



ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE – 2018-19 EVALUATIONS

ACCEPT ALLOTMENT GROUP

Enabling individuals experiencing mental health issues to overcome isolation, develop wellbeing, grow towards independence and enjoy life through opportunities to develop friendships, skills and community connections: ACCEPT Friendship Groups: meet weekly in pubs and cafes of group member's choice. ACCEPT Allotment: meet weekly on an allotment in Barwell.

The names used in each of the below pieces of anecdotal feedback are not the real names of beneficiaries involved.

- ✚ Tom had become very isolated, and low, due to suffering with depression and had also lost confidence in social situations. When Tom initially joined the project, he would take himself off, to carry out activities alone. We discovered that Tom had a real love and interest of birds. He was given the responsibility for developing a place to feed birds at the site. Tom carried this out with passion and over time, when as a group, we sat to eat and have coffee together, we would all enjoy watching the birds at the station he had developed. Everyone loved watching the birds so much and made many comments of appreciation to Tom. He shared with other beneficiaries his great knowledge of birds and much interest was shown. All of this had a significant impact on Tom's self-esteem. It was so encouraging to see him grow in confidence, leading to him talking much more to everyone at the project, and beginning to laugh. Tom then joined our Mindfulness for Wellbeing course, at the site, which he found extremely beneficial and shared how he was beginning to have hope for the future, for the first time in many years.
- ✚ Tina, having experienced domestic abuse, had difficulties with forming healthy relationships and had formed co-dependent relationships with other family members. When she first joined the project Tina was very isolated, feeling low, anxious and had lost her confidence. Over time, she was given responsibility for projects, at the site which she was interested in. This led to Tina regaining her confidence in her many abilities and passing her skills on to others. She began to meet up with other beneficiaries on a regular basis and form relationships which were healthier. Due to her parents health deteriorating, Tina decided to move closer to them, quite some distance away, so was unable to continue to be involved with the project. However, she has let us know that with the skills and confidence she developed at the site, Tina is now adopting a lead role in a garden project at a GP surgery, where she is passing on the skills she learned through the project.
- ✚ Jack was again very isolated, depressed and anxious when he joined the project. He struggled talking to other beneficiaries and remained very quiet, having very little confidence in social situations, both on a one to one as well as in very small groups. In the past, he had experienced bullying in the work place, the effects of which were still impacting him. Over time we witnessed him grow in confidence and self-esteem. Jack has a real interest in books and the process of sharing this with other project members was really beneficial. When we bought him a book we knew he'd love, he was deeply moved that someone should take such an interest in him and show kindness in this way. All of this seemed to enable him to come out of his shell and grow in confidence. He was getting into a routine for the first time, over a long period and doing lots of different jobs at the site developed his self-esteem. Jack was made aware of a part-time cleaning job, which although initially apprehensive about, he then began to consider, taking into account all he had been doing at the site. In the end, Jack decided to apply for the post and was successful, following which he ceased his time with us.
- ✚ Martin had been addicted to illegal drugs for many years. When he came to the project he had stopped taking these a few months before, with the help of professional support. Martin looked extremely thin and pale, having had a very poor diet over a long period. Although initially very quiet, Martin began to

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build relationships with other beneficiaries and spoke of interests in common. Witnessing the different fruit and vegetables grown at the site, he also started to become interested in how things are grown. This interest developed further as a result of him taking some of the allotment produce home. He shared how much he loved the taste of this organic food and began to take an interest in growing things himself. It is still early days, and he has had some physical health issues, which have prevented him from always joining us but we are now trying to nurture this interest. Although he still has a long way to go, Martin has made incredible progress from where he was just a few months ago and is benefitting in many ways, including having regular physical exercise, which he'd not had for many years.

BURBAGE YOUTH PROJECT – CLASSIC CAR RESTORATION

Within this project our young members learn about all aspects of a car workshop and the use of most of the tools/equipment, how this relates to vehicle repair/ restoration. They receive theory based sessions and live demonstrations for more difficult tasks such as welding. Our classic vehicles are used for the education around car restoration and maintenance as the older design has accessible engines enabling the full practical experience. The vehicles often have to be stripped own to the chassis and rebuilt, this entails restoring the engine parts as they progress with the car. The workshops run once a week in a safe, purpose built workshop environment. The work is supported by qualified volunteers and led by a paid professional tutor who has a passion for mechanical engineering, particularly classic cars. We actively encourage the young people to become mentors and volunteers themselves as their experience and confidence grows. From this we now have two mentors. In addition, the young people volunteer at the classic car shows with our support. Anecdotal evidence as follows:

- ✚ C – “ Attending the car project has helped me realise which direction I want to take when I go to college as I'd like to learn more about car mechanics”
- ✚ E - “I have been at BYP since September 2018 and have been accepted onto an apprenticeship with large car manufacturer. I've learned so much over the past year and have really enjoyed the sessions. Everyone is friendly and helpful”
- ✚ A – “I have been a volunteer at the project for the past few years and have helped with the bodywork as I used to spray cars before I retired. I enjoy the Monday nights seeing how the lads and the cars progress each week. There is a great camaraderie and we all work well together!”
- ✚ H – “My son absolutely loves going to BYP each Monday. At first he was nervous going into an established group, but the other lads made him feel very welcome. He was becoming anxious about the eventuality of taking exams and leaving school. It has really helped his self-esteem and helped him make a decision on what to do after his exams. He intends to go to uni and do a degree in Automotive Engineering, so this has given him a great focus whereas before he didn't know what to do! These sessions have made such a difference in him and I thank all involved who have given him this chance.”

CENTRE FOR FUN AND FAMILIES

'Grounded' sessions took place at Hinckley Academy We support parents, carers and teenagers who are experiencing behaviour and communication difficulties within their families. We strengthen family relationships and improve the life skills and outcomes of children and young people through effective, award winning, group work programmes, pioneered by our staff and shaped by the people we help. 'Grounded' is for 12 children aged 11-16 and ran for 7 sessions, 2 hours per session, one per week. Within the sessions each child focussed on anger management, self-worth, communication, negotiation skills, self-belief, the consequences of actions and developing positive alternatives. Each topic was addressed through a variety of media including ice-breakers, DVDs, role play, group discussions, team work and challenges.

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Group work is powerful - the children often commented they did not realize they weren't the only ones feeling as they did. Baseline assessments took place at the outset when experienced practitioners visited the children and their parents / carers to prepare them for the group sessions and to deal with any questions, concerns or barriers to attendance. The assessments were used as a benchmark to monitor progress and effectiveness. Where possible, feedback was also obtained from parents / carers and referrers about the changes resulting from the children attending the group. A group evaluation was produced reporting on individual outcomes for each child.

The following are a few quotes from this report:

What did you enjoy about Grounded?

- ✚ "All the practical activities and learning to behave"
- ✚ "Knowing other people are like me and deal with anger"
- ✚ "It's been fun and informative, it's really good!"

How do you think Grounded helped you?

- ✚ "I can control my anger better"
- ✚ "It's helped me argue less with my family and I concentrate a bit harder in student support"
- ✚ "It's helped me focus and understand everyone else's point of view towards me"
- ✚ "It's helped understand my emotions"

FORGET ME NOT CAFÉ

The name of the group reflects the loneliness and isolation which people with dementia and their families typically experience. It also reflects that people with dementia have a past that can often be overlooked and forgotten as attention is focussed on the here and now. The group is informal and self-supporting. Volunteers welcome people with dementia / memory loss and their carers to have a break from their routines. Meeting others socially, organised outings and activities they enjoy are arranged for them.

We recently celebrated our first anniversary which and collected responses from our members who attended on the day:

- ✚ "Happy birthday Forget Me Nots, a wonderful group which has made our lives so much better knowing we have support"
- ✚ "Well done to all the volunteers who make this group so welcoming and successful"
- ✚ "Today we had seated exercises, along with cake and tea. A wonderful group!"

GEORGE WARD TABLE TENNIS GROUP

We are a Sports club coaching 6-21 year olds the sport of table tennis, of all ability ranges. Not only do we encourage youngsters to take up the sport but we also teach them how to volunteer within the club, helping to organise the sessions and set up and take down the equipment. Once proficient we use competition pathways to develop their skills further.

- ✚ **Player: O.W.** (aged 13) – "I have benefitted from attending the Monday Coaching Sessions and by being introduced to competitive play via the Leicester Development League and the local Hinckley and District League. As a result I have been selected to represent Leicestershire Cadets at National Level this season."
- ✚ **Existing Volunteer: Roger H.** – "It is a real privilege to attend the Monday sessions to help with the coaching of the young people. To see them blossom from novices to good young players, some

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climbing to play for the County and others just doing well in the league. I get a thrill just seeing them develop.”

- ✚ **Coach: A. Wright** – “The youngsters are always willing to listen and learn. We are able to instil discipline and get them to understand team work and collective responsibility for their team. Most of all we can help them improve their skills, keep active and to enjoy sport.”
- ✚ **Parent: L. Lee** – “ My son is not the best player in the world, he joined the scheme after his school visited the George Ward club for two sessions. He was only 9 years old and now at 11 years he looks forward to going and does not bother with his X-Box on Mondays. He really loves it which is great to see. Long may Mike and his team continue!”

GREEN TOWERS – CLIMBING NICAS

A total of 54 Young People, aged between 7 and 19 participated and achieved their NICAS awards over the 12 months duration, with 16 Volunteers achieved their Climbing Supervision and Rope Management Qualifications. Many regularly assist the NICAS qualified instructors deliver the course. Anecdotal evidence as follows:

D. Ramsdale (Parent of participant A. Ramsdale)

- ✚ “My daughter recently completed her Level 1&2 NICAS certifications at Green Towers Hinckley Club for Young People. She thoroughly enjoyed taking part in the activity and the various challenges it encouraged her to deal with. As well as the high level of instruction and encouragement provided by the Staff, she had the opportunity to meet new people, learn a valuable skill and strive to improve each week. I think the course has encouraged her to try things outside of her comfort zone and given her more confidence. I am thrilled she had the opportunity to try it, and am pleased with how well she has done.”

K. Murby (Parent of participant O. Murby)

- ✚ “My daughter, has thoroughly enjoyed her NICAS climbing lessons at Green Towers with Ant and his team. As her parents, we can see her confidence has truly grown; she used to be shy socialising with people outside of her school environment. We believe this is down to the professional and friendly support she receives from Ant and Josh in particular. She often talks to us about what she has learnt each week, including how to belay with a partner and how to set up and use the equipment correctly.

My daughter often also mentions the other students and how well she gets on with them and new friendships she has made. We are proud of what she continues to achieve in her climbing and we are impressed when we have the opportunity to watch her climb.”

L. Buckley (Parent of participant J. Buckley)

- ✚ “J absolutely loves his climbing on a Friday evening. It has built his confidence to talk to others and he is comfortable offering help to other climbers that he is holding the rope for. He has progressed really quickly and is close to completing his level 2 NICAS award. Thank you Ant and team for helping my son.”

T. Gudger (participant)

- ✚ “My name is T. Gudger and I am 14 years old. I started doing my NICAS award after using the climbing wall while I went to the youth club at Green Towers and one of my friends told me about the certificates she had got. It has helped me so much in my confidence of heights and now I want to climb higher walls. I also get a lot of satisfaction when I help other people on the wall and see them get better, it reminds me of how I first was. Thank you Green Towers.”

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HINCKLEY MUSEUM SUMMER ACTIVITIES

Summer holiday activities for the children were offered over 6 Mondays from 11am – 3pm covering the historical periods of Roman, Tudor and Victorian with 2 sessions for each time period. Activities were also offered on Bank Holiday Monday and all the periods were offered from 10am – 4pm on those days. The activities included an archaeological dig for Roman pottery, making a ‘bulla’ in which to keep their treasure, grinding corn to make flour using a stone quern, making bead jewellery and a laurel wreath.

On Tudor days, the activities included making lavender bags, making coats of arms, crowns, learning to use a quill and spinning. They could have fun putting their friends into the pillory and pelting them with rotten veg (knitted in our case).

On Victorian Days the wash tubs and scrubbing boards were used after pumping water from the well and then using the flat irons, have a go at knitting and making a rag rug and also a spinning wheel. Children were encouraged to dress up.

We were helped by volunteers who brought representative equipment with them (Louise and Maddie Lock – Tudor reenactors) and Julie (Ewe to You) who demonstrated different types of spinning. Funding also enabled the Museum to engage with professional performance artists who could convey more information about living in a particular period e.g: what it was like to be a Roman or Victorian soldier. Children were able to take home anything they had made, take part in quizzes and games/puzzles relevant to the period.

We identified everyone enjoying themselves and that was certainly achieved by the fact that children returned for more than one activity. Parents/carers found the activities interesting and joined in, eager to learn more about living in the earlier times. Also hearing more about local history and heritage. We increased the number of visitors attending the activities by 116 over the previous year and also attracted more volunteers including: a history teacher new to the area, a student studying A Levels and a younger student participating in the Duke of Edinburgh Awards, using the museum as her volunteering achievement to enable her to pass. Funding also helped the museum to purchase equipment which will be useful for many years: a gazebo, pillory, new costumes, display rail and more replica pottery and artefacts.

Comments in the Visitors Book:

- ✚ “The children were so enthusiastic to learn, which was brilliant.”
- ✚ “We loved the re-enactment”
- ✚ “Didn’t want to leave”
- ✚ “Roman wash days were the best”
- ✚ “Fantastic Roman History day!”
- ✚ “Good for all ages!”

HINCKLEY TOWN TENNIS CLUB

We provide affordable tennis for the community, irrespective of age and ability. Non-members are welcome. We run at least eight weeks of holiday camps every year and we are proud of our inclusive tennis provision, 5/6 hours every week. We offer health and wellbeing benefits in a friendly family atmosphere.

- ✚ “Year 3 are loving their tennis taster with Hinckley Town Tennis Club” – St Margaret’s Stoke Golding
- ✚ “The tennis lessons have been such a positive experience for all of the children involved. They have made huge amounts of progress and most importantly have had great fun!”
- ✚ “One client has severe autism, John and Carl have helped him to practise for short periods of time. Without the support of the coaches he would not usually attend a two hour session of any kind” – Louise Bayliss, Achieve With Us.
- ✚ “Our pupils absolutely loved the eight hours of taster sessions run by Hinckley Town Tennis Club!” Westfield Primary School

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MARKFIELD MAYFLOWER CLUB

In January 2020 we conducted our annual member's evaluation survey in order to assess their feelings about the project, what they enjoyed, how they benefited and how we could improve the project. There was a 100% satisfaction level with the project and the survey clearly showed the benefits of the project. From the survey we were able to produce a "wish list" of what members would like to take place at the club during the following year (copy also attached).

Anecdotal Feedback

- ✚ Bill (82) "I lost my wife last year and I also care for my son who has learning difficulties. I also depend on a disability scooter to get out and about. This and left me feeling very isolated and often lonely. Ron and Carol "nagged" me into coming along to the Mayflower Clubs and I am so glad I made the effort. Now I look forward to coming along twice a week meeting my friends and playing dominoes. The Wednesday sessions are very interesting and useful and I have even been put in touch with the Steady Steps programme to help me with my mobility and help prevent me from falling".
- ✚ Sheena (68) "I am carer and have a people carrier to help me with my voluntary work. Unfortunately my vehicle was involved in an accident whilst out at a social event. Fortunately no one was hurt but I was horrified and so shocked at the time and couldn't even face driving my vehicle. However, Ron and the other members of the Mayflower Club rallied round giving me support and comfort. I would not have known what to do but Ron sorted it all out for me and my Mayflower friends were so wonderful and comforting".
- ✚ Rob (67) "I have had a really difficult time over the past couple of years. I had a messy divorce followed by a stroke and even lost my driving licence. I really needed to get my life together and get over my depression. Having called into the Community Centre to see what was going on I was told about the Mayflower Clubs. I decided to give them a go and it was just what I needed. I really appreciate the new friendships I have made as well as enjoying all the activities and sessions Ron and Carol put on for us. I am also really looking forward to joining the new indoor Mayflower Kurling Club it should be good fun"
- ✚ Dinah (76) "Last winter I suffered a virus that really knocked me for six. It took me ages to recover and it I totally lost my confidence in going out in case I collapsed. But I was persuaded to come back to the Mayflower Club and I am so glad I did. Meeting my old friends and joining with the activities has boosted my confidence and I am nearly back to my old self again. Even my husband has started coming along to the Monday afternoon sessions so he can have a game of dummies with the lads – he really enjoys it".

PATHWAYS - CORNERSTONE LUNCH CLUB

Cornerstone Lunch Club is a social lunch club which meets each Tuesday, providing a friendly and comfortable environment. It enables guests to meet up with new people and to also meet existing friends. This provides support and company, especially for those who do not manage to get out very often.

We collated feedback forms from members attending the group, please see below for the comments collected:

- ✚ Member G.E: A great social gathering, good to make friends at these events.
- ✚ Members B & H A: It was great to attend and take part in different activities also to eat together and enjoy.
- ✚ Member (Anon): This was a lovely group that always made you feel welcome. Lots of fun and games, plenty of refreshments, cakes were lovely. Helped my confidence and self-esteem.
- ✚ Member E J-W: I found it really helpful. I made a gift card, tried a hand massage which I found relaxing. I made a posy quite well and felt I would love to have another go at making one!"

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PROTON FOUNDATION - FLOURISH PROJECT

The purpose of the project is to equip young people to develop a healthy self-esteem, mental/emotional wellbeing. We do this by helping young people to develop a growth mind-set, creating helpful thinking patterns, enabling the young person to start to understand their potential, realising future aspirations and goal setting. We took feedback from our sessions:

- ✚ 'It's made a very big difference and it's really helped me become more confident, because I used to doubt myself a lot and now I don't'.
- ✚ I feel like I've got no limits anymore and that I can do what I want to do. I used to think 'I can't do this because I'm no good at that', but now I can do it because I can believe that I can. I think it should be something everyone does - there are so many girls out there that feel insecure, we're not the only ones'.
- ✚ It's a really good opportunity for people to have something they can grow in their self-confidence to prevent teenagers from things like suicide, the Flourish project brings back their confidence and lets them have a life.
- ✚ I recommend it because most of the people in this room feel much better about themselves. I'd definitely recommend it because it's just, first of all it's fun, but you're learning about something encouraging at the same time but they make it fun as well.

RATBY BAND

Ratby Co-operative Band has been playing Brass Music now for over 100 years. We have 5 different playing bands with over 140 musicians of all ages and abilities through our doors each week using music to enrich people's lives of both players and audiences. The funding was be used to replace existing equipment that became old and expensive to repair, more specifically the percussion equipment that ALL the bands use within the band room for practice, and then at our live performances. Purchasing the items has made a big impact on the quality of the band.

- ✚ "It's so nice to have equipment that is in tune!"
- ✚ "My mum thinks I should have a go at percussion now there are new instruments"
- ✚ The band sounds so much better now"
- ✚ "The new equipment really does offer encouragement to all involved"

SINGING FOR HEALTH

Weekly sessions, for non-confident singers, those that can't read music and may have thought they can't sing. Kathryn, the group leader encourages, supports and teach participants, she says *"everyone can sing, they just don't know it yet"*

Members have learned about the benefits of a warm-up, given in as easily accessible format so all can take part with no auditions, solos or spotlights! People work together and are encouraged to choose what they want to sing with no limit on the variety of songs. At least two members have ME and believe this has been an activity they can do without the exhaustion of many other activities. We started with one hour sessions and aim to be increasing the time as people grow in confidence.

In addition to the unsolicited comments, group members were asked for feedback for this report. This was done by offering Post-it notes to write their comments on. We had 21 comments and the following are a selection:

- ✚ Great fun and uplifting. I've really enjoyed every session. Absolutely amazing.
- ✚ Just lost my husband, made me feel so happy and extremely friendly group.
- ✚ Great to get to know other people who live in the town. Love to sing. .
- ✚ Wonderful, so happy & lively, just brilliant. I go home feeling on top of the world.



- ✚ The most enjoyable and relaxing hour in the week.
- ✚ Nice to have a sing-song with others – if nothing else it's a good way to blend in even when it goes wrong.
- ✚ A friendly group, great fun and a chance to sing with other people with no pressure.
- ✚ Amazing friendly group, so good for everyone.
- ✚ A very worthwhile group to belong to, very beneficial.
- ✚ I can now get out on a Thursday and socialise, I enjoy it.
- ✚ Come in feeling one way and go out feeling completely different.

ST CATHERINE'S CHURCH – GRAVE TALK

St Catherine's luncheon club met fortnightly over 26 weeks and the Grave Talk Café met 5 times during 2019 with one volunteer training session. Several key partners helped with the Grave Talk Café such as Professor Christina Faull from Loros Hospice who helped the group to begin the talk about the death of a loved one. Our anecdotal evidence is as follows:

- ✚ "It has been useful to talk about death, funerals and grief with strangers and friends as opposed to family"
- ✚ "Good to share in other people's experiences of death, hoping to be of help to them whilst getting something from it personally"
- ✚ "The Grave Talks gave us an opportunity to talk about all aspects of death in caring supportive group of people, I found it immensely helpful"
- ✚ "Very useful course which allows people to focus their thoughts and experience of the subject in a safe supportive environment"
- ✚ "Forward planning is important. If relatives know exactly what you want it helps them with the grieving process"

ST JAMES COMMUNITY CENTRE – CAFÉ JACQUES

Run by 21 Volunteers this friendly community group offers a friendship group in our local church hall called Café Jacques. Some make cakes, some arrange the tables and the tea and coffee, some clean and some offer a warm welcome, meeting and greeting. The people attending are between 60 and 100 years old with a 50/50 mix of male and female. The activity is mainly refreshments whilst you have a good natter and a laugh, getting to hear some great stories whilst making friends. Some like to sit and play games like dominos etc. It has been so successful we now offer a lunch club offering soup and a roll. We have also held a social events for all of our attendees. We held a WW1 Victory Meal with a singer and 112 people attending, who all said it was a great event.

We asked some of our members about how they felt attending the group and they replied as follows:

- ✚ Margaret was suffering bowel cancer and her husband had severe dementia. She rarely left her house but because she lived opposite the café, she was invited to come along. The group has transformed Margaret's life as she could escape her problems for a couple of hours a week. She regularly attended for 2 years and made many new friends who visited her when she was too ill to attend. Sadly she died last year and we miss her very much.
- ✚ June is a widow who moved to village from Stockport to be nearer her daughter. She knew no one and felt very lonely. Her neighbour encouraged June to attend the group. From this June has made many friends, attends an art class with another member and holidays with another friend made. Her social life has improved and she feels less depressed and isolated.

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- ✚ Ian is 60 years old and sadly had a stroke a few years ago which left him with a severe speech problem. Prior to the stroke he had already been left disabled due to an accident in his 40s. As a member of the café he has gained friends and his speech has improved. He never misses a week and it is a joy to know that we have helped in his recovery.
- ✚ Caryl (Volunteer): “Being a volunteer with my husband, Brian, we were so happy to see the joy our café has brought to others. However last July, Brian unexpectedly died from a heart condition, unfortunately I had also lost my daughter three years prior, also to a heart condition. I can’t express enough how wonderful my friends at the café have been, they rallied around with so much love, support and acts of kindness. I count myself lucky to be part of the wonderful rural community of Newbold Verdon.

THORNTON ARTS EXHIBITION

We hosted a two-day exhibition with workshops envisioning to hold regular events throughout the year, benefitting the wider community giving a platform for local artists to display their work. This event replaced the outdated carnival and turned out to be very well supported.

Sheila Burnage West End Art group reported:

- ✚ “Who makes art in your community? Well actually a lot of people do. We just often don’t get an opportunity to see it, to get involved in the making of it, to become part of a discussion about it or even buy it. But this is what happened in Thornton when Jill Tapping a member of the Thornton Community centre committee discussed the possibility of an innovative community art show with artist friends from the West End Art group. We thought that Thornton Community Centre was an ideal venue for such an event, having two large halls, a separate café, and access to an outside space looking over Thornton reservoir. The initiative grew with painters, sculptors, embroiderers, photographers and printers from the area coming together to provide not only eclectic, interesting and stimulating art works but also a friendly, informal environment in which visitors were encouraged to discuss, question and engage with the artists themselves. The Thornton Community Centre is going to host a similar event in July 2020 and hopefully this will become a regular feature of their calendar. This endeavour was a fine example of what a local community can do and should be doing”

TIME OUT FOR CARERS

As a new resident and carer with disabled husband, I was introduced through Social Prescribers to Local Area Coordination who introduced me to group. I joined the group in May, not knowing anyone locally. I had no previous knowledge of carers groups and there wasn’t anything like it in my area before. I have been really glad of the introduction, and I am pleased that I am part of a positive, dynamic group that is developing and growing and meets my needs. The group is open to my ideas and I feel able to contribute my skills and feel valued.

For me, joining the group has given me the benefits that have been previously mentioned, however, the biggest impact for me is the effect it has had on the family dynamics. My wellbeing is better and my stress level has gone down. This has improved my family relationships and home feels more harmonious with less conflict. My daughter has noticed this changes in me and how the family feels.

As we are a group of people with varying caring roles and expertise through experience of life, information sharing is invaluable. As a carer making an additional call or filling in another form adds significant stress and can be the final straw in some circumstances, especially when you don’t know what you are doing or what the result will be. Through the group, relevant and up to date information from people that know how it feels makes a real difference. This can be shared in relaxed environments which makes tackling situations feel very much more manageable.

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UPFRONT BREAST FEEDING

Upfront are a support group to help families establish a breastfeeding relationship and a group for mums to socialize. We run weekly groups with no fee, a dedicated phone services across Hinckley & Bosworth and support via a closed Facebook group. We aim to run free antenatal workshops if we are able to raise the money to do so.

- ✚ Hannah “ Without this group, my breast feeding journey would have ended at 3 weeks in because I didn’t realise my baby had a tongue tie, I was over producing milk and I needed support finding comfortable feeding positions. Our journey has now lasted 11 months and I plan to carry on until my daughter’s 1st birthday. Thank you so much for the group, it really is valuable to those who need support with breast feeding, a chat with like- minded people and a reason to get out of the house for a few hours. Keep up the hard work!”
 - ✚ Corinne: My husband I went to the breastfeeding group last night and found it a really relaxed and informative evening. It was great to hear from mums who have been through the journey and hear advice and information we didn’t know. My husband was surprised and happy at how much he will be able to support me as well as ways in which he can also bond with the baby. The group certainly helped us feel more prepared”
 - ✚ Eve “Without the breastfeeding group I would definitely have given up. Meeting like-minded people and making friends has been a lifeline. Still breastfeeding here at almost 10 months old.”
 - ✚ Michelle “Such a wonderful group to attend, highly recommended. So much help and support on offer and a great way to make new friends too.”
-