



# E.L.I.T.E Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1

Winter 2011

Hello and welcome from Elite Director—Val Rowley



Hello Everyone,

Welcome to our first Newsletter and I hope that you all find it informative and interesting. I would also like to welcome Linda Regan back to the fold after a short absence.

For those of you who are not quite sure what E.L.I.T.E (CIC) is about, we are a Community Interest Company – Not for Profit Organisation – and we are 100% User Led by Disabled People and their Carers, who have a great understanding of all disabilities making us “Experts by Experience” and who better to be involved in decision making, for all services, including the NHS, than those people who live the life 24/7. We are here to promote Social Inclusion and to eliminate the barriers that prevent disabled people from living full and independent lives that non disabled people take for granted.

A bit of sad news - The Government Funding for our Peer Support Groups throughout Staffordshire came to an end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2011 so our funding has dropped dramatically. To keep our services going we are now having to make a charge for the activities which we are providing throughout North Staffordshire, to help us to become self sustainable, which will allow us to continue supporting all Disabled People and their Carers. We do hope that you will support us throughout this changing time and please do not hesitate to give us a call or pop into the office for a chat, whenever the need arises.

On a brighter note our Activities 4 All pilot (which has now been running for 20months) has received a grant from the BIG LOTTERY over a five year period. This money will be used to promote “Social Inclusion” by providing a “stepping stone” to independence through Activities 4 All. (Please see our website where a short film is shown as to the activities we are doing at present). You can contact our Project Officer – Helen Tunnicliffe on 01782 662872 if you are interested in coming along to either Wye Road Community Centre – every Tuesday 10.00 to 3pm, or Newcastle Methodist Church every Thursday 12noon to 4pm.

On a final note I would like to say a BIG THANK YOU to Lisa and Lucy who without their help and support ELITE would not be running as efficiently as it is. Also a BIG THANK YOU to our Volunteers (some who are also Carers) Linda, Pat, Simeon, Sue W, Sue A, Lindy, Gillian, Mike, Steve, Rebecca, Miriam and Wendy. Without them Activities 4 All would not be here.

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Val J Rowley

## The latest Elite Day Opportunity News

E.L.I.T.E Theatre Company working in partnership with the New Vic *Borderlines*.

The E.T.C (Elite Theatre Company), will provide the opportunity for people with disabilities to work with the theatre enriching the lives of the participants and bringing new energies and ideas into the theatre company.

All participants will become a part of the ELITE Theatre Company and will

### Glossary of terms commonly used in Social Care and Health

- **Personalisation** - Giving you the choice and control over your life and the way services should respond to you, instead of you having to fit in with them.
- **Advocacy** - Supports people in expressing their views, preferences and decisions on an equal footing.
- **Person Centered Plan (PCP)**- Is a set of approaches designed to assist someone to plan their life and support.
- **Self Directed Support** - This is another term used instead of ‘personalisation’ please see the definition under personalisation.
- **Assessment** - A professional in Social Care and Health looks at your individual needs and discusses them with you. This is so the right support can be put in place for you.

develop their own ideas and aspirations for the company through engaging with highly professional and qualified practitioners.

Members of ETC will participate in weekly workshops leading to presentations and performances. In addition they will have access to the resources of the theatre including opportunities to see theatre performances.

Participants will have the opportunity to meet new people, make new friends, develop their creativity, learn new skills and most importantly have fun!

We currently have one session running every week on a Thursday, members arrive at the New Vic Theatre at 10.00am for a 10.30am start and the workshop ends at 12.30pm.

We are currently taking names of individuals who may be interested in a further workshops on a Tuesday and we have a suggested time of arrival at 3.30pm for a 4.00pm start and this workshop will end at 6.00pm.

All referrals / bookings will go through E.L.I.T.E (CIC) either by telephone 01782 662872 / 611992 or by emailing :-

Places would be limited to 15 minimum or 20 maximum and the cost per person will be £5 per session. Carers will gain FREE entry.

This money will then be put back into E.T.C to allow further sessions to take place when the funding comes to an end.

People who attend will also be given the opportunity to see how a Theatre works and obtain lots of background information. We have been advised that our clients will receive a concession on the purchase of theatre tickets whilst they are taking part in the workshops.



### **Are you experiencing problems opening a Bank Account in order to obtain your Direct Payment/Personal Budget?**

Are you having problems opening a Bank Account to receive your Direct Payment/ Personal Budget?

We are currently receiving a lot of telephone calls from members who are experiencing great difficulty in opening bank accounts that are suitable to receive Direct Payments/ Personal Budgets.

If this is a problem that you are also experiencing, please contact E.L.I.T.E on 01782 662872/ 01782 611992 or email [info@elitestaffordshire.co.uk](mailto:info@elitestaffordshire.co.uk), we will only be too happy to provide you with advice and support regarding this issue.

### **Come and join us at the Elite Garden Project**

Are you interested in helping the local authority park rangers with light gardening duties and general maintenance around the parks and other community areas?

You will be shown exactly what tasks need to be done and shown how to complete the tasks by the rangers.

Please ensure that you wear appropriate clothing that you do not mind getting dirty.

Everybody is welcome, if you do require support then you must ensure that you are accompanied by your own Carer/Personal Assistant.





## Volunteer profile — Pat Butler

I joined Elite several years ago. As carer's of a disabled young man, as a family we were faced with no care and no support for several months. Direct Payments was suggested and we were reluctant at first. After all we would become employers and we would have to administer the account. Having no experience of this or of the paperwork or rules and regulations we were concerned about how we would manage.

However after contacting Elite and, with Val Rowley and Linda Regan's reassurance and support we did take advantage of the scheme which worked well for us for four years but has recently faced difficulties; again I have received help from Elite in dealing with this, thanks to Val, Lisa and Lucy.

I remained a member of Elite throughout and have been a volunteer for quite some time. I currently help other volunteers delivering activity sessions to our friends. Some are disabled, some carers and some older and wiser members who all bring their gifts to the groups. Tuesdays at Wye Road are hectic, noisy and lovely. The friends I have made both volunteers and people who attend have made Wye Road such a special place. It has developed from just a few members to a large group, a lovely group of people who have blossomed under the gentle care of the volunteers and their carers.

The volunteers have special skills which are nurtured by special people. There is Linda, with her great organisational skills extreme hard work and creativity. Lindy, whose personality shines through, even quiet members of the group now shimmy to the music and take part in conversations. She also works on literacy and numeracy with those who wish to take part in this activity. Sue and Gillian help with the craft and in the kitchen when needed and Sue and Mike provide smashing food. Simeon keeps the boys amused in the computer room. Not forgetting Steve and Dean who have the difficult job of preparing the room and then putting everything away not a task for the faint hearted.

I cannot emphasise how much the group means to us all. Members who at first did not talk now chat like old friends. I know some of the members just come to sit, to have company in a safe environment. That is what we offer a safe place to come to, take part in activities, or to just sit and watch. We love helping and we know our friends love coming because they tell us every week.

Recently another smaller group began in Newcastle on a Thursday afternoon. There is a craft session followed by a cookery session for those who wish to take part, although numbers are limited we do our best to accommodate those who wish to join in. Julie is our friendly instructor and the recent baking of jam tarts was very successful. At first reluctant, the cooks follow instructions with help as required and are very proud of their achievements. Watch this space as there's a Halloween Bake being planned and later of course Christmas truffles.

It's a pleasure to be part of Elite, thanks to all my friends.

### E.L.I.T.E Activity Workshops

Elite activity workshops and day opportunities has been developed to boost confidence, self esteem, make new friends and learn new skills. Activities available include art and craft, dance and movement, singing, basic IT skills, computer consoles, basic numeracy and literacy and much more.....

To obtain details of the latest venues and times, please contact the Elite office on 01782 662872 / 611992 or email [info@elitestaffordshire.co.uk](mailto:info@elitestaffordshire.co.uk)

If you require support you must be accompanied by your own Carer or Personal Assistant. Admission is £5 per person and all Carers/Personal Assistants are admitted FREE.



**E.L.I.T.E**  
**ENABLING LIVING**  
**INDEPENDENTLY**  
**TODAY AND**  
**EVERYDAY**

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Staffordshire

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Website - [www.elitestaffordshire.co.uk](http://www.elitestaffordshire.co.uk)  
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Please visit our new website  
at  
[www.elitestaffordshire.co.uk](http://www.elitestaffordshire.co.uk)  
where you can view our  
activity directories.

## STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS ACTIVITIES

Staffordshire Moorlands – Activities/Workshops for Disabled People and Carers. Every Thursday and Friday afternoon from 1.00pm – 4.00pm. Trinity Church, Derby Street, Leek – Church Hall.

Presented by Melodie Forrester BSC (Hons).

Commencing Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2011

Hope and Glory (Music and Movement) for all Disabled people and their Carers/PA's.

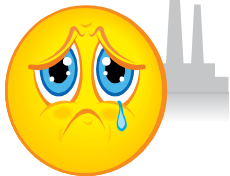
Friday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2011

Tools for Life (A Mind, Body and Spirit Approach) for all Carers.

Both Thursdays and Fridays will be a 6 week programme consisting of two hour sessions. If this proves to be successful then we will be looking at other venues in Cheadle and Biddulph. For further details please contact **Helen Tunnicliffe on 01782 662872 / 611992**

If you would like to receive future issues of this newsletter via email, then please provide us with your email address by contacting the Elite office on 01782 662872 or emailing [info@elitestaffordshire.co.uk](mailto:info@elitestaffordshire.co.uk)

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION—SCAM ALERT



For a number of years a chain email has been circulating reporting a postal scam that takes place in the run up to Christmas.

The email reads 'A card is posted through your door from a company called PDS (Parcel Delivery Service) suggesting that they were unable to deliver a parcel and that you need to contact them on 0906 6611911 (a premium rate number). DO NOT call this number, as this is a mail scam originating from Belize. If you call the number and you start to hear a recorded message you will already have been charged £15 for the phone call'.

Although this was an actual scam that took place, it was found and shut down in 2005. In October 2008, Phoney Pay Plus (formerly ICSTIS) put out the following statement:

- The chain email refers to a service that was shut down by us in December 2005.
- We subsequently fined the company that was operating the service from Belize £10,000.
- The service is NO LONGER RUNNING and has NOT been running since December 2005.

If you receive this chain email, please do not forward it on to friends and family. This only serves to keep the chain going year on year, and provides unnecessary worry and anxiety to those people who think this scam is still taking place.

It does however make sense to be aware of scams that might come through your letter box. If you have concerns about any letters or parcel delivery cards you may receive, please contact Consumer Direct on 08454 04 05 06.