

Wey Hey Whitley Bay

THE NEWSLETTER OF WHITLEY BAY BIG LOCAL

ISSUE 8 APRIL 2018

A LITTLE CARE MAKES A HUGE DIFFERENCE



The winter months have been no deterrent for our two neighbourhood caretakers Eric and Bruce who have been busy helping to improve the look and feel of the Big Local area and support and encourage local residents and businesses to do the same.

The pair have been busy working their way through a list of priority tasks suggested by residents and businesses in the area and their efforts have certainly not gone unnoticed.

As well as regularly clearing litter and debris from some of the vacant large fronted properties on South Parade and the empty shop fronts along Whitley Road, Eric and Bruce have picked up their paint brushes to paint more than 60 bollards and all the town centre street furniture in shades of 'Whitley Bay Blue'.

The green fingered duo have also been removing unsuitable planting from the

town centre planters and rehoused them in some of the smaller community gardens in the Big Local area where they are already beginning to thrive. Following resident feedback, hedges and shrubs have been cut back and tidied up along a number of streets, which has made a huge difference.

The caretakers have carried out an extensive survey of all the bins in the area and are now working with North Tyneside Council to try to resolve some of the issues of bins which are not fit for purpose. Eric is a regular at the monthly Green Beans Market at the Metro Station where he can discuss his role and jobs that he might be able to tackle in the Big Local area.

To find out more about the caretaker role, make suggestions or get involved please contact us at the shop via email on sarah.biglocal@yahoo.co.uk or via our Facebook page



IT'S ALL CHILD'S PLAY FOR SMALL SPARKS RECIPIENT



Jane said: "Most of us remember playing out as young children and the fun we had. For a number of reasons this doesn't happen so much these days, so after seeing some other successful play street activities in and around the Rockcliffe area, I decided to see if I could set up a regular play street where I lived."

"The Small Sparks grant allowed us to buy road closure signs, whistles and some sunflower seeds and compost so that we could get to know each other with a street sunflower growing competition. It also enabled me to complete a street activators course in Bristol so that I can help other people to set up safe play streets where they live too; I've helped five more people in the area to organise street closures and have worked with other like-minded people to form the group *play.meet.street* to encourage more streets to get involved."

"The street closure has really helped to build a sense of community. We now have a residents' Facebook page which helps us to communicate and we've had some impromptu play sessions and cake sales in the street."

Small Sparks recipient Jane Fahey is proof that bringing your local community together can be as simple as child's play with her street play activity.

Jane who lives in Plessey Crescent in Whitley Bay received £250 from the Small Sparks fund to help her get her street play idea off the ground and encourage the children in her local area to get together and play out.

But Jane's idea has led to a whole lot more and as a result of the regular play sessions in the street, other community activity is now taking place.



NEW CHAIR TO DRIVE FORWARD WHITLEY BAY BIG LOCAL PLANS



Rev Alan Dickinson, who is well known for his involvement in The Bay Food Bank and setting up the Whitley Bay Street Pastors has taken on the role of volunteer chair at Whitley Bay Big Local.

Alan, who was previously a board member at Big Local said: "Over the past four years Whitley Bay Big Local has helped to facilitate a real community driven effort; supporting existing community members and encouraging others to get involved and make a difference to the place in which they live and work."

"Recently we became a CIO – a charitable incorporated organisation – which alongside many other benefits, will allow

us to access additional funding channels to support our future plans which gives us far greater scope."

Whitley Bay Big Local has commissioned a feasibility study in to the provision of affordable housing and community space in the town and is looking for local people to share their thoughts and opinions. Whilst this is still very much in its infancy, it demonstrates the ambitions and potential impact of the project.

Alan added: "Whilst the funding plays a huge part, this is not why I have got involved. I've accepted the role as chair because I really believe in the community driven nature of the project and know that to bring about any lasting changes requires the support and efforts of local people which Whitley Bay Big Local is fortunate to have in abundance."

CAITLAIN'S PROGRAMME AT THE BASE



Caitlain's programme is named in honour of Caitlain Wright who sadly passed

away in July 2016. The group which is for girls aged 14–18, meets every Wednesday night, we get to do loads of different things but the most important thing is that it is our group to feel safe.

We come usually straight from school or college and we can speak openly about anything that is on our mind. We get and offer each other loads of peer support and the group has a very open atmosphere. We are supported by Karen, Justine and Donna.

Some of the things we have done include: work about body image, communication skills, Cooking from Scratch course with Ann from the Community Dietician team, art, social enterprise, cinema, Emelie Sande concert, presentation skills, mental health awareness, Food Hygiene certificate, First Aid qualification and learning how to nurture ourselves.

We welcome new young people into our group. We speak about our issues to a worker privately or in the group and this helps us come up with ways to deal with or cope with the things that are bothering us. The group really builds our confidence and helps us to feel part of something.



MEET THE WHITLEY BAY STREET PASTORS – HELPING, CARING, LISTENING



We met with Chris Lincoln, Street Pastors coordinator in Whitley Bay to find out more about the valuable work that the team of volunteers do in the town.

As well as providing support to vulnerable young people on weekend evenings, the volunteers also coordinate the North Tyneside SWEP team who provide emergency overnight shelter to the homeless during the cold winter nights.

Tell us about Street Pastors and what you do

Street Pastors was pioneered in London in 2003; 18 volunteers took to the streets of Brixton to provide support to vulnerable young people one evening.

Today more than 300 towns and cities around the UK have a Street Pastors team and Whitley Bay has its own dedicated team of volunteers.

Street Pastors offer reassurance, safety and support through listening, caring and helping and we work together with other

partners such as the police and ambulance service to make communities safer.

Each city project is set up by Ascension Trust, which is the governing body behind Street Pastors, and run by a local coordinator like myself with support from local churches and community groups, in partnership with the police, local council and other statutory agencies.

What is your role in Whitley Bay?

The Whitley Bay Street Pastors began providing support in 2011. Since then we have had a team of volunteers out on the streets every Saturday night in Whitley Bay from 10pm until 4am.

Over the past seven years we have volunteered more than 9,680 hours to help keep people safer on the town's streets and have helped more than 4890 vulnerable people in Whitley Bay alone. We help people who find themselves in vulnerable situations and either help to get them home safely or enlist the support and care that they need.

We issue flip flops – often to females who are no longer able to walk in heeled shoes – and foil blankets to those who find themselves dangerously exposed to the elements and whilst we are not medically trained, we can provide vital intervention and enlist the support of the emergency services.

It's not our job to judge but to provide

the support and care that people need when they find themselves in such vulnerable situations. In the summer months in particular, our volunteers encourage a huge number of people to come away from the beach and rocks, where they often put themselves and others in danger.

We also offer support to the wider community and our volunteers collect bottles and glasses which have been haphazardly left and prevent anti-social behaviour in the nearby residential streets.

Over the winter months, our volunteers also make up a huge part of the North Tyneside SWEP team who provide emergency overnight shelter to the homeless when the temperatures drop.

Tell us more about SWEP

SWEP is a severe weather protocol which councils up and down the UK are obliged to implement. North Tyneside Council approached us to support its SWEP procedures and now, together with other volunteers from local churches, we provide overnight shelter for people sleeping rough when the temperatures fall below zero.

If the council declares SWEP following three consecutive nights of temperatures below zero, people living on the streets can come to the hall at Oxford Street where they will be looked after out of the cold by a team of volunteers. We hope to build on these services and be able to offer more substantial support during the winter months but this requires more volunteers and greater funding.

Why do you give up your time to do it?

Street Pastors is a Christian initiative so all our volunteers are Christians and are keen to provide support to people in need; it's not for us to cast judgement but provide the help which is needed. For me personally, knowing that I am making a difference to the lives of others is my driving force.

How is Street Pastors funded?

We are a charitable organisation and rely heavily on donations. Whitley Bay Big local recently donated much needed funds to support our work with those sleeping rough and organisations such as the Co-op have provided immense support choosing us as one of their nominated charities. However we do very much rely on the generosity of the public and have set up a text giving service. You can make a donation of anything from as little as £1 to 70070 typing WBSP26 and the amount

To find out more about the work of the Street Pastors or to get involved as a volunteer contact whitleybay@streetpastors.org.uk



BREAST FEEDING SUPPORT GROUP SETS UP HOME IN BIG LOCAL SHOP



La Leche League Whitley Bay has been supporting breastfeeding mothers for the past six months. Around 15 mothers and babies meet at The Whitley Bay Big Local shop each month.

Every meeting is facilitated by a fully qualified breastfeeding counsellor who volunteers for the charity. The group is open to all pregnant or breastfeeding mothers and the women who attend are at different stages of their breastfeeding journey. Many come for the first time because they are struggling with feeding – and the shock of motherhood – but they generally come back because they love the

supportive atmosphere.

Rae Vacher Lowe, who runs the group said: *"The Big Local offers a fantastic venue – lots of comfortable sofas, tea and fresh coffee, baby changing and lots of toys. Finding such a lovely venue in central Whitley Bay has certainly contributed to the success of the group – it's easy to find, well served by public transport, and whilst it's warm and cosy there's also plenty of room for buggies."*

"Mothers enjoy the group so much that we are looking at the possibility of running it more regularly."

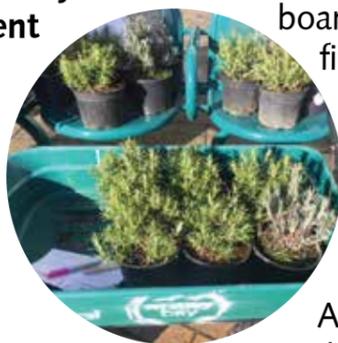
La Leche League Whitley Bay currently meets on the second Monday of each month at 10am and welcomes new mums to come and join them.

To find out more about using the shop for your community activity contact sarah.biglocal@yahoo.co.uk

IT'S GOOD TO BEE KIND

Whitley Bay Big Local proved once again that it's good to 'bee' kind, giving away hundreds of lavender and rosemary plants as part of its commitment to improving the local environment.

A team of volunteers gave away more than 400 lavender plants around the town centre and at Green Beans Market and in return asked the recipients to let them know what changes could be made to improve the appearance of the town in order to shape Big Local's future plans. Around 200 people shared their thoughts and opinions with a wide range of suggestions and ideas.



Marian Foster, the host of the weekly gardening programme on Radio Newcastle interviewed local resident and Big Local board member Helen Frankenberg to find out more: Helen said: *"Bees just love lavender and rosemary and these two easy-to-care for plants can thrive in large gardens or in pots in yards making them ideal for the typical town gardens inside the Big Local area"*.

As part of its 'Bee' Kind day, visitors to the Big Local shop were invited to take part in the newly formed **Kind Club**. Big Local Small Sparks grant recipient Chris Penlington set up the Kind Club to promote the benefits that kindness brings to a community, it includes mindfulness, meditation and activity sessions.

BIG PLANS FOR THIS YEAR'S CARNIVAL 25-26 MAY 2018



The 5th annual Whitley Bay carnival takes over our streets on the late May Bank holiday bringing a spectacular costumed parade, live music, crafts, street theatre, food & family fun. This year's theme is BIG so expect giant structures and big ideas.

Once again celebrations will begin with a carnival ball followed by a BIG carnival parade and a day of entertainment at the town's Spanish City Plaza.

Carnival Club will again be welcoming

people to come along and help make costumes and carnival structures or take part in street band sessions. This takes place every Monday in term time at Rockcliffe School from 6 – 7.30 pm and in the Big Local shop on Saturday mornings in May.

Organisers, who have set up a new not for profit company **SALTo Arts Productions** to deliver the carnival in partnership with Whitley Bay Big Local, New Prospects Association, North Tyneside Council and North Tyneside Music Education Hub are looking for even more local people to get involved in the preparations for this year's event, Carol Alevroyianni, carnival producer said: *"As well as the support of residents and local groups, support from local businesses is vital to the carnival's success. We are offering bespoke sponsorship packages so urge people to get in touch."*

For more information see www.whitleybaycarnival.co.uk or Whitley Bay Community Carnival group on Facebook

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK AND WIN £50 OF VOUCHERS TO SPEND IN WHITLEY BAY

As we approach our half way mark in our 10 year programme, we are asking local residents for their views to help shape our plans for the coming years.

Over the past four years a lot has been achieved to address initial concerns of local people. We have: helped to bring back the carnival to the town streets; introduced a dedicated credit union; funded the work of a Citizen's Advice Bureau in the town; and worked with some of the most vulnerable young people living in the town to help them to become a valuable part of our community.

We've helped to shape North Tyneside Council's master plans for the town and

seafront; supported local residents to create community gardens, funded new planters and town furniture; introduced telescopes along the seafront; and appointed dedicated town caretakers. We're also very proud of the hugely popular Big Local shop and all the activities that are held there.

In order to continue to make a difference we need to know your thoughts.

Please complete the simple 3 question survey overleaf and in return you will be entered into a prize draw. The winner will receive a £50 voucher of their choice to spend in one of the many shops in Whitley Bay.

WHITLEY BAY BIG LOCAL: GET INVOLVED



- Check us out on Facebook
- Visit our website:
www.whitleybaybiglocal.org
(PLEASE NOTE WEBSITE IS CURRENTLY DOWN FOR MAINTENANCE WORK)
- Call into the Big Local shop at
Unit 4, 305 Whitley Rd, NE26 2HU
on a Saturday morning
- Apply for a *Small Sparks* grant
(via website)
- Come to a meeting!
- Volunteer by emailing:
whitleybaybiglocal@gmail.com



BIG LOCAL SHOP DIARY

	MORNING	AFTERNOON	EVENING
MON	La Leche League Breastfeeding Support Group – 10am-12pm monthly Contact: lll.newcastlent@gmail.com	Family Learning –1.30pm-3pm weekly Contact: 0191 643 2288	Age UK LGBT group – monthly 7pm-8.30pm Contact: 0191 287 7012
TUES	Linguaforme French – 11am-12.30pm Contact Barbara: 07946 115256	Small Sparks – Whitley Warblers 1pm-3pm Contact Sheila: 0191 252 7459	Happy Planet – Poetry with Friends-7pm-9pm fortnightly. Contact Gail: 07752 356880
WED		Bookbinding Classes - monthly from March 14th. Contact Sue Bennett- 077859 48624	Peer Talk Charity 7pm-8.30pm Support Group. Phone or text 07908 493880
THURS	Whitley Bay Big Local - "Kettle's On" Coffee Morn- ing 10am -3pm Moneywise Credit Union Collection 10am-12pm Contact: 0191 276 7963	Whitley Bay Big Local Sew Wonderful sewing Group 1pm-3pm Citizens Advice Bureau 2pm – 5pm Contact: 03442 451288	Beats and Rhyme Society Young People's songwriting workshop. 5pm –8pm. Contact Ken: 07908 686030
FRI	Whitley Bay Big Local Knit and Natter 10am til 12.30pm Contact: 0191 252 3570	Whitley Bay Big Local Stone Soup Contact: 0191 252 3570	Debra Herron Counselling 4pm -7pm (from FEBRUARY 2018) Contact Debra: 07734 745807
SAT	Whitley Bay Big Local Community Activity 10am-12.30pm Contact: 0191 252 3570	Small Sparks Kind Club- Monthly	
SUN			



QUESTIONNAIRE

- 1 How can we improve how Whitley Bay looks?**
- 2 What activity/ activities would bring people together in the Big Local shop?**
- 3 How can we support the people in Whitley Bay who most need it?**

Please return completed questionnaire to the Big Local shop or email your answers to **sarah.biglocal@yahoo.co.uk** You will be entered into a prize draw. **The winner will receive a £50 voucher** of their choice to spend in one of the many shops in Whitley Bay.