

*Welcome to the Autumn Term newsletter. It can often be difficult deciding just what to put in each newsletter, there's a lot that we'd like to let you know about and it's hard to fit it all in.*

*We've come alongside a lot of people in practical ways recently, in giving out food parcels and helping with decorating & gardening. Also, you may have heard already that we've been blessed with a new van, which is proving to be a fantastic resource.*

*There's been some fun goings-on over the summer as well. From outings with some of the local families, day trips along the canals, afternoon teas for the elderly, art projects down at the allotment and a day in the park which saw the local community come together for a fantastic time.*



## A bit of summer fun!

In mid-August, Chamberlain Gardens saw people turn out in force for what was a brilliant community fun day. The weather held and people were able to enjoy good food, good music and everything from face painting & bouncy castles to table football competitions & Sport4Life's smoothie bike.

Karis brought together an enthusiastic group of local residents to organise the day. The group helped get other local people and groups in the area involved.

Over twenty organisations came along on the day to support the event and there are thanks for BID Services, Birmingham City Council Money Advice, BrumLETS, Central Ladywood Forum, Church Alive, Church of the Redeemer, the Deaf Cultural Centre, Dhiva, Edgbaston Reservoir Rangers, Favour for a favour, GEML, Ladywood Children's Centre, Ladywood Project, Norman Power Centre, Sport4Life, St John's Church, Tesco, the local fire service and police, the various caterers and all the others who came together to make the day such a great success.



Thanks also to the Capoeira group from the Ladywood Arts & Leisure Centre, the CRC dance group, Paul, our DJ, and the Flashbacks who provided some great entertainment.

Though we couldn't do an accurate count, we estimated there were nearly 800 people who passed through during the course of the day and there was a good crowd throughout. Everyone we've spoken to really enjoyed the day and we're hopeful that this can become an annual event, so look out for next year's fun day, even bigger and better!

## New faces...

We are welcoming a couple of new faces to the team in the office.

Lynne Harmon will be joining Jude in running the All Being Well project.



"Having the opportunity to be part of an organisation seeking to facilitate the transformation of peoples' lives is such a privilege. I trust that my time with Karis will see transformation for individuals and the reality of hope to the community.

I am grateful to those who have been and still are available to support times of transformation in my own life. I believe in change and am passionate about bringing hope for everyone." - Lynne

Also, though we've had to say goodbye to Paula, who went back to Bogota at the start of the summer, we were pleased to welcome Jan who arrived last month.

Jan is from Slovakia and is joining us for a year's placement as part of his time with the Jesuit Volunteer Community.

## Your Say...

“Though the Community Fun Day was initiated by Karis Neighbour Scheme it was great how they got lots of local people and organisations together to arrange it.

We were impressed with how easy they made it for us all to get involved and how everyone worked really hard and made it such a great day.”

David, local resident

“I was pleased to be asked to help at the Chamberlain Gardens Fun Day. I really enjoyed having a stall, it was a lovely sunny day.

I was in charge of the clothes, shoes and bags stall. A good day was had by all, lots of fun stalls for the children.”

Mary, local resident

“We had so many donations to the bric-a-brac stall that it filled most of a marquee.

With help from many volunteers we raised over £100 for the Ladywood project.

A big thank you to everyone involved.”

Nettes, local resident

## Getting away for the day

John and Katherine, who own the Golden Cross, kindly offered to take some of the families we work with on day trips on their canal boat in early September.

It may have been a cold, breezy couple of days but that didn't stop the families who had the opportunity to go enjoying the experience. One of the women who went said the canals were like 'a whole different world'.

Our hosts extended a very warm welcome to those who joined them aboard and the children had a great time working the locks, while parents enjoyed the relaxed pace of the canals. Some of the older children even had a go at steering the boat.

They weren't able to travel far in a day, but even so it was easy to forget you were in the city.

A very big thank you to John and Katherine for making this great experience possible and for being so generous in their time and hospitality.



## A visit to the Nature Centre

In August we took fifteen families to visit the Nature Centre and Canon Hill Park.

We spent some time looking around the Nature Centre at all sorts of wildlife from farm animals to kangaroos. People explored the centre in smaller groups and had chance to look at all the enclosures.



After exploring the Nature Centre we spent the rest of the day in Canon Hill Park where we had a picnic lunch, fed the geese and played in the playground until the rain came down.

More recently we also took a group to the ThinkTank who kindly provided free tickets to their open day for our families.

Thank you to all our volunteers and helpers, especially those from Polesworth Abbey who joined us at the Nature Centre, for making both these trips really enjoyable for everyone who came.

## White Van Man...?!



In the last newsletter we mentioned our trip to Cross Pollinate where we pitched to a group of business people for money to buy a van. The photo of a three seater sofa tied to the roof of a VW Polo must have won them over as we came away with enough

pledged to buy a brand new Ford Transit Connect van.

The new van has now arrived and it's been nipping back and forth across Ladywood, Edgbaston and even further afield. It's a great resource, not only for our work but also for us to support some of the other groups we partner with such as Hope Housing. Keep your eyes peeled as the van may soon be out and about with our logo painted on the side.

## Lending a hand

We try to come alongside people in practical ways when we can.

Because we rely mainly on volunteers to offer this help it depends on the time and enthusiasm they're willing to give as to what we can do.



So, it was fantastic when a ten strong team from Oasis church volunteered to give some of their time to help do some practical work. One of the ladies we know was in need of a hand with quite a bit of work around the house and having two young boys meant she couldn't manage on her own, though the boys were happy to try and help out as much as they could.

The group spent a morning cutting back the garden, clearing away rubbish, cleaning up the yard and stripping wallpaper ready for one of the rooms to be painted. Having so many hands to help



was great; they did a huge amount of work and made a big difference to the family.

If you'd like to lend a hand in a similar way, or know someone else who might, please do get in touch and let us know. We always appreciate the help.

## Your Say...

"I felt that being asked to get involved with organising the Fun Day was something which I was pleased to do.

At the meetings we had to organise the Fun day I was impressed with people's enthusiasm and importantly how everyone was doing this out of the goodness of their heart, that they and I felt that Ladywood deserved the best day that we could all organise.

At the fun day it was lovely to meet so much of Ladywood's community, many of whom I had never met, but it was a real pleasure to meet people and see them all doing their bit.

I loved watching the Children's faces being painted by Ruth and another volunteer, seeing expressions of joy as they became a lion, a tiger or a butterfly in the sunshine. I persuaded their parents to fill in a Leisure questionnaire while they waited for their children.

The exchange of simple acts of kindness and seeing the community mixing and talking and having fun was the highlight for me. Also how simple it was for all the volunteers to get together and materialise this wonderful day which brought some much needed kindness into the community.

Thank you to all the wonderful people who worked hard to make this event a success."

Dalbero, local resident

## Coming up...

Tuesday 3rd November '09  
**Step-Up Programme**  
10:00am till 12:30pm @  
Karis Neighbour Scheme

Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November '09  
**'Buddy' Training Evening**  
6:00pm till 7:00pm @  
Karis Neighbour Scheme

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> November '09  
**Fundraising Auction**  
6:45pm till 9:00pm @  
St George's Church, Edgbaston

Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> November '09  
**Time for Tea**  
3:30pm till 5:30pm @  
Onneley House

Saturday 14th November '09  
**Social - Walk**  
12:00 noon till 1:00pm @  
Edgbaston Reservoir

Saturday 12th December '09  
**Ladywood's Got Talent**  
TBC @  
Church of the Redeemer

*If you would like any more information about Karis or a particular area of our work please do get in touch;*

Karis Neighbour Scheme  
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0121 456 3212  
0121 455 7524 (Fax)

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## A Big Thank You...

...to everyone who has donated food to us through their harvest collections recently. We've been generously supported by local churches and would like to thank all those who've contributed. Our food store is entirely stocked by donations and harvest always sees the cupboard overflow.

We've seen the need for food parcels continue to grow in recent months. While it may be simple store cupboard food we're able to give out it can ease the burden on people who are really struggling to get by and can mean that those who wouldn't otherwise get a decent meal.

Some of the people we support may only need food as a one off, others may get help for weeks or months. The generosity of people at harvest helps us to be able to offer this much needed resource all year round. Once again, a big thank you.

## Fancy Joining Us?

St George's Church is hosting a fundraising auction on Friday 13th November. The funds raised will be given to Karis and we're wanting to support the evening in any way we can.

If you have anything you could donate for auction, or if you could make a promise of your time or skills to be likewise auctioned on the night, we would be delighted to receive any contributions.

Or, you might like to join us at the evening itself and take part in the auction. You can come along for pizza and a glass of wine for £5 a ticket or just pop in for the auction itself for £2 a ticket. If you would like to purchase tickets just get in touch with us at the office and ask for Harry.

## Christmas Gifts

We know it's a bit early to be thinking about Christmas yet but as this is the last newsletter before then we wanted to make a small appeal.

Each year we like to give out little gift boxes to some of the elderly folk we support. The boxes are usually filled with things like food, toiletries and little treats. If you would like to help fill the boxes we would be very grateful for any contributions.

If you have the time and want to get involved we always appreciate a helping hand closer to Christmas in delivering the gift boxes. Just let Helen know if you're willing to volunteer some time to help.

**SureStart**



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**The National Lottery**  
through the Big Lottery Fund

