



## Partnership to ease plight of lonely pensioners

Two Hanley-based charities are working together in a project to ease the plight of lonely pensioners in the city, funded by a £423,264 grant from the Big Lottery Fund.

The Saltbox, a Christian organisation with a number of social outreach programmes, has launched the CareLink project with the Dove Service, which supports people struggling to cope with bereavement, life-changing illness and other loss.

Over the next three years, CareLink will touch the lives of thousands of older people through:

- Phonelink, a free telephone befriending and support service for individuals
- Supporting and facilitating a network of leaders of faith/community activities
- Delivering training to enable leaders and volunteers to identify counselling/support needs in older people and fulfill those needs professionally in a familiar, safe environment

Led by The Saltbox, the project will provide friendly, specialist support for the most vulnerable and isolated older and disabled people, encouraging them to live as independently as possible.

The Dove Service will provide training to members of The



Pictured from left to right are Lloyd Cooke (CEO of The Saltbox), Dr. Simon Hankins (CEO of the Dove Service), John Taylor (Big Lottery Fund, Head of Region, West Midlands) and Ann Chatwin (Carelink Project Manager).

Saltbox team, Network members, faith-based pastoral teams and counselling to older people as their needs are gradually revealed.

Funding from the Big Lottery Fund Reaching Communities Programme was achieved after the

two charities spent months working together on preparing a joint bid and after a two-year pilot project by The Saltbox.

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AT THE END OF THE 2010/11 financial year it is the time to look back and reflect on what we have achieved last year as well as to look forward and plan what we feel we need to do this year.

Last year, like all years, had its challenges and rewards. I am very proud to say that despite the economic down-turn, despite the fact that we will not achieve our income targets and despite the fact that a number of our plans did not achieve their intended outcomes, we have managed to deliver even more services, activities and training to even more people than ever before.

But more than that, we have been able to improve the quality of our service provision.

Referrals to our counselling services have risen by 18% this past year (76% increase since 2008/09) but we have continued to ensure that the vast majority of clients wait no-more than four weeks from referral before being seen by one of our professional Counsellors.

We have opened 19 outreaches across Staffordshire and South Cheshire, situated closer to where our clients live, which makes our

## From the CEO's desk...



counselling and support services much easier for many more people to access.

We have significantly increased our in-community work. By working in communities of children and young people and adults with learning disabilities we have increased their, and associated professionals/adults awareness and understanding of emotional issues and wellbeing, dispelled misperceptions and

myths around grief and counselling, and significantly lowered barriers for individuals to access our counselling and support services.

By working closely and flexibly with different communities we help build whole community emotional resilience and work with them to develop their own sustainable support structures through training of staff as well as development of peer mentor groups.

As the coalition government's austerity measures begin to bite home and as the huge changes to social care and the NHS begin to take shape, this year will be even more challenging for us, and almost all charities.

However, we are well placed to realise opportunities as they arise and ensure that we continue to provide much valued and highly effective services to those who become stuck in their grief and cannot move on from their loss.

We will also continue to increase people's understanding of the emotional responses to loss and how to provide meaningful, appropriate and positive support to those who are grieving.

## 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

We would also like to thank:

- Blue Planet Communications, Keele
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- The Printing House, Crewe
- Keele University
- Staffordshire University
- Sainsbury's Hanley
- Pilotlight

# Dove Service receives £65,000 from Department of Health

The Dove Service was celebrating in March after receiving £65,000 from the Department of Health.

This vital funding meant that our specialist Counsellors were able to continue to provide vital support to people across Stoke-on-Trent, North and parts of South Staffordshire and South Cheshire last year.

The money was received as part of a £3.6 million Financial Assistance Fund set up by the Department of Health to support charities to the end of the last financial year. This enabled these organisations to continue their valuable work, supporting thousands of people with a whole range of needs.

To qualify for funding, organisations needed to have robust plans in place for future funding and deliver health and/or social care support which no other organisation could provide in the short term; and that there would have been a considerable knock-on effect on other front line services if the organisation ceased to exist.

The Dove Service supports people struggling to cope with bereavement, life-changing illness and other losses.

"This is excellent news for the hundreds of people who use our service every year but it also shows the value that the



**Health Secretary Andrew Lansley said he was pleased to give the money to the Dove Service to ensure we could keep providing valuable support and services for the people we help.**

Department of Health places on the work that we do here", said Chief Executive Dr. Simon Hankins.

"The money enabled us to meet most of the excess demand for our counselling and support last year that is not funded through our local NHS or other contracts. We were facing having to find a way of providing those services from our own fundraising activities and reserves.

"As a charity we are extremely well organised and flexible with a strong Board of Trustees but it would have been a struggle to meet the demand for our services and not have made a loss. This money has made all the difference".

Health Secretary Andrew Lansley said: "I'm pleased that we're able to give this money to the Dove Service to ensure they are able to keep providing valuable support and services for the people they help.

"Charities play an important role in our vision for the Big Society and it is right that in these difficult economic circumstances we should give short-term support to organisations like the Dove Service charity which are helping to support health and care services.

"This support will ensure that strong, independent voluntary organisations survive and are able to prepare for future opportunities that will be opened up by public service reform."

Care Services Minister Paul Burstow said: "By providing this money to the organisations that are already working closely with their local community on a daily basis we're helping to provide services that are shaped around individual needs.

"We would like to thank all these charities for the important work they do in supporting people with a wide range of health and social care needs."

## *Letter from Peter Jones who raised money by a sponsored head shave*

I decided to do a sponsored head shave because I wanted to raise funds for East Cheshire Hospice, where my Dad passed away in May 2010. Once diagnosed with cancer he lived for just six weeks.

My daughter told me about the Dove Service for counselling so I rang and made an appointment. I found it very helpful; they gave me so much comfort that I felt I needed to give them something back, so I decided to give back a share of the £1,200 which I raised at work, at The Potteries Shopping Centre, with the help of my family, friend, and staff. I have included the Douglas MacMillan Hospice because my Granddad died there a few years ago.

I would like to say thank you to all three charities, but an extra special thank you to the Dove Service and the three members of staff who helped raise money on the day. People who had their heads shaved were Emma Jones (daughter), my friend Malcolm Holmes and four members of staff. And a special thank you to 'Biddles', Barber Shop, Smallthorne, for shaving hair plus donating £50.

## A poem

By Lydia (age 14)

Two months ago since you left us  
I'll never forget that awful day  
I wish you were here to tell me,  
It will all be okay.

You'd read us a funny poem,  
To make us laugh and smile.  
But I've just got to realise,  
That I won't see you for a while

But even though I can't see you.  
I know you will always be there.  
And though it's not the same,  
It's just something I'll have to bear.

# Breaking point



I WONDER what your immediate reaction is if an employee or colleague, telephones into work and says that they cannot come in because their wife, husband, child, parent has died or that they have been told that they have a terminal illness? Is your first reaction:

- What will I say?
- How will we get the work done now?
- What will this mean for everyone else?
- How much time will they need off?
- What do I do if they keep crying?

The above isn't wrong, it is *normal*, but having the opportunity to think through these issues and deciding what the best policy is for your organisation BEFORE the event is both helpful and facilitative to you, your staff and colleagues.

It may be that the thought of death or dying is something that you just do not wish to even contemplate and your first thoughts are "I don't want to hear this". For some professionals it is part of their daily responsibilities that they deal with people who have experienced death or dying – our emergency services, funeral directors, registrars, medical staff, coroners, care homes, etc.

How do they manage without burn-out? How do they deal with their own personal issues but still remain professional?

Our training course *How to help when working with Individuals affected by bereavement or loss* enables delegates to gain a deeper insight into the possible emotional experiences of employees and colleagues.

## THE COURSE - ITS CONTENT, BENEFITS . . .

### CONTENT

- Active listening skills – working with empathy.
- Examining delegates own experiences of loss.
- Emotional responses to grief.
- Social, physical, psychological, practical, aspects to grief.
- Ways to support, to work with use of language "what to say and not to say."
- Helping employees, colleagues and supporting each other in the team.
- Sharing information in an empathic way.
- Support sources: where to go for further help?

### BENEFITS

- ✓ This course will enable delegates to actively listen empathically to employees and colleagues and understand their emotions and needs surrounding bereavement or loss.
- ✓ It will support the individual to recognise 'normal' grief reactions and to help to alleviate possible stressful situations.
- ✓ It will strengthen support within the team and enable empathic listening skills.
- ✓ The course will increase understanding which will reduce work-related stress.

# ... and the course that helps your organisation to avoid it

It's OK to ask what the employee wants and needs and to accommodate these within the boundaries and limitations of the organisation. It may be that they feel OK and wish to continue to work to keep themselves busy; they may feel that they need time off to get over the shock; they may feel completely stunned and unable to make any decision.

Who should be the first point of contact within the company? Their line-manager? Human resources? How hard is it to make that first contact? Does the organisation have a bereavement policy?

The Dove Service works with clients who are struggling with their employer's attitude to them; it is another stress for them when they have enough stress dealing with the bereavement or loss. They may be stressed about the possibility of losing their job. They may feel misunderstood, a burden, worthless, undervalued and without the release of coming for counselling may develop a physical illness that keeps them away from work anyway.

Our training courses are cost effective: £40 per delegate for 3 hours. This includes a work book

and attendance certificate. All of our Trainers are qualified as well as being qualified Counsellors who are able to facilitate the needs of the group.

To book your bespoke training course for your organisation, please speak to me, Jill Jenner, on 01782 683155 or contact enquiries@thedoveservice.org.uk.

We are also able to provide counselling within your organisation. Ensuring that managers, staff or volunteers are provided with emotional support and counselling is a clear demonstration of an organisation's duty of care to employees. Absence from work is often a sign that employees are struggling with emotional issues that result in increased levels of stress with resultant physical illness.

Loss is an everyday occurrence but can bring huge upheaval, whether this is from bereavement, loss of income, job and physical function or from the fear of imminent loss due to proposed changes within organisations. Enabling employees - either at their work place, at one of our



By Jill Jenner  
Service Delivery and  
Development Manager

outreaches, or at our Head Office in Hanley - to be able to safely off-load their emotions and to work through their grief alleviates stress, values them and enables them to continue with their day-to-day functions.

Employee well-being is our business.

## What the delegates thought about it

“The training we received will help me in the future because I will be able to help others when they have experienced loss.

*The training will help me to use my experience whilst also being aware of the need to be objective, and respect others processing of grief.*

This training will help me to be able to deal with grief myself and also support anyone else who needs support re loss.

*The most useful part was understanding that loss is not always associated with death and that people experience and deal with loss in their own way.*

This training has given me a greater understanding/appreciation of peoples' individual experiences of bereavement and loss.

*This training will help in relation to my job role in terms of awareness and sensitivity to the person who may have suffered a loss or is about to experience loss.*

This training will help a great deal as we can be dealing with this subject on a weekly basis. ”

## ... AND OUTCOMES

**OUTCOMES** - On completion delegates should:

- ✓ Have a greater understanding of bereavement and loss.
- ✓ Be able to explore their personal approach to bereavement.
- ✓ Understand how to work with strong emotions associated with grief, particularly anger.
- ✓ Be able to identify different behaviours, signs and symptoms that may be displayed by those facing bereavement and other significant loss issues.
- ✓ Know how to develop communication skills and active listening skills to appropriately respond to situations.
- ✓ Be able to support those with bereavement and other significant loss issues.



Helping the Dove Service to deliver effective services for children and young people

# VOICE-OVER ARTISTS

Uth Speaks are currently working with students from Staffs Uni on a unique project to produce a section on the Dove Service website that is appropriate for children and young people in the city and beyond, *writes Megan Davies* (Uth Speaks member).

We have chosen to use animated characters who have various problems that children and young people might have. The characters look really great and will be even better when they are on the new website's animated and interactive back-drop of Stoke-on-Trent. To make the characters even more life-like, we recorded voices for them at our last Uth Speaks meeting.

Although it was quite difficult to stay in character and get all of the words in the right places, we finally recorded speeches for each character. We are now all really excited to see the final web-page and see the animated characters and our voices put together.

The cartoon youngsters – Danni (14), Oscar (11), Vicram (15), Eve (15) and Toby the dog were developed by Uth Speaks and their stories are being brought to life by Scribblebox Studio, a group of students at Staffordshire University.



Vic and Danni, two of the animated characters



Annabelle Morley, a member of the studio said: "I love the challenge of bringing characters to life through animation. Working with the Dove Service has provided a fantastic opportunity to learn more about making animations for the web, and it's also great to know that our animation will be used to promote the work of such a worthwhile organisation."

The interactive backdrop of Stoke-on-Trent will contain local well known landmarks and will provide links for visitors through to information about, amongst

other things, counselling and bereavement and loss.

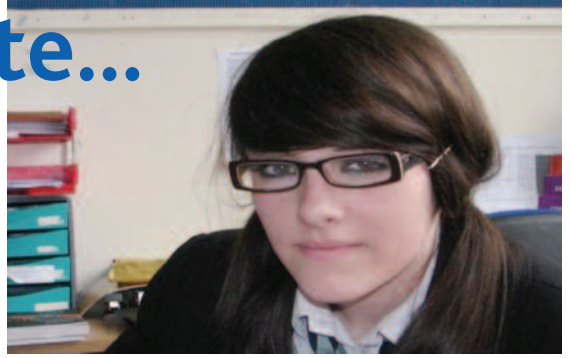
Emily Bard (pictured above) has loved being part of the development of Uth Speaks, especially being part of the new website. "What an exciting prospect - it will be great to see everything put in place and see all the characters come to life," said Emily. "I have every faith in this website and know that it will help many children/young people to become aware of bereavement and loss. I was nervous about recording the voices but the students from Staffs Uni were so kind and patient with me so I really enjoyed it!"

The Dove Service, in particular Uth Speaks, would like to express their thanks to the students and staff at Staffordshire University for their willingness and enthusiasm to get involved with this project.

## Join U<sup>th</sup> Speaks

If you are aged between 10 and 18 years old and would like to join our U<sup>th</sup> Speaks team please contact Charlie O'Dell at [charlie.odell@thedoveservice.org](mailto:charlie.odell@thedoveservice.org) .uk or telephone: 01782 683 155

# My name is Charlotte...



My name is Charlotte, I am 15 years old, and I am in my last year at High School\*.

I came into counselling because I was having a lot of panic attacks, and anger that bubbled up inside me. I treated friends and family badly; these panic attacks and being angry happened so often that lots of the teachers at my school started to notice and thought I needed help.

## How I reacted with my mother before counselling.

She never used to ask me to go places with her. It was always she'll be back later.

I remember one episode: My mother just came up to me and said 'you will be singing at my wedding'. She knows that I like to sing and that I have a very good voice. It would have been nice if she had asked me instead of ordering me to sing. It made me feel that she was using me.

## How was counselling?

When I first met my Counsellor, Isaac, I was so nervous and I just wanted all my problems to go away. During the first few sessions my problems got worse, nothing was going right for me. I began to have more panic attacks. As time went by I started to find my inner self, instead of this scared lonely girl hidden away, I started listening to the input and message given to me. Now I am trying to get it right; at least I think I have finally got most parts of it right. When I think back, how easy it was just to speak to my mum. It's now two weeks, the falling out has stopped and I am a happier person.

## How did it happen?

The past two weeks have been great. I went home and finally got the confidence to speak to my mum. It all happened while I was writing this letter to discuss with Isaac.

Mum asked me what I was doing, we had an argument and I kicked off again in an aggressive manner. I stormed off into my room. Mum waited until we were alone, she then came up to me and said come here, I then sat next to her and asked "Do you love me?" She said "What a silly question, of course I do." She then told me how she had noticed me being depressed and upset a lot of the time.

Then I told her that I have a counsellor and he helps me a lot. He has been provided by the school, he comes from the Dove Service, and his name is Isaac. Isaac has been helping me to find the courage to talk about you, about how I feel, and also about other issues that I have not been able to discuss with you.

Then we started talking about our mistakes and how to make them right. I started to cry (but for a happy reason) because I could finally speak to her and then she gave me a long hug and said she is

*Hi Mum,  
For the past couple of months I've wanted to talk to you, but I've never really had a chance to tell you how I feel. I'm going to start by asking you to understand me for whom I am, and not the person you want me to be.  
I'm sorry for everything I've said and done in the past and I hope you forgive me. I know you have always said you'd talk to me whenever, but when I try sometimes to do things differently, I feel you've always got more important things to do. When you do get round to talking to me I do feel you throw the past in my face.  
I just wish we could start over and live with the future. I may not seem happy about this wedding, but sometimes I sit and wonder how my dad feels about this and it hurts me. It's very hard for me to see you happy again it hurts so much inside. But because you are my mum, I'm happy for you, I'll start living in the future too. I love you mum.*

**Charlotte**

sorry if it feels like she isn't there for me. She said she'd drop everything just to talk to me.

Ever since that night the relationship between me and my mum's got stronger and then I thought "She does care", and this is all thanks to Isaac, he's helped me realise a lot and I will never forget him.

Also my panic attacks only come when I get stressed, or I've not had them as much because most of my problems have gone, and when I do get stressed I calm myself down. Rather than holding my anger in I talk to the person and sort it out or just breathe and forget about it.

## How do I now react with my mum?

She involves me in more issues instead of leaving me out. She involves me in going out places with her or asking my opinion.

Last week we were discussing the final touches to her wedding, she wasn't sure what jewellery to wear, and she asked me what I thought, I was so thrilled, I told her that I had a pearl necklace that was given to me by my great grandma and that I thought it would go nicely with the dress. She agreed to try the dress on with the pearls, she was beautiful and it went well. Now it has been decided that the jewellery for the wedding is going to be pearls, and it makes me feel good because she accepted my opinion other than that of her friends or what she had originally chosen for herself.

(\*the name of Charlotte's High School has been removed to protect her identity)

# Charities working together in community project

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"This outreach service will bring hope to thousands of older people, particularly those living alone after the death of a life partner or struggling to cope with dementia or to provide care on their own for a loved one", said Mrs Linda Williams, Director of Social Responsibility for The Saltbox.

"We are delighted to be working alongside the Dove Service as the expertise of their Counsellor Trainers is second-to-none. Together we can make a real difference for older people in this city".

Mrs Williams added that the support of the Big Lottery Fund, not just for this project but for the city as a whole, had been hugely significant.

"CareLink would have been impossible to set up without this funding and is another example of the Big Lottery Fund helping to tackle social deprivation in the city".

The number of older people affected by dementia is forecast

## community project



John Taylor enjoys a light moment at the presentation with our Chief Executive Dr. Simon Hankins

to rise by 28% by 2025, and 37% of people in the Stoke pilot project had admitted to mental health problems.



Also, some older people were 'property rich but cash poor' and came from a generation who found it difficult to ask for help.

"We have visited older people in large homes to find they are living in one room with only one bar of an old electric heater on and a blanket to keep warm", said Mrs Williams.

Dr. Simon Hankins, Chief Executive Officer of the Dove Service, said that CareLink was a good example of charities working together at a time of financial austerity to help local communities.

### A positive difference

"It is a privilege working with The Saltbox who are hugely committed to providing this service to both multi-faith and no-faith older communities in Stoke-on-Trent.

"Older people experience loss in a number of ways and the expertise of our Counsellor Trainers will enable the CareLink teams to recognise the signs of emotional distress during the course of their outreach, provide a level of appropriate support and know when, and how, to signpost individuals to our support and counselling services.

"This is real on-the-ground support delivered at the point-of-need in the community and will make a positive difference to the lives of older people".



● John Taylor with some of the Phonelink volunteers. If you would like to know more about this flexible and rewarding volunteer opportunity phone Zi on 01782 207200