



AUTUMN 2018

Caritas Diocese of Shrewsbury Newsletter

November 2018

Hello from our Chief Executive

Welcome to our Autumn 2018 Newsletter. As you can see it is full of news about what has been happening over the Summer, and a little insight into what we are looking forward to in the New Year.

The work of Caritas is successfully spreading throughout the Diocese. We have more volunteers helping in our projects and we have had the opportunity to meet some of you as we visit the parishes and community groups who are eager to hear about what we are doing, and become part of it.



Your continued support is truly a blessing for us. Without you graciously giving of your time and gifts we would not be able to reach out to those most in need. Thank you.

As Christmas approaches we are busier than ever, ensuring gifts and hampers are ready to be delivered to families and the most vulnerable amongst us. Caritas in Action!

May I take this opportunity to wish you and your families a wonderful Christmas, and a peaceful, healthy New Year.

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"What does love look like? It has the hands to help others. It has the feet to hasten to the poor and needy. It has eyes to see misery and want. It has the ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of men. That is what love looks like."

--St. Augustine of Hippo



Bishop Mark and Caritas Staff Team at the Office Blessing

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Caritas Centre 'Craft & Chat' session

Caritas Centre Seacombe

We have now begun to deliver programmes and activities from our Centre in Seacombe.

In general our programmes are timed to fit in with drop off and pick up times for parents with children of school age.

We are very aware that with today's busy and often stressful routines it is easy to feel isolated and alone. The Centre wants to provide a space for people to come to;

- for activities where they can meet other people and enjoy some time for themselves.
- Speak with Caritas staff about concerns they may have about their family, children or young people.
- Access information about debt management.
- Receive help in completing the paperwork relating to support for family members with health or educational needs.
- Have an opportunity to talk with a member of staff and avail of a listening ear.
- Access our adult counselling service (subject to availability).
- Relax and have fun together. **(Craft and Chat Group)** A coffee morning with a difference! This is an opportunity to have a go at card-making, sewing, wool crafts and lots more. Develop your creative side and make new friends.
- Join an activity which will help reduce your stress levels. **(Chill Skills Group)** Based on a successful model called 'Relax Kids' these skills are useful for all ages to help manage feelings, be more self-aware, raise self-esteem and confidence, and encourage mutual respect.
- **Nurture Programme:** This is a popular and much appreciated programme for parents and carers. It provides the opportunity to talk about what is happening in the family, share your stories with other parents and learn from them. Learn new strategies and ways of enhancing and strengthening family life by following this 10 week programme skilfully facilitated by experienced Caritas staff.

More new programmes will be starting in the New Year.



We've Moved and are so very Blessed!

In August we finally moved into our new premises in Seacombe.

It was all hands on deck as Caritas Head Office relocated from St. Paul's House, Beechwood to Wheatland Lane, Seacombe.

The new location provides space for offices and the much anticipated Caritas Centre where we have already begun our work within the immediate community.

Wednesday 24th October 2018 marked the day our new premises were blessed by The Right Reverend, Bishop Mark Davies.

A small, family affair, Bishop Mark led a short service followed by the blessing of those gathered and the crucifix which now hangs proudly in the entrance corridor.

We were joined by friends and supporters old and new, including; Trustees, members of the Laity and long standing supporters of the work of the organisation.



Hard at work! The Office Move and Office Blessing



Wythenshawe Mend Minds Group

In June 2018 we launched a brand new group in Wythenshawe, Mend Minds. The group aim is to promote positive mental wellbeing for men.

14 men have been involved in the Mend Minds Group since it began. Half of the men are fathers to young children. On average the group attracts 7/8 men weekly. The men have been involved in developing a Community Garden in the grounds of the Centre. They have created a Nature Pond and a Wild Flower Meadow, as well as helping to decorate part of Centre. With the support from the group and other projects at the Centre, 2 of the men have since found work.

An important aspect of the group is sharing personal stories. This has led to strong supportive bonds developing between the group members.

The group has received referrals from the NHS, Sure Start and the Food Bank.

Although still in its early stages, Mend Minds has already had a significant impact on those who attend, those who support, and the community as a whole.



Highlights from Caritas Mend Minds Group at Wythenshawe

Carers Together Group - just what the Doctor ordered!

The new monthly Carers Together Group got off to a flying start on Tuesday 27th November at the Caritas St Aidan's Centre, Wythenshawe. Tea, coffee, biscuits and crumpet was served!

7 people attended and reflected upon the joys and challenges of caring for a family member. The group included, parents caring for children with special needs and people caring for family members who have dementia. Some of the new members have connections with groups already based at the Centre, while others were referred in by the local medical practice.

During the gathering all the carers had an opportunity to reflect upon 'how are you?' A simple question which can be missed in the everyday life of a carer, with questions often focusing on the person being cared for. Then followed a brief input on the support available to carers, along with a quiz! One carer said it was 'just what he needed' and another that the group was 'just what the Doctor ordered!'

At the December gathering there will be a speaker on Carers Allowance, as many of the carers in the group are confused by the Universal Credit changes.

There are 7 million carers in the UK, 1 in 10 of UK adults. This will increase by 3.4 million over the next 10 years. 25% of carers say they haven't had a day off caring in five years! This new group has been launched in response to the overwhelming need within the local communities. We look forward to 'Carers Together' growing from strength to strength in the New Year!



Looking Forward

2019 promises to bring some exciting developments to Caritas, as we continue our mission to work with children, families, communities and parishes to build stronger, supportive communities wherever there is current disadvantage.

One such opportunity is **Community Sponsorship**. During 2018, Caritas has worked alongside committed parishes in Romiley and Sandbach as they prepared their community groups to receive a refugee family. Both parishes dedicated innumerable hours to their individual Resettlement Plans and all the organisation and planning that comes with such a commitment. Their hard work and perseverance has paid off as Romiley welcome their first family in January 2019, and Sandbach in the February! Well done to everyone involved, it has been an honour to be associated with this great adventure!

And finally...

Lise McLean - Family Support Social Worker, and Rasha Youssef - Refugee Project Development Worker, have both left Caritas since our last newsletter.

Both have made incredible contributions to our organisation and we want to thank them for all their hard work and dedication, and wish them every success in the next steps of their own journeys.

Caritas | Community | Family | Diversity | Dignity | Partnership | Welcoming

Contact Us

Contact us for more information about our services and how you can help support the work we do.

Caritas Diocese of Shrewsbury

Wheatland Lane
Wallasey
Wirral
CH44 7ED

0151 652 1281

info@caritasshrewsbury.org.uk

Visit our website at
www.caritasshrewsbury.org.uk

Caritas Prayer Requests

Now more than ever, please continue to remember us in your prayers. In particular, we ask you to pray for;

- **The parishes in Romiley and Sandbach who are due to receive their first refugee families in the New Year**
We pray that the families are able to settle into their new homes quickly, and feel safe and loved as they start a new life here in the UK.
- **More parishes to explore Community Sponsorship**
We pray that more parishes will consider the very real possibility of 'welcoming the stranger' by becoming a Community Sponsor for a refugee family.
- **Funding opportunities for Caritas**
We give thanks for the support received through the Our Mission Together campaign, our little collection boxes and all our contributors. We pray for success in accessing additional funding through local authority bids, Charitable Foundations and the generosity of benefactors.
- **The health and well-being of our staff**
Our staff team is our greatest resource, and so we pray for their continued good health and well-being.
- **New opportunities in 2019**
We pray that God will go before us as we continue the work of Caritas, and create new opportunities for the organisation in other areas of the Diocese.