

The Rattle

Spring 2008

<p>Dear all, This is our most formal newsletter of the year as it contains our AGM minutes and annual reports. Don't be put off by this though. You may think that these sound dry, but give them a read - they're all really interesting and give you lots of information about what the Branch has been getting up to and what our plans for the future are. We're as busy as ever!</p> <p>Talking of being busy, the next Nearly New Sale is already upon us. Time flies! It's on Saturday 15th March and you can find all the details you need on the back cover. Many bargains are to be had. The doors open at 10am but get there early. It's true what they say - the queue really does snake around the car-park at 9.30am (let's hope it's a nice day!). If you want to sell, the forms are on the middle pages but you'll need to register quickly: the deadline is 6th March.</p> <p>Do you like the new look of the newsletter? If you didn't know, the NCT have changed its logo after 50 years and so I thought this was a good opportunity to have a bit of a revamp!</p> <p>See you in the Summer. Karen</p>	Contents	
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Committee Update

Hello again and happy 2008

We are all now getting to know each other on the Committee and finding our feet a little in our new roles. There has been quite an influx of new talent so it has been really interesting to hear everyone's ideas and thoughts on how we move forward this year. Here are a few of our working aims which I think you will see some movement on soon:

- ♦ bring the Branch together by having some more social events. To that end we had a pub meet in January and will follow this up with some soft play dates, and when the weather improves, some weekend park dates plus hopefully a quiz evening. These will all be publicised in the Rattle and on the web site, which will have a calendar of events for you to consult.
- ♦ to maintain our fantastic membership numbers (currently 300). Part of this will be by more publicity, in publications like 'Small Talk', and by posters, but also in other ways, like growing our postnatal groups and ensuring that those people coming through our antenatal classes are supported and encouraged to continue with us. Using the Yahoo Group (see page 32), improving our web site and coming on social events is part of it too.
- ♦ to continue our fundraising efforts under the guise of the Nearly New Sale (ever growing!) and a follow up to the NCTea Party but also by smaller events held as socials, like book swaps and "Tupperware" style parties with proceeds going to NCT. If we get the growth of the Branch and raise the social side, fundraising becomes a whole lot easier.

If anyone out there has any suggestions, thoughts or ideas on any of the above please drop me a line or give me a call. It would be great to hear from you and I promise I won't try to co-opt you on to the committee!

With best wishes

Liz

chair@nctleeds.org

0870 421 4553

The Birth of Daisy Huby

I started with pains at about 2.30am on the Friday morning (16th November). The strange thing was that when I went to bed that night, I thought to myself that I could really do with a good night's sleep which I didn't get as Chris was snoring!

The pains were like period pains that just came every few minutes but I wasn't sure if it was labour or not so I didn't wake Chris up for about another hour. We stayed in bed for a while until I decided the pains were too bad for me to be able to sleep through, at this point we decided to come downstairs - this was about 4.30am. Chris made me a cup of tea and I sat on my ball and did a bit of bouncing. I just kept worrying as I didn't want him taking a day off work if it wasn't the real thing!

I rang my Mum to see if she thought I was in labour and she said she definitely thought I was so I started to concentrate on what was happening.

The pains seemed to intensify very quickly - they were like really bad period pains which were all at the front, I had no back pain at all. Chris ran me a bath which really helped and I just lay in there for a while squeezing on a bath sponge with every contraction.

I came downstairs and rang the LGI, they told me to take some paracetamol and have a bath and ring back in an hour and I'd probably be allowed to come in as they weren't busy.

I went to the loo at one point and there was some fresh blood which I found a bit scary, Chris rang one of our friends just to see if this was normal, she assured us it was and that it was my 'show'. I also had sickness and the runs which I know is perfectly normal too.

I came downstairs and used various areas of the house to ease my pains. I was on all fours over the sofa, over my leather bean bag, over my birthing ball, up the staircase, in the kitchen leaning over the work top, in the dining room over a chair - so I was just all over the place!!

I became very aware I was making a lot of noise but I didn't really care. Chris rang my Mum who works at a doctors surgery and one of the docs said I should definitely go to hospital as it sounded like I was quite far on

(as they could probably hear me!). Chris rang the hospital again and they said I could come down so we rang our friend who was our designated driver so we didn't have to worry about parking.

Our friend only lives 5 minutes away but it seemed like an eternity for her to arrive. She came in and gave me a big hug and reassured me that with every pain, I was one step closer to having my baby. This was something I kept in my head all the way through after that and it really helped.

We had her 2 1/2 year old son in the car with us which was quite funny, Rachel had explained to him that I was having a baby and might make some noise so he wasn't too upset. He spent the journey pointing out cars and aeroplanes to us which actually took my mind off things.

Just as we pulled up at the hospital I got some massive pains and I remember leaning over Rachel's car boot clinging to my ball, I didn't care that there were loads of people looking! I insisted on going up the stairs rather than the lift which Chris was delighted about as he had 2 holdalls, a rucksack and my birthing ball to carry - he literally bounced up the stairs!

I was examined when I got there (this was at 9.15am) and I was 5cm dilated, the midwife said she could move my cervix really easily and I could go straight to the delivery suite as I wouldn't be long at all. I had a contraction walking along the corridor and remember clinging to a fire hose at one point!

I went in the home from home room and was put straight on gas and air and shown how to use it effectively. I wanted to stand up as it just really helped to rock from side to side through my contractions. The gas and air didn't really take the pain away I didn't think but it certainly was a distraction and good to bite down on the tube!

The first midwife finished her shift so another came in and that's when things really got going. My waters broke all over the floor (and Chris's shoes) and at that point my contractions were just one after the other. They moved me to the end of the bed and put lots of thick gym mats on the floor for me to stand on. A male midwife then came in (Hugh the star!) and he did the monitoring of the heartbeat and spoke very softly to me - I can't remember anything he said to me though.

I started to feel like I really needed to poo and wanted to go to the bathroom but obviously I was stopped as it meant it was time to push. I

quickly felt like the head was coming down and asked the midwife if she could see but she couldn't as I was standing up (she even had a torch!). I asked if she wanted me to move but she said to stay where I was most comfortable. After a few pushes and the lovely burning ring of fire (yes, the song came into my head) the head was out. There was a fair gap then before the next contraction and I remember the midwife saying 'get ready to catch your baby' and the next second she popped out into my arms! This was 10.53am so it all happened very fast!

I just remember feeling really shocked at how quickly it had happened and saying over and over that I couldn't believe I'd done it - it was just amazing. I waited until the cord had stopped pulsing before I had the injection to remove the placenta - that was all fine. I just had a few internal stitches which again was fine.

The whole experience was unbelievable and so satisfying. I just felt proud to be a woman and amazed at what your body is capable of doing. Giving birth standing up was without doubt the best way to do it, the gravity helped so much.

The staff on the delivery suite were absolutely brilliant, my birth plan was stuck to and everything I wanted to happen did do.

Liz Huby

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO
SHARE YOUR BIRTH
STORY WITH OTHER
READERS?
WRITE IN TO
rattle@nctleeds.org**

New Babies ... Congratulations!

Sam Conway's Groups:

Katie and Colin	Rose
Anna and Ben	Iris
Lucy and Dan	Nell
Catherine and Steve	Oliver
Carol and Steve	Rory and Niamh
Melissa and Steve	Felix
Miriam and Will	Samuel
Ruth and Allen	Luke
Farah and Phil	Maya
Liz and Chris	Daisy
Kirsty and Damian	Aaron Jacob
Rachael and Binder	Hari
Sarah and Andy	Hannah
Tonia and Will	James
Emma and Sam	Ava
Wendy and Steve	Elodie
Claire and Nick	Frank
Louise and Sinisa	Mia
Liz and Andy	Emily
Kirsten and Matthew	Ava
Claire and Richard	Ethan
Danielle and Daniel	Elliot
Rebecca and Paul	Ben
Elena and Sam	Leon



Fatima Bhula's Group:

Joanne and Geoff	Kearon
Fay and Dan	Thomas
Natalie and James	Joshua
Gill and John	Maya
Helen and Al	Joe
Sarah and Gary	Kate



New Babies ... Congratulations!

Rose McCarthy's Groups:

Nicola and Adam
Suzie and Richard
Adam and Sarah
Mark and Stacey
Julie and Simon

Rob and Jane
Jo and Matthew
James and Jo
Alan and Juliet
Matthew and Kathryn

Leila and James
Sarah and Matt
Louise and Richard
Purvi and Adrian
Lizzy and Jason

Finlay Thomas
Eleanor Rebecca
Ariella Catherine
Hallie Rae
Martha Pip

Alice Eleanor
Isabelle Florence
Benjamin Michael
Elizabeth May
Sebastian Lewis

Oscar David Reed
Ruby Lara
Jacob Merouane
Amelia Chiara
Oliver Harlan



Minutes of the Leeds Branch NCT AGM

14th November 2007, David Lloyd Leisure Centre

Liz Kelley and Rachel Cooper welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were given on the night from Sam Conway, Claire Huntington, Nick Martin, Ruth and Simon Owen, Heather Pawley, Sarah Peacock.

The following new officers were elected:

Position	Proposed	Proposer	Seconder
Chair	Liz Kelley	Ruth Ker	Rose McCarthy
Secretary	Rachel Cooper	Adam Vero	Karen Fisher
Treasurer	Katherine Green	Rachel Cooper	Adam Vero
Membership Secretary	Claire Huntington	Liz Kelley	Ruth Ker
NNS Coordinator	Vacant*		
Rattle Editor	Karen Fisher	Monica Kapoor	Jo Bailey
PNG Coordinator	Monica Kapoor	Bridgett Hawkins	Andrea Vero
Booking Secretary	Andrea Vero	Fatima Bhula	Rose McCarthy
Website Coordinator	Sarah Nobel	Rachel Cooper	Liz Kelley
Publicity Coordinator	Jane Lewis	Karen Fisher	Sarah Nobel

*Continued by Liz Kelley until vacancy filled

Reports from committee members were given (see following pages).

The rest of the AGM involved a discussion on the following issues the incoming Chair Liz Kelley wanted to work on during 2008:

1. Maintain current high membership numbers (300)
2. Reach more areas of Leeds; committee members from across the city
3. Increase social events to support members so they grow with us

To help with these aims, Liz asked the group how we could keep people involved and how we could access more of the city than we do currently. The following is Liz's brief summary of the ideas which were discussed in "breakout groups":

Involvement

- Postnatal talks at Antenatal (AN) reunions
- Postnatal email to those AN attendees postpartum
- More social activities in Postnatal Groups (PNGs)
- Branch socials
- Ideas for further commitment e.g. committee posts/specialist workers/regional posts etc propagated at PNGs and AN classes
- Tap into groups formed separately by AN class attendees by;
 - First birthday card/emails
 - NCT socials linked to first birthdays
 - NCT adverts for events to all AN class attendees
- More events (auction of promises expressly mentioned)
- An alumni
- Benefits of joining NCT on the web site
- Give people a job!
- Regular branch emails on activities upcoming
- Dads' Groups
- Weekend events
- Events Coordinator
- Forums for info on web site
- AN class attendees to all meet up

Accessing All Areas of Leeds

- Committee meetings in different places (than LS8 and 17!)
- Events in different places (than LS8 and 17!)
- Perhaps leave those places assisted by SureStart and other agencies and concentrate on those other areas which are not traditionally "typical NCT" stamping grounds
- Publicity
 - doctors surgeries/clinics
 - flyers sent out regularly
 - closer links with Health Visitors
 - posters at hospitals

- Events in different areas of Leeds
- Links with SureStart
- Midwives to actively endorse NCT at AN checks
- Freebies/raffles in areas of low take-up
- Clothing exchange
- Breastfeeding peer support groups

There is a wealth of ideas here to build upon. Obviously we cannot do everything but I would like to keep referring to this list and pick up new things from it as we have spare time and energy to do so! At the AGM in November 2008 it would be useful to see what we have "ticked off" and what is left still to work on. Many, many thanks to everyone who gave so generously of their time and inspiration; I hope you will support us in the realisation of these aims.

Liz Kelley
Dec 2007

Antenatal Teachers' Report 2007

Antenatal classes have been busier than ever this year and as a result the Leeds teachers have been teaching back to back. Fortunately Nikki Ford and Rachel Plachcinski from neighbouring branches had come across to Leeds to help us meet the demand. We are delighted to say congratulations to Fatima Bhula who has now got her diploma in antenatal teaching and so is officially qualified. This is great news as she will be able to teach more classes next year. Unfortunately two of our teachers Sarah Lewis and Sarah Williams have decided to stop teaching due to other work commitments. They are a real loss to the NCT and we would like to thank them for all the hard work and enthusiasm they have shown over the years.

As a result we could really do with some more student teachers. At present Rebecca Bowens is our only student so if anyone else would like to consider training them please, please do contact one of us teachers to see what the training involves. I could not think of a more rewarding or worthwhile job to do, except being a mum of course! It is such a privilege to be involved with couples when they are expecting a baby. They come to the sessions as a group of strangers and leave as friends, hopefully confident in their ability to give birth and to parent their child.

We teachers have not just taught the traditional NCT classes. We have also been involved in outreach work. Sam Conway now teaches teenage classes, Sarah Williams has taught the first ever lesbian only classes in this country and I teach antenatal classes for SureStart in Chapeltown. Many of the people who have come to the SureStart sessions have been asylum seekers. They have come from many countries around the world and at times there have been six interpreters at once at the same session! The richness of their experiences has been amazing and though initially they have been aware of their differences when it comes to discussing how they have felt about giving birth, they soon realised that we are all the same. Birth is a fantastic way of bringing people together and these sessions provide a great opportunity to build a community amongst people who had had to leave their families behind.

Rose McCarthy

Breastfeeding Report 2007

It has been a busy year for the breastfeeding counsellors, but then we always say that. The antenatal teachers have kept us supplied with breastfeeding sessions and that in itself has generated many calls from, and visits to parents. Most of our calls, however, are not from mothers who have attended NCT classes, but from those who have seen our contact cards in hospitals and clinic, or who have been referred by health professionals. Several of the counsellors also answer calls from the NCT Breastfeeding Line.

There are at present seven counsellors as we are delighted to have Ruth Clarke back from Spain to swell our numbers again. However, we are always keen to encourage mothers who have breast fed to consider training as counsellors. It really is an amazing joy and privilege to help parents and babies achieve what is to all of them a very important part of their lives. It's the buzz I get from this that has kept me counselling for the past 29 years, although you don't have to continue it for that long, of course! Ruth Ker trains students from the Leeds area and Helen Stone trains those in far flung areas of the North.

Lynn Hewitt has qualified at long last and we hope she will enjoy being a fully- fledged counsellor. Well done Lynn! Marie Edwards and Nic Martin are having time out from their training and Rachel Meskill, Liz Trump and Claire Clarke are our other three students who we look forward to joining us in the not too distant future.

Margaret Guest is retiring from counselling at the end of this year, after 16 years of service. She is a member of Wharfedale branch but has been part of our group, attending meetings and counselling for our branch. She has also attended the baby café at Otley regularly since it was set up. We will miss Margaret very much both as a counsellor and as a friend of many years standing, and wish her well in the future. I am sure her wonderful work for countless parents and babies will always be much appreciated by all those she has helped over the years.

Kathryn Holme, the previous chair of the branch, has set up a peer supporters scheme in Gipton and Seacroft, called Breast Buddies, and we hope it will be a great success, helping to reach out to other mothers who may not otherwise seek help for breastfeeding difficulties. Peer supporters are being trained at present but will be starting their work next year as their training lasts several months, half a day per week.

Kathryn also helped to organise a group of volunteers who placed 'You Can Breastfeed Here' stickers in numerous breastfeeding friendly locations in Leeds.

We would like to thank the committee, postnatal groups and all members and others who have generously raised funds which help to support the training and work of the breastfeeding counsellors.

Val Winder

Training as a Breastfeeding Counsellor

I've been asked to write a short piece for the Rattle on what it's like to train as a Breastfeeding Counsellor in Leeds.

Well, I can honestly say that it's fascinating, stimulating, rewarding and great fun! I must admit it can be a challenge fitting in the many assignments around all the other commitments of everyday life (especially as some of them are pretty intense!) but I suppose that the most fulfilling experiences are often also the most challenging!

The training involves attending a tutorial a month (usually an evening, but twice a year we have a full day) at our tutor Ruth's house in Headingley. These are really relaxed and interactive, not at all 'class' like! The tutorial group consists of students at various stages of training – some just joined and some on the verge of being qualified. This makes things really interesting and we all benefit from the variety of input and experience. There are two weekend workshops during the training, one focusing on counselling skills and the other on facilitating antenatal classes.

The training is quite structured in some ways – it is now accredited by the University of Luton and we will receive a diploma of Higher Education, but is also quite self directed in terms of how long it takes to qualify!

I attended my first tutorial in January 2004 and (having just returned to training after a year's time-out for the birth of my son) am now hopefully nearing the end! I can't wait to be out in the 'real world' of qualified breastfeeding counsellors but will miss the comfort and security of being a student among my tutorial group, many of whom have become close friends.

If anyone would like to know any more about training as a breastfeeding counsellor please give me a call on 01943 873828.

Rachel Meskell

Why Should I Renew My Membership?

If you had a baby a few years ago and are no longer using NCT services, but are paying to be a member of the NCT, you may wonder what's in it for you.

At the birth of your baby, you probably had someone to support you. Maybe the father of your child was with you when you were in labour. Perhaps you gave birth at home or in a birth centre. You may have been encouraged to stay upright and off the bed. You may have been offered the chance to eat during your labour. You certainly won't have had a pubic shave, enema, or an episiotomy - whether you needed it or not - and you will have had access to your own set of maternity notes.

The availability of maternity and paternity leave is now better than it's ever been before. When the NCT was working for these changes to services you may well have been a baby yourself, too young to know or care that lots of mums and dads were members of the NCT. They paid their membership fee, not because they got anything, but because they hoped and believed they could make a difference for the parents that came after them. And they did. Now you, in turn, can pay your membership fee to make a difference:

- help make the health service more able to support women to have a straightforward vaginal birth
- help to make the UK a more breastfeeding-friendly society
- help to lobby for better maternity and paternity provision
- help to make sure that women have real choice about their care
- help to increase the status, respect and support mothers and fathers have within our society.

If you are not planning to have any more children, it's true that none of this will benefit you; but by paying your membership fee now, men and women in the years to come will remember what you did and be thankful.

If you know someone who's expecting a baby, please pass on the NCT membership application form on the inside cover of this newsletter.

Belinda Phipps
NCT Chief Executive

Postnatal Group News

Good luck Helen

Helen Whiteley has decided to scale down her postnatal group leaderships to just one with the imminent arrival of her 2nd child—and nobody would blame her! Helen is remaining as the Alwoodley leader whilst a willing volunteer is hopefully going to take the helm of the Roundhay group. Good luck Helen.

Another New Group

We have yet another new group, this time in Burley, which is going to be run jointly by Jo and Rachel. This now means we have 10 groups in Leeds (plus the Dads' Group) which is fantastic.

Over to You

Our Postnatal Groups are going from strength to strength, and here's what mums who currently attend the groups think about them...

Personally I have found the group great for getting to know people that live close by, the other groups and activities I go to cover a larger geographical area but everyone in this group is pretty much within walking distance, so it makes a nice change to be able to walk to the coffee mornings rather than having to get in the car. Hopefully this may also mean we may keep in touch even when we go back to work and also bump into each other in Chapel A! Rachel, Chapel Allerton Group.

I've found it a really nice informal way to meet other mums and spend some time with grown ups with a common interest in babies! It's also been good for talking about things that my baby's doing that are new or I don't understand and hearing how other people are dealing with sleeping etc. Helen, Morley Group.

The coffee mornings are a great way to meeting other local mums and is fantastic for supporting you in those early difficult months. Nita, Chapel Allerton Group.

The group is fantastic, really good to see other mums with babies of different ages. A good chance for my only baby to socialise with other babies and for me to realise I am not neurotic and other mums share the same worries. It is very well run and organised, thanks Ange you're doing a great job!
Karen, Chapel Allerton Group.

As a first time mum, I was nervous about leaving the house with my new baby but this group is a relaxed and friendly group with babies of many different ages. It's good to get together and have a good chat, sharing concerns and tips in a warm and open atmosphere. Anna, Morley Group.

I started coming to the coffee mornings when my little one was 8 weeks old and the youngest in the group. It has been a life saver in those days when I just needed to be out of the house in order to feel less alone and more 'normal'! Now my little one is 8 months old and is one of the oldest in the group and we both still enjoy meeting up regularly with everyone.
Nita, Chapel Allerton Group.

The NCT meeting is a chance to sit down for a cup of tea and a chat. It's a great place to meet other mums and to find out what else is going on locally. Jenny, Morley Group.

An invaluable source of friendship, support and knowledge of the local area (the latter being very useful if you need a good plumber!) Anne, Oakwood Group.

I have made some good friends through the coffee mornings and have even started to socialise again with their help!
Nita, Chapel Allerton Group.

Its a great way to get out and meet new mums and babies and swap stories and advice. Abi, Chapel Allerton Group.

Antenatal Bookings Coordinator Report 2007

In 2007, 64 antenatal classes were offered in Leeds, of which 3 were refresher classes for 2nd time mums and one was a lesbian-only class. All courses except the refresher classes consisted of a 2 hour breastfeeding course. We do not offer sole breastfeeding courses or early day classes.

As I have only taken on the role of booking coordinator in May 2007, I only have reliable numbers regarding participating parents since then. In the last 6 months, over 300 couples have attended classes and I believe that it is safe to say that this number would be similar for the first 6 months of 2007. Antenatal classes currently cost £120 plus an optional £39 for NCT membership. Refresher classes cost £60 plus optional membership.

We are applying the general NCT sliding fee scale and offer reduced rates as well as allow people to pay in instalments. During the course of 2007 approximately 20 people paid a reduced rate (an average of £43.30 per class).

After earlier this year two teachers decided not to run any more classes, we now only have 5 antenatal teachers based in Leeds, as well as one student who is currently on time-out. We are hence relying on two support teachers from the surrounding regions. For the Leeds Branch, there is therefore currently a serious need for additional teachers and new antenatal students.

Andrea Vero

Are you having another baby?
Have you thought about refreshing your
memory about what happens in labour? Are
you worried about introducing the new baby
into your family? **Then an NCT refresher
class might be for you.**
Email booking@nctleeds.org or call
0700 580 4248

Who's Who In Leeds NCT Branch Committee

Chair

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Nearly New Sale Team

Liz Kelley, Alice Thornley,
Helen Keith, Rachel Meskell,
Sarah Peacock, Alenka Hall

nns@nctleeds.org

Maternity Services Liaison Committee Rep

Rose McCarthy

239 0383

Committee Meetings coming up...

Tuesday 11th March	36 Crossflatts Avenue, Beeston, LS11 7BG
Wednesday 9th April	10 Boothroyd Drive. Meanwood, LS6 2SA
Tuesday 6th May	Venue TBA
Monday 2nd June	Venue TBA
Monday 7th July	Venue TBA

**The Committee meetings are held once a month, 8-10pm.
Please contact the Branch Secretary for more information.**

ALL ARE WELCOME

Postnatal Groups



We're a friendly bunch...

On the next 2 pages is a list of the NCT Postnatal Groups currently running in Leeds. These are a great place to meet fellow parents in an informal setting to do what parents do best - talk about their children over a cuppa!

If there isn't a group near you, call

Adel This group has recently started up. Please contact **Karen** at **Karen-Timms05@aol.com** for more details.

Alwoodley We started in July 2007 and currently there are 16 mums with children from a few weeks old to pre-schoolers. We meet twice a week on Tuesday afternoons and Thursday mornings for a coffee and would welcome any new members. If you're interested in joining the group, please contact **Helen** at **hbwhiteley@yahoo.co.uk** or on **266 0708** for further info.

Burley We meet on Monday mornings at 10am in the Burley/Headingley area. Some of the mums have moved from Burley since joining but still host the group from time to time. It's a small, friendly group with a full pre-school age range of children from 4 year olds to a 3 month old and some 2 and 3 year olds in between. We're looking forward to meeting and welcoming some new mums soon. Contact **Rachel** on **230 7352** or **Jo** on **228 7423** or at **josimpson@ntlworld.com**

Chapel Allerton We meet at each others' houses every Tuesday between 10am-12pm for coffee and a chat whilst the children play, feed or sleep. There are around 10 mums, and the children's ages range from newborn to 10 months. It's a great way to meet other local mums, find out about other activities in the area, to ask advice and share ideas. New people are always welcome. Contact **Angela** at **angela.malone@dsl.pipex.com** or **266 2764** for more info.

Cross Gates and Swarcliffe We've been meeting since March 2006 and we cover LS14 and LS15. There are currently 10 mums with children ranging from 7 weeks to 4 years old. We meet every Wednesday between 1-3pm and also have monthly social events. If you would like to join us

Dads' Group We meet on the 3rd Saturday of every month.

Dads and their babies or toddlers are invited to come along and have fun. For more details about the dads' group please email **Ben** at **dads@nctleeds.org**

Continued overleaf

Postnatal Groups

Morley The South Leeds group has only recently started and is meeting on a monthly basis on the 1st Monday of each month between 1pm-2.30pm at Seven Hills School in the Afterschool Club Room. There are around 10 mums who come along with children ranging from newborn, to a few around 6 months to a year and a couple of toddlers. It's a really friendly and informal group, so if you'd like to come along and join us for a coffee and chat please contact **Charlotte** on **219 5517**.

Oakwood We're a small and friendly group with mums who meet regularly for coffee each Thursday from 10am-12pm. The age range of children is from a few months old to pre-school children. New people are always welcome to the coffee mornings and socials. If you would like to know more about the group, please contact **Nicola** on **266 2606**.

Pudsey We've been meeting for at least 15 years - if not longer, at one point we became a tiny group - but due to a sudden baby boom we're now growing and have about 10 members. The age range is from an expectant mum to 3 year olds, so we can support each other on a wide number of concerns. We meet on a Monday morning -10.30am-12pm at each others houses. We would welcome any new members, if you are interested please ring **Gemma** on **256 3926**.

Roundhay and Gledhow (LS8) We're a well-established group of mums with tiny babies to pre-school kids (bumps also welcome!). Coffee mornings are held twice a week on Mondays and Wednesdays 10am-12pm. There are also regular socials, some are just for the mums while others are for the whole family. So if you live in the Roundhay area and fancy coming along for a cuppa and a chat or would like further info please contact **Monica** on **0870 421 4548** or at postnatal@nctleeds.org

Weetwood and Far Headingley We meet every Friday morning 10am-12.30pm for a cup of coffee and a chat with other mums while our children play. We welcome children from a few weeks old to pre-school age. Our current group covers people from Kirkstall, Meanwood, Adel, (Far) Headingley and Weetwood. You may like to join our babysitting circle as well. Additionally, we run social outings every now and then. For more info contact **Luisa** on **274 4140** (leave a message if necessary), or email luisahuaccho@yahoo.com

Interested in setting up an NCT postnatal group in your area?
Contact **postnatal@nctleeds.org** for our New Group Support Pack. We can also 'buddy' you with a current leader who will show you the ropes and help you to get a group up and running.

Leeds NCT Branch Committee - Specialist Workers

Breastfeeding Counsellors

Ruth Clark	01943 465 862
Bridget Hawkins	267 9508
Lynn Hewitt	266 9026
Ruth Ker	275 4981
Heather Pawley	266 2151
Helen Stone	01943 877 212
Val Winder	293 3176

Student Breastfeeding Counsellors

Claire Clarke Rachel Meskell Liz Trump

Breastfeeding Counsellor Tutors

Ruth Ker	275 4981
Helen Stone	01943 877 212

Breast Pump Hire

Ann Beal	294 8795
Julia Love	275 5774

Antenatal Classes

Bookings

booking@nctleeds.org

Andrea Vero 0700 580 4248

Antenatal Class Teachers

Jo Bailey	259 0160
Fatima Bhula	269 3971
Sam Conway	226 7452
Liz Fletcher	258 5649
Nikki Ford	01302 849464
Rose McCarthy	239 0383
Rachel Plachcinski	01924 467790

Student Antenatal Teachers

Rebecca Bowens

Home Birth Support

Stevie Welbourne
sjwangel@hotmail.com
274 7966

Twin Birth Support

Saskia Fisher
saskiafisher@yahoo.co.uk

Postnatal Coordinator Report 2007

It's hard to believe that nearly a year has passed since I took on the role of Postnatal Coordinator. It's been an enjoyable year and I hope that after reading my synopsis, you'll feel that I've achieved something, and not sat with idle hands and mind!

Since being in post I have established regular meetings with the postnatal group leaders; we meet once a quarter, and it's an informal afternoon where I update the group as to what I've been doing, group leaders feed back on their respective groups, NCT committee news is discussed, and any other matters of interest that may be raised are talked about. This year, we've met in January, April, July and October.

When I commenced my post we had six postnatal groups (PNGs) in Leeds: Roundhay/Gledhow (Helen Whiteley), Oakwood (Nicola Macdonald), Far Headingley/Weetwood (Luisa Huaccho Huatuco), Pudsey (Gemma Storr), Cross Gates (Kathryn Holmes) and Chapel Allerton (Jane Cambell/Angela Malone). I was really keen for this to increase, and advertised in the Rattle and on the Yahoo! chat group for people who may have an interest in setting up a new group. Interest was expressed, and sadly waned, for PNGs in Horsforth and Rothwell. On the plus side, four new groups have formed in Alwoodley, Morley, Adel and Burley. I am extremely grateful to Helen Whiteley, Charlotte Harrison, Karen Timms, Rachel Schorah and Joanne Simpson for setting these groups up, and I'm sure they have become a regular in the diaries of their group members.

In an attempt to raise awareness of the PNGs, I made contact with the Lead Pharmacist for Obstetrics & Gynaecology at the Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust, and also the Community Midwifery Team Leader (based at Kirkstall Health Centre). I sent a letter out to all GP Registrars in Leeds informing them of PNGs and the support they offer, and also a letter to the eight Health Centres (HCs) who host baby clinics: Kirkstall HC, Parkside Community HC, Middleton HC, Leaffield Clinic, Woodhouse HC, Hunslet HC, Meanwood HC, and Bramley Clinic.

I've written "information sheets" which are posted on the website's (www.nctleeds.org) Postnatal page. Topics covered thus far are baby manuals, weaning, eczema and postnatal depression. They are a general gathering together of information with evidence-based references from which readers can obtain further information. I've designed posters advertising our PNGs which the group leaders use. I distribute family

magazines (Raring 2 Go!, Small Talk) and NCT publicity material to the group leaders which they then circulate amongst their groups. Helen Whiteley, Nicola Macdonald and I hosted an NCTea Party on behalf of the Branch in September which you may have attended and/or read about in the Winter Raffle.

The NCT had a stall at a "pregnancy party" in May which came about after a Health Visitor from Meanwood offered me the invitation. A Health Visitor from Beeston is hoping to set up a six week course for new mums in January 2008 and has asked me for our input. A lady in Morley has set up a breastfeeding support group, and is liaising with myself and Charlotte (Morley PNG leader).

I receive enquiries from new parents about postnatal groups via email and telephone. I have endeavored to answer these enquiries in a thorough and efficient manner, and hope that everyone who submitted an enquiry feels they received a satisfactory answer.

So, all that remains is for me to say a big thank you to all the postnatal group leaders. You all give up valuable time to organize and run the groups, and you do a terrific job!

Monica Kapoor

Nearly New Sale Coordinator Report 2007

- Nearly New Sale November 07 raised approximately £1500 (not yet finalised as far as I know) compared to £1420 in March 07 .
- The amount raised through flyers was again £200 (as March) so excellent work there by Karen (Nov) and Mo (March).
- Numbers through the door was 300 in November. This figure was not taken in March or previously so will be the baseline for coming sales.
- The number of sellers was 60 in November compared to 55 in March.
- The number of helpers was 39 in November compared to 36 in March.
- A review of the venue will now take place as we are about to outgrow it and the size will put a cap on our growth.

Liz Kelley



Don't forget the Nearly New Sale!

Saturday 15th March 10.00 to 11.00

The Sikh Centre, Chapeltown Rd, LEEDS

Baby, kids' and maternity clothes, toys, books and baby equipment.

All in great condition for a fraction of the price.

Our Yahoo Group Needs You!

Did you know that the Leeds NCT Branch has an online discussion list on Yahoo? It's a great way to:

- Find out what the Leeds NCT branch is getting up to
- Find out about local events
- Ask a parenting question to other parents in Leeds ("Does anybody know where I can find a childminder in Farsley?" ... "Where can I take my bored 3 year old?" ... "Does anybody know a reliable plumber in Beeston?")

Says Liz: "I've seen people from outside the area post messages on it, e.g. 'I am a mum moving to Leeds, what's it like?'. I've used it to publicise things I'm doing, not just NCT things, e.g. shows, concerts. I figure if I'm interested in it there's a fighting chance someone else may be! It's also been used as a call to arms/warning system - e.g. woman hassled in town for breastfeeding! Or 'have you seen the SMA ad on telly? - if you think its dodgy write to the ASA...' etc. So many uses!"

And best of all, once you've registered you can choose to have a daily digest sent to your email inbox so you can read at your own leisure what topics have been discussed that day.

Setting yourself up on the group is easy:

1. Log on to **www.yahoo.com**
2. Click on **Groups** on the left hand side is a menu
3. A page comes up saying **Find a Yahoo! Group**. Enter **NCT Leeds** in the search box and then click on the **nctleeds** entry. You will come up with the front page of the group, showing recently posted messages.
4. There is an icon on the right saying **Join this Group!** If you click on this you will be guided through signing up to Yahoo, including choosing your own username and password. To post messages you will use these to log on to Yahoo. In the meantime you will see emails popping into your inbox from the group. Be careful when you respond to these as they will automatically reply to the entire group!

The more people who use the group, the better it will be. So what are you waiting for - join it today and get posting!

Baby Massage

Looking for a helping hand to a good night's sleep?

As a new parent there is an endless list of tasks you need to do 'to' and 'for' your baby - feeding, nappy changing, dressing, winding, carrying and comforting to name a few. Baby Massage however is something wonderful to do 'with' your baby.

Not as some may think a luxury pampering at the local spa for your little one, (or even a treatment provided by a baby massage practitioner), but an easy and fun way for you and your baby to relax at home together. Baby massage has a number of practical benefits not the least significant of which is helping to promote your babies health and better sleep.

Having experienced all the benefits of regularly massaging my first baby (which also helped in the relief of his colic), I trained to become a Certified Infant Massage Instructor with the IAIM (The International Association of Infant Massage).

Practising what I preach, baby massage is now also a valued 'special time' I put aside for my newest addition. The 20-30 minutes it takes us to do the combination of simple strokes covering his body reaffirms our bonding and helps me towards a greater understanding of his body's signals which is constantly improving our communication.

Baby massage is baby led - parents ask babies permission to massage them, and with little cues they will let you know when they are enjoying it and when they are not! (Your instructor will guide you through these). As with adults not every mood is right for a massage and not every part of the body may be enjoyed. Classes structured by the IAIM, are for all babies aged from birth to one year of age (pre-crawling will make it slightly easier).

Instructor led baby massage classes will provide you with all the practical skills, and the social aspect is an added benefit. Many parents find through classes they gain confidence in their own parenting and valuable insights from the other parents that attend. If however classes are not for you, private tutoring for individuals and groups is available as are a range of excellent books and DVDs. The website, www.iaim.org.uk provides a wealth of further details.

Massage Benefits

- Infant Parent attachment/bonding
- Facilitates body awareness
- Relaxation for babies and parents
- Boosts immune system
- Makes baby feel loved and respected
- Helps digestion
- Promotes better sleep
- Balances respiration
- Relief for teething pains and colic
- Improves blood circulation
- Sensory stimulation
- Improves skin condition

Victoria Iball BA (Hons) CIMI
Vivere Baby Massage www.message-vivere.co.uk
info@message-vivere.co.uk
0113 258 3847

Predicting the Sex of Your Unborn Baby

Are you pregnant, didn't find out the sex of your baby at the scan, but are now wondering whether to buy pink or blue babygros? Well, these old-wives tales may be useful (accuracy not guaranteed!):

It's a boy if:

- You didn't experience morning sickness in early pregnancy
- Your baby's heart rate is less than 140 beats per minute
- You are carrying the extra weight out in front
- Your belly looks like a basketball
- Your areola have darkened considerably
- You are carrying low
- You are craving salty or sour foods and protein meats and cheese
- Your feet are colder than they were before pregnancy
- The hair on your legs has grown faster during pregnancy
- Your hands are very dry
- Your pillow faces north when you sleep
- Dad-to-be is gaining weight too
- Pregnancy has you looking better than ever
- Your urine is a bright yellow in colour
- Your nose is spreading
- If you hang your wedding ring over your belly, it moves in circles
- You are having headaches
- You add your age at the time of conception and the number for the month you conceived the number is even

It's a girl if:

- You had morning sickness early in pregnancy
- Your baby's heart rate is at least 140 beats per minute
- You are carrying the weight in your hips and rear
- Your left breast is larger than your right breast
- Your hair gets red highlights
- You are carrying high
- Your belly looks like a watermelon
- You crave sweets, fruit and orange juice
- You don't look quite as good as normal during pregnancy
- You are moodier than usual during pregnancy
- Your face breaks out into spots more than usual
- You refuse to eat the heel of a loaf of bread
- Your breasts have really blossomed!
- Your pillow faces south when you sleep
- Your urine is a dull yellow in colour
- If you hang your wedding ring over your belly, it moves from side to side
- If you add your age at the time of conception and the number for the month you conceived the number is odd

100 Reasons Why Being a Parent is Fun (part 3)

39. Buying that train set/dolls' house/Scalextric/dressing-up set that you always wanted as a kid, even though your own baby is only one week old.
40. Throwing caution to the wind at the NCT Nearly New sale and buying everything in sight and still only spending £20.
41. Going to an NCT coffee morning and finding lots of other bright, intelligent women who want to spend two hours talking about how the birth was for them, or nappy rash, or sex, or sleep.
42. Enjoying a long lie-in, even though that now means getting back to sleep after an early feed and sleeping until 8 o'clock.
43. Going to the latest Disney film and not being the only unaccompanied adult in the queue.
44. Cruising all the 'baby' sites on the Internet.
45. Rediscovering the delights of the dawn chorus!
46. Being able to grin hugely at other pram-pushing parents in the park without danger of getting yourself locked up.
47. Discovering your partner at the NCT reunion, earnestly discussing brands of nappies with other dads.
48. Talking about the birth with your antenatal class for hours on end, because no one gets bored.
49. Being able to snooze on the sofa on a Saturday morning while your toddler is engrossed in cartoons on TV.
50. Becoming equally engrossed yourself in the re-runs of Scooby Doo and Tom and Jerry.
51. Teaching your toddler the words to the theme tune of Scooby Doo!
52. Rediscovering the world at toddler eye-level even if it gives you a crick in the back.
53. Developing a new family language as your toddler talks about 'scissoring' the lawn or asks for a drink of 'duce'.
54. Dictating a name over the phone, realising you have said the letter sounds rather than the names, and that the person on the other end has understood so must be a parent too!

Annual Report of the Maternity Services Liaison Committee

October 2006 to September 2007

The Maternity Services Liaison Committee (MSLC) meets four times a year, and it brings together representatives from the Trust, that is, Head of Midwifery, Matrons, Clinical Director, Consultants, Midwives and representatives from parent groups, that is NCT, Haamla, Women's Health Matters, SureStart, FAMs and other user representatives.

The Leeds MSLC is co-chaired by Alison Wright, Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist and Rose McCarthy, NCT representative.

During the last year the MSLC have raised, discussed and actioned various key issues, as brought to the agenda by user groups and health professionals. Key issues that have been addressed over the last year include:

1. Birthing Pools and Birthing Balls

MSLC have been committed to promoting active birth. Through the work of the group we can now provide women both sides of the city with birthing balls. Work is ongoing to provide access to water birth at St James', as is already available at the LGI.

2. Guidelines

Guidelines have been updated and shared with the members of MSLC such as management of breech presentation and induction of labour.

3. Interpreting Service

Cathy Peacock has attended the MSLC and we have made progress in terms of improving access to interpreters.

4. Asylum Seekers Billing

This has been an ongoing issue that MSLC representatives have addressed over the last year. The Head of Midwifery, Chairperson and others from the committee have been working to liaise with the Trust Finance Department as well as putting this issue on to the national agenda, to ensure that this high risk group of women have appropriate access to maternity care.

5. Statistics

The MSLC regularly reviews Trust statistics and where appropriate this is further investigated.

One example was the apparent disparity in episiotomy rates across the city. MSLC representatives investigated this and found that actually the problem lay in data collection, and that actually episiotomy rates, when correctly analysed, were very similar between the LGI and St James'. Further differences between the two Leeds hospitals, such as an apparent difference in induction rate are now being investigated.

6. User Issues

At every meeting an important part of the agenda is used to look at user issues arising. User issues are brought to us by various different groups such as NCT, FAMs and Women's Health Matters. Individual women's experiences are shared with the group and then taken to the relevant forum, such as Maternity Services Forum and/or consultants meetings where the issues can be addressed with obstetricians, anaesthetists and senior midwives, with the aim of improving the service.

7. National and Local Documents

Both national and local initiatives have been brought to the MSLC for consultation, such as Maternity Matters, National Service Framework and the Maternity Services Specification.

8. Breastfeeding

MSLC is regularly updated on the baby friendly initiative and the progress of this programme in Leeds.

9. Maternity Services Forum Input

The Maternity Services Forum (MSF) has an integral input into the MSLC and vice versa. The chairpersons of the MSLC also sit on the MSF so that feedback between these two groups can be maintained. Examples of issues taken from MSLC via the user group include issues around consent for epidural and general communication issues. Both of these are concerns brought by user groups to MSLC. The issues have been fed back through MSF to the relevant health professionals.

10. PCT Commissioning

PCT Commissioners attend the MSLC, which ensures that relevant information is shared both ways.

11. New Women's and Children's Hospital in Leeds

The MSLC has been regularly updated through the Chair People, Head of Midwifery and Ruth Mason (MLB representative) on the progress of the Making Leeds Better Initiative, and options for a new women's and children's hospital in Leeds. The MSLC has been, and will continue to be, fully involved in these plans.

Plans for the Coming Year

Following a review of the Department of Health document regarding Maternity Services Liaison Committee, the Head of Midwifery met with the co-chairs of the MSLC and decided on:

- a) a revised terms of reference
- b) improved links between the MSLC and senior trust management
- c) to formalise links between the different user groups and establish an email network for improved communication between them
- d) to look at consideration of voting for new chair people as the current chairs have been in post for several years
- e) to include in our meetings a short talk from significant user groups such as Women's Health Matters who will speak at our next meeting in October

Rose McCarthy

Toddler Groups

These are not NCT run groups but may be useful to you if you cannot attend our postnatal coffee mornings. Please get in touch to let us know about your local group at rattle@nctleeds.org

- ♦ **Busy Fingers, St James Church Hall, Horsforth**
Every Saturday 10.00-12.00. All ages welcome. Contact Tina Rychlik on 0113 278 1555 or email tinajrr@gmail.com
- ♦ **Chapel Allerton Methodist Church**
Thursdays 1.00-2.30. For more details call 0113 262 4828
- ♦ **Friday Friends, Prince Philip Centre, Scott Hall Avenue**
Fridays 1.00-2.30
- ♦ **Immaculate Heart Parents & Toddlers, Harrogate Road Immaculate Heart School)**
Wednesdays 1.30-3.00. For more details call 0113 395 0311
- ♦ **Lidgett Park Methodist Church Parent & Toddler Group, Lidgett Place** Thursdays 9.30 (term-time)
- ♦ **Little Jim's, St James Church, Horsforth**
Fridays (term-time) 10.00-11.30. Everyone welcome. Turn up on the day or contact Liz on 0113 258 5649
- ♦ **Munchkins, 13 Hilton Place, Harehills** Tuesdays 1.00-3.00
- ♦ **Oakwood Toddlers, Parochial Hall, Fitzroy Drive, Oakwood**
Wednesdays 10.00-11.30 (term-time). Everyone welcome. Turn up or contact Debbie on 0113 225 6306
- ♦ **Pals, Meanwood Community Centre, Stainbeck Avenue**
Fridays 9.45-11.15
- ♦ **St Andrew's Roundhay United Reformed Church, Shaftesbury Avenue**
Tuesdays and Fridays 10.00-11.30, Wednesdays 2.00-3.15 (all term-time). The Wednesday group offers activities for slightly older children
- ♦ **St Chad's Baby & Toddler Group, Otley Road, Headingley**
Tuesdays (term-time) 1.15-2.45. Everyone welcome; newborn to school ages. Call Rebecca Roberts for more details on 0113 275 9699 or email rdroberts73@hotmail.com
- ♦ **St Johns Parent & Toddler Group, Fir Tree Lane, Moortown**
Tuesdays 1.15-2.45
- ♦ **St Matthews Baby & Toddler Group Wood Lane (off Harrogate Road), Chapel Allerton** Mondays 9.30-11.15

Other Organisations and Support Groups

- ARC (Support around termination for foetal abnormality) 0207 6310285.
- ASBAH (Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus) 0113 255 6767.
- Birth Crisis Network 01865 300 266.
- FSID - Cot Deaths Helpline 0870 787 0554.
- Healthbox 0800 665544. Linkline for database of information on local and national support groups, waiting times, and health services across the region.
- Lean On Me (helpline for carers of other people's children) 01483 577 232.
- Miscarriage Association 01924 200 799.
- SANDS Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Society 0207 436 5881.
- West Yorkshire ParentAbility contact Beverly Flynn 0113 225 1099.
- Yorkshire Multiples - parents of twins and triplets - 01924 239 0216.

Are you pregnant? Recently given birth?

The NCT has a '**Pregnancy and Birth Line**'. Its aim is to provide a counselling and information service to deal with pregnancy, birth and early parenthood issues.

0870 444 8709 Monday - Friday 10am – 8pm