

Chair's Comments

Two years ago we were celebrating the fact that the Centre had survived. Last year we celebrated our 20th anniversary. Hard though it was, we were adapting to the new environment and devising new ways of working as a community business whilst preserving our core values. This year our efforts have paid off and we tendered for and have won a substantial North Tyneside contract for employability. This involves helping people, particularly lone parents and those on Incapacity Benefit, in to training and work. It is a big job and will stretch our resources, so it is great to have been able to recruit new receptionists and guidance workers. For the future of the Centre, we must make sure that we deliver this programme in an efficient and professional manner. I am confident that the staff, led by Maureen Madden, the volunteers and the Management Committee will continue to rise to the challenge.

Peter Latham 07/11/08

Staff (31st March 2007-1st April 2008)

Maureen Madden	Centre Manager
Mick Riley	Deputy Manager/I.A.G Worker
Nick Palmer	Print/Design Co-ordinator
Michael Lisle	Print/Design Assistant
Lorna Graham	Course Organiser/I.A.G Worker
Carol Tregidga	Administrator/I.A.G Worker
Karen Climpson	Café Staff
Susan High	Café Staff
Paul Climpson	I.A.G Worker
Rob Lackenby	I.A.G Project Worker

Management Committee

Peter Latham (Chair)	Garth Mayfield
Ian Ayres (Secretary)	John Maypothor
Bill Bowman (Treasurer)	Nicky Murton
Norman Brownell	Norma Playle
Jim Finnan	Yvonne Ritchie
Ylana First	Bob Shiels
Maria Gustiuc	John Stirling
Sundas Henderson	Brian Topping
John Jasper	George Welldon
Roger Layton	

Wallsend People's Centre ANNUAL REPORT



Community
Foundation
serving Tyne & Wear
and Northumberland



North Tyneside Council



affiliated
part of the national network
of unemployed Centres

wallsend people's centre
WPC
www.wallsendpc.org

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Chief Officer's Report

Well, here we are again. It hardly seems possible that a year has passed since the Centre celebrated its 20th birthday at last year's A.G.M. There's been lots to celebrate in 2008, and once again we have continued to provide services within North Tyneside that help people most in need. For example, we have equipped unemployed people with skills that will help them find sustainable employment. We worked closely with North Tyneside Council Adult Education Alliance and over 240 students took part in adult education classes.

We have worked in partnership with Acorn Computers (a community interest company whose aim is to provide training and employment prospects) in recycling computers. We supported the Walking With project in staying in Wallsend by providing rented accommodation while the new church hall is under construction. This has worked very well, with both organisations gaining from the experience of working with refugees and asylum seekers. This user group have a variety of problems including having no financial support, housing issues and the need for legal advice or help with English language classes. Assistance with all of these are offered by a team of well trained volunteers from the local churches in Wallsend. The Centre provides much-needed accommodation for the Glass Group, Writer's Group, Farsi Group and the Northern Oak Credit Union. This support is provided free by the Centre and is subsidised by other areas of the Centre's work.

For the future, the Centre has secured a formal contract, via the tendering process, with North Tyneside Council to supply employment advice and support within North Tyneside. This is a two year project and is "target driven". So, if we don't hit the targets then we don't get paid. However, as we have been successful in delivering the previous contract, I am confident we can deliver on this contract too. A successful project will mean that the People's Centre and the unemployed residents of North Tyneside will gain from the budget spend of £450,000 – which will help close the poverty gap within the borough.

The Centre has also secured funding to refurbish the café – which will move to the area currently occupied by the Printroom. It will have doors out onto Atkinson Street easily visible from the High Street which will help encourage passing trade. There will also be tables and seating outdoors during the summer. Funding for these changes has come from the LSC (Learning & Skills Council) and community PETE's (Partnership for Education Training & Employment).

The back hall (Main Hall) area within the Centre is also to have a make-over courtesy of the Adult Education Alliance. This space will be turned into a state-of-the-art IT suite and essential skills unit which will help the Centre provide a joined-up service to our students.

CRECHE SERVICES

The crèche staff at the Centre have an excellent relationship with parents and children who use the facilities on a daily basis. The crèche has an OFSTED certificate for childcare and over the year 565 children have used the facility. Without this service I am sure there would not be the take-up levels on our courses from parents. The crèche is free to those attending courses at the People's Centre.

Maureen Madden

Employability Work at the People's Centre

The Wallsend People's Centre now has a growing new string to its bow since the last AGM report and that is in the work we do around the employability agenda in the Borough. This work has become more important to the Centre throughout 2007 and 2008 and the figures you see below refer to the work we did between April 2007 and March 2008.

We worked with three major partners in this period, North Tyneside Council, Working Links and Connexions. The following statistics include details of people we have seen.

	N. TYNESIDE COUNCIL	WORKING LINKS	CONNEXIONS	TOTALS
CLIENTS SEEN	220	91	340	651

The number of clients who also had training provided or arranged by us was 331. Of this number 30 found permanent and sustainable jobs.

Our new contracts for 2008/09 see us as the prime contractor for the council's employability agenda and working with some new partners and we expect our success rates with the unemployed people of North Tyneside to greatly increase from the statistics included in this report.

Mick Riley

Adult Education Courses at the People's Centre

The following is just a small sample of the course subjects on offer:

17 different computer courses

Jewellery making

Spanish language

Digital photography

Crafty recycling

Counselling skills

Manicure and nail art

Teaching Assistants training

British Sign Language

Let's embellish fabrics

Over the course of the year more than 240 people attended courses at Wallsend People's Centre



Chris with the Centre's Mick Riley

Christine Tait has been involved with the Wallsend People's Centre for several years because she used to work for us. She then began to work for North Tyneside Council as a home help. During her time in this work Chris became conscious of

the fact that the job was in a precarious position due to redundancies and the contracting out of Council services.

Chris was well aware that she needed to upgrade her skills if she was to move into another job easily. She also wanted a better job. She enrolled on an evening class studying CLAIT (Computer Literacy and Information Technology) being provided by North Tyneside Council's Adult Learning Alliance and which was delivered in the Centre by deputy manager, Mick Riley.

Chris completed three units of CLAIT in her first year by successfully passing assignments in Word Processing and File Management, Spreadsheets and Databases. Pleased with this Certificate in CLAIT she re-enrolled and completed two more assignments in Electronic Communication and e-Presentations. This upgraded her original CLAIT certificate to a CLAIT diploma.

During the course of her studies Chris applied for, and was successful in getting, a job at the Department of Works and Pensions where, everyday, she uses computers as a part of her working day. Chris said, "I would never have had the confidence to apply for jobs like this if I hadn't done the courses at the People's Centre. It's made a huge difference to my life."

Mick Riley, the deputy manager noted that, "Chris was a very capable and determined student who always brought a laugh and a joke to the learning environment. I am delighted that she has her diploma and am even more happy that she has secured a permanent and worthwhile career move as a result. She is a perfect example of how learners can progress within their lives as a result of returning to education."



When I was looking for someone to publish a book I had written, I was told to try the Wallsend People's Centre Printing Department. Having no idea of what to do – which format, type size, use of photos etc. I went along and met Michael and Nick. It was the best thing I could have done. First the friendly welcome, followed by their advice and encouragement. I was made to feel so at ease and was invited to sit in on the work. It was a marvellous experience. I had second thoughts on some of my writing and asked for many alterations. They were all taken on board and implemented. I sometimes felt I was being too demanding, but they assured me that the book had to be to my satisfaction. With their help and patience I finally had my book, and it was wonderful. The standard of work and presentation has been much admired by many readers, and I was very pleased to tell them who did it. I would like to thank the Wallsend People's Centre, and the Printing Department in particular, for doing such a fine job of work for me.

George Charlton



My time at Wallsend People's Centre has been fantastic. I can honestly say that I have come so far since studying there. The atmosphere is so friendly and welcoming and everyone is nice and understanding. I have to say there is nowhere else that I would rather be than Wallsend People's Centre. So thank you for helping me find a new me. I now know that I am able to succeed and go far.

**Thanks
Maxine Jackson**