

Celebrating Diversity

The Newsletter from Harvest Housing Group

ISSUE 4

Welcome



Welcome to our fourth edition of 'Celebrating Diversity'. It is two years since the publication of our first edition, and as chair of Harvest's Equality and Diversity Board it is rewarding to witness and celebrate the work of groups throughout our neighbourhoods. None of this work would be possible without the passion and commitment of community members who have been willing to engage with our staff and help successfully deliver these activities.

In this edition, we showcase work around the seven strands of diversity. If you are part of a group, or an individual that would also like to promote or help with your work, please contact Shameem Khan our Equality and Diversity Coordinator on 01772 765643 who will be pleased to discuss this with you.

As the end of the year approaches, for many there will be participation in religious celebrations including Diwali, Eid and Christmas. It is often a time when celebration is centred around family, friends and neighbours, and on behalf of Harvest Housing Group I wish you all a peaceful end to the year and a prosperous future.



Kate Forrester
Chair, Harvest Equality and Diversity Board.

Frontis partnership helps people back to work

As an employer, Harvest is always looking to break down the barriers that make it difficult for people with disabilities to find employment.

A recent success story is Gemma Fairhurst who recently joined the administration team at Frontis through a partnership with the disability organisation TNG Training. Frontis set up an agreement with TNG to provide work placements for unemployed disabled people and after a short search, Gemma joined the Frontis team on a temporary basis.

At first, Gemma was unsure that she would like admin work but was willing to give it a try.

Gemma was diagnosed with epilepsy after giving birth to her first child and this had an impact on her confidence and she had been out of work for 8 years.

The experience of working at Frontis has helped to restore her confidence and she is now enjoying her role as an administration assistant.

Gemma is now doing an excellent job and has become a valued member of the Frontis administration team.



Black History Month

Black History Month is an international event that started in America in 1926 and is celebrated in October each year. The month features events that recognise the struggles of black people and is an appreciation of the contributions of black people across the world in politics and society.

Stockport's Black History Month celebrations have been happening for 11 years. Each year, the programme of activities varies. This year, events included music, dance food and drink, cloth making, a church service. There was also a performance to celebrate the life of the bass-baritone singer, actor and political activist Paul Robeson.

Black History Month was supported by M&D, who made donations to the events and held awareness raising sessions with staff and customers.

Trentham Gardens intergenerational trip

Forty members of the Birchwood Age Concern group and eight Birchwood Junior Police Community Safety Officers (PCSOs) teamed up to arrange a trip to Trentham Gardens recently.

Neighbourhood Regeneration Officer, Bernadette Bell arranged funding for the trip through the Grassroots fund. The funding covered the cost of organising the day and paid for transport to and from the event.

The junior PCSOs, all aged between 7 and 12 gave assistance to the older people on the day, including helping them onto the bus and around the shops. The highlight of the day was a visit to the shopping centre followed by a walk around the gardens.

The
Trentham
Estate



Cultural cooking on January Blues Cruise

Residents of Trafford will be treated to a January Blues Cruise on Saturday 8th January 2011.

The Blues Cruise has a tropical theme with parrots and music from a steel band to cheer up residents during the darkness and cold of January.

There will be many events throughout the day including a 'cultural cooking calendar' where recipes will be given for each month of the year from each of the top seven nationalities for the Trafford area.

There will also be taster exercise sessions in Zumba African dance along with yoga and aerobics.

A dietician will also be on hand to give advice and on healthy eating and how to feed your family for a fiver.

The event is taking place at the Old Trafford Community Centre, Trafford, on 8th January 2011 between 12 pm and 3pm. Everyone is welcome to come along.





Stockport Mela

A Mela is a celebration of culture and Stockport Mela took place at Stockport Market on Sunday 8th August to celebrate Asian and western culture with a theme of 'Celebrating Communities'.

The M&D stall gave visitors an opportunity to add a picture, comment or drawing to a 'Celebrating Communities' board which brought together ideas from different communities in Stockport.

There were lovely children's drawings that were added, including a picture of a hopscotch game, a pet cat, the new park and a choir. There were also philosophical comments from adults about equality and understanding 'each others' cultures and religions as well as learning about different ways of life.

The Lord Mayor of Stockport officially opened the Mela with a message that we should celebrate 'living together in peace and harmony.'

Contractors get refresher Diversity training



All Harvest staff have taken part in diversity training sessions so that they are aware of disability, gender, age, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and religious issues that are important to customers.

Contractors have been included in our diversity training programmes and experience the same training on equality and diversity awareness as our staff. This

ensures our customers receive a consistent service tailored to their needs.

Repairs contractors Crudens and PH Jones were the latest contractors to attend the training course which featured dramatised scenes to illustrate good practice when dealing with a wide range of customers.

Moorlands help Women's Aid tackle domestic violence

Moorlands
HOUSING



Moorlands Housing made a donation of £1000 to Women's Aid in October to help women who have experience domestic violence.

Shocking national statistics show that one in four women will experience domestic violence in their lifetime, with an incident of domestic violence reported to the police every minute.

Staffordshire Women's Aid run a refuge to support women who are fleeing domestic violence and the donation will be used to provide activities for women and children, such as confidence building courses and outings. These activities help to rebuild lives and increase self esteem.

Gavin McAlister, Neighbourhood Regeneration Officer, Moorlands Housing said, **"We recognise the important work of the women's refuge in the Staffordshire Moorlands in supporting women at periods of their lives when they are most vulnerable. Moorlands Housing has had a long partnership with the refuge and is often involved in helping women to move on to independent accommodation. We hope that our donation will enable Women's Aid to help even more women to build confidence and self esteem."**



Gavin McAlister, Neighbourhood Regeneration Officer, Moorlands Housing (left) with Mrs Dickie Chester-James, Chief Executive Women's Aid (right).

Upcoming important religious dates

21st December
Winter Solstice - Yule (Pagan)

Yule is the time of the winter solstice. Within the Northern tradition Yule is regarded as the New Year.

25th December
Christmas Day (Christian)

The day when Western Christians celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ. This is a time when gifts are shared and people celebrate with lavish meals and drinks.

14th January
Makar Sankranti (Hindu)

Makar Sankranti is one of the most important festivals of the Hindu calendar and celebrates the sun's journey into the northern hemisphere.

8th February
Parinirvana - Nirvana day (Buddhist)

Mahayana Buddhist festival marking the anniversary of Buddha's death. Pure Land Buddhists call the festival "Nirvana Day".

20th March
Hola Mohalla (Lunar Calendar) (Sikh)

Hola Mohalla is three day festival of military exercises and mock battles, together with religious discussions and devotional music, at Anandpur Sahib on the day after Holi.

21st March
Naw-Ruz (Bahai)

Baha'i New Year

21st March
Jamshedi Noruz (Fasli) (Zoroastrian)

Zoroastrian New Year's Day in the Fasli calendar.

Hazel's story...

Just over two years ago I changed from male to female.



Hazel, a Harvest tenant, recently spoke to Kate Forrester, Director of M&D and Chair of the Harvest Equality and Diversity board about her experiences of making the transition from male to female.

Hazel (left) with Kate Forrester, Director of M&D and Chair of the Harvest Equality and Diversity board (right).

Did you have any support during your transition?

To me, it was the support I got from my best friend Claire and my G.P. that really helped me through the transition. Harvest were also very supportive, the staff were willing to understand my situation and happy to help. This all meant a lot to me as I had been shut out by my family who were not willing to accept my situation. I know how isolation can feel and I want to be able to offer support to other trans men and women who may be isolated.

As a gender reassigned person, what factors are important to you when choosing where to live?

Security and support are often very important to people as they are more of a target for abuse. Harvest has a strong commitment to community safety, and has an active approach to hate crime. It is comforting to know they recognise that gender reassigned people are more likely to be targeted and they treat this very seriously, with a zero tolerance policy in operation.

What does Harvest offer, that you feel is of particular importance to someone who is gender reassigned?

Opportunities. While life can be full of challenges for someone in my situation, Harvest has given me the chance to feel proud and valued. They have hosted events that are dedicated to raising awareness of gender reassigned issues, and gave me the opportunity to speak. More importantly Harvest supported me in what matters to me – helping others who are going through what I went through in life.

How has Harvest helped you settle in to your new life?

Living in a sheltered scheme, it was always important that the manager understood my situation. My experience with scheme managers has been great. When I went through the transition stage of deciding to change to a woman, Harvest made it so simple and straightforward. There were no paperwork problems or awkward questions, just a comfortable meeting to update the records and to ask me how they could assist.

Are you comfortable in dealing with the staff at Harvest and do you feel like you are treated appropriately and with respect at all times?

Totally, in fact so much so, that I have attended many Harvest events and I am on scrutiny panels. It seems that staff are comfortable with accepting that I have needs that differ from a lot of people and they are keen to tailor the service so that my needs are taken into account. If they don't know something... they ask as they want to get it right for everyone.

“ I know how isolation can feel and I want to be able to offer support... ”



If you want to know more about the issues raised in Hazel's article or if you are interested in a support network please contact Harvest's Equality & Diversity Co-ordinator, Shameem Khan on 01772 765643

If you would like the help of an interpreter to understand this document, or to talk to us, please contact your local Neighbourhood Office or Harvest Response on **LoCall 0845 345 0272** or Minicom 0845 345 7484.

This newsletter is also available in other formats, such as Braille, large print or audio (CD or tape).

French

Si vous souhaitez l'aide d'un interprète pour comprendre ce document, ou pour nous parler, veuillez contacter soit votre bureau de proximité (*Neighbourhood Office*) soit Harvest Response au 0845 345 0272 (prix d'un appel local) ou au 0845 345 7484 (pour les utilisateurs de Minicom).

Ce dépliant est également disponible dans d'autres formats notamment en braille, en gros caractères ou sur support audio (CD or cassette).

Russian

Если вы нуждаетесь в помощи переводчика, чтобы понять текст настоящего документа или поговорить с нами, свяжитесь с ближайшим айонным представительством (*Neighbourhood Office*) или отделением Harvest Response по телефонам службы LoCall 0845 345 0272 или Minicom 0845 345 7484.

Данная листовка также доступна в других форматах – брайлевская печать, крупный шрифт или аудио-формат (CD-диск или кассета).

Punjabi

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਲਈ ਜਾਂ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਗੱਲ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਇਕ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਮਦਦ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਥਾਨਿਕ ਨੇਬਰਹੁੱਡ ਦਫ਼ਤਰ ਜਾਂ ਹਾਰਵੈਸਟ ਰਿਸਪਾਨਸ ਨਾਲ ਲੋਕਲ 0845 345 0272 ਜਾਂ ਮਿਨਿਕਾਮ 0845 345 7484 'ਤੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ ।

ਇਹ ਲੀਫ਼ਲੈੱਟ ਦੂਜੀਆਂ ਫ਼ਾਰਮੈਟਾਂ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕ ਿ ਬ੍ਰੇਲ , ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਛਪਾਈ ਜਾਂ ਆਡੀਓ (ਸੀਡੀ ਜਾਂ ਟੇਪ) ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ ।

Farsi

افضل ، دىراد مچرتم كمك هب ج اى تح ام اب ندرک تب حص ى ارب اى دنس نى ا ندى مف ى ارب رگا
مراهش اب سن اپسر تس و راه اى و (س ى ف ا دو ر و ب ى ن) ن ا ت دو خ ل ح م ن ك س م ر ت ف د اب
دى رى گ ب س ا م ت 08453457484 م ا ك ى ن ى م اى و 08453450272

ى ت و ص ت ر و ص ب اى و ت ش ر د پ ا چ ، ن اى ا ن ى ب ا ن ط خ ل م ج ز ا ى ر گ ى د ل ا ك ش ا ر د ن ى ن چ م ه و ز ج ن ى
ن ش ا ب ى م د و ج و م (راون اى و ى د ى س)

Polish

Jeśli w celu zrozumienia niniejszego dokumentu lub kontaktu z naszą firmą chcieliby Państwo skorzystać z pomocy tłumacza, prosimy o kontakt z miejscowym Neighbourhood Office lub Harvest Response pod numerem LoCall 0845 345 0272 lub Minicom 0845 345 7484.

Niniejsza ulotka dostępna jest również w innych formatach, takich jak druk pismem Braille'a lub dużą czcionką, bądź format audio (na dysku CD lub taśmie magnetofonowej).

Gujarati

જો તમને આ દસ્તાવેજ સમજવામાં અથવા અમારી સાથે વાતચીત કરવામાં ઈન્ટરપ્રિટરની મદદ જોઈતી હોય તો, કૃપા કરી તમારી સ્થાનિક નેઇબરહુડ ઓફિસનો સંપર્ક કરો અથવા હારવેસ્ટ રિસપોન્સનો (Harvest Response) લોકલ (LoCall) 0845 345 0272 ઉપર અથવા મિનિકોમ 0845 345 7484.

આ પત્રિકા બીજી રચનાઓમાં જેવીકે અંદાલિપિ (બ્રેઇલ), મોટા છાપેલા અક્ષરોમાં અથવા ઓડિઓમાં (CD અથવા ટેઇપ) પણ મળી રહે છે.

Urdu

اس دستاویز کو سمجھنے یا ہم سے بات کرنے کے لیے اگر آپ کو ترجمان (انٹریپرٹر) کی ضرورت ہو تو ہمارے مہربانی اپنے مقامی 'نئے برہنہ' آفس یا 'ہارویسٹ رسپانس' سے لوکل نمبر 0845 345 0272 یا مئی کام نمبر 0845 345 7484 پر رابطہ کریں۔

یہ کتابچہ دیگر شکلوں میں بھی دستیاب ہے، جیسے بریل، بڑے حروف کی چھپائی، یا سنسنے والی ٹیپ یا سی ڈی پر۔



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