

Choices

caring support for pregnancy
miscarriage & post-abortion concerns

Choices Pregnancy Advice & Support Services opened in Buxton in 2007, as a charitable project initiated by Buxton Church in the Peak and other local churches. Our aim is to help women and their partners or families facing an unplanned or difficult pregnancy and those experiencing distress following an abortion, miscarriage or stillbirth. We provide a caring and non-judgmental counselling service staffed by trained volunteer advisors who operate within the codes of good practice and ethical frameworks of the BACP (British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy) and the ACC (Association of Christian Counselling).

The vision for Choices is to facilitate the setting up of new pregnancy centres and flexible outreach sessions across the Derbyshire area. From small beginnings back in 2006, we have invested in training new advisors from across North Derbyshire and Derby City, in order to meet the needs of a predominantly rural county and to work towards establishing centres in areas with the biggest populations, particularly Derby and Chesterfield. Despite the distances involved, we have already helped clients from Derby, Chesterfield, Matlock and Bakewell, in addition to Buxton and the High Peak.



Heather and Angela

What is the link with Careconfidential?

Choices is affiliated to Careconfidential, an umbrella organisation which provides a national telephone Helpline and an Online support service for pregnancy and post-abortion concerns, as well as training materials and conferences for a network of over 150 independent pregnancy advice centres across the UK. Careconfidential is part of CARE (Christian Action Research and Education). Careconfidential centres have to adhere to good practice criteria such as regular counselling supervision to receive referrals from the Helpline, which is run by experienced trained advisors from different centres across the UK.

For more information, take a look at their very helpful website at www.careconfidential.com

Heather and Angela ran the new Careconfidential pregnancy advisor course in Buxton from Oct. 2008 to March 2009. Congratulations to Aggie, Becky, Sophie, Angela and Marigold from Buxton; Marion, Harriet and Val from the Matlock area; Denise from Chesterfield and Julie, Liz, Liz and Maureen from Derby, who all put in many hours of training and homework. 11 trainees are currently undertaking the Careconfidential post-abortion advisor course which is running at the new Riverside Centre in Matlock from May to July.

Our original small team of 6 advisors (Heather, Angela, Amanda, Bel, Annie and Debbie) have faithfully kept the drop-in rota going every Thursday morning at The Source in Buxton, as well as providing appointments at other times and at outreach venues such as Lime Grove Medical Practice, Imperial Road Group Surgery and the Riverside Centre in Matlock. We are happy to provide talks about our work for health professionals, agencies, churches, etc. If you would like a safe place to talk to someone confidentially about a pregnancy crisis, miscarriage or abortion – we are here to help.

For further information, please contact:

Heather Woodward, Choices Manager

Email: info@choices-derbyshire.org.uk or telephone 01298 213866 (24 hr answerphone) or 07851 284575.

Practical help for parents on a tight budget

We are currently considering the possibility of starting a nearly new maternity and baby clothes/equipment shop in Buxton. We would like to increase our contacts with the local community and feel this support service may be much needed in response to the economic recession. We have identified suitable premises but would need a substantial increase in funding to cover the set up costs and increased overheads before proceeding. If anyone can offer help with this new project in any way, either practically, financially or in an advisory capacity, please contact Heather for further details or to request a standing order form. Thank you for your prayers and support.

Working towards a new pregnancy advice and post-abortion service for Derby

An update from Julie Dixon and the Derby pregnancy steering group

We had an encouraging response from our first Information Evening on 10th November 2008, which was attended by over 60 people from various churches across Derby, many of whom expressed interest in training to become a pregnancy advisor or supporting the work in other ways. We have started a supporter database and kept in touch mainly by email to reduce costs. We have also held smaller monthly meetings since January to pray and to uphold the work behind the scenes. Several of us attended the Careconfidential National Conference in November and an East Midlands Regional Day in April, both of which provided a useful opportunity to hear what is happening in other pregnancy centres.

We are delighted to be working with a great team from Choices Pregnancy Advice & Support Services who have been giving us some invaluable help with training, planning and working towards the goal of a new centre in Derby. Four of us have recently completed the Careconfidential pregnancy advisor training course run by Choices in Buxton. Three of us are continuing our training on the Careconfidential post-abortion advisor training course which is currently running in Matlock from May to July. We will then have the opportunity to get involved with the Choices regional team, offering client appointments in Matlock and possibly in Derby if outreach venues can be arranged, for example at GP surgeries, community centres, etc.

Whilst we are in the process of looking for a suitable base to establish a pregnancy centre in Derby and planning all the details, we feel this is a helpful way for newly trained advisors to keep up their skills and begin to help women facing difficult pregnancy choices or problems following a miscarriage, stillbirth or abortion. It will put us in a stronger position to develop a centre in Derby and possibly several outreach venues across the city, once we have a bigger team of advisors trained and ready to start. The training course was excellent and I would encourage you to consider applying for the next course starting this September in Derby, if you feel called to this type of work.

We have started a Derby steering group to establish appropriate governance and management for the project and intend to add in others as needed. The members are currently Dan Rubens from Derby City Church, Richard & Julie Dixon from Community Church Derby, Sarah Pyman from Jubilee Church and Heather Woodward from Choices.

We would really appreciate your prayers and support as we work towards a new Careconfidential centre in Derby and thank you for your interest in the project.

If you would like further information, please contact:

Julie Dixon – Tel: 01332 511525 or email: jmdixon@hotmail.co.uk

Dan Rubens – Tel: 01332 341189 or email: dan@derbycitychurch.co.uk



Julie Dixon

Supporter meetings

We plan to continue monthly meetings on a Monday evening. If you would like to support us in prayer, or just want to come along to find out more, please get in touch with Julie for dates and venues. Further details are available if you would like to support the project financially or in other ways.

New training course in Derby – apply now!

We are running the next pregnancy advisor training course in Derby, starting Wed. 30th Sept. 2009 at The Bridge House, Riverside Centre, Pride Park. This will involve 17 daytime sessions until Wed. 26th May. There will also be a residential stay on Fri. evening 27th – Sat. 28th November, focusing on adoption, with specialist input from an adoption social worker. If you would like to apply or find out more about the course, please contact Julie or Heather for an informal chat and a course information pack. The application deadline is 21st Aug.