

creative
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WE
CARE

CREATIVE LIFE

2023
ISSUE 38



We are
family

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



CONTENTS

<p>3 A Warm Welcome Hello from CEO Anna Lunts and some of this issue's contributors.</p> <p>4 – 5 Your Good News Stories A round-up of what's been going on within the Creative Support community.</p> <p>6 – 7 Community Kindness Volunteering and being a part of your community can benefit more people than you think.</p> <p>8 Mental Health and Kindness Rebekah from Dudley talks about the link between kindness and mental health.</p> <p>9 Nature Calling Katy Taylor, who we support in the North East, shares her favourite parts of getting out and about.</p> <p>10 The Fun Loving Poet Sara W, a talented poet in Manchester, has shared her poetry journey and her latest inspirations.</p> <p>11 Bird is the Word Matt in Greater Manchester is an avid bird-watcher and photographer, and has written an article about the beauty you can find if you watch closely enough.</p> <p>12 Love Your Library Did you know there's even more to your local library than borrowing books.</p> <p>13 Charlotte's Library Tour Charlotte in Warwickshire loves her local library and all the wonderful things it has to offer.</p>	<p>14 Super Support Dog Ralph Ralph the therapy dog in training is a regular at services up and down the country, bringing joy and cuddles to all.</p> <p>15 Brett and Buster Best-Friends-Fur-ever! Brett shares his story of adopting his dog Buster, and how he helps with his mental health and confidence.</p> <p>16 Get on Growing Sunflower Competition! To mark the beginning of spring and the start of planting season, we want to invite you to Get on Growing!</p> <p>17 Cover story: Our Family Ties This year we're celebrating 'Community Connections'. We support siblings Robert, Amy, and Owen in Doncaster, who share what family means to them.</p> <p>18 – 19 Creative Stars Winners We're so excited to announce our first ever Creative Stars winners!</p> <p>20 – 21 Wall of Love Love makes the world go round, and there are many special people in our lives who we love very much.</p> <p>22 – 23 Quiz and Charlotte's Best Ever Cookies Recipe Spot the Difference, Word Search and Charlotte's cookies recipe.</p>
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Would you like to appear in this magazine?
Email: marketing@creativesupport.co.uk and send in your story!

Hello from Anna



Hello and welcome to the first 2023 issue of Creative Life!

This year, we are encouraging people to get involved in their communities and build connections with their local area. We have already seen so many people get involved in 'Community Connections', and the wonderful contributors throughout this issue have shared their stories on the first four elements of the year including: Family and Friends, Community Kindness, Love your Library, and Get on Growing.

Thank you to all who joined the Creative Life Editorial Meeting to get involved and share ideas, including: Dawn Moss, Helen Alton, Adam Clarke, Seymour Drive, Shetland Drive, and Railway Street. It's always inspirational to see people get involved in Creative Life and shape the issue, and if you would like to take part next time, then please get in touch with our Communications Team via their email address: communications@creativesupport.co.uk

Without further ado, I would like to hand over the reins to three of our wonderful contributors who have shared their stories throughout this issue: Charlotte, who has toured her local library and shared a delicious recipe for you to try on pages 13 and 23 respectfully, Matt who is an avid bird watcher and photographer and shared his perspective on the beauty of the great outdoors on page 11, and Helen who has shared the love in the creation of the Wall of Love on pages 20-21.

Anna Lunts, Chief Executive

A Word From Our Contributors



Charlotte Shakespeare: "I really enjoy contributing to the Creative Life magazines and reading what other people have done and achieved. I hope my article inspires you to find out all about your local library and everything it has to offer. I have included my favourite baking recipe for you to have a go at. I would love to see some pictures of your finished cookies!"



Helen Alton: "I like to be in Creative Life, I like reading the magazine as it helps me to live a healthy lifestyle. I hope people enjoy the puzzles inside. There's a photo of me and my boyfriend Dan on the Wall of Love on page 21 – we've been together for two years! I also hosted the Stockport Business Awards and the 30th Awards last year [you can find Helen in our last issue too!]"



Matt Holden: "It was great to contribute to Creative Life. I hope my photography and article give some insight into my favourite bird and inspires people to look out for birds and see them in a different light."

We would love to hear what you think of this issue!
If you'd like to get in touch, please email: marketing@creativesupport.co.uk

YOUR GOOD NEWS STORIES



Let's take a look at some of the lovely things that are happening in our services all across the country. We love seeing what everyone gets up to, so if you have a good news story you'd like to share, send it to communications@creativesupport.co.uk and you could feature in the next Creative Life!

Community Calling in Essex



Thistley Green have been at the centre of their community's hearts recently when they asked for help with their garden and patio area. Essex Aquatics, Naked Gardeners, Lee at G&B Finch plus Dale at Travis Perkins helped kindly donating materials to the project.

Thanks to their generosity a beautiful patio area for the 11 residents at Thistley Green has been built. This work has gone a long way to giving the people at the service a happy space, all thanks to the kindness of strangers.

Laura Newcombe, the Area Manager said: "We are very excited to host the companies and celebrate such excellent community spirit."

Postman Mark in Wolverhampton



Mark from Firsbrook House has achieved 30 years of service with Royal Mail! The team at his service are "very chuffed and proud" of Mark, and so are we here at Creative Life! Mark said: "I feel proud to have achieved 30 years working for the Royal Mail. I would like to thank my colleagues Stuart and Jane for their help over the years." Congratulations Mark, 30 years is something to celebrate indeed.



Skipping for Joy in Doncaster

Adrian in Doncaster has recently completed his skipping challenge, setting himself the goal of doing more than 100 skips per day, and has raised over £160 for Cancer Research UK! He said: "I am so pleased to have achieved this." The team at his service are "so proud" of Adrian, and said: "He always tries to encourage everyone around him to get healthier so the skipping challenges was perfect for him." What an achievement, and for such a wonderful cause- congrats Adrian!



All That Jazz in Bromsgrove

Faye, Sonia, and Simone have been working really hard towards their awards in Jazz. They go dancing every week and all "really enjoy going and have so much fun."

In November, they all won the Gold Award in Jazz and were highly commended. They received their awards at the beginning of 2023, and are really proud of their achievements. They're going for their next award in May, which we're sure they will excel in too!



On Your Laurels in Cumbria

Lynn, the daughter of Mary who we support at The Laurels, was so grateful for the wonderful care and support the team have been providing to her dear mum.

She said "I had an amazing visit to The Laurels today and I could have stayed all afternoon - it was like visiting my mam in her own home. When I arrived, she was getting her nails varnished by one of the amazing staff who then asked if I had come to get my nails done too! While she enjoyed being pampered, I was able to spend time with my uncle who was enjoying the sunshine through his bedroom window. Then my mam came to take me to her room to show me the new cushion which she had crocheted. After asking me the time, she then shooed me off so she didn't miss lunch!"

I wanted to send you this compliment to let people know the positives which can happen for older people. After a few awful years and sadly losing my dad, life has thrown me a curve ball and I have my mam back happier than I ever thought possible. I have no hesitation in recommending The Laurels to anyone of my friends whose older family members may be struggling."

A huge thank you to Lynn and Mary, and of course, the brilliant team at The Laurels who go above and beyond.



Have you got an interesting story, some exciting news or a photo of something that you're really proud of?

We want to hear about it!

We can share your story on our website, social media, or maybe even feature you in the next issue of Creative Life!

Keep up to date with our good news by following us @crtvsprrt



Community Kindness

Volunteering and being a part of your community can benefit more people than you think. The lovely folks at Seymour Drive regularly volunteer at their local community coffee morning, chatting with people and keeping them company. Dawn and Marie have talked to us about the importance of community kindness.

"We started going before the pandemic, and it was a way for the tenants at Seymour Drive to give back," explained Dawn, Registered Manager. "Our local church started a coffee morning for older people in the community to get together, especially during the winter period who may be a bit more isolated. We heard about the coffee mornings through a friend the tenants had made while on a day

trip to a local farm. A gentleman with support needs was there with his mum, and him and the tenants quickly got to talking. His mum mentioned the coffee mornings, and how the church was looking for friendly volunteers to come and help out. We were looking for new community-based activities for the guys, who

were already doing things like collecting items and donating them to help out a local dog's home.

"We got in touch with the folks who organised the coffee morning, who happily agreed to let the tenants come down and help out. The coffee morning gives people an opportunity to connect with others, who may live on their own and want to have a coffee and a chat in a safe space.

"It was all about their way of doing their bit. The tenants might communicate nonverbally, but that doesn't stop them from making friends. One tenant uses Makaton, another uses different tones of his voice or pointing, and another uses gestures such as laughing, standing up, etc. We initially started going with four tenants, but one of the tenants has since moved, so now it's one or two tenants at a time. David and Tony are the main two who go a lot, whereas Tracey has started going to the day centre again now that it's reopened, and our newest tenant Leslie come along now too.

"It's all about community values. We wanted to arrange this for our tenants so they had a way to give back to the community and be integrated into it. It can be hard for people to make friendships, but doing this gave them the chance to get to know more people. Nowadays, when they go into town everyone knows them and say hello! It's become more than just a coffee morning."

Margie, a Support Worker at Seymour Drive, said: "It's lovely seeing the tenants get involved with the community. When they go out, everyone knows them now! Taxi drivers know them too, and one of them who sees the

guys regularly gets out of his car to come and have a chat. The folks at Seymour do lots of things with the community now, like the disco on the Mondays because they all love dancing. We also go to bingo, and join up with a local day centre on a Friday, which has been lovely because the attendees are all old friends from school and it's so lovely that they've kept in touch."



Seymour Drive has got the community spirit.



Always up for a coffee and a chat.



Service User Feature

Mental Health and Kindness

Rebekah Salisbury, a person we support in Dudley, is a regular contributor to Creative Life. In this issue, she looks at the link between mental health and kindness, and how good deeds can benefit a community.



Everything in life needs a balance – rest and recreation, food and drink, work and play, but also our physical and mental health. Sometimes, due to no fault of our own, our mental health can take a back seat which in turn affects other aspects of our daily lives.

One way of restoring some of the balance is to use kindness, both towards ourselves and to others.

Kindness (noun): the quality of being friendly, generous, and considerate; a kind act (English Oxford Living Dictionaries).

Helping others can also benefit our own mental health and wellbeing. Kind acts help to reduce stress, whilst also improving our mood, self-esteem, and happiness.

The Kindness Test, launched on BBC Radio 4 and devised by the University of Sussex in 2021, was an online questionnaire about the public study of kindness. More than 60,000 people from across 144 different countries chose to take part, with ages ranging from 18 to 99. It revealed a link between kindness and wellbeing: people who said they receive, give, or notice more acts of kindness, also reported higher levels of well-being. The study also found that people who talk to strangers, see and receive more kindness.

I was recently invited to my first Iftaar (breaking of the fast) during Ramadan. It was an amazing experience to share with such a lovely family and with so many wonderful different foods to taste. I was so humbled by their warm hospitality and it has really made me appreciate the kindness of others, enabling me to try and help others more too.

Good deeds don't need to be time consuming or cost any money.

Some ideas for helping others and your community with kindness can be to:

- Volunteer at a local community organisation.
- Call or check-in safely with a friend/neighbour.
- Read stories at your local library, school or nursery to children.
- Involve your friends and neighbours in community projects.
- Offer to skill-share with a friend – you could teach guitar, dance or a new recipe.
- Tell a family member how much you love and appreciate them.
- Offer a listening ear to someone who simply wants to talk.

Although helping others is a great way to improve our mental health, we need to have a healthy balance in this field of our lives too – giving away all of our energy, especially if we are finding things hard for ourselves and want to just focus on other people is an easy thing to do. Make sure to leave enough time and space for yourself – kindness has to start with you.

There are many different ways that we can bring kindness into our everyday lives, and to help others too. Start small, so you don't get overwhelmed or give more than you are financially, physically or mentally able to.

By being kind to ourselves foremost, and also reaching out to offer help to others, we can slowly bring more kindness to the world.

By Rebekah Salisbury from the Yardley Hub, Birmingham.



Service User Feature

Nature Calling

Katy Taylor, who we support in the North East, has shared her favourite parts above getting out and about in nature this spring.



After the end of 2022, with Christmas and New Year in our past, the year of 2023 has begun and spring is here! Summer is only a blink away. As we're coming out of a long cold winter and darker nights, we will begin to see the sun beaming overhead and the time for adventures will begin.



The beautiful landscaped gardens.

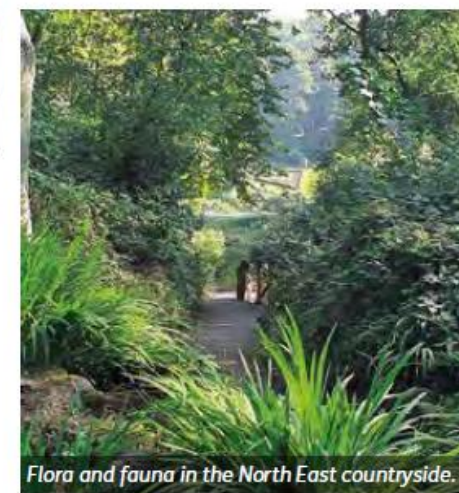
Whether it's sitting on a beach or walking along the sea front, or even walking through a forest or country park, there is so much to do in the North East of England. As for summer activities and daily trips, there are so many locations to visit, such as Saltwell Park in Gateshead, High Farm and Rising Sun Country Park in Wallsend, and lovely beaches from Tynemouth, Cullercoats and Whitley Bay. As the song sang by the band Right Said Fred goes: "the sun changes everything". It will be the dawn of summer days and warmer nights, with time to ditch

the coats, hats and gloves and get ready for the summer glow.

According to an article by the NHS, sunlight can offer a great source of vitamin D, as well as other health benefits like improving sleep, reducing stress and depression. The benefits of vitamin D can range from lowering the risk of developing multiple sclerosis, decreasing the chance of heart disease, while also supporting the immune system. With longer days coming, people should be able to get all the health benefits that the sun offers within their daily routine. However, always remember to wear sunscreen!

With all this in mind, it's now time to reconnect with the roots of nature, and bring on the New Year adventures.

By Katy Taylor from Knavesmire House, Tyneside.



Flora and fauna in the North East countryside.

The Fun-Loving Poet

Sara Whitehead is a talented poet and artist, who regularly attends Creative Together in Manchester.

"I started getting into poetry before I had my brain tumour, which was when I was seven," she said. "It took me about five years after my tumour to start writing again."

"I always wanted to be a journalist when I was a child. I struggled a bit with writing stories, so I got into doing poems. I've got quite a funny character about me, and I put my comedy into my style so my personality comes out. I want to make people smile with my poetry."

Sara volunteers at a local care home, and has written this poem about Brian, one of the residents. "I live just round the corner from the care home. I felt like I had nothing to do, so I went in and asked if they needed anybody to help. I make coffee and tea and chat with everyone. I want to help make people's lives a bit better."

"Brian is in a wheelchair. He's a very chatty guy, and makes a lot of jokes so we get on. When I write, I use the rhyme first, and then come up with a line that works for the rhyme."



Sara W; superstar singer, poet and artist!

Brian

*He gets around in his power chair
Then he needs no extra care
We often go into the canteen
Oh my gosh look who I've seen
It's Brian again with his
smiley face
Eating his grub at his own pace
We sit and chatter
About things that matter
Brian no longer travels on ships
and on planes
He finds it frustrating almost
insane
Taking from his wealth
He pays for his aging health
We say goodbye and go on our way
To come back and see him
another day.*

- Sara W, Manchester.

Sara W

BIRD IS THE WORD



Hi I'm Matt. I'm 32 years old from Greater Manchester. I am autistic, have M.E., and a heart condition, and I am also a wheelchair user.

I started bird-watching sometime between 2013 and 2014. I've always loved animals, so it seems natural I'd find myself preoccupied with any living thing (other than humans!). What got me excited about birds was that I learnt that birds are direct descendants of theropod dinosaurs (which includes the famous T-Rex).

My interest in bird and wildlife photography inspired me to join the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT). I began going to their nature reserves, where I see much more variety in species. Even so, one bird remains my favourite and I often see it in the garden. That is the Eurasian Jay.

The Eurasian Jay is in the 'Corvid' family group of birds, which also includes crows and magpies. The Eurasian Jay could be considered the flashiest of the corvids, with its beige body and fleashes of blue on its wings, along with a black moustache near its beak. They're timid birds, and despite their colourful plumage, many people have never seen one.

Jays love acorns, and when the acorns drop, they will be busy collecting and burying them in the autumn. They can bury around 3,000 acorns and remember where they buried most of them! But, those that do get forgotten will sometimes sprout into oak tree saplings, and given enough time, will eventually grow into

"What got me excited about birds was that I learnt that birds are direct descendants of theropod dinosaurs (which includes the famous T-Rex)"

- Matt, Manchester.

a mighty oak tree. Many oak trees you see today probably got their start in life from a Jay burying an acorn many years ago.

Learning about birds and getting out and about to watch and photograph birds has been a great help for my mental health. When I'm feeling at my worst, it's therapeutic to watch the birds come and go from the bird feeders in the garden.



Matt's close-up picture of a Jay, great detail!

Love your library



John Trotter, Senior Support Worker in Manchester, shares his top tips for getting the most out of your local library.

Did you know there's so much more to your local library than books? Like me, you love reading, then the library must seem like a treasure trove of unread goodies. From getting into the Valentine's spirit with a romance novel, to scaring yourself silly with a horror story, the library is literally an A-Z of all different kinds of literature.

However, there are many more things to enjoy at your local library. If you like dancing the night away to good music then there are often hundreds of CDs available to borrow. Or, do you prefer to relax in front of good film? Great! Libraries these days have a large selection of DVDs too. You can chill with a comedy, get stuck in to a good drama or be ready for action in front of a superhero smash hit! The best thing is you can enjoy all these music and films for free and borrow them for as long as you want. All you need is a library card which you can sign up for (for free) on your first visit. What a great way to enjoy new things AND save money at the same time.

You might think thinking that books, CDs and DVDs were all that the library has to

"The best thing is you can enjoy all these music and films for free and borrow them for as long as you want. All you need is a library card which you can sign up for free, on your first visit."

offer, but there's even more to enjoy than that. A lot of libraries have jigsaws and board games. Some are for borrowing, whereas others can be used on site. It would make for a perfect Friday afternoon trip out with a friend or staff, to play some games and return home ready for the weekend with a new book, CD and DVD. The vast majority of things to see and do at the library are completely free. If you do find yourself in the

mood to spend a few well-earned pounds then there is often the option of treating yourself to a new poster or colouring book available for a small fee.

Books, music, films or games aren't your thing? No problem! Another service the library provides is free use of the computers including their wifi. Check your emails, complete an online shop or simply surf the web to your heart's content. Should you need to print anything, then most libraries will allow you to do this for just a few pennies per page - an absolute bargain.

Next time you walk past the library just think of all the fun you could be having. The possibilities really are endless. Don't forget to ask for a schedule at the desk too, as many of them have community groups and classes running each week where you can learn skills and make new friends. There's something for everyone. Give it a try, I'm sure you'll soon learn to love your library.

**By John Trotter,
Senior Support Worker
in Manchester.**



CHARLOTTE'S LIBRARY TOUR



Charlotte in Warwickshire loves her local library and all the wonderful things it has on offer. She has spoken to us about what she gets from her library, and what you can too!

I really enjoy visiting my local library, which is located in the town centre. My favourite thing to do at the library is to look through all the books and go online on their computers, which is where I am also able to search the whole library catalogue and request books to read. My favourite type of book would have to be cookery, as I love trying out new recipes with my support workers and find it boring if I keep using the same recipes all the time.

I also love reading autobiographies and finding out more about people's lives. Some that I've read recently are those from Gok Wan, Elton John and Linda Nolan. I am going to be reading Beth Meads book next.

The library offers many things such as printing, photocopying, computers, and social groups for activities such as arts, crafts, and board games. They also provide lots of information about what's going on in the local area, and the team at the library can also help you with applying for things like a disabled bus pass and a blue badge for parking.

I highly recommend becoming a member of your local library as you are able to do a lot of things free of charge. This all helps with the cost of living crisis, as you are able to use a computer and read or borrow books without having to pay a penny!



SUPER SUPPORT DOG RALPH

Claire works in our Complex Care team, and last year adopted an adorable little dog named Ralph. "A seasoned train traveller", Ralph is a PAT (Pets as Therapy) dog in training and visits services across the country, bringing joy and cuddles to all.

Claire knew that a lot of the services she visited would really benefit from having a furry friend around, so when Ralph was four months old he started his training. "He was already very familiar with people and children, so I offered to take him to places with me. He's been to lots of places including Essex, the North East and Cumbria. It's a good way for me to get to know people too. Having Ralph with me helps people to feel more at ease so they can feel more confident and spend time with me".

Ralph is most at home when visiting Thistley Green in Essex. He loves running around in the outdoor spaces and going to people's meetings, especially Marc's with cheese and pineapple! "It's one of his favourite places, the



Jake loves giving Ralph a cuddle.

people who live there really helped to train him. He adores all the tenants and staff there. 'Where's Ralph?' is the first thing people ask. They even bought him a box for his things with his name on!"

One of the tenants, Jake, loves seeing Ralph and giving him an affectionate squeeze. Ralph even visited Jake in hospital, and really helped to cheer him up. "I feel very relaxed, it's nice to see him and he is very cute," said Jake.

Jacob, one of the tenants at Hall Lane, really enjoys getting out and about with Ralph. "Recently they went out for an hour and a half," said Claire. "Jacob was really motivated and wanted to keep walking because we were with Ralph."

By having Ralph around paves the way for other support dogs to visit services, and ease the process of meeting strangers and doing new things. Who could resist such a cute visitor?!

At the moment Ralph is training for his PAT dog test, which will allow him to volunteer at other places. Once he passes, he'll receive his own yellow uniform and be an official therapy dog. Good luck with your test Ralph, we're sure you'll do a pawsome job!



Ralph bringing joy to so many we support.

Brett and Buster – Best Friends Forever!

Hi my name is Brett, I live in Gateshead and have been with Creative Support for over four years. I suffer from PTSD, depression, paranoia and anxiety. This is my story on how the service has helped me.

I was referred to Creative Support by the crisis team, who I used to be in constant contact with. I lived in a high rise block of flats, and it was really lonely for me as I mostly stayed in my flat where I felt safe. There were times I didn't want to do anything because my mental health wouldn't let me.

Later on I moved into a downstairs flat, where I didn't have to be alone anymore because I was allowed a pet! I got myself a ten week old pug to keep me company. I named him Buster, and he is a playful bundle of joy. Going out on walks with Buster gets me a lot of positive interactions with people, and I feel that helps with my anxiety a lot.



Best pals Brett and Buster.

I am not as depressed as I was before I got him. The saying "a dog is a man's best friend" really is true! I still have really bad days but Buster helps me through them. Without Creative Support and Buster I don't know where I would be now. I go out and about with my support worker Andrew to the park, and Buster tags along as well (he's like my shadow). We have plans for when the weather gets better, with Buster included of course as he's joined at my hip!

Brett's Support Worker Andrew said: "Since our first meeting in September I've noticed massive changes in Brett's mood and behaviour. At first he didn't leave the house and he would try to avoid social interactions of any kind. After getting Buster, Brett knew he would have to start going out on walks, and doing so he started to receive positive interactions from fellow dog walkers and other members of the public. Anyone would be drawn to a little pug wearing a security jacket, it's beyond adorable! I noticed immediately how much Brett's overall mood increased and his positive attitude due to his new four-legged companion.

He spends so much time picking out new outfits for Buster and I don't think I have seen a dog with as many toys and treats. Brett's confidence and mental health has improved massively, as he is now actively planning group activities with other service users alongside myself. How much change a little pug can bring is beyond belief - I generally do see a bright future for Brett and Buster!"

"I am not as depressed as I was before I got him. The saying 'a dog is a man's best friend' really is true! I still have really bad days but Buster helps me through them. Without Creative Support and Buster I don't know where I would be now."

– Brett, Gateshead.

Get on Growing Sunflower Competition!

To mark the beginning of spring and the start of planting season, we want to invite you to Get on Growing!

Tying into April's theme of 'Get on Growing' and getting a head start on your garden, we're launching a sunflower competition to bring the sunshine into your green space.

To get involved in our **Get on Growing competition**, plant your seeds by the end of May so they can grow beautifully in time for summer.

Check out our '**Sunflower Growing Guide**' on our website which shows the step-by-step process of helping your sunflowers thrive- even in British weather!

If gardening isn't your thing – don't worry! You can also get involved in our Sunflower Competition by getting creative, so swap your green thumb for a painted one and craft a sunflower instead. You can submit drawings, paintings, photographs, or sculptures of sunflowers and be in the chance to win, so get creative!

Send in pictures of your sunflower and any steps of growing it, or pictures of your crafty creations to the Marketing team via marketing@creativesupport.co.uk Please make sure you send in your submissions by 1st September to submit your photos.

We can't wait to see you all bring the sun, so Get on Growing!

We'll have 3 categories:

1. **Tallest sunflower**
2. **Best artwork or craft**
3. **Best photography**

We'll also have separate prizes for staff and people we support!



Cover Story

OUR FAMILY TIES

This year we're celebrating 'Community Connections', and one of our first connections in life are with our family. We support Amy, Robert and Owen in Doncaster, who are three siblings with a close bond. Amy has been with Creative Support since December 2015, followed by Owen who joined 18 months later. Robert then joined at the end of December 2017.

They have shared their family story with us, and spoke about what it means to all be supported by Creative Support.

Robert has kindly put together the article with Amy and Owen.

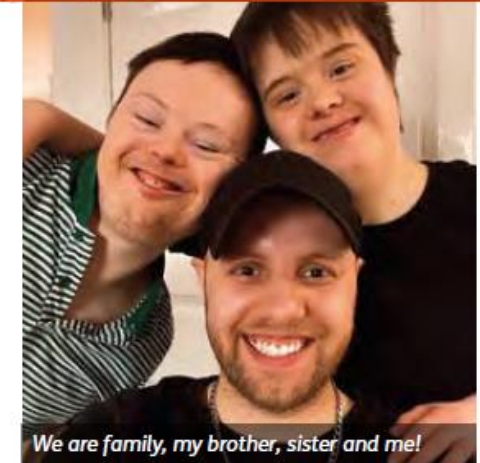
"We as siblings all have a very close connection with one another, which is something that's priceless and money can't buy! Although each of us are so very different and unique in our own way, we all get on so well when we're together." said Robert.

"Living close to each other is a mega bonus to all of our lives. It means that we can see each other quite frequently when it comes to events, days out, or to visit each other. Some weekends when we don't have much planned, we often have a Sunday dinner together. This is lovely as we all enjoy brother and sister time."

"We are very family orientated and know that we mustn't take these precious moments together for granted. We live in the moment as much as we can and cherish all of our blessings together as it's very important.

"Living close to each other is a mega bonus to all of our lives. It means that we can see each other quite frequently when it comes to events, days out, or to visit each other."

– Robert, Doncaster.



We are family, my brother, sister and me!

"It's certainly a nice feeling that Amy and Owen look up to me as a big brother, and they always look forward to seeing me when I visit. They share accommodation together, and I have my own self-contained flat which I love.

"We are all looking forward to when the warmer weather picks up so that we can have more exciting family days out together, and more adventures!"

Robert, Amy and Owen's mum Jane said that their set up is "perfect" and shared how much it means to have her children all supported by the same provider. "We couldn't believe our luck when Owen was able to move into an available room in Amy's apartment! Then when Robert was given the chance of moving into a single apartment, we thought 'what a blessing' it is to have all three children in one place."

"As far as family are concerned, maintaining contact with all three is so much easier," Jane continued. "Whilst they have quite different needs, they often spend time together, enjoying meals in each other's apartments or out with family and friends. I have no doubt that their service is the ideal way forward for supported living. It is a community, almost like a little village, rather than a house in a street."

Creative Stars Winners



We're so excited to announce our first ever Creative Stars winners! Our brand-new service user awards have four new exciting categories, and the winners in each category will receive a £30 Love2Shop voucher, certificate and badge. Congratulations to all of our nominees- you are all Creative Stars and help inspire others with your achievements!

Eco-Friendly Award

Alexander Groome, Worcestershire

Alex has been impressing the staff at his service with how environmentally conscious he is with his everyday choices.

Alex found time to organise weekly litter pickings, as well as keeping two volunteer jobs and work around his daily routine. He's taken the lead on maintaining the car park and green areas at his service, making it look welcoming to both residents and guests.

Tenants Janet and Faye have said thank you for his help in keeping everything so tidy. Alex, you're a superstar for helping not just your service, but the planet too!



Positivity Award

Aisha Begum, Blackburn



Our Positivity Award goes to Aisha, who always has a lovely smile on her face and spreads positivity around the service!

Aisha has been showing a positive attitude towards developing her daily living skills, personal care and laundry on a daily basis. She's also shown great commitment to improving her mental health, which is helping her make great steps towards her move-on plans.

Aisha says her new regime has made her feel "so much better in herself". Well done Aisha, you've made some equally positive steps for both yourself and bringing joy to your service!

Community Champion Award

Jimmy Grant, Grimsby



Jimmy was nominated for Community Champion for his fantastic engagement in local clubs, as well as bringing a smile to all those around him.

Jimmy is part of four clubs at his local leisure centre, where he's made lots of friends as he "brightens the room" whenever he comes in!

Jimmy is also part of the local social club, where this year he dressed up as Santa! These activities have all improved Jimmy's physical and mental health, as he's been enjoying going out more and socialising in the community.

Well done Jimmy, you're a joy to those around you, and you're a true Community Champion!

High Flyer Award

Ruby Sidhu, Grimsby

Ruby was nominated for her fantastic personal achievement as she has started to engage with a routine, improving her personal care and doing her laundry regularly. Ruby's dad commented that Ruby has been a lot calmer and relaxed since starting her routine.

Well done Ruby, you've been working really hard to make consistent changes and these have made such a positive difference. You've shown huge improvements in listening to instructions and accepting advice. Your family and staff members applaud you, as do we!



Thank you to our judging panel at Cecil Gardens for helping to decide the winners! Want to host a judging panel for our next awards? You can choose which month suits you best, and we'll provide £10 for refreshments! Get in touch at creative.stars@creativesupport.co.uk

Each month you can send nominations for people who you think deserve to be recognised as Creative Stars. You can find the nomination form on our website. Send your forms over to creative.stars@creativesupport.co.uk Good luck and shine bright!

WALL OF LOVE

Love makes the world go round, and there are many special people in our lives who we love very much. It could be your parents, siblings, friends, or partner- whoever it may be, they make our lives lovely.

This 'Wall of Love' celebrates the important people in our lives, who have shared their love with the Creative Support community for us to appreciate.

Raymond and Christine, Sheffield

Raymond surprised Christine on Valentine's Day with a proposal - congrats to the happy couple!



Lottie and Damon, Grimsby

"We really enjoy spending time together and relaxing on the sofa watching TV - our favourite things to watch are game shows and movies. We have been together for four years, and every year we go to a Valentine's Disco to celebrate Lottie's birthday and the love we have for each other. We are very happy together and like to spend as much time together as possible. We do date nights, movie nights, hot chocolate nights, and do activities together."



Helen and Dan, Stockport

"I love my boyfriend Dan, we both like to dance at the disco, watch DVDs, and talking on WhatsApp - we send each other texts every day!"

Chris and Rita, North Lincolnshire

"We met at Westbridge seven years ago, we both lived at Acorn House. We are very happy together and we get on good. It is nice to have company, and we love each other."



Spot The Difference

There are 10 differences (plus one hard bonus) in these two pictures, grab a pen or pencil and see how many differences you can find! If you find all 10 (plus the bonus) you could be in the chance of winning a £10 Love2shop voucher. Send your answers to Marketing!

A



B



Photography by Katy Taylor

Would you like to appear in this magazine?
Email: marketing@creativesupport.co.uk and send in your story!

Spring Flowers Word Search

D	L	L	S	A	D	S	C	A	L	I	L	S	R
A	A	R	H	R	P	Y	Y	A	W	J	A	I	S
I	S	A	N	I	N	Y	S	I	O	I	O	S	D
S	E	C	L	P	L	O	R	N	I	D	R	Y	L
I	G	U	Y	I	O	I	Q	D	A	H	L	I	A
E	T	H	L	A	S	U	T	R	T	P	O	Y	H
S	M	S	Y	I	I	H	T	N	I	C	A	Y	H
F	E	R	L	L	F	O	R	S	Y	T	H	I	A
I	R	T	S	D	R	E	D	N	E	V	A	L	M
W	Y	S	T	E	R	I	A	L	F	S	L	E	N
M	C	R	E	P	E	M	E	R	T	L	E	P	Y
I	L	M	A	I	L	L	I	W	T	E	E	W	S
O	I	T	E	C	A	R	N	A	T	I	O	N	S
S	S	A	C	C	D	A	F	F	O	D	I	L	S

JONQUILS
SWEET WILLIAM
WYSTERIA
DAHLIA
TULIPS
CARNATIONS
DAFFODILS
CREPE MERTLE
FORSYTHIA
HYACINTH
LILAC
LAVENDER
PANSY
LILY
DAISIES
IRIS



Charlotte's Best Ever Cookies

Charlotte, who wrote about the wonders of her local library on page 13, has also included a recipe for delicious cookies! "This is one of my favourite baking recipes that I use," said Charlotte. Let us know if you have a bash and send us your pictures via: communications@creativesupport.co.uk

Ingredients:

150g salted butter, softened
80g light brown sugar
80g granulated sugar
2 tsp vanilla extract
225g plain flour
1 egg
½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
¼ tsp salt
200g chocolate chips or chocolate chunks (your choice!)



Method:

Step One; Heat your oven to 190°C, or to 170°C if it's a fan oven, or to gas mark five, then line your baking sheets with greaseproof paper.


Step Two; Mix your 150g butter with 80g brown sugar and 80g granulated sugar in a bowl and beat until thoroughly mixed. Then add in your vanilla extract and egg (make sure there's no shell!)

Step Three; Using a sieve, sift in your 225g plain flour, ½ tsp bicarb of soda, and ¼ tsp salt into the bowl with the butter and sugar, and give that all a good mix. Then add in your chocolate chips, chunks, or other chocolate of your choice, and stir it all together.

Step Four; Make scoops of the mixture using a spoon. If you use a teaspoon you can get around 30 cookies out of the mix, but if you use a tablespoon you'll get bigger cookies (just less of them!)

Step Five; Bake your cookies until they are light brown on the edges and still slightly soft in the centre if you press them. This will be around 8-10 minutes if you have made smaller cookies, but bigger cookies might take a few minutes longer.

Step Six; Take your cookies out of the oven and leave them to cool on a cooling rack before enjoying!



Have Your Say!

Want to take part in shaping new projects and make them the best they can be?
Then we would love to hear from you!

We want as many people as possible to be involved and have their say about projects, magazines, and more. If you would like to be a part of a Feedback Group and have a peek into upcoming projects, please get in touch at: communications@creativesupport.co.uk



These groups will meet over Zoom, and you can take part in as many or as few as you'd like.

The year is flying by, but there's still many more exciting things to come! Don't forget to keep up with our What's On Guide and Journal to get the most out of our monthly themes. Here's what's coming up over the next few months.

May – Getting out, Feeling Great



It's time to explore! From walking groups to wildlife spotting, to exercise and fitness, ditch your screens and enjoy the fresh air. We'd love to hear about your favourite places in your local area, and any new spots you discover.



June – Big Idea, Volunteer

There are so many benefits to volunteering, from meeting new people, finding new places and learning new skills. We'll be sharing helpful tips to help you get started, as well as some experiences of existing volunteers who love giving back to their community.

July – Open Access



July is all about accessibility, including knowing your rights, accessing your community, and finding creative ways to meet like-minded people. Think about some accessible places in your community, and creative ways to improve accessibility in your local area and share them with us.

If you haven't got your Journal yet, make sure to contact: marketing@creativesupport.co.uk to order your physical copy, or access the online version on our website.



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