



MEC NEWSLETTER

MAY 2023



LISA HARRIS AND JOE DUNNE (BOTH PICTURED, FAR LEFT AND THIRD FROM LEFT IN FOREGROUND RESPECTIVELY) RECEIVING A DELIVERY OF SURPLUS VEGETABLES FOR THE NEW TEES FOOD HUB IN CANNON PARK

OPERATIONS UNDERWAY AT THE NEW TEES FOOD HUB

Operations are now well underway at the brand new Tees Food Hub at Cannon Park in Middlesbrough, with the first delivery having been received fairly recently with our own Lisa Harris and Joe Dunne (Both pictured, far left and third from left in foreground respectively) in attendance to see the delivery.

This new Food Hub, run by FareShare North East, will allow for daily delivery of a variety of food, including fresh, chilled and frozen foods, to a plethora of projects and initiatives including Eco Shops, community cafes, breakfast clubs and more! It's currently seeking volunteer drivers (Age 21+), drivers assistants and warehouse assistants (Age 18+). All enquiries about volunteering are handled by, and therefore should be directed to, andy.popple@fareshare-northeast.org.uk.

KEEPING CLIMATE AWARE WITH CLIMATE ACTION MIDDLESBROUGH

More hard work from the Climate Action Middlesbrough team who delivered their last session of Carbon Awareness Training to BridgeHill Day Service Middlesbrough on 18th April, where they also delivered a workshop of turning weeds into medicine! Well done to the team at BridgeHill for putting in the passion and hard work over the past 6 months and passing their training with flying colours!

All organisations who are interested in Carbon Awareness Training should be sure to contact Dave at david.scriven@mencity.org.uk for all enquiries: It's completely free and organisations can either join one of our sessions held at our offices on Sandy Flatts Lane, or opt for your own premises if you have a suitable location and up to 24 participants. All that's asked for is to provide the cups of tea!



DAVE SCRIVEN (BACKGROUND, RIGHT), PICTURED DELIVERING CARBON AWARENESS TRAINING TO BRIDGEHILL DAY SERVICE MIDDLESBROUGH

GROWING ACTIVE FOR SOUTH BANK

A lovely sunny Friday in South Bank with the Golden Boy Green Coffee morning. After they started their morning with a relaxing but by no means easy day of activities, a yoga session open to all, it was followed by an event at Oliver Street Community Garden for a spot of gardening.

There was a lot of litter picking and weeding done to restore the beds, which everyone got stuck into. After they were clear, they managed to plant a few herbs, a beautiful rose for Sheila who was important to the local community and two fruit trees picked out by the Golden Boy Green coffee morning. A beautiful addition to South Bank's developing fauna. Hopefully jam, crumbles and scrubs all round as they grow!

The team returned to basecamp for some gorgeous homemade soup, buns, and lovely cakes from Barefoot Kitchen, with thanks to MEC partners You've Got This! for the food.



ELLA DEACY, BACKGROUND CENTER, PICTURED WITH THE SERVICE USERS DURING THE GOLDEN BOY GREEN COFFEE MORNING

BAE AND FOREST SCHOOLS CONTINUE TO INSPIRE

Boro Active Explorers have continued to run weekly sessions for groups of children from local schools, encouraging them to be active, explore and look after the world around them and to develop new skills. Recently the children used hand drills to make bird feeders and enjoyed making and cooking bread on the fire.



CHILDREN AT THORNTREE ACADEMY COOKING FLATBREADS IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS UNDER GUIDANCE OF OUR FOREST SCHOOLS TEAM



SERVICE USERS TAKING PART IN A COOKING COURSE, ON SITE HERE AT MEC

SLOW COOKING FOR SUCCESS

The Food Team have recently delivered their popular 'Winter Warmer' slow cooker course to over 200 households in the Tees Valley area. Funded by Middlesbrough Community Learning, the people attending these courses enjoy a practical cooking session covering how to prepare nutritious meals whilst saving on their energy bills. On completion of the course, they received a slow cooker to take home to help them put what they have learned into practice.

MEC have been awarded a grant from Irwin Mitchel Charities Foundation part of which will be used to build upon the success of these courses and fund the delivery of further practical cooking sessions on using a slow cooker to groups in Middlesbrough.

TURNING UP THE HEAT WITH AFFORDABLE WARMTH

Over the last 12 months, the amazing Affordable Warmth team have attended 48 community events across the Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland area reaching hundreds of individuals who received advice, thermometer info cards and free lightbulbs! On top of this, the team have supported 1,975 households with fuel vouchers through our referral process.

Since October, our Affordable Warmth team have been working closely with Redcar Borough Council's Health Improvement Team and Northern Gas Network, as part of the Warm and Healthy children project, in partnership with The Yorkshire Energy Doctor. The funding from this project has allowed the team to support vulnerable households in the Redcar & Cleveland area with warm packs which are small, but very effective energy efficient measures, that the team has put together to help in preparation for our next winter. They have provided 77 households with these packs, and counting!



MEC WOULD LIKE TO INTRODUCE ABBY FEARON (RIGHT), OUR NEW AFFORDABLE WARMTH ADVISOR, WHO JOINED US IN NOVEMBER, AND CONNOR CHAMPION (LEFT), OUR NEW TEAM ADMINISTRATOR WHO JOINED IN FEBRUARY.

The team have also attended a number of events across the wider region, including:

- Lazenby Village Hall 'Cost of living Crisis' Community Drop-In session - 23 individuals engaged the affordable warmth/cost of living crisis drop in held at Lazenby Village Hall warm space.
- Guisborough Bridge/Methodist Church - 'Cost of Living Crisis' Community Drop in session - Over 50 individuals engaged with MECC conversations, benefit checks i.e. pension credit, council tax support etc. affordable warmth advice.
- Skinningrove 'Cost of living Crisis' Community Drop in session - Local residents were able to seek advice, guidance and support from professionals and services. A total of six warm home packs were issued to pensioners who attended the drop in.
- March 2023 Triage event - Around 200 people attended this event, with over 20 other organisations attending as well.

There's a number of upcoming pop-up events on the calendar too, so if you see the team out and about: Give them a wave!



AT THE TRIAGE EVENT, WITH CHRISTINE FEARON (LEFT) MANNING THE AFFORDABLE WARMTH STALL AT THE EVENT THAT WAS ATTENDED BY OVER 200 PEOPLE



ROOTED IN NATURE ENGAGEMENT OFFICER PAUL ROBINSON, LEFT, WITH SOME OF THE SERVICE USERS ENJOYING THE WEATHER IN SALTBURN

ON THE BEACH WITH ROOTED IN NATURE

Another month means another fantastic outing for Rooted in Nature, the service led by Middlesbrough and Stockton Mind delivered in partnership with ourselves, Barefoot Kitchen CIC, Tees Valley Wildlife Trust, All Year Round The Flower Patch CIC and many others.

The service users had an amazing time as a few of the famous beach huts (from Marshalls Beach & Leisure Huts) were booked for our trip which we could use as a base of operations as we took part in a number of activities: We foraged for seaglass amidst the rocks on the beach, cooked sausages over a roaring fire, enjoyed chips by the seaside, went for a walk along the pier, lounged in the deckchairs, had a quick jaunt in the amusements, and generally enjoyed a cold but beautiful day at the seaside.

A huge thank you to Leah from Mind and our own Paul Robinson who organised and oversaw this amazing trip, one that had all the service users agreeing with how invaluable Rooted in Nature is and how enjoyable it is to be able to socialise with other service users, enjoy eachothers company and enjoy these days out!



NEW ACTIVE TRAVEL TRAINER CONNOR MULLAN, PICTURED, POSING IN FRONT OF THE ACTIVE TRAVEL VAN

NEW ACTIVE TRAVEL TRAINER

Congratulations to newly-qualified Active Travel trainer Connor Mullan, who joins the team from the Community Actions team having passed his training with flying colours!

AN ASSORTMENT OF NEWS FROM CLIMATE ACTION MIDDLESBROUGH

Some good news from Climate Action Middlesbrough:

- This quarter, they have engaged with 14 community organisations, the highest since quarter 4 of year 1.
- CAM partners Tees Valley Wildlife Trust have planted almost 5000 trees!
- This quarter saw the launch of the Climate Action Club at Archibald Primary School, pictured here taking part in a litter pick.
- Following CAM advice, the local council has modified their grass cutting regime, cutting less and using fewer pesticides to help the flora grow!



CAM PROJECT OFFICER AURIANNA NAJAH, FAR LEFT, WITH THE CLIMATE ACTION CLUB AND STAFF AT ARCHIBALD PRIMARY SCHOOL!