



Summer Newsletter

Welcome

Welcome to the Ceartas Summer Newsletter and our chance to get you up to speed with everything that has been happening over the past six months. Since the turn of the year we have said our goodbyes to staff members moving onto new job positions, welcomed new board members and continued the development of our current groups along with some new projects, and continued our successful partnership working.



5th Annual Music for a Summer's Afternoon

Our annual Music for a Summer's Afternoon took place in June and we welcomed along past and current service users, groups, volunteers, carers and partner organisations. Prior to the event starting a Big Fit Walk took place with Paths For All Andy Lynch who leads health walks across East Dunbartonshire including our De Café Kirkintilloch and Bearsden group, and our Walk n Roll group which takes places right after ABI Café. Afterwards Andy was recognised for his valuable efforts supporting our groups throughout the year. Everyone had a great time listening, dancing and singing along to The Helen Reeves Experience with our very own Roy Hunter playing the double bass in the trio.

All at Ceartas would like to thank local organisations for their generous donations in support of the event, including Paul's Fine Foods, Table13, Sainsbury's Kirkintilloch and Tesco Kirkintilloch who helped make the event possible. Ceartas would like to say a massive thank you to all those who volunteered on the day: your efforts were paramount to the success of the event.





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still GAME

Still Game is a group specifically for those who have used or are currently using advocacy services offered by us here at Ceartas.

Still Game celebrated the festive season with their annual visit of Santa on the Barge and have been welcoming guest speakers every month since. This included; a visit to Kirkintilloch Leisure Centre, chair aerobics class with Anna Downes, Janice from Take Control, Elaine Jack from CAB telling us about Universal Credit and Charlotte Johnston coming to tell us about the Kirkintilloch project. Still Game have an exciting schedule for the remainder of the year with guest speakers already confirmed and more being actively invited.



LDAS Human Rights Event

Ceartas facilitated an LDAS Human Rights Event in February 2017 at McGregor House, where we welcomed 23 people from across East Dunbartonshire. This was hosted by Donna Nicholson, National Coordinator at the Learning Disability Alliance Scotland, and was an interactive workshop which involved the review of a recently commissioned Easy Read Guide by LDAS and discussed the work of the Alliance, with important messages about your Human Rights being highlighted throughout.

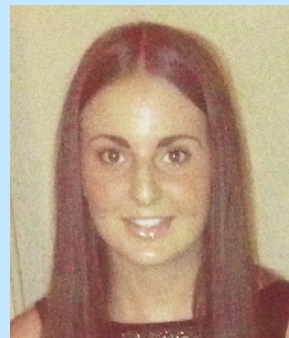




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Staff Changes

There has been a few staff changes since our last newsletter, we have said goodbye to Chris Waite our advocacy worker who recently left in January 2017 who moved on to work with the refugee council and we have recently said goodbye to Cheryl Murray our group resource worker who left in August 2017 to move on to work in Student accommodation. We would like to wish them all the very best in their future careers.



Marion Menzies

Marion has now become our new chair person replacing Martin Brickley who remains on our board. She is a lawyer who specialises in corporate governance, contracts, data protection and privacy law and intellectual property. She has also been a member of the Public Partnership Forum and is a keen advocate on community engagement and empowerment and on creating stronger links between business on the one hand and social enterprise and the Third Sector on the other.

David Wiseman

We are delighted to announce that David has joined our board. David started his social care career as a care officer in a home for older people before going on to work for Strathclyde Region in a variety of positions. He was the Director of Strategic Development and Deputy Chief Executive of the Care Commission in 2005. After a period as Acting Chief Executive of the Care Commission he retired in 2011 and was appointed to the Board of the Care Inspectorate. David brings strong skills in analysis and challenging constructively, strategic business planning, community development, human resource management and resource management and has a good understanding of developing and monitoring approaches to risk management.



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Get Set & Go Merkland

Taking inspiration from the success of our Get Onside course, Ceartas developed a pilot course in partnership with Clyde Community Foundation and Merkland School Kirkintilloch, accessible to school pupils on the autistic spectrum. The course combined the awareness of Self Directed Support, the promotion of health and wellbeing and a focus on essential life skills including enhancing employability skills, all elements enhanced through the medium of football. The course also looked at future volunteering opportunities, helping people to engage within their communities more.



‘My Voice, My Choice’: Creative Writing Project

Ceartas are delighted to announce that they will be running a creative writing project called ‘My Voice, My Choice’ at the end of September this year, which will run for eight weeks, thanks to funding from the Big Lottery: Investing in Ideas award.

‘My Voice, My Choice’ will encourage participants to explore and use the written word to record their experiences. Facilitating a group which supports people to tell their stories in this new format will help to develop confidence and empower members of the community who often feel discriminated against or excluded.

This project will culminate in a publication which will be used to challenge and break down the stigma around “service user land” and associated conditions. We also intend to use the publication as a tool to raise awareness and understanding of the benefits of independent advocacy, by giving examples of advocacy within context that will help explain just how advocacy can support you.



**NATIONAL
LOTTERY FUNDED**





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Annual General Meeting/Extraordinary General Meeting

Following our AGM in December, Ceartas had their Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) in March 2017, in the Auditorium at McGregor House. This meeting was to consider changes to the organisation's constitution, principally to convert Ceartas to a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation and also to allow us to 'tidy up' the constitution to bring it more in line with the current direction of the organisation. At the moment, Ceartas is both a Company Limited by Guarantee and a Scottish Registered Charity. This means Ceartas is subject to scrutiny by both Companies House and the Office of the Scottish Charities Regulator (OSCR). As an SCIO, Ceartas would only report to the OSCR, which will be more efficient.



Scotland's National Dementia Strategy

Scotland's National Dementia Strategy for 2017 – 2020 has just been published by the Scottish Government. Ceartas' Dementia Services Worker Karen Heath said, "We welcome this new strategy for three main reasons:

"Firstly, it implements The Carers (Scotland) Act (2016) in respect of carers for people with dementia,

ensuring that there are dedicated support services and person-centred support plans for adult carers, as well as ensuring the continuation of carer information and advice services.

"Secondly, it lays out a Palliative and End-Of-Life Care Framework that supports individuals approaching the end of their lives, to ensure that everyone in Scotland has access to services that can respond appropriately to people at this difficult stage of their care journey.

"Lastly, it supports the continuation of national Post-Diagnostic Support initiatives for people affected by dementia, making it more a personalised and person-centred service".



Scotland's National
Dementia Strategy
(2017 – 2020)



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Abi Café

The Abi café had their annual fish and chips on the barge which everyone who attended thoroughly enjoyed. The night was plane sailing and we look forward to next years trip already.



Alzheimer's Conference

Some of our members from our de café in Kirkintilloch went along to the Alzheimer's conference in Edinburgh back in June, where they met with Karen and Cheryl. They went along to a few seminars including dementia and technology and food and nutrition, which they found very useful. Afterwards they walked around various organisations stalls and found out lots of different information about things that they may benefit from.



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