Hello, it is great to be back! We have been quiet for a while and some of you have been wondering if there will be more newsletters. The plan is now to print a newsletter for each season of a year, and this is our Spring issue. You can read about how a chance phone call inspired us to restart Phone Friends project on page 2.

We have two growing and gardening projects featured in the newsletter. 'Growing Companions' (p.6) is all about helping you to grow and get involved in nature activities from the comfort of your own home. Diana Garden is looking for volunteers as it’s being restored into a beautiful and green welcoming space (p.3)

You can read about ACE Compassionate Communities Project and all the activities they have been running on page 4-5.

We shared a mindfulness exercise which involves paying attention to the present moment using five different senses (p.7-8).

Finally, in the 'Reader's creative corner' we share two poems from our regular contributors Elaine and Mary (p.9-10).

We hope that everyone who reads this newsletter will find it enjoyable and fun. Do let us know if you liked it, or if you have any suggestions by contacting ACE 02920 003132; healthy@aceplace.org. You can also unsubscribe on this number/email if you no longer want to receive this newsletter.
Phone Friends

The Phone Friends Service grew out of the pandemic and the need to keep in touch with people who were isolated. It provided a friendly weekly chat, the sort of chat you would have normally had on a bus stop or while you were queuing for the supermarket or at your doctor's surgery. Lockdown made the world a far quieter place and I think we all missed the human contacts and conversations we had sometimes with people we knew and sometimes with strangers.

ACE was fortunate to receive some short-term funding to employ 2 part time staff to make the service possible and to make sure that people were matched up with volunteers who had similar interests and also to provide training for volunteers on the principles of active listening.

Money doesn't last long and we were soon in the dilemma of having to curtail the service. With lockdown receding we were hopeful that things would get back to normal as everyday community life returned.

We accepted this as nothing lasts forever. Until I called a wrong number one day, twice by accident. I misdialed. The lady I called was very patient and I apologised profusely. She was in her 80’s and when I said how sorry I was to disturb her she said "Don`t worry love, you`re the first person I`ve spoken to in a fortnight".

This spurned us on to look for more funding to make sure that this important service could continue and we are now glad to report that we have obtained a small pot of funding to continue calling for a while longer. If you would like to know more about this work please call ACE on 02920003132 and ask for Rachel or Mags from Phone Friends.

It`s good to talk.
DIANA GARDENS

There has been a lot of work going in the last months in Diana garden. The last remaining piles of rubbish have been cleared with the help and support of Cardiff Council. We bought two picnic benches and now everyone can enjoy birdsong while sitting and relaxing in the midst of the garden.

The Dusty Shed - a group of men working to tackle social isolation and loneliness - will be installing raised beds in the garden this spring. This will enable us to grow some edible and pollinator-friendly plants.

We are looking for more volunteers to join the garden. Everyone’s help and ideas are very welcome and appreciated. We run gardening sessions every Tuesday 10-12. Each session is different - we do a bit of clearing and a bit of planting. We also plan activities to create habitats for the wildlife which there’s plenty of in the garden. Occasionally we do some sowing and planting workshops as well as plant give-aways.

If you would like to join in, please contact ACE on 02920 003132 or look up and join the Diana Garden Regeneration Project Facebook page.
ACE COMPASSIONATE COMMUNITIES

The ACE Compassionate Communities Project is a project working with people with life-limiting illnesses, their families and the people who care for them, and people who have been bereaved. The project is funded by Macmillan until the end of March 2023.

The project offers a number of activities for people to get involved in, either as someone needing support or as someone wanting to volunteer to offer compassionate support to others in their local community. The project covers the Ely, Caerau, Canton and Riverside area and it partners with our local GP Surgeries and Macmillan.

Activities and Support

**Grief Space**: A peer support group and a safe space to share experiences of grief / bereavement and share stories and memories of loved ones.

**Well-being bags**: Gift bags containing 'pampering' gifts and food / drink items, delivered to people at home.

**Practical Support**: Support with practical needs such as prescription collections and shopping, for people within the project criteria who are unable to leave the house.

Volunteering roles

We are always looking for volunteers on the project. These roles are:

**Compassionate Driving Volunteer**: This role is to deliver the wellbeing bags and prescriptions to homes.

**Compassionate Projects Volunteer**: This role is to support the running of the projects and can be tailored to what the volunteer would like to offer support to, whether that is making kindness cards, or sharing ideas, or experiences, or making the drinks in the groups.

**Wellbeing Bags Volunteer**: To pack the bags ready to be delivered out into the community.
We always have new and interesting opportunities within the Compassionate Communities Project, so if you would like to find out more or share your ideas, please do get in contact with us at the Dusty Forge on: 029 20003132.
The Growing Companions project

Do you spend a lot of time at home?

Are you interested in nature, growing or gardening or would like to give it a go?

Do you sometimes feel lonely or isolated?

Do you struggle with your mental health or physical health, or both?

If the answer is yes, we may be able to help! The Growing Companions project run by registered charity Grow Cardiff aims to support people living in Ely, Caerau, Canton and Riverside to engage with nature-based activities from the comfort of their own home.

Our Growing Companions Officer can deliver or post a growing from home kit or nature-based activity with instructions to your doorstep on a regular basis. Each time it is a different activity according to the season. Follow up calls are made to keep the connection with a friendly chat. This month we are offering a delivery of potatoes and pots to grow from home, seeds, flowers and bulbs to bring some spring colour.

“The project gave me a link to the outside world and helped me to keep engaged and part of the community... It helped me to not feel so isolated. The project has been invaluable to me and helped through a difficult time”

If you feel Growing Companions is for you and you would like to know more, give us a call.
My contact details - Alka: 07523 876143; alka@growcardiff.org
MINDFULNESS- FIVE SENSES

When someone is being mindful, they are noticing what is happening in the present moment by paying attention to and becoming fully aware of their thoughts, feelings, physical sensations and environment.

Most often the mind is on ‘auto pilot’ and caught up with thoughts about the past and the future rather than focused on the present moment.

Being Mindful will help you focus on one thing at a time in the present moment, and by doing this you can better control and soothe your overwhelming emotions.

Have a go at the following Mindfulness exercise on the next page.
Exercise - Five Senses

This exercise is a relatively easy one to bring you to a mindful state quickly. If you only have a minute or two the five senses exercise can help you bring awareness to the current moment.

*Notice five things that you can see - Look around you and bring your attention to five things that you can see. Pick something that you don’t normally notice, like a shadow or a small crack in the concrete.

*Notice four things that you can feel - Bring awareness to four things that you are currently feeling, like the texture of your clothes, the feeling of the breeze on your skin, or the smooth surface of a table you are resting your hands on.

*Notice three things you can hear - Take a moment to listen, and note three things that you hear in the background. This can be the chirp of a bird, the hum of the refrigerator, or the faint sounds of traffic from a nearby road.

*Notice two things you can smell - Bring your awareness to smells that you usually filter out, whether they’re pleasant or unpleasant. Perhaps the breeze is carrying a whiff of pine trees if you’re outside, or the smell of a fast-food restaurant across the street.

*Notice one thing you can taste - Focus on one thing that you can taste right now, in this moment. You can take a sip of a drink, eat something, or just notice the current taste in your mouth or open your mouth to search the air for a taste.
Readers' creative corner

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By Elaine

Too long in shadows forced to wait
It's me decides, directs my fate
I'll agitate and demonstrate
And instigate and operate
No more excuse to hesitate
The time is now - it's not too late
To integrate, co-operate
A life to live and stimulate
And dreams to free, explore, create
I won't be chained, capitulate
I'm standing strong so don't dictate
I've goals to reach - I count, it's great
So listen please and concentrate
For face to face I'll tell you straight
Unlock the door, unbolt the gate
Don't be unsure, resent, or hate
Allow my space, don't complicate
The message is to liberate
To free me is to liberate
An open mind will liberate.
Southend pier train

By Mary

Upon the train we travelled out,
Sir John Betjeman,
A beacon beyond the red horse roundabout,
Away across the raging sea,
North wind chasing you and me.
Waves that talked of mermaids,
Green, blue, white billows.
Miles from reach the gold, briny beach.
In the moment time stood still
Like a welcome ghost,
Laughed at penny machines, painted faces, sticks of rock,
Picture post,
Fortune tellers, a kiss for your sweetheart,
Pantomimes, dance, and jives.
All those clackety clack lives
That went before
The Pier Train stopped at the station.

NB. These poems were kindly provided by two of our regular readers, if you would like to share a poem, story, piece of art/craft or anything else for our newsletter, please get in touch on 02920 003132. We may not be able to print everything we receive but would love to hear from you.
CARROT AND CORIANDER SOUP

Some of you might have already heard of or even had a meal at Café Barr. It is a community café based at ACE and it is run by volunteers. It is named in memory of Caroline Barr a friend and a colleague, who sadly passed away last year. The café is open Tuesdays and Thursday 10am-3pm.

*Café Barr* staff shared this lovely and easy to make carrot and coriander soup.

Serves 4

450g carrots  
1 large onion  
1 large potato  
Fresh coriander  
Veg stock

Peel carrots and slice in circles. Peel potato and cut into cubes. Peel and chop onion.

Add veg oil to your pan and fry the onions and potatoes for about 5 minutes. Add carrots and veg stock and simmer until carrots are soft and tender.

Add chopped coriander and stir. Put into the blender and mix until smooth. Move back to the pan and reheat. Add salt and pepper to taste. Enjoy!
Rivers in Wales

RYEDOWEEMCONWY
YHYTHNEATHHLYM
CATOMMONNOWOYWOM
AOTMWOREDEEEDO
MYAACOYFCSTEEY
TEFAUOLYYWEWYV
KNFYHSENSWLYMWL
HMLLSKYYYYEEVFT
NYKENENTUYKWNY
EHNNEYVMMNSNNMY
ERRHREMYENYHFW
WLKYARMHNECNEV
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CONWY
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WYE
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3 2 4 1
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6 8 7 9 1 8
8 3 1 4

7 3

7 3

We have all the free sudokus you need! 400 new sudokus every week.

Make your own free printable sudoku at www.PrintMySudoku.com
Come to an introductory session of Tai Chi Movements for Wellbeing. Enjoy some time out, to learn a few simple gentle movements to relax and unwind with. No experience necessary and can be done both standing and seated.

**Wednesday 28th March**
1.30 - 2.30pm
Dusty Forge

Call ACE 02920 003132 to book.
Useful phone numbers and other ACE services

ACE Community Support team - 02920 003132
Provide help with foodbank assessments, benefits issues, energy advice and help with grants for household items.

ACE Tier 0 service - 02920 003132
Provide 1:1 guided self-help support on a range of topics including anxiety and depression, accessible via referral from a GP or you can self-refer (there may be a waiting list to receive this service).

Age Connects Cardiff and the Vale - 029 2068 3600
Provide befriending and a range of practical support for people aged 60+ living in Cardiff and the Vale.

Cardiff Council Advice Hub - 02920 871071
Provide advice over the phone, information about library services and Foodbank vouchers.

CALL (Community Advice and Listening Line) - 0800 132 737 or text help to 81066.
Confidential listening and support service, offering emotional support and information/literature on mental health and related matters to the people of Wales.

Cruse Bereavement Care - 0808 808 1677
Helpline staffed by trained bereavement volunteers, who offer emotional support to anyone affected by bereavement.

Macmillan Support Line - 0808 808 00 00
Offers confidential support to people living with cancer and their loved ones.