



Improving people's lives in Northern Ireland

In Focus

The newsletter of BCM
(Belfast Central Mission)

November 2022



What if YOU could help to ensure a child's laughter fills the air on Christmas morning?

For almost 30 years, Belfast Central Mission (BCM) has been collecting and distributing toys and gifts for children and young people at Christmas, with almost 4,000 going to homes in 2021 alone.

The harsh reality of this year means that many individuals and families will already be worried about what Christmas will look like for them, but especially for their children.

As with so many, the current crisis will be adversely affecting thousands of families, including those we may know, work with or live next door to. BCM wants to ensure that as

many children and young people have gifts to open on Christmas Day, but we cannot do that alone. There can be a limit to what anyone can do to help their neighbours, communities, family or friends at any time of year with many issues being kept private behind closed doors. What we do with the Christmas Appeal is provide an opportunity for all of us to help local families at Christmas.

In 2021, nearly 4,000 toy parcels were distributed by BCM to children across the city and further afield, and we need your help to continue this rewarding work.

If you are able to do so, there are a number of ways in which you could help. We will, as usual, be taking donations of toys and vouchers at Donegal Road Methodist from 12th – 16th December, and a drop-off slot can be booked at the link above.

To book a gift drop-off time slot go to

bit.ly/BCMtoydropoff

Or you can make a donation via the CAF (Charities Aid Foundation) link below or by scanning the QR code.

Thank you for helping in whatever way you can. Even a little help can mean a lot to someone.

You can donate by going to <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/21392> or by scanning the QR Code below. Thank you




Please support Belfast Central Mission's Christmas Appeal

Donations of new toys needed

Suggested toys / gifts

- EDUCATIONAL TOYS FOR AGES BIRTH-3 YRS
- CLOTHES FOR CHILDREN AGED BIRTH-5 YRS
- BOOKS –smaller books are better
- CHOCOLATES/SELECTION BOXES
- STATIONERY ITEMS
- DOLLS – Barbie or Baby dolls
- FOOTBALL ACCESSORIES - not linked to any team
- GIFTS FOR CHILDREN AGED 8-12
- TOILETRIES AND VOUCHERS FOR AGED 16-18

(Please do not gift wrap. No soft toys)
THANK YOU

For further information please contact Lorna at lhenry@belfastcentralmission.org
www.belfastcentralmission.org

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Registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland NC10271



PUDDLEDUCKS IS TEN!

Puddleducks Day Nursery recently celebrated its 10th birthday, with an extra special party for the children and their families.

The day nursery has been spearheading a revolution of early years childcare and development since it opened its doors in June 2012.

Consistently rated one of the top nurseries in the city, if not Northern Ireland, by the parents and families of its young charges, Puddleducks was named the Best Individual Nursery in the whole of the UK at the Nursery Management Today awards in 2018.

This was due in a large part to the ground-breaking 'Puddleducks Approach' which Manager Sharon Malcolm and Deputy Manager Vicki Watton have painstakingly devised and continue to shape for the benefit of the children in their care, the families, and the staff.

The team at Puddleducks is primarily focused on nurturing a child's emotional wellbeing, independence, and self-esteem so as they can approach formal education with a belief in themselves that they can achieve, and that they are important and valued.

In addition to speaking at conferences and contributing to textbooks on the subject, Sharon recently contributed to an episode of the 'Because Caring Matters' podcast to discuss the importance of empathetic early years childcare, while hearing first-hand from a parent whose children had been through Puddleducks before they went to Primary School.

For more information on our podcasts, see next page.



NEW TEAM MEMBER JOINS OUR BELFAST PROJECT

As we enter our final year of funding from Hagan Homes, we are delighted to welcome our new funded Support Worker, Caroline Owen, who joined our Supported Housing for Young People team this month. Caroline has been able to facilitate outings with the residents including a walking group, bowling and attending job fairs with residents. Our thanks to Hagan Homes for their continued support.



BECAUSE CARING MATTERS

In May 2021 BCM launched a podcast to highlight the many issues that our projects and staff teams work to support every day.

'Because Caring Matters' is a monthly broadcast of 30 - minute-long episodes, each tackling and discussing a different subject and the first episodes covered dementia, mental health in young people, and hoarding. Other subjects covered include the cost-of-living crisis and homelessness.

Each episode of 'Because Caring Matters' features staff team members from across BCM who have a link with the topic being discussed. They are also joined by third party contributors, including social workers, partner organisations and, on occasion, individuals that BCM has helped, to share their story.

By bringing these first-hand, personal stories to life we hope to start, and be part of, a wider conversation piece about the importance of providing fundamental and effective support for communities across Northern Ireland.

With more than 130 years of history and experience in supporting those that need it, BCM is well placed to influence opinion and public perception on issues that could be affecting anyone listening, a member of their family or someone who lives down the street.



Why not have a listen to the latest episode which is about BCM's Christmas Toy appeal, when we speak to a West Belfast Sure Start representative about the impact the donated toys have on their service users.



Catherine & Margaret from our Housing Support for Older People project in Belfast prepare to chat about hoarding issues with Social Worker David.

'Because Caring Matters' is available to stream on all major podcast-hosting platforms, including Spotify, Amazon Music and many more.



BCM Communications Officer & podcast host, Chris Pollock, recording the first episode about Dementia with volunteer Shelagh McCaughan and Interim Service Manager Andrea Selby

'DO YOU NEED HELP?' Information is now available on BCM's website

We are all aware of the struggles currently being faced by so many due to the cost-of-living crisis. So, to help people find where they might be able to access support, a list of potential sources of help is now available on the BCM website.



FUNDING RECEIVED

We were delighted to receive additional funding from NI Housing Executive for our Housing Support for Older People projects in Belfast and Armagh/Dungannon. This funding will enable us to further support older people (over the age of 55) to maintain their homes and therefore reduce the potential for eviction.

The funding will enable us to financially support our older people to hire gardeners to clear and maintain outside areas - to alleviate the issue of signs of a vulnerable adult

living in the house and offer them the opportunity to enjoy their gardens. We will also be able to offer deep cleaning services and potential short-term storage to improve home conditions as well as financial and practical support to help low-income /vulnerable older people to decorate their homes after a deep clean has been completed or if there have been many years of neglect of the property.

Our hopes are that, as well as improving their physical living conditions, the older people will have better mental health and feel able to enjoy life more.

LOOKING FOR A 'HOME FROM HOME'?

If you are interested in learning more about life at Copelands and the practice-leading residential care, whether for yourself, a loved one or relative, please do not hesitate to get in touch. An in-person or virtual tour can be arranged by contacting us directly. Phone Number: +44 028 91312700. Email Address: copelands@belfastcentralmission.org

Or, to find out about working at Copelands please check our website www.copelands.org.uk

