

Carecent Newsletter – June 2024

The last newsletter was sent in January, so we have lots to update you on.

Hearing Voices Group:

We are facilitating a Hearing Voices Group – which is a peer support group for those who hear voices, or have unusual experiences. We have linked up with TEWV (Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust and City of York Council) to work with two mental health nurses to facilitate the group.

Many individuals who access Carecent struggle to engage with statutory services, like mental health provisions due to past experiences with services, untrusting relationships and expectations, meaning that they are unable to access relevant support. When discussing the group, it was agreed that Carecent was the best place for a group like this, as many people were already comfortable being here; and it is more of an informal, neutral environment; it took away the pressure and power imbalance that our customers feel when engaging with ‘official’ appointments or services.

We see individuals struggle with their mental health each and every day, and are enthusiastic to see an openness for different approaches that fit the individuals, rather than a ‘one service fits all approach.

We are super happy that a provision like this is starting and hope that it is the first of many new groups with a less structured approach. Some of our customers struggle to engage with some appointments, it does not mean they are not willing to accept the support. It just means the boundaries and expectations of services needs to be reassessed as not one approach fits everyone.

Drama Group – Film Project:

As mentioned in the previous newsletter, we started a 10-week drama group before Christmas and it went down an absolute treat! It went down so well, that we have another group in progress. Some of the same customers have joined, but there are also a couple of new faces who have stepped into the group and flourished. They will be putting on an end of group performance in the coming weeks to a small, trusted audience of volunteers.

From our work with Night Light Theatre CIC we are also making a short awareness film (working title: In Their Shoes), to challenge public perceptions of homelessness and those who are accessing Carecent. The film will also be used to raise awareness around homelessness within our City.

The film will show a variety of individuals’ journeys and how they ended up accessing Carecent. Hopefully challenging the public perception around *who* can experience homelessness. Statistics from 2023 show that more than half of ‘working, renters’ are one paycheck away from homelessness. In comparison to 2020, when individuals were 2 and a half pay checks away from experiencing homelessness.

We are still at the beginning stages of the film project – gathering stories and exploring what is the best way for the film to be structured. We have held some auditions for actors to be in front of the camera, portraying the stories of our customers. We had a panel of six, two of whom are individuals who access Carecent and who's stories will be shared.

We have people accessing Carecent who are homeless and working full time; who have had traumatic childhood experiences; who have had a steady upbringing; who have been to university; who's family have been through Carecent and resettlement services; ultimately, everyone's journey is different. Those who experience homelessness are already prejudged by society around potential substance misuse, offending behaviour, or lifestyle choices around how they have ended up in their position. This film project is to challenge all of those perceptions and show that those who access Carecent all have their own story, and should not be judged just because they are in a position where they access Carecent, or just because they are homeless.

We are looking at mid October as a completion date for the film project.

Art Class:

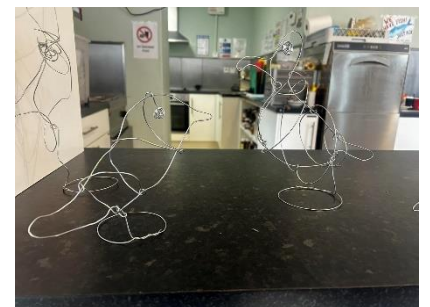
At the end of February we started Art Club, which is ran weekly on a Tuesday afternoon during termtime.

Some of our customers are already amazingly talented and creative, others wanted to learn different techniques and forms of art. Within these sessions we have made wire sculptures, clay models, printing, collages, story-boards and so much more. We are having a break over summer but then going to start class up again in September.



The idea is to potentially be part of 'York Open Studios' next year, which will allow our creators and artists to showcase their work.

A huge thank you to Tabettha for running this class.



New Décor/Art Work/Signage:

For the last couple of months we have concentrated on making information more accessible within Carecent.



We are aware that accessing a service like this can be quite overwhelming, and not knowing what else is on offer can mean that you miss out on vital services.

We now have a weekly planner that we rotate each week with the activities/drop-ins and sessions that are scheduled for that given week. This is everything from the breakfast service, to Choir, to Housing Navigators running their drop-in with us.

By having this signage it allows those who are new to Carecent learn more about what is on offer. We still have a few bits in mind and are hoping to implement these in the next couple of months.



Current Needs:

As you are all aware, Carecent relies solely on donations from the community. We are currently running low on the following items:

Food

- Jars of coffee
- Tinned corned beef
- Tinned ham/spam
- Sugar

Toiletries

- shampoo
- conditioner
- roll on deodorant (male & female)
- razors

Clothing

- men's thin socks
- men's size S/M or 28"-34" jeans and joggers
- men's S/M/L t-shirts

- women's small (size 8-10) joggers/jeans
- women's small t-shirts and jumpers
- small bras
- small/size 8 ladies underwear

Any, and all support is always hugely appreciated.

In regard to clothing – items do not need to be brand-new and unworn, but we do ask that they have life left in them to be given to someone new. Underwear and socks, we ask to be unstained and clean.

Changes to the Executive Committee

At the back end of last year, we had a change around within the Executive Committee and have been focused on looking towards where we want Carecent to go within the future. There have been many productive and passionate conversations happening around what Carecent will look like in one years' time, as well as 5 and 10 years.

We are also going to get a 'working group' of customers who are interested in having their say around Carecent and its future – ultimately Carecent is a service for our customers, so it is integral that they are able to share ideas and give feedback of what works or needs changing.

National Volunteers Week

At the beginning of June it was National Volunteers Week and we organised a social event for all of our volunteers to meet fellow volunteers, eat, chat and just have a good time.



A lot of what we do at Carecent stays the same, we serve breakfast 6 mornings per week, offer clothing/toiletries when needed and provide companionship and support. We may try out different activities, or sessions but ultimately it depends on the people who are accessing the service – our art class and drama group have been a success because we currently have a group of individuals in who are open to trying new things. We get some of the most complex individuals through our doors, work with an array of statutory and non-statutory services trying to offer a multi-agency network of support. However, none of this could be possible without our amazing volunteers.

None of this could be possible without the support from yourselves and our community.

So thank you to everyone who supports Carecent, whether it be volunteering, donating or spreading awareness about the work we do.

Thank you.