



LEAF PROJECT

(Locally Encouraging All to Flourish)

Ecumenical Update September 2022

*"I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message...
so all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you...
so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (John 17:20-21)*

Preface

The profile of LEAF continues to grow within the town. The links we have established with the local surgery, the primary school and other community-based groups in the town is providing a great impetus for the programmes we are seeking to roll out. This will be further enhanced in the Autumn when Tony addresses the Town Council and shares the work of the charity with them.

Physical Well-Being

CAP remains the major focus in the Physical Well-Being strand. Ledbury Debt Centre has developed a good relationship with the Foodbank and Denise work closely alongside the Foodbank volunteer Social Workers. Denise continues to work not only with those in debt but also attends the weekly leader's prayer meeting and there is a real sense of this work being embedded in the church community. LEAF is also the local hub for housing Ukrainian refugees and works in conjunction with the diocese to facilitate this.

As the energy crisis hits there are plans to explore the possibility of establishing "Warm Hubs" this winter in conjunction with the Talking Communities. There have also been discussions with TLG (<https://www.tlg.org.uk/>) regarding their "Make Lunch" project but these are just in the initial stages at present.

Emotional Well-Being

The second Kintsugi Hope course concluded in July and was well received by all who attended. A new course is due to start in September. As in previous courses some are coming through CAP contacts, others through the work of the chaplaincy (see below) and there is clear evidence that the "joined up" thinking that LEAF offers is reaping a rich dividend.

LEAF now has two professional counsellors who work in the community and a third will be employed in the autumn. Also, the link with Ledbury Primary School means that we now have counsellors in the school who offer support to two of the children.

Spiritual Well-Being

In the past year LEAF has run three Alpha courses and a new course is planned for the autumn. The Monday worship continues to offer an arena where people across the churches can come together to worship and pray for the town. This operates alongside the 7/12/7 weekly prayer which all involved with the charity consider the engine room of all we are seeking to achieve.

The chaplaincy service has become an integral part of the doctor's surgery in the town. Capacity has been reached in terms of referrals and it is interesting to note that 10% of those accessing the service

are referred on to one of the LEAF counsellors. We are now at a point where we can fund one of the chaplains, but we are also actively looking for further funding under the umbrella of the NHS mental health budget to broaden this work.

Children

LEAF held two highly successful events in the summer, both were held in the local park and attracted many children.

The weekly mentoring of children in the primary school continues and has just completed its first year. Feedback from the school has been excellent and the mentors will be back in school next year taking the children on into their new classes. Alongside this there is a gardening project which allows some of the children to access quality time with adults. Open the Book continues to operate in the school on a regular basis.

The school is very open to exploring options working in conjunction with LEAF. Recent discussions focus on the provision of a Tots and Toddler group in the school and developing other projects for some of the school's more needy children. The school is aware that LEAF is keen to partner with them to draw on funding streams to support additional work.

In addition to the work with children we have added a "Family Support" strand to our structure. This will be headed up by Lydia Williamson and whilst its focus will be on supporting parents there will, of course, be much overlap with the children's work currently undertaken.

Youth

The issue of restarting the Youth drop in continues to be thwarted by the lack of suitable premises. Tony is to have a meeting in the near future, exploring the option of sharing the old Youth Centre with the playgroup which currently use the premises.

Other News

LEAF finances remain in a relatively healthy position. The partnership that the local churches have with the diocese means that Tony's salary is paid locally, and the diocese maintains its commitment to fund the property in Biddulph Way. Beyond that individuals are supporting the work of LEAF in greater numbers. Grant funding is also being increasingly accessed which is encouraging in terms of the long-term sustainability of the work. Currently Tony is in discussions with Ledbury Healthcare, Ledbury Primary School and Ledbury Town Council, with a view to drawing down further joint funding.

We would love to stay in touch with you!

If you would like to be informed of 'LEAF' news and events, please tick the box below and let us have your contact details.

Name _____
Email Address: _____
Organisation (where appropriate): _____

Please complete this form and either hand it to a member of the LEAF team, or email it to us at leafledbury@gmail.com.

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