

INSPIRE CHESHIRE

SPRING 2024

MAGAZINE



SPRING HAS SPRUNG

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome back to Inspire Cheshire - a bit sooner than expected!

Spring has sprung - although with the weather we've been having lately, that can feel hard to believe. We're back with our second spring issue, this time to celebrate our latest achievements and to promote our newest project - Active Girls!

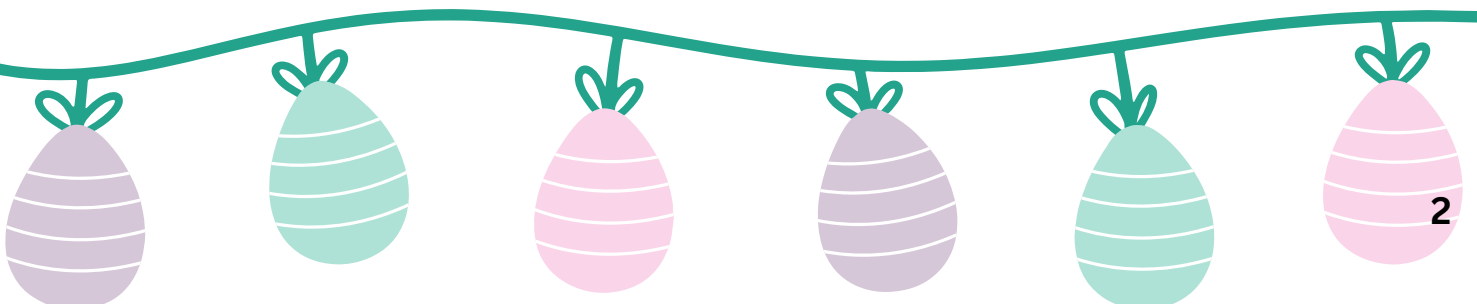
This project came to life not only to promote being active to look after your physical wellbeing, but also to overcome some of the barriers girls can face when wanting to get into sport and exercise. Have you ever wanted to try out a new activity, but felt put off by where it is or the thought of people looking? With our Active Girls sessions, we aim to provide a welcoming and safe space where anyone can come and do some exercise without judgement.

We recently had our first session in Crewe which was a great success - and we are looking forward to offering more sessions over the rest of spring and summer, too!

We're also pleased to report that the Youth Zone Research Project is starting to wrap up. Our researchers have now visited several Youth Zones all over the country, gathering ideas and feedback for how they want our Crewe Youth Zone to be shaped. Keep an eye out for their findings in the near future!

However you're spending this spring - be it trying something new or getting ready for your exams - we wish you well and hope you can take a few mindful moments to enjoy this edition of our magazine.

Take care!



#INSPIRE UPDATE

Recently we have been to visit the Carlisle Youth Zone to see the amazing work they do there and take away some ideas for our Crewe Youth Zone plans

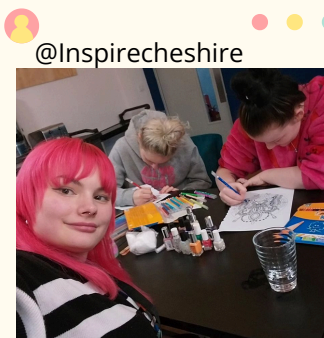


We hosted our first Fairy prom mother event of the year in April, and will be hosting two more in May!



COMING SOON

Keep your eyes peeled for more Youth Zone updates and our Fairy Prom Mother events. We will also have future #beactive events coming up later this year



We hosted our first girls only #BeActive sessions!

MOTHERWELL WOMEN'S DAY 2024

Saturday 9th March and Saturday 16th March saw two incredibly successful Women's Day events run by the amazing team at Motherwell Cheshire!

This year we have had two amazing Women's Days both at Crewe and Winsford. Thank you to all of our sponsors, performers and supporters who came to celebrate the days with us.

Both Crewe and Winsford were jam packed full of performances, stalls and demonstrations.

We hope you enjoy looking at the photos and we look forward to seeing you at next years events where we will be celebrating our 10th Women's Day.



TIFFANY JACKSON



After her two amazing performances at both our Crewe and Winsford Women's Day we contacted Tiffany to learn some more about how she became a Michael Jackson tribute act

Hello, my name is Tiffany Jackson and I am a young female Michael Jackson tribute act from Stoke-On-Trent.

When I was little, my dream was to be a performer and I would dream about being on stage entertaining people but as well as that I was a gymnast. I would train mostly everyday and go to competitions winning a lot of medals. People saw how talented I was at a very young age and they put me on to the WA squad.

At the same time of being a gymnast, I also did ballet and then a few years later I decided to join a dance school where I learnt how to do competitive disco dancing.

Where my love for MJ began

As a little kid, Michael Jackson's music was always playing around me as my mum (Jennifer) and my nanny (Gel Harford) were massive Michael Jackson fans. I remember that me and my siblings used to sing and dance to his music videos all of the time, especially the thriller video.

One day when I was at school, I was singing with my friends and randomly started singing one of Michael Jackson's songs called "Somebody's Watching Me". One of my friends told me that I sounded similar to Michael Jackson so when I went home I wanted to test myself to see if I sounded similar to him so I started learning the songs. The first song I sang was "The Girl Is Mine" by Paul McCartney and Michael Jackson and I was shocked at how similar I sounded to MJ.

Learning the Dances

After a few weeks of learning most of his songs I became a massive fan of him, but I never knew that you could become a tribute to him until one day, I was on one of my social media platforms and I came across a Michael Jackson tribute and I thought to myself

"hey that's actually really cool, if they can do that maybe I can". So I started watching Michael Jackson's live performances over and over again, watching his dance moves very carefully. I studied and practised daily for months. I soon picked up "The Drill" and "Remember the time" and then I learnt the more difficult dance choreography such as "Smooth criminal" and "Billie Jean" which includes some robotic and complex movements such as "The moonwalk".

Next Steps

After I learnt most of the dances, I went to show my mother what I could do, she then realised I had become really good. I explained to her what a Michael Jackson tribute was and how I would love to be one so she brought me my first MJ outfit which was the "Bad Outfit". A while later, she told me that a Michael Jackson tribute called "David Boakes" was performing in our area. I was really interested, so my mum brought us tickets. Finally the day came April 16th 2023, me, my nanny, and my mum went to see David Boakes. The performance was amazing, I had never seen anything like it, he pulled me up onto the stage and I couldn't believe it! When he pulled me up it really inspired me and I instantly knew that is what I want to do in life.

Learning the steps

After a few months had passed, I had learnt most of the dances, and I kept improving more and more. My mum brought me most of the main jackets such as the "Billie Jean Jacket" and the "Thriller Jacket" and then she brought me the wig. I also learnt how to do the Michael Jackson makeup. My original name is Tiffany Franchesca Skidmore but seeing as most of the tribute acts (not just MJ tributes) were changing their names to be more like the artist, I decided to give myself the name Tiffany Jackson. I started posting what I was starting to do in life on my social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, Tik Tok and soon enough I had a crazy amount of fans and followers and as people loved what I was doing it really encouraged me to keep going.

Attributes

Along the way I have already met some great MJ tribute acts such as Navi "the world's #1 Michael Jackson tribute" and "MJrawr". I have also danced alongside "Forever Jackson" "Rory Jackson" and many other MJ tributes. After doing this I needed to figure out a way to start getting more noticed by the public so my mum gave me the idea of busking. Ever since then we have been going to towns and performing outside of local shops, my sister (Amelia Skidmore) decided to join in on my act and become my backing dancer as she was a dancer and still did dancing just like when we were little.

In August, I got the news that my mum was going to be getting married and they wanted me to perform for their wedding on the 31st of October 2023 which would be my first proper show. The show was named 'THE RETURN OF JACKSON' and is currently named that to this day, i started uploading promo videos to tribute groups that look to find tribute acts to book for events.

I had a couple of people that were interested in my act. So far I have done a few performances including 2 charity/events For Motherwell Cheshire, Where Woman and Girls Matter, as well as a showcase performance at a pub called Ashwood Public House Longton. I am hoping that I will manage to get a lot more performances for the rest of this year and beyond. As well as me managing to get all of these performances I am very lucky to have the UK's top soundalike Michael Jackson tribute act Simply Jackson supporting me, he is giving me full guidance and equipment support with my career.

Hopes for my future

I am hoping in the future that I will be performing a lot more for weddings, festivals, restaurants etc . But I would like to perform mostly in pubs and events.

When I am old enough I really hope to start performing shows in theatres with a band and backing dancers. Maybe even one day I will be able to go on tour and perform for countries all around the world.

I look forward to the future and what opportunities await me.

Look out for my name.



#BeActive Easter taster day

We have had our first #BeActive session over the easter break, this was a lot of fun with a range of different sessions, Self Defence, Rockbox and Clubbercise. It was a great day where the participants feedback was 'a safe space for me to focus on myself and/or my wellbeing'.

the Inspire team took part in the day and thoroughly enjoyed learning new skills in self defence including how to escape a choke hold and how to effectively kick. the day then moved on to having a laugh trying our drumming skills during the kickbox session and finished by showing off our dance moves during the clubbercise class.

We would like to thank both Claire and Emma for being our instructors for the day. We very much look forward to holding more sessions later in the year.



THE SECOND LETTER

BY ADA NIELD CHEW



A fortnight back we printed a neatly written and admirably expressed letter from ' A Crewe Factory Girl ', and we requested the writer to supply us with additional details about her work.

Sir, – In your issue of 5 May you were good enough to publish a letter of mine on the above subject, and also to invite me to write you further on our wages, hours of work, and conditions of employment. Before responding to the same I have waited in the hope that an abler pen than mine might take up my subject and say a word on our behalf. I conclude, however, that sufficient interest is not taken in factory girls and their wrongs outside their own sphere to call for any comment. Speaking for our-selves, sir, I can assure you that this question of prices paid for our work and the general inadequacy of the same in proportion to the work done is one naturally of keen interest, and forms the subject of constant discussion and complaint – entirely amongst ourselves, please take note, sir! Notwithstanding this general private discontent, we unfortunately as a body regard the existing state of things as inevitable, and have not sufficient courage, and do not know how if we had, to make a resolute stand against the injustice done us. I feel my position, sir, in this matter of giving information, to be one of peculiar difficulty. On the one hand, to be quite fair to myself and to those I am endeavouring to represent, I ought, and would like to describe fully and explicitly the exact kind of work done by us, the exact amount of it, and the exact price paid for that amount, and to give my own experience without reserve. But on the other hand, were I to do this I should be making revelations which would lead to instant recognition by many people of the particular factory in which I am employed, and probably also, sir, to the identification of your correspondent, which I shall do well to avoid. And therefore, on that account I feel reluctance to reveal them, greatly as I value this opportunity which you, sir, have so kindly given me of emphasising – for it must already be known – the fact that we are suffering from a great evil which stands in urgent need of redressing.



However, I think that even within the limits to which I shall have to restrict myself I can make good the statements contained in my first letter. I must explain before proceeding further that I shall speak of the branch of factory work known as 'finishing' only. I have reason to believe that the other branches [of female employment] are not overpaid, but I shall speak only of what I know to be actual fact. With regard to wages. We are paid not by the hour or day, but a certain sum per garment. Wages, then, vary greatly. For instance, many different classes of work have to be done, and different prices are paid, not at all, however, in proportion to the amount of work to be done, for while one price may yield us as much as 3d an hour (occasionally), another will not yield us 1 1/2d an hour (quite frequently), working equally hard for each sum. Of course, all classes of work have to be done, and we have to accept with gratitude (or otherwise) whatever sum someone – our employer presumably – thinks it right to give us. We are doing excellently when earning 3d an hour. We not infrequently work for 1 1/2d an hour. An average of about 2d for the average 'hand' may be taken as fair. Occasionally we may get work which will yield us as much as 4 1/2 d an hour, but it is so very occasional that it may be passed by in silence – otherwise, of course, we should have no cause for complaint.

And now to take an average of a year's wage of the 'average ordinary hand', which was the class I mentioned in my first letter, and being that which is in a majority may be taken as fairly representative. The wages of such a 'hand', sir, will barely average – but by exercise of the imagination – 8 shillings a week. I ought to say, too, that there is a minority, which is also considerable, whose wages will not average above 5 shillings a week. I would impress upon you that this is making the very best of the case, and is over rather than understating.

What do you think of it, Mr. Editor, for a 'living' wage?

I wish some of those, whoever they may be who mete it out to us, would try to 'live' on it for a few weeks, as the factory girl has to do 52 weeks in a year. To pay board and lodging, to provide herself decent boots and clothes to stand all weathers, to pay an occasional doctor's bill, literature, and a holiday away from the scope of her daily drudging, for which even the factory girl has the audacity to long sometimes – but has quite as often to do without. Not to speak of provision for old age, when eyes have grown too dim to thread the everlasting needle, and to guide the worn fingers over the accustomed task. Yet this is a question which some of us, at least, ought to face, ignore it as we may, and are compelled to do. The census showing such a large preponderance of women over men in this country, it follows that the factory girl must inevitably contribute her quota to the ranks of old maidenism – be she never so willing to have it otherwise.

And now as to the number of hours worked to earn – or rather to get – this magnificent sum. I explained in my first letter that we are subject to fluctuations as to the amount of work supplied us. In other words that we have busy seasons and slack ones. It follows, then, that in busy seasons, to total up to the yearly average I have given, we make good wages – and, of course, work a proportionately long number of hours – and in slack seasons bad wages.



Now, sir, our working day – that is, in the factory – consists of from 9 to 10 hours. Take out of this time (often considerable and unavoidably so) to obtain the work, to obtain the ‘trimmings’ and materials to do it with, and then to get it ‘passed’ and booked in to us when done, and then calculate how much – say we are getting 2d an hour – we shall be able to earn in an ordinary working day in the factory. It will be plain that in order to average this wage we have in busy seasons to work longer than the actual time in the factory.

Home-work, then, is the only resource of the poor slave who has the misfortune to adopt ‘finishing’ as a means of earning a livelihood. I have myself, repeatedly, five nights a week, besides Saturday afternoons, for weeks at a time, regularly taken four hours, at least, work home with me, and have done it. This, too, after a close hard day’s work in the factory. In giving my own experience I give that of us all. We are obliged to do it, sir, to earn this living wage! It will be unnecessary to point out how fearfully exhausting and tedious it is to sit boring at the same thing for 14 or 15 hours at a stretch – meal times excepted of course. But we are not asking for pity, sir, we ask for justice. Surely it would not be more than just to pay us at such a rate, that we could realise a living wage – in the true sense of the words – in a reasonable time, say one present working day of from 9 to 10 hours – till the eight hour day becomes general, and reaches even factory girls. Our work is necessary (presumably) to our employers. Were we not employed others would have to be, and if of the opposite sex, I venture to say, sir, would have to be paid on a very different scale. Why, because we are weak women, without pluck and grit enough to stand up for our rights, should we be ground down to this miserable wage?

With regard to the conditions of our employment, those of which I can speak leave nothing to be desired. In the particular factory in which I am employed, we work in greatest freedom and comfort, and I should like to add, that as far as I personally am concerned, from those in immediate authority over me I have never received anything but consideration and courtesy.

In conclusion, sir, I am aware that in writing these letters to you I am probably doing what I was reading of the other day, namely, ‘butting my head against a stone wall’; but, as the writer I am quoting went on to say, ‘How can one be sure it is a stone wall, or one made only of paper, unless one does butt one’s head against it?’ Now I am not quite sanguine enough to think that the wall against which I am butting my head will give way at least with my solitary ‘butt’. Nevertheless, sir, I am determined to butt my head against it. Indeed, I feel it to be personally degrading and a disgrace upon me to remain silent and submit without a protest to the injustice done me.

And if the wall is of stone, sir, and the only remedy lies in the radical one recommended by the minority report of the Labour Commission, then will you allow me to urge upon your readers, upon those of my own sex who though not yet having the privilege of voting themselves, yet have influence with those who have, to use that influence intelligently, in the right direction? And to those of the opposite sex who do enjoy this privilege, to send only those men to Parliament, of whatever political creed, who stand pledged to do all in their power, with the utmost possible speed, to relieve the burden of the oppressed and suffering workers of this country, not least amongst whom are the factory girls of Crewe.

Crewe Chronicle, 19th May 1894



WORDS WORDS WORDS

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Activity

Fitness

Wellbeing

Clubbercise

Be Active

Rockbox

For me

Inspire

Fun

More to come

Self Defense

Mental Health

Empower

New

Encourage

Exciting

Feel good

Challenge

Autism Inclusive

invites you to attend our
Girls Group
 weekly during term-time
 4pm-7pm

for ages 13-25 **no need to book** **parents welcome** **free to attend**

for more info: enquiries@aicrewe.org.uk
 Autism Inclusive, St Marks, Bramhall Rd, Crewe, CW2 8PS

YMCA

After School Club
 Tuesdays
 4pm-5:30pm
 Sherborne Bungalow (no.27)

For more information call Tracey on 07590 883049

Youth club

Every Friday 6-8pm
 at Wishing Well Children
 and Families Hub for
 10-16 year olds

For more information, please contact Mabyn via
[Facebook@TheWishingWellCharity](https://www.facebook.com/TheWishingWellCharity) or email
mabyn.meredith@wishingwellproject.net

Registered Charity 1180756

Start Well @ the Wishing Well
 Children and Families Hub

Girls Youth Club

Craft for Wellbeing

Every Monday, Starts 4th March
 6pm – 8pm (12-16 yrs)
 Free to attend – snack provided
 3 Chester Bridge, Crewe
 CW2 7EF

For further information call the Hub
 on 07894 123413
 Or email
gemma.edwards@wishingwellproject.net

For more information about Inspire, please
 contact:
inspirecheshire@motherwellcheshirecio.com