

Appalling weather and terrible driving conditions made the journey to the December *Living Proof* weekend extremely challenging. Water flooded the road between Shallowford and Stafford in several places. If this trend continues, Simon will have to invest in an amphibious vehicle if he is to ensure that guests to the house arrive safely!



## House full!

Once again we had a full house. This time it was Tom and I that had to double up so that other members could have rooms to themselves. Altogether there were 26 of us of whom 4 were new members. The diversity of age, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, creed and places of residence could hardly have been greater. Perhaps it was the challenge of this unlikely mix that made the weekend so special. Both Jenny and Peter our facilitators commented on how impressed they were with the commitment, openness and depth with which personal issues were dealt with in the facilitated groups.

## Special interest groups

As happened on a couple of occasions previously, the women decided that they would like a session for women only. The group was self-facilitated and ran for over 2 hours which gives some indication of the enthusiasm and intense involvement of the participants. Similarly, a group was requested for 'extra-long-term survivors'. The 15 years' diagnosed group was a first. Andy acted as facilitator of a session that brought up painful memories and difficult circumstances of some members that contrasted starkly with strong positive and empowering situations that HIV and AIDS had brought to others. Like the women's group, this was well supported and would have been even larger if some members had not been faced with the tough decision of whether to stay or leave the Closed Group. Jenny also ran a short meditation session on Saturday evening before dinner. We should take pride that this week had so much to offer, and that members showed graceful acceptance when faced with the disappointment of not being able to participate in everything they wished.

## Remembering past members

Members who have died recently were remembered in the opening circle. The committee have also responded to requests to remember past members by agreeing in principal to plant rose bushes and shrubs in the section of the garden devoted to NLTSG. Alyn has already planted some bulbs around the NLTSG tree.

## Raffle

Thanks to Karl and Shaun for another successful raffle that raised £209. Similarly, we are grateful for the generosity of

members in bringing prizes and buying tickets. Amazingly, as always, everyone got something. Andy was responsible for organising the fun general knowledge quiz afterwards, which was won by Bernie. Regrettably, I had to forgo this pleasure because of having to get up early on Sunday to get myself to church on time.

On a personal note, it was heartening to find so many members (new and existing) closely connected with the Entertainment Industry. Not only was I able to chat about theatre matters, but I also had the renewed joy of playing piano duets with a professional musician.

Keep well

Maurice

## Newly Diagnosed Weekend

In November we hosted our first weekend run by NLTSG members for people recently diagnosed with HIV. The aim of the weekend was to help recently diagnosed people overcome the fears and lack of knowledge at the time of diagnosis leaving them with a more positive outlook. The event was an outstanding success. Perhaps this was best indicated by their appreciation of the contributions made by long term survivors' experiences and the keen desire of all the participants to meet up again to renew the friendships and support established over the weekend. We will be running further weekends over the next few years.

If you know anyone that might be interested please contact Nams at [ndbookings@nltsg.org.uk](mailto:ndbookings@nltsg.org.uk)

## Fund Raising

All donations can now be Gift Aided. Gary has produced a visiting card to give to your family and friends. For further details contact [Gary@nltsg.org.uk](mailto:Gary@nltsg.org.uk)

£3 a month is all it takes to help us support people who have been living with HIV for 5 or more years

[www.nltsg.org.uk/donations.htm](http://www.nltsg.org.uk/donations.htm)

Although we wish all members a long and healthy life, please do consider remembering NLTSG when you are preparing your will. Or consider leaving instructions for the funeral: No flowers please, donations to NLTSG.

**KPS Trebullom**, Cornwall, have requested we draw your attention to their Enabling Futures project funded by the BIG Lottery, which offers new respite opportunities for those living with HIV. These include Personal Development Breaks for adults and Summer Camps for children. For more details please contact:

Tel: 01566 86378, Fax: 01566 86331, Email: [jhunter@kpsdirect.com](mailto:jhunter@kpsdirect.com)

Website: [www.kpsdirect.com](http://www.kpsdirect.com)

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## Weekend Dates

### 2013

March 22 - 24

July 5 -7

Sept 27 - 29

Dec 13 - 15