

springboard

The newsletter for supported housing | June 2011



Mums prove they are ready to Move On

New training scheme launched for residents

Welcome to springboard

Welcome to the bright, bumper summer edition of Springboard – and it looks as though loads of you have been enjoying the nice weather already... what with Royal wedding celebrations in Bury and Red Nose day activities in Blackpool! Please keep sending us stories and photos of all the fun things you get up to at your schemes.

Check out our colourful centre page spread on Great Places' brand new training course

to help residents move on to independent accommodation. It's already working successfully in some areas – have a look at John's move-on story on Page 6. Expect your support worker to offer you the "Steps" course soon.

I have always known I am not artistic (well, if you exclude musical ability), and Page 11 has definitely confirmed that for me ... just how is an upside-down urinal considered art? Call me an old fuddy-duddy if you like, but I certainly won't be

hanging that on my wall – see what you think for yourself in the story of Chorley Old Road's residents' trip to the Tate.

But, well done to the young women at Sarah Lodge... their artistic mural is fab (I've seen the real thing and the photo doesn't really do it full justice!) – it certainly cheers up a drab corridors at the scheme.



Jane Greenhalgh
Assistant Director (Supported Housing)

Don't do the dirty down your sink!

More than a third of blockages in toilets and sinks could be avoided, says Yorkshire Water.

Follow this advice - and avoid an overflowing sewer this summer!

- Don't put oil, fat or grease down the kitchen sink.
- Don't flush wipes, condoms, sanitary towels, cotton buds, nappies or hair down the toilet. Put them in a bag, then put them in the bin
- Use kitchen roll to wipe out pots and pans before washing. That way, fat, oil and grease won't find their way down the plug-hole. You could also use a sink strainer to catch any food bits.
- Do feed the birds with your fatty kitchen scraps. It's a great way to get rid of them.
- Let larger amounts of leftover fat, oil and grease cool then pour into a suitable container and put it in the bin



£400 windfall from Voice

Voice, Great Places' staff committee, receives applications for funding at every meeting, and April was no different, as the committee gave away more than £400 to residents.

This month we bought a carpet for a disabled resident, a sewing machine for the residents of Tulloch Court and much more.

The money available comes from staff fundraising. Grants are given to all sorts of good causes

We've had a right royal do!



Royal wedding fever gripped residents of Ellen Court.

The tenants – who joined most of Britain to celebrate the marriage of Prince William and Kate Middleton at Westminster Abbey – organised a garden party to toast the happy couple.

The day before the royal couple tied the knot – April 29 – the mother and baby scheme in Bury hosted a morning of painting pots and planting seeds.

This was followed by a party in the afternoon and a quiz, with royal cups, tea towels and

Tenants join in to celebrate marriage of Wills and Kate

wine glasses as prizes.

Residents enjoyed red, white and blue cakes and jelly and tucked into a miniature wedding cake.

They also helped plan the party and even designed the posters advertising the event as well as the invitations.



Lauren Gilbert, 18, with daughter Sophia Johnston

Girls are in the running for success

There are some great tenants living in Great Places housing and Lisa Smith and Carla Dunphy are just two of them.

Carla completed the Liverpool half-marathon after receiving £100 from the Voice committee to buy running shoes and equipment. Voice also provided the event's entry fee.



Carla completed the run in just over two hours – her best time. The money she raised helped her apply to take part in a 13-week Raleigh expedition to Costa Rica.

Raleigh is a youth charity that has inspired more than 30,000 people from all walks of life to develop new skills, friendships and volunteer around the world.

Lisa, 22, is now volunteering as a mentor with the Prince's Trust.

She was supported by the staff at Rodney Street, Liverpool – a scheme specially for young women – in her successful attempt to apply for and complete the course.

Get-ahead girls:
Carla (right) and Lisa (top)



Indian odyssey for Rebekah

Psychology student Rebekah Pierre, a resident of Blackpool Foyer – a supported housing scheme for young people in education aged 16 to 25 – spent her study break last summer working as a volunteer in rural India. Here she tells Springboard all about it.



Volunteer: Rebekah Pierre

Summer of 2010 saw me visit an orphanage called Gwalior Children's Charity. It is a centre in rural India for destitute and disabled children and young people, who were often vulnerable and without family.

Having done similar projects before, I was encouraged to volunteer and dedicate my study break to something productive, challenging and rewarding.

At first, the prospect of any type of volunteering – in the UK or abroad – can be daunting and requires hard work, commitment and, of course, time.

However, I would recommend volunteering to everyone. The sense of reward and gratitude at the outcome is completely unrivalled, and

the effort and dedication given to the project eventually comes to light.

A huge obstacle was fundraising. How could I, a 17-year-old student, afford to pay to fly to India, get vaccines, insurance and so on?

The answer was simple. Instead of seeing the amount needed as impossible, I broke it down into small, achievable goals, setting myself a target of a certain amount each month.

Plus, I managed to raise money through my band, which helped to raise publicity and awareness about the Gwalior.

The amazing thing about volunteering is that every single day is different. You are constantly making a difference to the lives of other people. All you need is a little inspiration!



Getting to know you, neighbour!

Tenants take trip into space ... all in the name of friendship

Residents at Elk View Court – an Extra Care development for older people in Bispham, Blackpool – enjoyed a few laughs as they took an imaginary journey into space as a way of getting to know each other.

The tenants took part in a session organised by Great Places learning and development manager Grenville Williams. It involved a hilarious game that involved pretending to send famous people to Mars.

One tenant, Morag Harrop, said: "I enjoyed getting together with neighbours that I had seen around the building. Thanks to the game I can now count them as friends."

Following the session, Marilyn Harwood frequently visits the

on-site café and has lunch and a chat with people she knows and feels comfortable with.

Irene Witkowski also attended the event and usually is quite quiet but the group learned a lot about her past life in Poland and even met her sister-in-law Anna Guidzien, who was visiting.

Grenville said: "Elk View Court is a brand new scheme with lots of different tenants from all walks of life and we wanted

to ensure that everyone was mixing as much as possible.

"The sessions included some work on the stages of team development and some fun exercises to get people talking to one another.

"It was a really good opportunity to meet some of our tenants as I do not get much opportunity to meet the people we provide a service for.

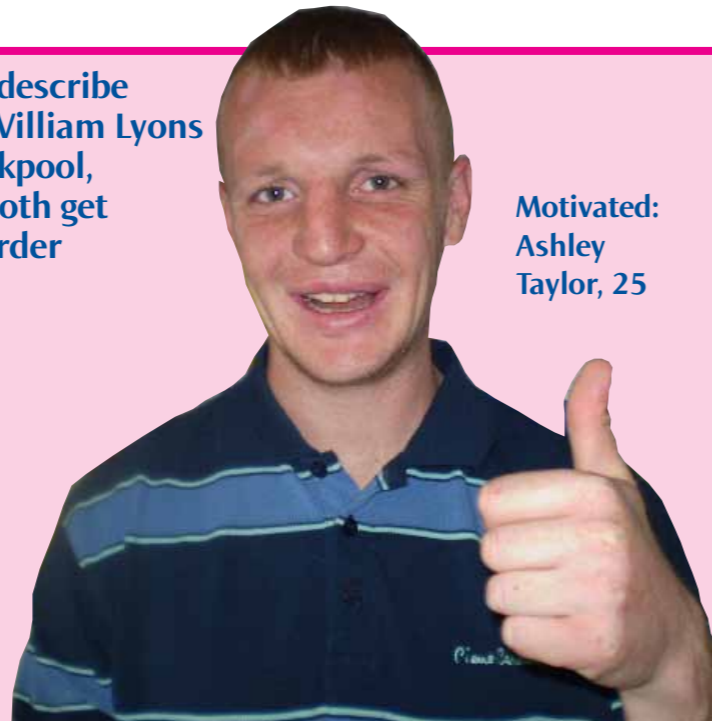
"I also found it very interesting to see at first hand the work colleagues do."

Lois Brownsword, scheme manager, who also attended the session, said: "There were 14 people who attended and we all enjoyed one another's company, sitting out in the garden together."



Two residents describe how living at William Lyons House, in Blackpool, helped them both get their lives in order

Living here turned my life around



Motivated: Ashley Taylor, 25

I came to William Lyons House in January. Before then, I had been sofa surfing and my life was chaotic.

a lot happier and things have calmed down. I am staying out of trouble and the police tend to leave me alone.

I have been here only four months but I think I have grown up loads in that time and my life has become more manageable.

I am definitely more motivated and looking forward to joining the volunteer centre in Blackpool. I have also been engaging with The Prince's

I am more independent and

Ashley's story

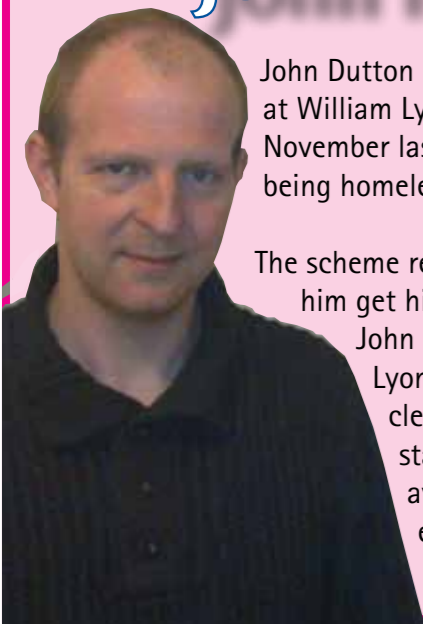
Trust and will shortly take football coaching skills with them.

My self-esteem and has improved and everything is fantastic Relationships with my dad and his girlfriend have improved and dad says he is

proud of me. I don't take recreational drugs any more. My attitude is definitely more positive and I get on really well with other clients at WLH.

I have built strong relationships with the staff and I would just like to say thank you. You have made a difference.

John finds a real home from home



John Dutton came to live at William Lyons House in November last year after being homeless for a while.

The scheme really helped him get his life in order. John says William Lyons House is kept clean and the staff are always available to help, especially key-

John's story

workers Jackie Gilroy and Dave Ward.

John, 31, was offered a flat in March and moved in with support from staff, and a community care grant.

Staff helped John apply to a charity, which gave him

a new cooker and fridge freezer. He will also be receiving assistance from support service worker Fiona Stewart.

John admits he is nervous about living in the community but knows he can do it. He thanked Great Places for giving him the opportunity to live in the community again.

William Lyons House caters for people with complex needs

Elk View Court residents raise cash for Comic Relief



Residents and staff at Elk View Court donned red noses to help raise cash for the BBC's Comic Relief. Right: Eddie Harrop (top) and Arthur Acton



Red nose fun for all!

IT was fun and frolics as Elk View Court helped raise cash on Red Nose Day.

Residents from the Extra Care scheme in Blackpool got together in the lounge to try on a red nose and get in the spirit of the day.

Arthur Acton, who drives

everywhere in his automated wheelchair, had the biggest grin of all.

Lyndsay and Michelle, from Sevacare, the on-site care providers, got in the mood, too.

Each wore red and both worked all day with their

red noses firmly in place. Together Elk View Court raised £120 for the BBC's Comic Relief charity.

Winner of the 'match the celebrity pose' competition was scheme manager Lois Brownsword, who donated her prize money to Comic Relief.

It's fun and laughter as staff share their skills

Last month saw the launch of the Staff With Skills initiative, which involves Great Places colleagues going out into some of our supported housing projects to deliver fun events and workshops with the residents.

The Great Opportunities team piloted the scheme from March to

May, with four of our Manchester-based supported schemes – Next Step Knutsford Road, Next Step Palatine Road, Lorna Lodge and Docherty House – and colleagues from our performance and innovation team (P&I) taking part.

All permanent members of the P&I team are dedicating half a day to delivering a fun, engaging or

informative session – including football coaching, singing, music lessons, arts and crafts, Bollywood dancing, city tours, walking clubs and gardening... to name just a few!

The benefits to residents are vast, as they are able to engage in activities they may not normally have access to. They're also meeting new people, building confidence, learning new skills and generally becoming more motivated to get involved.

There are also benefits to staff members who are able to get away from their day job, see different areas of the business and gain experience of working with more different people.

If the project is a success (and it's so far, so good!) we hope to roll this out across the group. We want as many colleagues to get involved as possible, and more residents – including those in general needs – to benefit.



Tenants get kick out of football

It was a wet, windy afternoon when Jonathan Worrall and Martin Dillon came to our project to lead a football session with floating support worker Steve Jackson. Tenants who took part were Shaun Conway, Chris Ward, John Lawanson and Kevin Ward, and we all had a great time.

The session began with a dribbling practice, ending with a shot on goal. For Kevin, it was the first time in six months that he had done any exercise.

He thought it was a good day and he really enjoyed it. For Shaun, it was an opportunity to show his close ball control. John also took part in the dribbling exercise, to cheers of support.

Kevin thought the best part was the penalty shootout, in which he came a close second. He said he missed the last one due to his choice of shoes, though he managed to score a late goal in the team game!

Chris came very close to scoring with a shot across the post. He wanted to know when the next training session was going to be as he wants to be in good

shape for the football competition with Street Soccer.

Chris encouraged the other tenants to come out and play – despite the bad weather – and he was the rock in defence throughout the match while Shaun showed some great skill and an impressive ability to pass and shoot.

The training session finally ended 3-2, in a closely-fought match. The tenants of Knutsford Road thanked Jonathan and Martin for the session and for helping us organise a game of football.

We all agreed that we would love to arrange another training session in the near future.

Written by Next Step residents Kevin Ward and Shaun Conway, with help from Steve Jackson



Tenants with Martin (left) and Jonathan (third right)

Make Clint's day and see how the changes affect you

The good, the bad and the plain ugly



New benefit and tax changes came into effect in April under the government's welfare reform agenda. Some of them could be good for Great Places tenants but others are bad or plain ugly!

Here's a quick recap on all the changes. More are expected over the next year or two. We'll update you when we know!

THAT'S GOOD

For Disability Living Allowance, high rate mobility is now available to adults and children aged over three who have a severe visual impairment. Previously you had to be both deaf and blind to apply.

In Income Tax, personal allowance has been increased, meaning you can earn more before you have to pay tax.

If you're over 60 and working between 16 and 29 hours a week, you may now be able to claim Working Tax Credit. This can be paid if you earn less than £11,100 if you are single and earn less than £15,850 for a couple.

In Child Tax Credit, the child element has increased.

THAT'S BAD

If you're on Incapacity Benefit, you will be moved onto Employment Support Allowance and re-assessed on whether you are fit for work.

If you get Working Tax Credits you used to be able to claim up to 80% of your child care costs when you're working. Now it's down to 70%.

Savings Pension Credit has been frozen for four years. There will be no yearly increase for some time.

No Child Tax Credit is payable for households who earn more than £40,000 a year.

In housing benefit, non-dependant deductions increased in April, meaning that more people in your home might be expected to contribute to the rent.

THAT'S PLAIN UGLY

Child Benefit has been frozen for three years at the 2010 amount, meaning you won't be receiving any more in the foreseeable future.

Clients enjoy a trip to Liverpool art gallery and come face to face with an unusual piece of work

Clients from our Chorley Old Road scheme in Bolton got a good look at the work of sculptor Henry Moore on a day trip to Liverpool.

Six residents travelled in a mini-bus with project support workers Tracy Caren, Mary Davies and student Cheryl Jolley. Funding for the trip was raised by Tracy from Bolton Arts and a Sir James and Lady Scott grant.

After an hour-long trip to



Art house: the Tate Gallery, in Liverpool, and (left) the urinal

Liverpool in drizzly conditions, the party stopped to eat a packed lunch that had been prepared earlier that morning.

Then everyone made their

way to the Tate Gallery, signed themselves in and placed their belongings in a secure cupboard as bags are not allowed in the exhibition.

The residents looked at work by Marcel Duchamp, particularly his piece called Urinal,

but questioned whether it was actually art! They were impressed by an installation that was a disco dance floor. Clients danced on it and one did a back flip.

They also looked at work by Rachel Whiteread and Alberto Giacometti.

It's great at the Tate!

Mums' brush with art

Residents and their children got together with local artists Tracy Fenton and Annemarie Longdon, of Art Fantastic, to decorate the walls with murals at Sarah Lodge in Tonge Moor, Bolton.

Tracy and Annemarie were commissioned by Great Places as a way of building the residents' skills, confidence and self-esteem.

Participant Chrystal Cooke said: "We worked together and I found myself making friends with some of the other girls here who I'd hardly spoken to before."



Front: Natasha White and Chrystal Cooke, with Finley, 3. Back: Artists Tracey Fenton and Annemarie Longdon, Gayle Parkinson and Sian Jopson

We'll help you take those first steps to managing a tenancy



Training to help residents show landlords they can manage a tenancy is being launched by Great Places.

Improving move-on rates – the number of our tenants who are able to leave supported housing and live successfully independently – is a priority.

Great Places looked at how other housing providers helped tenants develop their life skills and found they had lots of ideas

we could adapt.

So, with input from our residents, we put together a workbook full of good ways which we then piloted in some of our schemes.

Operations manager Jacqui McCann said: "During the pilot we obtained constructive feedback from residents who had completed the move-on workbook and we found they enjoy having evidence of the work

they have completed.

"The programme has also helped us to develop further partnerships with local housing providers as we can demonstrate that residents are ready to manage their own tenancy".

Staff where you live might have already have given you a copy of the booklet. If not, look out for it or ask your support co-ordinator.

Zoe is the queen of the pancakes

Teenager Zoe Smith proved she was a dab hand with the frying pan when she helped cook pancakes on Shrove Tuesday. The 17-year-old resident of Ellen Court, Bury, quickly learned the art of tossing pancakes after following a recipe. All residents were given a recipe booklet on how to make the perfect pancake and some topping suggestions, both sweet and savoury.



Why Lisa's poem is simply FAB!

MUM of two Lisa Stanley knew exactly what she wanted to do after successfully completing courses at Barnado's Family Action Benchill (FAB).

Lisa, a resident at Lorna Lodge, Wythenshawe, Manchester picked up her pen after finishing the Take Control Of Your Life and Self Awareness courses.

Having gained confidence as a result, Lisa wrote this touching poem entitled You, dedicating it to a friend who had helped her through some tough times.

Lisa, 25, said she was inspired by the support she had been given by her friend Victoria, whom she met while taking the course two years ago.

She said: "As soon as we met we just clicked and became best mates. Victoria has been

there for me and helped me out a lot.

"I felt I wanted to write her a poem to thank her for everything she had done for me. I texted it to her!"

Now Lisa, who has two sons – Callum, four, and two-year-old Mason – feels confident enough to write more poetry.

"You never know," she added. "I might even write a poem about my life at Lorna Lodge!"

Lisa: courses helped her to gain confidence



You

I still remember the first day we met,
We were too shy to say much at all,
It's funny to think back to that time,
Because now we're having a ball!

They say that true friendship is rare,
An adage that I believe to be true,
Genuine friendship is something I cherish,
I am so lucky to have met you.

Our bond is extremely special,
It's unique in its own way,
We have something irreplaceable,
I love you more and more each day.

We've been through so much together,
In so little time we've shared,
I will never forget all the moments,
That you've shown me how much you cared.

Friends are forever,
Especially the bond that you and I possess,
I love your fun-filled personality,
Somehow you never fail to impress.

The world could use more people like you,
It would certainly be a better place,
I love everything about you,
You are someone I could never replace.

You are always there for me,
When my spirits need a little lift,
I cannot thank you enough,
For that you are truly an extraordinary gift.

You are everything to me and more,
I could never express that enough,
Life is such a treacherous journey,
And without you it would be more tough.

Our story will continue to grow,
With each passing day,
Because I trust that with you by my side,
Everything will always be okay.

You are so dear to me,
You know I will love you until the end,
I will always be here for you,
And you will always and forever be my best friend.

Daniel Mountford, fundraising co-ordinator

How I can get you...
In the money!

I'm Great Places' fundraising co-ordinator and it's my job to help YOU, our residents, and my colleagues, to win money to pay for all sorts of community projects.

I don't really have such a thing as a typical day. I get into the office at about 7am and spend an hour dealing with emails.

Then I might set to work writing funding applications - a complicated process that requires a lot of research and gathering quotes and feedback from residents and other organisations.

I also attend meetings to discuss project proposals, develop ideas for working with other organisations and chase all the bits and pieces I need from other people to get my applications finished and sent off!

Even a small amount of money can make a huge difference and I love to be

able to use my skills to co-ordinate everyone's efforts and make things happen.

My target for the coming year is to raise lots more cash and enable more tenants to get involved in bidding for money to do interesting and fulfilling things in their neighbourhoods.

I've done all sorts of jobs, including being a teacher, so I have all sorts of experience that comes in useful.

As you might expect, the best bit for me is when we get the green light for funding. I love it when a plan comes together!

I get a real buzz and have to admit I like to shout "Yes!" and punch the air when I find out a project has been awarded some money.

Want to get in touch with Daniel? Contact him through your support worker or email daniel.mountford@greatplaces.org.uk



Daniel trying out bowling at a club in Oldham, which he helps with fundraising

Daniel's roll of honour

A total of £64,000 was raised in the first three months of 2011 for projects that benefit Great Places tenants. They included:

- £9,604 for 12 months of computer lessons at Richmond Park tenants and residents' association, from Big Lottery Awards for All fund
- £7,400 from the Santander Foundation for Castle Advice Service, Sheffield
- £6,306 for skills training at The Foyer, Blackpool, a scheme for young people, from the Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities Fund
- £790 for the Nutty Knitters, Chorlton, Manchester, from the Seed Fund
- £2,018 for the Active at 60 fund for St Lukes 60 in Salford, to pay for a curling instructor and equipment that they would have otherwise not been able to keep.

Beware loan sharks in your area



Is a loan shark operating in your area? Don't suffer in silence! There have been two convictions lately of loan sharks in Salford and Manchester.

They are people who lend money in the community and expect high interest rates in return.

They usually collect door to door and are known to use forceful measures to get their money back - like threats or violence.

Great Places works closely with the Illegal Money Lending Team to help victims of loan sharks. We are also setting up a Loan Shark Protocol with other housing organisations so we can help victims to move house if necessary.

Can you offer any information that could catch a loan shark? Great Places can contact the

Illegal Money Lending Team for you, if you don't want to talk to them directly. You can also give information without giving your name.

If you choose to give a statement you may be called to be a witness in court. You will be given help and support and be kept safe. By reporting information, you can help stop yourself and your community being ripped off and living in fear.

To report a loan shark call 0300 555 2222, or email reportaloanshark@stoploansharks.gov.uk, or text 'loan shark' and your message to 60003.

Did you know that Great Places can help you to get affordable credit and advice on debt or making the most of your money? Call 0300 123 1966 or email us at financialinclusionteam@greatplaces.org.uk or pop in to your local office for a referral.

Tell us what you think!

If you have a suggestion or comment about any of our services, your experiences or this magazine, we'd love to know. This is your chance to let us know anything you want, good or bad. Remember, it will only help us to get better! Post your comment to: Carlie Ford, Southern Gate, 729 Princess Road, Manchester M20 2LT

Your name:

Your address:

Your telephone number:

Your comment:



Win £20 in vouchers!

Oh we do like to be beside the seaside! Find the 25 seaside towns listed in our wordsearch and enter our competition to win £20 in vouchers.



Send your entry in the post to:
FREEPOST, R L S C - H L L J -
E Z R Z, Catherine Riordan, Supported
Housing Services Team, 119 Union
Street, Oldham, OL1 1TTE.

Fill your name and address in on the form on Page 15

... and please take the opportunity to have your say on our services!

- Amble
- Blackpool
- Blyth
- Bridlington
- Cleethorpes
- Colwyn Bay
- Filey
- Fleetwood
- Hornsea
- Mablethorpe
- Morecambe
- Redcar
- Rhyl
- Saltburn
- Scarborough
- Seaham
- Seaton Carew
- Skegness
- Southport
- St Annes
- Whitby
- Whitehaven
- Whitley Bay
- Withernsea
- Workington

C	O	L	W	Y	N	B	A	Y	F	I	L	E	Y	O	A
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A	L	T	A	L	E	S	G	M	H	B	O	R	A	L	V



St Annes

Rhyl

Scarborough

Congratulations!

Congratulations to the three winners from the last magazine - £20 vouchers are on the way! The winners are: **Darren Cloud**, Chorley Old Road, Bolton; **Jo Garner**, Christine Court, Altrincham and **Brian White**, 28 Palatine Road, Manchester.