

Ceartas Winter Newsletter



Hello and welcome to the Winter Edition of the Ceartas Advocacy Newsletter. We have had a very busy time since Autumn and are looking forward to continuing to grow our services during 2012.

You can help spread the word about independent advocacy by passing on this newsletter once you have read it and by joining us online where you can see photographs and videos where the people who work with us tell you their views about what we offer in East Dunbartonshire.

A very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all.



A De Café regular, George Nevay, told delegates at this year's AGM how vital the service is to people with a diagnosis of dementia and their carers. De Café allows him and his wife to meet others in a similar situation and to enjoy social contact with others.

FIRST CONTACT

George met with our Team Leader, Sharon, who advised him about the different routes into advocacy that Ceartas provides as well as our support group De Café. George said, 'I found that the speakers at De Café were interesting and helped me to understand dementia in its many forms and how it interfered with communication.'

CONCERNS

Having information and support makes it easier to cope when a loved one has a diagnosis of dementia. Like most others, George had concerns about how he and his wife were going to manage and what the future would hold. Through De Café he was able to speak about these very

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George Nevay



common concerns in a safe environment and get answers to the questions he needed for him and his wife.

SUPPORT

Ceartas offers different routes into advocacy which includes support groups like De Café. Please get in touch with us if you would benefit from this free service for people in East Dunbartonshire. A final word about De Café from George who said, 'We now have support mainly through the monthly De Café which allows both my wife and I to relax and socialise whilst discussing a broad range of interesting subjects'.



FOCUS ON

Robert Smith
Volunteer



ABI CAFÉ

An Interview with Helen Moran

The ABI Café is a group for people who have an Acquired Brain Injury. It's a very successful partnership between Headway Glasgow and Ceartas. Helen Moran attends the group.



Pam: Who is ABI Café for?

Helen: Anyone who has an Acquired Brain Injury, their family, or carers. The ABI may be as a result of a fall, assault, stroke, brain tumour or other reasons.

Pam: What are some of the issues affecting people who have acquired a brain injury?

Helen: There is a shock and fear factor as well as a feeling of isolation. Brain injury can affect memory and it can be difficult for people to **Acknowledge** and **Accept** they have a brain injury and **Ask** for help! After getting out of hospital, no-one keeps checking up on you to make sure things are going ok. Brain injury does not fall neatly into the category of physical disability or mental health, so there is a lack of services and information. This affects over 12,000 people in Scotland.

Pam: What are the benefits of the group for those who come along?

Helen: We meet monthly and have coffee and a chat. It's good fun and reduces isolation. We support each other by sharing experiences and knowledge. We sometimes get information from groups like the Fire Service, Citizen's Advice or visits from local politicians. Last month we had a discussion on 'Anger' and how our injury has affected us. Headway give information on where to get help and Ceartas ensure that people get advocacy support when needed.

You can reach us using the contact information at the back of the newsletter.

Favourite TV Programme

Dragon's Den

Favourite Song

Caledonia by Frankie Miller

Why did you join the Ceartas Team?

I wanted to do something for the community and to interact with people – volunteering with Ceartas over the past 8 months has allowed me to do this.

What motivates you to volunteer?

I enjoy learning and experiencing new things, I feel part of something important and I gain skills with every involvement.

Why volunteer with Ceartas?

I felt I had something to offer and was encouraged by the staff that I would be an asset.

What is the best thing about volunteering with Ceartas?

I love seeing empowerment in practice and enjoy the equality between the staff, the people who receive advocacy and volunteers.

Should others volunteer at Ceartas?

Yes – it is a fantastic organisation where you feel appreciated and are treated as one of the team. It can really build your confidence knowing you can help others.



still GAME

Many of you will remember a poignant talk delivered by Rona and Pauline about Still Game and what Ceartas should do to involve people more in developing its services.

It has been an exciting year for Still Game and since the appointment of a dedicated Involvement Worker (or as we like to call her – Pam!) we have set up a regular group of people who have used or have experience of the services of Ceartas. Still Game set their Aims – *To Have Our Say, Get Involved, Have Fun and Contribute to Development.*

From this the group went on to develop an action plan which has led to many changes such as Ceartas raising awareness of its services by attending community events and distributing publicity materials. We recognised that certain members wanted to focus on issues that are interesting to them so Task Groups have been established. One met recently to look at re-designing our advocacy evaluation form.

At each Still Game meeting a member of the Ceartas team has come along to the group to give information about what they do within Ceartas. We have also been involved with two other organisations and we were delighted to see Still Game members attend these also.

We have recently begun to use a booklet with Still Game entitled “My Journey with Ceartas”. This is one way of documenting how advocacy has helped them and seeing a clear picture of the individual’s Route to Advocacy and beyond.

Our most recent and proudest achievement is our Still Game Leaflet. We are so proud of what people have achieved over the year and none of it would have been possible without Rona and Pauline

setting out the road ahead. Still Game are now firmly in the driving seat of the future of Ceartas. You can hear from members of Still Game on the Ceartas Advocacy YouTube channel.



As well as helping Ceartas improve services, Still Game, gave up some time to volunteer with Operation Christmas Child in their temporary warehouse at Kirkintilloch’s Marina. Thousands of shoeboxes filled with gifts have been given by people throughout the UK which will be delivered to disadvantaged children throughout Eastern Europe in time for Christmas. Some of us checked the shoeboxes to make sure everything inside was appropriate to send and others then packed the shoeboxes into larger boxes. Still Game members had a great day and by giving some of their time and effort they have allowed children across the world to enjoy Christmas even more.



THE BIG SAY

Ceartas Advocacy and East Dunbartonshire Association for Mental Health need your views!

The Scottish Government is preparing a new strategy for mental health which will look at the future of services and how these can be improved with your input and ideas. So why not take part and help us represent the views East Dunbartonshire people to the Scottish Government. You can give your views at displays in the Ceartas office, the EDAMH office or the East Dunbartonshire Campus of Cumbernauld College (ED Campus). You can take part from Monday 16 - Friday 20 January at the following times:

Ceartas & ED Campus	EDAMH
Mon 10am – 4pm	10am – 4pm
Tue 10am – 4pm	12pm – 7pm
Wed 10am – 4pm	10am – 4pm
Thu 10am – 4pm	12am – 7pm
Fri 10am – 4pm	10am – 4pm

EDAMH: 24 Crossveggate, Milngavie, G62 6RA

T: 0141 955 3040

ED Campus: 50 Southbank Road, Kirkintilloch, G66 1NH

T: 0141 777 2090



FOCUS ON



Susie Martin
Advocacy Worker

Favourite TV Programme

Frozen Planet

Favourite Song

Somewhere Over the Rainbow by my grand daughter

Why did you join the Ceartas Team?

I believe Advocacy is a fundamental right in a society that claims to be democratic. It's so important that people feel supported and are heard at challenging times in their lives – especially when circumstances are overwhelming.

What is an Advocacy Worker's typical day?

It can vary immensely and involve: participating in statutory meetings; supporting someone express their views at a Mental Health Tribunal; or helping someone explore options particular to their situation.

What motivates you in your work?

The knowledge that advocacy can make a difference.

What is the best thing about working in Ceartas?

Ceartas is changing. As well as advocacy, we're actively developing service user involvement and have a dedicated 'Still Game' group for this. Other groups such as De Café, ABI café and the Dementia Advisory Clinic have broadened the work we do and how we do it which provides people with more routes into advocacy.

Why do we need Ceartas?

Without Ceartas, many individuals and families would not have been heard by those making important decisions affecting their lives.

Get in Touch...

By Letter

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Connect Online...



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