



Routes to Advocacy: Groups at Ceartas



WHO ARE CEARTAS?

Ceartas are a third sector organisation that provides free, independent advocacy for adults in East Dunbartonshire (16+). Ceartas is Gaelic for equality, fair-ness and justice, values which we promote through our work within the area.



WHAT IS INDEPENDENT ADVOCACY?

Independent advocacy is a way to help you make your voice stronger and to have as much control as possible over your life. Advocacy Workers do not make decisions on your behalf and they will not put words in your mouth. We can help you get the information you need to make choices and assist you to express your views to others. Our advocacy is independent as we do not work for health, social work or other services. You do not have to pay for advocacy. Ceartas Advocacy workers are not qualified in Law. If you need legal representation, we will be happy to help you find a lawyer. Ceartas works with a range of adults (over the age of 16) in East Dunbartonshire, priority is given to:

Older people, People with dementia, People with mental health issues, People with learning disabilities, People with physical disabilities, People with sensory impairment, People with an acquired brain injury, People with additional communication needs and People with addiction issues.

We have an active schedule and currently run a number of groups for the above mentioned groups. We welcome those people with lived experience or those looking for more information.

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ABI CAFÉ: ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURY

The ABI café is a monthly support and information group for people in East Dunbartonshire who are affected by acquired brain injury, whether themselves or in a caring capacity. The group is operated in partnership by Ceartas and Headway Glasgow and has continued to grow since its creation in 2011.



The group currently meets in Kirkintilloch Baptist Church on the first Thursday of every month between 1.30pm – 3pm. The main aim of the group is to reduce isolation for people with ABI by providing a supportive and relaxed atmosphere where they can meet other people and share experiences. The group also facilitates a variety of information regarding brain injury and its effects and also helps its participants to access practical help and support. The group welcomes guest speakers each month from partner and specialist organisations.



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

past and present service users who can share their lived experiences. Our group meets on the first Tuesday of every month 12.00—2.00pm at East Dunbartonshire Voluntary Action. The group plan the monthly speakers and have welcomed a range of organisations such as Citizens Advice Bureau, Zero Waste and NHS Podiatry etc. They also arrange social outings and lunches throughout the year.

Walk 'N' Roll

Walk n Roll is a monthly health walk suitable for anyone but focuses on including wheelchair users or people with mobility issues. The group takes place directly after our ABI Café group and meets at the back entrance of Kirkintilloch Baptist Church, the first Thursday of every month at 3pm.

With the help of Paths for All Coordinator Andy Lynch, the group organises health walks around routes which are accessible for all, and often includes visits to the canal and lasts between 30-45 minutes.

Our very own Roy, Linda and Cheryl are all certified WALK leaders, supporting the sustainability of the group so it can continue to flourish.



CHANGES

Changes is a collective advocacy group and it aims to support individuals with lived experience in decision making across the local authority. The group are currently part of The Service User and Carer Forum for the Health and Social Care Partnership and are looking forward to the opportunity to be involved in the shaping of the new service across East Dunbartonshire

Changes members are also keen to explore other potential partnerships over the coming year to ensure that the voices of those with lived experience are heard in consultations and decision making in matters that are important to them.

The group meets at Ceartas Advocacy as and when required to discuss local issues such as social security and building healthier and happier communities.



ADULT SUPPORT AND PROTECTION

This consultation group is for anyone who lives in East Dunbartonshire who would be interested in volunteering their time to help improve and develop the East Dunbartonshire adult support and protection processes. The group is in place to ensure adults are supported properly and understand the ASP process in East Dunbartonshire if they are potentially at risk of harm. The group meets every second month from 12.00 - 2.30pm at Ceartas Advocacy.



SERVICE USER FORUM

The aim of the Service User Forum group is to give people who use or have used Ceartas services a greater input into how the organisation is run. It supports service users be involved in the shaping of the organisation and raising awareness of Ceartas advocacy. The group works closely with the board ensuring their expertise, experiences and opinions are at the heart of everything that Ceartas do. The group meet every second month from 2.00—3.30pm at Ceartas Advocacy.



CEARTAS DEMENTIA VOICES

This is a group for people living with Dementia, where they have the opportunity to discuss specific issues or concerns they may face and have their views and opinions on local issues and services voiced. Dementia Voices meet about 6 times throughout the year at Ceartas Advocacy from 12.00—2.00pm. “It helps having other people around who really know what you’re talking about”





As part of our work supporting people with dementia to live well in their communities, Ceartas runs a series of Dementia Cafes across East Dunbartonshire. These cafes are places where people living with dementia and their carers can come to meet others who are affected by dementia and access information and support in a friendly environment. It gives staff from Ceartas the opportunity to hear people's views and opinions and to support people to feel connected to their community. Dementia Cafes are currently running in: Bearsden, Bishopbriggs, Kirkintilloch, and Milngavie.



If you would like any further information of any of our groups please do not hesitate to get in touch on 0141 775 0433 or email info@ceartas.org.uk. Please note that, times, dates and venues can change so please contact us before attending.