



The Slice

JUNE 2015 | ISSUE 3

Welcome

Welcome to Issue 3 of The Slice – the magazine for LIFE staff and volunteers. I hope you enjoy reading it.

Our new CEO, Stephen Sharpe, has some important messages for us all in this issue. As you know, we are going through a time of change to make the charity more relevant and fit for purpose. These are exciting times! So please make sure you read this issue carefully - especially page 3!

Stuart Cowie, Communications

Thank you – from the CEO

It has been just ten weeks since I joined the LIFE team. It has been an exciting time as I have been getting to know the team, meeting volunteers and travelling round the country following invitations to meet local and regional groups. I have been made to feel very welcome and I look forward to working with you all over the coming years as we continue to lead the prolife sector in the UK, transforming and saving the lives of so many people supported by LIFE.

Stephen Sharpe, CEO



LIFE stalwart

Thank you to Karen Newman (right) - Support Worker in the Slough 1 house for 16 years, one of our longest serving members of staff. Karen's sister, Sarah Strachan, is just behind her at 15 years, and works in Slough 2 house.



Shops



- The Leeds shop is planning an official opening event on **25 July at 11am** with guest of honour Eden Taylor-Draper who plays Belle Dingle in Emmerdale. They are also asking the local Bishop which, if he agrees, will give them their *"The Actress and The Bishop"* headlines! All are extremely welcome to attend.
- Thirteen members of Doncaster LIFE had a fabulous night out at Mecca Bingo's charity night. Although they did not win the £500 grand prize, Mecca gave LIFE and three other charities £100 and the manager donated **£100** of her own money in memory of her husband Terry.
- Market Harborough LIFE have been very supportive to the Leicester LIFE Group. With a donation box in the church for items for the shop, they regularly bring stock to the shop and have even donated **£1000** to Leicester from their fundraising.

Hello & welcome to:

Brett Scott - Rugby Shop Assistant
Deanne Tuite - Leeds Shop Manager
Lynne Drakeley - Finance Manager
Sandra Greene - Basingstoke Shop Manager
Sarah Sewell - Support Worker, Bournemouth



Housing

The LIFE House in Northampton has recently been helped by 11-year-old Hannah Heath who has been fundraising on their behalf.

"I heard about the LIFE house at the local church that my family and I attend," said Hannah. "It got me thinking about how I could help the mums and babies in the house."

“ So I came up with the idea of a sponsored silence and raised around £150 which was enough to make up six baby hampers - full of the things a new mum needs - and still have £50 left over to donate. ”



As a thank you, the house Support Worker, Tessa Francis-Russell, invited Hannah for lunch at the house so she could meet the mums and babies. "We're really grateful to Hannah," said Tessa. "When I asked Hannah what she wanted to be when she grows up she said a paediatrician or to work for LIFE Housing. We certainly hope it's the latter!"

First year celebration:

The Northampton house are celebrating their first year on 5 August. The LIFE group are asking the local mayor to attend the ribbon cutting and afternoon tea.

THANK YOU

Farewell & thank you to:

Jessica Ramsay – Support Worker, Bournemouth

Kyla Taylor – Care Centre Manager



Janice Impey (above) accepted a £1000 cheque from the Abbey Fund - the third year LIFE have been successful in receiving the donation. The donation will be used to purchase a lap-top, desk and chair for the St Albans house, and to create a library corner for the children.

Fundraising

A big thank you to everyone who sponsored Olivia Reeves for the Grin & Bear It obstacle challenge for Zoe's Place Baby Hospice, Coventry – a fun course which saw everyone getting wet and muddy! Olivia, daughter of Beckie Reeves, Housing Contracts Manager, raised almost **£600** alongside her Team Reeves team mates.



In Loving Memory

Sincere condolences to the friends and family of Dorothy Salisbury. Dorothy had been a member of St Albans LIFE group since it started in 1972. She was treasurer for many years and eventually resigned but stayed on the committee. She was an ardent fundraiser, helping the group raise thousands of pounds. She was a wonderful wife, mum and grandmother, a dedicated LIFE supporter and a very dear and much loved friend to all who knew her. May she rest in peace.

All change at Head Office

Stephen has made a number of changes within the Senior Management Team at Head Office to ensure that we have effective lines of communication and accountability within the team. This is particularly relevant during a period of change to ensure that the team is fit for purpose, responsive and capable of responding to an ever-changing landscape.

In summary, the new structure includes the following changes:

- There is a new Executive Management Team reporting into the Chief Executive, thus reducing the number of direct reports into the Chief Executive, with the intention of strengthening and streamlining the strategic decision-making process within LIFE. This team replaces the Senior Management Team.
- Margaret Coward has been appointed to the new position of Director of Operations. This post will bring together the three main service functions of Care, Housing and Retail to enable a more co-ordinated service delivery to our customers and service users. Eireann Janssens and Liz Lloyd will continue in their roles reporting to the newly created Director of Operations.
- David Bennett has moved to the new post of Director of Development and Communications, bringing together the business critical roles of fundraising, communication and campaigns into one department. Stuart Cowie will continue as Communications Manager reporting into the newly created Director of Fundraising and Communications.
- Elly Petrucci has taken on the new role of Strategic Projects Manager, created to respond quickly to and deliver on strategic priorities and projects as assigned by the Chief Executive.
- Isaac Nyirenda will continue in his role with a new title of Director of Corporate Services and Finance.
- Anne Scanlan will continue in her role with a new title of Director of Education and Media.
- The posts of Head of Housing, Head of Fundraising, National Development Manager and Head of Communications have been removed.

The above may be a little confusing in the first instance, so please do not hesitate to stay in contact with your normal link person, who in turn will be able to connect you with the right people.

You can view the new organisational chart [here](#)

Vicky O'Brien, HR

A rebirth of LIFE

Stephen (our new CEO) has been appointed by the Trustees to undertake a root and branch review of our charity...a rebirth if you like...regarding how we deliver services, what services we provide, campaigning, communication, fundraising etc. This process of change is focused on ensuring we are relevant and fit for purpose.

LIFE has been around, in one form or another, for 45 years, and in that time the charity sector has changed with increased regulation, professionalism and oversight: the Charity Commission, Companies House, Ofsted, Care Quality Commission, Supporting People, SORP etc -the list goes on. The national financial crisis has also impacted our income with a reduction in funding from the government and from our supporters as money runs short.

So...over the next six months Stephen, with the team, will be designing a new way of delivering our various services and activities to ensure that we continue to challenge the pro-abortion movement and to provide vital life-saving services for mothers, fathers and their unborn children.

We will keep you up-to-date with our progress and Stephen will continue to be out on the road visiting local and regional groups. Please let us know if you would like him to visit.

Mary Lubrano, Editor

Brompton Oratory (London) – the start of a new LIFE group

David Bennett and Michaela Aston were kindly invited by Fr Edward and the Friends of Brompton Oratory to give a presentation to an invited group on the vital work of

LIFE. Following wine and nibbles, a presentation was made by the team inspiring the Friends of Brompton to support LIFE by establishing a London group. Already they are exploring fundraising, establishing a shop and other awareness raising activities. Watch this space for more information as we give birth to a new LIFE group in our capital city.

Mary Lubrano, Editor





Prolife Parliamentary Group

The team has been meeting with members of the Prolife Research Unit to continue to explore how we can input into parliamentary life. As you know we support the Prolife Research Unit by seconding a member of staff to provide specialist expertise and guidance to the Prolife Parliamentary Group.

This includes undertaking research, analysis and the writing of speeches and papers. Stephen is meeting with the Chair of the group, Fiona Bruce MP, in August to explore how LIFE will continue to work with the Prolife Parliamentary Group over the new parliamentary term. This is vital work for LIFE in its role as the leading UK prolife charity.



Fiona Bruce, MP

Stuart Cowie, Communications

LIFE National Helpline – a day out to Sheffield



Stephen and I spent a delightful day in Sheffield with the National Helpline volunteers. The team updated Stephen on their vital role at the frontline of our work with crisis pregnancies. The volunteers got to know Stephen over lunch, which was followed by CPD training delivered by our National Care Manager, Liz. All had a good day, even if Stephen was an hour late!

Eileen Maher, Trustee

VAT reclaims for shops (oh the excitement!)

OK...a delicate subject! In my first 10 weeks, there has been a reoccurring tension relating to the transfer of monies from group accounts to shop accounts and vice versa. Thomas Gower has written to you about this recently as part of a finance team exercise in reporting separately on group and shop expenditure.

So, why are we doing this? We are attempting to register for VAT to enable LIFE as a charity to reclaim VAT. This is more money in the pot. Now...this is particularly relevant to our shops and if we are successful we will be able to reclaim some backdated VAT of up to circa £40k and a further annual amount. You can see why we are interested in pursuing this option and why it is important for us to get a realistic picture of what shop income is.

Email is not always a great way to communicate and particularly over such a sensitive issue as how shop and care centre expenditures should be apportioned. I will be looking into this more closely over the coming months. As you will have already read, over the next six months, I am completing a root and branch review of how the charity operates and this will include the shops and care centres. I am told that there has always been an understanding that shops would pay for the basic running costs of the care centres attached to them.

The local LIFE groups are the heart and soul of the organisation. Over the coming year we will be exploring in particular how we can provide you with more support and, in particular, to recruit new younger group members...we know what a challenge this is. This will, of course, include some changes in how we operate to ensure that we have a sustainable future and, where possible, we decentralize activities and services to a local level.

I hope that you are able to bear with me over the coming period as we find a way forward together for LIFE and the vital work it does in transforming and saving the lives of so many people that we encounter. I will continue to visit groups and consult on how best to reshape LIFE for the next 40+ years.

Please do keep in contact with me over the next six months and I would be delighted to meet with your group if you would like. I much prefer to talk with you face-to-face to share ideas about the future. E-mails are not so good for this!

Exciting times ahead!

Stephen Sharpe, CEO