



LATEST SUCCESSES UNDERLINE OUR CHARITY'S GROWING REPUTATION

Grants will fund learning disability projects for five years

THE DOVE SERVICE has won two huge grants from the Big Lottery Fund to support people with Learning Disability in Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme and the Moorlands.

The awards - totalling £796,337 - will enable the charity to provide what are recognised as ground-breaking services to an often under-resourced community in North Staffordshire.

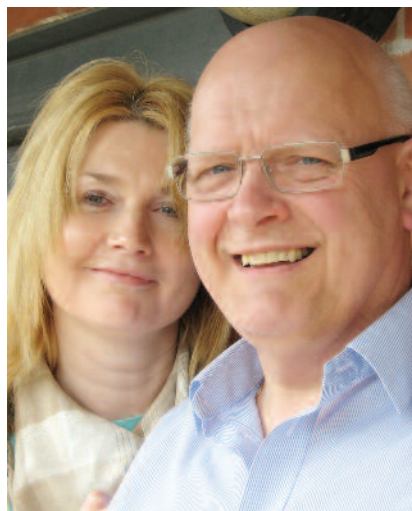
The first award, of £480,345, was the largest given to any organisation in the West Midlands in the May round of BLF Reaching Communities funding and will enable the Dove Service to deliver high quality Learning Disability services in Stoke for the first time.

The second, of £315,992, will enable our existing and widely-acclaimed LD services in the Moorlands and Newcastle areas to continue for a further five years.

"We are absolutely thrilled", said the charity's Chief Executive Dr. Simon Hankins.

"These awards enable us to greatly improve the lives of adults, children and young people with Learning Disabilities, their families, carers and other professionals who work with and support them.

projects for five years



Our ground-breaking work with the learning disability community was pioneered by counsellors Allan Morris and Debra Brown.

"It is great to be given the opportunity to provide our innovative and impactful services to LD-communities in North Staffordshire.

"People experience grief and loss in many different ways and I don't think that there is another area in

the country which has such expertise in helping to resolve these stressful conditions".

In July 2010, the charity's learning disability project in the Moorlands and Newcastle was showcased by NHS West Midlands as an excellent example of good practice.

In April this year, as funding for the service ran out, the Staffordshire Learning Disability Partnership Board allocated £34,450 additional funding to keep it going after county commissioner Sarah Taylor had praised the Dove Service's "fantastic hard work and dedication to the project" (see report on Back Page).

In April, the Dove Service started work with the Christian charity, The Saltbox, on the CareLink service to help lonely pensioners in the city after the two charities spent months working together on preparing a joint bid which attracted £423,264 from the Big Lottery Fund.

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Uncertainty is all around us. The change from PCT to GPC commissioning was paused half-way through its implementation; Social Care is continuing to roll out Personalisation and it is still unclear how we can engage with that; the NHS is piloting Personal Health Budgets with some longer-term patients so we need to watch that area closely.

Local authorities have started to pass on some of their budget cuts to charities; the competition for Charitable Trust funding has intensified, causing Trusts to raise the quality bar for successful applications. Then there is the move to integrate NHS community services with certain Stafford County Council Adult Social Care services to develop the Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent Partnership NHS Trust – an extremely large, county-wide, provider organisation that could well be a significant competitor to third sector organisations for tenders and other funding opportunities.

So what does all of this mean for the Dove Service? It means yet more change.

At the end of March over £200,000 of our income stopped due to withdrawal of funding from Social Care departments, Children's Services, Education

From the CEO's desk...



departments and the ending of a number of grant-funded projects (40% of our 2009/10 income and 31% of last year's income – a staggering amount!).

Rather than batten-down the hatches, reduce the size of the organisation and take a survival mode approach, we restructured.

In 2011/12 we funded 34% of our counselling and support services. This year, if we did nothing (with losing 31% of our income) we were looking at having to fund over 55% of that provision, which is not possible, so we need to do things differently.

We have had to close our Stafford Children's Centre outreach and our dedicated UHNS MacMillan Cancer Support Centre outreach since we received no funding for those. We have kept our Crewe and Alsager outreaches open, but anyone referring to our counselling services from outside North Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent are being asked to pay to receive those services.

The funding that we receive from NHS Stoke-on-Trent and NHS North Staffs does not cover the demand for our services; therefore, we have spent a great deal of time and energy securing other funding. However, even with our best efforts, we still have not yet secured sufficient income to meet demand and so are having to ask self-referred clients if they are willing to pay for provided services.

The great news is that we have recently won, or been a part of a partnership that has won, several significant Big Lottery Fund grants. These, plus a focus on our fundraising and sales of our services, and other changes, means that we are financially back to where we were last year and look forward to providing greater levels of our high-quality, specialist services to the various communities that we work with this year and beyond.

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

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The Dove Service is grateful to the following major funders:

- NHS Stoke-on-Trent
- Stoke-on-Trent Adult Social Care
- The Department of Health
- NHS North Staffs
- Staffordshire JCU LD Partnership
- Big Lottery Fund Reaching Communities
- Shavington EIP
- Big Lottery Fund Young People's Fund
- Newcastle-under-Lyme College
- Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council; Chesterton Community Chest
- Cabinet Office; Office of Civil Society
- Coop Community Fund
- Staffordshire CC; SureStart Children's Centres

We would also like to thank:

- Blue Planet Communications, Keele
- Leadbeater & Kay, Stoke-on-Trent
- Select Coaching, Butterton
- Dean Statham llp
- The Davison Partnership, Burslem
- Knightstor, Market Drayton
- The Printing House, Crewe
- Keele University
- Staffordshire University
- Sainsbury's Hanley
- Pilotlight
- Resolve HR
- Go Outdoors, Hanley
- The Sentinel
- Signal Radio

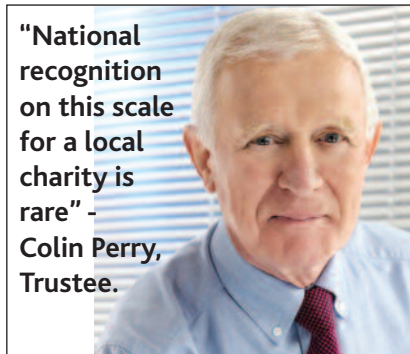
CABINET OFFICE GRANT PAVES WAY FOR NEW GROWTH

A GRANT OF £66,810 FROM THE Cabinet Office is enabling the Dove Service to seek new partnerships and plan for a better future.

Although only unveiled by the Government on Monday, June 13th, the money - awarded through the Office of Civil Society Transition Fund - is already being used to kick-start new initiatives in marketing and networking that will help the charity prepare effectively for the future and respond to its new operating environment.

"All charities can only continue to provide the support for those who need it by adapting to this new world where traditional income streams are becoming harder to secure and the whole funding picture is changing", said Chief Executive Dr. Simon Hankins.

"This cash is particularly useful because charities rarely receive money that can be spent on operational requirements. The



Government has recognised that in order to re-organise to meet these new challenges - to make that transition - charities need this kind of support".

Changes that the Dove Service were already planning - to create a senior marketing and sales role, provide training for key staff, develop a customer tracking database and purchase additional computers - have now been fast-tracked.

Others, such as the updating and maintenance of the website to provide more up-to-date and accessible information for potential partner organisations, are also being brought forward.

Colin Perry, a Member of the Board of Trustees, pointed out that in March the Department of Health had also awarded the Dove Service £65,000.

"And now this grant from the Cabinet Office arrives hard on the heels of two other significant recent awards from the Big Lottery Fund. We have been entrusted with more public money than at any other time in the history of our charity", said Colin.

"National recognition on this scale for a local charity is rare and it is a consequence of providing a high quality service that produces real results for people in need".

We are pleased to welcome Kathryn Morris as our Strategic Fundraiser. Kathryn told *Dovetales*: "I am delighted to have been appointed to this new position.

"The Dove Service has a great track record in developing and delivering much-needed support to those who are struggling to rebuild their lives after loss. Demand for our services always outstrips supply, and we desperately want to be able to help everyone who needs us."

But Kathryn points out that the charity itself faces an uphill struggle to maintain existing levels of funding and secure new sources of income. She continues: "There is intense competition for every type of funding. On top of that, it's a huge ask on our supporters to donate to us when the prices of food, petrol, gas, electricity – you name it, nearly all our basic needs – seem to be

Kathryn sets out our fundraising vision for future



going up week by week! So, fundraising is a real challenge for us, and it's my job to face that head on.

"By creating this new position, the Trustees and senior managers of the Dove Service are recognising that its fundraising has to become much more focused and creative. I believe my business background, working in the private and public sectors with a wide range of organisations, will equip me well for that, but there's no doubt I have lots to learn! My first priority is to develop a coherent

strategy and plan for raising funds over the next three to five years. We have lots of ideas and plans on how we want to develop the Dove Service and now have to find the funding to enable us to do that."

Kathryn would love to hear from you if you would like to help the Dove Service as a volunteer fundraiser.

"This isn't about rattling tins: there are so many ways in which you can help, and your ideas and suggestions are always welcome. Why not give me a call on 01782 683155", she added.

This is our Learning Disability programme at work



This is Ruth with Debra, one of our Counsellors. Ruth said: "I have had the experience of counselling and letting others know about how it can make a difference to your life. For me it has helped build up my confidence and empowered me to get my life back on track. It can empower others".



What is counselling
It is a time when you can talk about your grief or loss



A Counsellor can help when you have problems or are worried



You may feel lonely or angry



A counsellor will listen



We can also help you help your friends and family by giving you some skills



And we can help people who look after you as well



This is Robyn. Robyn said: "I found it hard to cope when I realised Dad was so poorly. I was referred to the Dove Service and the weekly counselling sessions, helped me to come through it. I just want to advise anyone to try counselling, it certainly helped me to understand how to share my feelings and not be afraid of facing the future. My Dad, who was my best friend, died last Christmas and although he is not in pain anymore I really miss him. I feel his troubles are now over, and I must now get on with my life. I want to thank the Dove Service very much, I still have my off days, but I can get through them."



This is Harry. Harry was asked: 'How has counselling helped you?' Harry said: 'Allan listened, he was understanding, good, kind, thoughtful, very respectful and trustworthy'.

The Dove Service is proud to be able to take this work into Stoke-on-Trent. If you have a Learning Disability, or someone in your family does, or if you work with LD, then please **CONTACT US!**

A celebration...

...to mark the launch of our LD Wing projects will be held in central Stoke from 11am to 1pm Friday, September 30th, 2011. Refreshments will be served.

If you are interested in Learning Disability and how the Dove Service can help to inform about and relieve emotional and mental distress, this is

your invitation to join us!

For further information and to confirm your place, please contact Charlie O'Dell on 01782 683155 or email: charlie.odell@thedoveservice.org.uk

I HAVE BEEN INVOLVED with the Dove Service for just over two years now, starting as a Volunteer Counsellor as part of my Diploma in Counselling at Staffordshire University.

Soon after qualifying I became involved with the Inspiring Communities project as well as outreaches in Newcastle and Meir and joined a team of three on this project last November.

I cover Stoke Educational Cluster 3 and part of Cluster 2 working mainly in Primary and High schools.

For me it is a great privilege and pleasure working for the Dove Service particularly on the Uth Wing project. Although the work can be time consuming and demanding this is far outweighed with job satisfaction.

I recently delivered my first bereavement & loss training to teaching staff at Mitchell High School. They could not believe the impact this training was having on them, giving them greater understanding and empathy with students who are dealing with bereavement, significant loss and terminal illness. I am looking forward to delivering training on dealing positively with change in preparation for their transition period to becoming part of the new Discovery Academy.

I worked at Belgrave Primary School with both year 6 classes (58 children in total), as requested by the school, delivering training in the classroom relating to transition and difficulties some pupils will experience

The privilege of working with young people

By Liz Sands

Liz Sands, one of our Counsellor Trainers, has been working in the Uth Wing project for eight months. In this article Liz - seen in typical teaching mode on the right - gives an insight into how the work has affected her and the young people she works with...



when moving up to High school in September.

I am passionate about the charity and my role within it. Each day, week and month is completely different due to the vast range of duties my role entails, from counselling to training (students and staff), networking and developing relationships between the service and the community, facilitating the Uth Speaks Team, developing new training programmes, to awareness events (e.g. Parents Evenings) and fundraising events for the organisation.

For me it is a privilege to be a Counsellor Trainer at the Dove Service.

'They could not believe the impact this training was having on them'

In this issue, Uth Speaks member Freyja (15) talks to the Dove Service Counsellor Trainer Tracey Hewitt.



Hobbies/interests: Reading, listening to music, spending time with friends, going to the cinema and shopping.

Favourite music/bands: Bify Clyro, Vampire Weekend, Headly, Rhianna, Adele, Scouting for Girls, Kings of Leon, The Script.

School/College: Clayton High.

Tracey: How did you get involved with Uth Speaks?

Freyja: My parents both work for the Dove Service and they told me

all about it, which left me wanting to join up.

Tracey: Do you think that Uth Speaks has helped make the Dove Service better for young people?

Freyja: Yes! Because we have given TDS opinions from young people which helps communicate more effectively with young people.

Tracey: What do you think Uth Speaks could do in the future?

Freyja: Continue giving a voice to the views and opinions of young people and help make the services more effective for young people.

Tracey: Tell me one interesting fact about yourself that others wouldn't know.

Freyja: I really enjoy photography.

Tracey: When I get older I want to be...

Freyja: A medical researcher

Tracey: I wish I'd never worn...

Freyja: White frilly socks and sandals (my mum's fault!)

Tracey: You wouldn't know it, but I'm very good at...

Freyja: Giving advice.

Join Uth Speaks

If you are aged between 10 and

18 years old and would like to

join our Uth Speaks team please

contact Charlie O'Dell at

charlie.odell@thedoveservice.org

.uk or telephone: 01782 683 155

A garden to help pupils grow in so many ways...

Seabridge Primary School in Newcastle-under-Lyme celebrated the opening of its memorial garden with songs, poetry and a flurry of coloured balloons on Friday, May 20th.

The spectacular garden project has been a beacon of community involvement since planning first got under way in 2009.

The Dove Service, which had been providing services in the area, became involved when Sandra Mitchell (Head Teacher) and Carol Chappell (teacher) asked our Counsellor Trainer Tracey Hewitt to help facilitate pupils in building the garden.

Funding to complete the project was provided by Aspire Housing which donated £5,000.

Among the many guests were Paul Farrelly MP - who cut a ribbon to officially open the garden - other community leaders, Dove Service Chief Executive Dr. Simon Hankins and staff, and pupils and ex-pupils from the school including the school choir and some young musicians.

Headteacher Sandra Mitchell said: "I am so proud of the children's energy and enthusiasm. The garden will be such a special place for all the children to go".

Tracey told *Dovetales*: "The children visited the National Arboretum near Lichfield, coming

Words and pictures by
John V. Wright

back full of inspiration and ideas. We discussed all their ideas and options, drawing up plans as we went along. Their enthusiasm and passion were a joy; they wanted stones painted with the names of people they knew who had died, poppies for remembrance and doves for peace all in the garden.



Charlie O'Dell (Service Delivery Manager) looks at some of the poems, notices and pictures posted by pupils on the garden noticeboard.



"The work Seabridge Primary has done is not just about a garden - it is also about facing the truth that death is a part of living that we can't ignore, introducing pupils to the hard reality in a gentle and extremely effective way.

"I feel tremendously proud to have been part of Seabridge's memorial garden. I continue to be touched, humbled and inspired by these wonderful, brave children".

The group of school children involved in the project is a group that has been through a number of life-changing experiences.

The children who initially began the project came back from High school to the Primary school to take part in the opening.

The pupils wrote poems and held an assembly dedicated to the opening of the memorial garden and the legacy of memory.

The children also released balloons with messages on them, in memory of their loved ones.



Sandra Mitchell (Head Teacher) watches MP Paul Farrelly cutting the ribbon with a flourish to open the memorial garden.



Tracey Hewitt, Sandra Mitchell and Simon Hankins pictured with the lifesize reed sculptures in the garden.

GRANTS WILL FUND LEARNING DISABILITY PROJECTS FOR FIVE YEARS

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John Wright, a member of the Board, pointed out that because of increased demand for funding, the Big Lottery Fund had told charities that it would 'only consider making grants of more than £300,000 if we think your project is an example of excellent practice'.

"This is a huge feather in our cap, not just for our Counsellors and management team but also for Staffordshire as a whole.

"Any charity will tell you that these awards are very difficult to achieve and only happen if you are delivering great results on the ground.

"The founder of the Dove Service, Dr. Linda Machin, lives in North Staffordshire and is a world authority on how bereavement and loss impacts on people's lives. Dr Machin acts as an adviser to our Board, and the county can

probably claim to be a national leader in this area".

He added that the Dove Service was actively seeking partnerships with other charities in the area to deliver integrated services.



When BBC Radio Stoke reporter Lamont Howie arrived to interview our LD client Robyn about the good news, she took the microphone and interviewed Allan Morris instead! Cue much hilarity, also enjoyed by Debra Brown and Charlie O'Dell.

County stepped in earlier to protect service

The Dove Service's pioneering work to help people with Learning Disabilities and others from their communities in North Staffordshire was originally saved from the axe thanks to a £34,450 grant from the Staffordshire Learning Disability Partnership Board.

The decision arrived in the nick of time - our Trustees had already decided that the work was too important to lose and had allocated money from its precious reserves to keep the service going.

Now, the service will not only carry on in the Moorlands and Newcastle area but will also be extended into Stafford district - and be secured for the next five years.

Chief Executive Dr. Simon Hankins said the grant of £315,992 from the BLF Reaching Communities Programme was a great result for Staffordshire as well as the Dove Service.

"We want to place on record our thanks to Christine Adams, the Commissioning Manager for Learning Disabilities and Sarah Taylor, the Partnership Board and Commissioning Officer, who first presented our case to the Partnership Board. They really fought our corner for us - thank you".

Working closely with local GPs

The Dove Service works closely with GPs in Staffordshire and South Cheshire. In the last 12 months we have provided counselling around bereavement, life-changing illness and loss to 2,065 children, young people and adults.

Our service is part-funded by NHS North Staffs and by NHS Stoke-on-Trent and we are partners in the Healthy Minds Network. Every year the number of referrals that we receive increases but our funding does not. Clients also refer themselves, or are referred through schools, college, or by other third parties. Some 56% of these referrals came via GPs or other health professionals.

We offer specialist counselling at 18 outreaches across Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire and Cheshire, as well as at our Head Office in Hanley and there is a high demand for these services.

If you are a GP or a Practice Manager and would like to know more about our services to NHS patients, please contact Jill Jenner on 01782 683155 or email: enquiries@thedoveservice.org.uk.