

Spring 2023



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Andy's Award & diary dates including an Art Competition

City of Culture

Leeds 2023 is a programme embracing art and creativity across the City.

It opened with a huge performance at Headingley Stadium called *The Awakening*. The stage was filled with dancers, singers, musicians and artists of all ages, abilities and races, including our very own customers and staff from Hillside community base plus Lewis from Strawberry Lane and Jenny from Sky Fallers. The guys performed on stage in front of ten thousand people, alongside celebrities such as Corinne Bailey Rae, Gabby Logan and George Webster in the Leeds on Wheels section of the show.

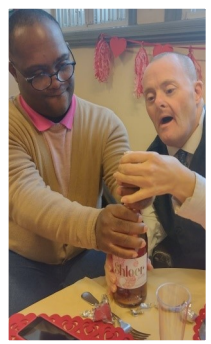
All their hard work paid off as they awoke the "Cultural Giant" of Leeds, who encouraged everyone to be as creative as they can be. Well done to Lewis, Jenny and all at Hillside for their amazing performances!



Love Is in the Air!

Roses are red, violets are blue, our favourite Valentines' are spent with you! Across our services people dressed in their finest, bought flowers and even cracked out the candles for Valentines Day! There were also Valentine's Day meals and games. Danny and Alan popped a bottle of bubbles, Naburn base had a party and both Cross Gates and Richmond Hill bases put on their dancing shoes and had a disco.

But the most heart-warming story, this Valentine's Day, comes from Danny and Kelly. Danny planned a lovely dinner for 2, with a rose on the table, before getting down on one knee and popping *the* question. Yes, Danny asked Kelly to marry him and, of course, Kelly said yes! They're thrilled to be engaged and we send our biggest congratulations to the happy couple.



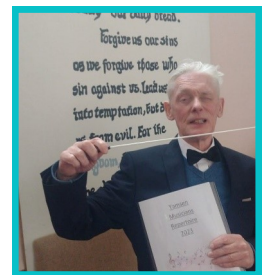
Partners Roundup

There's a saying that 'Team Work makes the Dream Work'. Well, the partners we have teamed up with have been very busy! Here's a little glimpse at what everyone has been getting up to.

YAMSEN have not only been hosting their weekly sessions, but lots of you sang with them at the Rothwell Music Festival. Phillip stepped up to conduct the group and the judges said "It's good to see so many singers in this group. It was a joy to hear you".



Vera Media have been working with our very own Ginger Cat Theatre Group, to learn about Foley artist work. Foley work is making sound effects for shows, TV, film or radio. They have been learning about making circus sounds and had several recording sessions ... in fact we think we heard some of their work at the Cultural Awareness Day!



Bright Sparks have been working on their next show and rehearsals have already begun. Things are looking very magical and we can't wait to see what they have lined up.



Since 2012, Open Country have been going out on walking trips with people from Barleyfields and Wetherby bases. The group has explored lots of places already this year, from Fountains Abbey to Otley Chevin. What a great way to stay fit, get into nature and enjoy each other's company!

Your News

Flipping Delicious!

This February, lots of you got your spatulas out and whipped up your best pancakes for Pancake Day! All at Blackgates enjoyed flat pancakes covered in lots of syrup, Diane enjoyed hers rolled up with sugar, crepe-style, while Barbara preferred the fluffier dutch pancakes. How do you enjoy yours?



Kelly's Kitchen

In March, Kelly decided it was time to start a healthy eating plan, but it's a bit scary when you don't know how. So, she started taking cooking classes with Jamie Oliver's Ministry of Food in Leeds Kirkgate Market. With the support of her friends and everyone on Facebook cheering her on, Kelly started her Healthy Eating Plan. Keep it up Kelly, we know you can do it!



Our Heroes

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No! It's the Gateway Superhero Party!!! The lads from Waterloo Supported Living Service flexed their muscles and put on their best spandex for the Gateway Superhero Party. Andrew wore his black mask and gadget belt as Batman, John and David got out the bright red undies and cape to become Supermen and Carl got dressed quick as a wink to become the Flash!

We feel much safer with these heroes about.

Fund-Raising Fun!

The folks at Bramley Day Service decided to start their New Year with a resolution: to get fit and do some fundraising at the same time! In support of Prostate Cancer charities, everyone took part in February Fitness Month, where they did exercise every day. Sophie, Liam, Lee, Caroline, Andrew and Jui Juinn, with the help of Donna and Simba, raised just under £180. Well done!



Many of you managed to see Bright Sparks' show "Nice to See You (To See you Twice)" just before Christmas. The money raised by the audience from all their shows raised a whopping £466.55 for the theatre group. This, together with funding from Aspire, will help them continue to spread the fun in 2023.



Your News (continued)

Happiness Projector

Holt Park base recently said goodbye to the interactive projector, which they have enjoyed as part of the Happiness Programme. Whether it was drumming to music, playing games or enjoying a full sensory experience, everyone loved the projector, and they can't wait to have the kit again.

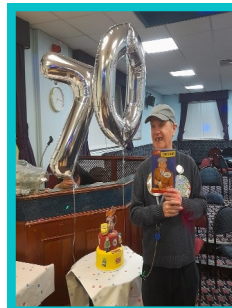
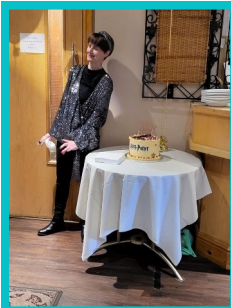
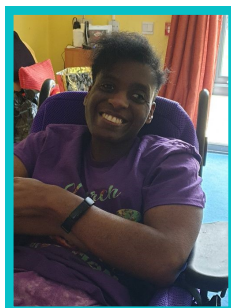
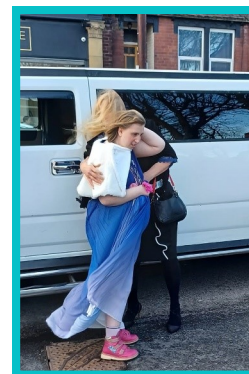


Big Birthdays!

A huge Happy Birthday to anyone who has enjoyed their birthday since our January newsletter. We've had some big ones since then including:

Chloe who knew she wanted to mark the grand occasion of her 21st birthday in style. She got dressed up in a glamorous gown and fascinator (which is a fancy hat) and hired a stretch limousine to take her for a ride. Chloe looked fabulous - just like a film star - and we hope it was a day to remember!

Charmaine and Ben both turned 40, Tracey was 50 and Ian enjoyed his 60th. Chris and Margaret both turned an impressive 70 (but they don't look a day over 69!). Happy Birthday to these guys and everyone else who is celebrating.



Naburn's New Garden

Naburn community base have been excited about getting the garden ready for spring, but the unsteady gravel made it difficult for people who use wheelchairs to enjoy the garden.

When construction company, Balfour Beatty, heard about this they kindly came to the rescue and offered to put in a new path for free (saving us £4,000). Now everyone can use the garden. The folk at Naburn base are over the moon.

Thank you Balfour Beatty for your hard work. Everyone will be enjoying the sunshine out there very soon!



Aspire's the Greatest Show!

We held our annual Cultural Awareness Day at The Irish Centre. The theme was The Greatest Showman, and it was wonderful to have an in-person event. Though it's been 3 years since the last Cultural Awareness Day, we made up for lost time with a day full of performances and fun!

Sky Fallers, *Dramarama* and Ginger Cats all performed on the day. We also had some interactive sessions: Kieron signed *A Million Dreams*, Alice hosted Zumba, Lewis performed belly dancing and also treated us to a rendition of his dance routine from the LEEDS 2023 Awakening. 'Old' favourite, Inder, came back to host a drumming workshop and we even had circus performers, who did some tricks on stage, before coming into the audience and teaching tricks up close. William particularly loved balancing tricks and he was a natural!



On top of all this we had a Fancy Dress Parade. Everyone looked fabulous and the audience judged the prize winners to be: Jenny as Miss Harley Quinn (3rd), Lewis and his family as a circus troupe (2nd) and James, Rajesh and Stephen were the winners as The Three Clowns!

We all had a brilliant day at the Circus, but as always, our favourite part of the day was just being together and watching the wonderful talent we have at Aspire!



Easter Egg-xcitement



Whether it was hunting for eggs in the garden, making Easter bonnets or creating a delicious lamb dinner, so many of you made the most of the long Easter Weekend. Strawberry Lane enjoyed an Easter Party, Kirkstall went out for a pub dinner and Armley Vicarage had an Easter Buffet Lunch.



It was smiles all round and it seems everyone had a lovely time. We would like to thank Hammers for Work and Support, and Balfour Beatty, who donated Easter Eggs to Strawberry Lane community base and Bramley Fulfilling Lives. They went down an absolute treat!

STAR Awards 2022

We held our annual staff STAR Awards and it was an emotional day given this was our first in-person awards event since the pandemic.

Zoe Bawn, our Chief Executive, talked about how proud she is of the hard work done by staff. *Dramarama* gave an upbeat and colourful performance of *YMCA* and *I Am What I Am* before 18 members of staff picked up their awards for 25 years of service.



Next, the staff and organisations shortlisted in each of the 7 categories of awards were revealed. We watched videos about why each of these had been nominated before the winner of each category was announced.

This year was the first year for our new category - *Partner of the Year* - and there wasn't a dry eye in the house when 7-year-old Amelia picked up the trophy for her amazing fundraising efforts for Bramley Day Service where her Aunty Laura attends.

Congratulations to the Winners:



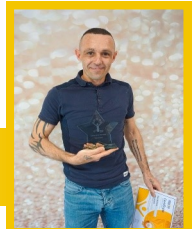
★ Colleague of the Year- Judith Kennedy (Holt Park)



★ Inspirational Person of the Year- Emma Frith (Bramley FLS)



★ Learner of the Year- Ryan Baldwin (Rothwell FLS)



★ Newcomer of the Year- Ewa Mahmoud (Farfield Respite)



★ Partner of the Year- Amelia Harrison



★ Unsung Hero of the Year- Gurmukh Bhogal (Reed)

★ Team of the Year- Area 3 Bramley FLS



Royal Hello

Alice, Scott and John had a royally good afternoon at Kirkgate Market in January, when a familiar face appeared. They were approached by HRH Princess of Wales, Kate Middleton, who was giving a talk on her "Shaping Us" campaign about supporting children.

Before giving her talk, she spoke to Scott about his newly purchased DVD, shook Alice's hand and was charmed by John who even gave her a kiss on the hand. Always a gentleman!

Everyone was thrilled to meet the Princess and couldn't wait to tell us all!



Farewell and Hello

We would like to wish Howard Emmerson, Bernard Bowles and Dahlia Richards all the best for their retirements. Between them they have been supporting people with learning disabilities in Leeds for more than 70 years.



We wish our new Quality Manager, Jo Seed, a very warm welcome.

Jo brings a wealth of experience in both health and social care settings. She will drive continuous improvement throughout our services by supporting managers to develop and implement action plans. This will ensure our services maintain quality and are compliant with CQC regulations.

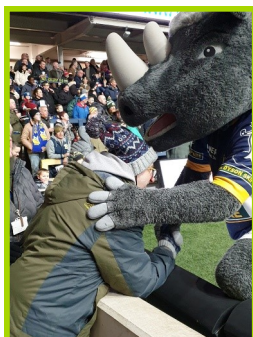


World of Sports



The Leeds Rhinos Foundation sessions continue to be a huge hit. Pudsey community base have been enjoying indoor sessions, working on aim and co-ordination. Now that the weather has improved, the Super League sessions have started at Kirkstall. It's great to see everyone back out on the field.

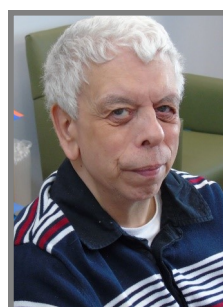
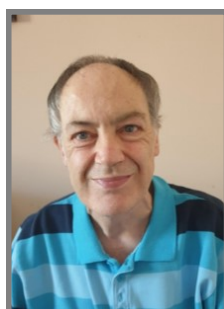
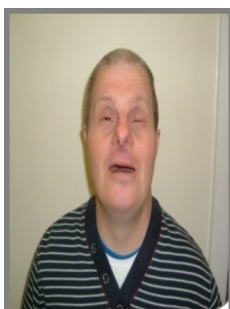
Middleton community base have been keeping up their training with Leeds Corinthians. Their skills are always building and competition is stiff for the prestigious Player of the Week trophy. Hayley was thrilled with her display of Girl Power when she beat all the lads and won the trophy. Who do you think will win next time?



A lot of you have been showing your sporting spirit by getting out to matches in the last few months. Endecliff loved the Rhinos match at Headingley Stadium and even got to meet Ronnie the Rhino himself!

Sad News

We are sad to report the deaths of Paul Bullock, Jean Purcell, Stephen Taylor, Stuart Hick and Clive Robson. They were all much loved and will be missed by those whose lives they touched. Our deepest condolences go out to their families and friends.



Andy's Award

Andy Rawnsley, our former Chief Exec, has won the Leeds Quality in Care Awards 2022 in the category Outstanding Contribution to Social Care.

Many of you reached out on social media to congratulate Andy, who said "Thank you for your kind words - they mean a great deal to me. Wishing everyone at Aspire (and beyond) all the very best."



Diary Dates

25th
April

Carers Information Session - Potternewton 10am-1pm
To book a place contact Carers Leeds on 0113 380 4300
Or email advice@carersleeds.org.uk

Closing date for our **Spring Awakening Art Competition**.
Winners will be announced on 2nd May.

28th
April

1st
May

Spring Bank Holiday

Coronation of King Charles III

6th
May

8th
May

King's Coronation Bank Holiday

Summer Bank Holiday

29th
May

19th
June

19th–23rd Leeds Learning Disability Week

28th
Aug

Summer Bank Holiday

Leeds Pride

6th
Aug

And Finally ...

Our Customer Survey is underway. Don't forget to complete your questionnaire for your chance to tell us what you like about your service from Aspire or what you would like to change.



Check out our Facebook page,
Twitter and Instagram accounts

www.aspirecbs.org.uk

0113 387 1919

News Team

News Editor

- Carol Benson

e-News producer

- Shaun Pilkington

News Reporter

- Jodie Linley-McVeigh

Don't forget to tell us your good news stories so we can let everyone know about them. Please send them to: newsletter@aspirecbs.org.uk

The next issue of our newsletter will be out around: **July 2023**