



# Get social this Spring!

2016 has been a busy year for us at Brightlife so far, with the launch of several exciting new projects to improve the lives of older people in Cheshire West and Chester.

In this issue of our newsletter you can find out more about our new Social Prescribing schemes across the region, and meet some of the partners we've commissioned to run Brightlife activities near you.

If you've got a great idea for a project to benefit older people, you can also find details of how to apply to our Bright Ideas competition to win support and funding. Happy reading!

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*Professor Pauline Ong*  
Chair, Brightlife Partnership



# Social Prescribing schemes in Malpas, Winsford and Chester

**Social prescribing is a new way to help people who are lonely and/or socially isolated (or who are at risk of becoming so), by allowing them to rebuild their own social support networks through involvement in local activities.**

We launched our first Social Prescribing scheme in Malpas in January, including a drop-in session held every Friday

morning in the Young People's Centre.

Our second scheme launched in Winsford in February, with weekly drop-in sessions at the Greenfields Bungalow (Tuesday mornings) and the Dingle Centre (Wednesday mornings).

We will be launching our final scheme in Chester in June. Along with Chester Voluntary

Action, we are researching the range of activities already taking place in Chester, and talking to local older people to find out what activities they would like to see (more information about the Chester scheme in the next newsletter). For more information, contact: Louise Gough (Malpas) 07736 168342, or Jackie Brown (Winsford) 07736 168348.

## Welcome to Chris McClelland

We welcome our new Head of Brightlife, Chris McClelland. Before joining us, Chris spent several years working on social inclusion projects for young people in Greater Manchester. "Brightlife is a brilliant idea and provides a unique chance to develop and test innovative ways of tackling social isolation amongst older people," says Chris. "I am really pleased to be a part of it!"



## Explore the Great Outdoors in Malpas

Access to green spaces and spending time outdoors is fantastic for our wellbeing. That's why we have commissioned Cheshire Wildlife Trust to run the Great Outdoors Malpas project – a new initiative to help older people from in and around Malpas access the countryside and connect with nature. Planned activities include practical conservation volunteering, wildlife gardening, wildlife photography, landscape painting, bee keeping and bird watching. There will also be supported activities such as nature walks for people with dementia.

For more information on the project, contact Gemma Sproston at Cheshire Wildlife Trust on 01948 820728.



**Cheshire Wildlife Trust**

*People taking action for wildlife*



# Bright sparks!

Simone Cobbold and Yvonne Boyle had an idea to improve the lives of older people in Cheshire. Thanks to Brightlife, they have turned this into a reality with Community Compass, a new social enterprise that helps communities to deliver sustainable, creative and active social groups or 'Compass Clubs'. We asked them to tell us more about who they are and what they do.



## What gave you the idea for Community Compass?

"We have both worked with older people for years – we met working at Age UK Cheshire on their Casserole Club and Wear Purple projects. Loneliness is a huge problem in the area, and we saw a need for something that could help communities to build their own support networks to prevent loneliness on a local level."

## When did you decide to make it happen?

"We knew about Brightlife through Age UK Cheshire, and we heard that they were offering funding to people who wanted to set up their own projects. We realised that we could create something really brilliant with their help, so we set up as a CIC (Community Interest Company) and applied for funding from them."

## What will you be doing and where?

"Community Compass has already launched in Malpas, where we run a range of groups and activity taster sessions. We are thrilled to be doing the same in Winsford very soon - keep an eye out for all kinds of activities coming up!"



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## The Brightlife 'Bright Ideas' competition is launching soon



### Do you have a great idea to improve the lives of older people in your area?

Enter our 'Bright Ideas' competition (launching Spring 2016) for a chance to turn your idea into reality. Any organisation or community support group in the borough is invited to apply.

Optional workshops will be held to support and advise potential applicants. Business and contract support will also be given to all shortlisted ideas, and the winners will be announced in October 2016.

See more information at:  
[www.brightlifecheshire.org.uk](http://www.brightlifecheshire.org.uk)

# Brightlife Festival

26<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER – 2<sup>nd</sup> OCTOBER 2016

## Get involved in the Brightlife Festival

Autumn might still feel like a long time away, but we are so excited about the Brightlife Festival that we are planning it already! This week-long celebration of older people is taking place from 26th September until 2nd October 2016, and will include a wide range of activities and special events across Cheshire West and Chester. For more information about how you or your organisation could get involved, please call Cath Logan on 01606 884445.



## Become a Community Co-researcher with the University of Chester

We are working with the University of Chester to evaluate the impact of all our projects on the lives of older people. We are recruiting teams of Community Co-researchers to help us do this, all of whom will receive training in basic research skills (so no previous experience in research is necessary).

If you would like to get involved or to find out more, call Mandy Roberts on 01606 884441.



University of  
Chester

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Brightlife is a partnership led by Age UK Cheshire  
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