Visit to 10 Downing Street

On 3rd February 2015, Carmen Conquer, Aspired Futures Founder and Director of Services was invited to attend the Community Champions Event hosted by Samantha Cameron at 10 Downing Street.

Carmen, along with Michelle Smith from Fylde Coast Carers Trust, had been nominated as a Community Champion by Paul Maynard MP. The nomination was in recognition of the service delivered by Aspired Futures to improve the lives of and empower children and young people throughout the Blackpool, Wyre and Fylde local communities.

Before the evening reception at 10 Downing Street, Carmen met with Paul to have a tour of Westminster Palace before being able to enjoy a coffee in the Smoking Room at the Houses of Parliament.

Aspired Futures Team Members Update

We would like to welcome Stephen to the Aspired Futures team, Stephen has supported us for many years and has recently been appointed as our new Transport Facilitator. As such, Stephen will be responsible for transporting our children and young people to and from sessions and activities in our fantastic company car which continues to be funded by The Splash Foundation.

Our Assistant Programme Manager Amy started her maternity leave in March as her baby is due in May, we would like to wish her all the best and we look forward to meeting the newest member of the Aspired Futures family soon!

Finally, we would like to say a big thank you and bid a fond farewell to Pete Mercer who has now joined the Fylde Coast Carers Trust to continue his work within the community house in Layton. Pete has been a volunteer and supporter of Aspired Futures for several years and more recently was a member of the Aspired Futures team as the Programme Manager for Layton. We would like to thank Pete for all his hard work over the years and wish him every success in his new career.

We would like to pay tribute to Christine Hardman who sadly passed away in March.

Christine was a very creative and talented lady and was a volunteer at Aspired Futures for 3 years.

Passionate about textiles, sewing and supporting our children and young people, Christine was the creative presence at our Thursday "Close Knit" group, passing on her creativity, skills, knowledge and passion to our children and young people.

We would like to thank all those who have made a donation to Aspired Futures in memory of Christine.

Our Reaching Communities

Application Success!

We are delighted to announce that our bid to the Reaching Communities / Big Lottery Fund was successful!

The success of this bid means that our core team can continue to deliver Aspired Futures services for the next 3 years.

We are continuing to apply for other sources of funding via new bid applications, fund raising and working with the local business community to revamp and promote our Sponsorship Pack so that we can continue to provide transport, food, resources and additional support staff for the sessions and back office.

We would like to thank all those who have made a donation to Aspired Futures in memory of Christine.
Awards 4 Achieving Outings

During the Easter Holidays, a group of Aspired Futures children and young people enjoyed a fantastic day out to the Chill Factor in Manchester. The trip was an award for those topping the leaderboard in the AWARDS4ACHIEVING scheme. This scheme is funded by The Friends of Muir Housing to enable Aspired Futures to recognise and reward children and young people for reaching their personal goals, demonstrating good behaviour and kindness within their groups. After the Chill Factor session, the group visited the Trafford Centre for pizza. Other outings that were run during the holidays included trips to the Sandcastle Waterpark, Lytham Park View 4 U, Stanley Park and sessions at the Kensington Foundation Resource Centre.

Future Citizens Group

The second group of our 12 week long Future Citizens programme, run in association with Brathay and funded by the Blackpool Coastal Housing Tenants Fund has nearly come to an end. The aim of the programme is to provide young people with opportunities to stretch their physical boundaries and learn the importance of behaviour management and working as a close knit team. The children and young people taking part in the programme all spent a weekend at Brathay Hall in Ambleside at the end of March. We are tremendously proud of the achievements of our young people, many of whom had not spent a night away from home before and some had not been out of Blackpool prior to this trip.

Congratulations!

We would like to say a huge congratulations to Chance, a previously supported child who is now one of our Teenage Trainee Volunteers. Chance has been successful in his application and has passed his assessment to join the Royal Logistics Corps in the Army. Well done Chance! We are immensely proud of you.

What our children and young people say...

We asked our children and young people, “What do you like about coming to Aspired Futures?”, here are some of their replies:

“I love it when I get to do art because I can’t do it anywhere else. I also liked it when we went to the Peter Pan show. I also really enjoy having a laugh with the staff. I also like being able to do my homework in the library at Aspired Futures.” - Niamh, aged 10

“My most favourite memory of Aspired Futures is when we went to see the show, “Mama Mia”- it was good. The best thing at Aspired Futures is the nice staff and friendly people who help me. I like to be able to do my homework in the quiet library. I am getting better at maths.” - Charlene, aged 11

“I like coming to Aspired Futures to do my homework with Ian and the staff and volunteers and playing all the games that are set out. My favourite games to play are the TRUGS reading game, pool and air hockey and I like drawing. Of all the things I have done with Aspired Futures the things I have liked best are: I liked going out on a trip to the beach, where we played with the rugby ball. We went to see the pantomime, Peter Pan which was brilliant. I liked going to the planetarium at Rossall School to look at the stars in the dark dome- it was fun!” - Lee, aged 11

“I like going to gymnastics every Saturday at the college. I learned to do the crab and the bridge, handstands and cartwheels. I like to come to Aspired Futures Tuesday club; I like dressing up with Courteney, the volunteer. I like putting make-up on and I like playing with the doll house. I really liked going to see “Mama Mia”; I liked the songs and I loved joining in with the singing. I liked going to Park School, doing circuit training and colouring.” - Mia, aged 9
Let’s talk money……. securing our financial future

Grant funding bids —

In addition to our Reaching Communities bid, we have also been successful in securing funding from:

1. Baily Thomas—Ian Squire, a qualified teacher, joined us in September 2014 to lead the Learning to Love Learning (LLL) pilot, providing tailored educational support to children who struggle academically for a variety of reasons. We have been successful in our application to Baily Thomas and will be able to fund the extend of this scheme for another year. We will also be able to extend the scheme to more of our children from September 2015 thanks to the additional funding.

2. Vera Wolstencroft Children and Animals Trust—We have secured £23,000 to enhance the outdoor space, including constructing a workshop. The funding will also enable us to purchase suitable flooring and decoration for our new annex.

Fundraising -

(1) EasyFundraising scheme

(2) Ethical giving options—giving everyone the opportunity to support Aspired Futures as a gift to a family member, friend or colleague

If you would like to know more about the above please do give us a call

Building Developments

The Kensington Foundation have very generously provided funding to build a new annex and construction is currently underway. The new annex will provide a fantastic new warm, light, airy and secure place and will be a tremendous addition to our centre as a therapeutic service support provider.

Sponsorship—

This initiative is key to our long-term commitment to children & young people. We have individual and business sponsors making monthly payments which enables us 100% of money received supports the services we provide. We are currently engaging members of the local business community as part of a Think Tank to enable our Sponsorship Pack to reach a wider community. If you would like to know more please ring our main office 01253 769755. You could make a life-changing contribution

Comic Relief Fundraising

Our Gymfuntastic Group, funded by the Community Foundation for Lancashire, raised over £100 for Comic Relief this year by performing set exercises both individually and in small groups within a time limit. Well done to everyone who took part and thank you to all those who supported the event.
Going the Extra Mile for AF

We want to say a big thank you for donations received this so far this year from -
* Freemasons
* Rotary

We would also like to say a big thank you to—
* Chris Bailey and Sunrise Rotary, Chris promotes our cause and provides lots of opportunities.
* The Splash Foundation pay for our car which is essential in transporting out children and young people to and from sessions and activities. The Sandcastle Waterpark generously provide the opportunity for us to take children swimming and are hosting our Sponsorship Think Tank meetings
* Martin Cooper for providing Conflict Management and Restraint training to the core team and selected volunteers, free of charge.
* Sarah Rickerby from Blackpool and the Fylde College who has worked with the Drama Department at the college to provide sessions, hoodies and pantomime tickets
* Colin King from Blackpool and the Fylde College who negotiates the use of the college gym and facilitates the dancing and gymnastics sessions

We are very fortunate to have the support of lots of people who go the extra mile for Aspired Futures, we will highlight just a few of these individuals and organisations each issue.

A poem about Aspired Futures

I volunteer with Aspired Futures
I’ve done so since September
And what life was like before that
I struggle to remember

I heard about them from a friend
And liked the sound of what they do
And following some research
Decided I could help there too!

The house is just amazing
Each room full of childhood delight
To see the children blossom there
Is a really wonderful sight

Staff and volunteers alike
Encourage and support each child
The results are truly amazing
Happiness and confidence replace “wild”

No two children are alike
Each child attends for different things
And with careful one to one support
We see all the good that it brings

When the kids are ten years old
They are encouraged to help and guide
To see the older kids teach the young ones
Makes me almost burst with pride

The work is sometimes difficult
And yes, it’s also tiring
But to see happy, smiling faces
Is beautiful and inspiring

I would not change it for the world
Things are structured and good as can be
And as for me volunteering
I’m afraid you are now stuck with me!

To put it in the children’s words
When they are “doing it tough”
They need Aspired Futures
To work their magic stuff!!

By Kathy West, an Aspired Futures volunteer

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www.aspired-futures.com
“Like” us on Facebook - https://www.facebook.com/Aspiredfutures

We welcome visitors, please give us a call to make an appointment
We are also happy to make presentations at your place of business, society or club