



LIFEUPDATE

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MARCH 2011

Loving Life, Offering Hope

New LIFE Care service opens on Uni campus

After two years of negotiations, a new drop-in and emailing support service opened in January for students at Lancaster University.

'There is a real need for this kind of service at universities all over the UK and we're proud that LIFE's opened its first one here in Lancaster,' says Chris Doyle, Caring Officer for Lancaster LIFE.

'We're available on campus each Saturday for three hours to provide students with free pregnancy testing, crisis-pregnancy counselling and counselling after abortion,' continues Chris. 'Our service is completely confidential and non-directive and, along with the university's existing pastoral services, is proving a life-line for young people at the university.'

The road to get a Care service established at the university has been a long one. 'We have received tremendous support from several members of staff who negotiated with the Students' Union. We were then allowed to have our own stall at the Freshers' Fair and staff have welcomed us and helped publicise the service.'

'We've already seen a wide variety of clients and attracted some great young students who are keen to join in and help. I have a wonderful team of hardworking

Pregnant? Need to talk?

Care on campus

Email pregnantoncampus@gmail.com



Free Pregnancy Testing
Crisis Pregnancy Counselling
After-Abortion Counselling



Drop in Centre
Saturdays 11.00am - 2.00pm
Grizedale College (Next to the Porter's Lodge)

skilled listeners and fundraisers with numbers growing all the time, and our Diploma Counsellor is busy training-up more volunteers in counselling skills.

'University is usually the first time young people leave home and they may feel they have nowhere to turn if the unexpected happens. Facing a crisis pregnancy or dealing with the

after-effects of abortion can be an isolating experience and it would be great if, in time, we could reach every university in the UK, so no young person has to go through anything like that alone.'

For further information about LIFE's Care service call 01926 421587.

Gloucester community rallies round following Care Centre collapse

Vital supplies of baby equipment and clothes were lost when part of the building housing Gloucester Care Centre collapsed without warning on 30 December and had to be bulldozed over the New Year.

Chair of the group, Nikki O'Neill, says: 'We were in serious need of help to replace everything. But following media coverage of our plight on local TV and radio we have been inundated with donations of equipment and clothes to replace the ones we lost. With all this support we're already up-and-running again!'



The bulldozers move in over the New Year.

I to r: Gloucester volunteers Nikki O'Neill, Maggie White, Katherine Goatley and Sarah Sharpley.



In loving memory

Mary Lamb, Secretary for Eltham LIFE for many years

Dr D Langridge, former Chair of Oxford LIFE

Miss Peggy Starkie, tireless, indomitable LIFE worker in London for many years

Grateful thanks for the following legacies left to LIFE from:

Miss G M Adcock

Father Timothy Patrick Joseph Feely

Mrs Rosaleen Mary Talbott

LIFE challenges new RCOG Abortion Guideline

LIFE has responded strongly to a new 'Guideline' on abortion issued by the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) which states that the ABC (abortion/breast cancer) link does not exist, that there is really no such thing as post-abortion trauma (PAT) and that induced abortion is not a serious risk factor for subsequent premature delivery.

In dismissing the ABC link, LIFE points out that the RCOG relies heavily on an Oxford study published in 2004 which itself rested largely on three previous studies (from Denmark, Sweden and the UK) which have been shown to be grievously flawed, and ignores the fact that in the last 18 months alone there have been no less than five studies from around the world, including Sri Lanka, Turkey and the USA, affirming the ABC link.

Astonishingly, PAT is dismissed without any mention of the highly-esteemed work of pro-choicer Professor David Fergusson and despite the fact that the sister-College of Psychiatrists stated in 2008 that there was considerable evidence for the damage which abortion can do to women's mental health. And so on.

The considerable evidence that induced abortion significantly increases the risk of subsequent premature births is likewise ignored.

Another LIFE FertilityCare baby, born to delighted parents last July, the Programme's 102nd baby. Her proud mum says: 'We sent you this photo to show you how fast Elisabeth is growing and showing her character - she's full of smiles as you can see!'



New research shows LIFE Fertility Programme delivers on every level

94% of clients agreed that LIFE's FertilityCare Programme (LFC) offers excellent levels of customer service in a recent audit of the service. With a success rate equal to that of IVF but offering an altogether different experience, it places the couple relationship at the heart of treatment.

'We had previously had IVF treatment,' says one client, 'and although the staff were nice, we were treated like a number. LFC treated us as individuals – it was personal and caring. I'm so glad I found the programme and my problem has finally been treated.'

Ira Winter, the programme's National Coordinator, adds: 'We have a positive approach to fertility. We work with couples to help them understand their fertility and to restore it, rather than bypass or suppress it.'

The audit of over 50 couples' experiences on the programme achieved some extraordinary results - 99.5% satisfaction level for LFC clinic staff, 94%

satisfaction level for their overall experience, 98% for waiting periods and 99% for clinic premises. The overwhelming majority (48 out of 51 couples) also said that information about LFC should be available at GP practices.

'The effects of infertility on a couple's relationship can be devastating,' continues Ira. 'Starting a family is something couples can take for granted, so the emotions they experience when problems arise can be a shock.'

'Of course, we can't spare couples the underlying stress of infertility, but the treatment process allows more time for managing this. Even if the programme is not successful in overcoming the fertility problem, couples usually leave with answers and this helps them to move on.'

'We are currently celebrating the birth of our 108th baby to couples who thought their chances of having a family were slim,' says Ira. 'The joy this brings

to couples is immeasurable, but it's just as satisfying to be able to treat the causes of their infertility and to watch couples' appreciation of their fertility grow through the process.'

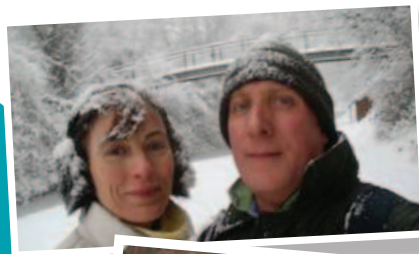
Over 84% of couples said that the programme had definitely improved their understanding of reproductive health, with one client adding: 'This should be the first port of call for couples needing help with their fertility.'

LFC's holistic approach can treat many problems, from recurrent miscarriage to 'unexplained infertility', using a rigorous, scientific method called NaPro Technology from the States and tailoring it to each couple. As one doctor comments: 'The clinics are practising good clinical medicine – many people could benefit from NaPro Technology.'

For a full version of the audit email fertilitycare@lifecharity.org.uk or visit www.lifefertilitycare.co.uk for further information about LFC.

Winter walk for LFC

Braving last December's snow and freezing temperatures, Gerry and Cathy Walsh (pictured) walked the tow path between Leamington Spa and Birmingham. 'We did it to show our appreciation for all that LFC has done for us,' says Cathy. 'We broke the 40-mile trek into three stages, inviting friends and family along for the final leg,' explains Gerry. 'With soup, sandwiches and a get-together at the end, this, along with other events over a three-month period, helped to raise £1800 for development of the LIFE FertilityCare Programme's website. Thank you to all those brave people who took part and special mention to our parish priest, Fr Harry Curtis, for all his support!'



Government cuts bite but we're working hard to limit the damage

For the last eight years LIFE's Housing service has been exclusively funded by rental income and contracts from Local Authorities to pay for the support service.

'In the last three years we have seen 12 houses lose their support service contracts as Local Authorities reduce their spending or switch from accommodation based to floating support services,' explains Margaret Coward, LIFE's Head of Housing.

'So rather than close down all these LIFE houses, we have decided to keep six of them open – at Bath, Didcot, Hemel Hempstead, Oxford, St Albans and Walsall. We still receive rent but fund the reduced level of support through fundraising drives spearheaded by local LIFE groups and supported by LIFE's fundraising team. We also have volunteers in some houses helping with activities and looking after the building.

'At any one time, these six houses accommodate 28 vulnerable young mothers, helping them to cope with having their babies and learning the skills they need to live independently when they leave us.

'Local LIFE groups have been doing some impressive fundraising,' continues Margaret. 'We need around £90k per annum to keep the six independent houses running with a full support service. This might sound like a lot, but we hope that with this continued fundraising drive and the help of our supporters, we can get close to that figure. Many, many thanks to everyone working hard to keep our six independents open.'



Becky's story

All I wanted to do after giving birth was come home to the LIFE house

When I found out I was pregnant I was so scared of telling my mum. I went to the doctor and found out I was nine weeks pregnant but I couldn't face telling my mum for two weeks after that. When I did, she kicked me out so I literally had nowhere to go. I turned to the local council and thankfully they referred me to the LIFE house.

If I hadn't got into the LIFE house I'd probably be sofa-surfing still. When I moved in I was four months pregnant and it was scary - but then you get to know everyone and it's a lot easier.

I think because I felt so supported and settled in the house I actually looked forward to giving birth and being a mum. It was a quick labour, just over 5 hours, and after I'd given birth to my little boy, Tyrese, all I wanted to do was come home to the LIFE house.

The staff are lovely and I really enjoy the Life Skills sessions, especially the kitchen and practical skills. When I leave I'll really miss the lovely girls I've met and the support from all the staff.

Becky Amos
LIFE House tenant

Tenants reap rewards of their fundraising >

'As a result of the fete we held in September, the girls decided that the £230 raised should go towards a garden fence,' explains Clare Dickens, Support Worker at the Didcot house. 'We were so grateful that Emmaus, Oxford, a charity for the homeless, erected the fence free of charge. They've done a fantastic job and the girls are now so pleased they don't have to draw the curtains permanently for privacy!'

I to r: Didcot tenants Amanda Graydon and Jen McGuigan by their new garden fence.



Thank you so much

Last issue's cover story covering the threatened closure of the LIFE house in Didcot, Oxfordshire, prompted an amazingly generous response from you, with over £8000 donated so far towards the six independent LIFE houses, including Didcot. One very generous donor has given a further £5000, helping us to ensure that we can keep these vital services open for young women and children made homeless through pregnancy.

Walsall Walk

Calling all LIFE supporters who live near Walsall in the West Midlands.....Liz Lloyd and the team are organising the group's annual Kathryn Wilcox Memorial Walk, held each year in memory of the founder of Litchfield LIFE group.

Last year, this sponsored walk raised over £5,000 and the team hope to beat that total in 2011, with all money going towards keeping the Walsall LIFE House up and running for another year.

If you would like to join the walk, it takes place on Saturday 16 April at 2pm from St Francis of Assisi Catholic Technology College, Erdington Road, Aldridge. The walk covers a nine-mile route and ends at the Holy Cross, St Johns Street, Litchfield (not far from Litchfield Cathedral).

For those who would prefer something shorter, there is a pram push taking place on the same afternoon. To register to take part, or to find out further details, call Liz Lloyd on 01922 712046 (mobile 07786 390861) or e-mail: lifewalsall@btconnect.com



The start of last year's Walk

18th birthday surprise!

Belfast
LIFE house tenant, Xiu Mei, and her baby, Angela, were treated to a party to celebrate Xiu Mei's milestone birthday.

'Mr Cheng, Xiu Mei's partner, prepared a Chinese banquet, a birthday cake and presented her with a bouquet,' says Support Worker Julie Clark. 'Despite all the obstacles and uncertainty of their future, Mr Cheng made it a very special day. He's become a familiar face around the house and is committed to being a good father to Angela.'



Herts supporters show a lot of heart

St Albans LIFE group have been doing some fantastic fundraising for the two independent LIFE houses in their area, raising over £12,600 last year. 'Our fundraising has been mainly due to the generosity of the parishioners at our local churches and donations from supporters in the area,' says St Albans' Helen Bassill.

'The Knights of St Columba run bingo for us every year raising £250 and last year St Albans Lions Club donated £500. We also had a great anonymous donation as a result of a LIFE Sunday appeal. LIFE Sundays at our local church - where we tell the congregation about our services - have been especially successful for us, raising £1500 last year and a further £2500 this January.

'But most of our funds have been raised through letters and networking - hard work but well worth the effort. Our supporters are determined to do all they can to keep the Herts houses at St Albans and Hemel Hempstead open, which is why we're getting such a terrific response to our appeals.'

LIFE Fundraising Early Olympic Fever

With the ticket sale release date for spectator seats at the Olympic Games set for 15 March, Olympic fever is starting to mount. Can't wait until 2012 to get in on the action? Then why not sign up for the BUPA London 10,000 Charity Run!

Taking place on 30 May 2011, LIFE has three guaranteed spaces for anyone wanting to run in the race to raise money to support our services. Starting and finishing in St James Park in London, its 10K route follows some of the same streets that the Olympic elites will be pounding next summer.

E-mail susanmurray@lifecharity.org.uk to register your interest today and say you ran it first! Alternatively, for further details of the route, which passes many of London's landmark sights, and other information, visit www.london10000.co.uk/race-information



LIFE supporter, Felicity Miller, is organising a dinner dance on 25 June, with a horse-racing theme! Tickets go on sale soon at £35 a head.

A Night at the Races

The price includes a buffet dinner and dancing, with entertainment culminating in the chance to try your luck on the horses!

Eight pre-recorded races will be shown on screen and guests given the chance to place £1 bets beforehand on the outcome, just like 'live' racing. At the end of each race, the prize fund is divided out amongst all punters who guessed the correct winner.

And there are other chances to get involved. Anyone attending the event - or even those who can't make the date - are

able to 'buy' and name horses beforehand for £8 each. If you have a lucky colour, place or anything else, here's your chance to put it to the test by incorporating it into your horse's name. Should it come in first, the glory will be all yours!

The event will be held at the Newbold Comyn Arms in Leamington Spa. To purchase tickets, please e-mail susanmurray@lifecharity.org.uk

Intrepid LIFE Supporters

LIFE supporters never fail to come up with ingenious new ideas to help raise money to support the cause. Ian Henery, James Foster and Phil Marshall are three such supporters who are certainly 'going the extra mile' for LIFE.

Even though a viral infection paralysed the left side of Ian's diaphragm, leaving the lung on that side of his body useless, the intrepid LIFE supporter is attempting to walk 40 miles across Cannock Chase in Staffordshire on 19 March. His 11-year-old daughter, Jenny, will accompany him for 13 miles.

'After the infection in 2009, I couldn't run up the stairs,' commented Ian, 'and I was the man who used to run 20 miles across the Malvern Hills.'

Less than a month later, Ian's feat will be followed by James', who is planning on running a half marathon in aid of LIFE on 13 April. Look out for him training hard whilst sporting his LIFE t-shirt if you live near his home town of Walton-on-Thames!

After hosting a dinner dance for LIFE in Yorkshire a couple of years ago, Phil's next challenge is to complete the Marathon des Sables - a gruelling 151 mile race run over six days across the Sahara Desert. Dubbed "the toughest footrace on earth", competitors run over sand dunes, uneven rocks and stone in soaring temperatures that can reach 150° F whilst carrying all their own supplies in a rucksack on their back.



Finishing the race is not a foregone conclusion, with some years up to 20% of the runners dropping out before the finish. Mental stamina is as key as physical strength.

Susie Murray, Head of Fundraising for LIFE, comments: 'We wish Ian, James and Phil all the very best of luck as they prepare for their different challenges, and will keep our fingers crossed that each manages to find lots of generous sponsors!'

If you would like to sponsor any of the adventurers above, and aren't sure how to contact them directly, please e-mail susanmurray@lifecharity.org.uk or call her on 01926 421587.

We asked three teachers to tell us what they think about our Education service...

Jacintha Bowe, St Mary's Catholic Independent School, Shaftesbury

I teach girls age 11 to 18. I think that today there can be too much emphasis on pleasure and personal happiness at the expense of the dignity and value of life. LIFE Education Officers (EOs) present information in an accessible way. They also challenge the girls to think about how they use their bodies, but in a non-judgmental way.

The EOs are approachable and knowledgeable. They have created an atmosphere of trust in which the girls can explore contemporary ethical and moral issues. In the words of one student – 'they bring ethics to life'.



Jacintha Bowe with some of her students

Mainstream sex and relationships education largely focuses on risk-aversion rather than putting mutual love and respect at the heart of relationships. We want to equip our students to make informed and life-enhancing choices.

EOs are always sensitive in their delivery and contemporary in their approach. We want to say a huge thank you for everything they have given the girls at St Mary's.



Paul Bristow, Henry Cort Community College, Fareham, Hants

I have been an SRE teacher for 13 years, tackling controversial issues. The LIFE Education Officer who comes into the school cleverly links her talks on abortion and life-issues with topics such as choice and responsibility. She really keeps the pupils engaged.

We hold a Year 10 'Lifestyle Day' where we run up to ten workshops. The students, age 14/15, are in mixed groups and are allocated to workshops, covering subjects such as drugs, road safety, healthy eating and, of course, sex and relationships. The LIFE speaker runs one of these workshops on life issues and has been amongst our most popular speakers for the past six years.

Before hearing a LIFE speaker, many of my students think abortion is the only response to unplanned pregnancy. The sessions open their eyes to all the options available. Many girls now want real choice.

Students' feedback has always been positive. In most schools SRE isn't taught by specialists or trained SRE teachers and as a result, it's taught in a way that doesn't 'rock the boat' or challenge any thinking. LIFE speakers present up-to-date information in an interactive and stimulating way.



Paul Mullan, St Bernard's School, Slough

I teach boys and girls, age 11 to 18. Each year LIFE EOs talk to our Yr 10 students – they get a lot out of it and have gained some valuable

points to include in their GCSE Moral Issues exam paper.

The students are very enthusiastic and enjoy the talks. They feel able to ask the questions they really want to, knowing their questions will be answered.

The school totally supports LIFE's Education programme and we appreciate the Education Officers tackling difficult issues, from genetic engineering to sex and relationships.

For further information about LIFE's Education work please call 01926 421587, email stuartcowie@lifecharity.org.uk or visit www.lifecharity.org.uk

LIFE has launched its official Facebook page to help reach more vulnerable people in need of support, provide up-to-date information and to promote upcoming events.

If you would like to become a member of this group and you have a Facebook account simply log in and type LIFE Charity into the search bar. If you scroll down through the results you should eventually find us listed on there with our official logo as the picture. Please note that some of the Care Centres also have group pages so feel free to become members of as many LIFE Facebook pages as you can!



Jacqueline Gray and Susie Murray (Head of Fundraising) are the admins of the group and will therefore be able to monitor the content posted on there to ensure there are no inappropriate comments/spam. Please encourage your friends and relatives to join the group and support us.

If you have an upcoming LIFE event you would like added to the group, please email Jacqueline at jacquelinegray@lifecharity.org.uk with the date, time, location and a description of the event.

LIFE Shops

The LIFE charity shops continue to go from strength to strength, showing a 78% increase on last year's takings already – and we're only half way through the year.



Manchester ^

A wonderful donor provided the Manchester shop with a treasure trove of jewellery which volunteers Margaret Mayne and Winnie Cooke (pictured) had valued and sold to local jewellers. The prize items included a Rolex watch which sold for over £300 and an 18k gold bracelet. In total, the jewellery made £880, raising funds for the shop which only opened in July but whose sales have already exceeded £20k.



Gloucester ^

The Gloucester LIFE indoor market stall opened 3½ years ago and is open 40 hours per week, Monday to Saturday, with a team of 6-8 volunteers. Stall Manager Maggie White says: 'Our customers are very varied and we have a regular stream of donations. The stall raises around £200 p/w which helps to support the day-to-day running of Gloucester LIFE Care Centre, including the training of counsellors and local LIFE projects.'

Weymouth v

Weymouth shop volunteers treated four tenants from the Bournemouth LIFE house to a day trip to Weymouth, which included lunch and a £10 voucher each to spend in the LIFE shop. 'We had a great time and we're so grateful to the Weymouth group,' says Bournemouth Support Worker, Rachel Young, 'and as it was last December the day had a lovely, Christmassy feel to it.'



I to r: Kim Palmer with baby Harvey, Esther Brewin-Summers with baby Tommy, Rachel Widdowson with Ellie and Kayleigh Humphries with little Oscar.

The LIFE National Shop Conference takes place on 7 April at the St Helens LIFE Shop to give shop managers and volunteers the opportunity to swap ideas. There will also be a Scottish LIFE Shop Conference on 29 March at the St Vincent Street Centre, Glasgow. For further details email Eireann Janssens - eireannjanssens@lifecharity.org.uk

Life
LOVING LIFE, OFFERING HOPE

Registered National Charity No. 1128355

Useful numbers and contacts

Head Office:
LIFE House, 1 Mill Street,
Leamington Spa, Warks CV31 1ES

Tel: 01926 421587
Fax: 01926 336497
Email: info@lifecharity.org.uk

National Helpline: 0800 915 4600
Text-to-talk: 07786 200330

Visit www.lifecharity.org.uk

Please join or donate now

I'd like my donation to go to:

- ☐ LIFE's Housing service
- ☐ LIFE's Care service
- ☐ LIFE's Education service
- ☐ LIFE projects of greatest need

1. Personal details

TITLE	
NAME	
ADDRESS	
POSTCODE	
TELEPHONE	
I would like to receive LIFE Update by email	<input type="checkbox"/>
EMAIL	

2. Standing order for Regular Givers

To the manager of:

BANK NAME	
ADDRESS	
POSTCODE	

Please pay LIFE, Account Number 01026925-62958364, Sort code 60-12-35 at Natwest Bank plc, 59 The Parade, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV32 4ZX the sum of

£	AMOUNT IN WORDS
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now & every month / quarter / year* thereafter, beginning

DATE	DD / MM / YY
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*delete as appropriate

please debit my account number:

Sort code:							

SIGNATURE	
DATE	

3. DONATION

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

<input type="checkbox"/>	£5	<input type="checkbox"/>	£10	<input type="checkbox"/>	£25	<input type="checkbox"/>	£50
<input type="checkbox"/>	£100	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="text" value="£"/>			

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

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

<input type="checkbox"/>	Mastercard	<input type="checkbox"/>	Visa	<input type="checkbox"/>	Solo	<input type="checkbox"/>	Electron
<input type="checkbox"/>	Delta	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maestro	<input type="checkbox"/>	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

4. GIFT AID

giftaid it

If you are a UK taxpayer, for every £1 you donate, GiftAid allows us to claim 28p from HM Revenue & Customs - increasing the value of your gift by nearly a third at no cost to you.

I want LIFE to treat all donations I have made over the last four years and all donations I make from the date of this declaration, until I notify you otherwise, as GiftAid donations. I will notify LIFE if I no longer pay an amount of income tax equal to the tax reclaimed on my donations.

Please tick this box

☐

SIGNATURE

DATE

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