

Fair Shares News

Winter 2019

GLOUCESTER

ANOTHER GREAT YEAR AT FAIR SHARES

Welcome to our Winter Newsletter! We've had a crazily busy time here at Fair Shares the last year, including our "chance to shine" month at Gloucester Services, numerous trips, events in Podsmead, Matson and of course the very successful Barton and Tredworth Cultural Fair.

We've also been on our Annual Holiday to Bournemouth; 23 people on 2 minibuses off on an adventure! We went on Monday 9th September for a 3 night stay at the Seafront Travelodge. Although we have been organising this holiday for quite a few years, it was great to see a whole set of new faces joining us for the first time.

Apart from rain on the day we arrived, we were lucky to have great weather for the rest of the trip which meant we were able to do lots of activities whilst we were there. Some of us went to Corfe and caught the steam train to Swanage, others went sea fishing, and a huge group of us had a hilarious morning playing crazy golf in the lower gardens. We had a lovely group meal on the final evening and we all had a really nice time together, sharing experiences and building friendships. We've had wonderful feedback from everyone, with one person saying it was "the best holiday he'd ever been on". A big thank you to everyone for making our holiday such a success this year!

We still have our regular weekly lunch group, art group, allotment group and the woodworking project is going from strength to strength with new people joining all the time and lots of things being produced for the community, including the lovely flower planters that can be seen down Barton Street.

Please carry on reading to find out all our other news and thanks for continuing to be part of our organisation, for all you give to others and to your community, and for making this year a great success at Fair Shares so far.



FAIR SHARES CHRISTMAS PARTY

Wednesday 11th December 12-3pm
Chequers Bridge Community Centre

Come join us for lunch, cake and Christmas festivities. This is always a great opportunity for all of us to come together at the end of a busy year and share some happiness and stories of kindness.

Please let us know if you are coming or bringing friends so we can make sure we have enough food (or feel free to bring some food to share with others!)

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TRIPS AND ACTIVITIES

Our trips have been very popular and we've had lots of suggestions for where people want to go for next year. Everyone felt getting out and enjoying nature was really important and a chance to enjoy the beauty of our county. With Christmas approaching we wanted to do a few things to get people in the spirit of things. Let us know if you have any ideas for trips as well.

If you're interested in coming to any of the trips please contact the office to find out more information. We always try to keep costs as low as possible.



Snowdrops at Rocco Gardens



Black Country Museum



Kew Gardens

"CHANCE TO SHINE" AT GLOUCESTER SERVICES

In June we had our "Chance to Shine" month at Gloucester Services. For every £1 spent there, up to £0.03p is donated back to local charities, and we are lucky enough to be one of the charities that they support. Other charities that are supported include The Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, GL Communities, The Nelson Trust, Play Gloucestershire, The Redwell Centre and APT in Stonehouse.



The aim of "Chance to Shine" was to engage not only with the general public but also with staff at the services, many of whom are local and might want to get involved with us. We had information days, bee-keeping sessions, yoga classes, art groups, a "chance to chat" postcard session and planter-making activities spread over the month.

One particular activity that really engaged people was our "Acts of Kindness" board. We encouraged people to share experiences whether they had either received or done an act of kindness to someone. There were so many lovely examples of people helping each other and it was a very heart-warming activity.

It was a successful and worthwhile experience. Staff and public learnt a lot about Fair Shares, what we do, how we work and opportunities for involvement, as well as learning some new skills.

TRIPS

Monday 2nd December Birmingham Christmas Market

Shopping trip to get your Christmassy bits and pieces.

Wednesday 18th December Pantomime Trip - Aladdin

Trip to a lunchtime showing of Aladdin at The Roses Theatre in Tewkesbury.

Thursday 23rd January Indoor Crazy Golf

Trip to Mr Mulligans in Cheltenham for some competitive fun.

Wednesday 12th February Pitt Rivers Museum

Visit a mad explorer's personal collection

Wednesday 18th March Cinema trip

We'll decide on a film closer to the time!

Thursday 16th April Westmidland Safari Park

Wednesday 20th May St Fagans Museum

Explore the history of Wales though people's everyday lives

There will also be trips to see bluebells and daffodils but we'll choose those dates closer to the time.

Please call us for times and costs of the trips and let us know if you're interested.

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SOUL DESTROYERS GIG IS ON THE MONEY!

On Friday 24th May there was a special fundraiser gig in Stroud for local charities and Fair Shares was one of the beneficiaries. It was also a tribute to long-time band member and trombone player Stewart Greenwell who sadly died at the beginning of this year. He was organising this gig to support his favourite local charities when he died, and he was a great supporter of Fair Shares.



It was a night of fantastic music, with 2 bands performing - Arkansaw Jukebox, with their bluegrass take on current popular hits and The Soul Destroyers getting the party going with some soul and pop classics, which included in the line-up our very own Emma on trumpet. The gig was a sell out and a great, foot stomping night was had by all.

Special thanks to Mandy for driving the minibus and all those that made the long trip from Gloucester to Stroud! A total of £766 was raised for Fair Shares. There are plans for a similar event next year so watch this space...

FOOD AND FAMILIES EVENT

It was great to be involved in the Food and Families event in Podsmead in May. The purpose was to ask the community what their views were around healthy eating and how achievable that was with what's on offer locally. A collection of organisations who work in the area had stands with information and activities. There was also a free lunch for attendees of the event.

Fair Shares decided to offer some activities for children around growing food. The most popular activity was making a cress head. We made over 40 of these with local children and families. This was a simple but fun idea to engage people and get them thinking about growing their own food, even if they have very limited space.

Whilst the children were busy, I was able to chat to parents and tell them more about Fair shares. We spoke about time banking and how it works, and how people might be able to get involved. We also spoke about various projects that we run, including the allotment project that is based at The City Farm in Barton and Tredworth. There was a positive response and interest and we are keen to get people from Podsmead involved.

But the nicest thing about the event was seeing time-banking in action whilst we were there. A couple of our participants came to help with the activities and use their skills, and one brought her grandchildren along. Once they learnt how to do the cress heads, they then helped others and showed them how to do it. Time banking isn't complicated - it's about us all using our skills and time to contribute to our communities.



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FARHANAH'S GEM JOURNEY

Before becoming a GEM Navigator Developer, Farhanah had been volunteering for 10 years. She has volunteered at GL Communities, The Nelson Trust, The friendship Café and at The Skill Zone where she was a Session Guide, taking children and adults around the Skill Zone village and talking to them about health and safety aspects. She has of course been very active at Fair Shares and organised the amazing fun day we had a few years ago.



In 2018 she took on the job of a Community Researcher for Gloucestershire Gateway trust where she spoke to hundreds of people finding out what people loved about living in some of our communities in Gloucestershire and how we can all make things better. After that six week project came to an end she finally found her new home at Fair Shares. The GEM project is all about supporting people along the path towards work or further education or training and Farhanah's journey makes her the perfect person to help others on a similar path.



"All the years I volunteered really helped me to become who I am - the experience and skills I gained through volunteering helped me to get this job. I was already helping people in my community but to get paid in doing what I was doing is a bonus - I love this job. When the job advert for the 2019 Community Researcher roles was advertised, I actually told several of my participants to apply. I helped two of them with their applications and they both got the job. It is a pleasure seeing them surveying people, meeting new friends and really connecting with each other." – Farhanah

One of the many things Farhanah organised this year, along with another GEM navigator Sarah Fotheringham, was a confidence building course. The aim of the course was to deliver workshop on building self-esteem, partnership working, cross-cultural integration, building trust and communication between Police and Fire Service providers and members of the local communities.

Police Sergeant Andrew Doyle from Gloucester commented on his experience: ***"it's always so valuable for us as Police to be able to engage with, what can be, harder to reach members of the community and break down barriers. We want people to feel confident in approaching us and being able to report incidents if they need to."***

GEM participant Jenny said of the day ***"A friendly relaxed informative experience, to try and listen more carefully to others, looking at body language as well as my own was good to interact with the police and fire service personnel who were very down to earth and easy to be amongst. I also enjoyed meeting people from different countries. I really enjoyed myself and felt it bonded people. I definitely had the feel good factor thank you."***

If you need help/support with confidence building, CV writing, applying for jobs, interview skills, or advice about training opportunities please contact Farhanah on 01452 415900, 07446405639 or farhanah@fairshares.org.uk



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BARTON AND TREDWORTH CULTURAL FAYRE

This was the 7th Cultural Fayre that we have been part of and this year's event was the best one ever. The sun came out at just the right time creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Everywhere you looked you could see smiling happy faces! The event celebrates all the different cultures and communities that live and work together in Barton and Tredworth and it was a great reminder just what a special place it is.



THE FAIR SHARES YOUTH PROJECT

It's been another really busy year for Rich as our project worker for the youth work. He's been getting young people involved in Fair Shares, helping other participants and taking part in larger community projects. There's been a never ending list of gardening jobs, DIY jobs, decorating, moving houses and even some apple picking. We were also lucky enough to work with Betaris again where we had a group of about 15 of their young people every week who gave their time offered their help. In particular we wanted to make the most of our new workshop and so we had the young people building all kinds of things from bird boxes for Barnwood Arboretum to Planters for a community growing project at Matson Library. We have even been working with The Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust on a Greening up Barton Project. You can see an example of our work outside the Sainsbury's Local on Barton Street.



PLEASE KEEP IN TOUCH

We know we're not the best when it comes to getting newsletters out regularly, but there are other ways to find out what we've been doing and what we might have coming up.

If you use facebook or twitter please check us out and link to our accounts: [f @fairshares](#) [t @fair_shares](#)

Also we try to send out more regular news bulletins by email, so if you're not on our email list, please contact us on Gloucester@fairshares.org.uk

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OUR REGULAR WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

LUNCH - Mondays

Our lunch group continues to flourish, with more and more participants stepping up to the challenge of cooking for the masses. We've had such a variety of meals, including homemade tomato soup, hot dogs, spaghetti Bolognese and vegetable chilli.



In June we had special guest chef, Thomas from Gloucester Services, cooking up a delicious traditional Venezuelan meal, including a black bean stew and homemade bread rolls. It was a lovely opportunity to try something new and everyone really liked the food.

The lunch club takes place every Monday, with food being served at 1.30pm. It is open to anyone so do come and join us! Help out or simply share a meal with us in a welcoming, friendly

setting. If you would like to cook one of your speciality dishes let us know and we can book a date for you to be "Head Chef" and can supply the ingredients for you. We don't charge for our lunch group, but a donation is gratefully received if you are able.

We are also looking at giving some support to a possible new lunch club starting in Tuffley, run on the same principles as our one here at the Friendship Café. If you would like to be involved in this please contact the office and speak to either Reyaz or Emma.



CROCHET – Tuesday Mornings

Our crochet group started in July this year. From humble beginnings it is now growing by the week and we have moved into the new sewing room at the friendship café to accommodate everyone. The group is open to anyone interested in learning how to crochet and developing skills. Participants work on individual projects, supported by our volunteer teacher Julie and other members of the group. They meet Tuesdays at 10am.



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ART – Tuesday Afternoons



Our art group has been very busy this year doing all kinds of different things. Painting, drawing, sewing, textile work, mosaics...the list goes on. One really great piece of community art that we have been involved with is the willow sheep project that you may have seen around Gloucester. Along with many other community projects we have been creating a flock of willow sheep (to celebrate the real flock of sheep often seen wandering around Matson).

Our sheep can currently be seen proudly on the Finlay Road roundabout. It's the huge ram with the orange horns!



If you want to come along and stretch your artistic talent or help us with any future community art projects, give us a call.

WOODWORK – Mondays, Tuesday and Fridays

Our woodworking project has been going from strength to strength this year and after months of getting our workshop up to spec we finally had its official launch and were able to open it up to wider community use. We need to thank the Screwfix Foundation, Ethical Giving and Barnwood Trust for funding our essential building work and helping us to really roll out the project

There's a huge range of activity happening in the workshop, from repairing furniture to building planters for ageing well groups. We work with individuals who come along to learn and develop new skills and those who just want to be part of a bigger project and share what they know. Currently we're working on a large project building a giant bee sculpture for the Gloucester Services which will be visible from the motorway!



ARCHERY – Mondays and Thursday evenings

Come and have a go at archery. Mondays are for children but they must come with an adult and Thursdays are for adults. 7.30-9.15pm

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ALLOTMENT – New plans for the New Year

For the past couple of years we have been slowly developing our allotment at the City Farm, but starting in the new year we want to really kick it up a gear. We will soon have a new project worker in place focussed on turning the allotment into something really special. The plan is for them to be there three days a week working with loads of different groups and individuals to turn our allotment into an amazing community growing, learning and sharing space. Our allotment is small but we know that it has a lot of potential and from the new year we're going to try and explore some new and exciting ways we can really make the most of the space.

If you have some skills that you'd like to share, or want to learn how to grow food, or just want to be part of creating an exciting community space, please let us know and get involved.



UPCYCLING – Wednesdays (for now)

This is another one of our projects that we are going to develop over the next year. We've had some great short projects working with the Redwell Centre to teach people how to revive and restore tired and old furniture. We are looking to continue this next year but will hopefully be working with more groups and different venues around Gloucester. But the basic idea will be the same, learn skills and techniques to restore, redecorate and jazz up any old furniture. Please keep an eye out for more information or call us if you'd like to take part.

TIMETABLE OF ACTIVITIES

Mondays	Tuesdays	Wednesdays	Thursdays	Fridays
Lunch group 1.30pm	Crochet Group 10am-12pm	Upcycling Project Time and venue to still be finalised	Allotment 11am-3pm (more sessions will be added in new year)	Woodwork 11am-4pm
Woodwork 11am-4pm	Woodwork 11am-4pm			
Archery for kids 7.30pm	Art Group 2pm-4pm		Archery for Adults 7.30pm	

If you'd like to find out more information about our projects or would like to get involved with anything we do please call us on 01452 415900 or email Gloucester@fairshares.org.uk

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