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Norfolk Christian charity's skydive appeal

Eight people are taking the plunge by skydiving from a plane, to raise funds for The Matthew Project, a local charity supporting those in Norfolk and Suffolk affected by drug and alcohol issues. *Alaine Mukene reports.*



The skydivers will descend on Sunday June 30, in Beccles. Most will tandem jump, with one solo jumping. They are jumping with UK Parachuting. The aim of the event is to raise funds for The Matthew Project, which supports people with drug and alcohol related issues across East Anglia by providing innovative education about the risks of drugs and alcohol and empowering people to make more informed choices. It offers free and confidential advice to anyone affected by drugs and alcohol.

Those taking part will include Matthew Project staff: Naomi Bales, Diane West and Sharon Hulbert.

Naomi is based at The Junction, Cromer, a service hub offering drop-in support, 1 to 1 sessions, signposting and more. She said, "I am doing the skydive because the work the Matthew Project does is very close to my heart and I wanted to take part in raising some money to help the good work to carry on. I am really looking forward to it and it will be a once in a lifetime experience for me."

Friends of the charity's Chief Executive, Rosalie Weetman, have been persuaded to jump on her behalf. Gemma Crammond and Katie Grunnill will be travelling from Derbyshire to take part.

Other supporters who have offered to take part include Tom Cator, son of Henry Cator, former High Sheriff of Norfolk, and Vera da Cunha Borges. Andrew Partridge, has also signed up to jump. Andrew is a Royal Mail employee who has also been encouraging support of The Matthew Project through the recycling of plastic tops at his workplace.

On the same day as these tandem skydives Toby Lipton, also based at The Junction as a Substance Misuse Worker, is doing a solo jump on behalf of the charity. He said, "I feel I owe The Junction, and The Matthew Project so much for supporting me when I have had issues in the past; for giving me opportunities for development, first as volunteer and then as staff. This has led me to the happy and productive place I now inhabit in my life, for which I will always be grateful. I am always looking for opportunities to raise money and awareness for The Matthew Project as a means of repayment. I naturally tend towards more challenging and physical events as a self-test to prove to myself that I am

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still very much alive and not over the hill yet!"

Gina Ayres of Norwich (pictured above) recently tandem skydived for The Matthew Project. She said, "My brother David died 6 years ago from long term alcohol abuse and not only did this charity help him with rehab but also helped my mother with counselling after his death. I can never thank The Matthew Project enough for the help you gave David, as you gave us more time together."

There is still time for YOU to take part in the Matthew Project's Tandem Skydive Day! Also, sponsorship of those already jumping would be hugely appreciated.

For information or sponsorship please email: sharon.hulbert@matthewproject.org

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