



## Getting 2014 Off to a Flying Start

The Electronic Newsletter of the Breastfeeding Network



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## 54.1 Message from the Chief Executive



March 2014 will mark my first anniversary as Chief Executive of BfN!

Last year was an amazing year of learning and discovery, as well as challenges and decisions. A high point in 2013 was our AGM and Study Day in Lancaster, which was attended by more members than ever before. This year our plans are ambitious and will include a new look for BfN with new branding, a revamped website and AGM in Glasgow.

I am delighted to have the opportunity to share with you a renewed vision for BfN and an assessment of our situation and the challenges ahead.

Our vision is a society where mums are able to make informed decisions about breastfeeding, to access help when they need it and to become confident in their choices. Talking to a mum who knows about breastfeeding can make a crucial difference to the breastfeeding journey and BfN strives to be the best we can be at providing support.

### Who We Work With

At the centre of our work are mums and babies. We also work very closely with dads, grandparents, uncles, aunts, health professionals and anyone else involved in a mum's care. Experience tells us that this vital network of close and trusted people helps a new mum in the early days.

We know that some mums need more support. This can be because their age, social barriers, disability, or where they are in their breastfeeding journey. Any of these factors can make breastfeeding more challenging and support more difficult to access. We focus our work on these mums and families using our model. We offer support by peers in drop-in groups to reach out to isolated communities and where breastfeeding rates are at their lowest. We develop evidence-based leaflets and train health professionals. We partner with organisations like Homestart and Barnardos who can help us in our work and who share our values.

### How We Work

Our approach is simple and strong. We strive always to:

- Listen actively
- Keep a mum at the centre
- Respect a mother and support her choices
- Share the evidence to inform early parenting choices

We will strive never to:

- Advocate a particular lifestyle
- Judge a mother for the choices she makes
- Accept money from companies that have a commercial interest in infant feeding
- Charge a mum for any of our services, including training

## The Challenge

The start of 2014 marks the beginning of a new era for the Breastfeeding Network. In line with good charity governance we have made major changes to our board and management. This has challenged us as an organisation. We have to address the reality of a structure that is no longer sustainable or fit for purpose. We also continue to feel the impact of public sector cuts.

The next twelve to eighteen months are critical for us. This is our opportunity to stabilise and be clear about who we are and where we need to be.

## The Opportunity

Our time is now, with breastfeeding high on the public health agenda as an important response to serious health issues such as obesity and diabetes. In addition the social case for investment in early years' intervention is building, particularly under an initiative from the Scottish Government. There is a growing evidence base, which indicates that social development starts earlier than previously thought. Opportunities for stronger attachment can be linked with babies who are breastfed. This policy and growing evidence base will provide good momentum for us to continue to support mums, babies and families.

## Our Resources

By building on our reputation, we have the chance to become the best provider of quality breastfeeding support for all mums. We are very good at what we do, but we could be better at sharing our achievements and promoting our work. We could also measure impact more accurately and consistently, and again this will be a key aim for us over the next three years.

Throughout this journey, we have the active support of a re-organised central team, dedicated and skilled board, and a subcommittee structure. They are all committed to helping us to get BfN on a stronger footing and to increase our geographical reach and impact. We need to make the most of this relationship, to share best practice, learn from each other's strengths and build on the benefits of working together at all levels of the organisation.

The Breastfeeding Network has been through a lot, and the resilience and professionalism of our staff and volunteers is something that I am enormously proud of. Through all the changes you have remained positive and, above all, professional. You have kept the organisation going over the past twelve months and I know without doubt that you will rise to the challenges ahead.

Shereen Fisher

## What Happened to Lindsay?



For a couple of weeks Lindsay graced the homepage of the Breastfeeding Network website with her bid to run the London Marathon for BfN. And now she has disappeared. Has she run off?

Lindsay was planning to add to her already impressive list of city marathons: six in London, one each in New York, Berlin, Rome and Zurich, and three in Paris. Though she did feel this one, her 14th marathon, would be more of a challenge as she is less fit.

Sadly, Lindsay's even less fit now, as she broke her ankle at the beginning of February and is now planning to run in 2015. But if anyone wants to step into her trainers...

More running and more fundraising for BfN with the [2014 Mums' Milk Run](#)

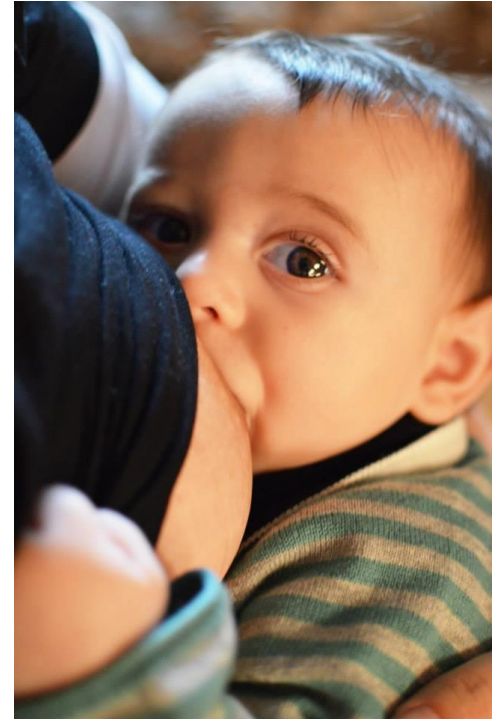
## 54.2 Editorial

Maybe the best thing about editing the BfN newsletter is opening an email with a new article and reading the fresh, unedited words spilling out the story? Or maybe it is the moment when I open the attachments and another cute baby fills the screen?

The cute baby count is high in this issue, and rightly so. Cute babies are the expected outcome of motherhood, but not the only one.

In the case of Hollie McNish one outcome was that she became the poster girl for pro-breastfeeding rap. This led to engagement with the public, which taught her about attitudes towards the various bodily fluids and the multiple roles of female body parts in modern British society. You can read about all that in [her own words](#); in prose this time.

For some people, an unexpected side effect of pregnancy can be depression. In the case of [one of our writers](#), the struggle to come to terms with motherhood was exacerbated by the recent loss of her own mother. In contrast, we also hear from a [supporter](#) whose baby has grown up and had her own baby.



Elsewhere in this issue, as [Mary Broadfoot](#) retires to the practice dressage in Argyll, we review her contribution to breastfeeding support over nearly two decades. We also look at the [Islington Project](#), which was started up by Deborah Behrman and Claire Davis, and is going from strength to strength.

But we can't get away from the cute babies at the heart of it all. They have been posing for their [portraits in Portsmouth](#).

More prosaically there is [information](#) about DBS and other administrative matters and a completely subjective [round up](#) of online resources that have caught my eye. Because it is just possible that the greatest pleasure in editing this publication is adding in [hyperlinks](#) everywhere I can.

In the meantime, here are a few more cute babies from Portsmouth, on the left, Wai and her nurslings, and on the right Rita and her nursling.

Veronika Tudhope

### Breaking News:

**The BfN AGM for 2014 will be held on the 4<sup>th</sup> October in Glasgow, venue to be announced.**

Since the BfN newsletter became an electronic publication alternative arrangements are being made for members who do not receive emails. If you know anyone who falls into this category please let us know. You can find information about the [board of directors](#) and [central team staff](#) on the website.

## 54.3 Congratulations



### Congratulations and Well Done

**Full supporters**  
Annaliese Truman –

**Thank you to her tutor**  
Claire Davis

**Supporters starting their probationary period**  
Beverley Smith, Erin Zohrehie, Kirsty Beck

**Thank you to their tutors**  
Erika Devine, Gladys Perrier, Lesley Backhouse, Nicola Worsnop and Rayanne Napper

#### And to newly qualified helpers and their tutors

##### Phyll Buchanan

Nicola Adshead  
Laura Biddulph  
Lauren Collett  
Sieglinde Cosias  
Gail Curry  
Magdalena Tsukiji-  
Krolikowsk  
Debra Wood  
Joanna Fairclough

##### Jane Neesam

Amanda Da Costa  
Janine Warman  
Rebecca Turpin  
Natalie Goldsworthy  
Sarah Maynard-  
Howe  
Shala Montgomery  
Roxanne Dinnes  
Rebecca Williams  
Lisa Moynihan  
Melissa Rose Amilli  
Virginia Ayllon Ruiz  
Anna Pavelikina  
Alison Skinner  
Sara Sandven-  
Burnett

Marissa Pajot Webb  
Lisa Higginson  
Samantha Cherrill  
Rebecca  
Whenmouth  
Rehema Gray

##### Kate Russon

Claire Fisher  
Teela Bednall  
Jane Ford  
Nicky Graham  
Katie Brown  
Freya Belgian  
Donna Ebanks  
Jenny Davis  
Pamela Kaur Sohal  
Leanne Kay  
Thureen Kauser  
Teresa Ball

#### A Certificate of Attendance was awarded to

Margaret Baptiste and Chloe Tucker  
Phyll Buchanan's trainees

#### Thank you and goodbye to

Magda Sachs



## 54.4 What does [Hollie McNish](#) think about 'Breasts are for Babies, Not Men'?

In March last year I finally quit my day job. I had been working in architecture. I really liked it, but poetry gigs and workshops had started taking over. I was working a part-time job and the poetry was taking up the same number of hours. And I had a child, and a relationship, and I also wanted a bit of my own time. So I quit my day job.

I set myself some weekly tasks to get into a kind of poetry work routine; funding bids, newsletter, starting to upload all my poems to [YouTube](#).... It was my boyfriend who said I should put up '[Embarrassed](#)'. 'Nah', I said, half because I didn't think anyone would bother about it. He insisted. After about two weeks, the video had notched up a million views, thanks to a site called [Upworthy](#), [Huffington Post](#) and hoards and hoards of people who had been sharing it online. I sat shocked, while my partner sat smug.

Since the video went viral it has completely opened my eyes to the debates, issues, stereotypes and more about breastfeeding. A lot of it makes me feel sick, angry and, most of all, annoyed that these things aren't talked about more and that they are not even common knowledge. Most people were really supportive of the poem. Some were horrendous. Some were just rude (e.g. 'ugly cow') But that's normal on YouTube; I get that sort of stuff a lot!

[Closer magazine](#) online said:

*'I think she (Hollie) should keep it to herself. I don't get on the table at a restaurant and make love to my boyfriend do I?'*

Some messages on YouTube were more worrying:

*'So next time you're out, I'll piss on the table then?'*

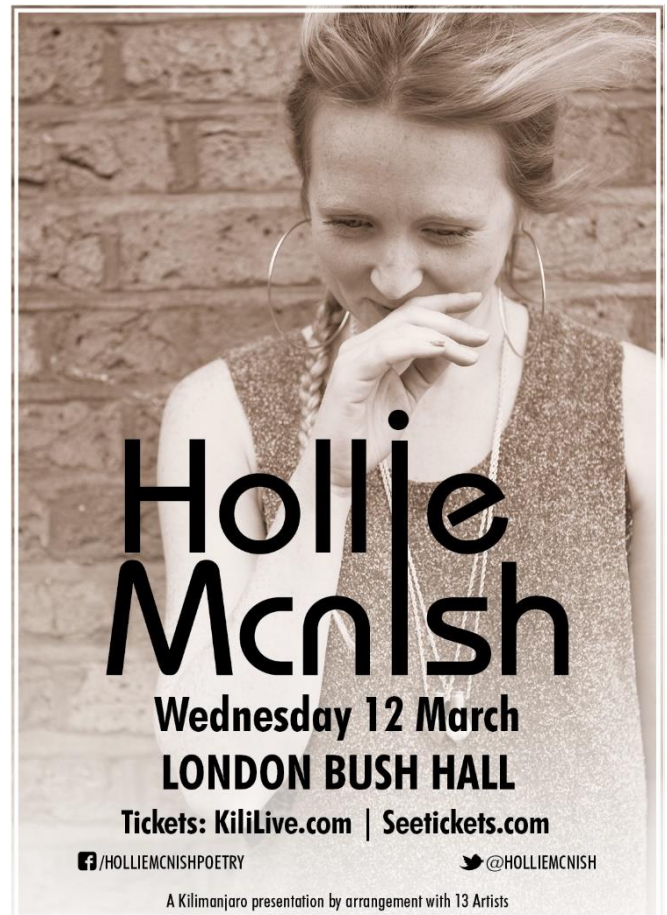
*'If men do this, they're called pedophiles, but women have the excuse of breastfeeding'*

*'In our community, I have to breastfeed in secret because the town says that breastfeeding girls will turn them into*

*lesbians, breastfeeding boys will make them sex perverts'*

At first, I just got annoyed, but that doesn't help anything. Then I sat down, breathed out and read all the comments. They are all relevant, they are all the real thoughts of real people. And for each person, there's a reason they think that way. I read them all.

The most common negative comments online related breastfeeding to sexual acts and/or going to the toilet. I can understand that people can be embarrassed about where to look when someone breastfeeds. We're embarrassed about so much in this country; dancing, people snogging, asking questions in a classroom. It's normal to be embarrassed about certain things. I think that's ok. I can understand some women want to be alone to feed, in peace, by themselves. That's fine if it's your choice. I, myself, found I was desperate not to be in my flat when I had a baby!



It was the sex and toilets quotes that I thought were really disturbing and far too common.

I understand there is no comparison, between breastfeeding (it is food) and excreting other bodily fluids. But in doing so no one compared breast milk to sweat, or saliva, or tears; always wee or poo. There were lots of responses about how poo and wee are unhygienic, whereas breast milk is in no way unhygienic. Practical responses were so helpful.

But there were also a lot of purely emotional responses too, which I found less helpful. These happened more often in terms of relating breastfeeding to sexual acts. 'Boobs are for babies, not men', was the one that annoyed me the most. Because this is the biggest reason why a lot of young people I work with think breastfeeding 'odd'. Breasts have been so sexualized and they find it 'weird' to see a baby sucking on a nipple. Most of them don't see that image anywhere, but they see the sexual imagery everywhere. Although I agree that feeding an infant is the main purpose of boobs, obviously, I think it's unhelpful to ignore the fact that they can also, for many, be arousing to the touch. They can play a role in people's intimate lives.

I saw a lot of arguing over this one idea: Boobs aren't for sex, boobs are for babies, boobs are for men, boobs are sexy, and on and on. Aside from the fact that breasts belong to the woman whose body they are on (and not ever her husband), I just can't understand why we are so against these body parts having more than one role. I kept reading this debate that had no middle ground. My breasts have been used for many purposes. Just like my tongue, my lips, my mouth, my vagina, my legs. I kiss my baby and my partner, but I do not confuse the two feelings I get from kissing them both. I gave birth, I have periods, I use tampons, I have sex. I don't confuse those things, though they

### Want to hear more from Hollie?

First Collection, [Papers](#), published by Greenwich Exchange Publishing, London 201:

[Poetry albums](#)

[Next solo show](#)

[Newest YouTube video \(explicit\)](#)

all use the same body part. In the same way, my partner can touch my boobs during sex and it's sexy. I wrap them up for tennis and they're just a pain. I fed my baby with them and they were a life (and money) saver. They have many roles!

After the shock of the video going viral, and after reading thousands of comments online, I now feel that this is one of the biggest topics that needs to be addressed. Not that breasts are for babies only, but that breastfeeding is not sexual. Baby's lips on a nipple are not sexual, but none of that means that nipples and boobs are not sometimes sexual too. It's not weird to breastfeed anywhere that a baby needs to be fed. But it's also not helpful to shout at people who think it is weird. It seems there are a lot of those people around and we need to find out why they think that in the first place.

Hollie McNish

(PS I've got few more videos to put up about it, which will generate more discussion, which I will read and so I might completely change my mind next month.)



*Emilia, from Portsmouth,, demonstrates her wide mouth*

## 54.5 National Breastfeeding Helpline

A massive thank you again to all BfN volunteers who take calls on the National Breastfeeding Helpline and Supporterline. We've just collated the stats from 2013 and the great news is that we have recorded our highest ever total for talk time – 3329:52 hours – the equivalent of 139 full days spent talking with and supporting mums and families – a 15% increase on last year – amazing work, thank you!

*“139 days spent  
talking with mums”*

However, although we're talking for longer, there are still many callers that don't get through first time, or don't get through at all, so even if you can just log on and take one call a week, that could make all the difference to a mum.

As always, teatime (between 4-6pm) and weekends are the times when we most need cover, but any time you can give would be fantastic!

Don't forget we are still offering a chocolate spot prize for one lucky volunteer each month, and we can also set up text messages to remind you to log on. Contact your [Link Worker](#) for more information.



### New Link Worker

This January, we welcomed [Kirsty Cummins](#) as our new temporary NBH Link Worker for the Central region and Wales. Kirsty already has a background working for BfN as she was previously a support worker in Suffolk.



### Web chat

By the time you read this, our first cohort of helpline volunteers will have been trained and ready to offer support on our ground breaking new web chat service. We are the first charity in the UK (possibly the world...) to offer breastfeeding support via web chat. At the moment we are just piloting the service to see what demand is like. Watch this space and next time we'll provide a full report on how things are going so far.

### No mailing this year

This year we won't be sending out a mass mailing with call record forms to all volunteers. This move will save BfN a great deal of money, time and resources.

Instead, helpline volunteers can either use our [online call record form](#) or alternatively [email](#) us to be sent a pile of paper forms and envelopes to return them in.

If you need help filling in the online form, contact your [Link Worker](#) or [Felicity Lambert](#).

Felicity Lambert, National Breastfeeding Helpline  
Manager

**Front Page Illustration:** Alison travelled to Cardigan to train these new helpers. They are pictured being awarded their certificates, along with the health visitor who has started up the breastfeeding group where they will be volunteering. The training was funded by [Flying Start](#), a Welsh Assembly Government organisation.



## 54.6 Mary Rides Off Into The Sunset

In November Mary Broadfoot celebrated her retirement from BfN.

Nearly two decades ago, Mary Broadfoot and a group of fellow breastfeeding counsellors were concerned about the lack of good quality, independent, evidence-based support for breastfeeding mothers. They decided to set up a small charity to provide just this – and the Breastfeeding Network (BfN) was born.



1997- Press shot, Mary with her daughter Katherine, used when the BfN was founded

Her key motivation is that mothers must have confidence in the service and know that BfN will not make money out their feeding choices. She showed us that keeping our integrity, even if it meant starting anew, was such a powerful message we could overcome many challenges.

Mary applied her many talents to her new role. She used her statistician's skills to demonstrate that a hospital going 'Baby Friendly' helped women to breastfeed. She also made an international impact when she finally got confirmation that the World Health Assembly resolutions did indeed carry the same weight as the original [International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes](#). This was vital in establishing the need to stay independent of companies manufacturing infant formula.

The idea of a national breastfeeding helpline, was also pioneered by Mary, offering a single, dedicated number anyone could ring to access friendly, independent, breastfeeding support. Supporterline was

launched in 1998, and in its first year it received over 1,900 calls. For the first ten years, Mary herself manually logged all individual volunteers in and out of the helpline when they started and finished their shifts.

Eventually Mary was asked by the Department of Health to set up the National Breastfeeding Helpline. In 2008 BfN joined forces with the Association of Breastfeeding Mothers to do this. Today, the NBH receives over 50,000 calls every year, and offers specific lines in various languages, as well as a dedicated Drugs in Breastmilk line for mums worried about the effects of medication.

After dedicating the last 16 years to the cause of offering mothers support, Mary has decided it's time to move on. She will finally be able to give more time to her other passions, including spending more time with her own family (and her [horse](#)).

Shereen Fisher, current CEO of BfN says: *'It's not often you can say an individual has been a defining influence on a national charity but in the case of Mary and the Breastfeeding Network, this couldn't be more true. Her clear judgement, integrity and no-nonsense approach has laid a strong foundation on which new achievements can be laid.'*



November 2013- leaving BfN

When she left Mary was presented with a Quach engraved with the words 'For all the mums, for all the babies, for all the families'.

Phyll Buchanan

## 54.7 All Change For Islington



*Deborah's last day with the Islington Project*

Tutor and supervisor Deborah has been with the Islington project since before it even started. She was instrumental in creating the original specification for the project back in 2006. Since then, she has made the long journey several times a month from her home in leafy Berkshire to Inner City London to tutor and supervise.

In her time here, alongside Claire Davis she has tutored many helper groups and supervised even more helpers and supporters. She hands over the reins to Susy Gilvin who will be taking over her supervision sessions and to Heidi Hembry, our very own, home-grown, newly qualified tutor. Both will work with Claire.

Deborah's leaving was marked at a final supervision session on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2014. Deborah brought her own delicious homemade cheesy biscuits and Kay, one of our newly qualified helpers brought yummy cake, in the best BfN tradition! As a thank you for all her hard work and commitment to the project over the years, Deborah was presented with chocolates, a book of photographs and comments from everyone, a beautiful bouquet of flowers and a voucher to buy something for her treasured garden. Deborah has chosen to buy a Morello Cherry tree for her garden as a permanent reminder of BfN Islington. We also took Deborah out to lunch at a local tapas restaurant. Deborah said she read through the comments in the book three times on that day; once on the train back,

once more at home and lastly aloud to her husband after supper.

Deborah will be much missed by everyone at the Islington project. Eunmi Song, one of our supporters and Deborah's supervisee put it so well:

*"It is sad that you are leaving us.  
But I'm happy that I had met you, have known  
you and will never forget you.  
You taught me to listen and share  
To be open and trust, to empower. You are one of  
the most incredible people that I have ever known  
and I am grateful that our paths have crossed. I  
wish you all the best and thank you."*

Although Deborah is continuing with all her other BfN work as tutor, supervisor and supporter outside of Islington, she is also embarking on a new and very important role as grandmother to her daughter's first born child, who is yet to make an appearance in the world!

We would like to thank you, Deborah, for the wonderful legacy you have given your trainees, supervisees, the Islington project and the mums and babies of the borough. Wishing you the very best of luck with your grandmothering. Please keep in touch!

BfN Islington Breastfeeding & Weaning Peer Support Project

## 54.8 Someone who knows

### A new mother describes how a BfN volunteer helped her through a terrifying year

I remember the sounds of the labour ward: newborns, in chorus. It sounded like the call of gulls. A midwife told me one night that it was the cries of hungry babies.

I had been terrified about giving birth and subsequently it became apparent that I had been suffering prenatal depression. I had only heard of postnatal depression. From the beginning of the pregnancy I had been suffering strange, obsessive thoughts. I lost my mother to cancer very suddenly seven years earlier. I was terrified of loss in all its guises.

I started to tell people about the fear but was met by strong hardy midwives. They said, if it all gets too much, opt for the epidural and lie back with a magazine. I didn't feel safe and I didn't feel listened to. My fears were not acknowledged and my due date was creeping ever closer. My mum wasn't around to tell my fears to, nor to ask the questions that had never occurred to me to ask previously. She wasn't there to hold my hand or to simply tell me that I would be ok.

There is a thin line between life and death at these moments. I was interested to hear the observations of an older woman who said that watching her mother die had the same raw intensity of giving birth to her daughter.

As many women are, I was afraid I was failing by admitting that this was a job I didn't think I was capable of. It pushed to the core of my existence

and in response I was having thoughts that terrified me.

Donna was the Breastfeeding Network volunteer supporting me. The best thing she said to me was that in a year I would feel better. A year felt like a lifetime. I had never felt so terrible: so afraid, so ill, so terrified and lonely.

I found Donna through the Breastfeeding Network, but her help and support for me went far beyond that expected from a professional person. Throughout the winter months she came to my flat and listened to me without judgement while I described the terrifying thoughts I was experiencing. She reached out to me, mother to mother. She told me I was doing a good job even though I wasn't feeling it. She taught me how to hold my baby and how to feed her. She was calm and kind to me in the face of my terror.

Today I am the mother to a beautiful, engaging, funny, smart thirteen-month-old. I am amazed and enchanted by her and my love for her grows by the day. I feel lucky to know her and to be her mother. I strive to meet her needs and to face the challenges and frustrations that mothering brings. I am still full of fear of the unknown but not frozen by it. As Donna said all those months back, I am feeling much better after a year.

I feel passionate about groups such as the Breastfeeding Network and the kindness I received. In turn I now tell new mothers who feel they are struggling that they are doing a great job. I tell them it is hard work but that it will get better. I am someone who knows.

The author has asked to remain anonymous

### Maws - Our Journey

If you are affected by the issues in the above piece, as they say on the BBC, you might be interested in watching this brilliant, moving [film](#). It is described as 'exploring personal accounts of perinatal mental ill health,' and the aim is to encourage shared experiences and better health care support for new mums.

It might be a reminder of what mums can be going through when they contact us, or resonate with you as a mum, or a granny. The clash between how the women feel and the cheery way in which their fears are dismissed is especially well illustrated.

The Maws in the title are Glasgow mums. This film was produced in partnership between the Mental Health Network Glasgow and NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde and filmed in Glasgow by the Bluebell counselling service at the Tom Allan Centre. It does contain the odd scrap of tartan accent but I guarantee the mums' (or 'maws') stories will resonate whether you live in Bellshill, Bradford or Bloomsbury.

Phyll Buchanan and Veronika Tudhope

## 54.9 Diary of a BfN grandmother

**12 weeks** Youngest daughter tells us she is expecting a baby in early December. I resist the temptation to talk about breastfeeding, perhaps because I know that she wants to do this. After all we have weekly conversations about my Supporterline calls, especially if they are about medication because she's a hospital pharmacist working in obstetrics.

**32 weeks** Fran has started to buy for the baby. I don't comment on the bottles and sterilising equipment. They were bought just in case!

**36 weeks** We take our presents for the baby - a Moses basket and a pack of BfN breastfeeding leaflets. Does she give me a funny look?

**38 weeks** A friend from her antenatal class visits. I give her the Supporterline leaflet and a pack of BfN breastfeeding leaflets, which I just happened to have in the car. Was that that funny look again?

**39 weeks** Orla Grace born weighing 8lbs 12oz.



**Day 1** First visit to meet our new granddaughter. I feel privileged when all other visitors are sent for a coffee while I help Fran feed the baby. She is worried because apparently her flat nipples would make it difficult to breastfeed! A midwife recommended nipple shields. I reassure her that babies don't suck nipples.

Although I had vowed to hide my BfN interest, I can't help myself! I ask the midwife about peer supporters in the hospital. They don't have them, so I talk about the benefits. Do I just imagine that funny look?

As soon as we got home, I email Fran information on nipple shields. Later, getting ready for bed, I

glance at my nipples. They are flat. I hadn't realised because no one had suggested that I would struggle to breastfeed my nine children. Sometimes ignorance is bliss!

**Day 4** Telephone call from a distraught daughter - Orla screaming and refusing to feed. I cry too. A local supporter is called and arrives within the hour. She defuses the situation.

**Day 10** 7.30am Fran phones tired and upset because baby has been feeding all night. Ask all the appropriate questions, get the right answers, reassure Fran.

7.30pm Fran phones upset because Orla has slept all day. Suggest skin to skin.

9pm Fran exhilarated because baby has had a good feed.

**8 weeks** Orla is exclusively breastfed but it's not been easy – lots of trouble with positioning and attachment. Nipple shields have been used, but they are now a thing of the past. Both Fran and the baby were (mis)diagnosed with thrush but Fran was armed with the BfN fact sheet. The midwife was a Wendy Jones fan and took swabs before medication was prescribed. (Actually, Fran wished it had been thrush as it would have explained the pain.)

Fran is lucky. She lives in an area, which is well served by BfN. Thank you, Sukie, Laura and all you BfNers running the groups that Fran drops into up to three times a week. Thanks also to Supporterline, especially Claire from London. Fran would say, 'They listened to me, which was what I really needed.'

### Being a grandmother and a BfN Supporter?

While I cuddle Orla at every opportunity, remaining hands off when supporting with Fran breastfeeding came naturally.

Whenever I am particularly anxious (notice the present tense) I pretend that I am taking a NBH call or making a home visit as a supporter, which reduces the stress. Thanks to Sara who supervised me.

### And Orla?

Well, Orla's constant feeding has ensured that her mother has a plentiful milk supply and Fran says she might have given up breastfeeding if Orla hadn't loved it so much!

Pat Little

## 54.10 Celebrating the Unique Breastfeeding Journey

### Portsmouth's Breastfeeding Portrait Day



*'I'm sitting here in tears. I hate having my photo taken but wanted to do it and I love them all. Sebi looks so so lovely. All mamas should do this. You made me feel at ease straight away. Thank you so much Jennifer.'*

*Last week I had the flu and it was the most challenging week feeding Sebi, I felt so ill and tired and down but didn't want to give up.*

*Yesterday I spent most of the day massaging a blocked milk duct. These photos have given me such a boost'*

Anna

In November 2013 mothers in Portsmouth were offered the opportunity to have their breastfeeding portrait taken by professional photographers.

The location was the beautiful, historic [Square Tower](#). We were welcomed with possibly the most tremendous homemade cakes ever eaten. Upstairs, mothers posed for photographs with their nurslings, taken by guest photographer Chris Reed and supporter Karah Mew. Downstairs, supporter Jennifer Murrey snapped away catching the atmosphere as mothers enjoyed tea and cake.

The aim of the day was to raise money for local services, whilst simultaneously empowering women and giving them a snapshot memory of their breastfeeding relationship with their child/ren. If they could have a photograph taken looking so happy and beautiful, they could see what everyone else sees. Then they would never again have a problem nursing in public. We are bombarded with bottle-feeding imagery so we see it as the norm. The more pictures we see of that magical connection between mother and child during breastfeeding, the more normal it will become.

To date we have raised over £200 from the afternoon, and we are still receiving orders for prints. More important is what the mothers gained from the experience and can only be captured in their own words.

Eleanor Johnstone & Jennifer Murrey



*You don't know how many times I looked at this picture in 24 hours!*

*I sent it to my parents and asked what word would they use to describe the photo and my Dad said 'LOVE.'*

Gyöngyi

*'I was photographed by a lovely gentleman. I explained that I wanted a photo of me tandem feeding my 2-year-old son and 6-month-old baby. He immediately suggested that I sat on a high chair next to a window so my son could perch on the sill and I had a free arm to hold my daughter. It was perfect. He snapped away happily, taking lots of shots of us all as well as a few close ups. He made me feel so comfortable and not for a moment like I was doing anything weird or unnecessary. It was such a lovely way to celebrate our unique breastfeeding journey.'*  
Jessica (BfN helper)

## 54.11 In the Bin

Apparently, not everything you read on the internet is rubbish... in fact, I've heard that the Breastfeeding Network have quite a good [website](#). Here is a tiny selection of what has caught my eye online recently.



If you have already made as many [knitted breasts](#) as you want (there is always demand for more) perhaps you would like to make bunting now?

The organisers of [The Breastfeeding Festival](#) 2014 are looking for mothers to make a flag representing a child they breastfed. Flags can be made out of any fabric and decorated any way. They ask that you put some details of the breastfeeding relationship on them, perhaps the name of the child, where you live, the best thing about breastfeeding, duration or some other positive message. You can write the message with a marker pen or make it part of the flag. Flags should be triangular, 18cm across the top and 22cm in length and are needed before the **1st April 2014**. Please

post them to: Lockwood and Greenwood, Ryecroft Business Park Ryecroft Street Ashton Under Lyne Lancashire OL7 0BU, marked FAO The Breastfeeding Festival.

Those very children who we are celebrating with bunting will be delighted to know that their mothers will still be able to remember making the bunting when they are old. [Recent research](#) has found a link between duration of breastfeeding and the likelihood of onset of Alzheimer's in the mother. Basically, the longer you breastfeed the more protection it confers. It has something to do with balancing the sugars in your brain, apparently, I can't quite remember...

It's a good thing, though, to have extra enjoyable years in your life. There are so many videos on YouTube to watch. But it's like going out to buy clothes; there are many to be discarded before you find something you think worthwhile.

Learn the actions and cheer yourself up with '[teach me how to breastfeed](#)'

What happens when a rapper babysits his baby cousin who is fed with ebm? Find out in [popping bottles](#).

For something far more controversial, why did the actress [Salma Hayek](#) breastfeed a hungry baby in Africa?

In complete contrast to the recent sensational coverage of breastfeeding in the media it was nice to read [Ask a grown up](#) in the Guardian recently. Anyone would think breastfeeding is the normal way to feed babies.

Veronika Tudhope



### New Helpers from Slough

Back row, left to right:

Maria, Tracy, Jackie and baby Emma, Jacqueline, Marylou and Nardia.

Front row, from Left: Angela, Aisha and Marcelle (Tutor)

Sameena is absent.

## 54.12 News from the office



### New Staff Member - April Pardoe

Many of you will have met April at the AGM, where she was taking the minutes, even though she did not begin work formally as Shereen's PA until the 18th November 2013.

When not being thrown in at the deep end, April lives in Northampton with her husband and teenage daughter Caitie. She has spent the last ten years working in the public sector as a PA.

In her spare time her main interest is amateur dramatics. Last year she played Sacharissa in Princess Ida and Countess of Rousillon in [All's Well That Ends Well](#) and this year she will take on the role of Lady Ella in [Patience](#).

### News about DBS for Tutors and Applicants for Criminal Records Bureau Checks.

The Criminal Records Bureau has changed its name to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) and there have been some other changes too. The main changes are:

1. Applicants can [register online](#) with the update service which means if they need a check for another organisation they can grant the other organisation access. It also means never having to re-apply for a new disclosure for BfN. You can register online from the time you apply to two weeks after the certificate is issued. Two weeks and one day after the certificate is issued is too late. In this case you will be liable for re-application in three years, or if you need a check for another organisation
2. Once the check has been completed a certificate is sent to the applicant only. Duplicates of the certificates no longer come to the office. The original of each certificate must be seen by a counter signatory or BfN tutor/supervisor. If the certificate is not completely clear this does not necessarily mean you cannot be a registered volunteer. The **original** certificate must be sent to BfN HQ (by special delivery, if necessary) for a decision to be made centrally. You do not need to disclose to your tutor what is on the certificate if you don't want to.

Currently all DBS checks for England and Wales are centrally co-ordinated in the Paisley office. Please call or email us if you have any questions.

**Lochgilphead** -The Lochgilphead PO box address is no longer active and all mail that was previously sent there should now be addressed to PO Box 11126, Paisley, PA2 8YB.

#### **HELPLINES**

BfN Supporterline **0300 100 0210** National Breastfeeding Helpline **0300 100 0212**

Drugs in Breastmilk **0844 412 4665** Supporterline in Bengali/Sylheti **0300 465 2421**

Supporterline in Tamil/Telugu/Hindi **0300 330 5469**

Postal address: **The Breastfeeding Network**

**PO Box 11126**

**Paisley**

**PA2 8YB**

Admin phone number **0844 412 0995**

Email: [admin@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk](mailto:admin@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk) Website: [www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk](http://www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk)



## 54.13 Mums' Milk Run 2014

### There's fun to be had!

The BfN Mums' Milk Run will be held in June 2014.

Please begin thinking now about what kind of event you might like to hold.

Perhaps you could have a chat about this at Supervision and Project or Group meetings?

Can you get local stakeholders involved?

Events can be small or large depending on your resources – do what you can.

Please contact your local project manager about ideas you have, or if you can help. Or contact [Kate](#) for help or guidance. As always there will be lots of resources on [our website](#) to help you.



*Mums' Milk Run 2013 in Kilmarnock, Ayrshire*

### Copy dates of future newsletters

Issue number	Name	Copy date	Published by
55	Spring 2014	25 <sup>th</sup> April	23 <sup>rd</sup> May
56	Summer 2014	25 <sup>th</sup> July	22 <sup>nd</sup> August
57	Autumn 2014	31 <sup>st</sup> October	21 <sup>st</sup> November
58	Winter 2015	30 <sup>th</sup> January 2015	February 2015