

Churches Together in Alresford – September Newsletter

On 17th July Churches Together in Alresford held its AGM. This saw the closing of a two-year period of fundraising for Firefly International, an organisation that supports Syrian refugees in Antakya, Turkey. Churches Together in Alresford has raised approximately £5000 for this charity over the two-year period so a huge thank you must go to all of you who supported this charity. The AGM also saw Laura Brill hand over the chairperson role to Gary Carter and we must thank Laura for all her hard work, enthusiasm, and dedication to Churches Together in Alresford.

At the AGM Jo-Anne Graham from Winchester Youth Counselling gave an interesting talk on the work of this charity which is CTiA have chosen to support for the next two years.

Winchester Youth Counselling was established in 2001 and its aims are as follows:

- To provide free open-ended counselling for young people aged 11-25 in the district of Winchester.
- To be accessible and have their main base in central Winchester
- To work with young people on a number of issues
- To offer both long term and short-term counselling
- To use 'walk and talk' therapy as an early intervention to help young people to deal with their issues and find their own ways of resolving these issues.

There are 14 counsellors, 2 supervisors as well as an administrator, a project manager and a clinical lead. Referrals to the service come from GPs, schools, colleges, Social Services, community mental health teams and young people can refer themselves. The charity sees young people who suffer from anxiety, depression, stress, social anxiety, ADHD, Autism, domestic and sexual abuse, those who have been in the care system and young people who have been carers.

Winchester Youth Counselling currently offers 55 sessions a month and sees over 200 young people every year. Each session costs £40 and a minimum of 12 sessions is offered to each client. The charity makes use of the Wildlife Nature Reserve close to the offices where they offer 'walk and talk' therapy as often a young person finds it easier to talk when outside and walking rather than sitting in a counselling room. Other services that are offered are nature therapy groups as well as 'de-stress, relax and chill' sessions which are offered on an individual basis.

As the number of young people who suffer from mental health issues rises and NHS mental health resources for young people are becomingly increasingly stretched the work of charities such as Winchester Youth Counselling becomes more vital for the young people in our area. Support from CTiA will directly help the young people in and around the Winchester area.

Dates for your diary:

Makins Court Christmas Day lunch

A leader is still needed to support the team for this so if you are interested or know someone who may be please speak to your CTiA representatives.

Away Weekend 8th-10th March

Information and enrolment forms are available in all churches or via your CTiA representatives. Do come and join us for a weekend of Christian fellowship.