

# lifeneWS

[www.lifecharity.org.uk](http://www.lifecharity.org.uk)

**Life**  
LOVING LIFE. OFFERING HOPE

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Autumn 2012 Issue 64 FREE



## LIFE's Flying High!

Full story p2

LIFE National  
Conference 2012 -  
full report and  
pictures inside

# The pro-life movement is moving

There has never been a more exciting time to be pro-life

## Abortion is front page news, and it's mostly good.

Two impressive large-scale studies from Finland and Scotland found clear associations between abortion and subsequent premature birth, confirming what many have long suspected.

Then the Prime Minister claimed to support a reduction in the 24-week abortion limit. Maria Miller, the Women's Minister, called for a reduction in the time limit to 20 weeks, as did Theresa May, the Home Secretary. Jeremy Hunt got into hot water by supporting a reduction to 12 weeks. For the first time in many years, there seems to be a political will to address the abortion issue.

Recent opinion polls show that 65% of the general public – and 75% of women – support a reduction in the 24-week limit. Prof Stuart Campbell, the pioneer of 4-D ultrasound images, supports a reduction to 12 weeks, saying: "I don't think we can let these very exceptional cases drive the whole question of the reduction of the abortion limit for the majority of women who come for termination of pregnancy."

The Care Quality Commission's report published in July into the workings of abortion clinics left much to be desired but identified clear evidence of doctors' pre-signing forms in 14 separate clinics and what they described as 'irregularities' in the filling out of forms in many others.

The British Medical Association has come out in support of improved access to independent counselling. The Department of Health is reviewing the issue and a consultation is promised. As Josephine Quintavalle noted at the LIFE National Conference, a consultation on 'three-parent embryos' is also under way. LIFE will be responding to this and encouraging individual supporters to do so too.

Shortly before the controversy over abortion clinic malpractice, it emerged,

following a *Telegraph* investigation, that some abortion clinics were offering sex-selective abortions. Investigations into these allegations are on-going, and some doctors have already faced disciplinary action.

The assisted suicide debate has been in the news over the summer, with Tony Nicklinson and "Martin" losing their High Court challenges to murder laws. While we can all sympathise with the Nicklinson family, this is good news for sick, elderly and vulnerable people. The BMA has also voted to remain opposed to euthanasia and in so doing underlined its commitment to campaigning for and providing high quality care for patients at the end of life.

A considerable majority of MPs refused to back calls to legalise assisted suicide. They stated that any change in the law would not be in the public interest and would remove necessary protection for vulnerable people who could feel under pressure to opt for suicide.

The tide is turning in public opinion and, it appears, the beginnings of a political will to effect some positive changes are emerging. LIFE will do everything it can to keep this momentum going.



## Website news

Watch out for the launch of our refreshed website [www.lifecharity.org.uk](http://www.lifecharity.org.uk) together with a new hub for our services designed around 'how we can help' which will be found at [www.pregnancyhelp.org.uk](http://www.pregnancyhelp.org.uk) and a user friendly site for our supporters and local groups [www.supportlife.org.uk](http://www.supportlife.org.uk) Features include: pregnancy date calculator, subscription to our weekly eNews bulletin, interactive map, and much more.

Check out the new LIFE FertilityCare site at [www.lifefertilitycare.co.uk](http://www.lifefertilitycare.co.uk) which can now be accessed much more easily from a mobile or iPad and features a new forum.



## Cover story - LIFE's Flying High!

**Congratulations to Aislinn Madden who skydived 13,000 feet on 11 August and raised over £500 for LIFE's Care Centre in Belfast. Aislinn has been an on-going supporter of LIFE and taken part in many fundraisers, but this one was certainly the most daring! She said: "During the skydive I couldn't stop smiling. Whether it was from sheer joy or just the pressure of falling at 120mph I'm not sure, but probably a bit of both."**

Thanks to the many kind donations from friends and family, Aislinn was able to exceed her fundraising target – by using Facebook to post about the event two to three times a week and by putting up posters at work, everyone knew about the skydive. A close friend, Andy, wished her



luck on her JustGiving page saying: "Get your knees in the breeze, have fun and keep smiling!", which we can see she did!

LIFE is extremely grateful to Aislinn and all those who supported her in the run up to, and on, the big day. She hopes others will be inspired to take part in something like this and raise money for such a great cause.

## lifeneWS

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# LIFE wins Big Lottery Fund grant



**LOTTERY FUNDED**

**LIFE has been awarded £292k from Big Lottery funds to finance its Care and Housing work throughout the UK. The funds will be used to develop and sustain three Care Centres in Greater London and the Midlands and five LIFE houses in Bath, Bracknell, Didcot, Oxford and Walsall over the next three years.**

The Big Lottery Fund is the largest distributor of National Lottery good cause funding across the UK. The Fund aims to enable others to make real improvements to communities and the lives of people most in need.

National Chairman, Prof Jack Scarisbrick, says: "We are thrilled to have been granted this award. It means that we can take our unique services forward and deliver care and support to vulnerable women and children in areas where it is truly needed."

LIFE's Care Centres deliver non-directive counselling and support to anyone facing a crisis pregnancy, suffering the loss of a baby or coping after abortion. They also provide free baby clothes and equipment and other practical support to women and families in difficulty.

Head of Care Kyla Taylor, says: "We thought very carefully about where the money would be used most effectively. The areas chosen reflect the needs in those communities, often in areas where there is considerable deprivation. Our Care Centres offer a safe space for women, free from outside pressures, to explore their feelings about a range of pregnancy-related issues."

LIFE Housing provides accommodation for pregnant women and unsupported mothers with young children. The service fully supports tenants – with the life skills programme and individual

support plans – to prepare them for independent living with their children.

Margaret Coward, Head of Housing, adds: "In the last few years we have seen several LIFE houses lose local authority funding. Rather than close all of them down, we decided to run as many of them as we could independently. It has been a constant struggle to raise the funds necessary to do this, despite the fantastic work of local groups and fundraisers. So this award is especially welcome and gives five of these houses security for the next three years.

"Our work with tenants is vital in these areas, providing safe accommodation and support with parenting, budgeting, career planning, further education and much more. We help tenants to turn their lives around so they can look forward to the future with their children."

## New LIFE leaflets

We have launched five brand new leaflets to promote LIFE's services. To order yours please call 01926 421587 or email [admin@lifecharity.org.uk](mailto:admin@lifecharity.org.uk)

**you're more than special you're unique!**

**LIFE Education**  
Informing and equipping the next generation

**LIFE Care**  
CRISIS PREGNANCY COUNSELLING SERVICE  
PREGNANCY LOSS COUNSELLING & SUPPORT  
PRACTICAL HELP  
National Helpline 0808 802 5433  
Text to Talk; text LIFE CARE (followed by your message) to 88020

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS

**STIS**  
what you need to know

providing positive alternatives

**Life**  
LOVING LIFE. OFFERING HOPE

### New LIFE merchandise

To order from our range of new goods all bearing the LIFE logo please call 01926 421587 or email [admin@lifecharity.org.uk](mailto:admin@lifecharity.org.uk). Items include mugs, memory sticks, keyrings, trolley tokens, bags and balloons. And don't forget to get your Christmas cards from us too!

# fundraising

## LIFE Shops

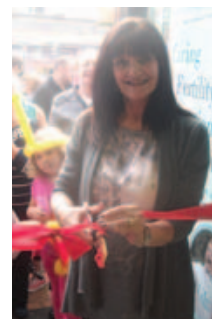
The LIFE shops' success story continues, with four new shops opening this year (a fifth one opening shortly in Stoke-on-Trent), seven new shop managers appointed and profits up again by 54%.

**The Rugby LIFE shop**, below, was officially opened by the Mayor of Rugby, Councillor Katherine Lawrence, on 16 October.

*Eireann Janssens (front centre), Retail Development and Operations Manager for LIFE and National Chairman Jack Scarisbrick (centre back) also attended. Shop Manager Mary Williams (in red) said: "Trading in the first week has been very successful. Thanks to Fr. Tony Furlong, Chairman of the Rugby group, for his leadership of the project."*



**The Blackpool LIFE shop** was opened on 20 October, with Anne Nolan of Nolan Sisters fame cutting the ribbon. *"Shop Manager Lisa got clowns to entertain the children," said Blackpool LIFE's Tony Hetherington, "and there were free drinks and cakes for all the customers. The launch was a great success."*



**The St Helen's shop** volunteers had a fun 1940s weekend away using shop donations.

*"Many of the volunteers have been working for the shop for more than five years so it was a thank you to them for all their hard work," says LIFE's Eireann Janssens.*



*Marie Clapham with Jordan who owns the hair salon next door and kindly gives a percentage of his income to the LIFE shop at St Helen's.*



# Spread the word!

We are continually grateful for all the support we receive from each of you over the years, either by organising an event, regularly donating to us, participating in a local LIFE group or volunteering at your local LIFE house or Care Centre.

It is now time for you to get the rest of your family involved! Your daughters, sons, grandchildren, nieces and nephews can all support LIFE in different ways - we are eager to get more and more people involved.

There are now more ways than ever to show your support of LIFE. If you want to have a key role in your community we can put you in contact with your local LIFE group; if you want to have a new stimulating experience, why not

organise a sponsored event - a skydive or parachute jump? Or if you'd prefer to help our organisation without getting actively involved, why not become a silent supporter? By donating just £3 a month or increasing your donation you can help us to continue our work and know that you're part of the reason we can do that! Just complete the attached slip at the back of this magazine and return it to us in the enclosed freepost envelope or visit us online at [www.lifecharity.org.uk](http://www.lifecharity.org.uk)

LIFE needs more supporters, particularly young professionals related to you - to join forces and help our cause! Spread the word about LIFE to your families, friends and neighbours. We need more supporters like you!

**Win  
£25,000  
by helping LIFE!**

Don't forget to sign up with charity lottery Unity for the chance to win £25,000 every week, just by making a £1 donation to LIFE. For further information visit

[www.unitylottery.co.uk/life](http://www.unitylottery.co.uk/life) and sign up on-line - good luck!



**Kiera Downes fundraised for LIFE by taking part in the BUPA Great Birmingham Half Marathon – and finished in a fantastic 1 hour 59 minutes!**

After returning from a year-long backpacking trip to Australia and New Zealand, Kiera gave herself the challenge of completing a Half Marathon. She trained for a gruelling six months prior to the race with help from her boyfriend Luke; together they increased the distance little by little until Kiera could comfortably run the 13 miles. Congratulations on such a great achievement!

## Welcome

**Sarah Appleyard recently joined the Fundraising team at Head Office as Assistant Fundraiser.**



"I studied Modern Languages (French, German & Spanish) at Durham University and graduated in June 2012. This is my first fundraising post and it's a real challenge, but I'm learning so much. I love what LIFE stands for so fundraising to sustain and develop our vital services is a role that I'm really enjoying."

## Help LIFE live on in your memory

For the last 40 years, gifts left by individuals in their wills have made it possible for LIFE to continue its valuable work saving children's lives and transforming their futures. Every donation we receive makes a real difference, supporting children, and those children's children, whom LIFE helped to bring into the world.

If you would like to consider remembering LIFE in your will and want to discuss options in more detail, please contact us on 01926 421587 or email [sam@lifecharity.org.uk](mailto:sam@lifecharity.org.uk). Alternatively, just fill in the form and we'll send you further details.

Thank you.

Dear LIFE,

- Yes, I have left a gift to LIFE in my will\*
- I would like to leave a gift to LIFE in my will\*

\* delete as appropriate.

Signed

Name

Address

Postcode

Date

Please return this coupon to LIFE, 1 Mill Street, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV31 1ES.



# education

## Torchbearers for the pro-life cause



**Alliance of Pro-Life Students**  
building · supporting · connecting

**The Alliance of Pro-Life Students (APS) is delighted to announce the launch of our exciting new organisation dedicated to building, supporting and connecting student pro-life societies in Great Britain. APS is run by students for students to encourage a culture of life and bring the pro-life voice back into British universities.**

The idea for APS arose from a conversation between Ed Smith, the then president of Edinburgh Life society and Eve Farren and Anne Howard, co-founders of Bristol Students for Life. Since then, things have moved with miraculous speed. Ed had already received support from Michaela Aston and the LIFE Education team. Representatives from Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh and York's student pro-life societies met in February 2012 and the Alliance of Pro-Life Students was born. Eve, now Executive Director of APS and Ed Smith, now Chairman, were honoured to speak at the LIFE National Conference. APS looks forward to liaising further with LIFE as we enter our first year of pro-life student outreach.

There has been a sudden upsurge in pro-life student activity recently. In the last two years new groups have been formed in Bristol, York, Oxford, Dundee and Exeter, joining the marginally older groups in Cardiff and Edinburgh. However, there has also been a worrying rise in the suppression of the pro-life voice: a raft of Student Unions have introduced motions making themselves "pro-choice" and preventing pro-life societies from operating. APS will support students facing these oppressive motions by sharing experiences and linking them with legal help.



**Left to right: Eve Farren (Executive Director - APS), Maryja Morrison, Laura Lynch, Anne Howard, Isabel Fawcett, Maria Mulroney (Youth Defence - Ireland), Alithea Williams (Treasurer - APS), Prof. Jack Scarisbrick, Peter Leyland-Bartley, Ed Smith (Chairman, APS), Rhoslyn Thomas, Abdullah Al-mulla.**

APS also wants to connect societies. As students and recent graduates, we know it can be isolating being pro-life at a modern university. Of course, there have been pro-life groups at British universities for years, but they often do not survive beyond the degree period of their founders. We hope that with an umbrella organisation providing support and resources, graduates will have the courage to continue pro-life work.

Universities are where the pro-life leaders of tomorrow are being formed. We would like a group of respectful, passionate pro-life advocates in every UK university. To this end, we aim to have 15 active societies by the end of 2013, volunteering in the community with their local LIFE group, house, care centre or charity shop.

We have the support of the wider pro-life community and are thankful that our vision is shared by organisations

and key pro-life figures: "I am delighted to support this initiative and to know that the next generation of torchbearers for the pro-life cause has arrived." (Ann Widdecombe).

We need your support. Please come to our Launch Fundraising events in Edinburgh on 14 November and London on 16 Jan 2013 – tickets are just £10. Spread the word about APS and our launch events to your family and friends. Start-up donations would be gratefully received. To book tickets, make a donation or find out more about our work visit: **www.allianceofprolifestudents.org.uk** Phone: 07568 355677 Mail: Box 300, 56 Gloucester Rd, London SW7 4UB.

*Alithea Williams*  
APS Treasurer

LIFE's 2012 National Conference, held in Coventry over the weekend of 12-14 October, was a big event, in every sense of the word. Attended by 150 delegates, the theme of the weekend was Think Big, Think LIFE.

"The Conference was an opportunity to highlight how the pro-life movement is gathering momentum," said National Chairman Jack Scarisbrick. "We are, I believe, on the cusp of some major developments and it's important to capitalise on this positive trend.

"This year, a new format was piloted, with more interactive workshops exploring and sharing ideas on how to further improve LIFE's services. And we were delighted to welcome Lord David Alton as our keynote speaker to open the Conference." (See p10 for a summary of his address).

Over the weekend, speakers included Josephine Quintavalle of CORE (Comment on Reproductive Ethics) who explained a new IVF-based technique which could result in three-parent embryos. She urged delegates to oppose the new technique via an imminent public consultation.

Nikki Kenward from Alert related her personal story of becoming paralysed and outlined a campaign defending the right to life of the vulnerable. The nationwide billboard campaign will feature a poster: "What's the cost of euthanasia? You are."

Italian Pino Morandini urged delegates to sign a petition for the European Citizens' Initiative

which aims to bring an end to the destruction of the human embryo in all EU countries. The petition requires just 1 million signatories by May 2013 to invite the European Commission to propose legislation. Thousands have signed across Europe. (For further info and to sign visit [www.oneofus.eu](http://www.oneofus.eu))

Several mini-presentations took place on LIFE's work in Ireland, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Zambia and Uganda. And the newly formed Alliance of Pro-life Students received loud applause after an inspiring presentation about their plans for the future (see p6).

Everyone let their hair down for a fun Saturday evening dinner and dance, with entertainment from comedian Don Maclean and a live band featuring Stuart Cowie, LIFE's Head of Education.

"This was a seminal conference," said Jack Scarisbrick. "Supporters, volunteers and staff left with renewed hope for the future and enthused about their roles at an important time in the pro-life story."

***Tireless pro-lifer and LIFE patron Lord Alton got Conference off to a great start with a rousing review of pro-life issues at the start and end of life.***

LIFE National Conference 2012

# Thinking Big



LIFE National Conference 2012

# Thinking Big



▲ *Research & Education Officer Niall Gooch leading the LIFE Education workshop.*

◀ *Eve Farren, Executive Director, Alliance of Pro-Life Students*

▼ *Head of Care, Kyla Taylor, hosts the Care workshop*



▲ *Representatives of the Isle of Man LIFE group with Jack Scarisbrick (right)*



◀ *Christine & Tom Davis of the Wimbledon LIFE group receive an award for their tireless and long-standing work for LIFE*

▶ *Head of Fundraising David Bennett speaking at the Fundraising workshop*







◀ *Pino Morandini delivers his talk (in Italian) on the European Citizens' Initiative, translated by CORE's Josephine Quintavalle*

➤ *Mary McCarthy, Chief Executive of LIFE in Ireland, updates delegates on their work there*



▲ *Ira Winter, National Coordinator of the LIFE FertilityCare Programme*



◀ *Josephine Quintavalle of Comment on Reproductive Ethics (CORE)*

➤ *Fundraising Assistant Sarah Appleyard and Head of Care Kyla Taylor (right)*



▲ *Jack Scarisbrick had no luck at the tombola, seen here with Fundraising Assistant Sarah Appleyard*





LIFE National Conference 2012  
**Thinking Big**



**^** *The Saturday evening dinner and dance in full swing*

### Lord Alton's Conference Speech

## "Do we uphold the value of every single life or do we not?"

- We abort 600 children every day. In 2010, abortion cost the taxpayer £118 million. 1.7 million children live in severe poverty in the UK and 4,000 children ring Childline every day.
- What is more out-of-step with our professed values than gender and eugenic abortion?
- 90% of babies with Down's Syndrome are aborted – what a contrast to the respect shown to the disabled at the Paralympics.
- 1 million older people don't see anyone in an average week. Instead of respecting them some talk about how to make it easier to kill them.
- Euthanasia proposals use words like 'compassion' and 'dignity' but legions of disabled, sick and old people will be killed if a new Bill to legalise assisted dying goes through.
- The hospice movement could disappear and 'right-to-die' will become 'duty-to-die'.
- The media, and the BBC in particular, has orchestrated a propaganda campaign to change the law and has relentlessly promoted assisted suicide.
- 1 in 50 people in Holland are euthanized, a quarter of those without their consent. Mobile units have been deployed to make house calls on sick people whose own doctors have refused to end their lives. They are targeting 'unmet need', that is, people with depression, disabilities, Alzheimer's, even loneliness.
- If proposed laws are adopted in the UK, the vulnerable are most at risk as 'a drain on the resources of the NHS'. Ministers will opt for the cheapest options; only the rich will get palliative care. How long before the mobile 'death units' are near you?
- Two doctors making the 'ending-life' decision is too casual an arrangement for the gravity of what is at stake.
- The issues are the same at the start and end of life – do we uphold the value of every single life or do we not? That is LIFE's mission. We must remain loyal and committed to the cause.



**<** *Comedian and LIFE patron Don Maclean entertains the audience*

**>** *Conference organiser Jo Morris takes a well-earned break*



# My view

## The Liverpool Care Pathway: a tool to help the dying

by Niall Gooch, Research & Education Officer



**Some LIFE supporters will have read the leaflet distributed at the LIFE National Conference *Keep Safe In Hospital: Dangers of the LCP*, discussing the Liverpool Care Pathway.**

While there are some legitimate concerns over the LCP, this leaflet did not explain it adequately and confusion about it could result in families objecting to relatives being placed on the LCP even when it is in their best interests.

The *Consensus Statement on the LCP*, a document by medical professionals and charities who support it, says it is a "framework for good practice" in care of the dying. Its function is to improve care management **for people who are already dying**, that is, people in the last days or hours of life. As the CS says, "it is not in any way about ending life, but rather about supporting the delivery of excellent end-of-life care."

Peter Saunders of the Christian Medical Fellowship says he is reassured by the fact that the average amount of time for which a patient is on the LCP is 29 hours; you cannot starve or dehydrate someone to death in that time, even if they are frail or seriously ill.

The LCP extends best practice from palliative care into other clinical settings - important because most people in the UK who die in hospital do so outside palliative care settings. Many concerns about the LCP focus on the withdrawal of food and fluids, but it is routine, good clinical practice at the end of life to withdraw nutrition from patients if it has become futile or burdensome.

The LCP is a tool. Like all tools, it can be misused in the wrong hands. The horror stories we read about represent cases where medics have **failed** to follow the LCP correctly. Some say we do not need the LCP and it represents

euthanasia "by the back door", but this plays into the hands of the pro-euthanasia lobby who will argue (as pro-abortionists did in the run-up to the Abortion Act) that unregulated euthanasia is widespread so should be legalised.

There is every reason to think that the LCP protocols have significantly improved end-of-life care.

Please do not hesitate to contact me on 0207 240 1276, or [niallgooch@lifecharity.org.uk](mailto:niallgooch@lifecharity.org.uk) if you need more information.

LCP Consensus Statement:  
[www.rcn.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0011/477677/Liverpool\\_Care\\_Pathway\\_consensus\\_statement.pdf](http://www.rcn.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0011/477677/Liverpool_Care_Pathway_consensus_statement.pdf)

Dr Peter Saunders on the LCP:  
<http://pjsaunders.blogspot.co.uk/2012/06/is-nhs-really-killing-130000-patients.html>

## care

## Miracle babies!

**"These twin boys were quite a surprise to their mum," says Helene Laurent, London LIFE Care Centre Manager.**

"She already had three children and wasn't planning any more but, despite having a contraceptive coil fitted, she had a strange feeling she might be pregnant. A visit to the doctor revealed she was already five-months pregnant and at her scan she discovered it was twins!

"As a single parent she was extremely concerned about how she would get all the necessary equipment in time for the birth. Her friend

recommended LIFE and we were able to offer her both practical and emotional support, providing two cots, baby clothes and a double buggy.

"I went to visit mum and the boys in hospital one day after their birth (when this picture was taken) and delivered a hamper of new toys, bottles and a steriliser which she desperately needed.

"A year later and the boys have grown out of their double buggy so we were able to give them a state-of-the-art pushchair which had just been donated. The family are doing really well and we continue to support them."



# Care

## The difference LIFE made

**Ella was unable to stay at home because of her pregnancy and chose to have her baby adopted.**

LIFE's Care service supported her throughout her pregnancy and through the adoption process. Here is an extract from the letter she wrote to her counsellor...

*I couldn't leave without saying a huge thanks for everything you have done for me and explain just how much I appreciate your constant support. You have been so amazing to me. I really don't know how I would have coped without your support and just knowing that someone cared and I wasn't alone. I hope you can see the difference you made and the difference in me, especially comparing the girl you met on that first day who felt quite beaten by circumstance to the girl leaving today.*

**Lots of love and thanks, Ella\***

*\*not client's real name*



## Bath Care Centre given new lease of LIFE!

**LIFE's Care service in Bath was re-launched on 15 October following a major refurbishment and will once again be able to offer a free counselling service to any woman facing a crisis pregnancy, suffering from a pregnancy loss or coping with the after-effects of abortion.**

Caring Officer Ali Murphy-O'Connor, said: "We are delighted to be able to offer non-directive counselling for women experiencing a variety of pregnancy-related problems. The newly renovated centre provides a friendly, welcoming place where visitors can explore their situation free from outside pressures."

Guest of honour Cardinal Cormac Murphy O'Connor, a renowned supporter of LIFE's work, was invited to the re-launch alongside LIFE National Chairman Professor Jack Scarisbrick. Special thanks go to Bernard Barron and the rest of the Bath LIFE group for their tireless fundraising. The Centre is open for counselling sessions on Tuesdays 12pm-2pm and Fridays 10am-12pm on a drop-in, one-to-one basis.

***To r: Ali Murphy-O'Connor (Chairperson), HE Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, LIFE Trustee Nuala Scarisbrick and Professor Jack Scarisbrick.***

## The third Musketeer!

**I met Jessica\* when she was pregnant and in a desperate situation.**

Originally from Jamaica, Jessica had lived in the UK for nine years and had two children here. However, her Visa had expired when she became pregnant with her third child and she was not sure how she was going to cope as a single parent.

She phoned the LIFE office when she was eight-months-pregnant with nowhere for her and her children to stay that night and no money. She feared her children would be taken into care.

We saw Jessica regularly, offering her counselling, help with finding accommodation and practical solutions for gaining an income. She was granted some financial assistance through the LIFE Gemma fund and we gave her all the baby equipment she needed. Jessica is hoping to gain citizenship in the UK and find permanent accommodation for her family.

**Helene Laurent, London Care Centre Manager**

*\*Not client's real name*



# housing

Third-year university student, Jennifer Biermann, recently completed her work experience placement at the Woking LIFE house. Here she tells us about her time with the tenants there.



## ‘A first-class support service’

**My time volunteering at LIFE has been immensely fun and eye-opening. I never fully understood how much support young mothers and families may need and how these young people can slip through the net and be forgotten by the state.**

Since I started last October, I have seen several girls come and go from the Woking house, each with their own personality and story to tell. Whether they were pregnant or young mothers they all desperately needed LIFE’s help, which was delivered through the love and care of Clair Wright, the house Support Worker. I have seen many different characters come into the house and this has changed the dynamics each time. Even though

some of the girls may have had a hard life, they still persevere and are tough inside and out. This is something I have a lot of respect for!

The Life Skills programme is an integral part of their time at the house as they learn the essentials needed to take care of themselves and their children. The girls have taken part in many classes, such as baby massage, cooking workshops and early reading sessions.

Recently I helped set up some garden furniture so the girls could sit outside and relax with their children. Now whenever I go round we sit outside and enjoy the sun together. I will be helping with the upcoming Open Day by baking cupcakes and creating a display to show some of the children that have passed through the Woking house. This involvement has made me feel included and part of the LIFE team.



I have grown particularly fond of one girl and her 11-week-old baby girl. She talks to me about her past experiences before LIFE took her in and whilst it is sad knowing how vulnerable she once was, it’s such a relief to know she now has the best support for her and her baby. It is lovely to see the girls develop into independent and confident women through the care that LIFE gives. Clair works tirelessly to meet the practical and emotional needs of each girl, meaning they see her as a positive role model and mum-figure. Well done LIFE for your fantastic work, first-class support service and making me feel like part of the team at the Woking house.

Jen x





*LIFE tenants and staff were among the organisations attending the opening of the new development by Dave Wells Properties. They were joined by Glossbrook Builders and the Mayor of Bournemouth Cllr Phil Stanley-Watts.*

# Bournemouth LIFE house tenants - moving onwards and upwards

The Mayor of Bournemouth officially opened a new development in Winton, Bournemouth, on 11 September incorporating ten brand new flats for LIFE Housing tenants.

LIFE Housing runs the accommodation built by private sector landlord DWP Housing Partnership.

LIFE Housing's Regional Manager, Elaine Hall, said: "The tenants are delighted with the new self-contained flats. They were living in unsuitable accommodation with shared bathroom and kitchen facilities. Housing shortages in the area meant we had no luck finding a suitable alternative.

"That is until DWP came forward providing five one-bed flats and five two-bed flats, one of which we use as a communal area for group work with the tenants. The old house accommodated seven tenants and their children but we can now house nine. There is an urgent need for this kind of support so we're thrilled we've been able to increase our capacity.

*'It's awesome - loads better than the old house.'*

Tenant

"These flats will help our tenants grow in confidence; DWP has taken great care to cater to our needs, providing CCTV, buggy stores and carpeting throughout."

Margaret Coward, Head of LIFE Housing, adds: "The flats enable tenants to move one step closer to independence - providing privacy whilst still being fully supported by our staff.

"The communal area means that we are able to deliver our life skills programme which helps tenants develop essential skills such as budgeting, nutrition and childcare as well as providing vital information about careers, further education and benefits."

Managing Director of DWP, Steve Wells, said: "These flats play a valuable role in giving people a fresh start and helping them become independent. We hope our newest residents will be very happy here."

*'We are so lucky to get a flat. It's nice to have my own space.'*

Tenant

*'My son likes his bedroom and is sleeping better now that he's not in with me.'*

Tenant



*l to r: Margaret Coward, Elaine Hall and Steve Wells assess how the build progresses.*

# LIFE Housing Forum 2012

**The second annual Housing Forum took place on 13 September bringing together staff and residents of LIFE houses from across the country.**

The aim of the day was to provide tenants with a greater understanding of LIFE's services outside Housing. It was also a chance to celebrate achievements and highlight potential areas of improvement within the current supported accommodation service.

16 tenants with their children, 25 staff members, two volunteers and one LIFE trustee took part in the day – a big increase on the previous year. Head of Housing, Margaret Coward said: "The Forum was very well-received. It's a fantastic opportunity for tenants to gain a fuller understanding of LIFE's work and for all of us to make sure the service we're delivering continues to meet the needs of these young women and their children."

The Education workshop (above) gave tenants a chance to explore different aspects of their relationships.



The workshop also showed tenants the main focus of LIFE's Education programme and the type of material that our Education Officers deliver in schools and colleges.

Delegates participated in 'Peer Mentoring', 'Care – Listening', 'Personalising Life Skills', 'Tenants Newsletter' and 'Working with Volunteers'. As well as these stimulating sessions, Margaret Coward's presentation highlighted how much progress LIFE Housing has made and how the future is shaping up.

Tenants were encouraged to feed back about their experiences living in LIFE houses and discuss anything they thought should be changed. "This was an extremely productive and enjoyable day for all involved," says Margaret. "and everyone is looking forward to next year's forum."



▲ *This little cutie enjoyed learning about LIFE's Care programme*

## Belfast LIFE tenants move in

**Tenants of the LIFE house in Belfast celebrated their move into self-contained flats with an Open Day on 25 September.**

Vivien Hunter, Director of LIFE Northern Ireland, which has been providing supported accommodation in Belfast for over 30 years, welcomed this new development. "We opened our first LIFE house in East Belfast in 1981. We moved to a better property in South Belfast in 1986 and now, 25 years later, we're back in East Belfast again, with even better LIFE Housing accommodation, meeting all the current standards for supported housing."

Regional Manager, Sue Beades, said: "The tenants are over-the-moon with the new flats which have a large kitchen diner, new white goods and an outside patio area. The previous LIFE house served us well with shared accommodation for over 25 years but these flats mean we can progress our unique service even further.

"The flats give tenants a taste of independent living whilst keeping the safety net of the Support Workers in

place. Other LIFE tenants are just down the corridor if anyone wants a chat or a cup of tea! The life skills programme and individual support plans remain key to the service delivered and the self-contained flats help with the tenant's growing independence and confidence."

Aislinn Donaghy and 18-month-old son Addison spent just under a year in the old LIFE house before excitedly moving to the new flats. She said: "I'm so happy in the flats as we have plenty of space and still have the company of the other girls when we need it. I was really lucky to be referred to LIFE - it has changed my life and my son's future. I'm so grateful for all the help and support I've received and when I move on to my own house I will be very sad to leave."



*Vivien Hunter (far right) along with LIFE staff and representatives from other agencies, at the Open Day.*

## Laptops for Learning

**Walsall LIFE house Support Worker, Nicola Barker, applied for a grant from Walsall Council's 'Change Making Fund'.**

"The tenants also got involved in the application during their Life Skills sessions," explained Nicola. "We were delighted when we found out we'd been awarded the full grant of £646 to buy two laptops, two desks and two chairs. We plan to convert some of our attic space into a computer room."

## Registered provider of social housing

**LIFE has been approved as a Registered Provider of social housing by the Homes and Communities Agency.**

The benefits of this are largely financial in that it should protect LIFE from the risks of potential significant housing benefit cuts through reforms to the regulations around "exempt accommodation". It is also expected to aid our credibility with commissioning and funding bodies because the organisation is subject to external regulation.

### 3. SINGLE GIFT

I would like to support your vital life-saving, life-changing work. I enclose my gift to LIFE for:

£5     £10     £25     £50

£100     Other    £

Please find enclosed cash or cheque/charity voucher/PO\* \*delete as appropriate

If you don't require an acknowledgement letter, please tick box

Alternatively, if you would like to donate by credit/debit card, please provide your details below.

Mastercard     Visa     Solo     Electron

Delta     Maestro     CAF Card

Card Number

Maestro only    Start date    End date

Card security number    Issue Maestro/Delta only

NAME ON CARD

SIGNATURE

DATE

Or visit our website at [www.lifecharity.org.uk](http://www.lifecharity.org.uk)

*giftaid it*

### 4. GIFT AID

*If you are a UK taxpayer, for every £1 you donate, GiftAid allows us to claim 25p from HM Revenue & Customs - increasing the value of your gift by nearly a third at no cost to you.*

Please treat all Gift Aid donations as qualifying gifts of money made today  in the future

I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand the charity will reclaim 28p of tax on every £1 that I gave up to 5 April 2008 and will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give on or after 6 April 2008.

SIGNATURE

DATE

Please notify LIFE Head Office if you:

- Want to cancel this declaration
- Change your name or home address
- No longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains.

If you pay income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue & Customs to adjust your tax code. LIFE abides by the Data Protection Act 1998.

**Please return this completed form and send your donation in the enclosed freepost envelope or post to: LIFE, LIFE House, 1 Mill Street, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV31 1ES**



# Please join or donate now

I'd like my donation to go to:

LIFE's Housing service

LIFE's Education service

LIFE's Care service

LIFE projects of greatest need

## 1. Personal details

TITLE & NAME

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

TELEPHONE

I would like to receive LIFE Update by email

EMAIL

## 2. Direct debit for Regular Givers

£

now & every month / quarter / year\* thereafter, beginning

DATE  \*delete as appropriate

Please specify your preferred collection date. If the collection date selected falls within the next 28 days, the first payment will be collected the following month

1st  15th  MONTH  YEAR

Instruction to your bank or building society to pay by Direct Debit

NAME OF ACCOUNT HOLDER

Bank/building society account number

Sort code:

Name and full address of your bank/building society TO THE MANAGER

POSTCODE

Service user number

REFERENCE

### Instruction to your bank or building society

Please pay LIFE 2009 Direct Debits from the account detailed in this Instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this Instruction may remain with LIFE 2009 and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my bank/building society.

SIGNATURE

DATE



# group news



## ▲ London Ten Bridges Walk

59 LIFE supporters took part in the London Ten Bridges Walk on 23 September and the total raised is nearing £10k. "We started at Tower Bridge, finishing at Albert Bridge 3.5 hours later in the pouring rain," said Rosalie Cuthbert, Chair of Waterlooville LIFE group. Many thanks to Therese Walker of Kingston LIFE who organised the event.

*Above l to r: Joyce Prendergast (Waterlooville LIFE) and Chantal Brown (Chair of Basingstoke LIFE).*

## River Tees Bridges Walk

Meanwhile, on the same day 250 miles away, 100 people took part in the River Tees Bridges Walk raising over £2k. Organiser David Relton designed the course so it suits all abilities. "It's a beautiful walk along the river and we were thrilled with the turnout this year," said Middlesbrough LIFE Chairman Steve Smurthwaite.

## Intrepid fundraisers! ▲

Despite heavy rain and difficult walking conditions, 13 walkers turned out for this year's Doncaster LIFE walk on 21 July. The nine-mile walk raised a magnificent £1,903.

*Top: Vera McDonagh, Doncaster LIFE Caring Officer, leads the walkers through the wilderness!*

## ▼ Open Day at LIFE house

Haywards Heath LIFE house held an Open Day on 19 June for tenants, staff and volunteers, to say a big thank you to Mid-Sussex LIFE group, and in particular, Sheila Wheeler, for all their support over the years.

*Right: Tenants and their children enjoy the day.*

*Below: Sheila Wheeler (centre) with the Mid-Sussex LIFE group.*



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National Helpline: 0808 802 5433

Text LIFECARE followed by  
your message to 88020

Visit [www.lifecharity.org.uk](http://www.lifecharity.org.uk)

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# Life

LOVING LIFE, OFFERING HOPE

LIFE is the trading name of LIFE 2009 which is a limited company registered in England and Wales (number 06786752), a registered charity (number 1128355) and a charity Registered in Scotland (number SCO41329) whose registered office is at LIFE House, 1 Mill Street, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV31 1ES.