



Welcome to the July edition of the WERS newsletter!

The last three months have seen the effects of the transition to a single accommodation provider and the upheaval experienced by many clients and their families. WERS was relieved that the vast majority of clients living in Your Homes Newcastle properties were able to remain in their homes. However, for those living in properties previously managed by the Angel Group, it was a very different ballgame, with clients having to move into new accommodation, sometimes within Newcastle but sometimes much further afield, with a resulting loss of support networks carefully put in place over a period of time.

However, amid all this disruption there have been a number of really good things happening both at WERS and in the city and so this edition is going to focus on those things which give us cause for celebration!

WERS Befriending Scheme again awarded APS



WERS is thrilled that the application for the re-accreditation of the Befriending Scheme by the Mentoring and Befriending Foundation was successful. Many congratulations to our Volunteer Co-ordinators Jo and Carol and all the volunteer befrienders! We were most grateful to

the two clients and two befrienders who agreed to be interviewed as part of the assessment visit. The rigorous assessment process, although arduous, enabled WERS to review every aspect of the scheme: the recruitment and training of volunteers, the referral and matching process, evaluations, volunteer support and supervision. The assessor was clearly impressed with the scheme:

'A key strength is the way in the which the service has developed a strong and effective structure for the work, underpinned by comprehensive documentation: however this more 'formal' element of the work is handled in a way that responds effectively to the needs of the clients...'
Well done everyone!

A grand day out!



Many congratulations to Bishop Martin on being awarded the CBE for his service to the Church of England and to communities in the North East. Bishop Martin has been a patron of WERS since 2004 and has been a fantastic supporter and promoter of our work. We were both very pleased to receive our honours from the Queen at the same investiture.

It was a lovely and most memorable occasion for me and my family, but it was very good to get back to reality, back to all the clients, staff and volunteers who make WERS what it is and for whom the MBE was accepted.

Alnmouth Friary weekend

In June, Helen and David Goodacre took four of our female clients for a weekend at Alnmouth Friary. This was the second visit - some of our male clients went with David and one of our volunteer befrienders last summer.

It was a wonderful opportunity for the women to distance themselves from their difficult and stressful situations for a short while and enjoy the beauty and tranquillity of the Friary and its surroundings.



The Brothers' hospitality was again warm and welcoming and everyone felt at ease. The varied programme of activities included games, walks on the beach, a chance to talk and opportunities to be quiet – the silent breakfast on the Saturday morning presented quite a challenge for some!

We are indebted to Brother Jason and his colleagues for their generosity in funding the weekend. Helen says:

'It was a privilege to share an insight into the lives of women WERS has helped and supported. The gifts they have to offer are great and with some encouragement and support they will be a great asset to our country.'



Refugee Week 2011

The long-established tradition of the awareness-raising stall in the city centre was continued this June with volunteers from many different projects and organisations giving out free pens, coasters, balloons and mythbusters to passers-by in the Grainger Market.

The North East Strategic Migration Partnership had generously given funding for the event as well as producing the latest version of the very popular and effective Mythbuster leaflet, now in its 8th edition.

During the day 1800 mythbusters and pens were given out – an all-time record. The freebies ran out just before 2pm so more leaflets needed to be fetched and sweets purchased in lieu of the pens.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the event!



9am and all ready to go – Helen poised to greet the early shoppers

Lindsay Cross

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Opening times:

Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri: 9.30am – 1pm

Wednesday: 11am – 1pm