



unsung heroes

The Queen's Award for  
Voluntary Service 2008

# The Beacon Friends Newsletter



Summer 2011



## Fundraiser for Beacon Manchester BUPA 10K

### WELL DONE TO EVERYONE WHO TOOK PART!

For the second year running we entered Team Beacon in this event with 23 runners and walkers doing us proud!!! This year's team was made up of counsellors, trustees and friends of Beacon - many doing this for the first time and all commenting on how exciting it was to take part in such a big event.

All successfully finished the run/walk in under 2 hours and everyone managed to obtain fantastic amounts of sponsorship. The fastest on our team was Ben Garside who pipped 16 year old James Stanion, last year's fastest for Beacon, to the post by less than a minute. Well done to both of you ....43 & 44 minutes - fabulous times!! However, our team wasn't just youngsters at least half of those taking part were over 21!

Inspired by the 2010 efforts Margaret Lewis, one of Beacon's trustees, decided she wanted to be part of the 2011 team: not only did she speed walk the course completing it in 1.41 hours she raised a phenomenal £900. A huge thank you to you all for your efforts on the day and raising money for Beacon.

The fund raising trustees send this special message.....

*"Thank you to all the runners who trained and raised funds for Beacon Counselling at this year's Great Manchester Run. The amount raised will be in excess of £5000 which is a great boost to Beacon. A fantastic effort by all."*

### Thank you

to

*Janet Bowden from  
Woodbank Office Solutions,  
Stockport*

for donating the runners T-shirts.

They were printed by  
Totally T-shirts, Stockport.



### Appeal for magazines

Please can you bring any unwanted magazines that are in good condition into the Bramhall office. They will be used in our waiting room.

## Farewell to Creator of Friends Newsletter, Olivia Hunt

Over 10 years ago, Beacon looked to set up a letter for its volunteers and supporters that would have news of donations and what the service was doing. Olivia Hunt stepped into the breach and created the first edition of Friends of Beacon. Perhaps she didn't expect it, but over the next 10 years she would change the newsletter from a bi-annual A4 update into a 4 page, bi-monthly newsletter in full colour! What is more, Olivia developed a real knack for finding interesting items and for making potentially boring items interesting; during my time at Beacon she has shown a flair for writing in a way that is informative and professional, yet warm and personal at the same time. And now Olivia is stepping down from this role, with this her last edition. I want to thank her for the amazing dedication, commitment, and time she has given to make the Friends newsletter what it is, and for being a stalwart for Beacon for such a long time. I also enjoy working with Olivia, and will miss our occasional meetings to discuss what's coming up for future editions. This is not the end of all Olivia's involvement with Beacon, as she will be helping out with occasional projects, and is currently working on a History of Beacon, which will be developed into a booklet for all.

This is not the end of the Friends newsletter though, oh no! Julia Larmer, who has been putting the editing to the articles for the last year and created the new look for the newsletter, has been Olivia's protégé and will be taking over from the next edition. So welcome and good luck to Julia as the new editor in chief of the Friends newsletter.

James Harper

Diana Stockford, Counsellor, left Beacon and has written to us about her experience with us. She writes *"there was always a cheery and welcoming atmosphere as I came up the stairs and this seemed to me to be the hallmark of a confident organisation. ... I mention Beacon to whoever I come across who is interested in how the independent organisations run counselling as an exemplar .....*

Thank you, Diana, your kind words are very much appreciated.



### Very new arrivals

On 15th June, the second Miss Harper arrived, Harriet Aurelia. Our congratulations to James and Natalie. Hopefully Hermione is thrilled with her new sister. A small package made its way to the proud parents from the office team.

We also congratulate Charlotte on the arrival of Max, Emily on the arrival of Lily and Julie on the arrival of Jake.



### Wellbeing Tip

**Maintain friendships: Just listening and talking to friends who are feeling down can make a huge difference.**

**So make sure you devote time to maintaining your friendships both for their sake and your own.**

[www.mentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk)



## Arrivals & Departures....

Interviews took place on Friday May 13<sup>th</sup> – from nearly 50 applications 7 people were interviewed and 6 were offered posts with Beacon. Tom and Nafeesa are working at Disability Stockport, Adrian is working at the Beechwood Centre in Adswood, and Fleur, Aditi and Ruth are based at the Bramhall office.



We now have a total of 55 counsellors, with 36 working on the adult service in Bramhall, the Heaton and Adswood; 9 at Disability Stockport; 5 on the Pennine Care contract, 3 on the Wythenshawe project, and 8 in schools and B2. A number of counsellors work across more than one project.

We have said goodbye to Diana, who travelled from Holmfirth to work in Bramhall, but her family are planning a move south. Also moving south soon is Briony, so we say thanks and farewell to both. And Olwyn has decided to pursue her career with private counselling and left Disability Stockport at the end of June - Good Luck, Olwyn.

Our best wishes go to Jim and Assia who are recovering from health problems and we hope to see you back very soon.



## Office News

Life in Bramhall gets even busier - with more counsellors and counsellors doing more work.

Fiona stepped down from the Counselling Coordinator role looking after the Disability Stockport team, so Sue Bright is now providing our administrative support for the D.S. office – working Tuesday and Friday mornings, backed up by the other Appointment administrators in Bramhall.

Between them – Sandra, Margaret, Barbara and Sue now provide 51 hours of cover, making sure we have clients booked in, sorting the paperwork and keeping our database up to date.

We say goodbye to our Wednesday morning volunteer Tom, as he becomes a Wednesday morning volunteer counsellor. And hello to Elaine - our new admin volunteer, and Veronica – our new Wednesday evening receptionist.

At the end of June the total number of new clients had reached 330 - 217 for Bramhall, 16 Adswood, 65 Disability Stockport, 49 from Pennine Care and 37 in Wythenshawe and the total number of active clients 115.



## Update from the Supervisors – Margaret Parker

The team of supervisors has been strengthened in the past few months with three new people, Jean, Dianne and John, and we are delighted to have them on board. We meet together every 6 weeks or so for a couple of hours, currently at the Bramhall tennis club! The idea is that we use the time to share concerns about the supervision work we do, and help each other to work things through. In fact we usually spend some of the time discussing more practical issues before we get on to the supervision of supervision. James attends part of every third meeting, which we find valuable, and recently he led us through the process of looking at the purpose and future of Beacon as part of the project which the whole of Beacon is undertaking. We take it in turns to chair the meetings, and to take the minutes.

## Finance Update by Sam Smith

We are in the fortunate position at the moment of having built up cash reserves over and above what we need on a day to day basis. We have invested these funds in Bonds (extremely safe!) which will pay better rates of interest than we get from the bank. Looking forward to next year and the year after, we may well need this money to cover continuing the work we do. In order to make the most of the investments we have made several small and short-term investments that mature at regular dates. This means we do not get penalised by having to cash in any investments early.

Beacon is also upgrading its accounting package. In July we purchased a system called "Quick Books", which is a more powerful system than our current "Money Manager". The programme was very affordable and will enable Beacon to better track spending the various grants and contracts that we have now, and anticipate having in the future.

All in all, Beacon is in a better position than a few years ago, and we are working to make sure it stays this way.

Sam Smith, Finance Manager

## Transition from trainee to qualified counsellor

Hopefully the wording of the title is not tempting fate, since I have not yet heard that I have actually passed the final assessment of my training course! However, it is true that the Diploma course at Stockport College has finished and I am now in that limbo state of being...well, what? No longer a student I suppose, but not yet in possession of the magic qualification paper, although working alongside fully qualified colleagues. It is a slightly weird feeling, but one thing is certain: as I said in my final assignment (portfolio of placement experience) 'the best thing about the whole training period has been my placement at Beacon'.

It has been through my work with clients here at Beacon's service in Bramhall that I have been able to put into practice my wish to become a counsellor and through my client work here to develop my own sense of practice and gain confidence in my own abilities. In college sessions we all shared something of our experiences: time and again I was made aware of how lucky I have been to work at Beacon. The huge support we receive here at Beacon in

comparison to what many of my peers experienced in their placements, where often very little – if any – administrative support was in place, let alone the further benefits we enjoy at Beacon such as group supervision and marvellous training workshops.

So I would like to say a huge Thank You to everyone who has supported me throughout the past 18 months of my time at Beacon: to James; an especial big thanks to Debby and Barbara and for all your admin help, general info and all round moral support; to my supervisor Ashley who has been simply fantastic; to Jed and everyone in my supervision group from whom I have learnt so much, especially Victoria (nothing to do with the wine and giggles there!) and Assia; to others I have met and learned from in training workshops – and I look forward to continuing here at Beacon for a long time to come, qualification permitting. So it's back to that small detail of just passing!

*Written by Julie Lawton*



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