



NEWSLETTER September 2024

➤ Welcome

We had **26 attendees**, including three new members (welcome Alison, Elizabeth and Gaynor!), Vicky from MPFT and our guest speaker. It was another good crowd! We received a few apologies from people who were unwell – we wish them all a speedy recovery.

Many thanks to Bried & Lynn this month for the lovely cakes!

❖ **Guest Speaker: Dr Nicola Dennis, Public Health Speciality Registrar**

Dr Nicola Dennis is currently working with our local NHS team at MPFT (the Midlands Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust) looking at the Respiratory services. She was keen to ask the group about how we felt about the services that we had experienced.

It was a lively discussion!

There were many very positive stories about individuals (doctors, nurses, pharmacies) but just as many less positive experiences too. One key issue was that it was often very difficult to see the right people – experts rather than people just ticking off a check-list. In general, there isn't enough focus/trust on us as whole people who know our own symptoms – especially given that so many of us have more than one condition. The system is disjointed – primary and secondary care not talking or sharing with each other. There seems to be a “postcode lottery” when it comes to getting the best local service from GP, nurse, pharmacy (let alone hospital).

Nonetheless, there was a clear overall sentiment that the Respiratory specialists available in Stoke-on-Trent were very good – it was more the disjointed system that wasn't working at all well/consistently.

It is good that patient groups like ours are involved in the review of the NHS services and we encouraged Dr Dennis to organise discussions with us whenever there might be opportunities to gather useful input in the future.

Many thanks Dr Dennis for the lively discussion!

❖ BENS Walkers

The weekly park walks have been great fun – gentle, sociable and good for exploring new places!
So we've all agreed to make them a permanent activity!

We will choose a new park each MONTH, starting to walk there after each monthly meeting. This will allow us to get to know each park better. We can walk at own pace & distances – aiming to improve each week.

No need to register separately – just turn up each week. We'll keep all of BENS informed.

Day: **Tuesdays***

Time: **1:30 – 2:30** (allows for cafés to still be open!)

September Park: **Westport Lake**, Middleport – Visitor Centre – ST6 4RZ

*We already have a different outing in Tuesday 24th September (see below) so for that week we will walk instead on Thursday 26th. So, the walks will be on Tuesdays 10th, 17th and Thursday 26th September.

See you there!

❖ Allotments for Lung Health

Gardening at an allotment is a wonderful opportunity for fresh air and gentle activity in a social, communal environment whilst also learning about nature and good fresh food!

The **Better Together** charity, in conjunction with our MPFT respiratory team, proposes to let us work with them on their Allotment.

It would be a weekly activity (at least) during the growing season (March to October).

We are planning a **Social Event** to test the interest in this project:

Friday 20th September, 11am until 1pm

- Short presentations about the Allotment, BENS, MPFT Services
- Free teas/coffees, cakes
- Free raffle (£25 Supermarket Voucher!)

It'll be interesting AND fun!

A-Maize-Ing Grow community garden,

Our Lady and St Werburgh's Catholic Primary School,

Seabridge Lane, Clayton, ST5 4AG

(poster & map at the end)

The weather will be great, so please come and enjoy tea and cakes exploring the allotment!

❖ Other News and Activities:

➤ BENS X

We will be re-starting the classes from **Monday 23rd September**. (2pm at Dougie Mac Wellbeing Centre, Barlaston). We've had a delayed start due to unforeseen issues for our superman main trainer, George.

It's really important that we get fit to help our breathing so please make the effort to join in!

➤ Macmillan Coffee Morning

Kerry is holding a Macmillan Coffee in honour of her Mum (and Malcolm's wife) Margaret Podmore. Many of us knew the lovely Margaret well and this would be a fitting tribute to her. Please come and donate whilst enjoying tea, cakes and a raffle:
11am to 2pm Tuesday 24th September.
16 Bannock Street, Weston Coyney, Stoke-on-Trent, ST3 6SL

➤ MPFT Awards

BENS has been shortlisted for a "Brilliant You Award" from MPFT in the category **"Community Group Co-production Partners of the Year"**.

How good is that ?!

The awards are on 3rd October – we'll let you know how it goes! 

➤ Autumn Concert - Daleian Singers

Victor sings with the Daleian Singers and they have a concert 19th October – please come and support us!

Singing is good for your lungs (as well as your memory!) and we have BENS members singing with the *City of Stoke Male choir* and the *Singing for Lungs* group too. We should all be encouraged! Poster for the Daleian concert is attached. Please contact Victor if you'd like tickets!

➤ WhatsApp

We're going to launch a WhatsApp group for BENS. It's a very useful tool that many of us already use. As a group messaging tool it will allow us to share information about BENS activities in a much easier and shared way. It will be restricted to BENS activity messages only – not as a discussion forum.

Victor and Patrick will organise signing everyone up in the next month so that we can start to trial it. Any questions please don't hesitate to contact us.

❖ Calendar of BENS events this month:

Sep	
S 1	
M 2	
T 3	
W 4	
Th 5	
F 6	BENS at Tesco
S 7	
S 8	
M 9	
T 10	WALK: Westport Lake 1.30pm
W 11	
Th 12	
F 13	
S 14	
S 15	
M 16	
T 17	WALK: Westport Lake 1.30pm
W 18	
Th 19	
F 20	Allotment EVENT 11am
S 21	
S 22	
M 23	BENS X: Dougie Mac 2pm
T 24	Macmillan Coffee 11am
W 25	
T 26	WALK: Westport Lake 1.30pm
F 27	
S 28	
S 29	
M 30	BENS X: Dougie Mac 2pm
T 1	WALK: Westport Lake 1.30pm
W 2	
Th 3	
F 4	BENS at Tesco
S 5	
S 6	

OCTOBER

❖ BENS Programme 2024:

2024	Main Event	Other Topics	Awareness Events
January	AGM		-
February	MPFT: PR & Exercise		-
March	20th Anniversary Lunch		Blythe Bridge
April	Stoke Central MPs: Lung Health - Future Govt Policy?		Longton
May	Wolseley Centre Nature Reserve		Trentham Gardens
June	Keele Univ: Patients as Educators		Asthma Event: Cannock
July	NHS & Changes: Mental Wellbeing		Meir
August	Rudyard Lake & Beatrice Boat		-
September	Dr N Dennis: Respiratory Service Review		Allotment Event
October	A+LUK: Ongoing Research projects		-
November	NHS MPFT: Nutrition		World COPD Day: Affinity & UHNM Blythe Bridge / Meir
December	Christmas Lunch		-

Next Get-Together: **Friday 4th October – 1.30pm at Tesco**

Contact: Victor CHOLIJ Tel: 07789 713782 or Hamish Kirkpatrick Tel: 07962 400182
Email: BreatheEasy.NS@gmail.com

Have a Wonderful September!



supporting

breatheeasy
North Staffordshire



FRIDAY 20TH SEPT 2024, 11AM UNTIL 1PM

ALLOTMENTS FOR LUNG HEALTH OPEN DAY



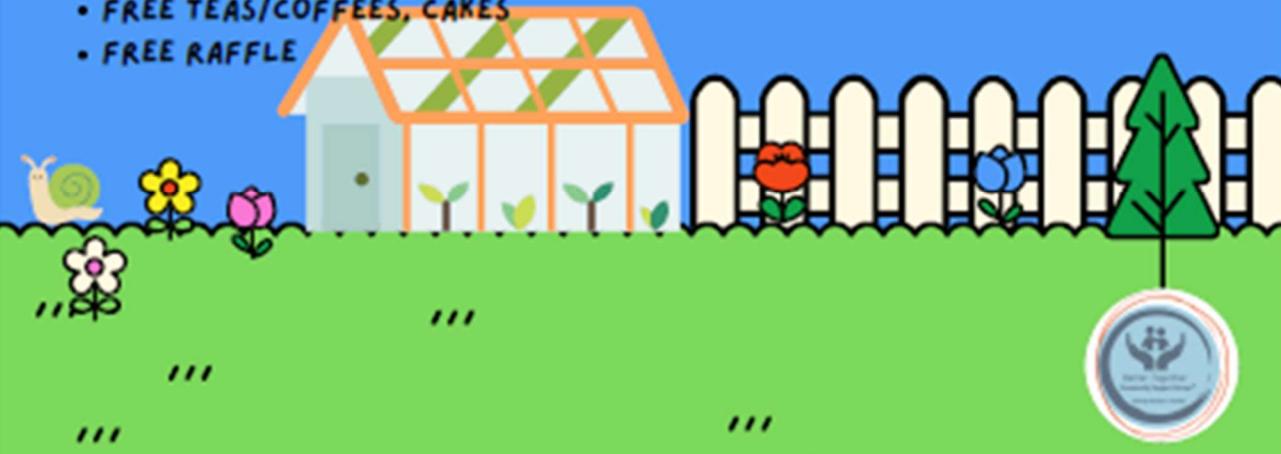
A-MAIZE-ING GROW COMMUNITY GARDEN,
OUR LADY AND ST WERBURGH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL,
SEABRIDGE LANE, CLAYTON, ST5 4AG

PARKING: SCHOOL PARKING NEXT DOOR, OR BEHIND THE CO-OP ON WINDERMERE ROAD, OPPOSITE THE ALLOTMENT

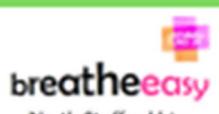
BREATHE EASY NORTH STAFFS COMMUNITY GROUP TOGETHER WITH
BETTER TOGETHER COMMUNITY GROUP ARE LAUNCHING AN ALLOTMENT
CLUB FOR PEOPLE WITH LUNG CONDITIONS

SHORT PRESENTATION ABOUT THE ALLOTMENT,
ALSO TALKS ABOUT:

- THE COMMUNITY GROUPS (BREATHE EASY AND BETTER TOGETHER)
- THE LOCAL NHS SERVICES
(LOCAL GP & COMMUNITY RESPIRATORY TEAM)
- BENEFITS OF ACTIVITY
- COPING WITH A LUNG CONDITION
- FREE TEAS/COFFEES, CAKES
- FREE RAFFLE



COME AND EXPLORE THE ALLOTMENT
AND HEAR ABOUT THE
SUPPORT AND SERVICES AVAILABLE TO
YOU LOCALLY.



How to find the Allotment:





Refreshments
and
A great raffle!

The Daleian Singers



AUTUMN GOLD



19th October 2024



at

The Town Hall, Kidsgrove, 7.30pm

Evocative and poignant songs for the Season



Tickets are £12.00 each
With more information and bookings
available from Mr. Andy Maxfield at
andymaxfield67@gmail.com



The Daleian Singers' prize winning
performance at the Cornwall
International Festival of Male Voices



Scan me



LUNG HEALTH EXERCISE CLASS "BENS X"

EVERY MONDAY
2pm

Wellbeing Centre, Dougie Mac
Barlaston Road, Stoke-on-Trent, ST3 3NZ

- Classes tailored for people with lung conditions
- Based on the Pulmonary Rehabilitation course
- Varied exercises with flexibility to match your level
- Social & fun with peers who share your condition!

Regular exercise is good for your lungs

- It increases the strength of the muscles around your lungs and the rest of your body.
 - As you build strength, your muscles will need less oxygen to work too, meaning you will breathe more efficiently while moving.
- If you have a lung condition, being active can help to improve your quality of life and help you manage your condition.

If you wish to attend please contact:
Email: breatheeasy.ns@gmail.com

www.dougiemac.org.uk

SUPPORTED BY:



RCN 1073613