

View From The Peak

The Newsletter Of
The Small Group Project

Issue No: 20
Winter 2007

The Small Group Project supports small voluntary and community groups in the High Peak and particularly those who are disadvantaged, marginalised or rurally isolated.



The team grows!



Nancy and Sandy are delighted to welcome Louise McNeil to our little team. Because of Sandy's reduced hours and

Louise—always on the go!

Nancy taking on more development work we were left with a gap in our admin support. Louise, who is already a part-time member of staff at the CVS has been internally recruited to work 10 hours a week on the project. We're really looking forward to all the fun we're going to have. Louise says 'I was thrilled to be asked to join the Small Group Project team. I am looking forward to meeting and supporting your groups and getting 'stuck in' to all the variety of exciting and interesting projects with enthusiasm and energy. So look out, you might see me at some of your meetings! As well as being a member of CVS staff, Louise is a busy mum, swimming teacher and PTA member and when she has any spare time enjoys walking in the great outdoors and travelling.

What is Poverty? - Workshop for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Advisory Group member Carol Evans reports

Most of the groups involved in the Small Group Project aim to overcome specific problems experienced by members of their group. For example a luncheon club set up to enable elderly people no longer able to socialise to meet with others for a bite to eat and a good chat or to have an outing. Access groups which look into problems of accessibility constraining their members', and many other people's activities. We don't think of this in terms of poverty or deprivation, but without such groups the lives of the members would be deprived of the ability to live a life considered the norm for the majority. Living in a rural area means that many of the services and support groups available in larger towns and cities are not available.

It was because of the very varied experience of members of these groups that the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, one of the leading research organisations in Britain, asked us to take part in a workshop looking into the public understanding of poverty. Their intention is to promote a better understanding of people experiencing deprivation and how their situation could be more authentically portrayed by the media and also to help charities and other groups communicate about poverty more effectively.

Thirteen of us took part in the workshop lasting most the day and we were able to discuss what we thought poverty was, look at headlines depicting the plight of individual cases (or in some cases the condemnation of the media to what they label as job shy or living off the state), consider how politicians speak about poverty and even dream up a 'miracle' we would like to see happen to make change. It was difficult to try and come up with a headline or caption that we felt truly represented our own lives or problems, or to say how we would address the problem of poverty in talking to a class in school, but we had a good try. It was all very interesting, exchanging ideas and hearing about experiences and I hope the researchers were able to take back a rounded view of rural deprivation and how it differs from that in urban areas.

Induction of HPBC councillors

On 27 September the High Peak CVS hosted a lively session with councillors of the High Peak Borough Council and key voluntary organisations including all the volunteer centres and the Citizens Advice Bureau, as many of the new councillors weren't aware of just how much activity there is in the voluntary and community sector.

Here at the Small Group Project we were particularly keen to let the councillors know of the importance of the groups to vulnerable, isolated people and the particular difficulties they may face. We were able to tell the councillors about all the fabulous small groups in their particular wards. They were mightily impressed—and so they should be!

The Small Group Project (SGP) is a project of High Peak CVS. Our address is 1a Bingswood Trading Estate, Whaley Bridge, High Peak. SK23 7LY. Tel: 01663 735350. www.highpeakcvs.org.uk



The Town End Club - celebrating the changing seasons

The Town End Friday Club in Chapel-en-le-Frith have been successful in a funding bid to run a series of activities based around the time of year - appropriately entitled 'Seasons of our Lives'. This group of older people meets weekly at the Methodist Church to share a hot meal and various activities and entertainments. They put together their idea of seasonal trips with associated arts and crafts sessions. Some of you may remember Andréa who used to work on the SGP. She will be leading the members in this project. The members were keen to take on another project following the enjoyment they had from making a CD of their reminiscences last year. The CD is still available for all those of you who are interested in learning about local history straight from the horse's mouth!

The Club is able to accept new members at the moment who must be from the Town End part of Chapel-en-le-Frith. They can provide transport. If you or anyone you know is interested in joining this lively club, please contact the Duty Team at Cromwell House on 01298 308100. The group would also be very happy to hear from anyone who would like to volunteer to help out at the sessions and to accompany and assist their members on day trips.

60 Not Out!

One of the great things about the Small Group Project is sometimes coming across fantastic groups almost by accident! This happened as a result of our work with The Harpur Hill Residents Association, who are keen to reach out to the older folk in their community. As a result we got to meet The Harpur Hill Darby and Joan Club which has been running for a staggering 59 years - and one of the founder members is still attending! She is 96 year old Nora Askey, who as far back as 1984 received a forty year service medal from the Women's Royal Voluntary Service, to whom the club is affiliated. Nora remembers all the canning and preserving that they did for the war effort, as well as the 'pie stand' they ran in the area each week!

The Darby and Joan Club was set up in 1948 and has enjoyed many activities over the years, including a trip to Brighton, fund raising events and general socialising of up to 40 members. Sadly, the Club lost its last 'Darby' last month when he moved to Fairfield and would very much welcome more new members. They meet weekly from 1.45-3.15pm on a Wednesday at the Methodist Church in Harpur Hill. On November 14th the local WRVS representative is coming to talk to the group, anyone interested in attending this or any other of the groups meeting can expect a warm reception and some lovely (usually homemade) cake—please give us a ring if you would like any more details.



Harpur Hill Darby and Joan Club (minus the Darbys!)

Art for Art's Sake?

We mentioned in our last newsletter that the GLOSS (Giving Lots Of Sensitive Support) group had been successful in a funding bid for training and equipment to enable them to push ahead with their pottery project. Pictured here is

group member and local artist Vaughan Parker with some of his figurines in the making - the finished version will be painted and, well, glossy! Other members of the group intend to become involved in making the pottery pieces and they will be selling them to raise funds for the group in local outlets. Keep an eye out for them!!



Vaughan showing off his works of art.

New homes for the groups

Two of our groups have found new homes since our last newsletter. New Mills Tea Dance have transferred to Thornsett Band Room - where we're told the floor is well suited to 'tripping the light fantastic'. The time remains unchanged at 2.00 - 4.00pm each Wednesday - all welcome.

Also, the **Glossopdale Fibromyalgia Support Group** have moved over to St Mary's Church, Hollingworth. They have changed their meeting day from the first to the second Thursday of each month, from 2.00 - 4.00pm. For further info about their programme or for help and support with the condition you can contact Iris on the Fibromyalgia helpline 0870 7567415.

Direct dial us on
01663 736426 (Sandy) or
01663 736427 (Nancy)
01663 736431 (Louise)

SYRENKA SOCIAL EVENING



The revellers tuck in



Live entertainment



What a good looking group....



Who would have thought it?

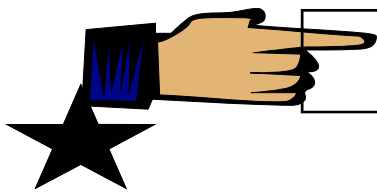
Syrenka—New Polish Generation go from strength to strength!

What a night! Over 100 eager party goers enjoyed food, music and film at the first Syrenka, New Polish Generation social at St Anne's Church hall, Buxton on Saturday 29th September. It was great to see people from so many walks of life enjoying Polish hospitality and culture. Having been welcomed by chairperson Ola Tomczak to a candlelit, Chopin filled and flag be-decked hall, we were intrigued to learn a little Polish history from a short film - did you know that Russia was once part of Poland? And no that isn't the wrong way round! Having eaten more than our fill of Polish delicacies (kolacky anyone?) Damien Zerulik and his friend Rafal started the musical ball rolling with his guitar playing before the women took over the microphone and treated us to some traditional Polish folk songs. It was at this point that MP Tom Levitt, whose wife Theresa is Polish, surprised us all with the quality of his singing by

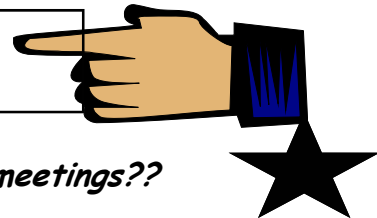
reciprocating with a rousing version of 'Wild Rover'! In fact, many parents did a really good job of that time honoured activity, embarrassing their children with their singing and dancing and generally letting their hair down. It was a smashing night of celebration. The group has worked very hard since starting up last January and they have come a long way. They were keen to express their thanks to the people who have helped them over the past months. Their aim to help Polish people with information, education and projects enabling them to integrate successfully into their local community is well under way.

The group hold regular evening meetings at the church and have a website— www.syrenkanpg.republika.pl and all are welcome.

Can't wait for the next social!



Noticeboard



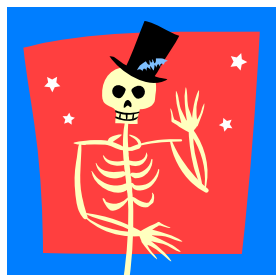
Do your members forget meetings??

Going MAD in the Gardens!

Friends of Pavilion Gardens are going MAD on Sunday October 28th from 10am til 3pm. For 'Make a Difference Day' they will be holding an exciting Halloween event in the park for all the family.

There will be lots to see and do on the day from a display of birds of prey to Halloween fun and games. Everyone will have the chance to make their own bat box to take home or leave in the park. There will be an exciting Treasure Trail, Halloween Quiz, fun rides and pumpkin surprise treats.

If you want to come along in Halloween fancy dress and scare a few people in the park you could win yourself a prize in the fancy dress competition.



The first prize for the raffle is a pair of Go Ape tickets - so don't miss out. Come along and see what's going on.

The Friends of the Pavilion Gardens are looking for new members to join their informal friendly group and take part in bulb planting and other events which all help to make Buxton's gardens a great place in which to walk and play. For more info, contact Andrea on 01298 25281.

REMEMBER—The Small Group Project is here to help any marginalised, disadvantaged or isolated groups. We can come out to visit you and give you the support you need. Contact Sandy, Nancy or Louise on 01663 735350 or now on our direct dial numbers - 01663 736426 (Sandy) or 01663 736427 (Nancy) 01663 736431 (Louise)



One of the things that groups often tell us is that it's hard keeping their group members. Well, there are some things that you need to ask if your members are dropping off, such as.... Are you still catering to their needs? Have circumstances changed since you set the group up? Do you ask the members for their feedback regularly? There are also many more considerations such as the suitability of the venue and the times of your meetings and so on. However, sometimes it may be that your members just simply forget when you are having a meeting. People lead busy lives and, particularly if yours is a disadvantaged group, they may have many challenges to face and overlook the date of your meeting. There are some things that you can do to help this situation. It can be very costly and time-consuming for one member to ring round everyone to remind them, so you could think of having a 'telephone tree'. How this works is that one member rings two other people to remind them of the meeting. Each of these in turn rings two other people and, hey presto! In no time at all everyone knows. Another thing that you might like to consider is to give your members a calendar with each of the meeting dates marked on; or always meet on a set date such as the first Monday of the month. Some of our groups such as local history groups produce a yearly programme which lists who the speakers or topics are for each meeting. **If you know of any other ways - don't keep them to yourself - let us know.**

Minutes, Meetings and More! 6th December 10am - 1pm.

Due to the popularity of the last session, this is a **ANOTHER** great chance for members of our groups to access a friendly, informal workshop run by Sandy on Thursday 6th December here at the CVS. If you are new to the role of Secretary, Chair or simply a committee member who wants to learn more about how your group and others work you can come along for free (though charges will apply for paid workers). To secure one of the limited places call Nicola on 01663 736432.



Harpur Hill Residents Association have arranged a Seniors Christmas meal and entertainment with the school to be held on Thursday 6th December. If you are an older person, or you know of someone who would like to come and enjoy good food, company and entertainment from the children please give us a call.

'View from the Peak'

We try to make our newsletter interesting and informative and from your feedback we feel that most people welcome it as a way of keeping in touch. However, we know circumstances change and would be pleased to know if you no longer wish to be on our mailing list or if you would like it to be sent to someone else in your group. We would love to hear your comments on 'View from the Peak' and any suggestions you have for making it better. Tel Sandy (01663 736426) Nancy (01663 736427) or Louise(01663 736431) or e-mail sandy@highpeakcvs.org.uk, nancy@highpeakcvs.org.uk, or louise@highpeakcvs.org.uk. The newsletter is available in Braille or large print.