



Still Game

- ◆ Contributing to Development
- ◆ Having Their Say
- ◆ Getting Involved
- ◆ Having Fun

ABI Café
 A-Spire
 Anniversary Plans

USER INVOLVEMENT NEWSLETTER

Summer 2014

Meet Still Game . . .



It's been another exciting 6 months for the members of Still Game who keep all the staff team at Ceartas inspired with their enthusiasm and continue to be at the centre of everything we do.

Hopefully this newsletter will give you a taste of what Still Game and some of our other service user groups have been up to over the past six months.

Still Game members have taken part in a diverse range of exciting activities recently including representative's trip to the Scottish Parliament. The group have had a workshop on the Independence Referendum and their journey into the heart of Scottish politics continued with a guided tour of Holyrood,



Contributing to Development. . .

Ceartas newest initiative started recently with Still Game members at its beating heart. The **Service User Forum** is a group which sees representatives from each of our groups meet with board members to discuss the agenda for board meetings and also contribute any other ideas they have for service development.



The Forum is the next step in Ceartas placing service users in the driving seat of service delivery and the group is proving a great opportunity to pass the expertise of members on to the board. Achievements of the group already include producing a directory of services and taking forward joint partnership working proposals.



Having their Say . . .



Still Game have again been instrumental in developing Ceartas over the last 6 months and have played a big part in a lot of the exciting projects the organisation are involved in.



Members have attended a workshop organised by the Shine partnership, which looked at ways of utilizing people's experiences of front-line services to raise awareness and promote the benefits of

SDS in East Dunbartonshire.

A Still Game member also accompanied Ceartas staff to give a presentation about the role of advocacy to Social Work students at the University of Stirling. This event was met with really positive feedback especially regarding the still game member's input about how advocacy gave her a voice when she felt she wasn't being heard.

Getting Involved . . .

As well as regularly attending our Service User Groups, we are grateful to people for the many additional ways they have been involved in the life of Ceartas this year:

- ◆ Nicola was nominated by Still Game as our new Ceartas Champions.
- ◆ Several members have been giving Presentations about their life experiences to the group and are looking for opportunities to develop these presentations for other groups and professionals.
- ◆ Still Game have been looking into developing a tag-line for the group.
- ◆ A number of additional Task Groups have run throughout the year with service user involvement in various aspects of the life of Ceartas.



Having Fun . . .

Members of Still Game and ABI Café have also completed a 6 week course with Universal Comedy. The project has seen members take a comedic journey to explore what makes them laugh and how to find comedy in everyday situations. Ceartas would like to say a massive thank you to JoJo Sutherland and the staff at Universal Comedy Workshops for making the sessions such a success and leaving our funny bones thoroughly tickled.



In June we will also be having our 'Music for a Summer's Afternoon' Event for all those who attend our groups throughout the year. Following on from the success of last year our staff member Roy will again be bringing along his fantastic band who will be playing a range of classic hits to get people up on the dancefloor! .



The ABI Café

ABI Café have been especially busy over the last few months, not least with the publication of their **ABI Café Stories** booklet.



The booklet tells the stories of six ABI Café members and their journey to recovery after their injury. Members showed amazing bravery to share their experiences so openly and hope their stories will reassure others who have recently acquired a brain injury that the road to recovery is not one they have to walk alone. The booklet also gives more information about the Café itself and the other supports that are available for people affected by Acquired Brain Injury.

In May ABI Café members also hosted their third annual **ABI Seminar** to coincide with brain injury awareness week. The Seminar included an incredibly inspiring and informative *Meet the Authors* section. This gave members of the audience the opportunity to learn about ABI from the most insightful source of all; those who live with the condition. ABI Café members talked about how they've managed to overcome challenges and re-build full and meaningful lives for themselves, emphasising that people with ABI are still capable of contributing to their communities and achieving so much.

The ABI Café planning group have also recently met to organise activities and speakers for the following 6 months. Highlights will include sessions on OPAL and dementia awareness, as well as visits from Police Scotland and live music with Robin Lucas. If you have any queries about ABI Café or have an acquired brain injury and would like to join the group please contact Ewan Roy on 0141 775 0433.

A-Spire: Speaking from the Spectrum Group



The last 6 months have seen the continued growth and success of Ceartas newest group A-Spire: Speaking from the Spectrum. A Ceartas service user developed the idea of a group for people on the autism spectrum and we have ensured the group has continued to grow the way group members want it to.

Following on from their Independence Referendum workshop many A-Spire members continued their interest in the political landscape by visiting the Scottish Parliament and having a guided tour of the most important building in the country. The group are set to continue their political journey this summer when they host Fiona McLeod MSP and learn more about the inner-working of Scottish politics, as well as asking some important questions about support services available for those on the spectrum.



The group have also been paid a visit by Figure 8 consultancy services to find out their views and experiences of using autism services in East Dunbartonshire. The information gathered through this survey will be used by East Dunbartonshire council to assess service gaps and the needs of people with autism. A-Spire members contributed a lot of insightful suggestions and experiences and by doing so will be playing an active role in shaping services for those with autism in the local community.

Representatives from the group have also attended Autistic Intelligence Spring Conference and heard from leading experts on the condition such as Dr. Michelle Garnet and Professor Tony Atwood. The discussions and talks that took place were both inspiring and informative and covered a range of issues that have been discussed during A-Spire meetings such as transitional periods and tools for coping with emotional distress.

The last 6 months have also seen the group host movie events and guest speakers from partner agencies such as the Autism Resource Centre.

Dementia Cafes - More Than a Cup of Coffee...

As part of our work supporting people with dementia, Ceartas runs a series of Dementia Cafes across East Dunbartonshire, some of which are run in partnership with other organisations. These cafes are places where people can come to meet others who are affected by dementia and access information and support in a friendly environment. Dementia Cafes are currently running in:

Kirkintilloch – Kirkintilloch Baptist Church 1.30-3pm – last Friday of the month, **Bishopbriggs** – Woodhill Evangelical Church 2.30-4pm – third Wednesday of the month, **Bearsden** – Killermont Parish Church 2-4pm – fourth Tuesday of the month. If you would like any more information De Café or any of our Dementia related services please do not hesitate to contact Karen Heath on 0141 775 0433.



Anniversary Plans . . .

As this year marks Ceartas 10th Anniversary we will also be having an evening to celebrate everything we've achieved as an organisation with its users at its heart. This event will be taking place at Hayston Golf Club at 7pm on the 2nd October 2014 and invitations will be sent to all our service users who have been so instrumental in making the organisation a success.

If you'd like to know more about receiving Advocacy Support, or would like to get involved with Still Game or any of the other groups mentioned, please contact Ewan Roy, Involvement Worker.

Ceartas Advocacy, Suites 5-7, McGregor House, 10 Donaldson Crescent, Kirkintilloch, G66 1XF,

Telephone: 0141 775 0433 email : E.Roy@ceartas.org.uk www.ceartas.org.uk