



Newsletter Summer 2022



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Let's Celebrate!



“Life is a celebration. Consider everything that makes you happy as a gift from God and say, 'Thank you'.”

(Francis Lucille, [The Perfume of Silence](#))

According to the Collins English dictionary, a celebration is a special enjoyable event that people [organise](#) because something [pleasant](#) has [happened](#) or because it is someone's [birthday](#) or [anniversary](#). But celebrations can be so much more than this. Celebrations are a sign of triumph over adversity, of strength, and of hope, particularly in the later years when they represent decades of experience. The importance of celebrating life is reflected in physical and mental health, community, family relationships and a healthy self-concept.

We have much to celebrate here at the Beth Johnson Foundation, this year. Fifty years of supporting our local older generations. Fifty years of listening to, learning from, and sharing people's stories of ageing. Working together to help people enjoy a great later life. We have developed a team of passionate, highly motivated, skilled staff and volunteers, who are continually striving to do their best; who actively listen to what the older members really want and work hard alongside them to achieve it. To celebrate with them the small successes, and walk with them through the challenges and harder times.

Celebrations are our chance to talk more together; work together; meet new people; reconnect with colleagues and members; reflect on the past so that we have better clarity about the future. A future where we celebrate the wisdom and experiences that our older generations have to share with us. We have organised a number of different ways of celebrating our 50th anniversary here at Parkfield House, trying to connect and network with as many people as possible. Creating the mosaic of tiles brought together young and older generations in a purposeful way; bringing laughter and meaning to those who seriously contemplated their tile and honed their craft using clay, with help from the local ceramist, Philip Hardaker. Learning whilst laughing and ultimately sharing thoughts and ideas, which we can collectively celebrate by unveiling our mosaic above the fireplace in our new Community Hub, downstairs at Parkfield House. We have connected with many organisations, to generate funding to enable us to celebrate in style. The local council supported the development of our external blue plaques, which the Lord Mayor and local councillor Dean Richardson will unveil in July.

We are hosting a celebration event at the Spode Works, Stoke, in October a lunch time event for up to 150 people where members, staff, volunteers and stakeholders can celebrate the past whilst targeting a future where we can work with others to achieve so much more for our local older community members. Each of our celebrations will be inclusive, celebrating with those at the very heart of everything we do - our older generations.

The theme of this summer newsletter is celebration, and I hope it will help you to appreciate just how much we are grateful for across the work of the foundation, and indeed how much more we can look forward to.

“We forget that without inches we’d never have miles. Therefore, work toward the miles but celebrate the inches.”
(Craig D. Lounsborough)



**Emerita Professor Sue Read,
CEO, Beth Johnson Foundation,**

Joan Walley DL – Celebrating

Our CEO Sue has just about summed it up: this edition of our newsletter is all about celebration. Celebration of all that BJB has achieved in our past 50 years of life. As we look forward to the unveiling of our ceramic plaque and our commemorative October big event, we can be proud and thankful for all the effort and compassion that has been at the heart of our work over the past half a century.

So I hope that as many people as possible will join in our anniversary celebrations.



Celebrations are milestones along the way; giving pause for thought about a job well done despite the hurdles that invariably seek to distract us. A time to pause, ponder and enjoy. Whether you are at the receiving end of our services, a volunteer, or a valued partner already working with us or thinking about coming on board to bring support to older people, please enjoy this newsletter and do take time out to share in our achievements and contemplate with us what our next steps might be.

**Joan Walley DL
Patron, Beth Johnson Foundation**



Healthy Generations - A Fond Farewell and Huge Congratulations!

After an extremely successful 3½ years supporting local people, it is finally time for the Healthy Generations project to come to an end.

Since the start of the project, we have adapted, developed and re-adjusted as necessary to overcome the unique challenges that have faced us all throughout the pandemic.

When we were no longer able to bring people together in the community, the Healthy Generations team developed a programme of online interactive wellbeing sessions: Digital Wellbeing and Staying Safe online, Physical Wellbeing, Healthy Eating, Creativity for Wellbeing and Emotional Wellbeing. We talked people through the process of downloading and using the zoom platform to enable them to join in their first-ever video calls and re-connect with people.

Throughout the pandemic Healthy Generations was still able to offer support via various ways to many lonely isolated people. Beneficiaries have been at the forefront of everything we have delivered. They asked we sourced; online cookery sessions, health awareness, digital support or telephone support. We worked in partnership with PIER, Arthritis Action, and the Vegetarian for Life Charity to name just a few - developing new ways of working together online, and we even developed an accredited CPD training programme to accompany our wellbeing sessions.

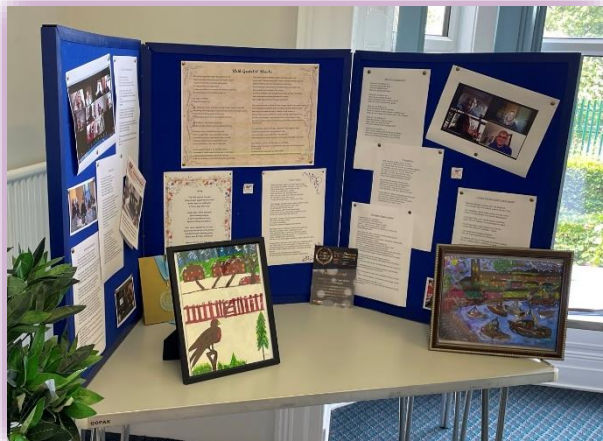
We created a set of online weekly Zoom support sessions – Mindful Monday Mood Boosters; relaxation and meditation, Chuckles and Challenges; quizzes and laughter, Maggie's Poetry Moments; the opportunity to try hand at creative writing, Art for All; an online art group, and Local History: researching everything local - events, buildings and locally made artefacts. The creativity within these groups led us to produce three publications featuring group member's work, thoughts and reflections.



Healthy Generations recruited and trained volunteers to become the first Digital Tech Buddy volunteers at BJJ. We were awarded runner up in the Digital Champions in the Community Award and one of our Tech Buddy volunteers won Support Staffordshire's Stars Award in the category of Volunteering Support for the over 65's.

It seemed only fitting to bring the project to a close by celebrating all the achievements of the project – those of the team, of our volunteers, and most importantly, of our beneficiaries themselves! So we invited everyone to join us for tea and cake, and to share their experiences and reflect on their time together.

“Let’s come together and share our achievements, maybe you’d like to read a poem or have some art or crafts to show us all. Perhaps you would like to tell us about something you have learned or would just like share your favourite memories of our sessions! Whatever you have been involved with during our time together, we hope that you have tried something new, learned something useful and most importantly, made some friends along the way...”



What a perfect way to celebrate this innovative achievement, to bring an end to our project and to say farewell. It’s been a pleasure working with all our members, and the positive impact of the connections made will continue long into the future... Well done to all involved!

Jane, Amanda & Clare – Healthy Generations

Congratulations!

BJF Carer Support Service

Health and Wellbeing for Older Carers

As we navigate our way through a new 'normal' it seems only appropriate that we should celebrate the return of being able to plan simple pleasures as people enjoy more freedom than they have had in a long time.

But we know there are many people out there who will still feel unsettled at the thought of venturing out – especially if they are caring for someone who could be at risk of serious complications if they fall ill. Ongoing isolation and the inability to safely access support with their own wellbeing will continue to be an issue for many people.

Informal carers play a vital role in supporting others, often family members with long-term health conditions. With ageing populations, the need for their role is increasing, and there are more than two million informal carers in the UK aged 65 or over. Older carers' face multiple additional challenges; pride can prevent them asking for support, their own declining health makes the physical aspects of the caring roll more difficult, they have concerns around who will care for their loved one if they can no longer fulfil the role. All this while coping with their own multiple losses, often restricted lives, social isolation and loneliness.

But the ***Beth Johnson Foundation Carer Support Service*** is here to help. Over the years, BJF has developed services that enable people to age well through health and wellbeing, advocacy and staying connected to their communities. Taking a whole community approach means that we are involved in intergenerational work, bringing younger and older people together, and in supporting carers. We can:

- Offer a programme of short courses aimed at promoting positive ageing through health and wellbeing activities for older carers in Stoke on Trent.
- Enable older carers to have the information, guidance and support they need to learn about self-care; to be able to ask questions resulting from these sessions in relation to their own health; and subsequently be able to better manage their health related issues and be more confident in accessing the services they need.

The sessions will help to build confidence and people will gain knowledge and learn skills that they can apply to their own lives so that they experience a more positive older age, and thus build their resilience.

The ultimate programme outcome is for individuals to feel healthier and happier. Learning about resilience will enable people to build skills to manage life's choices and changes, enabling people to be more active and involved.

Carers say that providing care can be extremely rewarding, but it can also bring with it many challenges. The emotional and physical demands of caring for a loved one and focussing on their wellbeing often means that the carer neglects their own. Finding support and building connections with people safely remains harder than ever.

We can support people in Stoke-on-Trent who are 50+ and are in a caring role to look after their own health and wellbeing.

The caring role can be diverse, and many people do not identify themselves as Carers and do not seek help and support. If you know anyone who is aged 50+ and provides care to a family member, friend or neighbour, then please get in touch!



The Beth Johnson Foundation

Are delighted to be a partner to the

Stoke-on Trent All Age Carers Support Service.

This valuable service Provides a single point of access for all Carers, ensuring that they have access to a wide range of support services, information, advice and guidance.

Click here for more details

BJF **nsc.**
Beth Johnson putting carers first



To find out more about the BJB Carer Support Service or make a referral contact:
Amanda Carter on 07867 003313 or email carers@bjf.org.uk

[Visit Carers Support Service on the BJB Website](#)

The Beth Johnson Foundation Carer Support Service, is delighted to be a partner to the **Stoke-on-Trent (SOT) All Age Carers Service** led by **North Staffs Carers**. This valuable service provides a single point of access for Carers of all ages and ensures that Carers have access to a wide range of support services, information, advice and guidance. The service brings together a range of partners to provide holistic support; enabling Carers to feel better supported so they are able to make informed choices about their caring role and own health and wellbeing. For more information about the SOT All Age Carer Support Service visit:
<https://www.carersfirst.com/s-o-t-all-age-carers-service>

nsc.
putting carers first



Canook Chase Clinical Commissioning Group
East Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Group
North Staffordshire Clinical Commissioning Group
South East Staffordshire and Seisdon Peninsula Clinical Commissioning Group
Stafford and Surrounds Clinical Commissioning Group
Stoke-on-Trent Clinical Commissioning Group



Dementia Advocacy – Awards and Accolades

This year BJF celebrates 50 years, and the Dementia advocacy project is the longest running project at BJF. The project has been running for 24 years and has grown from offering support to 35 people living with dementia during the first year to over 200 people currently. In the 24 years the project has been running we have supported thousands of people living with dementia, cascading to many others involved with people we have supported.

The success of the project is due to the hard work of the staff involved – they are always prepared to go the extra mile for the clients we support. This diligence is reflected in all BJF staff and, as importantly, in the volunteers who work with projects at BJF.

The Dementia advocacy project has grown immensely over the years, acknowledged by other Professionals as a shining example of providing a high standard of dementia advocacy. Over the years, the project has been involved with numerous reports, for example supporting Local Authority homes many years ago to develop a directive on relationships in care homes. It also supported OPAAL (Older Peoples Advocacy Alliance) to complete a report on safeguarding in care homes. The project developed an accredited training module relating to supervision for advocacy managers.

The peer support group facilitated by the project has produced several items relating to dementia. Amongst them a Comic “No bus map for dementia”, a bookmark highlighting dementia does not only affect short term memory, a report on the dementia pathway. The group have also made many films demonstrating you can live well with dementia.

The project was recently nominated for an award and managed to be shortlisted a wonderful accolade for the project. However, the highest accolade we receive is a thank you from people we support.

Peer support group members are involved with another project looking at “Does dementia testing need testing?” This project involves working with other DEEP members from diverse areas of the UK. BJF members have produced a questionnaire and are currently in the process of analysing responses received. This photo shows Peer support members joined by representatives from the memory clinic. Members are asking memory clinic representatives for their opinions on dementia testing.



We will be celebrating the project’s silver anniversary next year - a brilliant achievement for a project whose conception was originally for a three-year pilot!

Betty Machin, Dementia Advocacy Manager

[Visit Dementia Advocacy on the BJF Website](#) or visit our [Facebook Page](#)

Discover Digital

The BJF Discover Digital Team have been busy working in our communities, helping people to explore and discover how digital technology can help people in their day to day lives. We are supporting people to learn and understand more about using digital devices for example phones, tablets, and laptops. For some people, lack of confidence is getting in the way of exploring technology and most people tell us they are worried about privacy and online scams. Discover Digital Engagement Sessions help people to talk about their concerns and learn to use digital devices and technology safely and with confidence.

Discover Digital Engagement Events

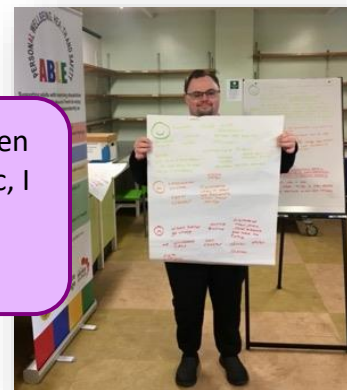
We are busy visiting community groups and bringing groups together to take part in our Digital Engagement Sessions around the city. So far, we have held nine community digital engagement events for people to learn about digital:

- Oak Priory Extra Care Village
- North Midlands LGBT Older People's Group, community centre
- Fenton community members, Fenton Hub
- West End Extra Care Village, Stoke
- In partnership with City Central Mosque, Equality House
- Maple West Extra Care Village
- Haywood Hospital PIER Volunteers, Vale Park, Burslem
- North Staffs Carers Group, Fenton
- ABLE drop-in sessions, people with learning disabilities, Fenton.

Discover Digital Engagement Sessions give everyone a place to talk about what stops people from using digital, what they worry about and what would help. We explore what digital means and introduce online safety and wellbeing. We use digital devices in our sessions to help people to get started. People can bring their own device, or they can use a BJF device. We have a small number of iPads, Samsung tablets and Amazon Kindle tablets so that people can explore the internet with support from BJF Volunteers (Digital Friends).



“The session has been supportive, fantastic, I enjoyed it.” ABLE Group Member



We received some fantastic feedback from North Midlands LGBT Older People's Group about our Discover Digital Engagement Session.



“Overall, I thought it was a useful introduction and yet another nice opportunity for the group to meet and share each other's company, knowledge, and experience. Very Pleasant, knowledgeable presenters.” (OLGBT Member)

“I really enjoyed the session and was able to help one member of the group with a 'digital' solution. Plenty of tea n biccies, mmm. The presenters were just plain lovely and supportive.” (OLGBT Member)



BJF Digital Friends

BJF Volunteers (Digital Friends) are busy meeting people at engagement events and following up with one-to-one practical support. We are helping people to learn to use their digital devices, discovering more about using the internet and learning how to stay safe online.



“Really enjoyed it today, happy to help out.” (BJF Volunteer)



“Thank you for including me in these opportunities, it feels great to be helping people.” (BJF Volunteer)

“I enjoy helping and if I can do more anytime I will.” (BJF Volunteer)

Digital Friends support people at BJF Engagement Events, in the community and in people's homes. We support people who feel:

- Digitally lost – don't know where to start with digital
- Digitally worried – have tried using digital but worry to do any more
- Digitally ready – feel comfortable with digital and ready to do more
- Digitally confident – feel confident and keen to explore, try new things.

Digital Friends offer:

- light support (a few hours) to help people to feel more confident with their device, to find a local or online training course to build their skills.
- medium support (a few days) to help people to get to know their digital device, to learn and practice new digital skills.
- in-depth support, Digital Friends visit weekly and starting with the basics, help people to grow their digital confidence and skills.

We are working with people, groups, and organisations, to help build digital confidence and skills for the future, so they can continue to grow when the Discover Digital project ends. Learn more about [BJF Discover Digital](#) on our website or contact Patsy: patsy.corcoran@bjf.org.uk Tel: 07770 016978

Discover Digital Pop-up shop

Discover Digital is a partnership of organisations funded through the UK Community Renewal Fund. Partners in the Discover project are: Staffordshire University, VAST, Beth Johnson Foundation, The Community Foundation for Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent College, Wavemaker, YMCA North Staffordshire, Caudwell Children, Stoke North Big Local, The Dove Service, Keele University.

BJF worked together with Discover Digital partners to open and run a pop-up shop in the Potteries Shopping Centre, Hanley. The pop-up shop opened on Saturday 23rd April, opening Wednesday to Saturdays until May 29th.



The Discover Digital team organised and delivered a range of workshops:

- How to get started online
- How to use social media
- How to save money using online tools
- How to make your own podcast.

We supported people to apply for a grant from the Community Foundation for digital equipment. By using a loyalty scheme for customers, people were entered into a prize draw to win a digital device. During these five weeks the Discover Digital team supported over 100 people, to explore digital, to find training courses, and to apply for funding for digital devices.

To find out more about Discover Digital in Stoke-on-Trent you can check the VAST website www.vast.org.uk

The Success of Social Prescribing

Over the past 12 months the Leek and Biddulph PCN social prescribing team have supported over 900 patients between three social prescribers.

From starting in post at the beginnings of COVID during the first lockdown, to where we are today, the key to the success of the team has been spreading the word about the role, and embedding ourselves into the practices. Getting to know what the wonderful services/groups are out there and in turn connecting people to those services and to the community they live in. Be it a telephone befriending call, check-in calls to high risk pts and ensuring patients have access to shopping/mediation to telephone mental wellbeing support and connecting the community with many other support services.

The role has enabled people to have someone to turn to who can advise/guide them in the right direction and has brought together services/groups and community members that otherwise may not of been connected.

The success stories range from socially connecting people via online/telephone services who were social isolated; getting people involved in their community; and seeing people thrive to tears of relief that financial support is in place/housing issues have been resolved.

Now that communities have opened the doors again, we have more pathways than ever to provide support to patients, alongside identifying any gaps within the community and working with the voluntary sector/community members to look at how those gaps may be filled. For Social Prescribing to be successful an SP much be the 'all seeing eye' within the community, leaving no stone unturned when it comes to knowing the opportunities/options open to people alongside foster strong connections with all that the community has to offer.

We have successfully developed strong links with many community services and are now starting to attend community groups/services to gain first-hand experience of what they have to offer. Social prescribers is in my view are the missing bits of a community jigsaw, they complete the puzzle.

I look forward to where the next 12 months will take the role, and to future successes such as the development of further community groups and spending more time out in the community.

Here are a few of the kind words we have received which highlight the achievements of the service:

I cannot thank you enough for your kindness and support it was a vast help to me at a time when I most needed it.

This is the most helpful service my GP has put me in contact with, you've made such a difference.

Thank you for showing us what support is out there for us locally and beyond, it has been extremely helpful

My quality of life has really improved after speaking to you. Your positivity on my progress really boosts me.

It has been lovely to have someone who has the time to listen, caring can be hard at times so it's nice to know that there's someone who can help when needed.

Your pro-active approach is a huge help to many.

Thanks very much for helping me to get sorted with where I am today. I now have my benefits in place and feel much more positive about the future.

Since being connected with the bereavement support group, I feel much better having people to talk to that have experienced similar situations.

My befriender from Moorland Home Link is great, it's lovely to have someone to talk too. Thank you for putting me in contact with them.

Lianne Burton, Social Prescriber Link Worker

Patient Information, Education and Resource Centre (PIER)



New Year, New Venues, New Programmes of work!

Along with several other Beth Johnson programmes, our last few years have been really challenging and we have had to change and adapt to new ways of working with our volunteers, who provide information and support for patients with arthritis at the Haywood Hospital.

The PIER centre which is normally based within the Haywood Hospital outpatients' area, has now become community based and now has two new venues from which it is currently delivery patient information services from:

- The Port Vale Foundation Hub, Hamil Road in Burslem
- The Foxlowe Arts Centre, Market Square, Leek.

After working with our volunteers and patients to reorganise our programmes, we are now beginning to deliver our new range of patient information projects.



We will soon be rolling out the new patient telephone service, using online information to support and signpost callers.

An online directory of arthritis services is being developed and will be accessible via the Haywood Foundation website.

Our quarterly themed events, where members of the public can come along to gather information and chat to our volunteers have now begun.

The first information event took place at the Port Vale Foundation Hub on Friday 29th April.

The theme of the event was nutrition, arthritis and the work of the Haywood Foundation.

The event included, leaflets and signposting to healthy eating, arthritis support and eating on a budget. The volunteers were very creative. They designed posters, helped with the information display, produced recipe cards and chatted to visitors.

42 people attended the event. Visitors were mostly from the local area of Burslem. Many being patients who have some form of arthritis.



The next information event takes place in July. The theme is mental health titled 'Every mind matters'.

Please pop along – we'd love to see you!

For more information about this event please contact June: june.brammar@mpft.nhs.uk or call 07929 875554.

June Brammar, Project Manager

Linking Generations Northern Ireland – Connecting Communities

Connecting Care Homes & Communities Share the Learning Event

LGNI were delighted to host this online event as a celebration of the successes of our LFT Trust funded Connecting Care Homes & Communities Project. The project was developed in response to the ongoing isolation of Care Home Residents and staff from their local communities and the outside world.

LGNI worked in partnership with 3 Care Settings and provided CPD Accredited intergenerational training to staff in each of the settings. The project was delivered during the most difficult of times and although the pandemic had a massive affect through setting closures, staff illness and ongoing restrictions we commend all involved for their enthusiasm, innovation and dedication!

At the event the Commissioner for Older People NI provided an introduction, LGNI gave an overview of the project and we heard from our amazing care home partners about their intergenerational stories so far and the links they have developed with schools, nurseries and community groups!

"Great to see how much exciting and valuable work is being done between care homes and schools"

"Potential benefits for young people & older people There's so many benefits for the care home residents and the pupils. The presentations really brought this to life, they were excellent. Great hearing from them directly"

School pupils taking the lead on IG work in their communities

Last year LGNI delivered some training workshops with the pupils at St John the Baptist College Portadown to raise their awareness of intergenerational practice and to support them to develop their own intergenerational ideas. LGNI are so proud to see the amazing progress and links that have developed!

The pupils have made a strong connection with their local care home reaching out at Christmas with cards and letters and at Easter with chocolate gifts and a meet and greet. They have linked with their local Men's Shed to plant and grow and have recently hosted an intergenerational baking session at the school!



When asked about their experience of being involved pupils feedback included:

"It's good to link old and young. There are a lot of life lessons to gain from both sides"

"I had fun & gained confidence"

"I really enjoyed meeting the older lady's - they are very funny"

Well done everyone and thanks so much for being Intergenerational Champions!

Vicki Titterington, Manager – Linking Generations Northern Ireland

[Visit the Linking Generations Northern Ireland Website](#)

Community Health Champions

The Beth Johnson Foundation has six Community Health Champions who are working with VAST (Stoke Voluntary Action) to share information and improve the health of people in Stoke-on-Trent. The role of a Community Health Champion is all about talking with people, and most importantly, sharing good information on health-related matters. Champions lead by sharing health messages in a friendly and helpful way.

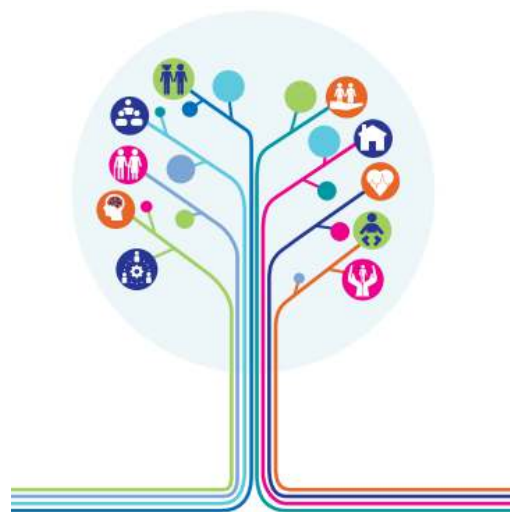
The next year of Community Health Champions will support the Health and Wellbeing Strategy's priorities in Stoke-on-Trent, moving beyond COVID-19 to support communities to live longer, happier, and more fulfilling lives. The strategy has four themes:

Start well: getting the healthiest start in life and developing well into childhood.

Live well: promoting good physical and mental health and supporting people to maintain independence.

Age well: living well into old age and providing the best end-of-life care.

Healthy city: living in a healthy home and environment, building strong communities, and supporting sustainable employment and skills.



The Beth Johnson Foundation will be focussing on **Age Well** – supporting older people to enjoy a great later life. We will continue to cascade information through our volunteers and staff to users of our services and the wider community.

For more information on Community Health Champions please visit:
<https://chc.vast.org.uk>

The Support We Have Provided

Throughout the pandemic, we have regularly reported on the support we were able to continue to offer to our clients safely through telephone calls, online virtual Zoom groups and by other means appropriate depending on the situation at any given time. As recommendations change and restrictions ease, we are continuing our return to offering more activities and support that involve direct client contact - but always with due regard to Covid safety.

Here is a summary of the direct client support we have provided with our projects and work streams throughout Spring, March through to June. These figures do not include all the background work that we do to support people, or the hours put into managing our volunteers and activities.



Thank you to all our staff and volunteers for continuing to provide excellent person-centred support despite the considerable challenges that Covid has presented to us all.

BJF Listening and Engaging

BJF aims to promote the voices of older people and to recognise the wisdom and valuable contributions that you, as older community members, make to our society. We are committed to listening to the voices of older people and taking actions to include your ideas and views in our future development.

The pandemic has been particularly difficult for older people who may have been bereaved, isolated, shielding and excluded. As we start to recover from the effects of the pandemic, we want to work with you to understand your wishes and needs.



What does the future look like for you?

What are you looking forward to?

What are your concerns and worries?

BJF wants to work with you to plan next steps together, providing the activities and services you want and need.

Linking in with our 50th Anniversary Celebrations and focussing on our theme of Positive Aging, this Spring we will be talking and listening to all our group members as well as staff, volunteers and Board members.

We will be asking what Positive Ageing means to you and how BJJ can build on your ideas to truly reflect the needs of older people in North Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent for the next 50 years!

**We want to hear your ideas:
join the discussion and get involved!**



Celebrating Volunteers

“It’s hard to imagine a world without volunteers. Often unseen and unheard by many; but to the people who really matter, volunteers provide that human lifeline to a better future, particularly as we grow older.”

Sue Read, CEO Beth Johnson Foundation

June/PIER:

Celebrating the work of our volunteers

To thank our volunteers, many who have been with us for over eight years, for all their support and commitment given to the project, we are arranging a special summertime social event, which will take place in July. We really do appreciate all their hard work and friendship and hope that they continue enjoy volunteering with us for many more years to come.

Anne, Jan, Geoff and Norma – a few of our wonderful volunteers

For more information and news about the Haywood Foundation visit

www.haywoodfoundation.org



Betty/Dementia Advocacy:

The Dementia advocacy project unlike other projects does not use volunteers. However, that does not distract from the benefits of using volunteers recognised by the project.

Amanda/HG

We are so grateful for all the hard work of our wonderful HG volunteers! Throughout the life of the project, our volunteers have given such great support to our clients - and to us a team! Their invaluable assistance has ensured that we could meet the changing needs of our groups and members, and allowed us to invest more of our time in delivering our wellbeing sessions out in the community to as wide an audience as possible... We could not have achieved all we have done without them!

Thank you!

Angie/Office:

'Volunteers are so important, particularly in the charity world. BJF have been lucky to have many wonderful people who have assisted our projects. For me one person, Pauline, has been so supportive with her knowledge and empathy with our clients and has also assisted me in the office, helping me with those jobs which I don't get the time to do. Pauline has been with us for ten years, and today was her last day in the office with me, so a sad day, yet I know we will keep in touch. So, thank you Pauline for all your help and I wish you the very best for the future'.



BJF Volunteer Team/Patsy

With a collective contribution of over 50 years of volunteering with Beth Johnson Foundation, our volunteers have remained a constant and core support in everything we do. Currently we have 13 volunteers working in a range of ways to support our activities and development. We are developing our volunteering opportunities and welcoming more volunteers to our team. We are also exploring a partnership with Newcastle College, to include students in our growing volunteer programme.



Volunteers are involved in activities across Beth Johnson Foundation, with our local and our online communities:

- Supporting the day-to-day work – office and project administration
- Supporting new BJF developments – community library (coming soon)
- Contributing to strategic direction – from engagement to coproduction
- Celebrating 50 years BJF – clay workshops, events, and celebrations
- Supporting older people in our communities – a range of BJF activities
- Participating and representing BJF at events – Staffordshire University.





For enquiries about volunteering with BJF please email volunteering@bjf.org.uk or call Patsy on 07770 016978

National Volunteer Week – Time to say thanks

We really enjoyed celebrating our BJF Volunteer Team during National Volunteers Week 2022. We spent time listening to each Volunteer talking about their volunteer journey with BJF. It was amazing to hear about each person’s connection with us, reasons for volunteering and the difference it makes to everyone. We shared smiles and tears too, then after the listening, we shared cakes and gifts. We are very lucky to work with such wonderful people, thank you to all our volunteers, we couldn’t do it without you!



To say Thank You to Volunteers

We would like to invite our Volunteer Team to a celebration meeting at Parkfield House

On Monday 30th May, 11am to 1pm

Please expect cake & more cake!

R.S.V.P to Patsy.Corcoran@bjf.org.uk

We said a huge THANK YOU! to our volunteer, Pauline Wood who has volunteered with BJF for 10 years and is now ready to retire. We celebrated the time, commitment, care, and work Pauline has contributed over the years. Pauline was presented with flowers and a Moorcroft vase, a small token of our thanks.

Here is an extract from Pauline's volunteering story, First published in 'Time: Our Gift to You, COPA (Cancer, Older People and Advocacy programme, a collaboration between OPAAL (Older People's Advocacy Alliance), Macmillan Cancer Support and partners including Beth Johnson Foundation, 2017.



As my retirement from a long career in the Social Care Sector was approaching, I began to think about how I could continue in some way in this area of work. At the voluntary sector and had met and worked with numerous volunteers so I decided that volunteering was what I wanted to do. In the summer of 2012, I read an article in my local paper, the Evening Sentinel, about a new Cancer Advocacy scheme that the Beth Johnson Foundation was setting up. I was very interested in this as I had previous knowledge of the Foundation and their excellent reputation for supporting older people. I also had some professional experience of working with and supporting people affected by cancer as well as supporting relatives and friends through their cancer journeys. So, I applied to become a volunteer on the Cancer, Older People and Advocacy project and was accepted onto the training course. My role as a volunteer advocate gives me the opportunity to 'give something back' to the community of North Staffordshire.



Beth Johnson Foundation recently nominated Pauline for an award in the Support Staffordshire Volunteer Star Awards 2022 in the locality of Staffordshire Moorlands. Pauline was nominated in the category of **Volunteering Support for the over 65's**, recognising a volunteer who has made a difference to the over 65's in the community.

Here is an extract from the Volunteer Star Awards nomination form:

As a BJF Volunteer, Pauline has supported older people living in her own community and in other parts of rural Staffordshire. Everyone she has supported speaks very highly of her as indeed do our staff and fellow volunteers. Pauline is kind, calm, competent and caring. She is well organised, highly motivated, reliable, and professional in every aspect of her work. As a befriender she has made a significant difference to the lives of many older people... She inspires and motivates others within our team and is a model of the very best in volunteering



Pauline was awarded a well-deserved commendation in this category!

Congratulations Pauline!

We look forward to staying in touch, wishing you a happy retirement,

very best wishes from everyone at

Beth Johnson Foundation.

Celebrating 50 years of BJF in clay

with Philip Hardaker - Sculptor, Ceramicist and Mosaic Artist, Arts Consultant for Community, Education and Public Arts



In celebration of 50 years of Beth Johnson Foundation, we asked renowned artist Philip Hardaker to work with us to create a lasting ceramic artwork. We are lucky to have worked with Philip to create a large mosaic of tiles, each tile made by people connected to BJF through the years. The mosaic features a framed picture of Beth Johnson at the heart of the artwork, surrounded by quotes, images, symbols and motifs, crafted with love and care.

We invited people who currently work with us, people who have worked with us over the years, and people with a strong connection to BJF, to join our clay workshops, led by Philip Hardaker. We were joined by volunteers, staff, trustees, BJF group members, patron, children from a local school, visitors, and friends who each contributed their time, energy, and creative talents.



Working together across communities and generations, we have thoroughly enjoyed collaborating and seeing this artwork evolve from clay into the final stunning mosaic, which will hang above the fireplace at Parkfield House.

Working alongside Phil Hardaker gave us a unique opportunity to design and create an individual tile for the mosaic and to learn skills and processes of the pottery industry. Together we contributed to a unique piece of local art which takes pride of place in our community living room at Parkfield House. This important artwork commemorates 50 years of work where BJF has been championing the voices of older people.



Each person designed, created, and painted their own tile to represent Beth Johnson Foundation. Each tile represents a story or symbol connecting the maker to BJF through the artwork. By creating tiles individually and joining them together in a mosaic, the artwork symbolises the work of many people, coming together to make Beth Johnson Foundation work for everyone.

We even have a portrait in clay made by Philip Hardaker, of Tillie, guide dog and member of Hazel's family, and frequent visitor to Parkfield House. BJB Volunteer Hazel and Philip Hardaker helped Tillie to make a pawprint in clay, Tillie's portrait and pawprint are embedded in the mosaic.



The clay project has been a truly collaborative initiative, people helping each other to take part and to complete the tile making process together. Tiles reflect the experience of BJB group members and volunteers, documenting the difference we all make together.

This mosaic artwork is a truly collaborative unique story, reflecting community, diversity, and creativity. It is a fitting tribute and lasting commemoration to Beth Johnson Foundation, championing positive ageing for 50 years.

A Day to Remember

As part of our 50th celebrations, creating the mosaic of tiles brought together many people, young and old and from different ethnic backgrounds.

I was lucky to take part in the painting of the clay tiles event. This was really a day to remember! The atmosphere in the room was amazing. To see these people working together with a sense of humour and enthusiasm was very reassuring.

One of the participants sent me the following:

On Monday the 20th June 2022 I visited the Beth Johnson Foundation in Stoke for the first time. I was immediately struck by the quiet industry taking place in all of the rooms. The occasion was the painting of commemorative tiles designed and made by the BJB community. I was seamlessly absorbed into this wonderful group as if I were a regular visitor. When I asked if I could help in any way, tiles were found for me to work on, a brief lesson on application and off I went, part of the group. So relaxed and warm and welcoming, what a wonderful asset to have at the heart of the community. I left secure in the knowledge that the next time I am in Stoke I shall be able to call in and be absorbed as if I had never left, a truly lovely feeling.

I was moved to sketch the below humble watercolour after spending several hours in the company of the BJB community. They were painting tiles which they had designed and made as the centrepiece of their 50th anniversary celebrations. I was struck by the quiet dedication to the task and the diversity and quality of all their varied and beautiful designs. I wanted to record and hopefully capture some of that day. (Marilyn Gollom, Manchester, June 20th 2022).



Professor Ziv Amir
Chair – Beth Johnson Foundation (On behalf of the Board)

Beth Johnson Foundation

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