

BfN News

Mums Supporting Mums

BREASTFEED HAPPILY HERE

Making waves in Ayrshire

BECOMING BREASTFEEDING FRIENDLY

What is it and how is BFN
involved?

DIVERSITY IN BFN

One volunteer's experience &
how can we do better?





HELLO!

JULY 2018
SUMMER
ISSUE 70

Editor's Note

Welcome to the Summer 2018 edition of BfN News.



Summer has definitely arrived at BfN and we are making the most of it while it lasts! Enjoy the lovely summery pictures you'll find across this issue, including our beautiful cover girls, Elayne Murphy and her baby Charlie-Rose - this picture was taken at an open air swimming pool in Ayrshire in May - not mid summer in the Mediterranean despite how amazing it appears - get booking your Ayrshire holidays for next year now! A huge thank you to them for sharing this pic, and you can find out more about the amazing things the Ayrshire Breastfeed Happily Here scheme is getting up to on page 9.

in this edition you'll also find details about BfN's involvement in the Becoming Breastfeeding Friendly scheme, an insightful article from BfN volunteer Vanisha Virgo reflecting on the challenges faced by black breastfeeding women, plus there is a round up of Mums' Milk Run, all the details about our upcoming conference as well as the usual updates from across the network.

Please do let us know what you think of this edition of BfN News and get in touch if you have suggestions for articles for future newsletters. We'd love to hear from you.

**Thank you for your ongoing support for the Breastfeeding Network.
See you at the conference!**





By Sally Kendall MBE,
Professor of Community
Nursing and Public Health,
Centre for Health Services
Studies, University of Kent

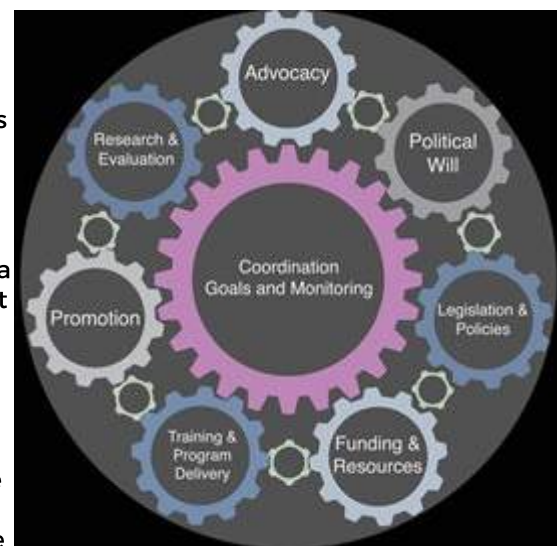
"Why do we need to **Become Breastfeeding Friendly** in England? It's a loaded question, implying that as a country we are unfriendly towards breastfeeding and that we need to become something that we are not already.

The facts are that, despite the known health benefits of breastfeeding, we have one of the lowest breastfeeding rates in the world, in the UK as a whole only 0.5% of babies are being breastfed up to 1 year compared with 23% in Germany, 56% in Brazil and 99% in Senegal (Lancet series, Victora et al. 2016). We still don't understand everything about why our rates are lower than other countries, but we do know that its time to stop blaming individual mothers and to find ways to enable, support and protect the breastfeeding environment in England so that babies can have the start in life that being breastfed and human milk provides.

The **Becoming Breastfeeding Friendly** (BBF) study is a collaboration between Yale School of Public Health, the University of Kent and Public Health England (as well as the public health departments of Wales and Scotland) which for the first time brings together academics, policy makers, non-governmental organisations, breastfeeding organisations representing mothers and health professionals to find solutions that will tackle the issues to create a more breastfeeding friendly community, like being able to breastfeed or express milk without worry in the workplace, providing better training for all health professionals to support mothers, ensuring we have sound data to measure effectiveness, and funding to provide community resources that support mothers and babies to enjoy the nutrition and close relationship that breastfeeding brings. (<https://publichealth.yale.edu/bfci>)

The aim of BBF is to work together at country level to assess against a set of international benchmarks where England (Wales, and Scotland) currently 'sit' in relation to breastfeeding policy, data and activity. The 54 benchmark statements are designed around a set of interlocking gears, the idea behind the model (pictured on the right) is that as a smooth running whole system each of the eight gears will drive each other and turn the co-ordination, goals and monitoring gear at the hub.

The collaborating team are currently collecting the data, the evidence, knowledge and expertise that already exists to identify where the gaps are in the system, what the key issues are that prevent the gears from turning and how government policy, public health and health practitioners, non-government organisations and parents can work strategically to implement actions that will promote a breastfeeding friendly environment for all mothers and babies. Key recommendations for government will be reported in the early part of 2019."



This article initially appeared as a blog on the PHE site during Breastfeeding Celebration Week:

<https://vivbennett.blog.gov.uk/2018/06/29/becoming-breastfeeding-friendly-by-sally-kendall-university-of-kent>

How is BfN involved? Our CEO Shereen Fisher explains:

Underpinning the evidence-based programme is a committee of experts in the field of infant feeding who through their discussions, review the evidence, contribute to the discussions on scoring and develop the recommendations for the study. BfN is a committee member and project participant on the Great Britain Committee, alongside other organisations like UNICEF and First Steps Nutrition. BfN also represents on country committee meetings in England and Scotland.

To date our contribution has involved support for collecting and gathering data, identifying advocates in the field and contributing to debates at several meetings alongside other organisations and civil servant officials. In between main committee meetings there are a series of specific gear working group meetings. The process is both thorough and rigorous and we are working hard to achieve a robust set of recommendations for action as part of the final report, due Spring 2019.'

Points of Light Award for Wendy!

We were so delighted in May to learn that Dr Wendy Jones, BfN's resident pharmacist had been awarded a Points of Light Award by the Prime Minister.

The Points of Light award recognises outstanding individual

volunteers - people who are making a change in their community. Wendy is pictured here receiving her award in Westminster from George Hollingbury, her local MP. It is fantastic to have this national recognition for the many years of hard work Wendy (and her team of volunteers) have put in to supporting families and HCPs with medication worries and questions. Her impact on breastfeeding families cannot be underestimated.

Read more about Wendy's reaction to receiving the award here: www.pointsoflight.gov.uk/drugs-breastmilk-helpline



BfN goes back to school



Pictured - Julie Wiegand and Melanie Woodward.

Julie writes: "BfN and NBH were invited to St Aiden's High School Health Fayre in Wishaw, North Lanarkshire, in June. We accompanied other organisations such as Police Scotland, North Lanarkshire Leisure and NHS Lanarkshire with information stalls where students were able to approach us for information about what breastfeeding means as a public health issue and the support and information available to families who choose to do so."

A tribe called QUES?

You may have heard about a mysterious BfN group called QUES - it stands for Quality Assurance Standards and Training committee and it's a group that meets on a regular basis to try and work on improving how BfN works.

The objectives of QUES are:

- Development of new courses as needed
- Overseeing Piloting and Evaluation of new courses
- Income generation through sales of courses
- CPD for volunteers
- Code of conduct and operating documents
- Annual returns and registrations
- Lessons learned from complaints and grievances.
- Supervision and Tutoring/Training
- Evidence based information
- Evaluation and Monitoring

There are 4 smaller sub groups which make up QUES:

- Peer Supporter
- Information
- Tutor Supervisor (led by Sukie Woodhouse)
- Training (led by Phyll Buchanan)

The group is made up of BfN Directors, plus **Sarah Edwards** (Training Development Manager) and **Anthea Tenant-Eyles** (Programme Manager - South)

If you'd like more info on what QUES does, contact phyll.buchanan@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk or sukie.woodhouse@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk

Project Leads Meeting



The Projects Leads meeting takes place in Spring and Autumn of each year. It is a chance for all the coordinators leading our commissioned services across the UK to meet alongside Programme Managers and a member of the BfN Central staff team. It is invaluable time for us to share best practice, learn from the different ways we work in each areas and make improvements within the services.

Pictured above are all the lovely project leaders at their most recent meeting in sunny Birmingham in June.



Join us for the BfN Annual Conference!

Saturday 6th October The Priory Rooms, Birmingham

The best opportunity of the year to meet with fellow BfN members, network, learn, share, celebrate **AND** have a go on a tomboobla!

It also counts as a full study day towards your supervision requirements...

What more could you ask for?!

Just £10 for current BfN volunteers!

£35 HCP/Doula/Lactation Consultant
£30 Volunteer Peer Supporters

Speakers include:

- Emma Pickett - Responsive Feeding
- Dr Clare Relton - Valuing Breastfeeding in the UK
- Heather Trickey - Lessons from the Evidence for Peer Support
- Mark Williams - Fathers Mental Health Issues
- Smita Hanciles - The Power of Peer Support
- Dr Aimee Grant - Breastfeeding & Daily Life
- Dr Wendy Jones & Beth Chapman - Breastfeeding and Mental Health
- Sally Etheridge - Breastfeeding Struggles

Babes in arms welcome

Book your place now!
www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/conference

Fancy making a weekend of it?

Join us on the Friday evening for pizza, drinks & chat at The Lost & Found Bar
£15 - book online



Supporting as a black woman and why it's important

Vanisha Virgo is a trained BfN Helper, and part of the amazing team in Haringey, North London, where she has been volunteering and supporting families for over a year. Here she tells us about her experience as a black breastfeeding mother and peer supporter.



"I am proud to be a black woman breastfeeding a 2.5 yr old and will continue to do so for as long as my child needs. That being said my breastfeeding story within the black Afro Caribbean community is not a common occurrence.

Recently my picture with a quote that black women do breastfeed was posted on the BFN Facebook page for National Breastfeeding Celebration week 2018. My statement **"black women do breastfeed"** is based on my cultural and personal knowledge. I wanted to highlight the fact that the numbers of black women breastfeeding is below the general average in the UK. The percentage of these women still breastfeeding babies at 12 months... well let's just say the numbers are just not there. There are no specific documented statistics for women of colour as yet.

My experience and research over the years are the reason I write what I do to show other black women that it's normal and natural, that black women do breastfeed, because all they see around them are white women, feeding in public, on the tv, on posters at the doctors or health clinics and online.

Culturally African women are more likely to breastfeed than women from the Caribbean. Support for breastfeeding is extremely low in the Caribbean - this is because of the availability and low cost of formula, advertisement and social awareness, so when the women come over to the UK, this way of thinking is continued and handed down within families. Most of these women are not aware of the health implications and even those who struggle financially think formula is better for baby because of the extra vitamins added to formula etc.

One of the main reasons for the low number is the sexualisation of black women and the inability to separate the breast for feeding and the breast as a sexual tool. Young black women don't want saggy breasts or 'a baby dangling off their tits' and they want their body back as soon as possible so they generally go down the formula route. The black female body becomes something for sexual appraisal very early on in life, girls, some as young as 2/3 yrs old, are encouraged to emulate the actions seen on tv, music videos, twerking and shaking their booty for praise, with this historical behaviour and negative influences from an early period of life you can understand the complexities of why some black women do not breastfeed at all. This embodies the enormity of the task black women face when it comes to the choice of breastfeeding, especially in public. As peer helpers/ supporters we need to be aware of the historical and cultural aspect of why a woman may be feeling uncomfortable asking for any breastfeeding advice.

When supporting a woman of colour, we as supporters need to be aware that the information out there and the literature that tells us how to identify signs and symptoms of mastitis and other breast related issues are for Caucasian women, people of colour are not exactly likely to have a red mark, our nipples look different from those portrayed in the pictures in books and on the web, when looking up signs and symptoms of mastitis or breast related issues literature, all state I should look for a red mark or it mentions pink nipples. I have never had 'pink' nipples.

Here are some things to think on, next time a woman of colour comes to you for help:

- How as a supporter can we tell a mother of colour what signs and symptoms to look out for?
- Do you know what signs and symptoms to look for yourself and if you are unsure who would you go to for advice?
- What resources can we refer her to that she can identify with?

We as a breastfeeding organisation are doing them a disservice by not providing the mothers with the relevant information for them. When I started my breastfeeding journey as a black woman I didn't have the answers to and the pictures are out there, we just need to look."

FURTHER READING & RESOURCES

It can be difficult to find UK based images and resources representing all women, but as Vanisha says, they are out there. The ABM have some wonderful new images (like this one, right) encompassing a wide range of diverse women and families on their website www.abm.me.uk.



Here are a few more links that you might find useful:

www.121doula.co.uk/breastfeeding/black-mothers-and-breastfeeding

www.cibii.co.uk/2017/08/29/black-breastfeeding-week

<https://blackwomendobreastfeed.org/>

www.facebook.com/OpDiversity

www.121doula.co.uk/breastfeeding/ruth-talks-on-black-breastfeeding-week-2

COULD YOU HELP US DO BETTER?

The BfN Board have made a commitment to do more to ensure all families feel comfortable accessing our support, volunteering and working with us.

As part of this, we are recruiting volunteers for an advisory group to help us ensure we are being as inclusive as possible in the resources we provide, the images we use and the information we share. The time commitment for this would be minimal, and work would be done virtually by email and phone.

If you're interested in joining this group, please email Anthea.Tenant-Eyles@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk for more details.



New BfN Project opens in Derbyshire!

In May, the Breastfeeding Network welcomed our newest project on board - Derbyshire!

Derbyshire has an existing network of multiple support groups and over eighty volunteers, who are now coordinated by **Francesca Elver-Fiddimore**, who is very excited to be a part of this. Francesca has been peer supporting with the NHS and LLL for two years, and is the current chair of Cradles, a long-established breastfeeding support group in Ilkeston.

Over the next few months, Derbyshire will be growing its volunteer base, particularly expanding into areas where there is currently little peer support, and transferring its existing volunteers into the BfN.



Pictured L-R: Francesca, new peer supporters Sophie, Katie and Courtney, Teddy, and very supportive local councillor Phillipa Tatham



What BfN means to me...

By Louise Everett, BfN Helper & Project Administrator, BfN Sandwell

"I first found out about the BfN when I was experiencing my own struggles with breastfeeding my little boy, thanks to the support I received in those first few days, weeks and months we are still breastfeeding now at nearly 3. Since then the BfN has been such an important part of my life, giving me support, new friends, a support network and confidence to be the mum I wanted to be

My own experiences have led me to train as a volunteer helper, completing the course has enabled me to give back and support mums who are struggling in their own journey or who need help to find their own inner confidence.

I've also recently been employed by the BfN as my local projects Administrator, which I love, through that I have found a completely new support system, friends and colleagues and hopefully a new career path. I hope my journey with the BfN never ends!"



#IAmAPeerSupporter



During the **UK National Breastfeeding Weeks** (18-24th June in Scotland and Wales and 25th June - 1st July in England) we asked our volunteers to help with a social media campaign showing what a BfN Peer Supporter is and why they volunteer. We also hoped the images would highlight the differences in breastfeeding support in different areas. As you know in some (lucky!) areas a family might receive excellent 121 ongoing peer support, but just down the road a family might receive nothing at all.

We were delighted that so many volunteers got involved (there were even more than those pictured here) and with the responses received on social media. We had a range of really positive pictures celebrating how great support was in each areas as well as other more hard hitting ones highlighting funding cuts and a lack of support for local families.

We used some of the images as a call to action - encouraging people who felt shocked or concerned about the postcode lottery in breastfeeding support to contact their MP and invite them to the next APPG (which handily was taking place the following week).

Thanks to everyone who got involved in this campaign which reached more than 40,000 people across Facebook and Twitter.

Catherine West MP for Hornsey and Wood Green (pictured), visited one of our Haringey drop in groups during National Breastfeeding Week to find out more about the services provided to breastfeeding families in the area.



Mums' Milk Run Round up

During a particularly hot May this year we challenged BfN supporters (that's supporters with a small s, not Supporters!) to complete 20km over the month to help us raise funds as part of our annual Mums' Milk Run Campaign.

BfN-ers got involved throughout the month and added to their totals (or exceeded them!) by completing sponsored toddlers, fun runs, park runs, super cycles, Race for Life events and even the Liverpool marathon!

Loisa Hayward provided inspiration for the runners by sharing her story on the BfN blog about why she chose to complete the challenge - you can read it here: www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/bfn-helped-me-through-some-tough-times



In Renfrewshire, the local BfN group managed to herd a group of toddlers round the local woods and even secured some press coverage (left) as a result!

A massive thank you to everyone to who got involved this time! We hope you like your wooden medal!



Big Tea Break

Even if you didn't get your trainers on in time to take part in the Mums' Milk Run in May, it's not too late to still get involved this year! In October we have our **Big Tea Break** campaign, and again we'll be asking you to run/walk/swim/toddle 20km over the month - but this time there's the added incentive of cake at the end of it all! Or if you're not up for any physical activity, why not organise a bake off with friends or colleagues, or hold a Big Tea Break themed supervision? There's loads of ideas, recipes and more on our Big Tea Break pages on the BfN website www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk/fundraising and if you're coming to the conference, you might even get some more tips and inspiration there as well.



Breastfeed Happily Here

Breastfeed Happily Here is an NHS Ayrshire & Arran initiative promoted by the BfN that supports Ayrshire businesses and organisations to welcome breastfeeding families while at their premises. It also raises awareness of the law in Scotland that protects breastfeeding in public. It's a great example of the partnership between BfN, NHS and local councils to support & promote breastfeeding in our community. Julie Peterkin, Peer Supporter at BfN Ayrshire has been instrumental in the amazing things they have achieved locally.

Our cover image and others on this page show families celebrating the signing up of New Cumnock Swimming Pool and Town Hall recently. The weather couldn't have been better for the celebration and everyone made the most of the outdoor pool to cool off in the summer heat. Also pictured is Councillor Jim Todd, Provost of East Ayrshire, who is a huge supporter of the scheme and couldn't miss the opportunity to join in on the fun!



But swimming pools and town halls are not the only ones to get involved - they have more than 200 cafes, restaurants, health care providers, schools and many local businesses including shoe shops and even a travel agency!



Most exciting though is through the scheme BfN have developed a long standing relationship with **Ayr United Football club**. Ayr United has had links with BfN since 2010 when they presented our first trackside board advertising our local groups.

In 2016 it was the first club in the UK to support a breastfeeding friendly scheme and **Alison Thewliss MP** commended them in Parliament for leading the way and used their example to encourage other clubs to follow. She was a guest of the club last year and had promotional pictures taken alongside the 'Breastfeed Happily Here' trackside board that was gifted by Ayr United.

In the latest development with the club, and in what we think is a world first for a breastfeeding charity, BfN have been given the chance to appear as a sponsor on their shirts - the opportunity to do this was donated by a local business owner and two charities were chosen - Alzheimer's Scotland and BfN. The BfN logo is displayed on the 'away kit, and it had it's first outing on the 24th July with just the goalie wearing it, the first full team outing will be 11th August!



Follow @BFHappilyhere on Twitter or on Facebook (www.facebook.com/bfhappilyhere) for updates and to find out who they get signed up next!





NBH Update

We had a fantastic study day in Sandwell in June, with over 80 volunteers and healthcare professionals in attendance - a wonderful opportunity to promote the helpline to HCPs and for volunteers to network and learn from each other. A huge thank you to Anna Cooney and the Sandwell project for ensuring the day was a big success.

We attended the ABM conference in June, their guest speaker was **Kimberly Seals-Allers** (right) who inspired everyone with her passion about her innovative work encouraging breastfeeding particularly with disadvantaged families in the US.



Our programme of webinars is going from strength to strength, with recent presentations from Dr Helen Ball from the Infant Sleep Information Service and Zaineb Yate on Breastfeeding Aversion. Coming up we have sessions on baby led weaning, tongue tie and unnecessary interventions.

In great news, NBH have had a poster presentation accepted for the BFI conference so we'll update on that in the next edition.

We carried out a volunteer survey in the early part of the summer, getting feedback from volunteers about what they like most and least about volunteering on the helpline. We're working through the responses and will provide a summary soon. Thanks to everyone who completed the survey.

We're looking forward to giving out lots of certificates and badges at the BfN conference in October, so if you're nearing one of our targets, try and get some calls in before then! The summer holidays is always one of our busiest times on the helpline, with many volunteers away and fewer options for face to face support, we often struggle to answer all calls first time. Some volunteers have decided to take on the **Big Summer Challenge - 'be there every day if you're not away'** - trying to log on at least once a day during the summer holidays. We have various incentives on offer to encourage and reward volunteers, but as we all know the biggest reward of all is that feeling when you know you've made a difference to another parent.

Thank you to every volunteer who answers calls on the helpline.



Volunteer Experience Strategy

A small team made up of staff members, a director, tutors and volunteers are currently working together to develop a new volunteering strategy for BfN, with the aim of improving the volunteering experience for all - the group aims to streamline the processes throughout the volunteer journey - from initial enquiry, through training and annual returns. There is a lot of work to be done and things won't change overnight but there is a lot of enthusiasm and drive to make positive changes. If you have suggestions or ideas that might help the team, please email sarah.turner@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk Watch this space for updates on developments as they happen.

Goodbye to Kristie!

NBH volunteers in the North of England have been very lucky to have had **Kristie Legg** as their NBH Link Worker for the last 9 years. Kristie has recently secured a new full time role outside of BfN which means she is stepping down from her Link Worker-ing. Her positivity and gentle encouragement will be very much missed by the NBH team. We are delighted that she is planning to stay on as an NBH volunteer however - phew! Wishing you all the best in your new role Kristie!

Do you work with an amazing volunteer you think deserves a bit of extra recognition?

Email

felicity.lambert@breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk with details and we'll include them in the next issue of BfN News!

CONGRATULATIONS TO...

---- HELPERS ----

Anna Southern
Sibel Turkman

Ruth Grey

Trina Grey

Julia Cooper

Laura Putt

Natalie Cooper

Diane De Jesus

Veerma Kaur

Clementine Lovell

Mayani Muthuveloe

Cleo Bowen

Esmeralda Andrade Fernandez

Agata Towarek

and their tutor

Joy Jones

Tessa Newmark Hudson

Alyson Spicer

Karolina Tattersall

Deborah Watt

and their tutor

Grace Edghill

Laurie O'Shea

Aneeta Patel

Tori Poole

Alexia Quédeville Aparicio

Chloe Way

Nazaret Canete Gil

Amina Mshauri

Lauren Wiltshire

and their tutor

Sarah Twite

Lucy Russell

Claire Homer

Niah Hardcastle

and their tutor

Eleanor Johnson

Kirsten Taylor

Jacklyn England-Smith

Sehar Mehmood

Lori Rostron

Sarah Hobson

Amy Thwaites

Emily Ward

Ruth Rosenthal

Minara Shah

Joy Timms

and their tutor

Kate Gray

Kat Carnevale

Mirika Anderson

Amy Ashworth

Susie Holt

Alex Mickleburgh

Ruth Sabrosa

and their tutor

Jane Taylor

Cathy Knapp

Jo Robinson

and their tutors

Eleanor Johnson &

Anne Marie Thomas

Anne Rushent

Amanda Bryce

and their tutor

Carolanne Lamont

Caroline Furey

and her tutor

Karen Paterson

Lynn Barr

Katie Golding

Fiona Grint

Sarah Purcell

Cara Sutton

Gemma Humphreys

Victoria Howe

Rebecca Sheehy

Shailey Woods

and their tutor

Jane Neesam

Lynsey Knowles

Lydia Murtagh

Jana Szalova

Tracey Arrowsmith

Maria Billington

Nic Davis

Lorna Fletcher

Sarah Starkey

Rachael Steele

Lorraine Wilson

Louise Everett

Dannii Wilkinson

Theresa Price

and her tutor

Naomi Waters

---- HELPLINE SUPPORTERS ----

Alison Lohman

Melody Renouf

Marta Gibek

Carla Agulhas

and their tutor Mandy Barlow

Sarah Bolland

Mairin Nicol

Marissa Waite

Yvonne Wilson

and their tutor Carolanne Lamont

Linda Velloso

Karen Schrider-Smith

and their tutor

Sukie Woodhouse

---- PROBATIONARY SUPPORTERS ----

Timea Bakaja-Dezsi

Ratna Shah

Zoe Dutton

and their tutor Joy Jones

Gina Mark

and her tutor Mandy Barlow

Maja Geeves

and her tutor Sukie Woodhouse

A huge thank you to everyone who makes BfN what it is - helpers, supporters, tutors, supervisors, staff members, friends and fundraisers - you all make a difference to families across the UK.