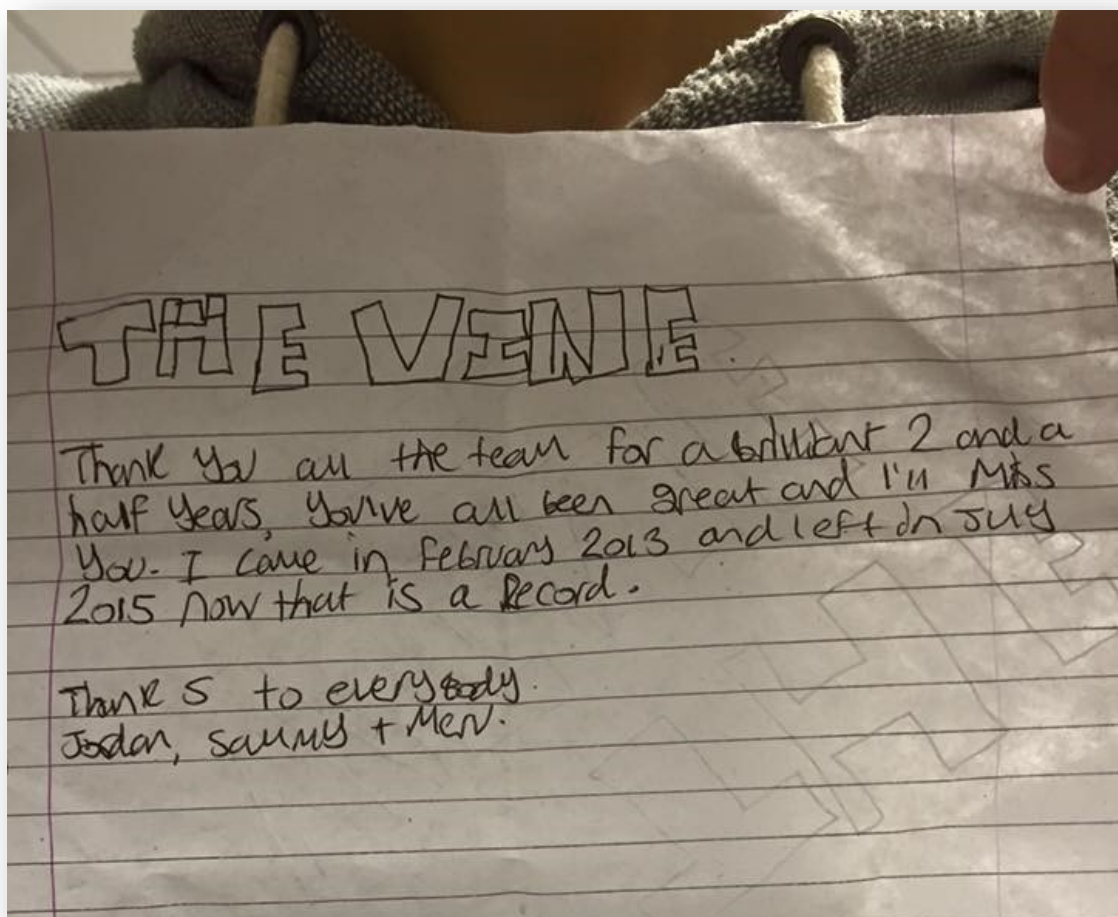


The Vine

The Vine Spring Newsletter

A snapshot of 2015



The Vine annual report - a snapshot of 2015

The Trustees view

2015 has been another wonderful year for Leeds Community Development (The Vine). We exist to help transform lives in and around Leeds. As a supporter of The Vine, we want to let you know what's been happening through our two projects, the Debt Advice centre and the Child Contact centre, over this past year.

Our hope is that as you read this annual report, you will be as encouraged and inspired as we have been. **Encouraged** by the numbers of families supported by our child contact centre and the number of clients helped through our debt advice centre. **Inspired** by the quotes from children, parents and debt advice centre clients as well as from our wonderful centre managers – Gwen Procter and Elaine Sadler, who work tirelessly in providing such high quality service to those who chose to use our centres.

We had a **marvellous BBQ** for the trustees, volunteers, staff and many family members in August – even with a spot of rain at the beginning – it wouldn't be a British BBQ without rain!



Christmas 2015 was another opportunity to put love into action through our projects. The opportunity for many generous people in and outside church to put on parties, buy gifts and visit those in need. Thank you so much to all who took part in this.

As we draw close to the 5th anniversary of embarking on providing debt advice (in April 2016) and our 4th anniversary of contact centre provision (March 2016), we will take every effort to celebrate this as well as look at ways we can build on and sustain our success well into the future. Some contact centre parents have asked if the centre could be open every weekend – we will certainly take this into consideration when thinking about our next steps! Apart from anything else, I take this as a great compliment of a fantastic contact centre team.

With your support, we really are able to make a life changing impact on many families and individuals struggling with relationship breakdown and financial debt.

Thank you!

Matt Button

The Vine, Chair of Trustees

Thank you

Fundraising Raising funds is so often the main cause for concern for the board of trustees. 2015 was no exception, but with the efforts of a number of individuals, we secured funding for the year. A few highlights were:



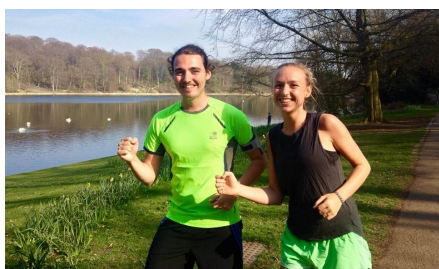
Anne ran a pampered chef evening



Matt, Tim, Diana & Vicki ran the Leeds 10K



Diana, Alan & others walked the Yorkshire Dales 3 Peaks



Tom & Nikki ran the Edinburgh Marathon



Jason & Gwen rode stage 19 of the Tour de France

Thank you to everyone who has given up time, energy and money in fundraising and giving regularly in 2015 – every penny really does count! We have had more people commit to giving regularly and this too is invaluable in enabling the work to continue.

We also have some groups and organisations who we'd like to thank for supporting us in 2015: Leeds Vineyard, Gateway Church, St Oswald's Collingham, North & West Yorkshire Resolution

Howard King

A big thank you must go out to Howard King, who stepped down in May 2015 after over 2 years as chair of trustees. He did a fantastic job specifically improving the health of the finances through undertaking a fundraising review and overseeing successful funding bids along with Roger Turner, fellow trustee, and working with the board and managers in bringing greater clarity of focus.



The Vine Child Contact Centre provides an opportunity for children to spend quality time with the parent who they no longer live with. We offer a safe, fun, neutral and supported environment for the children to play and reconnect with their non-resident parent. Because of your generosity, this service is offered **free of charge**.

For more info: www.thevineleeds.org/childcontactcentre

The Vine Child Contact Centre is run by Elaine Sadler along with Deputy Manager, Fi Brazill.

Elaine writes, The Contact Centre was re-accredited in January 2015 – which is always an excellent way to start the year! The Vine Child Contact Centre continues to provide a happy, friendly and safe place for the children that attend.

The year started off very slowly in terms of referrals but gradually built up with lots more coming in and always a steady stream of enquiries. There are many highlights, as these stories demonstrate.

One mum who came for her pre-contact visit before Christmas, said '**it was the first time someone had actually listened to her.**' What an impact.

In 2015 there were:

83 new enquiries made

13 people expressed an interest in volunteering

26 New families started contact

12 children on average using the centre in the mornings

9 children on average using the centre in the afternoons

4 weeks waiting time from first enquiry to first use

21 volunteers currently with us with 8 starting since September 2015

Good News Stories:

We had an extremely difficult contact where the first four contacts were manipulated heavily by mum who did not want this to happen. The children were very unhappy without a smile or any chatter. The boy would come in to see his dad but the four-year-old daughter would cry if she had to go in. The case went back to court and it was decided that mum had to drop the children off and leave the building. This gave the children the freedom to see dad without thinking they were also displeasing mum. The children blossomed, laughing and having a great time.

Just before Christmas they did not turn up as usual. After speaking to Dad, he was very excited court decided that he could have the children on Christmas Day at his house, and on the 18th January 2016 he could have the children overnight at the weekends on a permanent basis. Dad was over the moon and so happy. Staff and volunteers were really happy for these children as this case had had a big impact.

What the children say!

"I can see my daddy"

"Very helpful, they solve all your problems if you are upset."

The Vine

child contact centre

All the children enjoy the games, Lego, playing and art & craft.
Suggestions for improvement include going swimming, tennis and a trampoline!

The Volunteers

Generally looking back over the year it has again been fun and very rewarding. We have said goodbye to a few volunteers, one who was long term from the start Tom Deighton and Julia Barratt who was with us for two years. Anne-Marie Workman completed her studies in teaching and left us to start a primary school job. Lovely committed volunteers. Also some volunteers here for a short time who have moved on to further their studies.

There are four teams of people with four Team Leaders heading these up - Anthony Pollard Sally Parrini, Komal Hussain and Ann Worsley, all committed to their teams. There is a very cheery atmosphere!



"I trust the Vine Child Contact Centre, because I know that my child is safe and well looked after." - resident parent

"It has kept my relationship with my daughter." - non-resident parent

What the parents think!

"It gives me peace of mind to know that my daughter is in a safe supervised environment, and also myself." - resident parent

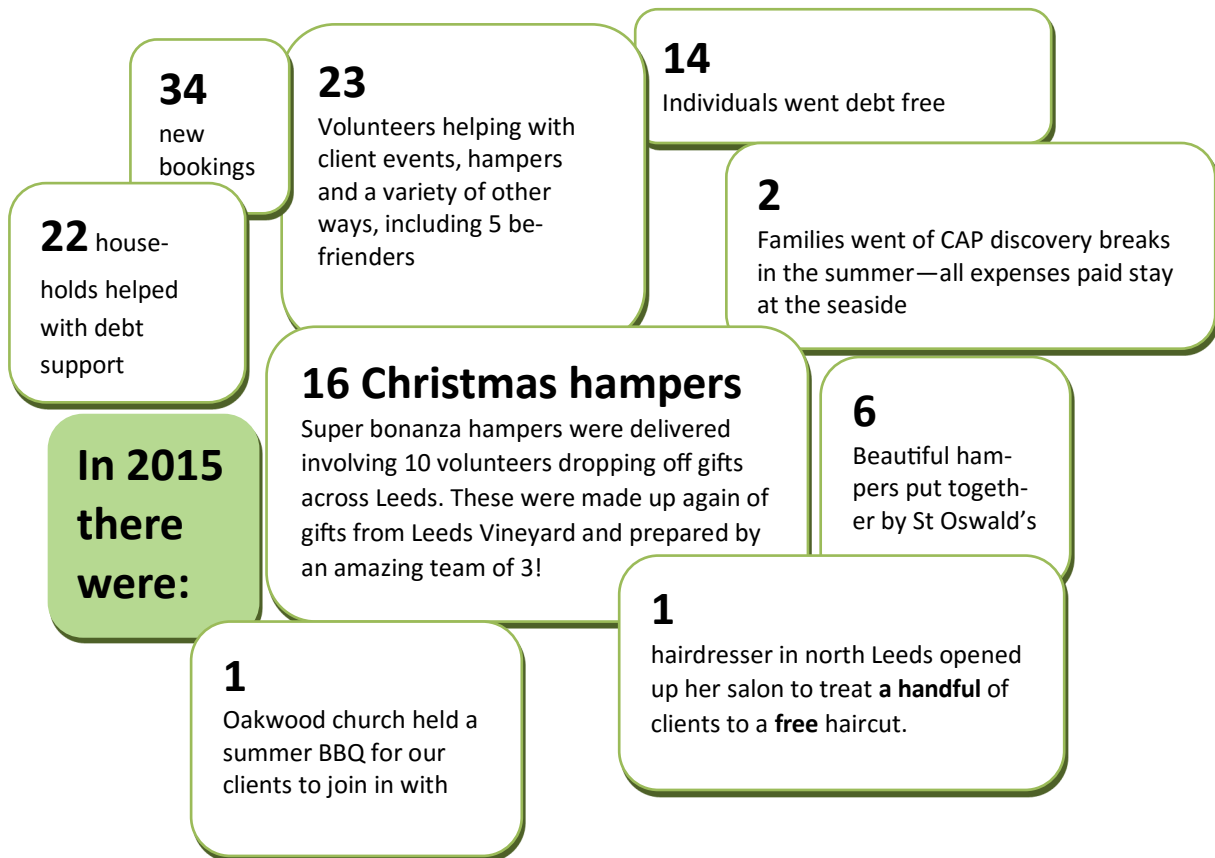
"Yes it has improved a lot - it means the world to me." - non-resident parent

The Vine

debt advice centre

The Vine Debt Advice Centre provides a highly personalised service, making home visits to help support our clients as they wrestle with bills, threatening letters and making ends meet. We partner with CAP (Christians Against Poverty) who work out a fair budget, negotiate with those who are owed money and can take people through insolvency procedures where necessary. This service is also offered free of charge.

For more info: www.thevineleeds.org/debtadvicecentre



Client quotes

"I felt useless and incapable of handling my own finances without outside help. CAP has helped me deal with my situation and helped structure a budget to deal with my problems."

"I was fearful of losing my home. My husband left leaving me with 3 young children. [After CAP got involved I] felt more in control and was able to think there was a light at the end of the tunnel."

"I felt relieved that I had support and someone to talk to if necessary."

"Did not know how to continue making any payments to creditors. Barrages of phone calls and letters. Hated going home to see what was on the doormat. Letters and phone calls gradually stopped. Started to 'enjoy' going home."

From Gwen,

"2015 has been a relatively quiet year for the DAC in terms of new clients booking in - this is not dissimilar to the other CAP centres across the Yorkshire and Humber region. However, for those with whom we had the privilege of working, it was a significant year packed full of opportunities and blessings over and above the debt advice including:

- Ringing the council and having a court summons waived,
- Phoning a loan company who had taken repayments directly from a new clients bank account leaving her unable to pay her rent - they returned enough money to her to prevent her building up more rent arrears,
- Regularly listening to clients who express how relieved they are to have help and a solution found for their debt.

And when asked why I work as centre manager? Most of all it is to help the likes of a lady I've just met who lost her husband and son a year apart to the day. She has struggled to work since due to the impact of the bereavements on her mental health and is unable to pay the funeral costs. **To have the opportunity to help her - this is why I do it."**



Client events are always a highlight. At our Christmas dinner we hosted 12 guests for a proper turkey dinner and all the trimmings. The evening had a lovely atmosphere - we enjoyed a Christmas quiz and speaker from head office sharing her experience of Jesus giving her comfort and purpose. Many people from Leeds Vineyard generously donated food nine people wonderfully helped in cooking, serving and preparing the room.



child contact centre

The Vine Child Contact Centre provides a neutral location for children whose parents are separated, to meet with the parent with whom they no longer live. We offer a fun and supported environment for the children to play and spend quality time with their non-resident parent. This service is offered free of charge.

debt advice centre

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Contact Details

info@thevineleeds.org

www.thevineleeds.org

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To Give to the work of the Vine

Regular gifts

A electronic bank transfer using the details below - please add a reference including the word "gift".

Leeds Community Development (The Vine)

Sort code: **20-48-46** Account number: **13253147**

One off donations

Cheques payable to 'Leeds Community Development'

Give via Stewardship at www.give.net or go to www.thevineleeds.org and give via mydonate

Regardless of how you give, if you haven't already done so and are eligible, please also complete a **Gift Aid declaration online via our website.**

If you shop online

Financially support us as you shop online: www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/thevine