



Independent Living

PHAB independent living newsletter

living

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Enniskillen: Independent Living Centre

Enniskillen Independent Living Centre experienced a rough time throughout May of this year when it was the target of a continuous campaign of stone throwing. The centre suffered multiple structural damage including 10 broken windows in total.



Newspaper coverage came from the Fermanagh Herald and Impartial Reporter, taking photographs and statements from the centre managers and residents. Deputy Chief Executive of Phab Independent Living, Lynne Morrison, gave an interview on the matter to Radio Ulster's 'Talk Back' programme, which sparked a wave of phone-

calls condemning the actions of the vandals. Publicity about the incident didn't stop there. In a further effort to shame the stone-throwers, a lengthy news report was aired on GMTV, interviewing Lynne and Karen McClelland, a member of Phab Independent Living's Board of directors.

However, It's not all doom and gloom. Local group 'Women Making Waves', who are regular users of the centre for receiving training in BSL (British Sign Language), have vowed not to let these incidents overshadow their use of the centres facilities in the future. Centre Managers Shaun and Lorraine, who deliver this training, have said "We will not allow these vandals prevent our work within the local community".

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BALLYMENA: One cinder-sausage or two?

As part of a number of summer events at our Ballymena centre all our residents enjoyed a barbeque carefully prepared by our centre manager, Anne 'smoke gets in your eyes' Henry. Once again Anne lived up to her name by roasting everything in sight and, though the fire brigade were placed on standby, the centre is still standing and, unbelievably, everything was eaten. Better still, all lived to tell the tale!!!



This commitment was reinforced by the 'STEP Forward' project, which has recently commenced training within the centre looking at Self Image and Confidence Building, involving groups of people with disabilities from Drumcoo Day Centre.

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING IN SANDHURST?

Lyndsey Thompson explains.....

Sandhurst has had great success recently with residents, reaching the many goals they set out for themselves with the support of the staff.

We have one young person who, never even having switched on a computer before, has started a computer course and is doing so well he is now sending e-mails to his family in Scotland. He said he loves working on computers and possibly would like to start a career in this area when he learns more about them.

with similar disabilities, to take part in many outdoor activities, such as Zip Wire - which is zooming up and down trees using wires, archery, horse riding and swimming. Not only did this prove very challenging, but many good friendships were made with the other participants.

against other centres. Competition is good for everyone and after a close contest, we lost. But, so what, we had great fun and plenty of laughs!

When it comes to bowling, the residents have proved to be very competitive



Another resident, who is visually impaired, joined up with the 'Torch Trust for the Blind' and travelled to Sussex with 6 other young people, all



Lorraine Watson
Centre Manager

“We will not allow these vandals prevent our work within the local community.”

Ballymena resident profiles:

Short profiles of Michelle Porter and Alena Montgomery.

At the age of 16 years Michelle became a resident at the centre in September 2003 whilst studying for her GCSE's. The move to the centre, on top of her studies, was a difficult period but Michelle is a lively young lady who tries to keep focused. Still this isn't always easy!

Eventually Michelle settled down and left secondary education achieving 8 GCSE's, grades C and above. She also gained entry level 3 in Spanish and was presented with a reward for best-all-round performance and endurance at the school's prize giving evening.

Michelle is currently studying AVCE Health and Social Care (Double-Award) at Ballymena Campus, successfully completing her first year with A and B Grades in all subjects.

Congratulations Michele. Go girl Go!



Newsflash!!!

Cathy Dobson, our Administration Officer, is now a doting granny! Her son David, with fiancée Stephanie, recently presented her with Benjamin, their beautiful new baby boy. Congratulations granny Dobson.

“May the sons of your daughters smile up in your face.”

Ballymena resident profiles cont...

Alena came to us in July 2003 at the age of 17, having her 18th birthday at the centre 3 days later. Staff tried to make it a special occasion and with other residents held an impromptu party with cards, cake and tea. At this time Alena was studying for her GCSE's, travelling to school in Belfast every day. Because of lack of motivation and self esteem, her grades were poor. So a plan in time management and studying was set up to help her deal with all her course work. Things began to improve and she went on to acquired 7 GCSE's!

An interview was arranged with Alena with the Belfast Institute and a place was offered to her for a foundation course in Art. It was a hard work keeping Alena motivated, keeping a routine going and her spirits up. Alena persevered and successfully completed the course in June of this year, passing with flying colours. Now a confident young lady looking forward to a bright future, a place has been offered to her at University of Ulster in September of this year.

In October 2004 we contacted a Television Documentary crew called 'SOS', who were looking for people with problems similar to Alana's, and from a list of over 70 families, Alena and our centre were selected. From October 2004 until May 2005 'SOS' filmed life in the centre, which will be shown on BBC in September of this year. One of the main reasons for asking Alena to work with this production was the involvement of Jeffery Bates, a well-known psychologist, who helped Alena become more confident person.

As time-out this summer we have arranged with Bryson house for Alena to participate in volunteering work in Europe. This will give her the opportunity to experience new cultures and to meet new people.



FLOATING SUPPORT

The Floating Support project has witnessed a significant increase in service users since March 2005 and has currently it has reached its targets. Several reasons have led to this increase, for example, promoting the service, interagency co-operation and an increasing awareness by statutory bodies of the shortage of support services for vulnerable people living independently in the community.

Recent referrals have included several young people from various Leaving and Aftercare social work teams throughout the demographic areas covered by Floating Support. In the Foyle Trust area, for example, Phab Independent Living has been recognised as a stakeholder in Floating Support provision for example Greater Belfast, L – Derry and Ballymena. In the Foyle Trust area, for instance, It has been identified in this area alone there are around 600 16/17-year olds presented as being homeless. If this figure is mirrored in other Social Services Trusts it is important that Phab IL Floating Support is at the forefront in service provision.

Positive responses to the service have been forthcoming by service users. User reviews now being held have mainly showed satisfaction with support offered and wish for Floating Support Services to continue.

NEWS FROM ASHMORE

We had a surprise birthday party for one of our female residents, Nadine, on Thursday 16th June 2005, with all the residents' chipping-in to buy a small gift of 'bath oils and scented creams'. We decorated the house with 'Happy Birthday' posters the residents designed and produced themselves. Two of the residents and I went to the local market and bought a cake, candles, sausage rolls and cocktails sausages for the surprise party, which we had planned for later that evening. Our guest of honour was touched by our thoughtfulness and thanked us from the bottom of her heart, "That was the nicest thing anyone had ever done for me".

Terry, another resident, has achieved his 'Gold Medallion' in life saving, and Dominic who also lives at the centre, is setting off on a weeklong holiday to Belgium and is currently trying to get tickets for a 'Heavy Metal' concert he wants to see. What is so special about Dominic's trip is that he uses a wheelchair and will be backpacking around Belgium for the week and plans to see as many places as possible.

this month's success story

Phab Independent Living would like to congratulate Andrea Hope, a resident at Salisbury ILC, who has successfully gained a place at Queen's University in Belfast to study for a music degree. Andrea's success story is quite an achievement, having completed a foundation course this year and been involved with various other courses at BIFE. Andrea and her guide dog Odette is an inspiration to us all as, despite miserable weather, she has persevered with all her studies and also finding time to be involved with the Open Arts Choir. Well Done to Andrea and Odette.



If you have anything you wish to be included in the next issue of this newsletter please contact karen mcclelland:

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Congratulations:



Pat James, our Financial Controller, celebrated the graduation of her daughter Rosie James, who successfully achieved an M.A Economics.



Celine Heatley, our Personnel/ Administration Manager, also celebrated the graduation of her daughter Orla Heatley, who successfully graduated in Engineering from the University of Ulster Jordanstown.