



Support Network Newsletter

October 2017

Number 11

In this Issue

- Introducing our new CEO
- ... and our new Chair
- No. 24
- New outdoor play area
- Survivors' Voices
- Community Fundraising in Action
- Fundraising Pamper Evening
- More Purple Tea Party Fun!
- Two musical events for your diary

Event Dates

Saturday 18th
November: Rock
Concert

Sunday 10th
December: Aquarius
Singers Annual
Christmas Concert

Introducing our new CEO



We are pleased to announce the appointment of Heather Hunt as the new CEO of Bury St Edmunds Women's Aid Centre, who will be joining us at the end of this month. For the past 3 years Heather has managed the Young and Young Adult Carer Service of the Maldon-based charity Action for Family Carers, where her team of 21 full- and part-time staff support over 1000 young people and their families. Prior to that she was a Young Carers' Support and

Advocacy Worker for Suffolk Family Carers. In both those roles she has worked with families experiencing a range of complex issues that include domestic abuse, mental health problems such as depression and/or addiction, social isolation and financial hardship. Heather impressed us at interview with her proven leadership abilities, her financial management experience and her successful track record of obtaining local authority contracts and grants from national charities. She is also an experienced public speaker and is practised in giving media interviews. In short, Heather is exactly the person we hoped to find to lead our organisation forward, and we look forward to welcoming her on 30th October.

Annie officially retired at the beginning of September, but has kindly agreed to remain in post for two days a week until Christmas in order to induct Heather into her new role. It will be an unbelievably sad day when she leaves us; but we continue to hope that in due course she may decide to serve on the Board of Trustees.



... and our new Chair



At our AGM held at the Refuge on Monday 24th July, Maureen Byrne was appointed Chair of the Board of Trustees. Maureen has served as a Trustee for 4 years. She is an Employment Law Advisor with 30 years' experience on Employment Tribunals, an Accredited Mediator and a Conciliation Support Worker. She is also a Trade Union Branch Officer at Stansted Airport and a Haverhill Town Councillor. With our expanding staff team and plans to increase our pool of volunteers, we are extremely fortunate to have Maureen's expertise and range of Human Resources skills at our disposal. Meanwhile our previous Chair, Christina Dye, was re-appointed Vice-Chair. Elizabeth Larcombe and Fiona Harbron continue as Treasurer and Secretary respectively. The remaining members of the Board are Judith Grandi our Fundraiser, Ruby Sayed and Pauline Allen.

Other News

No. 24



Renovations are still being carried out at our new Outreach Centre in St Andrews Street North. The new IT system is already in place, with the telephone and security systems currently being installed. There is still a lot to do before we can unpack and arrange our new furniture, but we are crossing our fingers that all workmen will be gone by the end of the month. In order not to attract undue

attention, the Centre will be known quite simply as 'No 24' - although some of our service users have dubbed it 'Butterflies' because of the beautiful graphics on the window. The image of purple butterflies was chosen to match the butterfly on our logo - the symbol of new beginnings that carries a lot of meaning for our Survivors. We hope to announce the date of the official opening in the January Newsletter.

New outdoor play area

Thanks to the support and generosity of our Patron Gina Long, plans are afoot to transform the tired and awkwardly-sloping Refuge garden into an imaginative outdoor play area for our child residents and a more attractive environment for their mums. Gina's friend Janey Auchincloss, the well-known garden designer and Chelsea gold medallist, has kindly come on board to design something really special for us, and both she and Gina will be calling on friends and business contacts to provide practical assistance. Janey is aiming to get the project underway in early Spring, and we can't wait to discover what's in store!



Summer Raffle

This year the Summer Raffle raised a welcome £1550.00 towards our Development Fund. We are grateful to all who contributed to this successful outcome: the businesses and individuals who donated prizes, those who sold tickets on our behalf, and everyone who bought tickets to support our cause. A great team effort by one and all!





Most of our readers will already be aware of the ongoing partnership between our organisation and Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds that began in 2016 when playwright Danusia Iwaszko delivered a series of four writing workshops for residents and former residents at the Women's Refuge. Using the stories they wrote, Danusia then worked with the women to create 'Refuge', which was performed before a small invited audience at the Theatre Royal in March 2016.

Such was the impact of that first performance that Annie and Judith immediately recognised its potential as a powerful training and awareness-raising tool and were determined to find a means of bringing it to a larger, Suffolk-wide audience - though they were soon to discover that it was easier said than done to pull off such an ambitious undertaking. With their dream fast-fading, they approached Tim Holder, Head of Public Affairs at Suffolk Community Foundation, who saw at once that the way to make it happen would be to persuade four key players to work together in a unique creative collaboration: Suffolk Community Foundation, Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds, Bury St Edmunds Women's Refuge and DanceEast. And that is exactly what he managed to deliver!

The outcome was a special and highly successful two-part event held on Tuesday 10th October at DanceEast in Ipswich that raised awareness of the many aspects of Domestic Abuse and challenged victim stereotypes.

The Afternoon Event



This was billed as 'A Unique Multi-Agency Domestic Abuse Training Opportunity'. The event consisted of 'Refuge', a powerful dramatization of the stories of women in refuge with a cast of actors directed by Danusia Iwaszko, followed by a Q & A session with a panel of survivors of domestic abuse. It was attended by delegates from key sectors such as the Judiciary, Constabulary, Custodial Services, Local Authority Services, Health and Education, as well as a number of relevant 3rd Sector organisations.

The Evening Event

This followed the same format as the afternoon event and with the same objectives in mind, but with a guest list drawn up by Suffolk Community Foundation. An additional aim of the evening performance was to demonstrate the power of the arts as therapy.

These two events were attended by over 350 people, and feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. We are grateful to all our collaborators who worked so tirelessly to translate our vision into reality. We are particularly proud of the four Survivors who responded to questions from the two large audiences with such honesty and eloquence.



Community Fundraising in Action

We are proud to announce that the members of Rotaract Bury St Edmunds have nominated us as one of the four Charities for whom they will be fundraising during the coming year.



Our thanks to Kiki Law and the team at the Sahara Boutique in Bury St Edmunds who raised £500.00 for us at their annual Summer Party.



We are grateful to Jeannie & Fred Bloomfield who recently organised a Quiz Night in Walsham Le Willows, raising £253.50 towards 'No.24', our soon-to-be-opened Outreach Centre in St Andrews Street North.



The fabulous Edmund Octet and Friends raised £500.00 at their popular annual Cabaret Night. Grateful thanks to their Director, Gill Garside, for suggesting us as this year's beneficiary.



An awareness-raising stall and bucket collection at Sainsbury Bury St Edmunds on Saturday 7th October raised an unprecedented £800.32! Thanks to Volunteers Gill, Liz, Anna, Frances & Peter; to Trustees Maureen, Pauline & Judith - and the biggest thanks of all to Fiona who organised the event for us.

Fundraising Pamper Evening

Members of our Support Network are cordially invited by L'Occitane Boutique in Bury St Edmunds to attend a Fundraising Pamper Evening in aid of our new Outreach Centre. The event will take place on Thursday 16th November from 6pm-8pm. Tickets cost £15 and will be on sale at the boutique until Friday 10th November. Included in the price will be an express facial, hand and arm massages, champagne, chocolates and exclusive discounts. All proceeds to be donated the Bury St Edmunds Women's Aid Centre. This promises to be a wonderful evening, and we hope that as many of our supporters as possible will be able to attend.

L'OCCITANE
EN PROVENCE

Fundraising Pamper Evening

In support of Bury St Edmunds Women's Aid Centre

Experience an evening of pampering at L'Occitane Bury St Edmunds, where you can enjoy an express facial and experience a moment of delight with one of our signature hand and arm massages. Enjoy champagne, chocolates and exclusive discounts.

6pm-8pm Thursday 16th November

Tickets will be on sale for £15 each until Friday 10th November and can be obtained directly from the boutique. Cash only please as all proceeds from ticket sales will be donated to the Women's Aid Centre.

Receive £10 off a £60 spend and £20 off a £100 spend.
Valid on full price items, excludes gift sets and special value items.
Not to be combined with any other discounts, promotion or gift card purchase.

More Purple Tea Party Fun!

Five more Purple Tea Parties have taken place since the July Newsletter, with more in the pipeline before the end of the year. A huge thank you to **Jeannie Bloomfield**, **Sue Woods of TGWU Branch 1/1365**, **Drinkstone WI** and **Christine Stainer** for holding such wonderfully enjoyable Tea Parties, and to **Sarah Parkinson** for combining hers with a fun-filled Mini-Olympiad complete with a medal ceremony conducted by Annie! That brings the overall total to over £3000.00 raised so far in 2017.



This is an on-going campaign to raise urgently needed funds to cover extra staffing costs for our work at No.24 and to develop new programmes.

Fundraising packs are available, containing all the information and resources you'll need to make your Tea Party go with a swing, plus ideas on how to make it a truly **PURPLE** occasion.

Each Purple Tea Party Fundraising Pack contains:



To obtain your Fundraising Pack, please email your postal address to judithwac@btconnect.com or ring Nikki on 01284 753085

Two musical events for your diary!

Saturday 18th November

Seymour Quigley of Washing Machine Promotions has kindly organised a fantastic ROCK CONCERT in aid of the Women's Refuge, to be held at Hunter Club from 6pm - 11pm. Tickets £5 on the door. The gig will be headlined by *Janet Street Slaughter*, and will feature supporting acts *Goldblume*, *Lemondaze*, *All We Know*, *Inbetween Normalities*, and *Sam Eagle & the Lemon Lizards*.

"Washing Machine is dedicated to bringing awesome nights of alternative / rock / indie / punk / dance music to the good people of Bury St Edmunds "Rock City" & beyond!"

Please help spread the word!



The poster features the band name 'Janet Street Slaughter' in a stylized, gothic font. To the left is a rooster illustration, and to the right is a woman in a dress. Below this is a black and white photo of a woman with a headscarf and glasses. A circular text box on the right reads: 'FUNDRAISER for BURY ST EDMUNDS WOMEN'S REFUGE Providing safety and support for women and children experiencing Domestic Abuse.' The bottom section lists the supporting acts: 'Goldblume', 'LEMONDAZE', 'Sam Eagle and the Lemon Lizards', 'ALL WE KNOW', and 'INBETWEEN NORMALITIES (acoustic)'. The venue is 'THE HUNTER CLUB BURY ST EDMUNDS' and the date is 'SATURDAY 18TH NOVEMBER 2017'. It also includes a 'Washing Machine Promotions' logo, a '14+ welcome' notice, and the 'HC HUNTER CLUB' logo.

Sunday 10th December

The Aquarius Singers will be holding their Annual Christmas Concert at All Saints Church, Bury St Edmunds, at 7.00pm. Tickets £8, to include a glass of mulled wine and refreshments. There will also be a raffle, drawn on the night. Proceeds in aid of the Women's Refuge.

Come along and bring your friends!

