



# N East Lancashire Voices ewsletter



**Exciting news!  
People First have got  
the contract to support  
the peer advocacy  
work in Lancashire.**

**Look inside to find out what  
this fantastic news means to  
East Lancashire Voices.**





# The Team

**Editor-in-Chief - Christopher**

**Deputy Editor - Linda**

**Proofreader - Jonathan**

**Community Networker - Russell**

**Communication Project Worker - Stephen**

Supported by



**People First**



The newsletter sub-group would like to welcome Stephen to the team. Stephen is a paid worker for People First and has taken on the new role of Communication Project Worker. He will be helping us to spread the word about East Lancashire Voices.

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**People First have worked hard to get the peer advocacy contract with Lancashire County Council for the next 3 years. We asked East Lancashire Voices what this means to them...**



“It means a lot to us that we’ve got a successful team behind us. It means we can continue to help people.”



“We’ll be able to continue the work on our projects in terms of health, safety, community and making people’s disability rights better.”



“It is vital to maintain the service for people with learning disabilities so then we feel supported and valued.”

## DISABILITY RIGHTS



Getting the contract is very encouraging as it gives us a sense of purpose and the drive to fight for justice.

**PHEW**

It is a big relief as we now know all of our hard work was not in vain. The hard work has paid off.



The contract is there to help us get new members as well as existing ones. We are looking for new members to join East Lancashire Voices. Don't be afraid to come along.





**A few weeks ago, the community sub-group went around Accrington to see lots of different organisations. We were trying to build a network by getting people to know us and for us to know them.**

We also decided to spread the word about East Lancashire Voices by giving out our newsletters. We want to be seen out and about within the community at different places in Accrington.

For example, we normally meet at the Double Decker café but we also meet at Micki Morgans. Philip usually organises the table and biscuits. Look out for us in a café near you!

We got a really good response from the people we spoke to.



# 4

## PARLIAMENT WORKSHOP

Rachel Dodgson from UK Parliament came to visit our group.

She talked to us about voting and how the government works.

She was very impartial by not taking sides with any political party.



She talked about the different levels of government: local and national.

She showed us how to contact our MP and how to find them on the Internet.



We talked about going to a polling station and using a NOW card or a voter authority certificate for photo ID. We also practised voting at a polling station and how to do a postal vote.

# 5

## LIBRARY PARTNERSHIP

We are lucky to have our meetings at Accrington Library. We have a community partnership with them.



Nick from the library came to our group to talk about how to join the library and what you can do there.



You can borrow up to 20 books! You can keep books for up to 3 weeks.



You can use a computer. The library staff are very friendly and helpful. They will show you what to do.



You can meet other people by joining groups like Knit and Natter or the Weekly Coffee Morning.



You can pick up lots of helpful leaflets about things happening in the local area.



Lancashire Mind came to talk to us about how to look after our mental health and how to support someone else. This is called peer support.



## Self-care



The group made a self-care box. They drew pictures of things they can do or think about if they are feeling sad.

We also learnt about the 5 steps to wellbeing. Here are some of the ideas from East Lancashire Voices...



“Lots of us here go to church. It supports our mental health because it helps us to meet people and share what is going on.” Russell



“I go walking and it helps me feel happy and free.” Ria



“I spend hours on mindfulness apps for relaxing music and relaxation techniques. The ones I use are called Calm, Headspace and Insight Timer.” Tim



“On some Mondays, I’ve started a new group called Spring into Drama. I’m learning about barriers to relationships.” Ian



“I did a charity bus ride using local bus services. It’s hard work and challenging but very rewarding because it’s something I do without expecting something in return.” Jonathan

People with a learning disability have worse health than people without a learning disability. It is important to raise awareness of this. This is why we invite learning disability health teams to our group.

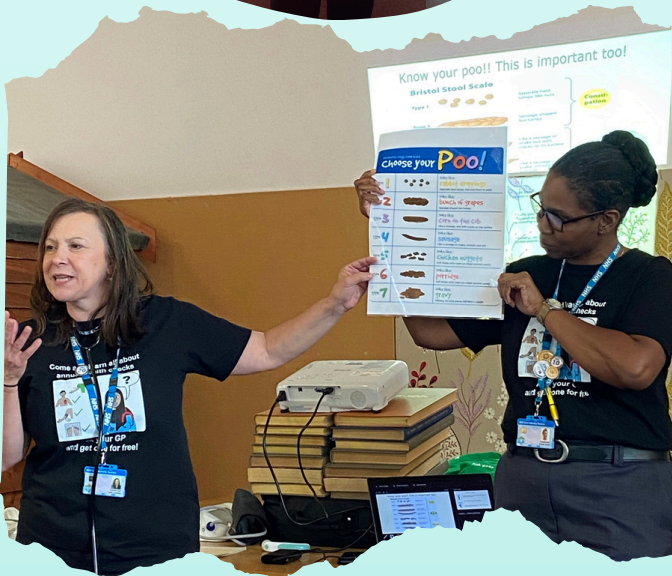


## Breast Awareness Workshop

Julie from Lancashire and South Cumbria Foundation Trust showed us how to check for lumps and notice signs of breast cancer.

## Annual Health Checks

Julie and Crystal came to talk about what to expect in an annual health check.



## Our Health Day

The Health Day at Blackburn Hospital was a success. Well done to East Lancashire Voices for speaking up about it. Thank you to Julie Clift and Rachel Jeffries from East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust for listening to us and making it happen.





# Stuart



## What do you enjoy about East Lancashire Voices?

“I enjoy meeting new people and getting to know them.”

### What are you good at?

- \* Crown Green Bowling.
- \* Being a team player and supporting other people.
- \* Helping out at a church in Clayton-le-Moors.
- \* Talking to people and being friendly.

### What have you improved at?

- \* Helping out with the East Lancashire Voices newsletter.
- \* Feeling confident to come to the group by myself.
- \* Wanting to co-chair the East Lancashire Voices meeting.

“I’m really proud of myself for helping out with the meetings!”

# 10 FUTURE PLANS

We want to try to get our work advertised in local community magazines.



We want to connect with Sarah Smith, the Hyndburn Labour MP.

We want to work with the local Police Community Support Officers in Accrington to develop a safe places scheme.



## FINAL THOUGHTS...



“Our work shows that we’re continuing to stand up for what we believe in - our human rights. Look out, here we come!”

Christopher - Editor-in-Chief

# Join us at Accrington Library



September

26

Friends and Relationships  
Workshop with the  
U-Night Group.



October

3

We will be finding out all  
of the news from the  
Learning Disability  
Partnership Board.



November

7

We will be talking about  
feeling safe in our town.



*'Helping you feel safe and stay safe  
when out and about in town'*

December

5

We will be talking about  
ways to connect with our  
community.



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East Lancashire Voices

Making Change Happen