

# OUR OWN VOICES

The newsletter of Opening Doors

Issue 25 December 2014

## New for 2015

We are really excited that next year we will be sending out our Opening Doors membership cards.

Before we do this we need to check that we have the correct information for our members.

We would also like to know if you have any health issues that it would be helpful for us to know about so we can make sure we are supporting you safely.

We keep this information **confidential**. This means we will keep it private.

We are pleased that it is still free to be a member of Opening Doors.



Turn over the page to find out what we need from you.

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# What we need you to do now

**Membership form**  
Opening Doors

**Information about you**

My name and age  
Your name and your age

Your address

Your phone number

Your email

Who to contact in an emergency  
Name Number

Do you have any health issues?

Do you use any equipment to get around?

Do you have a learning disability or difficulty?

Please return the form to us by **Friday 16 January 2015**

In with this newsletter is a membership form. It includes space to tell us about your health needs and if you are happy for us to use your photograph.

We need you to fill in the form and return it to Opening Doors.

You can hand it to an Adviser or post it to:

**Opening Doors**  
38a Bull Close  
Norwich  
NR3 1SX

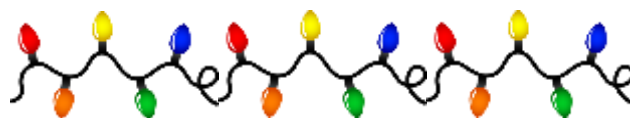
If there is not anyone at home who can help you with this form please call us.

If we do not receive a form from you we will think you no longer wish to be a member of Opening Doors.



**01603  
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# Christmas open house in Norwich...



We welcome our friends to come and join us in the Norwich office on **Tuesday 23rd December**.

Please drop in anytime between 11.00am and 3.00pm for some mince pies and Christmas fun.

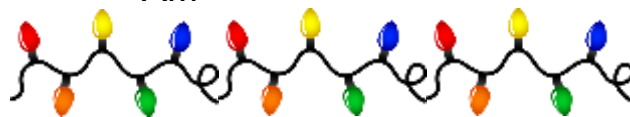


AM

to



PM



# ...and a Christmas raffle in Cromer



There will be a Raffle and drop in on **Friday 19th December** at the Cromer Office in Merchants Place.

Please come along between 10.30am and 12.00pm.

Raffle tickets are £1 per strip.

There will be Christmas Cards and a cake stall.



# Cromer table top sale

'On Friday 31<sup>st</sup> October Dan came to Cromer to help at the table top sale.



Dan and Jason were on the stall. We had DVDs, Christmas cards, bric-a-brac and jewellery for sale.

It was good to meet people. We raised £35.80 for the Cromer Office.'



By  
Dan Barrett  
and  
Carl Bygrave

# Christmas and New Year office closures

The Norwich office will be



closed from 5.00pm on Tuesday 23 December



open from 9.00am on Monday 5 January 2015

The Cromer office will be



closed from 4.00pm on Friday 19 December



open from 10.30am on Friday 16 January 2015



# Christmas card design winner

The winner of the competition to design the Opening Doors Christmas Card for this year is Debbie Banyer from Cromer.

It was the first time Debbie had entered the competition so it is thrilling for her to win the £20 prize for her design which will feature on our Opening Doors Christmas Cards.

# My hospital experience

By Sabrina Bartram



'In April of this year I took myself to the doctor's because I knew something was wrong.



The doctor was really good and gave me a check up. She then sent me to the hospital for further tests.

I had to have lots of tests, because it was really important that they gave me the right treatment. One of the tests I had was an MRI scan; this was a big x-ray machine that uses



magnetic signals. The tube was big, scary and noisy, but

the nurses were really helpful.

I had to go in feet first. They gave me some headphones, and let me listen to the radio. They checked on me to see that I was ok.

I was in there for 45 minutes.



I had to go and see a Consultant to get my results. He was very good and explained everything to me clearly. He knew that I had a learning difficulty, so he checked that I understood.



He told me that I would need to go into hospital to have an operation.

I had to go on a Waiting List!

I got the date to go into hospital in August. I was really scared!

A few days before I went into hospital I contacted Tristan Johnson, the Learning Disability Liaison Nurse.

Before the day, I had to have an assessment, to make sure I was healthy enough for the operation and that I wasn't allergic to anything.

She spoke to the Ward I was going to be in. She told them I was coming and arranged for the visiting times to be flexible so that a family member, or my Advocate could stay with me for longer if I needed extra support.

I was able to have the Advocate stay with me on the day I went in and they met me at Recovery after I came out of the operating theatre.

The nurses in the ward I was in were very helpful.



The day after the op, I was out of bed and walking about slowly.

I had to stay in hospital for a few days. I feel much better now.'

# Training Calendar in 2015



From January we will be running an exciting new programme of training courses.

At the December training group meeting we will be voting on what are the most important topics to cover in 2015.

We will be running one training session a month on different topics for professionals, support workers and people with Learning Disabilities.

In January we will be sending out our new training calendar and booking form. It will include information to help you understand what the courses are about.

We are really excited. All our training has been written by us at our training group. And will be delivered by us.

Look out for our calendar. We hope you can come along.



# A members poem: 5 ways to wellbeing

Wellbeing is sharing news and giving time  
To help make sure we feel happy and fine  
To notice things more it helps us shine  
You will pick up more when you read this rhyme.

Connecting to a person is sometimes hard  
Too often we text, email, or write a card  
So try to talk to each other when walking,  
bus or car

Speaking and listening is better by far.

Being active helps the brain and body to  
work happily

No need to sweat just be gentle and free  
Take more walks and use up some energy  
Let's use less of the TV and other technology.

Taking the time to notice the world that we share  
Enjoying the sights and starting to care  
Instead we don't notice it all seems so bare  
Let's try a different route and see what's out  
there.

Learning is good we learn every day  
It helps keep depression and anxiety away  
Different ideas from what we do or may say  
Resources are there to find a new way.

Giving time and help to people that are here  
Making them happy with nothing to fear  
It's a joy to give, it feels great and so dear  
Too friends, family and others who's near.

All these things are an act of wellbeing  
And some examples for you we have given  
Communicate, exercise and stop you're kidding  
Get good health in this life that we're living.

By Hayley Burwood

## Christmas members meeting



15 members attended our Christmas Norwich Members Meeting at Chapelfield Road Church.



We were joined by Father Christmas!



We walked over to The Forum and watched the Christmas Light Switch On and Fireworks.



Back at the meeting we enjoyed Bingo, Christmas Karaoke and some nibbles.



Thank you to all our volunteers who helped out on the night. Without extra support we would not be able to make this happen.

Also thank you to Tesco's for kindly giving us food and drinks to share.



## Have a go at our Christmas wordsearch

C	H	R	I	S	T	M	A	S	D	A	Y
A	S	E	T	R	B	I	V	K	M	D	C
R	X	I	Z	Y	Q	S	W	J	F	V	A
D	U	N	A	P	W	T	H	O	G	E	R
S	Z	D	X	C	M	L	O	B	R	N	O
P	Q	E	Z	X	N	E	L	M	V	T	L
Y	T	E	W	Q	A	T	L	V	M	C	S
P	Q	R	X	Z	T	O	Y	S	N	A	I
M	B	D	H	K	J	E	W	N	P	L	N
C	R	A	C	K	E	R	S	O	H	E	G
T	U	R	K	E	Y	P	M	W	B	N	E
M	I	N	C	E	P	I	E	S	G	D	R
S	L	E	I	G	H	B	E	L	L	A	S
T	I	N	S	E	L	Z	C	M	X	R	Y

1. Christmas Day
2. Mistletoe
3. Advent Calendar
4. Crackers
5. Toys
6. Snow
7. Reindeer
8. Sleigh bell
9. Cards
10. Carol Singers
11. Mince pies
12. Tinsel
13. Turkey
14. Holly



## Staff update

There have been a number of staff changes this year at Opening Doors. This is an update of who's who!



**Ian Duckmanton**  
Executive Adviser



**Jo Brown**  
Part-time Adviser



**Cathy Huston**  
Great Yarmouth and  
Waveney Adviser



**Ian Hubbard**  
Norwich, North and  
South District Adviser



**Jen Darlow**  
Admin Supporter



**Lou Isherwood**  
Admin and Accessible  
Information Supporter

## Training: Looking after your eyes



Three members of the Training Group ran training sessions at the Cromer Advocacy Group.

Andrew Borrett, Carol Barber and Janet Brandish have been travelling up to Cromer to run the sessions.

The training has been put together with another charity called Seeability.

Feedback from the training has been really positive.

Well done to everyone taking part.

Andrew  
and  
Carol  
leading  
the  
training





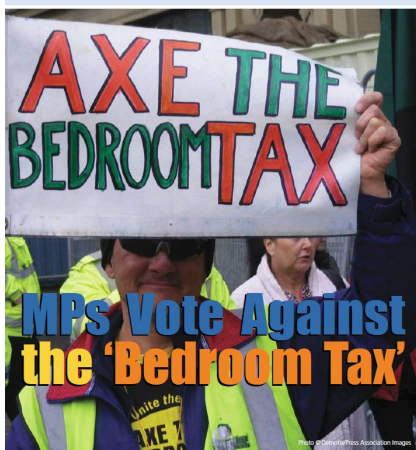
# easy news eleventh edition

The next edition of easy news, a newspaper that is easier to understand for people with learning disabilities, is available now.

You can read it at advocacy groups or contact the office and we can email a copy to you.



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## Japanese visitors



Documentary-makers from Japan came to Opening Doors to look at how our members have taken control of their lives and make informed decisions for themselves.

In Japan, a person with a learning disability is given a guardian who makes their decisions for them – from money, to home and health matters.

Producer Minako Kurachi met with Peter Moule, a member of Opening Doors.

Peter said: "I do feel that I am making decisions for myself in my own life. Through my work at Opening Doors I can share information with other disabled people."

## Lloyd's winners!



Great news!

We came third in the Lloyd's Community Fund and won £1,000 for the Cromer Office.

Well done to everyone who voted!

## Feeling unwell?

If you are feeling unwell please stay at home. Do not come into the office.

It is important not to spread germs.

Get well soon if you are feeling poorly!



## Do you need a meeting room?

The Joan Scott Training Room at our Norwich Office on Bull Close is now available to hire.

We are situated 10 minutes from the City Centre, provide on-site parking and seating for up to 15 people seated Boardroom Style.

Please call the office for more information and prices.



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## Norwich community office

Every Monday from 10.00am to 12.00pm our office on Bull Close is open to members to come in and learn new office skills.

If you would like to come along please call the office.



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## A 'crafty' adventure



By Sabrina Bartram

'Hayley and I are really into making things so we decided to have a go at doing a Craft Fair.

Hayley got busy making cards, and I made some Hot Water Bottle covers and Christmas decorations.

On the day we were both very nervous; we got there and set up.

It can be quite boring sitting in the same place all day, but it's a great feeling when people buy things.

Hayley is putting the money she makes from her cards, to Opening Doors.

We have set up a Facebook page and called ourselves Sabs and Hales Crafts.

We have had business cards and t-shirts made, to wear when we are doing a stall. We are showing that people can achieve their dreams.

Hayley and I encourage each other and work well together, which is what Advocacy is all about.'



# Candle-lit vigil



By Paul McCluskey

'In October, Ian Duckmanton, myself, Janet Brandish and Peter Moule attended this year's Vigil which was held at The Forum in Norwich.

Janet and I did a small speech about Hate Crime and that this has been on the increase in the last year. We both got a round of applause for this.

The Police, Hate Free Norfolk and the Safer Places Scheme are all working together to help stamp this out for good.

There were other speakers, including Michelle de Oude and Poppy Rose. There was some harp music playing, which was very soothing.

A candle was given to each person who was there; although the most disappointing thing was there was not a great amount of people there.

So I hope after more publicity there will be more people there next year.'



# Raising money for Opening Doors

A huge congratulations to Simon Hayes for swimming 20 lengths at the Oasis swimming pool in Hunstanton to raise money for Opening Doors.

He raised a massive £194.50 from sponsorship.

Thank you and well done from everyone at Opening Doors!

Can you help raise money for us?



# Holiday buddy

'I am looking for someone to join me on holiday next year.

I would like to stay in a caravan near Great Yarmouth.'

Please call the office if you would like to join Peter.

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## Advocacy group start back dates



**Cromer Advocacy Group**  
Thursday 22 January  
**New Venue: St Johns Ambulance, Bond St**



**Norwich Advocacy Group**  
Tuesday 10 February  
Chapelfield Road Church



**Parents Groups**  
Contact Cathy at the office for start dates.

## Save the date



Opening Doors is holding our celebration day on **Saturday 20 June 2015.**

It will be a chance to hear about what we have been up to over the past year and what we hope to do in the future.

Please save the date!



**The next issue of Our Own Voices will be out in February 2015**



This newsletter is available on **CD** and in **large print**.  
If you need either please call 01603 631433.



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