

# LANCASTER MEN'S HUB NEWSLETTER



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## Cornerstone Relaunch

Saturday 24 September saw the relaunch of the Cornerstone with a full day of celebration involving all those who use this valuable facility regularly along with our local MP, Cat Smith, and the leader of the council, Caroline Jackson. Lancaster Men's Hub were prominent in the event, running the cafe



Members of Lancaster Men's Hub talk to Cat Smith MP

throughout the day, making new contacts, and renewing old ones. Phil McGrath, the Cornerstone manager, said the relaunch was to bring the contribution of the Cornerstone to more general attention, to officially launch their newly created spaces and to re-focus the work of the many community groups that use the Cornerstone as a base for their activities. As well as Lancaster Men's Hub, these included the Making Place Group, Lancaster Male Voice Choir, Lancashire Adult Learning, Lancaster and Morecambe College,

**Answers to last month's brainteaser**  
The cryptic clue answers were  
private ly(re)  
thing (in north in gridlock)  
ballots (anagram of last job)  
Putting the three word into what3words  
gives you the location of  
The Judges Lodgings

Lancashire Youth Challenge, Lancaster CVS, RAIS and many of the LMC Groups including Justice and Peace and Bereavement Support. The day was a great success with good attendance and a formal ribbon-cutting ceremony performed by Cat Smith MP.



Owing to lack of space there will be no Brainteaser in this issue. Watch out for further opportunities to test your thinking and research skills in next month's issue.

## ASDA Green Tokens

A few months ago the newsletter contained details of the ASDA Green Token Scheme, an on-line vote run by the supermarket to determine which local charities should be supported. We are delighted to announce that we have won the latest 3-month scheme and have been awarded a substantial amount of funding. Thanks are due to all the members and guests who took the trouble to vote regularly in the weekly poll, also to ASDA for their generous support over the last year. You can be sure that the money will be spent wisely for the benefit of members and the community. Well done everybody!

**Don't forget that we have Elevenses every Friday from 11.00 pm at the Cornerstone on Sulyard Street. Free coffee social drop-in. Everyone is welcome.**



## Poetry and Music

Although not strictly speaking Lancaster Men's Hub activities, the following may be of interest. We have been privileged to acquire a new member recently who has already proved a real asset to the Hub. His name is Ben Guilfoyle (aka the Woolly Hat Poet) and he is taking part in two initiatives that involve LMH. Firstly, he is organising a regular Poetry Evening on the last Wednesday of every month in the Herbarium, starting on 26 October. The session is called **The Wordarium** and will feature a host of



poetry-related items that should make for a most entertaining evening. In addition, Ben is hosting an evening celebrating the spoken word at Lancaster Methodist Church on 21 October, starting at 7.30 pm; these events will both offer welcome financial support to the Hub.

The second project Ben is involved in has been organised by Phil McGrath, who is the manager of the Cornerstone and a member of LMH. The regular sessions run from 1.00 pm to 3.00 pm every Monday and involve a nostalgic look back to the fifties and sixties for anyone interested, but particularly for people whose recent memories may be causing them difficulties but have happy memories of the music of that era. Ben has been performing with other members of Lancaster Men's Hub at these sessions. The sessions, at the Cornerstone, are entitled **Hanks for the Memory** and are free to participants.

## Samaritans

The Lancaster Men's Hub talk on Friday 30 September was given by the Samaritans. Yvonne Brade and Christine Hough gave an interesting and stimulating talk on the role and importance of the Samaritans and their need for volunteers, since this is a service entirely dependent on volunteers. The



Samaritans are a national institution, and they receive a vast number of calls every day from people troubled by a variety of problems. Christine and Yvonne stressed that the most serious of these problems often involved thoughts about, or actual intentions to, harm themselves, with potential suicide being a major concern for men under 50. Over 5000 people killed themselves in 2020 and 75% of them were men. They spoke about the massive need for volunteers for their 200+ branches and outlined the rigorous training that volunteers receive to ensure that they can cope with the confidentiality and the emotional demands of the calls they get. One aspect of particular

interest was the training given in prisons to prisoner volunteers, who then used those skills to help troubled inmates. Lancaster Men's Hub is very grateful to Yvonne and Christine for such an interesting and enlightening talk. There is a link below for anyone wishing to find out more about this vital organisation.

<https://www.samaritans.org/about-samaritans/our-organisation/what-we-do/>

## Offers to members

Phil McGrath from The Cornerstone has a significant number of Vodafone and O2 SIMS, and vouchers for Three that provide free mobile call and data usage for 6 months. This is designed to help those on low budgets or struggling with the rising cost of living; if you would like to take up this offer then please contact David Mace, our chairman, or Phil. Phil also has 6 places available for anyone wishing to learn to cook using a 'Wonderbag' - dates to be announced. The Wonderbag has been developed to give the ability for families to cook warm meals with up to 70% savings on fuel usage.

The Wonderbag is a non-electric slow cooker that uses heat-retention technology to continue cooking food once the pan has been removed from the heat source. To cook, using the "Wonderbag" participants simply bring the food to the boil on a stove, let it simmer, and then put the pot into the Wonderbag. With no additional gas/electric being used, households can benefit from reduced energy bills, less time spent cooking, and lower household emissions.

