

Crossways Community

Time to focus

Newsletter Spring 2008

Crossways Community 8 Culverden Park Road Tunbridge Wells
Kent TN4 9QX
Tel: 01892 529321

www.crosswayscommunity.org.uk
number8@crosswayscommunity.org.uk

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A thought from the Chairman

You may have heard the story of a man who was employed by a Duke and Duchess. One day he was called in to speak to his employer:

'James – how long have you been with us?' asked the Duchess.

'About 40 years, Your Grace', he replied.

'As I recall, you were employed to look after the dog', she said. 'Yes, Your Grace' he replied.

'James! That dog died 30 years ago' said the Duchess.

'Yes, Your Grace', said James 'What would you like me to do now?'

The Lord started to 'employ' Crossways 40 years ago to care for people in need and we celebrated this event in style last October. But we need to keep on saying to Him 'What would you like us to do next?'

Well, we were challenged last October through our friend and Christian brother, Brian Woodgate, to look to the future, roll up our sleeves and expect a new beginning. The

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Lord said to us through him that: "We have built carefully ... however, it is not the end, it is the beginning. It is the opening of a new chapter, the start of a new adventure of faith. For it is in My heart to expand the ministry ..."

These were exciting words. We are certainly not going to wait another 40 years for a new beginning. Inevitably, there will be some changes in our leadership and we expect young and active men and women to carry the torch in the future.

'What would you like us to do now?' we are saying to the Lord. As we pray, we believe that He will tell us, and we expect that to be an exciting new beginning!

Your Chairman,

Alan Harvey

A Roller Coaster—Martin Granger



Looking at what has been happening across Crossways since Christmas, life has been a bit of a roller coaster – reaching the heights and plumbing the depths as it were. But that's life, and certainly in a community you will experience the whole range of behaviours, feelings and activities that you do with a family, but on a rather larger scale.

The good thing about a roller coaster is that although, as with life, many things come around again, the ride that it gives is controlled. Even if there are heights and depths they are within the limit of the fairground ride. But real life does sometimes get out of control, so how do we deal with those situations which may seem impossible to deal with?

Kathy Lewis and John Neel will share something about the exciting changes that have taken place within Bethel Court and Culverdale; the same can be said about No 8 where we have welcomed two new residents. The worry is, how will they all settle down and what

happens when or if they don't? Well, looking back we know that most people who join us do settle down even if they struggle (very understandably) to begin with. Other residents help new residents find their feet and it's amazing how soon the new residents are making a life for themselves in Tunbridge Wells.

the same God who has met us over the past forty years will be there for us in the years to come.

Of course a lot of our time nowadays is taken up with paperwork and meetings and there is a real sense of "it's all too much". However, we do get through it and this often informs our thinking, which in turn helps us to improve the standard of support we give.

Lastly, it is the unexpected expenses that we find ourselves having to meet. As you can imagine, some are very big. Recently, we heard of some new regulations which we may have to comply with that will cost us forty thousand pounds to implement. It came as a bit of a shock but our experience is that in every aspect of our roller coaster life at Crossways, the same God who has met us over the past forty years will be there for us in the years to come.

Number 8 news

As part of our in-house holiday week, Roy and Sarah took some residents for a day trip to Eastbourne. We were blessed by a sunny (but windy) day which was perfect for a stroll along the sea front and a fish and chip lunch on the Pier. On the way home we stopped at blustery Beachy Head and were relieved to return home with a full head count !

Elaine took a group of residents to Polehill Garden Centre as part of the holiday week. There is a shop where home made organic produce is sold—mouth-watering cakes, pies, fruit and veg. Our residents wandered around trying out new food, checked out the plants and flowers, then finished with a lovely cream tea in the café. A really good day !



BETHEL COURT—Kathy Lewis

After what seemed like an age to all of us, in early December the first two residents moved into flats on the ground floor and the next week two more took up their new homes on the second floor. Then just in time for Christmas, one resident moved into the top floor.



These six flats are for independent living. Mostly the people in them are taking on all sorts of boring, worrying things such as paperwork that many of us have got used to over the years, but is new to some of them. As with any new building, there were a few teething troubles which we were able to sort out fairly quickly, but again there will be some bits and pieces that will need looking at for the first year. Some have been very irritating, like the front door that fitted too well and then with all the wet weather it needed the strength of Samson to get in or out!

Everyone handled the upheaval very well, especially as it was right on top of Christmas, a challenge to even the greatest of saints! There was plenty of excitement (myself included!) – the last tenant moved in at the end of February and now the house feels complete. We have a great group of folk who will I am sure enjoy the challenge of a new venture together.

It has been a wonderful privilege to be able to watch the tenants put their own style and character into the flats with their own particular choice of furniture and fittings, and then to enjoy a cup of tea with them. The garden around the flats has been professionally landscaped and is really nice. We can't wait to see all the plants start to fill out and get established. There are bound to be more teething problems over the next year so do remember people in your prayers as, unlike our other projects, they do not have "support" from staff being available every day. They will need to find their own friends and network ... that is surely independence.



CULVERDALE NEWS—John Neel

Hello there from a Culverdale that is now beginning to settle down – what a whirlwind of activity we have had over the last 3 months. Christmas was a great time of celebration; firstly our Carol Service, followed by our annual Dinner at Number 8. Then what is now becoming a tradition, our Culverdale Lunch hosted this time by Pembury Baptist Church, not forgetting the hard work of both Natalie and William. I did not know that William was that proficient in the kitchen.

So what has been going on – well we have had six of our residents move on into Bethel Court, the last resident moving over this month, and one moving back into the community. Five new residents have moved in to Culverdale over the last couple of months and all appear to be settling in very well, we also have a resident about to move in from Number 8. What we have noticed as a team and praise God for, is just how the Lord has undertaken in every area of these moves. Some of our new folk are either in their late 20's or early 30's which has brought a new dynamic into the house. What is so heart warming is just how they are socialising with the older residents as well as those that have been here

“Five new residents have moved in to Culverdale over the last couple of months”

for some time. In fact we have an elderly lady now being spoilt by the younger folk who have made her the House Granny! So now I know what Moses felt like with having to move the whole nation of Israel.

As you may or may not know, part of our funding at Culverdale comes from Supporting People and this funding is based on the condition that we attain a certain standard to attain Accreditation. Well the good news is that at our audit late last year we were able to attain a 'B' right across the board, and the SP representative commended us on the level of support that we afford our residents.

For this summer we will be at Green Pastures in Bournemouth for a week and a number of our residents have already booked a place. Because of this we are not going to have our in-house holidays. We still continue to have our out & abouts once a month and with the new folk that have come, residents have started a little Culture Group where once a month they go to a show, theatre or cinema.

Again, thank you so much for your thoughts, prayers and support.

SCATTERING THE SEED

Those of you who attended the Service of Thanksgiving last year will remember that Brian Woodgate shared with us a word from God that he had been given for Crossways. Part of this word was about scattering the seed – sharing the values, practice and ethos of Crossways.

This scattering conjures up for me the picture in the parable of Jesus about the farmer sowing seed in the field by scattering it as he walked along—never quite sure as to how things might work out.

One of the exciting things that has been happening at Crossways over the past few years is that we have been working with the Kent Police College offering trainee officers the opportunity of a week's placement at Crossways. This is to help the trainees have a greater understanding of mental health and to better help those they come into contact with whilst on duty in the community.

... trainee officers have a greater understanding of mental health ... whilst on duty in the community

These placements have been of great mutual value. Having people with us, even for such a short period of time, who are associated with the police, has helped dispel some of the fears and images that our residents have of the police, quite often due to their encounters in the past when they have been unwell.

However, we know from the feedback that we receive from the trainees that their experience with us has been both informative and helpful; and for one or two their time with us has challenged and changed their outlook on life. They continue to share this learning during their training and into their careers.

What we have found is that just in sharing our daily life at Crossways, or scattering the seed so to speak, both the trainees, their colleagues and Crossways have benefited considerably, and who knows what the impact for good will be in the future in terms of the benefit to those living in the community who come into contact with the police.

Can you help?

You may not know it, but there is a very rare breed of people known as 'cleaners'; a bit like garden song birds they are disappearing at an alarming rate. A good cleaner in the house, you might say, is worth two in the bush!

We used to have a good cleaner but sadly she had to retire due to ill health, that was some nine months ago. We have tried to get another cleaner but without success and so the care support staff, who have always done some cleaning, are having to do it all at the present time. We are very grateful to them but we know that this affects time they have to spend with the residents.

A well-kept and clean home is vital for the work that we do at Crossways. Most of us feel so much better when our surroundings are clean and tidy and our home looks cared for. For this to continue at Crossways we need a dedicated person who is willing to make this vital part of our work their contribution towards the welfare of our residents.

If you would like to join our care home team at Number 8 or think you know someone who would, please contact Jacky Taylor on 01892 529321.

Skills for life

Many of the people who come to Number 8, our registered care home, because of their enduring poor mental health, have either not been able to learn the practical life skills they need to live more independently or have lost confidence to use the skills they once had.

Our Life Skills Trainers play an important part in personal development in the life of each our residents. Because their role is a dedicated one they can set aside undisturbed time with residents, helping them learn the skills they need to move on.

We have a vacancy for this rewarding job (part-time) and if you think you would like to be considered for the position of Life Skills Trainer please contact Penny Jones on the above number for more information.

Easter



*Easter, my favourite time of year,
The cloudy winter days are gone,
And the brighter showery Spring is here.
With primroses, bulbs and snowdrops to gladden my life,
And new born lambs frolicking in the peaceful pastures.
A time to celebrate God's love
In sending Jesus down from Heaven,
His only perfect Son,
To take away all my sin on the Cross.
A perfect life and a perfect death,
And rose again the third day,
To make ready the Way
For a glorious life in Heaven.
Where He will reign over us,
As we gladly live for Him, In new glorified bodies,
Without pain or sin,
In the presence of a Father who loves us.
And the Saints who now see Christ's face,
And are filled with joy unspeakable, perfect love and peace.*

David Cooke

If you would like to comment or have any anecdotes you would like to share with us, then please address to Crossways for the attention of Celia, or why not email them, we would love to hear from you.

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