



**SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH AND
AFFECTED BY HIV IN THE BRADFORD AND AIREDALE
DISTRICT**

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME1 ISSUE 2 JANUARY- APRIL 2010

Happy New Year to you all!

The Our Project wishes you our readers a Happy New Year.

This issue covers a variety of topics which have mainly been contributed by those who access the service. Reading this newsletter will give you a view into the project from the service users' perspective, the work that the project is involved in and HIV/AIDS issues.

Our is a charity that supports people living with and affected by HIV in the Bradford and Airedale District. We offer different kinds of support which are based on the needs of an individual in a safe and confidential environment.

The Our Project is funded by Bradford Social Services & Bradford and Airedale tPCT

WORLD AIDS DAY

On the 1st of December we joined the rest of the world in commemorating World AIDS Day.

This year we have had tremendous support from different organisations, especially around World AIDS DAY and we hope to build on relationships we have formed in the years to come. We would like to take this opportunity to give a big **THANK YOU** to the following for taking our collection tins and red ribbons in their premises in Bradford:

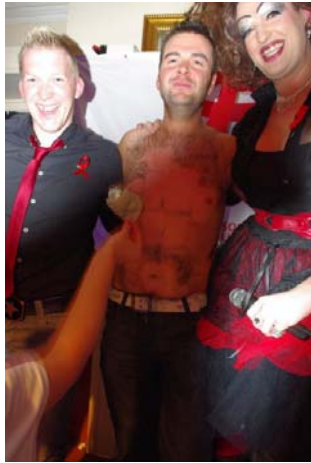
Argos (Forster Square)	Sainsburys (Greengates)
ASDA (Forster Square)	Sherrington Nursing Home
Bar Uber	Starbucks (Centenary Square)
Bradford City Council	TDF (Bradford)
Bradford Grammar	The Sun Hotel (Sunbridge Rd)
Boots (Forster Square)	UNISON
Candy Night Club	Hanson School

All the mentioned organisations have played a vital role in our efforts to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS in Bradford. We don't have to wait for the 1st of December to raise awareness on HIV/AIDS. As a community we work throughout the year to draw attention to HIV/AIDS. With us in this awareness journey has been The British Red Cross who have worked with the project untiringly:

WAD EVENTS

Events took place to raise awareness and we would like to thank:

- **BBC Look North** for coming to Centenary Square where we were located and showing our flag (raised on the poles in Centenary Square),
- **Radio Leeds** for interviewing one of our workers and a service user,
- The **Sun Hotel** for the waxing event and fundraising



- **Bar Uber** for fundraising,
- **Keighley Cougars** for passing through our stall in Arndale Shopping Centre,
- **Red Ribbon Society** at **Bradford University** for inviting us to do an interesting talk.

PARTNERSHIP & EDUCATION



The OUR Project recently launched a partnership with Bradford Bulls and Keighley Cougars (as we support people living with and affected by HIV in both areas) as a way of highlighting and **Stamping Out Stigma**, which is Yorkshire MESMAC's campaign this year. We are aware of how much people in our community love rugby and we hope these partnerships will play an important role in our campaign this year.



Some organisations such as The Salvation Army, Cyreneans, Bradford & Airedale tPCT and Leeds Medical students (1st year students) have invited us to train them on HIV/AIDS and we feel that with knowledge people are less likely to stigmatise people living with HIV/AIDS.

As an organisation, we applaud Hanson School and Bradford Grammar School for equipping their young people with fundamental information on HIV/AIDS by inviting us to educate them.

Information on HIV/AIDS has changed dramatically from the 80's and 90's and if you feel your organisation or school needs to be updated or educated please feel free to get in touch with us.

A special thanks goes to Sainsburys (Greengates: Bradford) for donating every week towards our food bank. Every week Carole O'Connor provides much needed and appreciated food and essentials for individuals and families of those who access the project. We would also like to thank Home Base (Greengates) for their kind donation towards items for our office that is being renovated.



FOOD GLORIOUS FOOD

There is nothing as comforting and as good as a cup of tea/juice shared with people you appreciate and understand, in a relaxed atmosphere where you laugh, joke and just be yourselves, the feeling is great.

At the OUR Project we have food and drink during meetings and some of the food is available to take home.

It is on Thursday meetings that we take home tinned foods especially, varieties of pasta, vegetables, baby foods, etc.

They go a long way in helping us especially in these times of the credit crunch.

We all agree, with being HIV+ one needs to eat the right food and eat regularly, thank you **SAINSBURYS** for the food/things that you provide.

We really, really appreciate this gesture and pray that you continue with the service in the year 2010.

Once more **THANK YOU SAINSBURYS AND HAPPY 2010!!!**

How Sainsburys Helps Me

Receiving groceries from Sainsburys means I can save a lot. I have a family and most of the times it is hard to afford a healthy diet so thank you for your kindness, me and my family are very grateful.

Please carry on supporting us.

Allotment

The allotment will soon be springing into action in and there's a lot of excitement and plans on what to grow. The builder is about to start work to transform this tired land into an accessible place of beauty.

This development has been made possible by an **Awards for All** grant from the Big Lottery.



LOTTERY FUNDED

SERVICE USERS' FORUM

Our Project service users have been mulling over the following dilemmas and would welcome any feedback

HIV and Sex

My friend and I argued over the use of condoms, she suggested sex is losing value and momentum; she thinks condoms are for the young generation. When you are over forty it feels embarrassing and uncomfortable to be buying condoms. For some of us we had long term partners and never had to experience using condoms.

What are your thoughts?

HIV and Dating

Most of the people I meet and have spoken to find it difficult to start new relationships, the reason mostly being disclosure.

One lady said and I quote, "I'd rather stay single because by the time I find a partner I might have disclosed to the whole city."

What do we do?

SERVICE USER'S FORUM

HIV and Stigma

Why is stigma such an issue that I feel is not dying down really? Or is it just me reading into things? I would be very interested in knowing your stories or experiences of stigma. Is there a way to fight stigma just to make life easier for positive people?

Your thoughts please

Any comments can be e-mailed to **The Newsletter Group** via Annabel Madyara Community Development Worker at the Our Project:
a.madyara@mesmac.co.uk

or sent to the OUR Project PO Box 267, Bradford BD1 5XT.

This edition of the Our Project Newsletter has been produced by staff and service users at the project. If you would like to contribute to our next Newsletter please contact Annabel (details above).

MY HIV JOURNEY

Every journey has a story to tell, memories to share and ends somewhere; there will always be a destination. My HIV journey is a secret, none of my family members know. I chose not to tell them because of the stigma attached and the fear that I would hurt those I love most - therefore none of them is with me on this boat. I met some friends though on this journey, and these friends have become very important to me, we are together on this journey and we share so many sad and good stories when we meet at the Our Project.

I found out I was HIV Positive in 2005 and believe me I have had ups and downs especially with medication/side effects, facing stigma but am still soldiering on. I have climbed mountains, crossed rivers, I have fallen, got myself up and I am still moving on.

There are things that give me courage, the desire to live longer, and the hope that one day, maybe one day, there is going to be a cure. I take my medication religiously; I recently changed from Trizivir to Atripla, from one twice daily to one a day, isn't it great, just one a day.

I went through episodes of nightmares, night sweats, dizziness, loss of appetite, the list is endless but thank God most of these side effects lasted from two days to a month. I have gone through these humps and feel much better now. I have watched my body shape change, from hour glass shape to baby elephant shape, this used to worry me, I discussed this with doctors hence my change of medication from Trizivir to Atripla, and I am hoping gradually my body will take a better shape. I do not let this worry me much now, somehow I have accepted some things may never be the same - every journey has its ups and downs.

Stigma exists in the U.K. and I have been a victim. I have been treated badly at the hospitals, it is sad. I really do hope one day, just one day, education and civilisation will be found in all institutions / homes / society.

I am going to keep on sailing, there may be heavy tides but this is a journey whose destination I do not want to reach as yet - I am calling all HIV positive brothers and sisters to sail with me - Please take your medication.

OUR PROJECT SESSIONS

The **weekly social group** meeting is still on and during this time there are complementary therapies available.

Well-being sessions have been going well and so far topics that have been covered include; HIV and disclosure; HIV and Treatment; HIV and Nutrition.

They will still carry on with topics including: dealing with stigma and discrimination; assertiveness skills; preparing for employment, education and training (motivational).



Felt making—creating a unique vase from an old bottle



Arts and Crafts Sessions have been a tremendous success with service users learning how to knit, crochet and felt-making from being clueless to becoming well equipped to carry on the skills learnt at home. There have been quite a number of items made and these include: scarves, cardigans, hats, shawls, berets, small bags and brooches. Thanks to Pauline Sedden who has been extremely patient with us.



The felt making process early stages of a handbag



MY KNITTING NEEDLES MY COMFORTER



I have knitted before, with straws of grass as knitting needles, different kinds of wool joined into a ball.

I have knitted before, and the best I could knit was a belt for myself or my doll, I knitted anyhow and any way, holes as big as my thumb formed part of the pattern. I knitted when I was a little girl, my grass needles and pieces of wool I picked up whenever and wherever gave my innocent mind so much joy and comfort.

The content and pride, the amazing feeling of motherhood in some way gripped my innocent mind; such feeling of achievement which words cannot explain summed it all up.

The grass straw needles and the junky wool kept me out of mischief but, I am no longer a little girl.

ME KNITTING AT AGE 50

I am knitting at the age of 50 many thanks to the OUR Project. I never thought I would go back to that amazing feeling I got from trying on my thin stretchy belt knitted from junk wool.

I am now wearing berets from some of the best yarn any woman would wish to have. I have knitted matching scarves as well.

I have family, immigration and health issues that worry me sometimes, I have drifted into situations where I fail to find sleep in the night especially and guess what!!!!!!!

I turn to my knitting needles and they have never let me down, I find comfort and a friend in knitting, they take away stressful situations and give me pride and contentment



Thank you, Our Project.

OUR PROJECT YOUR PROJECT

In the times we are living in, there are very few entities without owners. Most organisations, even if they claim to be people driven, do have people up there who are dictating how things should be done (proprietors). It is different with the Our Project, a Bradford based social support service organisation that supports people living with HIV. True to its name, it is my project and it is your project as well. We'd like you to take some time to read about what your organisation is doing in your community.

HIV is not an individual challenge, but a challenge for the community as a whole. There is a need for a collective effort from both individuals and organisations to address the issues around HIV.

Whose efforts are needed?

- Men and women (families)
- Community leaders
- Government
- Private sector

Each and every one of us has a role to play in helping people living with HIV, raising awareness and taking responsibility for our actions and our health.

Everybody has a role to play if we are to create a society that is free from HIV stigma; a society where people have the knowledge, skills and resources to make choices about their own lives. The Our Project does not only work with people living with HIV, it is also taking a leading role together with our colleagues in Yorkshire MESMAC in raising awareness, reducing HIV transmission and fighting HIV stigma.

We know we can't do this alone and that is why partnership is really important to us. Our thanks go to the following organisations who have made this goal possible; Bradford Refugee Forum (BRF), ABCD, Bradford City Football Club, Bulawayo City FC, Beauty Station, Red Ribbon Society (University of Bradford), Bevan House, NHS (Trinity Centre and Sexual Health Promotional Team at Lister Mills) to name a few.



For more information about our activities in the city of Bradford, please do not hesitate to contact us on 01274 740548.

Remember your organisation needs you!

ENGAGING CHURCHES

To many people in Bradford, faith plays a vital role in their daily lives and is part of their identity. It is with this in mind that we, at the Our Project feel there is a need to engage with the church in our efforts towards improving the wellbeing of those living with HIV and also raising awareness in the community.

Our Project staff will be working with religious leaders to identify and train members of the congregation as peer educators.

Our aim is

- To identify common ground to get church members to deliver prevention and support programmes to the members of their congregations without compromising their or our values.
- To get people who are visible and well known to their churches informed about what is the state of HIV and services in the area and be able to signpost those who may be in need of support

- To identify the training needs of the members of their congregations and also to liaise with us on where and when we can offer some support.
- To make more members of the community aware of our services and also promote the idea of community testing.

The Our Project together with other service providers (for example, Trinity Centre) will endeavour to reach out to churches around the city, especially El-Shaddai and Abundant Life Ministries to set up committees of people who will be trained to offer support and information. National African HIV Prevention Programme (NAHIP) will be tasked to offer some training and accreditation.

Our Project staff will facilitate meetings to monitor progress and also provide support.

We expect to see

1. Reduction of stigma and improved dialogue with an important community organisation.
2. More people seeking support.
3. An increase in early diagnosis of HIV.

We want to

1. Reduce the negative perspectives about HIV.
2. Get the church involved in the emotional support of those who may be living with HIV.
3. Make the church an ambassador of our services to the community and keep them informed about the changing face of HIV locally and globally

Other useful services and telephone numbers

National Sexual Health Advice Line	0800 567123
African Aids Helpline	0800 0967500
Sexual Health Clinic Trinity Road,, Bradford	01274 365088
Walk in clinic Mon, Wed Fri 8.30 till 12noon	
Tues & Thurs 8am till 12noon	
Sexual Health and contraception central appointment number , Bradford & Airedale	0845 002 0021
Centre for Sexual Health LGI, Leeds	
Male Appointments	0113 3926724
Female Appointments	0113 3926725
Stop Hate Helpline	0800 1381628
Bevan House Homeless & Asylum Support Team	01274 227555
Bradford Royal Infirmary	01274 542200
St Lukes Hospital	01274 734744
Rape Crisis	01274 308270
Red Cross Bradford	01274 223293
Refugee Council Leeds	0113 3862210
Bradford Action for Refugees	01274 223240
Samaritans	01274 547547
Salvation Army	01274 731221
Bridge Project (Drugs Advice)	01274 723863
Piccadilly Project	01274 735775
NHS Direct (Health Advice)	0845 46 47
Social Services (Children's Team)	01274 437500
Social Services (Adults Team)	01274 431704
Bradford Day Shelter	01274 393234
CONTACT Disabilities support run by Disabled people	01274 494121
CHAS housing aid (furniture for people on low incomes	01274 731909

part of Yorkshire MESMAC group of services charity number 1040407
P.O.Box 267 Bradford BD1 5XT Tel: 01274 740 548



