



# MERSEYSIDERS

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## STRESS MANAGEMENT TIPS

Crisis Skylight Merseyside ran a workshop on Keeping Well as part of their series of training sessions on Preparing for Volunteering and Work. The group wanted to share their top ten tips for combating stress with readers of the magazine.

Stephen, Lorraine, Sue, Declan and Fran identified lots of areas in daily life that can cause stress and explored particular events or times that are personal triggers for them and then thought about the best ways of handling these.

Stephen suggested having this list around could act as a daily reminder of useful ways to handle difficulties, and the group felt that they would be useful to share with everyone.

1. Talk to others – share your problems and help find solutions.
2. Use your sense of humour.
3. Take yourself out of the situation – do something you enjoy instead (walking, visiting charity shops, listen to music, looking at beautiful things – museum, art gallery, views of our lovely city)
4. Do something nice for someone else.
5. Make time for reflection/mindfulness/stillness/meditation/prayer.
6. Be kind to yourself – eat well, sleep well, relax.
7. Plan & organise your day.
8. Use music/tv/books to take your mind off your worries.
9. Acceptance – accept yourself and others and some situations that you can't change.

EASY

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**IT'S NOT WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU, BUT HOW YOU REACT TO IT THAT MATTERS.**

## 'There is light at the end of the tunnel'

STEREOTYPES of homeless people abound in society, yet they are often far removed from reality. One woman who has had experience of homelessness but very much defies stereotypes is Sue Kay, who had a good job and salary until she developed serious health problems, including cancer, after finding herself made redundant from work.

"Initially, I could not claim housing benefits because I had savings and I had to live off them until they dried up. I applied again and was told I was not eligible for full housing benefit," she states.



Inevitably, she and her husband, who also had health problems, got into rent arrears and they found themselves evicted. While she now lives in Liverpool and her husband on the Wirral, separate housing benefits are now paid to her and to him and to their teenage son for three residences, a striking example of how the benefits system can divide families.

"We were evicted with just the clothes we had on, were told we could come back later for our property but it was gone," says Sue, recalling how many priceless items were lost to them.

Sue and her husband were initially put in a B and B, until they were told they were 'not vulnerable enough'. She was taken ill and while in hospital, her husband was told that the local authority would not pay for his and their son's accommodation, so each of them moved, separately, to stay with relatives.

As someone who does not smoke or take drugs, and who seldom drinks, Sue says she understands why people who have become homeless might turn to such substances.

She says that Local Authorities needs to provide more back-up for people in circumstances such as hers, rather than just a list of hostels.

However, staff at the Royal Liverpool Free Hospital were very helpful, and put her in touch with the Basement, who got her accommodation in Anne Fowler House.

"I'm really passionate about homeless people now as I was a snob before [this happened to me], but you need to get out there and explain to people that it could happen to anybody. People live in their own

little bubble and they think it'll never happen to them, but a lot of people are about a month's salary away from losing their homes and becoming homeless."

After eight months in the hostel, she met a landlord who was in the process of buying a one-bedroom flat which interested her.

With the help of Crisis and Whitechapel, she entered a bond scheme which covered the deposit.

Whitechapel is one of the 128 private renting access schemes Crisis has funded throughout England.

The bond meant enough money for the deposit required by her landlord.

A delighted Sue is now living in her flat, her health has improved and with the encouragement of Clare in Crisis Skylight Merseyside, she is now volunteering for Crisis on a regular basis.

"Crisis has been fantastic and I wouldn't have been able to achieve what I have without them... Not only do they help you move on with a home, but also with education and looking for work... When I get a job I'll still be volunteering for Crisis. I want to give something back," says Sue.

In April of last year, Sue moved into the flat, and since then has been undergoing much training with Crisis and is co-ordinator of the Homeless Games.

"I now feel happier and more fulfilled," she states, urging people not to give up hope but to remember "There is light at the end of the tunnel."

However, she warns that the pending introduction of Universal Credit will create many problems, as many, particularly those with addiction issues, will need support in paying bills.



THERE IS LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL



## GETTING AROUND IN LIVERPOOL BY MORLEY CUMMINGS

I am writing to inform readers about the difficulties I have getting around the city centre and beyond.

I use a mobility scooter to get around and I experience many obstacles including the heights of kerbs, uneven pavements and cobblestones.

A major issue concerns other road users when I have no other option but to take the scooter off the pavement and onto the road itself.

This is putting me at risk, as it is a great source of worry. People's opinions can be based on ignorance and comments hurtful, leaving me feeling very low.

I have some friends who are understanding and help me immensely through non-judgemental support in return.

I am sometimes able to help them, so everything usually works out in the end.



### The Barber's Tale

By Stephen McGrath

I was once with my father in Liverpool city centre. At the time my hair was quite long so my father said to me 'Stephen, son, get in that Hairdressers' and get that hair cut'. I said to my dad 'I've got no money', he replied, 'I will pay for it'. I sat in the barber's chair he said "How would you like it?', I said 'A short back and sides'. When he finished he said 'How is that?' I replied 'OK thanks, how much will that be?' He said '£6.00'. I turned around where-upon no dad. I said 'Mate you better put it back on!' I got a slap off the barber, when I arrived back home I seen my father and we had a long argument.

### 3 Steps to a family

Hello how are you today sir? Are you well? Have you seen your daughter since she moved to London last year? If so, how is she settling in?

Is your mother recovering from the stroke?

As for yourself, did you ever get that wisdom tooth seen to?

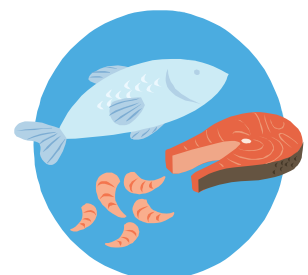
Did you get rid of that old banger, the rust bucket? And your dog Shep, has she had her pups yet?

Does your father still go fishing at the weekend? The last time I was in Northumberland, I went with him and we had a lovely time.

We caught a lot of salmon that week on the river Tweed and your father, being the good hearted man that he is, divided most of the fish among the neighbours.

Ok, Sir Martin, I'll sign off for now.

By Seamus Reddan



## 'The Streets of Kenny' depicts Kensington

lives

LIVERPOOL has had a tradition of soap opera dating back to Brookside, but a soap with a difference is currently being featured on Liverpool Community Radio (LCR) depicting the daily lives of people in Kensington.

"The Streets of Kenny" is the story of two families, the Streets and the Rhodes, who live in Kensington and Fairfield.

The idea of producing 40 episodes began more than two years ago, when participants in LCR concluded that most soaps had gone a long way from their working class roots.

According to the latest issue of "The Kensington & Fairfield Voice", the group responsible has been meeting weekly and evolving stories based on personal experiences.

Six minute episodes are broadcast on LCR at noon every weekday, with an omnibus at 11 am on Saturdays and Sundays.

Series producer Steve Faragher says "We wanted people to listen and recognise the people, the situations and their problems."

Local screen writer Arthur Ellison (who has worked on "Hollyoaks", "Brookside", "The Street" and "Moving On") developed the storylines into six minute episodes. The actors come from all walks of life, some of whom have had previous acting experience, but many have not.

The recording and post production process was co-ordinated by Wendy Miller. "The hardest part was keeping track of all the characters, the episodes and the recordings," she states, adding that the satisfaction of bringing it all together was "immense".

Arthur's wife Margie kept track of who should be where and when in the recording process, while the signature tune was composed by local man Steve Maudsley.

The soap was launched recently at LCR's studio on Holt Road. Funding for the process came from Liverpool PCT, and while there is an underlying health storyline, the health message "is not hammered home", according to the "Voice", but the soap does feature such issues as bad diets, alcohol abuse, sexual health and lifestyle choices. The series can be accessed at [www.l-c-r.co.uk](http://www.l-c-r.co.uk), on a smartphone by using the "TuneIn" app, or if you are an I-phone owner, by downloading the LCR app.

The editorial in the "Voice" takes a shot at many of the soap operas on television for their "unrealistic but melodramatic version of everyday lives of the underclass", which ignore "the misery and poverty being heaped on a daily basis onto the lives of the working class viewers".

"It's a bit like showing a shed full of battery hens a constant diet of KFC adverts on a very large LCD screen," it states.

"The Streets of Kenny" is seen as reappropriating working class soap operas for the working classes, and the "Voice" states "there are no plazzy gangsters, guns or drugs", but instead real storylines about real people getting on with real lives, written and acted by real people from Kensington and Fairfield.

A study of LCR carried out by Sue Potts of the Institute of Cultural Capital at University of Liverpool and John Moores University found that it has listeners in over 60 countries, including Nepal, the Faroe Islands and Iran!

## Women's Turnaround

Article by Sue Kay

The Women's Turnaround are part of an organisation called PSS. It is a service just for women and offers individual and group work to support adult female offenders and women at risk of offending in Liverpool, Knowsley and Wirral.

The team works with lots of different agencies such as the Citizen's Advice Bureau, drug and alcohol agencies, local training and employment agencies, mental health services and criminal justice services.

They are there to help reduce the number of women in prison who do not pose a risk to the public. They want to reduce offending and re-offending and increase the number of women diverted from prosecution. They also want to increase the number of women accessing and being successful in engaging with community provision. They also aim to reduce the number of family breakdowns and improve the health and well being of all the women they work with. They do all this by helping the women, support their wider family and help them reach the services they need.

The team are very experienced in working with women who have practical, personal and emotional difficulties. They offer individual support for all sorts of things including legal advice, advocacy, housing, benefit and debt management, employment, education and training, reading groups, health and well being support for drug and alcohol abuse, domestic abuse, IT and counselling.

They also run a number of group sessions which focus on thinking positively, freedom programme, parenting, critical thinking and understanding your emotions.

The activities take place at their base in Boundary Street and at outreach venues throughout Liverpool and Knowsley.

### QUOTES FROM WOMEN WHO HAVE USED THE SERVICES OF THE WOMENS TURNAROUND

"I have been coming here over 12 months. I did not want to come initially, I thought it would be a waste of time. I have learnt new things and formed new friendships. I have had access to health advice and training. I am glad I have done this. I enjoy coming here, it has helped me move on with my life"

"At first I thought this was not for me, but I was encouraged to come along and I am glad I did. I enjoy it and I have met new people. I have sorted out issues that I had and I have got a lot of help from the staff and the other girls that come here. It is a facility that is needed here and should be promoted to the wider community"

"I was terrified when I was told I had to come here and I was very nervous on my first visit. The staff are very good and the other girls made me feel very welcome. I now feel more relaxed. I have been given lots of help and advice and have been able to contact other agencies to sort out some of my problems. I now enjoy coming here and look forward to Mondays"

**'No such place as Southern Ireland' By Declan McSweeney**

SINCE moving to Liverpool in 2011, I have been constantly struck by its warmth and friendliness.

Local people are well aware of the city's ties to Ireland, and Irish President Michael D Higgins described it as 'the most Irish of British cities' when he visited last November. Estimates of the percentage with some Irish ancestry vary between 50-75%.

Yet, I have lost count of the number of times I have been asked "Do you come from Southern Ireland?" and I constantly reply "There is no such place as Southern Ireland."

Under the 1937 constitution, Bunreacht na hÉireann, the name of the state is simply Ireland or, in the Irish language, Éire. However, the term Republic of Ireland is universally accepted as a description of the state, in the same way as one may speak of France or of the Republic of France.

Irish passports merely carry the terms Ireland and Éire. Some of the older generation in Britain have a habit of referring to the Republic as Éire, but this is as ridiculous as referring to Germany as Deutschland while speaking in English!

In fact, when writing in Irish, Éire refers to the entire Ireland, not just the Republic - it includes Tyrone as much as Tipperary.

"Southern Ireland" simply does not exist. If one wishes to distinguish between the two political jurisdictions, one speaks of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. This usage is reflected, for example, in international football, with each part of Ireland having its national team.

The term 'Southern Ireland' was planned to refer to an area of the UK with home rule, under the Government of Ireland Act 1920, an area coinciding with what is now the Republic, but the usage ceased to exist in 1922 with the establishment of an independent Irish state, then known as the Irish Free State, a term which ceased to be valid when the current constitution was adopted in 1937, providing for an elected president as head of state.

Yet, the term republic is not actually used in the constitution, as the country's then leader, Eamon De Valera, felt it might be insensitive for the unionist population. The formal declaration of a republic was not made until 1949 and was recognised by the UK in the Ireland Act of that year.

Thus, to refer to the Republic of Ireland as 'Southern Ireland' is like referring to Iran as Persia, or Zimbabwe as Rhodesia. While it is true that Irish people colloquially refer to the Republic as 'the south', they will never say "Southern Ireland", as the usage of that term sounds as if the speaker is referring to the southern part of the Republic i.e. the ancient province of Munster, consisting of Cork, Kerry, Tipperary, Limerick, Clare and Waterford.

I have found that many British people are surprised when told that the highest point in the island of Ireland is in fact in the Republic, namely Malin Head in Donegal - see this link <http://www.wesleyjohnston.com/users/ireland/geography/extremities.html>

To be precise, the most northerly point is Banba's Crown on Malin Head - Banba was the name of a mythical Irish queen.

Thus Donegal is west of the border, rather than north of it and has close affinities with Northern Ireland.

In one sense, the confusion of many British people about the name of the only country which has a land frontier with the UK is surprising, but less so when, as I have found, many don't know the name of their own country.

I have asked several people to give the full name of their country, and have been told "Great Britain" or "Northern Ireland" or even "the United Kingdom of Great Britain and the Isles!"

The full name is, of course, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. While immigrants who wish to become British citizens need to know the differences between Great Britain, the United Kingdom and the British Isles, many British-born people are unaware.

For the record, Great Britain means England, Wales and Scotland, while the United Kingdom is the three of them plus Northern Ireland. The British Isles (a term not favoured in the Republic of Ireland) is used by some geographers to refer to the islands of Great Britain and Ireland, and the surrounding islands, including the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands, which are not part of the UK.

It was strange that during the Olympics, we spoke of Team GB, rather than Team UK. Athletes from Northern Ireland were able to take part, nonetheless, in either that team or the Republic of Ireland team, because under the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, passed by the people of both parts of Ireland in simultaneous referendums, the people of Northern Ireland can declare themselves British, Irish or both.

A further irony was that cyclist Mark Cavendish, who comes from the Isle of Man, took part in Team GB, even though the Isle of Man is clearly part of neither Great Britain nor the United Kingdom.

While the island of Ireland is divided into two political jurisdictions, many institutions operate on an all-Ireland basis e.g. the Irish rugby and cricket teams represent both Northern Ireland and the Republic, in contrast to the soccer teams.

Likewise, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions operates in both parts of the island, and most of the main churches also operate on an all-Ireland basis. Both in the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Ireland (the Irish branch of the Anglican Communion), there are many bishops based in Northern Ireland whose dioceses extend into the Republic, and vice versa.

I am constantly amazed by the number of people I have met in Liverpool who seem unaware that Northern Ireland is as much a part of the United Kingdom as Toxteth or Huyton are! Yet others seem to think that all of Ireland is in the UK!

Moreover, I have found enormous lack of understanding of what the Troubles in Northern Ireland were all about, and above all people don't seem to realise that when the Provisional IRA were in operation, they were at war on the authorities in Dublin as much as those in London - several members of the Irish police force, the Garda Síochána, were killed by the Provos down the years, as was a member of the Irish Army, Private Paddy Kelly, who died in 1983 with Garda Recruit Gary Sheehan during a shoot-out in Leitrim to rescue the kidnapped supermarket executive Don Tidey.

It has only been in the past ten years or so, as the IRA ceased to exist, that electoral support in the Republic for Sinn Féin has become significant. For a younger generation which does not remember the Troubles, it is seen as a party of protest on economic issues, rather than being connected with violence.

A further point of confusion is that sometimes people ask me "Do you speak Gaelic?", not realising that people in Ireland do not use that term, but speak of the Irish language - there is Irish Gaelic and Scots Gaelic and Manx Gaelic, distinct though related languages.

Sometimes people say "Why don't we pull out of Northern Ireland and give it back to the Irish?" They don't realise that this is not possible, because under the Good Friday Agreement, ratified by the people of both parts of Ireland, a united Ireland can only come about with the consent of a majority of the peoples in both parts.

That prospect is less and less likely at the moment because of the severity of the Republic's recession, with unemployment being 14.6% in contrast to the 7.6% in the UK.



Some time ago, I made the acquaintance of a young man from a Belfast loyalist background who spent time in Liverpool. He was adamant that he was British, not Irish, but he found this hard to explain to local people.

In turn, he was confused when local people spoke of the 'Anglican' cathedral, saying that where he came from, people just spoke of 'Catholic and Protestant'. When it was put to him that it was more complicated than that, he did not want to know!

However, many from the Republic are equally ill-informed - I can recall, attending a Catholic secondary school many years ago, that our History teacher asked us to write out the names of ten different Protestant denominations.

John Cahill wanted us to get away from thinking in terms of "Protestant" churches and to understand the difference between Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, Congregationalist, Lutheran, Quaker, Salvation Army, Pentecostal, Moravian, etc.

However, times are changing and the growing warmth in the relationship between the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland was reflected at last year's Olympics, where, as Nick Clegg has pointed out, fans found no problem in cheering for both Irish boxer Katie Taylor and Britain's Nicola Adams.

In recent years, it has been great to see the welcome Queen Elizabeth received when she visited the Republic in 2011, her meeting last year with Martin McGuinness, and the presence of Irish Catholic Primate Cardinal Sean Brady at the wedding of Kate and William, at the Queen's visit to Dublin and again at her visit to a Catholic church in Enniskillen, the first time a monarch ever visited a Catholic church in Northern Ireland.

By the same token, when President Higgins was inaugurated in Dublin in 2011, it was good to see that the ceremony included prayers by both the Catholic and Anglican Archbishops of Dublin, Presbyterian, Methodist and Orthodox clergy, and representatives of the Quaker, Jewish and Muslim communities, with a humanist representative also offering a reflection.

## Homeless Young People's Parliament: By Matthew Kay



Matthew Kay and Claire Pickering

On December the 13th 2012, history was made. For the first time ever there was a Homeless Young People's Parliament held at the House of Commons and I was fortunate enough to be there as Liverpool's representative from Crisis. I was very honoured and excited to be asked to take part in an event of such importance, given the Government's plans to remove housing benefit from people aged under 25 in the near future. Everyone who attended had many issues to raise, but we were all united in the fact that we were going to take a stand against this proposed Government policy and to try and make sure that it never came into fruition.

So Thursday arrived and at 6am I was up and ready to start my journey to London. The first part of

my journey was to get the train from Port Sunlight, where I live, to Liverpool Lime Street where I would catch the train to London. This is where I met Clare, who is a Work and Learning Coach with Crisis, who would be joining me on the trip to Homeless Young People's Parliament. Clare shares the same view as I do, that this cut on housing benefits would be disastrous, as it would force thousands of young people back on to the streets and once again becoming homeless.

So we began our journey down in good spirits, discussing what we hoped would happen, what issues would be brought up and what the MPs would be willing to do in the future. We were also pleased to find out that Channel 4 would be covering a segment of the debate, as this would bring great exposure to the homelessness issue and the plight of many people on the street, as highlighted in Cathy Newman's report. We also discussed some of the MPs we were likely to meet. Jack Dromey, Labour's shadow housing minister, was the man who organised this event, so we were both very interested to hear what he had to say. Also speaking would be Liberal Democrat MP Don Foster and Mr Speaker John Bercow and an, at the time unnamed, Conservative MP.

We arrived at London Euston and immediately took the underground to Westminster. After we emerged from the depths of the station the sight that greeted me was amazing. To see Big Ben and the House of Commons for the first time in the flesh was truly awe inspiring. Such a wonderful design, for something so old. We made our way to the visitors' entrance where we were greeted by a stringent security check, which is to be expected in today's climate. After passing the check and receiving our visitors' pass, we made our way to the room where the discussions would be taking place.

We wouldn't be the only representatives from Crisis, as there were five from Oxford, three young people and two tutors and there was Alex Kennedy who had organised for Crisis to be there. The other organisations being represented there were YMCA England, Centrepoint, St Basils, Foyer Federation, Homeless Link and St Mungo's. In all there were close to 100 people at the discussion.

Jack Dromey opened by welcoming everyone for coming and for being part of such a historic event. We all received a handout, which outlined three key priorities for government from each organisation. After this Jack welcomed eight volunteers up to the top bench to discuss what they wanted to get from the day, what they would like to see the Government do and some of their own personal experiences of being homeless. This was followed by a Homeless Young People's Parliament ballot, where we would vote on the three most important issues that we would like to discuss in the breakout discussions in the afternoon. Jack then held a brief debate while we waited for John Bercow to arrive for his brief question and answer session.

John arrived to a rousing reception and got straight into answering questions. I thought it was very interesting and important to hear from him, because as the speaker he has to remain neutral, so his views would be completely different from the other MPs. I think this gave a good contrast to the discussions and gave us insight into an important Member of Parliament. He commented that as the speaker he would give every discussion and debate a fair hearing when it reached Parliament. It was very reassuring to hear that our discussions and our key points would get that fair treatment. John then left as he had a prior appointment and we broke for lunch, which was provided for us on the other side of the Parliament.

We returned from lunch to take part in the breakout discussions. Jack informed us that we would be split into three groups, each with its own individual MP to question. I stayed in the main room with Conservative MP Nick Boles, whereas the other groups would be meeting a Labour and a Liberal Democrat MPs respectively. It turned out I was one of the lucky ones as my group would be getting their discussion filmed by Channel 4 news as part of Cathy Newman's report into homelessness.



So when the cameras were in place and everybody was ready we began. There were some really good questions asked of Nick Boles, but he struggled to give us any reassuring answers. The only crumb of comfort he could offer was when he said that the housing benefit cut for under 25's was not government policy. Many of the young people around me were not happy with his answers or his deflection of questions to the previous regime. Nick left as he too had a previous engagement and Cathy thanked us for our impact and efforts.

Next it was question time with Jack, Don Foster Liberal Democrat and a representative from St Basils. Now was the time to discuss the top three key points that we had voted on in the morning which were, abandoning proposals to cut housing Benefit for under 25s, a consistent voice for young people and service delivery that integrates housing, learning, welfare-to-work and public health provision. I felt this was a really good discussion as Don and Jack put some really good views across and they confirmed that this would be the first of hopefully many meetings in the future.

After the question time finished it was followed by Jack's closing speech, in which he thanked everyone for coming and he added that he was seeking an audience with David Cameron for the next discussion, which should happen in the next six months. That was the cue for us to leave and make the trip back to Liverpool. In my opinion it was a great and historic day. It was so reassuring to not only find MPs who agree with you but were prepared to fight for what we both believe in. I'm hopeful that the future is looking a lot brighter after the events of the first Homeless Young People's Parliament.

## JOKES SECTION

**Once upon a time, there were three bears, now there are loads of them.**

My mum asked me to take her pet giraffe for a drink because it was his birthday, so I did as she asked. I then took him to the pub, a hour passed by and my mum's pet collapsed on the floor; the manager said to me "You cannot leave that lying there." I replied "It is not a lion, it is a giraffe."

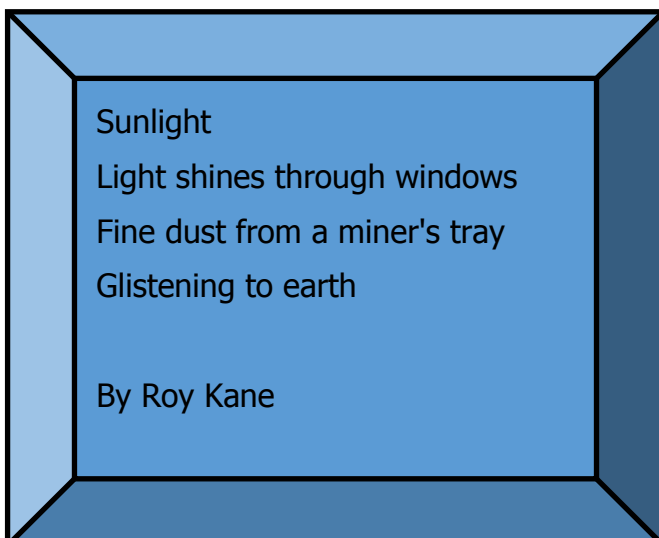
**Yea, though I walk into the Valley of Death, I shall fear no evil because I am the meanest person in the valley.**

I once went to the fish and chip shop. I asked the owner "Have you any chips left?" He said "Loads of them." I replied "Well, you should not have made so many."

**I was going to be a doctor but I never had the patience.**

God said "Let there be light!" and some bright spark invented the electric card.

**What do you call a woman who sets fire to her bills? Bernadette.**



## Saying no! By Chris McIntyre

Are you willing to change to make a difference in your own life?

To look at your glass, as half full, rather than half empty?

It's your life at the end of the day. It's up to you what you do with it. We only get one.

We all make mistakes in our own lives.

It is a willingness to change especially to drugs or drink.

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## Liverpool photographer survives Fuerteventura ordeal

LIVERPOOL photographer Chris McIntyre, whose work is familiar to readers of Merseysiders, has survived an appalling ordeal during a working holiday in Fuerteventura, on the Canary Islands, in January.

He flew there on January 2, with the intention of taking photographs to build up his portfolio.

While the early part of the trip was very enjoyable, the final part was anything but.

On the night before he was due to leave, Chris received a letter telling him that he was to get on the airport transfer bus at 9 am the next day, but by 9.30 am there was no sign of the vehicle, and it emerged no one told him that the vehicle was actually leaving at 8.30.

"I was told to get another bus to the airport, which is twenty miles from the hotel, but delays on the bus meant that I missed my flight," says Chris.

He had to wait three days more, for a flight with Easy Jet to Manchester, and was advised by a woman at the information desk of a hotel he could stay in.

"I noticed her speaking to a man in Spanish, and with hindsight I believe they were involved in what was to happen to me," says Chris. After going to his hotel, he strolled around the area and saw for himself the dire state of the Spanish economy.

"My heart went out to them, if you are British they think you are rich," he says, mentioning that many businesses were for sale.

On the final night in the hotel, he noticed three sailors - a Spaniard, a German and an Italian, speaking English and mentioning his hotel room number. He got alarmed and looked out onto the balcony and saw the men practising fight moves. The Spaniard was translating comments into English for the German.

"I heard them say they would gas the room and I started to inspect it for safety. I realised that they had cut a hole in the ceiling."

Chris heard the men saying they would kill him. One had a machete, another, a flick knife. "I thought I was going to die."

At this point, Chris realised that his lens had been stolen. He rang his mother in Liverpool, who texted him the number of the embassy in Madrid.

He contacted the embassy, who told him to take his property to reception, ask staff to lock up the hotel and ring for the police.

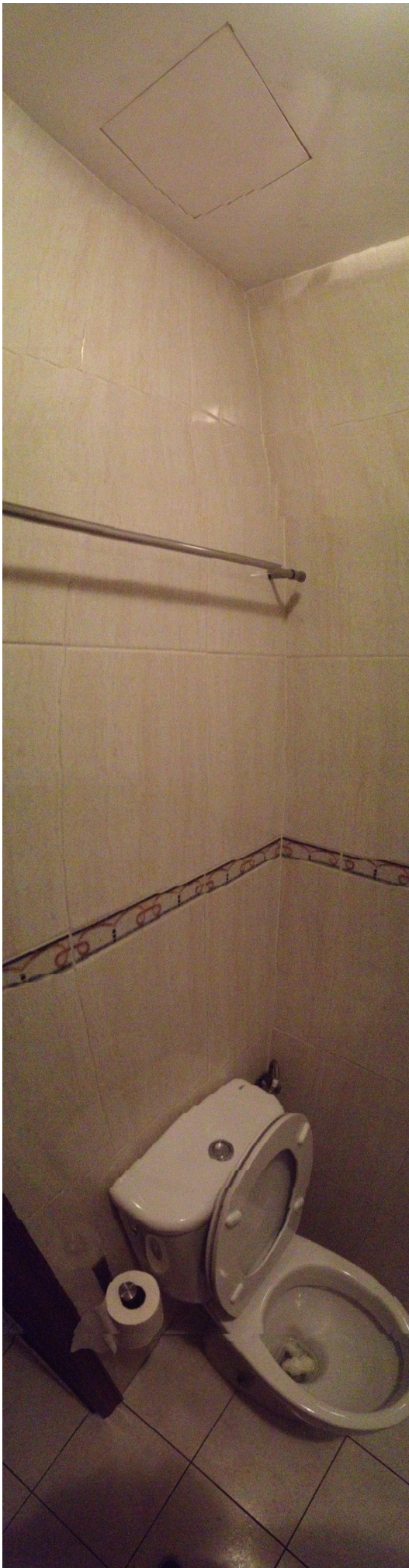
When the police arrived, they confronted what had by this stage become a gang of 20 people, and shots were fired as the gang tried to get away. About four more police cars arrived, and while the Guardia Civil wanted him to get a statement, for Chris the priority was to get home.

He met a British lady who was a representative of Thomas Cook, and she helped him get to the airport. When he got there, he saw the same man and woman who had initially given him directions to the hotel.

"They were shocked when they saw me," he recalls. Chris asked the travel rep to put him on a plane to any part of the UK or the Republic of Ireland, and in the end he flew to Manchester.

However, Chris' personal ordeal was not the only trauma he experienced. "I saw a girl being raped the night before I left, I think she was Spanish." He saw one man rape her in an alleyway while two others held her down.

His overall experience was that "It made Liverpool look like a walk in the park." He believes hotel staff, were involved in the robbery.



"I felt safer when I was in jail than there, this will haunt me for the rest of my life," says Chris, who has given up alcohol and cigarettes since the experience and vows never to go abroad alone again.

He makes the point however, that he felt safe while on the tourist trail, but the hotel he was in was off the trail.

Looking back on the whole experience, Chris recalls praying during his ordeal and has no doubt that "Jesus has given me another chance".

## **Ann Fowler Article** by Sue Kay

Ann Fowler is a Homeless Centre owned by SAHA and managed by the Salvation Army, in Liverpool City Centre. Its target group is single homeless women. The minimum age of residents is 16. Staff provide 24 hour cover. Key Workers hold regular meetings with residents, giving them support with form filling and liaison with other agencies. The Key Workers also provide a resettlement programme. There are also regular visits from a Community Nurse, Optician and Mental Health Support Team as well as other agencies.

There are 30 fully furnished rooms and a lounge, dining room and garden for residents use. There is also a room which is fully wheelchair accessible and adapted for a less abled resident. Breakfast and Evening meal are provided using fresh ingredients to provide a varied menu cooked to a high standard. There are also 8 resettlement rooms where residents cook their own food.

Ronni is a Key Worker who has worked at Ann Fowler House for 5 years. During that time she has seen women arrive at the centre for a variety of reasons including problems with alcohol, drugs, mental health issues and victims of domestic violence. She has seen a marked increase in women who have none of these issues but have become homeless because they have lost their jobs, or their partners have become unemployed, resulting in the breakdown of their relationship and loss of their homes. There has also been an increase of women refugees from other countries including Somalia, Iran, Iraq and some Eastern European Countries.

Ronni works with all the women assigned to her to help them get support for any issues they have and starts them on a resettlement programme to enable them to eventually secure another home and move on with their lives. There are a lot of positive success stories of women who have turned their lives around with the help and support of the staff at Ann Fowler House

QUOTES FROM PREVIOUS AND CURRENT RESIDENTS OF ANN FOWLER HOUSE;-

"I was at rock bottom, my life was going nowhere. Staying at Ann Fowler House gave me stability and I felt safe. I slowly built up my confidence and with support from the staff I managed to move on."

"I was a stranger to this country, a refugee. I did not speak any English. I found help and friendship here. I went to college and learnt to speak English. Now I have friends and a place of my own. I am very happy"

"I was a victim of domestic violence. I tried staying with my family but ended up in a Womens Refuge. I was very stressed there and could not settle. My Support Worker suggested I come to Ann Fowler House. Although I did not know the area at all I came here and stayed for 8 months. I hope to be moving out soon. The Staff are helpful and I feel more confident now than when I first came here."

"I slept rough for 5 months and eventually got a place in a homeless centre in another part of the country. I could not settle and I wanted to come to Liverpool. My Support Worker got me a place at Ann Fowler House. I settled in well and stayed for 15 months. I moved out into Supported Housing. Unfortunately this did not work for me as some of the other residents caused trouble and the Police were always knocking on the door. I was having lots of panic attacks so I asked to come back here. I feel more settled now. In a couple of months I will start looking for my own place.

**There are 30 fully furnished rooms and a lounge, dining room and garden for residents use.**

# Morley's Poetry

**Cornwall**

**Ocean is blue**

**Redruth is where I was born**

**Newquay is a good fishing place**

**Walk around the cliffs**

**Above the cliffs you can see birds**

**Lifeboats go out to sea in all weather**

**Lighthouses are towers with bright lights that warn ships from rocks  
and all other dangers.**



**Kernow**

**Everyday it rains**

**Redruth is where I was born**

**Newquay is a good fishing place**

**Ocean is blue**

**Walk around on the cliffs**

**By Morley Cummings**

# MAM

Well mam it's that month again, the one I hated, no detest. On the 28th March 1985, you my beautiful mam passed away. 28 years ago. You were only 59. Mam why did you have to die? When you died it was the saddest day of my life. When you died part of me died too. You mam were, are and always will be my inspiration, my hero, my best friend, my rock and my world.

So if you've got a mam **cherish** her with pride, because she wont always be by your side.

Mam if I could have one wish I know what mine would be! I'd climb the steps to heaven and bring you home with me. Mam not one day goes by when I don't think of you and mam I still cry. So God bless mam, sleep tight.

Your loving, broken hearted son Joe

P.S mam

Heard that lonesome willow wind he sounds to blue to fly the midnight train is winding loud I'm so lonesome I could cry.

# LYN ANDREWS

FAZAKERLEY native Lyn Andrews has long been renowned for her novels, most of which have been set in her native city.

She was recently at the Bridewell, off Argyle Street, to promote two of her latest works.

"Sunlight on the Mersey" is set in Liverpool during WW1, while "The Queen's Promise" is the author's first venture into historical novels as such, being based around the life of Anne Boleyn.

Hosted by publishers Headline, the event featured a question and answer session with another local author, Deborah Morgan, author of "Disappearing Home", together with queries from the floor.

Educated at Notre Dame in Everton Valley, and at Commercial College, Coventry, Lyn has been married for 45 years to another Fazakerley native, her childhood sweetheart Bob.

They are the parents of triplets Paul and Keith (both of whom live in Merseyside) and Helen, who lives in Hertfordshire.

For many years, Lyn and Bob lived St Helen's, then in Southport, but later moved to Offaly, in the centre of the Republic of Ireland, approximately an hour from Dublin.

Many of her books were written in their cottage at Rahan, on the banks of the Grand Canal, but just over three years ago they moved to the Isle of Man to be nearer to their family.

The house in Rahan has featured as a setting for some of her work.

They have an apartment in Southport and regularly spend time there to be close to their sons, daughters-in-law and grandchildren.

Replying to Deborah's questions, Lyn said she never experiences "writer's block" as the pressure of a contract forces her to come up with ideas.

She was critical of writers who are not from Liverpool and whose work reflects a lack of familiarity with the city e.g. saying "the Scotland Road", instead of "Scottie"!

She described how she uses an old edition of Kelly's Directory for information on the householders and shops of Liverpool in days gone by.

Praising Headline for the quality of their covers, she also spoke of plans for a future novel on Anne of Denmark, the wife of King James VI of Scotland and I of England.

Lyn also spoke of how difficult it is for writers today to get their work published, and of the impact of supermarkets in the closure of independent bookshops.

Describing Liverpool as a "cosmopolitan city", with its own vibrant identity, she compared it to Newcastle in this regard.

# BRITISH CHEESE

T I L C H E S T E R L A C E E G C T O D	APPLEWOOD	SHROPSHIRE BLUE
O S A R R I I R U E S A H S M O S U R C	BLUE VINNEY	SOMERSET BRIE
A P N E S E I R L S U R E H R G E N K I	CAERPHILLY	STILTON
W S C T U H D O B D C O E N O B T S N Y	CHEDDER	SWALEDALE
O E A S S L I L G T A T I A A E U G E S	CHESHIRE	WENSLEYDALE
G N S E F O B E E F E S T I L T O N Y I	CORNISH YARG	WILTSHIRE LOAF
R E H C A O P E R I H S N L O C N I L E	COTTAGE	
E C I U O C R R R Y C W R I A I D U L O	CROWDIE	
I S R O L R S T A I C E M E V T G E I Y	CURD	
S B E L E S A R C P H N S E M L L M H L	DOUBLE GLOUCESTER	
N Y E G R O G O N I P S U T A O H P P D	DUNLOP	
Y S A E I A E S E W E L P N E R S E R E	GOATS	
E N H L H H D D P E B E E O N R N W E N	HUNTSMAN	
R U R B S L E N C P L Y G W R H I U A C	ILCHESTER	
Y W E U T I R I R W D D I A O H B M C L	ISLAY	
E N E O L I B W O E T A O Y T O S D E B	LANCASHIRE	
N L T D I P Y D W S R L I T O T D Y A E	LANCOLNSHIRE POACHER	
E Y C S W A L E D A L E D U N L O P T S	ORKNEY	
D E H E C I A R I E O Y E U Y E O C N D	PENCARREG BLUE	
I S D D A Y O R E D D E H C U R D P R R	RED LEICESTER	
	RED WINDSOR	
	SAGE DERBY	



## EASY CHEAP LASAGNE

### PREPARATION METHOD:

1. Cook lasagne sheets according to the packet instructions.
2. Add onion and mince to a pan and cook till browned off. Season. Stir in passata and herbs. Remove from the heat.
3. In a clean pan, melt the cream cheese over a medium heat. Gradually add milk, whilst stirring, till you have the consistency of white sauce.
4. Lightly grease a baking dish with three lasagne sheets. Cover with a layer of mince, then with three more lasagne sheets. Cover with cream cheese sauce, then the final three pasta sheets. Finally, top with the remaining mince and then end with the remaining cheese sauce.
5. Place in oven and cook for about 15-20 minutes, but make sure it doesn't dry out.



### INGREDIENTS:

- SERVES 4:      READY IN 45 MINS
- 9 Lasagne sheets
  - 500g lean minced beef
  - 1 tbls dried mixed herbs
  - 1 medium onion, chopped
  - 400g passata or chopped tomatoes
  - 1 tub low fat cream cheese
  - Milk
  - Salt and pepper, to taste

# ENJOY!

# Another Successful Basement Residential

Despite January's snowy weather, the Basement staff and 8 service users set off for the snowy hills of Wales to begin a 14 day residential alcohol detox programme. Supported by staff, volunteers and an experienced nurse 8 lads set out on a journey that would potentially change their lives and the life's of those around them. Over the course of the residential the lads participated in a slow alcohol reduction programme, supported by group sessions and educational workshops around issues concerning, 'triggers' 'harm reduction', 'relationships' and life skills alongside outdoor activities including hill and river walks – (and the occasional snow ball fight!).



A residential educational workshop

As a member of the staff team informed us “ These resi's were set up for the most socially excluded of our service users, those who are rough sleeping, in hostel accommodation and for various reasons don't always engage with mainstream alcohol services. Whilst for some the resi can be respite for the chaos of street life and drinking, an essential party of the resi is to explore aftercare options for all our service users and this is something we are really proud of. All service users on the residential will work with staff to put things in place for their return. We explore options that are tailored to suit the individual's needs and particular circumstances.



The residential is held in a secluded Cottage in the Welsh mountains

For some this will mean moving straight into a residential rehabilitation centre, abstinence based housing, day treatment services or voluntary work. For others it may mean support on return through our detox after care group – a self help group run by service users who have maintained abstinence on return from previous residentials, one to one counselling through the Basement, organised activities including fishing trips and outreach support where necessary.

Something we are very proud of is the number who move on to complete our Peer Mentoring and Volunteers course and now actively contribute to the Basement services”.

For more information regarding the programme ring the Basement on **0151 7071515** and ask to speak to a member of staff who will arrange an appointment for you come along and find out more

## Spot the Difference

Can you spot between the eight differences between these two pieces of patchwork? Circle them in the lower picture.



## HARD

8		7	1	6		5
9	2		8			1
	3	7	5			
2		6	3		1	
	3				2	
	9		1	4		
		9			7	8
		5		3		2
		4	8	1		

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## A Matching Pair

Only two of these vases are identical in every detail. Can you spot the matching pair?

