

Children & Young Persons Champion Report

Councillor Tracy Brown

This year has been a continuation of ongoing difficulties for our children, younger people and families working to find support within our communities through independent groups and authorities have been challenging due to lack of funds and local expertise and ability for an urgent response when required. Although being at the heart of so many controversial issues the aim has been to find a direction forward to find solutions to individual traumas and work towards a positive outcome. This is my journey through the year...

Mental Health – More and more children and younger people are finding coping in today's modern life so stressful. Coping with peer pressure, education expectations, modern family expectations, social media, health issues, abuse/bullying and in some cases addictions such as excessive gaming, drink and drugs. Working with a local community Charitable Organisation 'Shine for Sian' in memory of Sian Waterhouse who died after a long battle with anxiety and depression. Sian was only 16/17 years old and a very loving and caring young woman who always wanted to help others.

Sian's family created the 'Shine for Sian' organisation In the Memory of Sian. The Charitable Organisation has raised funds for Lancashire Minds/Young Minds, also a peer support groups helping people with mental health issues or just feeling the need to talk.



Morecambe & Area
Peer Support & Wellbeing Group
for Men & Women

WHERE: Stanley's
79-83 Stanley Road, Morecambe LA3 1UT

WHEN: First Thursday in every month
WHAT TIME: 18:00 - 20:00

It's Okay to Not Be Okay.

We welcome you to our peer support group, a safe space designed to help you manage your stress, anxiety and/or low mood. This is not a therapy group but a group designed to get men & Women together, simply to talk, relax and open up.

This is an informal, confidential and safe space to allow you and your peers the opportunity to share experiences and to seek more information on the various services and charities that are available to you.

Refreshments Provided

No Pressure, No Judgement, So Let's Talk...

Poverty continues – A year on and the food banks are supporting so many more families with the roll out of Universal Credit, it still continues to force families onto the poverty line and with the delays in payments put stress on schools and community organisation to find food to feed these families. With the loss of local funding for children centres, the schools are picking up the expenses that are occurred for the education and support to families in need to help the families move forward and recover from consequences of the transition onto Universal Credit.

Some schools are requesting donations to help the families move forward and helping the families empower parents to move out of poverty.

Needing support – Support through family trauma has come to my attention this year with a large number of families needing understanding through Social Service actions. Help understanding what is expected of them and the consequences, should expectations not be met.

It is my belief that although actions may need to be taken by Social Services the parent/parents are left in very distraught positions with no one to turn to, the Parent/parents should be able to have a liaison support worker to support the family. There is no support or guidance within the community for families with Social Service intervention.

This is a County Council responsibility and something to be taken forward in the future.

This will help support Mental Health issues/ ill health and anti-social behaviours within our community.

Home Education – since I reported this issues last year it has come into main stream news recently with worries to gang crime – and knife crime links amongst anti-social behaviours.

A school environment isn't suited for all, some children feel vulnerable and at risk from violence or verbal bullying from their peers or the child's needs are not fully met.

Having a home schooling register would help authorities ensure the child/children are receiving an education at home and the child/children's wellbeing is positively maintained.

Theatre Education Programme – the education programme was written by myself to help support children in their own personal development, expression and understanding of their environment while incorporating the development of confidence, spoken work, speaking and listening and the understand of language via expressional art. This year the programme was for refugees and the topic was 'The Journey'.



Autistic Awareness- working with local young mums with autistic children helping the community understand the Autistic Spectrum Disorder and being a parent of an autistic child. A young mum asked for my help to support her to help her raise awareness of ASD she explained that people would say how she was a bad mum and she should have smacked her child for having an upset while shopping in town. Her child was only 3 and was diagnosed with ASD.

Alongside her father, a local radio DJ and the support of the local community 'Push for Autism Awareness' set out to help the community understand Autism with family fun days and a 'Safe Place' Karaoke evenings.

Summary – I have enjoyed my four years as the Children and Younger Persons Champion and I have the opportunity to support and help fantastic people of our communities.