

Social Enterprise Newsletter

Keeping In Touch

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Christmas Edition

December 2021

Christmas Message from our Chief Officer Paula Jennings



As we get ready for to wind down for the Christmas holidays, I just wanted to say a few words in acknowledgement of the past 12 months. I am exceptionally proud of every single trainee and for every single effort that they made to stay engaged, stay upbeat and continue with their learning and development despite the challenges that we have all faced.

I have personally been delighted with the determination, attitude and positive outcomes that have resulted from all their efforts. To see trainees participating on live zoom training sessions, showing their creativity on social media and their ease at adapting to returning to face to face activity has filled me with great pride.

I say this not only for myself but also on behalf of our exceptional staff team. They have shown great determination and resilience throughout the year to make the Stepping Stones NI experience as great as it has always been. I would like to pay a special tribute to our people as without them we would not be.

I hope that you all have an enjoyable holiday period that is filled with joy and happiness. Thank you for all your support and for choosing Stepping Stones NI, together we are changing lives.

I wish you all a very Happy, Peaceful and safe Christmas and look forward to a bright and cheerful 2022.

Kindest regards Paula Jennings



Paula welcomes Mayor Stephen Martin to the newly refurbished Courtyard Café—receiving excellent customer service from Katrine!



Thomas starting employment with Henderson's. Having joined Stepping Stones NI in 2018 to study NVQ L1, then moving onto an NVQ L2 we are delighted that Thomas has achieved his goal in finding work. Well done Thomas.

A very happy Christmas and a healthy and joyful New Year are wished to you all from the Stepping Stones NI, Social Enterprise Team. This year has brought many challenges but with the support of parents and carers the trainees and NVQ students have enjoyed a successful period of learning and have used their skills to ensure our customers receive excellent customer service and quality products. Well done everyone! As we look forward to 2022 we hope everyone has a lovely Christmas break and trainees return refreshed and ready for work on 10 January 2022. Enquiries: T: 028 9266 7124

Ellen Hillen, Deputy Chief Officer



2021 was a busy year and despite the Covid restrictions and closures we managed to do lots of work and fun activities. The NVQ students completed their course and received their certificates and a new group of students started Level 1 and Level 2 training in September. The Loving Life programme continued and this was enjoyed by many, especially the walks in the Park and visits to local shops, market and Lisburn Museum. This photo montage shows trainees hard at work and enjoying time with friends and colleagues at Stepping Stones NI.



Stephen, Andrew, Rosemund and Julia enjoying a walk in the park.



Conor and 2nd Avenue team supporting Christmas Jumper Day!

Keeping Safe! Joyce and Julie taking part in the 'Anti-bullying' training session.



Picture Framing team welcome the Mayor to their workshop



Ellen & Cameron glad to be back working in the Courtyard



NVQ class enjoying a Christmas Shopping day in the Mall after a busy day in class!



Wednesday night footfall group enjoying being put through their paces by coach Gerard Haughy



Mark happy with his Selection Box

Round up of activities across the social enterprises.



The team at the Gatelodge have been busy this year. 9 students completing NVQ Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications. New young people have trialled the service and joined the team for day placement opportunities or NVQ training. As well as receiving on-the-job training within the café the trainees enjoy educational days out. The photograph to the left shows the group out visiting a local market and learning about fresh fruit and vegetables. The Christmas trees are in place and the trainees are welcoming customers for a delicious festive menu.



Adam



Tamara



Nathan

The Health & Wellbeing of staff and trainees is of high importance and to help relieve anxiety and stress caused by Covid-19 activities such as creative art, gardening, park walks and relaxation exercises were introduced into the weekly activity plans. Here we can see David and Catherine enjoying potting plants during their day at the Loving Life programme. Enjoying her placement in Gatelodge is Emma—proudly displaying fresh scones she helped bake as part of her NVQ training programme.



Carla Bowyer, Business Development Executive promoting Stepping Stones NI at the Balmoral Show in September. NVQ Level 2 student Esther enjoying her work placement at the Ground Café in Lisburn.