supported this training.

All 11 trainees stayed the course, and the feedback indicated that they found it to have been a very worthwhile experience. The time always goes by quickly, and the close links that have been forged will hopefully be maintained through the

This session can be both challenging and fruitful (for both trainers and trainees),

Training Session 6

We thought it would be useful here to highlight session 6 where we look at different aspects of our personality. In this session we are particularly interested in the aspects of our character that either we are *unaware* of, or that we knowingly or unknowingly keep in the dark. This ses-

sion can be both challenging and fruitful (for both trainers and trainees), if we can be open to the process. As you know OBN promotes safe and sound befriending, and getting to know all the different aspects of our self can help us to be clearer in our communication, and to

have a greater understanding of our boundaries, both personal and organisational.

The next Oxford Training

The next Oxford Training is due to start on 17th June and will take place on Tuesday evenings plus two full-day Saturdays at the OBN premises. If you think anyone you know might like to find out more about becoming a

volunteer with us, please contact: enquiries@oxonbefriending.net

Witney

Ten prospective befriending volunteers started the Witney Induction Training on Wednesday 12th March. Two further trainees from West Oxfordshire joined the current Oxford Training as they work full time and were unable to attend a daytime training.

The course, held in the lounge of the Witney Congregational Church, was

facilitated by Linda with the support of staff members, Isabel Pack and Elaine Sar. The trainees have also had the benefit of meeting several of the current experienced West Oxon. volunteers and Befriending Partner, Iris Pimm.

A big thank you to those who have supported the staff to ensure the success of this

first West Oxon. county training and so honestly and ably have shared their befriending experiences – it has been much appreciated.

The final session of the course ran on 23rd April 08



Outreach

Staff at the OBN have been getting out and about to Burford (at an Age Concern event) and at a Green Fair in Witney. At Witney contact was made with 6 potential new volunteers as well as members of the public who were dealing with relatives with terminal diagnoses.

More outreach is planned in West and North Oxon. Volunteer Yvonne Beaumont, and Linda will staff a stall at the Age Concern Older People's Information Fair to be held at the Langdale Hall in Witney on Thursday 8th May. Volunteers Sue Hadland and Jean Chapman have

offered to run a similar stall in Chipping Norton at the end of June.

The Jericho Street Fair is on Saturday **14th June** and The Cowley Road Carnival is on the **6th July**

The Oxfordshire Befriending Network will be having stalls at the Jericho Street Fair and the Cowley Road Carnival so if you can help out please get in touch with Laura

End of Life Services

As some of you know we are looking to further develop our services to those near the end of their lives. This work is being led by Ally. We recently held an open meeting for interested volunteers at our offices to exchange ideas and

ask questions to help shape the project. Our thanks go to those who attended.

The second End of Life meeting was organised by Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust, and linked in with

the issues raised in the draft strategy document that many of you received at our AGM.

End of Life Services

It is a very engaging time for the field of End of Life work; not only is this strand of OBN's work developing concurrently with what is being developed within the Primary Care Trust, but nationally the government is also seeking to bring the subject of death and dying out of the shadows, and to promote greater choice and flexibility about the care available for people as they

approach the final stages of their life.

'There is a major mismatch between people's preferences for where they should die and their actual place of death'

Professor Mike Richards

Remembering

Mollie Nixon, Befriending Partner of Jane Lanci-ault, died peacefully at her home in Moreton-in-the-Marsh on Easter Sunday. Jane had developed a deep friendship with Mollie who lived with chronic back pain and cancer. Jane and her sister Susie, a former befriender, supported

Mollie and her two daughters to ensure Mollie could die at home as she wished and they were all present with Mollie on Easter Sunday. Our thoughts are with Mollie's family and Jane and Susie at this time as they come to terms with the loss of a great mother and friend.

Remembering

Judith Reynolds died peacefully in a Nursing Home in Boars Hills on Friday 4th April. As a service user Judith had been a staunch supported of OBN and it's work over a number of years, giving back as she received from

the organisation. She had attended several of our Induction Training Sessions to talk to potential volunteers about how our services had impacted her life and to answer their many questions. It was great that despite failing

health she was able to be present at our last Christmas party

Remembering

Judith was accompanied all the way on her journey with multiple sclerosis and then cancer by Ally Stott who continued as her Befriending Volunteer after taking on the role of Oxford City Co-ordinator with the OBN over two years ago. Our thoughts are very much with Ally, who had built a deep relationship with Judith over several years and with all who knew and loved her.

Margaret Kinnane befriending partner of Joan Boyle died at the beginning of April. Margaret had been befriended by Joan Boyle since January 2006, and a strong and trusting relationship developed between them. Prior to being befriended by Joan, Margaret was befriended for a short time by Kate Evans. Margaret had recovered well from surgery a few years ago to

remove cancer from her tongue, and died unexpectedly in hospital after having a fever. Our best wishes are with all those who are close to her.

Remembering

Diana Hodgkinson died in mid-April in hospital. Diana was the much loved befriending partner of Barbara Brown. Prior to being befriended by Barbara, Diana was befriended by Glynis Balehan and then by Rachael Woodhouse. Barbara and Diana began their befriending relation-

ship almost 2 years ago, and within a short time a friendship of mutual respect, strong will and good humour had been formed. Despite Diana being in her early 90s, her strength of character came through to the very end, she will be greatly missed by those who knew and loved her.

Bless you Diana! and thank you Barbara.

Every Penny Counts



Every Penny Counts – The Oxford Befriending Network needs money to keep its services going – can you help us raise funds? We always are on the look out for fundraising volunteers and if you have any particular interest

or skills in fundraising and marketing then we would be really pleased to hear from you. But here to get you started are some of our:

Top Ideas for Fundraising

Shaking that Tin

Your local supermarket, pub, train station, theatre, cinema..the list is endless. You do need to get their permission to organise a collection and we have a supply of collecting tins just waiting to be used.

Every Penny Counts!

Anyone for Tea?

Fancy holding a coffee morning or afternoon tea and cakes or even a BBQ (if the weather holds!!) – then charge people to attend and start cooking!

On Your Marks, Get Set...Go!!

Did you watch the Marathon runners heading up the Mall – did they inspire you to put on your trainers? It isn't just running we are looking at here.

For any sporting event that you take part in make The Oxfordshire Befriending Network your charity of choice.

Test Your Knowledge

Calling all pub quiz organisers. If you run a quiz make The Oxfordshire Befriending Network the charity you support.

Going, Going Gone...

To the highest bidder of course. Do you have a special talent or skill that

people would pay for? Do you love ironing? Are you a brilliant photographer? a gourmet cook? A cracking garden designer? A dab-hand at DIY?

Then how about auctioning your skills to the highest bidder for the benefit of the Oxfordshire Befriending Network?



If you have any questions or ideas or want to get more involved in our fundraising get in touch!

Cotswold Dreaming

Wychwood Poetry and Pictures, a new arts group based in Chipping Norton has organised an evening out with dinner, poetry and pictures at the Blue Boar in Chipping Norton at 7.30pm on Saturday 14th June.

The evening is called Cotswold Dreaming, and will feature imagery of the local landscape, new poetry by local writers and a little music to add to the culinary delights served up from the kitchen of the Blue Boar.

All profits from the event will be shared between The Oxfordshire Befriending Network and Katherine House Hospice.

Tickets cost £20 and are available from Nick or Laura at the OBN office.

All profits from the event will be shared between The Oxfordshire Befriending Network and Katherine House Hospice.

News roundup

Message in a Bottle

The Message in a Bottle scheme is an idea designed to encourage people who live alone to keep their basic personal and medical details in a common location where they can be easily found in an emergency.

The personal information is kept in a plastic bottle which goes in the fridge. Membership of the scheme is denoted by two green cross stickers. One goes inside the front door and the other on the fridge itself.

The scheme is free and bottles can be obtained from health centres, GP surgeries and Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinators

News roundup

The scheme is run by The Lions Clubs and you can get more information from Lion Maddy Radburn on 01993772241 or maddy@mradburn.fsbusiness.co.uk

What Helps to Keep you Healthy, Happy and Active?

Oxfordshire Rural Community Council is looking at services from the Primary Care Trust and

Oxfordshire County Council which older people use. Responses to the survey will be collected until the end of May. For further information contact

ORCC, Jericho Farm, Worton, Witney, OX29 4SZ

www.oxonrcc.org.uk

Life Before Death

You might just be able to catch this amazing

photographic exhibition at The Wellcome Collection (183 Euston Road, London) which closes on 18th May. This is an extraordinary series of portraits by German photographer Walter Schels. His partner Beate Lakotta recorded the poignant and revealing interviews with the subjects in their final days.

The alliance will aim to represent all people in Oxfordshire affected by a neurological condition

News roundup

Oxfordshire Neurological Alliance

The Oxfordshire Befriending Network recently attended a meeting to discuss the formation of an Oxfordshire Neurological Alliance. Along with representatives from many voluntary sector groups we

heard that an important objective of such an alliance would be to enable the neurological charities to achieve greater impact in lobbying and informing key bodies such as the Primary Care Trust, local and national politicians and the general public on the main generic issues affecting

people who have a neurological condition. Those present at the meeting were in favour of such an alliance being established and linking into the national body and further work is now taking place to establish a steering group.

Support Groups

Attendance at support groups is an integral component of your role as a volunteer. It helps to ensure the quality of service to your befriending partner as well as the quality of support to you, the volunteer. We will be revisiting

our guidelines to ensure that we have clarity over procedures if we have volunteers who regularly fail to attend support group meetings.

Our next County Gathering will be held on **June 3rd 2008 7-9pm**. Chris

Gillett Head Macmillan Nurse from Sobell House Hospice will be our guest speaker. Venue details will follow shortly but please remember that as we are having the county gathering no support groups will be held in June.

Dates for your diary

May 2008

6th 2-3.30pm Oxford City Daytime Group. OBN

Offices

6th 7-8.30pm Oxford City Evening Group. OBN

Offices

8th Daytime Age Concern Information Fair—Witney

13th 7-9pm West Oxon Support Group. The Ridgeway Burford

15th 1-2.30pm North Oxon Daytime Support Group. Family Room,

Relate, Castle Street

Banbury

20th 7-8.30pm North Oxon Daytime Support Group Garden Room

(upstairs) Carers Centre, Horse Fair, Banbury

20th 7-9pm South & East Support Group. Abingdon

June 2008

3rd 7-9pm County Gathering

14th daytime Jericho Street Fair

14th 7.30pm Wychwood Poetry & Pictures

17th evening Oxford volunteer training starts

July 2008

6th daytime Cowley Road Carnival

And finally

Coming next month...

Web based fundraising – our new initiative.... the OBN library, we take you through the bookshelves....our response to the PCT's End of Life Strategy..and much, much more

How to get in touch with us:

By phone: 01865 791781

By email:

enquiries@oxonbefriending.net

By mail: East Oxford Community Centre, Princes Street, Oxford, OX4 1DD

Thank you

Thanks to our volunteer Hilary Wheatley for sub-editing and proof-reading this newsletter

COMPLIMENTS, CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS

Want to compliment us about something?

Want to share a concern?

Want to make a complaint?

Let us know

Let us know

Let us know

Oxfordshire Befriending Network

East Oxford Community Centre
Princes Street
Oxford
OX4 1DD

Phone: 01865 791781
E-mail: enquiries@oxonbefriending.net

We are on the web
www.oxonbefriending.net

Supporting people with life threatening and terminal illnesses.

The Oxfordshire Befriending Network aims to improve the quality of life for those with life-threatening and terminal illnesses. We do this by providing trained volunteers in the capacity of befriender, advocate or counselor to give support in the home, the hospice or the hospital,

For more information about our services, to make a referral, to help us raise funds or to find out about our volunteering opportunities, contact us

*enquiries@oxonbefriending.net
01865 791781*



Supported by

