

Our spring Living Proof weekend saw a break in the long period of severe wet winter weather with a wonderful sunny Saturday, which gave Steve, Michael and Maurice a chance to plant a rose bush and native primroses in memory of David Carpenter.

Unusually, we had more attendees than in December: 26 members including 7 new members. Trustee Tom was missing because of illness; we wish him a speedy recovery. Otherwise everyone managed to arrive safely to fill Shallowford House with the usual abundance of conversation and laughter. Unfortunately Bernie had an accident and had to be taken by ambulance to A & E for treatment. We all hope that she recovers from her injuries soon.



Our facilitators were Pat and Neil with Lynn, George and new therapist Andrew providing a range of therapies that for the first time included Shiatsu.

## Raffle & Collecting Tin

Karl and Shaun once again did a fine job with the raffle: we raised £206. This was supplemented by a further £69.52... the contents of Anthony's NLTSG collecting tin... making a total of £275.52. Well done

Anthony and thanks to everyone for donating prizes and buying tickets.

At the closing circle John was presented with a small token of appreciation for his gallant action in accompanying Bernie to hospital and staying with her overnight. Below are a few words from John about the weekends and the group.

## John's Story

When I finally arrived at my destination for the Christmas weekend 2013 ... I was in a rather sorry state, but as promised I was met by a friend ... the greetings I received then and there were heart-warming ... we were all taken to this outstanding building that sat in the most wonderful gardens in rural Staffordshire, my first glimpse of "Shallowford House" , it proved not to be my last.

I decided during that weekend I would return, it had been a wonderful experience from the moment I stepped foot inside its impressive and welcoming entrance to the welcome I received ... throughout that weekend ...

...all of us had travelled from near and far and came from many different backgrounds ...cultural ... or sexual orientation we were one family united in our support, compassion and understanding for each other..

Isolation didn't exist at my first weekend nor did it at the "LIVING PROOF WEEKEND" of March 2014... nor does it now. I'd highly recommend to anyone who may be thinking about one of these weekends newly diagnosed or long term ... you won't ever regret it! (Extracted from a longer piece)

## NLTSG needs you!

NLTSG needs you to help keep the organisation running. We are due to elect trustees at the AGM in July 2014 and there are vacancies on the Board. If you are interested in becoming a trustee, particularly if you have a proven history of successful fundraising, please contact Andy, our Chair, in the first instance. Andy's email address is [andy@nltsg.org.uk](mailto:andy@nltsg.org.uk).

The Board meets four times a year and all trustees are expected to attend at least two meetings per year. Please note that trustees do not get preferential treatment and pay to attend the weekends like everyone else. Expenses are only paid for costs incurred as a trustee. To read more about becoming a trustee, and being a beneficiary of the charity at the same time, visit the Charity Commission website and search for "Becoming a trustee" and "Users on board: beneficiaries who become trustees".

If you are not interested in becoming a trustee, but would like to get more involved with NLTSG you could join us as a volunteer. The Board always needs support, so get in touch with Andy if you are interested.

## Gift Aid and all things financial

NLTSG has been able to offer half-price places for some time, and we have been very fortunate in securing funding to be able to do this. At the moment, we have not received any new grants, although applications have been submitted, and those grants which we had received have now been spent. NLTSG has been increasing its reserves in recent times, so we have enough to be able to subsidise those who attend. However, we need to increase our income, and *Gift Aid* is one way of achieving this.

If, and we know that it is a very big "if", we could find 150 UK taxpayers to donate at least £3.00 a month, this would raise a massive £6,750.00 a year. A sum of this size would allow us to offer half-price places in the longer term and enable us to support as many people as possible.

## Clarifications

NLTSG supports people who are living with HIV and AIDS. The "Living Proof" weekends are open to anyone over the age of 18 who has been diagnosed with HIV for five or more years.

NLTSG is mindful that some people have been living with HIV for longer than they have been diagnosed. On these occasions, NLTSG will accept the view of a medical professional who is able to confirm that the individual has been living with HIV for more than five years, even if their diagnosis is more recent.

Those aged 16 and 17 who have been living with HIV for five or more years can also attend, provided that they are accompanied by a parent or guardian who meets the eligibility criteria.

The Newly Diagnosed Weekends are open to anyone who is HIV+ and is ready to learn to live with HIV. Most of those who attend have been living with HIV for less than two years, but NLTSG does not enforce a minimum or maximum length of diagnosis.



## Weekend Dates

### 2014

**July 1 – 13**

**Sept 26 – 28**

**Dec 12 - 14**

### 2015

**March 27-29**

**July 10-12**

**Sept 25-27**

**Dec 11-13**