**NEWS**

**Free Swimming**

There is a free swimming offer now available at both West View and Fulwood Leisure Centres for a range of groups.

For more details and to check eligibility, click [here.](https://www.better.org.uk/preston-1/community/funded-swimming).

For those who are not digital, registration and swim bookings can be made directly in person at the leisure centres by speaking to a member of staff.

**Proud Preston Awards**

We previously advised about the new Proud Preston Awards which have now been launched, and nominations are now open.

There are several categories which look tailor made for PCN member groups to be nominated and hopefully get some recognition for the fantastic work you all do.

For more details, please click [here.](https://www.blogpreston.co.uk/2025/12/from-caring-heroes-to-inspirational-young-people-the-proud-preston-awards-2026-are-open-for-entries/)

**Laptops for Sale**

The Inclusive North group have a selection of used IT equipment including laptops for sale at reasonable prices to groups in the VCFSE sector.

All the equipment has been checked and in working order but you must be able to collect from the group’s Blackburn only

If you are interested in any of the items please email [projects@inclusivenorth.org.uk](mailto:projects@inclusivenorth.org.uk) for more details.

**ICANN 2026 Webinars**

Our friends at ICANN Advocacy are putting on some online webinars in 2026. These are aimed at the VCFSE sector and will focus on educating the sector on the benefits system and the process as a whole. These sessions start in on January 20th and there is a 50% discount for voluntary sector employees/volunteers!

<https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/2026-pip-wca-child-dla-webinars-4798711>

**YOUTH NEWS**

**Youth Matters – Your National Youth Strategy**

Central government have announced their new National Youth Strategy -Youth Matters, which strongly aligns with our own Preston Youth Strategy.

Read the full strategy here - [Youth Matters: Your National Youth Strategy - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/youth-matters-your-national-youth-strategy/youth-matters-your-national-youth-strategy)

Accompanying the strategy is a report titled State of The Nation which sets out the reality of what it is like to grow up in England for young people in 2025 - [Youth Matters: State of the Nation - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/youth-matters-state-of-the-nation)

**Kings Trust - Get into Engineering & Business Services Programme**

**🌟** We’re now taking referrals 🌟Please see more information below.

Get Into programmes are a chance for young people to gain work experience in a sector they are interested in and gain invaluable employability skills.

In partnership with BAE Systems – Samlesbury  | February 2026

Taster Day: 22 Jan 2026

Programme: 9 Feb- 27 Feb 2026

✅ FREE 3-week programme for young people aged 18–30  
*(Not in full-time work, education, or training)*

What’s involved?  
🛠 Hands-on Work Experience with BAE Systems  
📄 Boost CV & Interview Skills  
💼 Explore Job Opportunities & Apprenticeships  
🚀 Build Confidence & Discover Careers in Engineering  
It’s designed to boost confidence, develop skills, and open doors to exciting careers.

💬 We’re especially encouraging young women to apply as we work to increase female representation in engineering, tech, and business roles.

If you know a young person who you think would be interested in this programme or if you require any further information, please call Becca Grimshaw 07484906567 or email [becca.grimshaw@kingstrust.org.uk](mailto:becca.grimshaw@kingstrust.org.uk).

**Child Centred Policing Project**

The Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) has commissioned a research project to explore children and young people’s views on child-centred policing. The project is being delivered by researchers from the University of Bedfordshire and the University of Lancashire and runs from September 2025 to February 2026

The survey is open to the 19th December and can be accessed via the [QR code](https://mcusercontent.com/8f80d5c0d69f3e179cf8a467a/images/4b6a7e40-3528-50a8-86e3-dfb6c616bab5.png). The survey is for young people aged 13-20.

**Youth Futures – Online NEET Drop in**

The Youth Futures Team is now offering a monthly online drop-in session for young people aged 16 to 18 who are not currently in education or employment. These sessions provide a relaxed, informal space for young people to access basic careers advice and information.

Key Details:

* When: Last Friday of every month, 9am–4pm (except December – held the Friday before Christmas)
* Who: Open to young people, parents, carers, and professionals supporting them
* What: Light-touch, no-pressure advice and signposting
* How to join: Via [QR code on the leaflet](https://mcusercontent.com/8f80d5c0d69f3e179cf8a467a/images/653d0f93-b3b7-3fde-2f8c-048c35df457a.png) or by contacting the Youth Futures Team directly, [Click Here](https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_OTExODViZDMtZDdlMC00NWU3LWIzOWYtZWMzY2YyNWZkN2Ew%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%229f683e26-d8b9-4609-9ec4-e1a36e4bb4d2%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%227d682b73-619b-4866-b83d-fc459dcfb801%22%7d) to join the meeting

**TRAINING**

**Amparo**

Our member group Amparo is a suicide postvention service offering practical and emotional support to anyone affected by suicide.

They have advised that they will shortly be holding a series of briefing sessions for those involved in this field, where they will share updates about ongoing initiatives, priorities, and ways to engage with our service

Briefing sessions can be booked by clicking [here.](https://amparo.org.uk/free-briefing-session/)

**Marketing Training for Charities**   
Media Trust is offering fully funded online marketing courses to help charities strengthen their communications and reach new supporters, thanks to support from The Marketing Trust.

Organisations can choose between a Marketing Essentials programme exploring how offline and digital channels work together, or an intensive Digital Marketing course designed to build practical skills and confidence.

Multiple online workshop dates are available in February and March and there are more details [here.](https://mediatrust.org/communications-support/training-courses/marketing-for-charities-training/)

**VACANCY/SURVEY**

**FUNDING**

**Weavers Foundation**

A new funding round is now open for charities working with ex-offenders, young offenders and young people at risk of entering the criminal justice system. Grants of up to £5,000 and larger awards with no upper limit are available from the Weavers Foundation for projects that build skills, expand opportunities and support groups often overlooked by mainstream funders.

The deadline for the latest round is March 12 and there are more details [here.](https://www.weavers.org.uk/charity/charitable-grants/)

**Macmillan CARE Grants**    
The new CARE (Culture Agency Respect Equity) Grants Programme run by Macmillan Cancer Support is now open for applications.

Grants are offered to VCFSE groups for innovative community-led projects that tackle inequalities in cancer care across the UK and there’s an online information session on January 8 from 3.30pm-4.30pm with deadline January 23.

For more details, click [here.](https://www.macmillan.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/macmillan-funding-grants/care-grants)

**EVENTS**

**‘Meet the Buyer’ Support**

Lancashire County Council’s procurement team have advised that they are expanding their ‘*Meet the Buyer’* support webinars/drop in events to include attendees from VCSFE backgrounds.

Links for the upcoming sessions below.

13th Jan Webinar: [Boost Business Lancashire | Lancashire's Business Growth Hub](https://www.boostbusinesslancashire.co.uk/events/lancashire-county-council-meet-the-buyer-january-2026-event)

20th Jan in person drop in: [Boost Business Lancashire | Lancashire's Business Growth Hub](https://www.boostbusinesslancashire.co.uk/events/lancashire-county-council-meet-the-buyer-drop-in-event)

**Health Screening Awareness**

There is a health screening awareness pop up taking place on January 13th. [Full details on the attached poster.](https://mcusercontent.com/8f80d5c0d69f3e179cf8a467a/images/af366421-1b62-b66a-dc85-f7a0bce9f22b.png)

**Weekly Round-up**

Below you will find a summary of events happening this week. Registration is not required unless stated. Please also keep an eye on the weekly events in Section Two of the Events section of our website [here.](https://prestoncn.org/events/)  
As always, please check with the event provider to make sure that the event is still running.

**Thursday, December 18**

**6.30pm to 8pm: Discover Fostering – Make a Difference**

Join Caritas Care for “Discover Fostering – Make a Difference”, an information session designed to help you explore the joys and challenges of fostering and learn how you can make a real impact on a child’s life.

To book online click [here](https://www.caritascare.org.uk/event/discover-fostering-make-a-difference/2025-12-18/) or ring 01772 732313 or email [recruitment@caritascare.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@caritascare.org.uk)

**Saturday, December 20**

10.30am: **Christmas Brunch.**

Full Scottish Breakfast

Location: Deafway, Brockholes Brow, Preston PR1 5BB.

Registration: £10pp. Email [events@deafway.org.uk](mailto:events@deafway.org.uk)

**Sunday, December 21**

**4pm-8pm**: **Preston Community Hub** **Christmas Party. For all the family.**

Location: Preston Community Hub, Samuel St, Preston PR1 4YE.

Registration: £5 per child, inc. meal and present from Santa.

Book by Dec 17. Message via WhatsApp 07753 139141.