

AUTUMN
WINTER
2018
ISSUE 68



Autumn & Winter Newsletter 2018

POSITIVE LIVING AND LEARNING FOR PEOPLE
WITH EPILEPSY AND OTHER COMPLEX NEEDS

Welcome to St Elizabeth's Newsletter



This year has been one of change for St Elizabeth's, but it has been an exciting time too. St Elizabeth's Centre, as most of you know, is no longer owned and managed by the Daughters of The Cross of Liège. The Sisters will still be around, and I'm sure we will see many of you at the Christmas Bazaar. I would like to thank each one of you for your support and help over many years, without which the Centre would not be what it is today - a centre of excellence to be proud of.

We have placed St Elizabeth's in very safe hands - with Adam Sampson as our new Chief Executive supported by a strong Senior Team. We feel very confident "All shall be well." (Julian of Norwich)
Our thanks, Sr Annette and Community.
Trustee

Welcome from new Chief Executive, Adam Sampson



"Starting a new job is always exhilarating and nerve-racking. Hopefully it is also exciting. Occasionally, it is disappointing. The ten weeks I have spent so far as the new St Elizabeth's CEO certainly has had their ups and downs. But far from being disappointed, my overwhelming sense is of inspiration at what I have found.

Almost without exception, the people here - staff and residents, learners and lecturers, pupils and support staff - are amazing; friendly, welcoming and committed to

making this a community which works and cares for everyone in it. There is an open acknowledgement of the challenges we face - challenges which range from the individual (young people struggling to learn to communicate with the world around them; older residents adjusting to bungalow moves or staff changes) to organisational (looking to modernise the estate and bringing the income for our adult services into balance with expenditure). But that is more than matched by a sense of care, energy and sheer joy which permeates so much of the organisation's activities.

There is much to do here, of course. But there is so much to be proud of and so much to build on. I'm really looking forward to being part of that building process."

Kyle's Story

St. Elizabeth's is a great place to be. I have been here for a very long time; fifteen years to be exact. In that time I have done many wonderful things and I have learnt so much. Each day is different and I have made many friends.

When working in College, I take part in so many different lessons, from English and mathematics to working on a farm as well as cooking. Being at St. Elizabeth's has given me so many exciting opportunities. Last year I started a work experience placement in the training department where I assist the staff and help prepare meetings. As well as this, I have also recently started an external work placement at a football shop. This is a great opportunity as it is something I've always wanted to do.

It is through my learning

experience that I have gained new skills, such as communicating with customers, developing my organisational skills and remembering it is important to keep eye contact when talking to others.

At College I was also given the opportunity to be on the Learner Council. This was a great honour as I got to have a say in what we do at College and helping other learners have their own say.

I especially enjoy all the different events we have throughout the year; such as Enrichment trips, charity days and sport events such as the Inclusion Cup. Last year we won the Inclusion Cup and I scored four goals. I can't wait for the next match.

Being at St. Elizabeth's has helped me a lot and I am happy to have been part of all the fun things over the past few years.



Health & Therapy

▶ The Health and Therapy team rolled out "Open Gym" in May, in conjunction with the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy campaign called "Love Activity/Hate Exercise". The idea is to offer adult residents who have difficulty participating in physical activity independently the chance to do some exercise in a relaxed atmosphere. The gym is open 2-4 pm on Thursdays and each week around 4-6 residents attend, with a variety of ability levels.

▶ After many years of service, Wendy Savill retired as our Therapy Services Manager in August. Lead Physiotherapist Paul Hook has now taken on the role as Therapy Lead and we wish him every success!

▶ Regular therapy sessions have commenced in the School for the new academic year. These include Badminton, Star Club, Wii group, trike/bike club, rebound therapy, hydrotherapy and core group.

College

▶ 13 new learners started at the College between June and September.

▶ The College hosted their first Open Day of the academic year on Thursday 18th October.

▶ New sessions of Music Therapy have started with Nordoff Robbins, and a new Music Teacher is in place every Friday mornings.

▶ The Travelling Pantomime are coming in to the College in December to perform 'Jack & the Beanstalk' to all of our learners.

▶ The Learner Council have elected Joey (front page) as their new chairperson!



Day Opportunities

▶ Our Enterprise projects (Ashvale and The Drawing Room) collectively made £301.95 on Apple Day, selling stock made by our residents.

▶ Day Services were invited to make and display a scarecrow at High Wych Scarecrow Festival on the 8th and 9th September. Staff and clients decided on a fantastic Mary Poppins, umbrella and 'magic' case included. The scarecrow was awarded with a highly commended certificate!

▶ Staff and clients were delighted to be invited to Brook Cottage Farm Riding School event, where Her Royal Highness Princess Anne was opening the new RDA (Riding for the Disabled Association) group.

▶ On the August bank holiday, Day Services took a minibus with residents to take part in the Harlow Carnival. The colourful decorations for the bus were a real team effort and the bus looked terrific with dragons breathing fire along each side and a knight in armour on the front.

School

▶ 12 students graduated in July 2018, with 7 going on to join our Specialist Further Education College.

▶ In the summer, students enjoyed a trip to Paradise Wildlife Park, walking through the new Dinosaur Land and visiting the petting zoo. Students also enjoyed a day out at the President's Sporting Day, taking part in athletics, cricket and gymnastics.

▶ Students have been having fun in Science, making marble runs, tornado in a bottle and fun with spaghetti!

▶ The School continue to host very successful Enterprise Sales, with handmade dream catchers and bookmarks proving very popular!

Adult Home

▶ Kelly and Kearney House are delighted to be opening a new multi-sensory room in the bungalow. The room will have lots of lights, sounds, colours and textures, as well as soft play equipment for residents to enjoy at any time.

▶ Nichole House enjoyed a fantastic day out to Southend-on-Sea on 21st July. Our Respite clients enjoyed lots of singing on the journey, fish and chips on the seafront, and even a glass of cider before heading home.

▶ At our annual Sports Day, the White Team were victorious, beating out strong opposition from the rest of our adult residents and day clients!

▶ All residents have had an enjoyable summer, visiting local attractions, enjoying cream tea and dining out. Some of the residents have enjoyed the lovely beaches on the Isle of Wight while others had a lovely time in Norfolk, and had lots of fun on a boat trip on the broads.



Update from the Fundraising Team

With the school's tennis court having to be closed due to extensive cracks and damage, we are urgently fundraising to have the area resurfaced. Used for everything from football, badminton and trike club, to basketball, playtime and physiotherapy, the area is essential for both therapy and play, and staff and students are desperate to get their outdoor space back. We have already secured £20,000 towards the cost and are furiously fundraising to secure the remaining £35,000.

We are busy re-designing our website, collating information and photos from across our services to ensure it best represents what we do. With lots of new videos, case studies and factoids, the new website will be a great way of telling our story. Watch out for its launch at the end of the year!

With donations from individuals, community groups and charitable trusts, our School and College have been able to purchase a range of new equipment for the start of the new term - from new book schemes and musical instruments in the School, to a new interactive white board in the College.

In September, 80 riders from the charity Ordinary2extraordinary cycled 260 miles over 3 days from the UK to the French coast, raising money for St Elizabeth's as one of their 8 chosen charities - thanks to all the cyclists for such an amazing effort! Final amount raised will be announced at the end of the year!



We've been filming! Thanks to support from HNE Media, we have produced over 10 new videos which showcase our work, with input from parents and staff. Check them out on our new website or on our YouTube Channel.

Want to stay in touch with what we are up to? Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, check out our website or sign up to our mailing list (if you haven't already) to keep receiving this newsletter.



Community Update

We've had a busy few months, with some great support from local Community groups, companies and individuals:

♥ A huge Thank You to our 2018 Ride London team - we had seven 100-mile riders and two 46-riders, raising £4,000!

♥ Thank you to Bishop's Stortford Golf Club's Bridge Club, who held a fundraiser in October, raising £810 for a Go Kart for our school children.

♥ Bishop's Stortford Chamber of Commerce held their 3rd Quiz Night for St Elizabeth's helping to reach their fundraising goal to purchase a specialist wheelchair-bike for the school.

♥ In July and August, Tesco's Blue Token scheme ran across three local stores, raising £2,000 for St Elizabeth's!

♥ Harlow Rotary Satellite Group invited us to be part of Harlow College's NCS (National Citizen Service) scheme. Two groups of students selected us as their chosen charity.

♥ Thank you to all our Corporate Volunteers who have worked so hard, sometimes in very hot weather. Thanks to a new partnership, Harlow Rainbow Services have been sending their volunteer groups too. In total, we have had over 250 volunteers between April and October, which amounts to 1,250 hours or around 33 days of work!



Events:

Our **Summer Fayre** was a huge success - under the baking skies of the summer heat wave, we welcomed over 500 people to the Centre to enjoy stalls, games, music and food, raising over £8,000!

In September, our now annual **Charity Golf Day** saw 15 teams tee off against each other in the battle to secure the Winners' Trophy, specially made by our adult residents in the Drawing Room. The event made St Elizabeth's a profit of £1,711 - an incredible amount!

Our traditional **Apple Day**, in our ancient 3-acre orchard, saw hundreds of people join us to help harvest over 1,800kg of apples ready for sale or juicing. Billy Byrne, DIY SOS's electrician, opened the event and, alongside BBC Three Counties Radio, helped make the day a roaring success!

Thanks to all who visited, volunteered, donated or supported our events.

We have been asked to host Father Christmas at his Grotto as part of this year's Christmas Market in Bishop's Stortford. If you are in the area, please do pop along and visit us on Saturday 1st December.



Update on our Shops

Our charity shops, based across the local area, play a vital role in raising essential funds for the Centre.

On Saturday 15th September, our Braintree branch celebrated a year of retail! Shop Manager Emma and her team put on hourly fashion shows to the public, and hosted an awareness stand and raffle on the High Street. Our very own Gruffalo even put in an appearance, handing out leaflets to the public throughout the day. Our Braintree shop continues to specialise in vintage and curiosity items - please keep your donations coming!

On Tuesday 18th September, our 11th Charity Shop opened on Terminus Street in Harlow. This is our third Charity Shop in Harlow alone, joining Bush Fair and Staple Tye. The shop specialises in large

furniture and clearance items, and is on the look out for volunteers to join the team in Harlow!

If you are interested in volunteering opportunities, please contact Angela Fordrey at angela.fordrey@stelizabeths.org.uk

You can visit us at:

1. Braintree (High Street)
2. Bush Fair, Harlow
3. Florence Walk, Bishop's Stortford
4. Hoddesdon (High Street)
5. Potters Bar (Darkes Lane)
6. Saffron Walden (King Street)
7. Staple Tye, Harlow
8. Terminus Street, Harlow
9. Thorley Centre, Bishop's Stortford
10. Waltham Abbey (Market Square)
11. Ware (High Street)



Staff stories

Speech & Language Therapist Emma Connolly

Emma has been a Speech and Language Therapist at St Elizabeth's for just over a year, supporting all adults and college learners in our care.

Whilst it might not come as a surprise that Speech and Language Therapy looks at developing new communication techniques, a large part of Emma's work is also based around supporting those who have difficulties eating, drinking and swallowing, a condition known as dysphagia.

Many of our residents and learners have some degree of dysphagia - they may be on a modified diet, be monitored due to on-going chest infections or have to be fed via tube directly into their stomach. Because of the health risk that dysphagia presents these cases are her priority.

For both the College and the Adult Home - Emma will carry out a full assessment of each individual. She will look at the different stages involved in swallowing such as ability to self feed, chewing through to the risk of choking or aspiration (when something is inhaled into the lungs). She will then make suggestions of the support needed during mealtimes and any further input required.

She will also assess an individual's communication skills, such as their level of understanding and methods they might use to express themselves - whether via words, sign, body language or specialist technology.

She may suggest new resources required such as voice output communication aids, communication switches or visual aids e.g. visual timetables and "Social Stories" (used to help to develop greater social understanding) increasing understanding and reducing potential anxiety.

Emma will then train and assist those supporting individuals where required on the best ways to communicate with them and to understand how to manage mealtimes. With such a varied role, and so many people to support, every day is different - there is no such thing as a typical day! But the support that Emma, and the rest of the Health and Therapy team, provides plays a vital role in ensuring the safety and health of those in our care, and in giving them a voice.



Highlights from 2018 at St Elizabeth's



Please Support St Elizabeth's

Thank you!

Follow us: [f/StElizabethsepilepsycare](https://www.facebook.com/StElizabethsepilepsycare) [@st_elizabeths](https://twitter.com/st_elizabeths) [@stelizabeths_centre](https://www.instagram.com/stelizabeths_centre)

We hope you have enjoyed reading our newsletter and will feel inspired to support St Elizabeth's. There are many ways to help, for example by making a donation, supporting one of our fundraising events, volunteering or by sharing this Newsletter with someone you know.

If you would like to make a donation, please complete the enclosed form and return to the Freepost address.

If you would like further information on mailing preferences or fundraising, please contact our Fundraising Team at fundraising@stelizabeths.org.uk or on 01279 844355.



2018/19 dates for your Diary

St Elizabeth's Christmas Bazaar

Saturday 24th November 2018

St Elizabeth's Reflection Service

Sunday 2nd December 2018

St Elizabeth's Summer Fayre

Saturday 29th June 2019

Please send to:

FREEPOST, St Elizabeth's, Much Hadham, Herts SG10 6BR

☎ 01279 844355 ✉ fundraising@stelizabeths.org.uk