

Fresh in the City

Special Edition | Issue 4 | Winter 2010

Integrated Medicine

- Complementary Therapies for Families
- Parent Support Groups

B-Sage

- Gardening Day 24th September

FInDA

- Pathways to Care

Supporting People

- Our Expanded Services

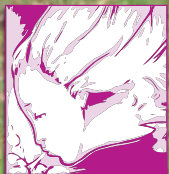
Freshwinds IT

- A Bold New Venture

In the pink

Maxine Gopsill's story

Official Magazine of



FRESHWINDS

Hello and Welcome...

...to this special edition of *Fresh in the City*.

This edition is packed with news and updates about what has been happening at Freshwinds and its various programmes, including:

- *How a local woman fought her cancer and has dedicated her time helping to raise money and support others.*
- *How a group of city workers are giving up their time to help older residents in the north of the city maintain their gardens.*
- *Some of our new staff team give us their experiences of working at Freshwinds and explain how their time with us has helped them as well as our clients.*

We hope you enjoy this edition of our magazine. If you are interested in finding out more about Freshwinds or any of its programmes, you can look at our website: www.freshwinds.org.uk or you can call us on 0121 415 6670.

If you have any comments, questions or suggestions for future issues, please get in touch by phone, post or by email to freshinthecity@freshwinds.org.uk.

Best wishes and happy reading

The Freshwinds Team

**Thanks to all the clients and volunteers
who contributed to this issue!**



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Living with Cancer

Having been diagnosed with breast cancer in 2006, Maxine, a mother of two, came to Freshwinds for support to help her in her road to recovery and a return to normal life. She found great strength from Freshwinds' holistic approach to support which allowed her to benefit from complementary therapies to help with relaxation and pain management as well as important courses to help her build her confidence.

With Freshwinds' support, Maxine continues to make a positive recovery and has been working hard over the past year to raise funds to help us continue supporting people in Birmingham facing similar problems.

Maxine's first project was a sponsored hair-dyeing campaign which saw her colour her hair bright pink for several weeks to reflect Freshwinds' logo. Over 170 people gave their support to Maxine in this campaign which raised over £550.

Her fantastic efforts culminated in a brilliant variety evening at the Royal British Legion club in Northfield in May with performances from a number of great acts including two talented local dance groups and some fantastic singers including tribute acts to the Blues Brothers and the Carpenters. Two hundred and fifty tickets to the event were sold and the evening was a great success which was enjoyed by all.

As a result of her continued dedication and hard work, Maxine has now successfully raised a grand total of £1,601.31 in a short space of time. This is a wonderful achievement and we want to thank her on behalf of all of Freshwinds' clients who will benefit from her commitment and kindness.



Maxine receives a certificate for her hard work from Dr. Rhonda Lee and James Voller

Thank you Freshwinds

You lifted me from the depths of despair

With your support and loving care

Always willing to lend a listening ear

To wipe away tears and fear

Your therapies helped me through all my pain

Teaching me to live life and smile again

Giving me back my courage and will to fight

Encouraging me not to give up even when I loose my sight

My life is much less painful and much more hopeful thanks to you

For all that you are and all that you do

My loving thanks goes to you.

By Maxine Gopsill

Complementary Therapy for Families

Between January and April 2010 the Integrated Medicine Team ran a series of very successful workshops, which invited families who are caring for a child with complex health needs to introduce skills for day to day symptom control. This was funded by Heart of Birmingham PCT. Workshops were held over a period of 10 weeks covering aromatherapy, massage, relaxation and reflexology.

A total of 49 families (121 individuals) attended the workshops. The aim was to allow families to come together in a relaxed and informal way to meet other families and to learn complementary therapy based techniques to assist in relieving common symptoms such as pain, discomfort, fatigue, constipation, anxiety and stress. The workshops were held at The Saffron Center, as well as at the Birmingham Community Children's Centre (Bacchus Road) and at Mayfield special School (Handsworth).



In an atmosphere of fun and play, some of the techniques covered included foot massage, a story script for children's back massage, a quiz about aromatherapy oils and visualisation for relaxation. Families were able to choose which of the sessions to access and they all took away booklets outlining the techniques covered so that they could continue to use them at home. Immediate feedback from the parents and children indicates a 100% satisfaction rate and families felt that the workshops were highly beneficial.



Comments from families include:

- "Benefitted my son and my family and helped my son sleep well and relax more."
- "Because my son suffers from 'stridor' this helps relax and feel better at breathing"
- "This will help us to incorporate relaxation into our daily lives"
- "Helped to relieve aches and pains"
- "It also helps you to bond as a family taking time for relaxation together, making things a lot less stressful".

For further information please contact Ann Goddard on

0121 415 6670

For more information visit:

<http://www.freshwinds.org.uk/2010/07/14/complementary-therapies-for-families/>

Parent Support Group Events



Families with a child living with a life-threatening or life-limiting condition are amongst those that receive support through the Children's project. Many of them are restricted in the types of activities that they can participate in due to disability issues.

Over the last eight years the Parent Support Group has been a channel for families to meet, share experiences and gain peer support. This acts as a source of comfort and respite for parents, siblings and the child. Events usually take place

in the shape of organised outings or activities at pre-arranged venues.

The most recent events included a visit to The Birmingham Nature Centre and the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. Families enjoyed lunch at the Nature Centre and took part in the various activities available. At the next event families will enjoy an afternoon of bowling followed by lunch. The benefits of such events can be summed up in the following comment by one parent:

"We can go as part of a group outing to places where we would not normally go alone because of being self conscious of having a disabled child".

For more information please contact Dr Pankaj Shah at
dr.shah@freshwinds.org.uk

Gardening Day

24th September 2010

Freshwinds' B-Sage programme provides support, advice and a befriending service to elderly and isolated people in the north and east of Birmingham.

Many of our clients suffer with long-term health issues. They, in addition to mobility problems, often do not allow them to maintain their gardens any longer. People take great pride in the upkeep of their garden, and being unable to do so can be upsetting and frustrating.

B-Sage has had the honour of being adopted as Charity of The Year 2010 by GVA Grimley, a Birmingham based property consultancy firm! Along with a £5,000 donation presented to us, some of the employees of GVA Grimley also donated a day of their time to support the B-Sage project. To best take advantage of this opportunity, in a discussion with GVA Grimley, we decided that helping clients with their gardening

would be a great way to make a difference to their quality of life.

As a result, on Friday the 24th of September, we held a "Gardening Day". Three teams of Freshwinds' volunteers and B-Sage staff members, together with a team of 27 volunteers from GVA Grimley, mowed, trimmed, weeded and pruned their way through gardens around Birmingham, in preparation for the onset of winter and to ensure that in the spring these gardens will truly be in bloom.

Thanks to Bournville garden centre, who donated 25kg of spring bulbs to our cause, and City Industrial Power Tools in Longbridge who were so helpful and supportive in providing hire tools for the day.

See some of the feedback from our clients:

- "I can't speak highly enough of all the help I have received from all the staff, in particular Alan Beards and Carole Hartle. Without all of your help, I am sure I couldn't have coped to be where I am today, and I know from other people who have home helpers that they feel the same towards them." - JP
- "Thank you for helping me with all the stuff I did not understand. I now feel that there is a light at the end of the tunnel.... I had buried my head in the sand, hoping it would all go away... just talking to Linda I feel I have achieved so much, and I thank her for all the support that I needed; she has encouraged me to start looking after myself and to be able to get on top of all the stuff I never thought I could do." - CH
- "My experiences with the people who come to see and help me were so helpful, and cheered me up." - DS
- "We feel that someone is 'out there for you', and that is very comforting. We hope these visits are here permanently. Thank you so much." - BMH



Pathways to Care

Pathways to Care is an innovative employer-led "into work" programme designed and delivered by Freshwinds' FInDA Employment and Training programme.

FInDA Employment and Training engaged with local Health and Social Care Employers as well as Freshwinds' B-Sage programme to offer employment and volunteering opportunities to unemployed individuals within the city.

In order to offer this service to the widest possible audience FInDA Employment and Training also worked in partnership with the Birmingham City Council Employment Access Team (EAT) and Bournville College.

Pathways to Care offered employment-focused accredited and non accredited training, interview preparation and guaranteed interviews with employers. By working in partnership with the B-Sage programme we were also able to offer volunteering opportunities for individuals that couldn't access the programme or employment immediately. Freshwinds' Supporting People Programme also supported this activity through the delivery of Safeguarding, Moving and Handling, and Equality and Diversity Training.

The programme was extremely successful in gaining a large number of employment opportunities for the participants.



Cornel Bonner is a young, vibrant and dynamic Jamaican man. He worked 3 jobs in Jamaica as a taxi driver, security guard and a trained electrician. He came to the UK and was unable to legally work until his citizenship was resolved. He has been in the UK six years and has just been granted citizenship. He is married to a British woman and they have three young children. Cornel found it really hard to find a job; his electrician qualification was not recognised in the UK and he could not just walk straight into a job in the electrical industry.

His licence for taxi driving in Jamaica had also run out and again was not permissible in the UK. He came to see me in desperation; he is a proud man and was starting to lose faith that he would be able to support his family. We arranged for him have some driving lessons so that he could start making the steps to get back into taxi driving. This gave him confidence, faith and raised his self esteem. I then talked to him about other professions as I had noticed he had excellent people skills and is a good communicator. He is also a very gentle and caring person and I suggested that he took the training programme that we have in-house here at Freshwinds called **Pathway to Care**. He now works full time in a care home and is thoroughly enjoying it. He takes his driving test next week!

We are proud to have helped him on his journey to independence and will continue to help him support his family.

Valerie Burns



Future Jobs : Success Stories

Munir 20



My name is Munir Khan. I work in the Supporting People Team as a Trainee Refugee Tenancy Support Worker and my journey to employment has been filled with a host of highs. I started at Freshwinds with a two weeks training which offered me a brief introduction to the organisation and the work we do. I recognised that I had an attitude when I started which I am pleased to say has now changed.

While on the training I started to come out of my shell and during the training I had the chance to meet the staff team and the managers who discussed with me the project aims and the different clients I would be working with. We agreed that I would be best placed within the Refugee team and what a team to pick! The work was and still remains very demanding.

My journey to employment was very tough with many hurdles to cross but I felt that all the team were very supportive. I was given lots of opportunities to learn on the job which helped me to understand all the paperwork I was required to complete and to better understand the accountability of being a support worker.

During my initial 6 month contract I recognised that I was growing as a person and was doing very well. I started to learn things about myself which I had not noticed before. Initially, I think that I might have struggled had the management team not been as accessible as they are, because my line manager was not always around due to her busy schedule, but I always felt able to walk into the senior management office to seek advice about how best to approach my work.

I have had some moments where I have thought to myself "What am I doing here?" but the thought of not being able to help somebody continues to affect my attitude towards the job. As the end of my original 6 month contract started to near, I realised how quickly my time at Freshwinds had passed. I was very anxious to find out if I was to be kept on but my attitude to the work did not change and I think that this is what helped me to be here at Freshwinds today.

I have grown as a person and probably would now be described as "A mature head on young shoulders". The experience here has been wonderful. I am still learning today and I think I will be learning for as long as I am in this job.

Trisha 54



Each day I wake up looking forward to going to work at Freshwinds. At the start of this journey I never thought I would ever be so passionate about anything. After losing both parents last year I went right down, not thinking too much about what was going on around me. Then I received a letter from the job centre about getting into employment. My advisor suggested that I should try a new scheme that had just started called Future Jobs and so I agreed to go to the appointment at Freshwinds in November 2009.

On the day of my appointment I was so scared because it had been 10 years since my last interview. I met Natalie who was very warm and welcoming but horror set in as she explained the job role to me. I thought "I can't do this!" Then I met Tanja and Carol who interviewed me. I can still hear their words "And what do you think you will bring to Freshwinds?" I said "Me". They made me feel like we were just friends gathering for a chat so I was relaxed and I could have talked till the cows come home!

When I found out I had got the job, it was just the best news that I have had in a long time. It seemed life was finally "looking good". I went on a two week training course to give me an introduction to employment and since then I have continued to learn. Eventually I started to believe in myself as much as the team around me had done all along. I got all the support I needed from Freshwinds to help me achieve my goals.

The 6 months of my future jobs contract soon came to an end and I was sad at the thought of leaving, however my managers and team were impressed at the work that I had been achieving and they decided to keep me on and renew my contract for another 6 months. Each day I consider myself so lucky to be in a job I love and to be surrounded by the people who I work with. I am truly passionate about what I do and would never have thought I would be writing about my journey. I am loving it, each day is so positive and now I tell my clients not to be negative and this seems to help when we talk about their needs and what they want their outcomes to be.

My family, friends and anyone who knows me say I look fantastic and have changed for the better. I personally think this is because I am in a good place in my life; because of where I work and the people I work with. My parents used to say to me "Take a step back then look in, you will see things better". I never really understood what they meant but I do now and it reminds me how much I love my job.

Chris 23



My name is Chris Burrows and I work as an IT and Admin worker for Freshwinds. I started working here in June 2010 after the Jobcentre gave me an interview through the Future Jobs Fund.

I wasn't sure at first exactly what work I would be doing but I was really pleased that I was able to get involved with a variety of different IT tasks from technical work with our servers and the telephone system to more creative tasks such as website development and working with Flash.

I am looking forward to working towards a Preparing to Teach in the Life-Long Learning Sector qualification (PTLLS) so that I can begin to transfer the skills I have learned to other people. I am excited by the opportunities for learning and development that I have here at Freshwinds.

On 24th October 2010 Chris ran in the Birmingham Half Marathon to raise money for Freshwinds. His time was 1 hour 36 minutes!

The Birmingham Half Marathon took place at Paradise Circus in the city, incorporating some well known sights along the way through Cannon Hill Park, Selly Oak and Cotteridge. Every year a number of Freshwinds' clients and staff alike get involved in various fundraising activities to generate further income to support the services we deliver.

If you want to get involved and help raise funds for Freshwinds please visit:

www.virginmoneygiving.com
and enter Freshwinds in the 'search for a charity' section.

Alternatively, if you already access services at Freshwinds you can make your pledge to support Chris on a sponsorship form at reception.

Well done Chris!

Pete 22



My name is Peter Daniels. I work for Freshwinds as an IT and Admin support worker. I was a Customer Assistant at a petrol garage for 4 years before leaving, and after being on Jobseekers for 6 months, I was given an interview at Freshwinds through the Future Jobs Fund.

Sitting at reception before the interview, I thought that all I'd be doing if I got the job was entering reams and reams of data into a giant spreadsheet for 8 hours a day: not really what I wanted out of a job.

I've always been very interested in graphics, illustration and design. I ran an online comic for a year or so, as well as making various websites for friends and family. Whilst I could do what I liked in my spare time, I never had a chance to do it in a professional context. So when I was asked at my interview if I knew any software other than Microsoft Word, I was quite surprised, as were Adam and Greg, the IT interviewers, when I told them I had 12 years experience using the graphics software they had recently purchased.

In my time so far at Freshwinds, I've designed various leaflets, posters and banners, and the occasional balloon. My more noticeable work includes taking the graphic design-lead in the recent redesign of the Freshwinds website, the magazine you hold in your hands, and the Freshwinds logo itself, which had needed to be redesigned for almost 5 years. I was delighted that an organisation with over 100 staff had allowed me to redesign its public image, something I wouldn't have seen myself doing this time last year.

I have also been able to work towards an Information Technology Qualification (level 2) as well as undertaking a Preparing to Teach in the Life-Long Learning Sector qualification (PTLLS). Freshwinds recently registered as a Microsoft IT Academy and a Test Centre and this will present me with some exciting opportunities such as Microsoft certified qualifications, along with qualifications in bespoke graphic design software.

Working at Freshwinds has been so much better than my previous job. I feel respected and appreciated for the skills I bring to work with me and supported in my development. It's nice to feel part of an organisation whose aim is to help those in need. I'm looking forward to seeing what else Freshwinds can throw at me in the future!

The Supporting People Programme

The Supporting People Programme has been a successful government funded scheme since 2003, following the need to fund a tenancy support programme that helped to reduce the risks faced by vulnerable people losing their tenancy due to health or social issues. Freshwinds' Supporting People Programme has been providing specialised support for people with HIV since 2003 and in December 2009 the programme was recommissioned by Birmingham City Council to expand our tenancy support work. The service now supports clients who are at risk of offending, ex-offenders, those with a refugee background as well

as those who are HIV positive. In 2009 the service was rated as 'excellent' by the commissioning team and it continues to develop on this reputation by providing clients with support to improve or maintain their independence.

We adopt a non-judgemental, confidential, holistic and integrated approach to supporting clients to live independently. The programme has a dedicated team of managers, coordinators, support workers and volunteers who provide our clients with an opportunity to make positive choices and changes in order for them to achieve their goals.



Volunteer Spotlight - Arman Azadi

Arman has been volunteering at Freshwinds since December 2009. He is a member of the city's Iranian community and has experience in supporting those with a refugee background with many different issues. Arman's volunteering activities at Freshwinds support the Refugee Supporting People team by providing language skills in Farsi, Kurdish and Afghani.

Arman's essential language support offers those from Iran and Iraq with limited English language to understand and support with gaining services, including welfare, training, housing, ESOL etc. In addition Arman's volunteering activities provide an opportunity for clients to positively integrate into society.



"I like to be involved with people and to integrate with them. I believe in human rights and I like to help support those who are disabled, refugees, and everyone... I really enjoy the work of the team, and I am very happy volunteering for Freshwinds."



See some of the feedback from our clients:

- "The help that Freshwinds gave and how the SP team have supported me is good. If that's the way they look after everybody who comes to Freshwinds then they are doing a great job."
- "I have benefited a lot from getting all the help I have had from Freshwinds"
- "When I came over to Birmingham, I had no friends I was lonely and desperate, the people at Freshwinds helped me to find an organisation with people like me in my situation...Freshwinds is helping me with my debts, course and health situation, not forgetting the hardship grant."

Freshwinds IT - A Bold New Venture

As an entrepreneurial charity that is always working to solve, create and develop solutions, Freshwinds has been working towards launching Freshwinds IT (Freshwinds Information Technology) as a social enterprise which will offer training, design and technology solutions.

Over the years Freshwinds' IT team has developed and delivered many innovative technology solutions such as Client Management databases, Risk Assessment tools, Personnel & Human Resource Management tools along with a range of custom programmed plug-ins and add-ons for commonly used software, in order to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of its charitable work.

We have also had years of experience designing publications and multimedia materials to effectively advertise and communicate the

support services Freshwinds' various charitable programmes offer.

The Freshwinds IT team all work directly within the charity carrying the ethos, ethics, spirit and holistic approach close to our hearts in order to provide this same level of service to all commercial clients. As Freshwinds IT understands the importance of the help and hope the charity sector provides to so many people, all of the services we offer will be offered to charity organisations at a substantially reduced rates.

Adam Lloyd
Adam volunteered at Freshwinds for several months, before receiving a full time position, where he currently supervises all aspects of the IT team.



What will we offer?

Freshwinds IT will offer a large variety of services, these include:



Design and Branding: This includes designs for both print and web use, be it a simple business card, website, logo or a whole new brand identity. Our work in the voluntary sector means we know how sometimes money is not readily available and as such, all our services are competitively priced. Looking nice shouldn't cost a fortune!



Technology: We recognise that, especially in a charitable organisation, there is simply not enough time to be checking that your database has backed itself up today, or to spend hours on the telephone trying to work out why your email server has gone down. At Freshwinds IT, we take care of the systems management and let you get on with the important things.



IT Training: In today's fast paced world, basic IT skills are more important than ever, with far more jobs requiring the use of a computer than they did 20 years ago. Coupled with the rise of unemployment, this means more and more people are looking to upskill themselves in order to find employment using IT, or in the IT sector itself. With this in mind, we will be offering a range of comprehensive, Microsoft-Certified qualifications at competitive prices.

- Some of the other technological services we will provide include:
- Game Servers
 - Voice Chat Servers
 - Dedicated Servers

Look out for the launch of our website - www.freshwindsit.co.uk

Microsoft Certified Training

Freshwinds' has registered with Microsoft IT Academy which will enable us to deliver Microsoft certifications to our clients, better equipping people with not only the computer skills but also qualifications that will enable and empower them to succeed in gaining and maintaining employment.

Increasingly, more companies are looking to employ those with Microsoft Standard qualifications, therefore we wish to provide the best standard of certified training to our clients.



Enabling Through IT

Often the social impact of IT is missed – the focus shifts too much to features, performance and design of systems and software without looking at the human side of IT.

I consider myself lucky, having worked with computers since the mid 90's I have been able to adapt to new software and technology. Our experience of providing training to clients has shown how anxious they can be about using IT for the first time.

In my time at Freshwinds I have seen how practical and relevant skills in IT have enabled our clients, volunteers and staff to improve their confidence when using IT in their daily lives. Writing a document may sound simple to most, but that first document could be the beginnings of a new CV and consequently a new career. A basic spreadsheet can improve people's

In our initial phase we will be offering Microsoft Office Specialist and Microsoft Certified Application Specialist certifications with a view in the near future of expanding to offer even further bespoke qualifications.

Offering these services on a social enterprise level will enable Freshwinds to provide substantially more of its charity clients with the same training opportunities potentially free of charge.

budgeting and help a family avoid poverty. An email can be a way of inexpensively connecting with distant family members.

This new endeavour, Freshwinds IT, will enable us to expand upon this work and help provide other organisations in the sector and beyond gain training and extend the reach of the benefits of IT. We have seen the positive outcomes of this work and wish to bring this enablement to a wider audience.

Greg Robson

Greg started working for Freshwinds as a Volunteer over 5 years ago during the final year of his degree. Since then he has become a fulltime member of staff supporting the organisations' internal IT systems.



Staff and Volunteer Stories

Kevin 17



My name is Kevin Mir, I have only been with Freshwinds for a couple of months, but in this short period of time I have already gained some valuable experience. I currently volunteer in the IT department, where I am involved in research and development for Freshwinds IT, as well as all-round IT and Admin Support.

From a young age I have always shown an interest in using computers and software, and volunteering has given me a great opportunity to use my knowledge in a workplace environment. After I had finished my GCSE's, I realised I hadn't done as well as I had hoped I would, and my confidence received a knock as a result.

Being at Freshwinds has really helped me to get that confidence back, and I feel like I am starting to get back on my feet. With their help I am working my way towards getting my Microsoft Certification to show that I formally have the skills that employers are looking for.

At Freshwinds, you learn how to work in a diverse environment that encourages communication. This is a skill a lot of people do not have and is invaluable for me in terms of getting a job, as many employers now incorporate diversity into the workplace.

My colleagues are really supportive and open, there is a strong culture of everybody working together and helping each other with tasks. The friendliness makes me feel really good to be part of the team.

Jon 33



My name is Jon Langton and I work as Technical Support to the IT team. Before coming to Freshwinds I had spent ten years as a software engineer, being the lead developer within several large engineering and construction projects across Europe. As you can imagine this was quite a stressful job! However, after being diagnosed with a stomach condition which was increasingly impacting on my ability to live a full life and to deliver work to schedule, I began a downward spiral of sickness and anxiety.

I found being unable to work very difficult, but as my health started to improve I decided to look for opportunities to occupy myself and utilise my skills. Personally I have always found helping others to be the most rewarding thing in life so I decided to look into becoming a volunteer. I discovered Freshwinds through BVSC, I was most impressed with their ethos and the diverse ways in which they help people, so approached them to offer my time. Happily after several months of voluntary work, Freshwinds was able to offer me a part-time job under the Permitted Work scheme, which aims to get people back to health by utilising the benefits of employment.

It is very refreshing to be in a supportive and accepting office environment, and with so much going on there is plenty I can help with, such as developing core features for the Freshwinds client management system, FIIM e-learning and the main Freshwinds website. I enjoy contributing to finding new ways we can improve our services for the benefit of our clients, staff and partner organisations, as well as being able to pass on skills to my colleagues whilst also learning from them.

Pfizer Supports Freshwinds

In August this year, staff members from Pfizer, one of the world's leading pharmaceutical companies, donated a day of their time to work on a challenge set by Freshwinds. The Thinkathon events were organised across the UK to support a charity in each region and Freshwinds was chosen as the Midlands charity.

The event, organised through Pfizer's Stakeholder Engagement Team and the Collaboration Company, was an excellent day where senior staff from Freshwinds and Pfizer worked in small groups on the challenge of how Freshwinds can communicate all the work and projects it delivers to all the groups it works with, a meaty challenge indeed!

At the end of the day, the ideas generated were presented to Mohammed Al-Rahim, Founder, President and CEO of Freshwinds and a winning team were selected, although all of the teams generated

insightful and some challenging ideas that have been implemented in the charity.

"Usability is an important part of making a service accessible."

As a result of the kind donation of time from Pfizer, we gained a whole fresh outlook on what we do, how we tell people about it and how we communicate who we are. The ideas that were generated on the day have led us to re-design our website and completely rethink how we communicate the excellent work that we do. The day was also great fun and an opportunity for Pfizer's staff to make a very practical contribution to our work.

A huge thank you to Pfizer for their support!



New website launched

After receiving feedback from the Pfizer 'Thinkathon' event, we have recently re-designed our website to make it easier for you to use and to get the information you need. The new website includes more information arranged in a user friendly way and makes accessing our services, as well as referring clients to those services, faster and easier.

Common feedback from the 'thinkathon' event was that our communications were often not as clear as they could be and we should be doing more to promote the work that we do. A key theme within this was the website, which participants on the day found confusing to use and to navigate through.

Based on this feedback, we designed a new user

interface which aims to direct people more quickly in to the services or information that they need and to make the wealth of information that is on the site more accessible to users.

As part of this, we have also re-designed the supporting Freshwinds pages making it easier for people to access information on volunteering or fundraising to support the work of Freshwinds as well as a portal where you can shop online at your favourite stores whilst raising funds for us at no cost to you! A great scheme with Christmas just around the corner...

The website also includes a blog, which is regularly updated with news, upcoming events and fundraising opportunities for Freshwinds.

Utilising Virgin Moneygiving, our new website also allows you to donate to Freshwinds online.

If you would like to donate to Freshwinds, please visit <http://www.freshwinds.org.uk/about-us/help-freshwinds/>

The re-design of our website is on-going and we value your feedback as to what works and what does not, so please visit today and email feedback to adam.lloyd@freshwinds.org.uk and please watch this space for future development in how you can interact with Freshwinds online!



Up Here

Freshwinds takes on the Malverns

On Thursday 30th September 2010, the staff and volunteers of Freshwinds attended our first team away day. Over 100 people from all of Freshwinds' departments, programmes and office sites travelled together to the Worcestershire town of Great Malvern to enjoy a group walk in the famous hills.

As a group, we walked a route up to the top of the Worcestershire Beacon which offered spectacular views across the surrounding countryside. The aim of the day was for our staff and volunteers to interact, particularly those that would not normally have the opportunity to do so, and to learn about each other and how we all contribute to Freshwinds and its mission.

Over the 2 hour walk, everyone from the Chief Executive to our volunteers were able to talk with someone that they had not met before and to gain some understanding of an area of Freshwinds' work that they did not previously

have.

After the walk, an excellent lunch was provided at the Abbey Hotel and everyone had the opportunity to visit the beautiful Malvern Priory Church and to sample the delights of Great Malvern's many antique and independent shops.

The day was a great success and was enjoyed by all who attended. It was wonderful to see the whole team together in one place and gave a real sense of how much Freshwinds has grown and the diverse areas that we work across.



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