A few days ago, I lost a dear friend to cancer. I had not seen him for fifteen years and yet, when we chatted on his final day, all these years disappeared. We chuckled over shared experiences, often embarrassing, when things hadn't quite gone to plan - slipping down the stairs and losing one's dignity or entering the wrong cloakroom between wearing them with guests.

Life passes quickly and we have no way of knowing how long our journey will last. But we can be sure, whether long or short, there will always be twists and turns, hills and valleys.

I would love my friend to still be with me. I love the idea of picking up the phone and giving him a call or just dropping in to see him in his delightful country cottage. The possibility of these things happening has now gone forever but my memory of him will remain for a lifetime.

If I had been able to design the path of my own life, it would certainly not have included so many deep valleys or unpleasant turns. But I believe it is managing the dark days and the unexpected incidents that makes us, in effect, either the wise but challenging words that James, brother of Jesus, wrote in his letter to the church:

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

My friend had the happy knack of turning trials into triumphs and, as long as my journey lasts, I want to do the same.

Andrew

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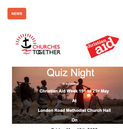

Norfolk Advice Network Helpline

This new service which opens Monday 4th April is designed to help callers find the right NCAVA member agency to refer to for advice and support. It specially includes those who are unable to use the internet, those who are not aware of specialist veterans to NCAVA's member agencies. Funded by Norfolk County Council for 3 years initially, Your Norfolk Advice Network Helpline is designed to save organisations time in signposting callers to the right place. The Helpline number is 0333 800 6332. Opening hours are 9am-5pm Mon-Fri. For enquiries about this new service, you will be able to email: helpline@ncava.uk.net from 4th April.

Fuel Poverty in West Norfolk

Fuel Poverty: West Norfolk included in areas most at risk.

It was recently revealed in a report from ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England) and the Fuel Poverty Fuel Coalition that "Rare data projections reveal that the fuel poverty crisis gripping the country is affecting some areas worse than others."

The report discovered the following:

- "Around a third of households in market town King's Lynn and rural West Norfolk will be in fuel poverty (33.4%)"
- "Fuel poverty is expected to spike during this year, reflecting the rapid increase in the cost of fuel. Nearly 2.6 million households in England will wake up in fuel poverty that morning."

(Paradoxical: The amounts where nearly everyone is in fuel poverty – End Fuel Poverty Coalition)

How has this changed from 2020?

In 2020, there were an estimated 13.2 per cent of households (3.16 million) in fuel poverty in England under the Low Income Low Energy Efficiency (LILEE) metric, down from 10.4 per cent in 2019 (2.18 million). Annual Fuel Poverty Statistics LILEE Report 2022 (2020 data).

However, fuel poverty figures are set to increase even further in 2022:

"The End Fuel Poverty Coalition's latest estimate is that 6.5m households (26.7%) in England will be in fuel poverty from 1 April 2022 as a result of recent price increases."

See the full article here.

Why is West Norfolk at risk?

Much of these areas are isolated due to rurality and rely heavily on oil to fuel their homes, which means they are disproportionately affected by rising costs of the oil supply market, this is a worrying time for our residents.

Paul Dixon, Rural Evidence Manager at Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE), commented:

> "Rural residents have some of the hardest to heat homes. Additionally, about a million households rely on heating oil which has increased in price by more than three times since the same period last year. Government must recognise and address the particular vulnerabilities of people in this situation."

How we can help

Here at Community Action Norfolk, we are here to help you. We recently received a grant from the Fuel Poverty Coalition to provide advice and support on winter bills. We are the ACRE member for Norfolk – we can provide support and resources for your home, village hall or community centre. We regularly receive advice and resources from ACRE which can be applied to your village hall or community centre. These regular discussions and communications mean that we can support and carry you might have.

If you have any concerns or queries, please get in touch via email: community@communityactionnorfolk.org.uk

ACRE and the Fuel Poverty Coalition have published resources and support with the rise in energy cost, you can see them here (ACRE) and here (EFPC). There are also other national charities such as National Energy Action (NEA) who may be able to help.

The EFPC have also recently been asking people to tweet their MP to call for action on the energy price increase. Sending short emails to press on social media, tweeting your MP and writing to your local newspaper. We recommend making your message personalised – setting it aside from the other communications that they may receive that have been copied and pasted.

SUPPORT FOR UKRAINIAN REFUGEES

Gateway Church offers free English lessons to Ukrainians

Gateway Church in King's Lynn is re-launching its international café with a view to helping Ukrainian refugees learn English.

More

Working together to support Ukrainian refugees

BCKLWN and its Lily service is offering further support to individuals arriving from the Ukraine. Support is being given in the shape of a voucher or items, to fill the gap between their arrival in the area and access to Government support. Lily has been working with the Salvation Army and the Big Lottery, the West Norfolk Wine lottery to provide support to individuals in need of the essentials. This funding has been raised by individuals who have played the local lottery.

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The fund will be administered through its Lily service and any requests for support should be directed to them via their website. Individuals can self-refer through the website, or third parties can refer on their behalf by completing the referral form. Lily Support Workers will also be able to signpost individuals to any other local or regional support.

In addition The Hanseatic Union and Access are providing wellbeing support for those affected by the conflict in Ukraine. They have received funding from Norfolk Community Foundation to extend the support they can provide in the local community. They will be offering three types of support:

- The workshop, based in Kings Lynn, is delivering sessions in local primary schools to help children process their feelings through drama,
- Support through email or Facebook for people who want to contact multilingual staff to share and talk through their emotions
- Relaxation and social sessions at Access, Hospital Mews, Kings Lynn on 29 March from 7-9pm. A drop-in session for sharing, and learning relaxation skills, to have a cuppa, to give everyone time to chat and connect.

Julie Chaplin, from The Hanseatic Union, said: "The war in Ukraine is a terrible time and we, as always, are here to help everyone in our community. Anyone who feels alone or frightened can get in touch with us and talk, or come to our social event to chat."

Inna Celinska, from Access, added: "The impact of the war in Ukraine is being felt in all communities. Our main client group is from Eastern Europe. They have been affected significantly due to historical events and close ties with Ukraine and Russia. We would like to offer our support to those who are finding it hard to manage their thoughts or feelings. With additional funding our Project Workers have extra time to provide emotional support, listen to concerns and to talk about worries."

- The Hanseatic Union: Facebook - Hansos Unija - or email Julie@hanseaticunion.co.uk.
- Access: info@accessmigrantsupport.org.uk
- Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk- click on Ukraine Crisis for useful links
- Government Homes for Ukraine campaign

How the sex trade preys on Ukraine's refugees

Refugees are forced to put their trust in strangers. It doesn't always turn out well.

More

CINNAMON NETWORK

Advice for churches on supporting Ukrainian refugees

We've put together a list of key considerations for churches that want to welcome refugees into their communities. Information is updated all the time, but this is a great place to start.

More

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

King's Lynn foodbank

Administrator

12 hours per week

Could you be the person that helps to ensure King's Lynn Foodbank can continue to serve people in food crisis?

King's Lynn Foodbank seeks an Administrator. We are looking for a person who is reliable, organised, enthusiastic and who has excellent communication skills; someone who can work as part of a team and help manage our volunteers.

The Administrator will support the Project Manager with the administration for the charity, including being a first point of contact for telephone or email queries, and supporting the Treasurer with the charity finances.

Wage: £9.58 per hour
Permanent contract, following a satisfactory initial 3-month contract.

To express interest, please send your CV and request for a job description and application form to Helen Gilbert by email: helen@kingslynn.foodbank.org.uk or phone: 07582 558143

Closing date for applications: 5pm on Friday 6th May 2022
Interviews will take place on May 13th 2022

King's Lynn Foodbank is a charity founded on Christian principles. Not every member of the team is a Christian, but we all subscribe to the same values and hope new team members will too.

TRAINING

CAN Community Action Norfolk

Only 3 months left to access fully funded courses

Only 3 months left to access fully funded courses for staff and volunteers - Mental Health Awareness, Functional Skills, IAG, Behavior That Challenges, Self Harm & Suicide Prevention

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR THE FUNDING?

- In order to be eligible for the funding each learner must:
- Live in a 'non-devolved' postcode area
- Be aged 19 or above
- Not be on any other Government funded programme, i.e. an Apprenticeship.
- Have lived legally in the UK for the last 3 years
- Be eligible to work in the UK, or be entitled to claim public funds.

To book your spaces on the courses please email/call Andrea Swales directly.

Andrea Swales
AEB Business Development Manager
T: 01753 596004 I **M:** 07706 324 181
W: impactfutures.co.uk I thechildcarecompany.com
Head office: Floor 1, The Switch, 1-7 The Grove, Hatfield Road, Slough, SL1 1QP
Safeguarding: Call us I Email us I Call Childline

Supporting Deaf People and those with Acquired Hearing Difficulties

This free 1-hour online (via Zoom) taster session on Tuesday 26th April from 11:30 to 12:30, has been facilitated by CAN for West Norfolk Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise organisations and will be delivered by Anna Pugh (Manager) and colleagues from West Norfolk Deaf Association.

West Norfolk Deaf Association is a local charity providing support to Deaf people and those with acquired hearing difficulties in West Norfolk to live independent lives. Their work includes Hearing Support, Deaf Advocacy, Training Courses, Social Groups, Ear Wax Clinics and much more...

The awareness training is designed to help improve communication with, and for, those living with hearing loss and covers:

- Raising awareness of the deaf community and those with hearing loss
- Ensuring all services are as accessible as possible
- Improving your organisations service offerings, understanding, and increasing awareness

To book a place please contact Jackie Cushing at jackie.cushing@communityactionnorfolk.org.uk

RESOURCES

New Grant Searching Solution

Grantway is a new and exciting innovative grant searching solution that has been developed by Induct to help volunteer organisations and charities find and obtain essential funding without having to pay a penny.

More

LET'S TALK...

I would love to hear from you to discuss any of the following things:

- How you are getting involved in your local community, and any good news stories about the difference this is making
- Events you are running, which welcome the local community
- If you would like me to visit your church, church meeting or group
- Anything you would find useful in future editions of this letter
- Just to say hello!

Andrew Frere-Smith
t: 07949 964932
e: andrew.frere-smith@dioceseofnorwich.org

Imagine Norfolk Together is a partnership between the Diocese of Norwich and the Church Urban Fund. We support local churches creating stronger communities through social action.

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