

Mindful

The Bath Mind Magazine



ISSUE 24 / SUMMER 2014

Mind and the General Election 2015

The Mind federation is a family of approximately 150 independent Local Mind Associations (LMAs), linked with the national charity Mind, which is based in London. Local services are provided by LMAs in communities across England and Wales. The national charity Mind tends to focus on national campaigns promoting fair treatment in mental health, undertaking research and disseminating information.

Mind Chief Executive Paul Farmer and his team have drawn up a manifesto to raise awareness of important mental health matters with all political parties and prospective candidates in the 2015 General Election.

Whichever party or coalition will be managing the government after the election, the Mind Manifesto provides them with a clear six-point action plan to improve the quality of mental health treatment and services across the country.

Please lobby your local MP and competing candidates by writing or e-mailing them the Mind Manifesto and requesting their support.



Paul Farmer, Mind CEO

Mind's Six-Point Manifesto

1 Reduce mental health stigma and discrimination and continue to support the Time to Change campaign.

2 Mandate the NHS in England to offer talking therapies to everyone who needs them within 28 days of referral.

3 Ensure everyone gets safe, speedy and accessible crisis care whenever they need it, no matter where they turn.

4 Transform the support for people who are not working because of their mental health and create a system that really helps them to overcome the barriers they face.

5 Increase the overall NHS mental health budget by a minimum of 10 per cent in real terms over five years.

6 Implement a national strategy that helps everyone to take care of their mental wellbeing.

IMAGE: CHRIS O'DONOVAN



Published by Bath Mind, 13 Abbey Church Yard, Bath, BA1 1LY
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Write for Mindful

We want to hear your thoughts, opinions, experiences, poems and stories. Send pieces by e-mail, post or hand delivery using the addresses above. The copy deadline for the next issue 26/09/14.

Gardening with Greenlinks

Greenlinks, the gardening project at Monksdale Road allotments, has just been assessed by judges for Bath in Bloom 2014. Each of the past five years has brought either a silver or silver gilt award and, on two occasions, the cup for the best community garden. We are hopeful for a further award this year.

We have enjoyed a good season so far - the sweet peas are nearly out and beans ready to pick!

Greenlinks welcomes any new faces wishing to join the group and enjoy the rewards from the allotment. Come and garden with us. Peace and relaxation can be found in weeding, harvesting, watering and seed sowing -

and of course the chance to have a chat with someone, or a quiet sit by the pond! Support, companionship and help are always on hand.

Sessions are: Mondays and Fridays 12.30pm -3.30pm.

You can stay for as long or short a time that suits you. A hot drink and biscuit is always available. Why not come down and have a look?

To find out more details call the Bath Mind office (01225 316199) If you need any support finding Greenlinks or overcoming anxiety to face it, do let the staff know.

“Greenlinks welcomes any new faces wishing to join the group”



IMAGE: MARTYN E. JONES/FREEMAGES

Wellbeing Summer Festival

Friday 18th July saw the Wellbeing Summer Festival at Green Park Station, with workshops, food, fun and activities promoting positive mental health in the modern world. Bath Mind were there with Greenlinks and Mosaic. As were many, many visitors!



Above: There were sunflowers everywhere!



Above: Chris Hailstone, Bath Mind General Manager, tucks into some lovely Mosaic treats on the Bath Mind stall.



Above: There were different stalls and activities from many groups and service providers.

Right: The Mosaic team cooks up a storm, despite the soaring temperatures.



IMAGES: KATE MCDONNELL

BATH MIND
HOUSING SERVICE
RESIDENTS'
ACTIVITY FUND
SUMMER RAFFLE



Great Top Prizes:

- 1st prize – 2 Hot Air Balloon Tickets
- 2nd prize – 2 New Ladies and Gents Bicycles

Ticket price £5
Draw to be held on the 26th August. Winners will be contacted by telephone.

All money raised will be put towards leisure activities and group outings for residents of Bath Mind's home.

Buy your tickets from the Bath Mind Office (13 Abbey Church Yard, Bath, BA1 1LY – telephone 01225 316199 first to check there is someone there to meet you) or contact the home by telephone 01225 448396 or email housing@bathmind.org.uk



IMAGE: KATE MCDONNELL

Munch with Mosaic

November 13th! Mark the date in your diary!

Following the excellent feedback received by Mosaic Munchies after their triumphant, sold-out, pop-up restaurant evening in the Bear Pad Cafe, Bear Flat in February; the team will be repeating their ethnic-based fine-dining offer this November.

The food is a fantastic stream of high-quality courses from authentic ethnic traditions, served in style.

The atmosphere is friendly and relaxed. The bargain prices provide excellent value for those on a budget.

Don't miss what will undoubtedly be the social event of the autumn.

Places are limited and will require advance booking. Why not arrange an evening out for you and your friends or family?

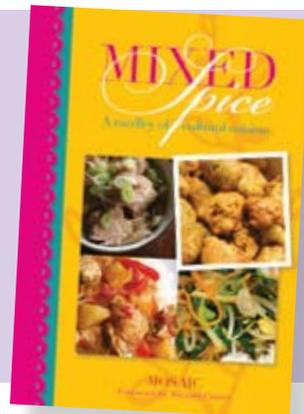
More details will be advertised closer to the date – but for now, don't forget to mark that date in your diary.

Mixed Spice

Mixed Spice is the best selling recipe book produced by Mosaic Munchies, with a forward by celebrity chef, Michael Caines.

Copies are still available for sale from Bath Mind at £5.

Call in or contact us to secure your copy.



DID YOU KNOW THAT IT'S RAMADAN?

Several members of Mosaic are celebrating Ramadan this month, but how much do you know about this most important Islamic religious festival?

Check your knowledge and fill in the blanks below. If you present your copy of Mindful at the Mind Office (13 Abbey Church Yard,

Bath, BA1 1LY) with all the blanks completed correctly, you will receive a £1 reduction on the price of the best selling Mosaic recipe book Mixed Spice (£4 instead of £5).

It is always best to check by telephone (01225 316199) that someone will be there to greet you before you arrive.

_____ is the _____ month in the Muslim calendar. At this time, Muslims will _____ during _____ hours for the whole month. During Ramadan, Muslims celebrate the time when the verses of their holy book, the _____, were revealed to the Prophet _____.

Muslims fast during Ramadan to help them remember poorer people and to be more _____ - _____ and more generous. As well as fasting, they will spend lots of time _____ and _____ the Qur'an. They will also try to do _____ and will give money to charity.

Ramadan is a time to spend with _____ and family, too. Often the fast is broken by several families coming together. The first meal eaten after sunset is called the _____. This often consists of _____. A bigger meal will also be eaten in the evening.

At the end of Ramadan there is a big festival called _____ - _____ - _____. The fasting is over. People wear their best _____ and give _____ to children. They must also give money to _____ for the poor so they can celebrate too. Friends and family will gather together to celebrate.

MISSING WORDS

Eid-ul-Fitr ninth dates good deeds iftar gifts self-disciplined fast Ramadan Muhammad charity praying friends Qur'an clothes daylight reading

Over to you...

To Give, to Receive, to Cope, to Care, to Survive, to Live, to Enjoy!

TO GIVE: I don't intend to start the summer by preaching and teaching. Giving to my mind does not have to mean handing out all your spare cash to a registered charity, or volunteering with the less well off. It's as individual as you are and, for me, sometimes means just taking the time to listen to a friend with a worry or a query and share a little tea and sympathy. It really is



Nissa McLean on Bournemouth Pier



Meryl's little rucksack

true that if you give it comes back to you and it can be so rewarding. I hope it doesn't sound trite if I say that, "A trouble shared is a trouble halved".

TO RECEIVE: Sometimes we may feel that our burdens press heavily upon our shoulders and that we shouldn't load up our colleagues or trouble our friends. But if we take the risk and off load we may find that we are not alone - that there are solutions that hadn't occurred to us acting alone and that just finding a caring, listening ear can be such a relief.

TO COPE: One way in which I find new coping strategies is to ask myself, "What's the best way round this issue?" So if I am down and need company, I will seek out friends at one or other of my regular haunts. If I want support, I go to places where I can access specialist care and if I want solitude, I will take a ramble and cheerfully talk to myself - or to put another way, "commune with the Most High". I like the radio and I find writing to be most therapeutic but less obviously I also enjoy photography and very occasionally will do

some art work.

TO CARE: I love my family, although none of them live in Bath, but I keep in regular contact and I find that it gives me a real lift to make sure my relative has everything she needs in terms of food, is coping with her bills and making the most of her life. She does the same for me and we mutually support each other.

TO SURVIVE: In the early days of being diagnosed with bi-polar life really was about survival. The important business of keeping clean, doing the shopping, the laundry and changing the sheets take priority and then I found myself doing too much comfort eating. But it does get better and the one-to-one with people like Nissa McLean (here photographed on Bournemouth Pier on a Mind social group outing) can work through problems, finding solutions and putting the past to rest.

TO LIVE: I remember having a support worker who talked most sensibly about having a "work life balance". So throughout my recovery journey I have striven to keep occupied but also found time

to relax. All people differ but I am an early riser, go about my daily business in the morning and then have a rest after lunch and write later in the afternoon and evening. I have found a routine that suits me and I have a number of regular haunts where I have made friends.

TO ENJOY: This is something that I need to achieve to be able to feel I am part of society. The photograph of my little rucksack was taken in the early part of this year when I took a long walk along the Kennet and Avon Canal. I love the great outdoors and I enjoy looking out for wild flowers or winter berries, wildlife and just being part of the scenery. People say hello, the dogs are mostly friendly and I really enjoy a cuppa in a café when I get back to Bath.

Living with a mental health issue is tough but if you can come to terms with the worst aspects of it - such as being unable to hold down a paid job, or having mood swings and peaks and troughs - then it is possible to make the best of a bad job and hold your own. Let us know what works for you, feedback warmly welcomed.

Meryl Williams

Mr Angry says:

Automatic bus notifications - these marvellous inventions have been around for quite some time now but I wonder if they are all as unreliable as my local one. The ones to which I refer are not the upmarket digital readers ones attached to bus stops in the more affluent areas of the city and town but the ones where you text a "magic number" and you are sent a return text that is supposed to inform you how many minutes you have to wait until the next bus is due. Every single time I have attempted to use this service from my local stop it has failed big time! I once waited over 40 minutes for a bus that was coming to me in increments of 3 minutes of arrival time so I waited and waited and waited expecting the bloody thing to turn up very soon! I only thought it was worth waiting because every time I texted it told me that it was due in 3 minutes. After a very long time (in excess of 40 minutes) it then told me the next one was due in 20 minutes. I was gobsmacked when I realised the one I had waited so long for hadn't turned up. Then I realised how foolish I was. The bus must have been invisible and went past me without so much as a whisper! My fault obviously. It couldn't possibly

be the fault of technology! Call me a cross between Hyacinth Bucket and Victor Meldrew but I then went on a mission to several of my local stops and did a test for half an hour at my own expense and texted each different stop for bus arrivals. Surprise, surprise - not one bus was true to the stated arrival time. My advice is to just stand at your chosen bus stop and take pot luck; much more reliable that way if you understand my meaning.

On a happy note (for a change) - In this age of toyless child entertainment where all kids amusement takes the form of button pushing with hardly any direct personal interaction at all (some teenagers and adults included) it was most refreshing to pass 3 very young girls playing with dollies and prams. Chattering and laughing together like we used to when I was their age instead of being "screen obsessed" which is sadly the norm nowadays. I only wish there was more of it about. Simple, fun games that involved so much more real and proper learning skills that all these i-pod, i-pad, pibbly pob or whatever the damn things are called can ever possibly supply!

Alan Cupit (aka Mr Angry)

Fun Up North and a Long Distance Walk

Well spring 2014 has been and gone. For me the highlight of spring 2014 was the Roller Coaster Club of Great Britain's annual Blackpool Bash at Blackpool Pleasure Beach the last weekend in April. I travelled to Blackpool by train on Thursday 24 April, and spent Friday daytime in Sandcastle Water Park. The Blackpool Bash officially began the Friday evening in the Paradise Room with entertainment from Mark James and Johnny Casson. In addition, Club member Dave Maryan sang a series of songs from yesteryear. Saturday daytime members enjoyed riding in the Pleasure Beach, including a couple of exclusive ride sessions on selected coasters. I enjoyed a total of 30 rides that day. The fun continued Saturday evening in the Paradise Room, with songs performed by members, some games and the Gong Show. I entered the Gong Show, my act featured a series of exercises I typically do during circuit training sessions at Bath Sports Centre most weeks. Bizarrely the audience voted me the seemingly impossible combination of best and worst Gong act of the night. A one-hour disco rounded off Saturday evening.

Sunday morning began with the Club having

exclusive use of three coasters for an hour. Afterwards those who had wristbands could ride until closing time. I had a Sunday wristband for the first time since my first ever Blackpool Bash in 2008, and continued riding until closing time, thereby amassing 28 rides that day. Altogether it was a coaster crazy weekend in Granadaland, which featured

two nights of entertainment as well as riding in the Park. Just before the Blackpool Bash, I had a T-shirt of my own design printed, bearing the slogan "I'm Not An Adult I'm A Big Kid!". Many members liked it when I wore it the Friday evening of the Blackpool Bash.

That's not all I've done. Early April, I saw Muppets Most Wanted at ODEON Bath.



Normally I have difficulty grasping the plot of films, but I found Muppets Most Wanted easy to follow from start to finish, and I enjoyed every minute of it. Mid-May I visited the Helicopter Museum in Weston-super-Mare. Its main hangar features a vast collection of old helicopters, including several Westland helicopters, and various Russian aircraft. Altogether it was an interesting visit.

Friday 30 May, I caught the train to Bradford-on-Avon and walked to Churchill Bridge, Bath along the Kennet and Avon Canal towpath. The very next day I returned to Churchill Bridge and walked along the Riverside Path followed by the Bristol and Bath Railway Path all the way to Bristol. The upshot of that was I walked from Bradford-on-Avon to Bristol, approximately 26 miles, in two consecutive days. Many people I spoke to both days were amazed I was walking that far in two days. Some asked if I was doing the two-day walk for charity, or for an event, and were surprised to hear I was doing it for neither of those reasons but merely because I felt like it. A long distance walk doesn't necessarily have to be for charity, I just fancied the challenge of walking from Bradford-on-Avon to Bristol in two consecutive

days, and enjoyed seeing the scenery every step of the way, as well as a few refreshment stops both days. Understandably, since this was my own personal two-day walk, I received no special rewards for my effort, e.g. certificate, medal, T-shirt. All I now have are my personal memories and lots of photos of both days, but that's good enough for me.

Before anyone gets too excited and suggests I run the Bath Half Marathon or London Marathon next year in the aftermath of my two-day walk, forget it. The sheer thought of running 13.1 miles, let alone 26.2 miles, puts me off such races. A more realistic possibility would be next year's Bristol 10K run, although it would perhaps be in my best interest to start with a 5K run somewhere before attempting a 10K.

The Eurovision Song Contest took place in Copenhagen, Denmark in May; it consisted of two weekday semi-finals plus the grand final on Saturday 10 May. As a keen fan, I watched both semi-finals and the grand final. Once again the UK's entry, "Children of the Universe" sung by Molly had a disappointing result, just 17th place and 40 points in the grand final. I think the UK deserved a higher placing than that. Looking positively,

17th out of 26 finalists wasn't that bad really, 9 finalists finished below the UK, and a further 11 countries failed to reach the final. Although the UK has had mainly low places for several years now, it must be remembered that with so many participants in the Eurovision Song Contest these days, it's difficult for any country to win. In fact, for most countries, just getting to the final is an achievement to be proud of. Austria won with "Rise Like a Phoenix" sung by Conchita Wurst. It was a first class performance of an excellent song which reminded me of a James Bond film theme. Since this was their first win since their only previous win in 1966, they now take the record for longest gap between wins, 48 years. It just goes to show, never give up!

So what comes next? Unlike last year, there's no Gromit Unleashed trail around Bristol, but nonetheless I'm bound to find plenty to keep me busy the next few months. I've recently discovered that several members of Team Bath will be competing in the 2014 Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, as a Bath resident I wish them the best of luck. Whatever you do, have a good summer.

Nicholas Wilmott

Travels with My Pen - The Big Smoke!

I am occasionally a creature of impulse and one fine Monday morning in February I woke up early and decided to go to London for the day. It's expensive by train but it is possible to get a cheaper off peak ticket for travel after 8.43am on a week day. Return is on or before 4.30pm, or you have to wait until 7pm. On a Saturday and Sunday there are no restrictions.

I have lived in London when I first graduated and know my way around the centre quite well and so, when I arrived this year, I walked from Paddington Station to the Royal Albert Hall, through the Kensington Gardens. The day was mild and sunny and I had a picnic by the Italianate Gardens that Prince Albert had installed in honour of his bride the young Princess Victoria. These gardens have fountains and balustrades and are very pretty. The Kensington Gardens are close to Hyde Park so it is also possible to walk over to your left to Marble Arch and the start of Oxford Street.

At the time of my visit, Kensington Palace was closed for refurbishment but had previously housed an exhibition of portraits of the late Princess Diana. At the exit of the Gardens near the Royal Albert Hall stands the magnificent Albert Memorial. It is huge and ornate with statues that look like alabaster, much gold leaf

and steps leading up to it. It must have cost a fortune and one can imagine that being a source of controversy at the time. The Royal Albert Hall of course has a functional use as a concert hall and is just as amazing on the inside. You will see it on the television when the Last Night of the Proms appears in September each year.

From the concert hall I walked to the Victoria and Albert Museum where I enjoyed a cup of tea and pastry and saw exhibits of Victorian wrought iron work, examples of ancient dynastic pillars and a copy of Michelangelo's David. After that I took the tube to St James' Park and visited Westminster Abbey.

It's expensive to go in the Abbey but there is a lot to see and there was some lovely brand new stained glass installed to celebrate HM the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. I met some volunteers when I asked a



Westminster Abbey

question about the new glass and I was very privileged to be taken to the library off the cloisters where I bought a photograph and was given some more information. Coming out of the Abbey I felt I'd had a really good day so I headed back to Paddington and caught the 4pm train home to Bath. Yes it was an expensive day but well worth it if you don't mind the foot slogging!

Meryl Williams

Black Hole

There is a black hole beside my bed
I wake up
for fear of falling
Falling
falling into that hole
If I can get out of bed
do I stay or do I go?
The hole reaches out to grab me
I am on the edge
The blackness echoes
and ripples
a noisy silence
A suffocating blackness
a black hole of depression
wherein my voices lay
There is no-one to save me
Will I free fall
into timelessness?
The prey of darkness
my bed is my refuge
gravity betrays me
The hole reaches out to grab me
Will the devil's yawm
suck me in?

Fairburn

A Boy's Anthem

A Boy's Anthem is Meryl's latest poetry anthology which is now available for sale (£5.95), as are the three anthologies that precede it. Meryl meets all the publishing costs herself and then donates all sales proceeds to selected charities and good causes. To date she has raised over £500.

A Boy's Anthem will benefit Bath Mind.

Survival

Your load is my load
Join me on life's road
Take part in shared hope
Let's forever toil
Together forever
Whatever the weather.

My dreams are your dreams
Some sweet as it seems

Not all come true
But as long as I'm with you
All aspirations
Are worthy contemplations.

We are united
Joined with one accord
Let's not be frightened
Of life's disarray
None of us is perfect
All can go astray.

I love you ever
Never will we part
Long have we tarried
One mind, one goal, one heart.

Loving you as I do
It will never die
To you I owe my very life
Not a word of a lie.

As we reach survival
Let's be on our way
I'm always with you
For ever and a day.

Meryl Williams

After Reading Mahler's Ruckert Lieder (Five songs/poems)

Her beauty betrayed her
As in her room she sat
Writing.
Deeds didn't function well
In her nest.
Her beauty betrayed her.

At midnight she lay awake
Alive but dead to the world.
O, Heaven mine!
Extraordinary times.
Sleep betrayed her, promising

Golden smiles when all the
While it lurked out of reach
Pictures – black and white –
glared
At her from the walls.
She lay appalled at it all.

Jessica Lovelace

Far Flung Moments

If you knew how far to
Push me, would you try?

Fly me high, fly me low
How far, how far can you go?

Hunter seeks the hunted
Shunted from the sidelines
Marginalized by her thoughts
'Cos it's all in the mind.

Hunter loads the weapon
Seeking out the din
Of noises off and reeking of
Sinful doubting maidens fair.

Watching in the bushes
Hidden by her lair
She stalks the ever watchful,
Watchful waiting pair.

Arduous torturous mountains to
Climb, rhyming thoughts that
Tell the time, seeking out those
Stuck in a rut, all the time.
What?

What is it that's out there that
Keeps me in here, that stops,
Stares, seeks madness in my
Lair and can't compare with
you.

The burns cuts grazes stings
Bites slaps binge eating that
Tears sighs and ducks ever
Seeking that pat on the back.

Over and out they often cry
Over and out I often sigh
Dying countless deaths I wish
And weep hoping for some
sleep.

Hunter asks the hunted:
"What have you done today?"
The hunted replies to the
hunter
"I have been your prey."

Jessica Lovelace

Design a Christmas Card

Draw, paint or take a photo and enter the Bath Mind Christmas Card Competition 2014

Bath Mind is looking for three designs (drawings, paintings or photographs) to use for its charity Christmas cards and also as a computer generated card. The pictures should reflect the spirit of Christmas in a traditional or fun and funky way.

All artwork and photographs must be original, in landscape format and no larger than A4 size (210mm high x 298 wide) with a border of 35 mm.

Please send us your original artwork. Entries become the property of Bath Mind and entrants transfer ownership of copyright to Bath Mind. Drawings and paintings can be in crayon, paint or pencil.

There are three categories based on age: under 10yrs, 10-16 yrs and adult. One winner will be picked from each category.

The designs will be judged on content, creativity and originality by an independent panel and their decision will be final. The winners will have their details printed on the back of their winning card and receive a thank you certificate plus 25 copies to send to family and friends.

The closing date for the competition is 5pm on 30th September 2014. The winners will be contacted by phone or email 2 weeks after the closing date.



How to enter

Please send in your entries unfolded to Bath Mind Design a Christmas Card Competition, 13 Abbey Church Yard, Bath, BA1 1LY, or email community@bathmind.org.uk

Put your name, address, age and telephone number or email on the reverse of your artwork.

Entries in the under 10 or 10-16 category will need signed parent or guardian's consent on the back of the artwork, or by e-mail, to state you have read and understood the terms and conditions to entering this competition.

Bath Mind will only use entrants' data for the purpose of the competition.