

"The View Point"

Volume 20 Last Edition

HEAR-OUR-VOICE
Mental Health Action Group

December 2017

LAST EDITION

This will be the last edition of The View Point as part of the programme for Hear-Our-Voice to de-register as a Company and Charity. Further details and some key events during the lifetime of Hear-Our-Voice are shown on pages 8&9.

Below are some members comments.

I have enjoyed my time at Hear-Our-Voice. A friend of mine Michael Phillips told me about it. I made new friends whilst there. I enjoyed the trips going to Bridgnorth, Stratford upon

Avon, and Coventry with Canal trips in the summer to Coven and Compton. The Christmas meal, when we would turn up for Christmas in our T shirts, jumpers and hats. Thanks to the people who have come to do talks, relaxation sessions, and other workshops making wreaths with Juliette Best, Christmas decorations with Janet Taylor with Dan Manville always ready to come in and tell us about the latest benefit changes. Thank you to the Directors for planning the groups and workshops and allowing me to become a Director. **Steve McColl**

I would like to wish ALL our members and readers well for the future. A special thank you for the support from Directors and members. But an extra special mention for Graham and Andrew for giving me the opportunity to achieve what I have accomplished to date. I will ALWAYS remember you both for this. **Janet Taylor**

'I loved being part of Hear Our Voice. Hear Our Voice kept me motivated and enthused and in turn I felt valued and listened to. I will be sad about some of the necessary changes, but I am glad it may continue in its new form next year.' **Hiran Patel**

As this is the last edition of the View Point, I would like to say over the years I have tried to write letters which readers would find interesting, informative and to highlight items which readers might otherwise have missed. I have tried to look for positive stories about mental health, but this has become increasingly difficult over the last few years. I will finish by saying I have enjoyed contributing to the View Point over the years. **James Egginton**

I have enjoyed my time being a member of Hear-Our-Voice(HOV), meeting new people and going out on various trips and attending forum meetings and workshops; I was also a Director for a while. Some of the members of HOV formed a running group, led by Andrew. We trained for the Wolverhampton half- marathon which was good fun, and I went on to run the full marathon. (Thanks to Graham for cheering me on!). I have enjoyed doing the artwork for The View Point and being part of the editorial team over the years. -----It has been a great opportunity for me. A big Thankyou to Graham, Andrew and Stephen Maurice-Castree and all the Directors for their hard work and dedication and to Amanda Williams of WVSC for all her help and support. **Jessica Reeves**

Illustrations by Jessica Reeves

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Whatever your faith we at Hear-Our-Voice wish our entire membership and readership a very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year for 2018 and in the years to come.
May peace love and mutual understanding be forever on earth, may there be peace on earth; forever more: Amen.

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Directors past and present

	Joined	Left
*Graham Myerscough	2000	
*Andrew Lycett	2000	
Frank Sproson	2014	
Steve McColl	2017	
*Edward Aston	2000	2004
*Morris Lakin	2000	2005
*Debbie Kidd	2000	2001
Janet Rhodes	2004	2006
Sam Marshall	2004	2005
Andy Brown	2004	2004
Carol Williams	2005	2009
Hiran Patel	2006	2009
Jessica Reeves	2008	2012
Andy Littleford	2008	2009
Andy Davies	2008	2011
Jo Davies	2008	2011
Lynsey Bailey	2011	2015
Janet Taylor	2012	2016
Sharon Jones	2014	2015

* Founder member

*Jane Viner was a founder member and Secretary but never became a Director.

James Egginton, a member was appointed as Database Coordinator in 2000 and is still current.

EDITORIAL

You will have noticed from the front cover that this is the last edition of the View Point and therefore the format has been changed. On pages 8&9 you will find information about events leading up to the final decision for Hear-Our-Voice to stop activities as a Company from 31st December 2017 and some pictorial reference to key events in our history. This is supplemented by further highlights on the back cover.

My time as Chairperson of Hear-Our-Voice has been hard work but very rewarding and enjoyable. I would like to extend a personal vote of thanks to all Directors past and present for all the efforts they have made. Although this is the last edition it is true to state that although sad, it is also a time to celebrate the achievements that have been made over the years including the introduction of my concepts headlined on the back cover. As some of you will know those achievements will not stop having an impact just because The Company has ceased operations.

I will not be stopping my own work to introduce the concepts headlined on the back cover to the human race, hence my website www.issness.com and establishing contacts with interested parties including Wolverhampton University.

At this time of the year a lot of people will be sharing good wishes and thinking of how they can help their fellow human beings. Let us try and enjoy being alive and to share that enjoyment with others the whole year round.

Enjoy your Christmas and New Year

Graham

G. Myerscough

Chairperson Hear-Our-Voice.

MANY THANKS

The Directors would like to thank all past Directors and participating members for their contributions over the years and wish all our members and all our readership well in the future. Many thanks to the Wolverhampton City Council for the funding support that they gave until March 2016 and to the CCG after that date and the very welcome contribution from Wolverhampton University Students Union.

REVIEW OF HEAR-OUR-VOICE EVENTS

Forum-6th September 2017 Review of Hear-Our-Voice Operations

Members were reminded that following discussions at the July Forum and the AGM in August, it had become apparent that unless further responses from members were forthcoming then Hear-Our-Voice would commence winding-up as a registered Charity and as a Company from the 31st December 2017.

If there was a sufficient demand from members a Hear-Our-Voice social group could perhaps be formed.

A vote was taken on whether members would want to form a social group from 31st December 2017. There was almost a unanimous vote in favour. It was emphasised once again that the group would have to be run by members not the current Directors.

Further discussions would take place at future Forum meetings



Relaxation Workshop 22nd September 2017 The workshop was facilitated by Marcia Thomas of Crystal Blue Holistics. In the morning session Marcia put emphasis on breathing and conducted some relaxation exercises. She introduced members to a variety of techniques including Acupressure; EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique); Tapping into your Meridians; Body Tapping. In the afternoon she did her usual individual massage sessions.

Notes associated with the session are shown on page 7. Many thanks to Marcia for an excellent and interactive workshop and for workshops past.

World Mental Health Day Celebratory Forum 4th October 2017



The meeting to celebrate World Mental Health Day took the form of a music quiz conducted and designed by Andrew Lycett. Members were split into groups and marked each other's answers. The session concluded with the playing of members' music selections.

Many thanks to Andrew for a very enjoyable session.

World Mental Health Day Event October 2017

Hear-Our-Voice had a World Mental Health Day display at the main library during the week commencing 9th October giving details of the World Mental Health Day Organisation and the Hear-Our-Voice concept of Mental Health and Physical Health As One. A lot of interest was shown in the display with a lot of the Company's literature being taken by the public including the latest issue of the View Point.

Forum 8th November 2017- Special General Meeting & Forum

The Resolution: *Members to adopt the Board decision made at the Board meeting 11th September 2017 that Hear-Our-Voice is to cease trading from 31st December 2017 as the first stage to being struck off the Companies House register and then be de-registered as a charity.* The above resolution was passed unanimously by a show of hands.

The remainder of the meeting was followed by a discussion about the possible formation of a Social Group and it was agreed that a meeting would be set up by members to discuss the possibility of forming a Hear-Our-Voice Social Group (see page 8 for details)



Aromatherapy Workshop - 24th November 2017

Juliette introduced the session with details of various essences and their beneficial effects and how they should be used. The remainder of the workshop was spent making items for the home, brief details of which are shown below. Many thanks to

Juliette for this and the many past workshops.

Creating Aromatic Items for the Home

Winter Pot Pourri.

Select a variety of cones and leaves and arrange in your container or bag. Add a few drops of essential oils such as, Pine, Cypress, Cedarwood or Eucalyptus. If using a container, wrap or bag and tie with ribbon. To use, open or remove bag to allow aroma into the room. Refresh with a few drops of woody essential oils.

REVIEW OF HEAR-OUR-VOICE EVENTS

Lavender Pillow.

Choose a ready-made mini pillow case or sew your own. Turn fabric to right side out with edges of seams tucked in. Decorate using fabric pens if desired. Take enough wadding to softly fill case, tease out fibres a little before sprinkling with a teaspoonful of dried lavender seeds. Fold this over, and avoiding losing seeds, carefully feed into case. Fold open end to close.

Bath Crystals

Onto a piece of paper put 3 tablespoons of sea salt and 1 of Epsom salt.

Mix together on the paper.

Use pipette to drop up to 1ml of colour. Mix till all the same colour.

Add 2 teaspoons of bicarbonate of soda and mix well.

Measure 5ml of Almond oil and add to this up to 10 drops of essential oils in total. Stir well then add to crystals and mix well.

Add ½ teaspoon of Citric acid and mix.

Tip into small plastic bag and tie or close with rubber band and ribbon.

Place in display of choice such as gift bag

Pomander orange

Make hole through centre of fruit using wooden stick to thread with ribbon/string. Push Cloves into zest in a pattern of choice. Carefully cut zest in lines from top to bottom in 4-6 places. Leave to dry out in airing cupboard, warming oven or top of radiator. This can take several weeks. This process can be speeded up by rolling fruit in powdered spices such as cloves or cinnamon.

Aromatic Spray To 50ml of base liquid (20ml vodka, 25ml water and 5ml jojoba/almond oil), add up to 15 drops of essential oils of your choice. Use a funnel to pour into glass bottle adding spray top and label stating contents and date. Can be used as room spray or on skin, avoiding the eyes.

Juliette Best

Websites

Appreciate u

www.appreciate-u.org.uk



Winter Health

www.nhs.uk/chicices/winterhealth

Money Saving Expert

www.moneysavingexpert.com

Met Office

www.metoffice.gov.uk/getreadyforwinter

Christmas Family Games www.freeprintable/christmasfamilygames

Wolverhampton Clinical Commissioning Group

www.wolverhamptonccg/chemistsopeningtimes

JOKES



What do computers eat for a snack? Microchips.

Why are ghosts so bad at lying? Because you can see right through them.

Who hides in the bakery at Christmas? A mince spy.



Mum, can I please have a cat for Christmas? No, you'll have turkey the same as the rest of us.

Did Rudolph go to school? No. He was elf-taught!

'The secret of life is honesty and fair dealing, if you can fake that, you're got it made' Groucho Marx.



Dear View Point, I would like to thank the board of Hear – Our – Voice for all their hard work they have done over the years and during this year. I also like to thank Amanda Williams for all the hard work and help she has given during the year. Finally I would like to wish all members of Hear- our-Voice a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

James Egginton

Dear View Point, There have been a number of items in the newspapers recently on welfare which I thought readers might be interested in. Theresia Degener, Chairwoman of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), has accused the government of creating a 'human catastrophe' for disabled people in the wake of the government's benefit cuts. Mrs. Degener added, 'policies pursued by the government have totally neglected the vulnerabilities faced by disabled people.'

The government also face allegations by the CRPD of misrepresenting the impact of policies through unanswered questions, misuse of statistics and statements on policies and legislation. Previously the CRPD have said welfare reforms have led to 'grave and systematic violations' of disabled peoples' rights.

The committee is now conducting a wider investigation to assess the UK's progress in implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People.

The government have spent nearly £40 million on legal challenges to sickness and disability benefits claims. Critics argue growing numbers of legal battles are happening because the assessments for sickness and disability benefits are deeply flawed, leading to incorrect decisions.

Labour MP Frank Field say, 'What's appalling is the government is prepared to spend nearly £40 million of taxpayer's money against people who are desperately fighting off destitution.'

An NHS report has revealed nearly one in three sick notes issued by GP's are for a mental health condition. The report found there has been a 14% rise in sick notes for mental health problems between 2015 and 2017 and mental health is now the most common reason for people to take time off work.

The report also revealed that sick notes for mental health conditions were being issued for longer periods than other types of illness.

Commenting on the report The Royal College of Psychiatrists said the finding were 'alarming' and Simon Stevens, NHS England chief executive said, 'the NHS is now putting mental health front and centre.'

James Egginton.

Dear View Point, A report by the Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR) have found a dramatic rise in first year university students with mental health issues over the past 10 years; 15,395 first year students disclosed they had a mental health condition in 2015-16. This means one in 50 students suffer from some kind of mental health problem, almost five times the number in 2006-07. The significant rise in the number of teenagers and young women having mental health problems was the main reason for the increase.

The IPPR report found 134 students killed themselves in 2015 almost double the number ten years ago. A record number of 1,180 students also quit university because of their mental health problems in 2015, this is an increase of 210% compared with 2009-10.

The report also shows universities have experienced a 94% increase in the demand for counselling, in some universities up to one in four students are using or waiting to use counselling services.

James Egginton.

Dear View Point, This year as seen a number of changes in mental health provision in Wolverhampton. At the beginning of the year we saw the City Council remodel there mental health services and give the contract to Starfish. In October the Black Country Partnership HNS Trust merged with two other local trusts.

All this means is more changes and upheaval for service users, staff and services. There have been so many changes in recent years but none of them seem to be about improvements in services, care or support for people. In fact it seems that services have become poorer and fewer and the services that do remain are harder to receive. What most people with mental health issues want is stability but this is the one thing they are not getting with all these changes.

The way things are going I feel in a couple of years time there will be very little services, care or support, left in Wolverhampton for people with mental health needs.

Going back to Starfish, the feedback I have been receiving from service users as been mixed. Some service users attending the groups run by Starfish have found them enjoyable and supported. The other service users however have had problems with the service provided by Starfish.



The main problems service users have found using Starfish are; nobody turns up for groups including the volunteer running the group; not being informed when groups are cancelled; closing and opening of groups on a mouth to mouth basis and the venue of groups being changes.

A number of service users also feel the application form to join Starfish is too intrusive and it is difficult to contact Starfish by phone. Finally most of the groups run by Starfish have an art theme. If you are not interested in art what reason is there to join Starfish?

Besides Starfish there seems to be very little other community based support for people in Wolverhampton. Where are people supposed to go for support if Starfish is not for them? In my opinion I feel the remodelling of mental health provision the Council carried out at the beginning of the year has failed.

I fear the result of all of this will be peoples' mental health will deteriorate as people will isolate themselves as there is no adequate support or services for them in the community. I also feel more pressure and demand will be put upon already stretched G.P.'s and NHS mental health provision because of the failure of the Council's remodelled community base service.

James Egginton.

Dear View Point, A couple of items I find about work and mental health which I thought readers might find interesting.

A freedom of information request by the BBC have found that the number of mental health staff going off sick with their own mental health problems as increase by 22% in five years. The number of staff off sick for longer than a month as also increased, in 2012-13 it was 7,580; this has increased to 9,285 in 2016-17.

The department of Health have given this statement to the BBC findings; 'We are transforming mental healthcare for everyone in the country, including NHS employees, with record amounts of investment. There is more to do that is why we are undertaking one of largest expansions of mental health services in Europe, so all staff have the time to look after themselves as well as others.'

A government commissioned report on mental health in the work place estimated 300,000 people each year with long term mental health conditions lose their jobs.

The report found people with mental health conditions also lose their jobs at twice the rate as people without such conditions. The report also claims poor mental health costs the UK economy up to £99 bn each year. Paul Farmer co -author of the report 'Thriving at Work' and Chief Executive of Mind say, 'opportunities are missed to prevent poor mental health and ensure that employees who may be struggling get the support they need.'

The report makes 40 recommendations about how employers and the government can better support employees to remain at work, below are some of the report recommendations.

Create a mental health at work plan: Build mental health awareness by making information and support accessible: encourage open conversations: provide good working conditions and ensure employees have a healthy work – life balance: promote effective people management with line managers holding regular conventions about health and wellbeing with their staff: routinely monitor employees mental health:set up an online wellbeing portal.

The report leads me to ask a number of questions. How many employers have the time or the resources to put these recommendations into effect? Will employers take any notice of this report? Will the government bring in legislation to better protect employees with mental health issues in the work place? What does the report say about employers' attitude about mental health?

Finally over the last few years the government have make several statements promising to improve and invest in mental health. What the government have not mentioned in their statements is how much they have cut from mental health provision since coming into office in 2010. The investment promised by the government for mental health services now will not make up for the cuts in previous years nor the neglect in mental health provision over several decades. Even with this promised investment in mental health services mental health is still playing catch up.

James Egginton.

Dear View Point, The government hopes to train at least a million volunteers in mental health first aid starting from next autumn. The on-line course will teach volunteers how to help patients who are depressed, anxious or experiencing other mental health crisis. The government course will help volunteers to assess their own mental health as well as teaching them coping techniques. The £15 million course will also train volunteers on how to help family members, friends, colleagues and strangers dealing with mental health crisis. The course is to be welcomed but I have a couple of concerns. How well will the volunteers be trained? What level is the training? I feel the training would have been better if it was face to face rather than on- line. Also are the government, by running this course, trying to plug some of the gaps in mental health care on the cheap?

Dave Russell.

Relaxation Workshop- Notes



One of the most important relaxation techniques I find is **Deep Breathing**. Most adults have lost their natural way of breathing properly. We tend to breathe from our chest and take lots of shorter breaths. By breathing this way, we take in only around 30% oxygen. This can cause many health problems as well as preventing the full amount of oxygen needed to help us relax in stressful situations.

When we experience any form of anxiety, our heartbeat increases, breathing becomes quicker and our muscles tighten, especially our chest, back neck and shoulders.

By learning to breathe deeply and from the abdomen, you may find that with regular practice, not only does your stress level lower, but your overall outlook on life, your mood and your physical health begin to improve.

To practice this, the best way is to sit or lie down and place one hand on your abdomen. Close your eyes. Breathe in deeply and slowly, you should feel your hand rise as your lungs fill with oxygen. Notice your hand lowers as you breathe out slowly.

Some of the many benefits of breathing deeply using the abdomen are:

- Thinking clearly
- The ability to relax
- You remain calmer in a crisis
- Improved Concentration and memory
- Improved digestion
- Relieve from headaches/migraines
- Sleep better
- Less muscle aches and pains
- More ideas and solutions to problems emerge

As you learn to breathe deeply from your diaphragm, you may become aware of how relaxed you feel. Even better if you can do this exercise for 10/15 mins a day, you become more focused on your breathing taking your thoughts away from anything else. You cannot think two thoughts at the same time, so if you have an unpleasant situation going on and it overtakes your thought process, then bring yourself back to *focused deep breathing* which brings you into the here and now, (the calm place where you can switch off).

Tapping into your Meridians

During our lifetime, we experience a number of emotional ups and downs. These emotions are often stored somewhere in the body until we are able to release them. These emotional experiences can cause emotional blockages which is why we sometimes find we are unable to move forward in our lives or perform the way we want to.

There are many ways we can help ourselves dissolve or balance our emotions, below are three self-help techniques.

1. Body tapping (using your hands)
2. Acupressure (acupuncture without needles)
3. EFT (emotional freedom technique-Tapping with fingers).

All three techniques work on the basis that there are meridian lines running throughout the body with certain 'points', if when activated, can help unblock many physical and emotional issues. These techniques have been used by Ancient Chinese and Indian cultures.



www.crystalblueholistics.co.uk

Editor's note. At the workshop members practiced using all the techniques mentioned above under the heading **Tapping into your Meridians**. It is not possible to include all the extensive written and diagrammatic material that Marcia introduced at the workshop but extensive information is available on the Web by just searching using the names of the various techniques.

Cessation of Hear-Our-Voice the Company

At the Board meeting in April 2017 Andrew Lycett tendered his resignation as Director and Treasurer of Hear-Our-Voice effective from the 31st March 2018. As a result, a special Board meeting was held to discuss the implications of his decision and the Forum meeting 3rd May was devoted to a discussion about the future of Hear-Our-Voice. After a series of meetings and consultations with members it became apparent that there would not be sufficient management manpower to continue providing the current service provision. It was therefore decided that Hear-Our-Voice would no longer be providing the current service provision, ceasing operations as from the 31st December 2017. The three months period after ceasing operations, which is the mandatory minimum period necessary, will be used to implement the necessary action to officially wind up the company from the 31st March 2018 or the nearest possible date after that date. This decision was endorsed unanimously at a Special General Meeting on the 8th November 2017. It is with some regret that the Board had to recommend this decision particularly since Hear-Our-Voice has provided an excellent service to members since its inception in 1999.

Please note some members have planned a meeting to discuss the possibility of forming a Hear-Our-Voice Social Group to be held at The Wild Bite Café in Darlington Street at 11.00am Wednesday 10th January 2018. See letter enclosed with View Point.

HEAR-OUR-VOICE HIGHLIGHTS



Forum -2011

The first Management Committee Meeting was held 4th October 1999. The members of the first Management Committee were Edward Aston, Jane Viner, Graham Myerscough, Andrew Lycett, Morris Lakin, Debbie Kidd. An application for funding was made and that became available from the 10th October 1999. The group was established as a Private Limited Company on 13th April 2000 and was given Charity Status 6th September 2000. The basic plan each year was for 10 Forum meetings; 5 Workshops; Special Events and 4 issues of the View Point which was nearly always achieved. I will leave you to do the maths (18 years) over time!!!!



↑
Aromatherapy -2010
Making wreaths
↓



Workshop- Access
to Business 2016



Xmas event 2010



Coventry visit 2016



Educational visit to
Wightwick Manor 2013
Janet Taylor



Canal trip 2012

World Mental Health Day Events & Other Highlights



October 1999

Morris Lakin -- MAP



October 2008

SPECIAL EVENTS TASK GROUP



October 2010

Andrew



Quiz nights

Charity walks

Workshops



Andrew & Graham
Cheque from Students
Union 2015

"Looking OUT!" 2011

Suicide Awareness & Prevention video



Stephen Maurice- Castree



Workshops & Many stories of **MERLOCH**
& 'Good Vibrations' in the View Point

RAVENS 2007



QUIZ CORNER

Picture quiz

Can you spot the location of these photos?

They are all places where Hear-Our-Voice has held events over the years.

Picture 1



Picture 2



Picture 3



Picture 4



Picture 5



Picture 6



Picture 7



Picture 8



Quiz

1. Which Canadian female singer had a hit in USA, Canada and the UK in 1970 with 'Snow Bird'?
2. Which four US states begin with the letter I?
3. In the TV series Thunderbird's, who pilots Thunderbird 1?
4. The Welsh town of Aberystwyth is located on which bay?
5. Which two Germans have been voted footballer of the year?
6. What is the official name of the flag of The United Kingdom?
7. Which city in the North West of England does not exist?



ANSWERS ON PAGE 11

Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

The Benefits and Work website reports that a PIP claimant used a secret recording of his PIP assessment to win his appeal tribunal.

The Disability News Service (DNS) is reporting that the number of complaints about PIP assessments rose by nearly 900% in a single year.

DNS have heard from 250 claimants who say that their assessment reports were totally inaccurate. In view of this, it would appear that recording of medicals seems more and more reasonable.

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)

The DWP have now published the criteria they will be using to decide which claimants will no longer have to have repeat work capability assessments in order to continue receiving ESA or UC. It would appear that many claimants with mental health conditions will not be considered, even though they are in the support group for ESA.

Disability Rights UK (www.disabilityrightsuk.org) have published the guidance on their website, and it is clear that people who are put in the support group because their mental health condition means that there would be a substantial risk to themselves or someone else if they were not placed there, will not be considered for exemption from further medicals. This is in spite of the fact that the substantial risk regulations are a common reason for being put in the support group.

Universal Credit (UC)

A report in October by the Commons Work and Pensions Committee says that the Government should aim to reduce the wait for the first payment of UC from six weeks to four weeks.

In areas where the full service has rolled out, evidence points to a rise in financial difficulties, and most low-income families do not have the savings to see them through this extended period. Although Advance Payment loans of up to half the estimated monthly award are available, they are not a solution.

The Government has announced that there will be no pause in the rollout of UC, in spite of them losing a non-binding opposition day motion calling for the rollout to be paused.

A time table has been published (on the www.gov.uk website) showing the dates for rollout in all parts of the country, and the latest date for Wolverhampton is December 2017. This is only for **fresh claims** and **changes of circumstances**, the DWP proposes to begin moving all **existing claimants** to the full UC service in 2019.

All DWP Phone Lines to be Free

Following the scandal over 55p per minute calls to the UC helpline, the DWP have announced that all DWP customer phone lines will be free to use by the end of 2017. Freephone numbers will be introduced. It is to be hoped that call centre staff numbers will be increased to cope with the probable increase in the volume of calls.

Online Appeals

HM Court and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) have moved on to stage 2 of the roll out of online hearings.

Over the next 18 months virtual hearings and online hearings using 'rapid messaging' will become a reality.

It will also be possible to lodge an appeal online and track the progress of your case by text, email or online.

People may welcome the opportunity to avoid the stress of a face-to-face hearing, but there is a concern that paper hearings have a much lower success rate than in-person hearings. HMCTS say that in-person hearings will still be available *'for those that need them'*, and judges will always

have discretion over the way cases should be heard. Specialist, face-to-face help will be provided for people who cannot easily use digital services.

Over and Out

This is the last Benefits Bulletin, I hope that the information provided over the last few years has helped readers to navigate their way through the seemingly never ending maze of rules and regulations. Also, many thanks to Dan Manville for his benefit Forum sessions.

I would heartily recommend the Benefits and Work website (www.benefitsandwork.co.uk) as a source of help and information, and I wish you all well for the future.

Stop Press: The chancellor in the budget has announced that the Universal Credit waiting time is to be reduced from six to five weeks from February 2018.

Also, housing benefit claimants could continue to receive their payments for an extra 2 weeks while waiting for UC payments to start.

Advances to people in need will be made more generous, covering up to the full value of their claim, rather than a maximum of one half.

Andrew Lycett

Chairperson's note Although Andrew is not officially resigning until 31st March 2018 since this is the last edition of the View Point it is very appropriate to include a massive vote of thanks to



Andrew in action

Andrew for his untiring efforts as Treasurer, Director and Trustee and one of the two remaining co-founders. He has made many contributions to the View Point, and was renowned for his very professional Quiz nights, which more recently he downsized to Forum quiz sessions. He was the organiser of the Hear-Our-Voice Carver Half Marathon Team (see back cover) and organised sponsored walks. He is shown left on one of his many bike rides.

Many thanks to Andrew

Here to listen...

Steve Guy: Counselling & Grief Support Service

07913 805285

www.steveguycounselling.co.uk

ITEC qualified

HELEN HOLDSWORTH

Massage therapist (Mobile)

Tel. 07708 068443

Email helenholdsworth@gmail.com

In remembrance of John Creamer



We have recently heard that John Creamer has died. John was a regular attendee of Hear-Our-Voice events and contributed to the wellbeing of others whilst doing so. Those contributions that John made will continue to have an impact on us a long time after his death since they are stored in our memories which we can recall and use in the course of our everyday lives.

Answers Quizzes

Quiz

1. Anne Murray
2. Idaho, Illinois, Indiana and Iowa
3. Scott Tracey
4. Cardigan Bay
5. Bert Trautmann and Jürgen Klinsmann
6. Union Flag
7. Hull, the official name of the city is Kingston upon Hull

Picture Quiz

1. Day trips to Bridgnorth
2. Wildside Activity Centre – Canal Trips
3. West Park visits
4. Clarendon Pub, Chapel Ash – Venue for first members' Xmas Lunch
5. Central Library – World Mental Health Day displays
6. Lighthouse Centre – Exhibitions and Films
7. Queen Square – Balloon Launch, WMH Day
8. Bantock House, Tractor Shed – AGM venue



Poets Corner



My Reason for Christmas

Christmas a time of year
When so many like a Bear
I like my Christmas to have a reason
Then I can enjoy this special season
Looking back on the Christmas's of the past
In my mind they have been allowed to last
As a Christian remembering who was
born on that special day
I can call upon when my faith does sway
The Christmas films I like to see again
And when I watch them it never wanes
I enjoy Christmas that I have a tree
All year round.
And enjoy the songs anytime of the year
and the sound.
Steve McColl

SNOW

People walked through East Park:
Trekking through the snow!
Stood there waiting for other people to arrive,
Rubbing hands trying to keep warm and watched



The other walkers passing through the woods!
Wind blew down on their faces
As spring popped its head up,
They dreamed of sunny days
Magpies walking across snowy ground,
Wild ducks flew overhead;
Children threw snowballs;

People stood in the snow and waited for the bus,
Hoping it'll turn up, stood there for hours,
As the bus arrived, they entered and sat beside
Windows, the bus started up,
Michael Hill



A VISION RESTATED

If for one person there is Hope
A Vision fulfilled.
Then what of mankind;
A chance perhaps.
If for one-person Contentment and Peace;
Perhaps for all
Speak words softly and slow
That others may hear your voice.
Allow your thoughts and fears to be shared.
Finding you are not alone
You may join together
Tentative and slow.
Withdrawing, watching, alone, not
understood.
A long process to rid ourselves
Of the rules that keep us apart.
Yet once started in a way however small
We will continue until,
As individuals, yes,
Open to our own and others' needs, we will
emerge
Bound to each by our own Oneness
And amazed at our new found strength

Graham

DON'T GIVE UP

Life is queer with its twists and turns
As everyone learns
And many a failure turns about
When he might have won had he stuck it out
Don't give up though the pace seems slow
You may succeed with another blow

Ron Ward

WORDSEARCH

WINTER

See if you can find the hidden words associated with WINTER.

BOOTS
DRIFT
FISHING
FLAKES
FLURRIES
FUN
HOCKEY
ICY
PLAY
PLOW
SALT
SAND
SCRAPER

F	S	K	A	T	I	N	G	H	O	C	K	E	Y	V
V	U	S	B	J	T	M	P	W	O	L	P	T	D	W
P	T	N	P	B	O	O	T	S	F	Y	S	A	L	T
S	N	O	W	M	A	N	Y	C	C	S	T	O	R	M
E	F	W	T	Z	L	S	E	I	R	R	U	L	F	S
S	F	M	L	E	E	L	Y	E	O	Y	Y	D	N	E
E	O	O	M	E	M	I	A	U	M	E	V	O	I	R
K	G	B	S	W	O	P	S	B	L	F	W	G	H	U
A	N	I	H	V	B	P	A	P	W	B	M	N	S	T
L	I	L	O	B	B	E	N	N	L	O	L	I	K	P
F	D	E	V	D	U	R	D	O	Q	U	N	H	I	L
X	I	N	E	D	B	Y	W	W	X	J	P	S	I	U
Z	L	K	L	N	I	E	L	D	T	L	D	I	N	C
F	S	V	V	L	R	K	T	F	I	R	D	F	G	S
T	S	C	R	A	P	E	R	J	W	W	H	I	T	E

SCULPTURE
SHOVEL
SKATING
SKIING
SLIDING
SLIPPERY
SNOWBALL
SNOWBLOWER
SNOWMAN
SNOWMOBILE
STORM
WHITE

CONTACT NUMBERS

NHS 111 - www.nhs.direct.nhs.uk

Social Services - emergency out of hours service
T.01902 552999

Penn Hospital Reception - T. 01902 444141

Samaritans - 24hrs helpline T.08457 909 090
or 01902 426 422

www.wolverhamptonsamaritans.org.uk

Cruse: Bereavement Support T. 0844 477 9400

The Haven: Help and Advice for victims of
domestic violence- T.08000 194 400

LGBT Network: Support for the LGBT Community-
T. 01902 425 092 www.lbgtwolverhampton.org.uk

Victim Support - T. 01902 795 830

Creative Support - T. 01902 458797
www.creativesupport.co.uk

Floating Support & Learning Disability;
Boot Factory

Saneline - T. 08457 67 800

Self - Harm Information and useful contacts
www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/self-harm

**Directory of Mental Health Services
in Wolverhampton:**

www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=4849&p=0 or google Directory of Mental
Health Services in Wolverhampton

USEFUL NUMBERS

'Walking for Health in Wolverhampton' is a local scheme that provides people with sociable, regular led group walks in many areas of Wolverhampton. For their latest timetable of the led walks, please telephone **01902 446601**

The Home Library Service: 01902 556256

Housing information and Housing Support: Contact Candice Gordon of Heantun Housing on **01902 571135** :
Catherine Ashley of Bromford Housing on **01902 731089**

WHERE TO GET SUPPORT

Black Country Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (bcpft.nhs.uk) Referral to these services is by a G.P. or a mental health professional.

- **Complex Care** This service provides community support for people with severe and enduring mental health problems such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.
- **Healthy Minds** Healthy Minds is a psychological therapy service for people who are experiencing common mental health problems such as depression, anxiety and stress. (You can self-refer to this service. To self-refer phone 0800 923 0222).
- **Wellbeing Service** The wellbeing service is a nurse led service for people with more complex mental health problems.

Starfish Starfish are an independent company who are funded by and run services on behalf of Wolverhampton City Council. Starfish run a number of groups and social activities across the city. These include Coffee Clubs, Writing Groups, Wellbeing Group, Drama Group and Art and Craft Groups plus social events including walks, meals out and visits to the cinema and theatre. For information phone: 07949 290036, email info@thesocialhub.org.uk or go to the website www.thesocialhub.org.uk

Kaleidoscope plus Kaleidoscope Plus are an independent group who run groups and activities throughout the Black Country including Wolverhampton. For information on groups and activities provided by Kaleidoscope Plus phone: 0121 565 7818 or go to the website www.kaleidoscopeplus.org.uk

The Avion Tuesday Club This group is a service user's run group. It meets at St. Andrew's Church, Whitmore Reans on Tuesdays between 10.30 a.m. and 3.30 p.m. Activities include: - Relaxation, Poetry Reading, Topical Discussion and Games. Liquid refreshments are freely available.

The Friends Group 'Where Mental Health matters' This is an independent group. It meets at St. Patrick's church hall Wednesfield near New Cross Hospital. It is open on Mondays and Tuesdays between 10.00 am. and 4.00 p.m. Activities at the group include: - Pool, Board games, Art group and outings plus Benefit Advice. Refreshments are available. For more information please phone: 07989020346.

Low Hill Group This is a service user's run group. It meets at The Good Shepherd Church in Second Avenue on Tuesdays between 2.00 p.m. and 4.30 p.m. Activities include: - Board Games. Refreshments are available. Everybody is welcome. For more information phone: 07722424095.

The Mental Health Travel and Social Group This is a service users' run group. It meets at the lower mall in the Mander Centre beneath HMV on Wednesday's between 10.30 a.m.-11.00 a.m. The group visits cities & towns around the West Midlands and beyond with the aim of promoting confidence & wellbeing among its members. For more information phone: 07919626246.

The People's Group This group is a service users' run group. It meets at St. Chad's (Lime Street) on Thursdays between 10.00 a.m. and 12.30 p.m. Activities available include: - Skittles, Board Games, Pool, Yoga and Relaxation. Refreshments are available. For more information phone: 07543844781 Thursday's only.

Place of Welcome Place of Welcome are a network of hospitality run by local community groups who want to make sure that everyone in their area has a place to go for a friendly face, a cup of tea and conversation, if and when they need it. There are a number of groups set up around Wolverhampton and they meet in churches, community centres and mosques etc. The groups are open to all in the community and are not a specialized mental health group. For more information email: info@placeofwelcome.org or go to the website www.placeofwelcome.org

The Phoenix Social Group This is a service users' run group. It meets at Wednesfield Residents and Community Rooms on Mondays between 12.30 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. Activities available include: - Pool, Board Games with Occasional speakers and Outings. Refreshments: - Tea, Coffee, Juice and Biscuits are available for a small charge. For more information phone: 07957648331 Monday's only.

Wolverhampton Information Network (WIN) Wolverhampton Information Network (WIN) have information on a range of services available in Wolverhampton. The web address for WIN is www.wolverhamptonci.co.uk

Travel Information For bus routes and timetables information contact N network West Midlands on 0845 303 6760 or N network website at www.Networkwestmidlands.com

James Egginton.

Thanks to James Egginton

Many thanks to James for his all his efforts made with his contributions to The View Point and in his very valuable role of Database Coordinator. Best wishes for the future James. The Board of Directors



Opening and Closing Times for Services Christmas 2017 and New Year 2018



Pharmacy Opening Times

For Information on Opening Times
See Your Local Free Paper
Christmas Opening Times

Emergency Contacts

Contact Penn Hospital (01902) 444141 to receive advice.

In-Patient Services

All wards will be open.
Senior Nurse on duty via Reception Penn Hospital (01902) 444141.

Mental Health Liaison Service

Crisis Resources/Home Treatment Team will be open over bank holidays 24 hours (01902) 445810. Access via A&E at New Cross Hospital. Doctors on Call and CHMT.

Early Intervention Service

Closing at 5:00 pm on Friday 22nd December 2017
Re-open Wednesday 27th December. Closing 5.0pm 29th December
Opening 2nd January 2018. (01902) 443993

Crisis/Home Treatment Service

The Service operates 7 days per week, 24 hours per day to provide support in crisis. The home treatment service operates 8.00am - 8.00pm.

The service is available throughout the Christmas period and the New Year.

The address is Penn Hospital, Penn Road, Wolverhampton WV4 5HN. Contact Duty Worker on 01902 444141; Fax 01902 575212.

Creative Support

T. 01902 458797 www.creativesupport.co.uk
Closed 25th & 26th December 2017 and 1st January 2018.

Community Mental Health Teams

Penn Hospital – The Willows

Tel: (01902) 443977
Closed 25th and 26th December 2017
Closed 1st January 2018

Steps to Health

Tel: (01902) 443640.
Closed 25 & 26th December 2017. Closed 1st January 2018.

Drop-ins, Day Centres & Other Services

ACCI (African Caribbean Community Initiative)

Tel: (01902) 571231
Usual opening times: 9:00 am - 5:00pm
Monday -Thursday, Friday 9:00 am - 4:30 pm
Christmas Period:

ACCI's Day Centre will be closed on 25th & 26th December 2017 and open on 27th December 2017. Closed 1st January 2018

Heritage Centre

Heritage Centre, Clifford Street, Whitmore Reans, WV6 0AA, phone number 07815 522668

The Heritage Centre will not be closed over the Christmas/New Year period, they are open as usual.

Monday - 4:00pm until 12:00am
Tuesday - 4:00pm until 11:00am
Wednesday - 4:00pm until 11:00am
Thursday - 4:00pm until 12:00am
Friday - 4:00pm until 2:00am
Saturday - 4:00pm until 2:00am
Sunday - 4:00pm until 12:00am

NAVJEEVAN

Closed 25th & 26th December 2017. Closed 1st January 2018. Contact 01902 312234 for further details.

Please note – Dates and times of all services are subject to change and are beyond our control. It is advisable to check before you travel.

The Editorial Team would like to send a big thank you to everyone who has contributed to the View Point throughout the years and a big thank you to everyone for their support. We hope you enjoy your Christmas and wish you all a very Happy New Year.

MENTAL HEALTH AND PHYSICAL HEALTH AS ONE 'IMPROVE ONE IMPROVE THE OTHER'

City Show Exhibits



City Show 2006



City show 2010



City Show 2007



Jane Viner
City show 2008



Stephen & Paul 2008



Sharon Jones & Janet Taylor
2012



James Egginton
2010

DAY TRIPS

Bridgnorth-Left
Stratford Upon Avon -centre
Malverns- right



THE CARVER HALF MARATHON RELAY EVENT 2008

End of 1st leg run by Hiran



Beginning of 2nd leg -Jessica



The triumphant team of Andrew, Darren, Jane, Jessica & Hiran with Stephen the avid supporter



Yet another example of mental health and physical health as one; improve one improve the other. Just look at those beaming faces.

Well done the team!!!
Photographs by Jon Lucas



Eat well-think well

BEING ALIVE - a short summary

I am alive: I am a human being; Desires Sensed: Required action: Desire fulfilled: Enjoyment: using all the senses and associated muscles and the 'required action' muscles on a continuous basis just like breathing only thinking when you need to think. Remember the relaxation periods; perfect peace as well.