



WITH LOVE FROM THE TEAM

Hello!

How quickly has this year gone?! Our Aspire groups have been back up and running for 14 months now and we are growing quickly in numbers - we now have over 160 people on our books across our seven groups and outreach work. Your support and involvement is crucial to Aspire's success - we know that being together and having fun with friends is the beating heart of Aspire. Recently our groups were described as "Ordinary Magic"- doing seemingly ordinary things with extraordinary outcomes! We always love your feedback, so if you feel that Aspire makes a difference to your life we'd love to hear from you.

We have had changes here at Aspire - a little rebranding work! Our new logo is being launched on the 1st December and is on the top of this newsletter. Over Christmas we are running a Reverse Advent Calendar across our social media pages. The calendar lists one thing to do per day in the run up to Christmas that would help keep us going over the winter.

I hope you have found the sessions with the Green Doctors about energy saving and keeping ourselves warm during the coming winter months useful. If you do have any worries at all, please speak to your Session Leader as there are organisations we can refer you to that may be able to help. Also, Kirklees Council have a very helpful "cost of living support" website <https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/cost-of-living/index.aspx>.

Lucy, our Almondbury session leader, left us to take up a full time Occupational Therapy role. We will miss her because she has been a part of the Aspire family since she began volunteering with us pre-COVID, was with us for her practical experience from university and then, following her graduation, as a session leader. Jo McFarlane has joined the core Aspire team and is the Session Leader at our Almondbury group. Many of you will know Jo as she has been the tutor for many of our sessions. We have students on placement almost non-stop now until Easter too - always a joy!

Also, Marion Hall, who has been coming to the Aspire group at Greenhead for several years has agreed to become a Trustee on behalf of all group members. We will be developing this role over the next year and would love interest from other group members who might like to get involved in 12 months time.

Lots of love

Susanna xxx

CEO

STOP PRESS – we have been awarded the Kirklees Volunteer Quality Award – see page 3

Our weekly programmes of activities are available on the website:
<https://www.aspirecreatingcommunities.org.uk/groups>

Aspire Creating Communities
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Huddersfield, HD1 5JP

email: enquiries@aspirecreatingcommunities.org.uk
Charity Number 1186846

What We've Been Up To



What have we been doing recently? The stained glass windows were glowing, the autumnal felting was fun and the tea lights were lighting up our days! We were concentrating hard on Scrabble as well as making Christmas cards and baubles for the tree.

WHAT WE DO - Come and join us!

Aspire Creating Communities delivers a weekly network of creative community groups across Huddersfield, to promote social inclusion and mental well-being. Aspire works in partnership with other local community services with people over the age of 55 who may be experiencing isolation, bereavement, loss of role or mental health difficulties through an Occupational Therapist lead programme of creative activities.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME AT OUR MEETINGS WHICH ARE HELD:

Monday 10.00 – 12.00 pm	Moldgreen United Reform Church, Dalton HD5 8AA
Monday 1.30 – 3.30 pm	St Michael and St Helen's Church Almondbury, HD 5 8DU
Tuesday 10.00 – 12.00 pm	Chestnut Centre, Deighton, HD2 1HJ
Wednesday 10.00 – 12.00 pm	Crosland Moor Community Centre, HD 4 5RX
Thursday 10.00 – 12.00 pm	St John's the Evangelist Church, Birkby HD1 5EA
Thursday 1.30 – 3.30 pm	Berry Brow Church, Newsome HD4 7LP
Friday 10.00 – 12.0 pm	Birkby Croft, HD2 2UG

VOLUNTEER VOICES

Pamela Stevens

When did you begin volunteering with Aspire?

I started volunteering with Aspire shortly after it began at St John's Birkby in 2015.

How did you hear about Aspire?

I heard about Aspire through Susanna and was interested in what she was doing. I am blessed with good health and felt this was a way I could give back to the community and maybe make a difference.

What is your role as an Aspire Volunteer at the moment (what have you been doing)?

I have been a volunteer at three of the Aspire groups and currently am involved in the group at Birkby St Johns in Greenhead. I love making people comfortable and talking with the members of the groups. I'm happy to respond to whatever needs to be done whether that be helping with crafts or making cups of tea. We often laugh together, especially when my memory fails and I can't remember the orders of who wants tea and who wants coffee.

What do you like about Aspire & the work that it does as a charity?

I love the fact that we work as a team. There is the opportunity to meet people and build relationships with those who come to the sessions. I have learned a lot of the principles of Occupational Therapy along the way. There is satisfaction in being able to connect with others no matter

Can you offer any words of encouragement for those looking to begin working as an Aspire Volunteer?

The sessions are well run with a lot of laughter and fun. I always come away with the feeling that I have been able to help someone in some small way.



COULD YOU BE AN ASPIRE VOLUNTEER?

Volunteers are crucial to the work of Aspire. If you are interested in joining the team contact our Volunteer Co-Ordinator: volunteers@aspirecreatingcommunities.org.uk or call 07411 879609.

STOP PRESS

We are so proud to have been awarded the Kirklees Volunteering Quality Award. Aspire has a team of 30 volunteers in a variety of roles, and each and every one is crucial to our work.

We have been working towards this assessment for the last couple of years as it is the gold standard in Kirklees for recruiting, processing applications and – most importantly – valuing our volunteers.

We couldn't do it without you our amazing team so
THANK YOU



Student News – a message from Peter



What an amazing time my eleven weeks at Aspire has been! I have been welcomed by the staff, volunteers and members at all seven of the groups. It has been a whirlwind visiting all of the groups during each week, and I hope that I got to know you all well. I have loved the variety of activities at the Aspire groups, from the crafts such as rag-rugging, to armchair Zumba and skittles. As a student of occupational therapy it has been brilliant to see how people use the Aspire groups to enjoy themselves, build new friendships and feel part of the community. I particularly enjoyed our Jubilee celebrations, from the crafts and music, to driving the bus!

As I start a new career in the hospitals of Greater Manchester, I will remember what you have all taught me – that people's wellbeing in the community is as important as their physical health. I wish everyone in the 'Aspire Creating Communities' world the very best for the future!

Warm spaces in Kirklees

Warm spaces are friendly and comfortable places where you can keep warm and be with other people.

Warm spaces in libraries

In Kirklees we have 24 libraries that are warm spaces and everyone is welcome. All of our libraries are heated, so are comfortable to stay in for long periods of time. Every building has a range of both comfy seating, and more functional furniture for study or computer use. They are a place to keep warm, meet friends, sit and read and take part in activities.

[Library locations and opening times](#)

In our libraries you can access:

A warm and comfortable environment

Free wi-fi

Free access to computers

Free books

Free events and activities

Support and advice

Friendly and helpful staff

[Free support from libraries](#) tells you more about what you can get from the library service.

A HUGE THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

funded
through



the Joseph Rank trust



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



WEvolve funding and support provided by
the Ward Councillors from Huddersfield
Central and North Place Partnerships

