



CREATIVE LIFE

ISSUE 44 – 2026

A photograph of a man with a beard and blue-rimmed glasses, sitting in a wheelchair. He is wearing a green and blue plaid shirt and is smiling broadly, showing his teeth. The background is a colorful, abstract painting with various shades of green, yellow, and pink. The text 'Colours of the Carnival' is overlaid in large white letters on the lower part of the image.

Colours of the Carnival

Our artistic adventures!

Contents

- 3 Welcome**
A warm welcome from CEO Anna Lunts and some of our guest writers from this issue.
- 4-5 Living Our Best Lives**
Our Good News Stories in this edition are all about your exciting outings and dreams coming true.
- 6-7 Robert Loves Where He Lives**
Robert in Doncaster shares his passion for interior design and how he makes his flat feel like home.
- 8 Creative Competitions 2026**
This year we have the exciting Art Competition and Creative Mission Competition open for your entries! Learn how to enter and get inspired for your chance to win a We Care hoodie.
- 9 Blackpool Engagement Workshop**
Folks in Blackpool enjoyed a day exploring this year's journals at their Engagement Workshop.
- 10-11 Kalash's Passion for Fashion**
Kalash in Doncaster shares her stylistic takes and shows us how to stay on trend, no matter your budget.
- 12-13 Kat and Keelie... A Love Story**
A heartwarming love story from Northamptonshire, inspiring us to follow our hearts and let love grow.
- 14 Culture Nights in Stoke**
Alex, Gen and Thomas have been learning about different cultures through food and games.
- 15 Hull Culture Day**
The folks in Hull celebrated the rich cultural backgrounds in their community with a fun day filled with food and laughter.
- 16-17 Creative Fun at Venture Arts**
Art is all about expressing yourself, as Michael and Josh's experiences at the art centre show.
- 18 Bedford Crystal Gala**
The annual Gala in Bedford brought everyone together to shine bright.
- 19 Christina's Volunteering Journey**
Christina finds a passion for coffee-making in Manchester.
- 20 All about Creative Space Centre**
The largest multi-sensory centre in the UK welcomes you to a behind-the-scenes look at what makes it tick.
- 21 Get Involved in Our Events**
Events Lead Sian tells us about all the events she is planning for you this year.
- 22-23 Word Search & Spot The Difference**
There are 10 differences to spot. Grab a pen or pencil and see how many you can find.



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Hello from Anna



Hello and welcome to issue 44 of Creative Life!

This is our first issue of 2026, and what a lovely start to the year it's been! In this issue, we hear about what enables you to say our first 'I' Statement: 'I live my best life in a place I call home'. Robert in Doncaster tells us how he used his talent to transform his flat into a beautiful home.

We have included lots of amazing stories, featuring your adventures and milestones. The people we support in Stoke and Hull tell us about their experiences learning about different cultures, while Christina in Manchester takes us on her volunteering journey at a local café. We hear about the fantastic art Michael and Josh have created at Venture Arts, and how Kat and Keelie fell in love in Wellingborough.

This issue also spotlights Bedford's annual Crystal Gala, and some of the fantastic upcoming events you could attend in 2026. We hope you enjoy all the stories in this issue of Creative Life, and look forward to seeing what else you get up to this year.

Anna Lunts

Anna Lunts, Chief Executive

A Word From Our Contributors



Kat and Keelie

"We've really enjoyed the opportunity to tell people what we like to do. We are excited for people to read our story, and hopefully inspire others to share theirs too!"

Robert

"It's an honour to be featured in Creative Life. Interior design has always been about more than aesthetics for me - it's about creating spaces that feel authentic and personal. If readers take anything from my story, I hope it's the confidence to trust their instincts and design spaces that tell their own story."



Kalash

"I love showing people my clothes, shoes and handbags as my bedroom means the world to me. Looking nice makes me feel like a million dollars."

We would love to hear what you think of this issue!

If you'd like to get in touch, please email: communications@creativesupport.co.uk

LIVING OUR BEST LIVES

This year we're looking at our 'I' Statements, and what they mean to you. From 'living your best life in a place you call home' to 'feeling able to reach your full potential', we'd love to see and hear from you about how the statements relate to your life. Send us your writing, artwork and photography to communications@creativesupport.co.uk to be in with the chance of being featured in the next issue of Creative Life!

Chris and Francis's trip to Devon

Chris and Francis from the West Midlands had a great time together on their second holiday to Tuckenhay! They enjoyed swimming, chilling in the sauna and Jacuzzi, going on picnics, beach walks, and crazy golf at Babbacombe Model Village. They also both tried new things like cave exploration, going to the lighthouse, and adventuring down the River Dart in Dartmoor. Chris said his "happiest moment was the pitch black in Kent Cave" while Francis said his best part was seeing the lighthouse for the first time.



Charles' holiday to Brussels

Charles in Liverpool took a trip of a lifetime to Brussels, a place he has a real connection to and has wanted to visit for a really long time. After building up his confidence by doing lots of fun trips, such as Wimbledon, Charles felt ready and excited for a trip abroad. Charles said he had "the most amazing time" and that it was "even better than he ever imagined." Next up on Charles's list is Paris so watch this space!



Ruthie's Cat

Ruthie in the North East has always wanted a cat, and staff wanted to help make those dreams come true. They supported Ruthie to visit her local cat rescue centre. When Ruthie spotted a small bundle of black and white fur, she knew immediately that Tasha was her cat and adopted her there and then.

"My staff helped me to get a cat," said Ruthie. "I look after her and I love her. Before I got my cat the staff supported me to go to the cat café." Tasha is now Ruthie's house cat and brings her lots of happiness and company.

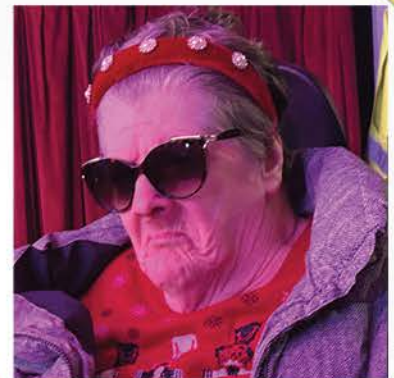


Franklin's Award


Franklin in Wolverhampton had a fabulous time at the West Midlands Christmas Awards, where he received the amazing award for 'Achieving Independence, for Contribution to Community and for Overcoming Challenges'. He was nominated by Manager Kerry and the whole staff team as they wanted him to be recognised for all of his hard work. Franklin gave a speech at the awards, where he "thanked his staff and Creative Support," and said he was so grateful for the encouragement he receives.

Raymond and Sally at the panto

Raymond and Sally in Sheffield love the Christmas tradition of a pantomime and went to watch the classic 'Snow White' on stage. The pair had a fabulous time with support workers Gillian and Debbie. Sally said: "I love pantomimes and go every year with my staff team," and Raymond said: "Christmas is the best part of the year. Especially dressing up as Santa and handing out presents to all the people at the service."





 **YouTube**
Visit our channel to watch
a video of Robert's story.

'I love where I live!'

Robert in Doncaster has a passion for interior design, following stylish trends and developing mood boards to showcase his taste. In 2018, Robert began his interior design journey, and set out to create a space that he could proudly call 'home'.

Tying in with our first 'I' Statement journal 'I live my best life in a place I call home', Robert has completely transformed his flat into a beautiful living space that truly captures who he is.

Robert said: "I think the environment you live in is very important because it's your home and you have to live in it every single day. Putting your own style and personality into a room really makes a huge amount of difference."

"When I first moved in, everything was magnolia and quite basic, so I wanted to bring in more warmth and earthiness to make it feel like a real home. I started by changing the walls to different shades of green, which instantly made the space feel calmer and more connected to nature. It's been amazing to see how much a colour palette can completely change the mood of a room. I also added a beautiful fireplace, which gives the room a real focal point and adds character to the space."

Robert spoke about what finding his style meant to him: "The first thing I bought for the flat was a huge Welsh Dresser. I really wanted a statement feature for the whole room, so I went to a few charity shops and antique places and that's when I came across this treasure."

"I wanted a more rustic and upcycled style. I didn't want everything to be prim and proper. I wanted things to be used and loved because I really think that compliments a room in itself. If I do have marks or stuff on furniture,

I won't be like 'oh no what have I done' because I think when you see imperfections on your things, you can see it's tied to a story or a memory, and it just creates more character and sense of 'home'."

Robert found charity and antique shops were the best places to find his special pieces.

"I love the history behind certain furniture and finding out how it was used. I also think that by taking the time to find pieces that are unique, it has made me realise that you really don't have to spend a lot of money to get a great result when decorating or renovating."

"Interior design just makes me really happy. It gives me a sense of achievement and gratitude."

Robert shared what interior design means to him and what he has learned over the years with this interest.

"Staff have been really helpful, they're a lot more mindful when it comes to budgeting and supporting me to believe in myself and celebrate what I've already achieved."

In 2024, Robert started volunteering at Barnardo's, sharing his talent to create eye-catching displays on the shop floor. He says the next step is to start a career in visual merchandising and to step into the professional side of interior work: "I'd love to inspire more people and just get my ideas out there in the world."



Art Competition 2026

Calling all painters, sketchers, knitters, crafters, cross stitchers and artists of every kind!

We are so excited to be launching this year's Art Competition. Every year, Creative Support welcomes fantastic art submissions made by the wonderful people we support and our amazing staff.

We want to see lots of different styles of artwork, so please send us your paintings, drawings, sculptures, crochet, embroideries, photography or anything else you enjoy making.

Winners of this year's Art Competition will be in with a

chance to feature in the 2027 Creative Support Calendar, greetings cards and other marketing materials. All winners will receive a 'We Care' hoodie as a special prize.

It doesn't matter when you made your artwork – you could make it especially for the competition or it could be a painting you completed years ago! Whatever it is, we would love to see it.

**Competition closes
Wednesday 30th September 2026
so please send your entries in soon!**

Get inspired by some of the previous winning entries.



Enter the Creative Mission Competition!

On the back page of each journal there is space for you to create art or write something that is inspired by each 'I' Statement. You can use any materials you like, whether it's paints, pencils, collage, stencils or something else entirely!

This year, we are bringing back our Creative Mission Competition for the second year in a row. This time, we're asking you to send in a photo of the artwork or creative writing on the back page of one of your journals and email it to us at marketing@creativesupport.co.uk for your chance to win a We Care hoodie.





I Live My Best Life In A Place I Call Home

Blackpool Engagement Workshop

In January, people we support in Blackpool took part in an exciting Engagement Workshop led by the Social Value Team, inspired by our 'I' Statement: "I live my best life in a place called home."

The afternoon began with filling in the first of our nine 'I' Statement journals. This journal offers a personal, creative space for the people we support to think about what home means to them and any goals they have for their home.

For David, home means decorating his space to fit his interests. He said, "I watch the footy in my room and I love my Liverpool FC memorabilia on the walls." For housemates Fiona and Madison, home means friendship. Madison said, "I love living with my friends, like Fiona. At home I feel safe."

After lunch, everyone decorated photo frames to take home as a polaroid camera made its way around the room, capturing memories to put in the frames. In her frame, Madison placed a photo of herself and Fiona to celebrate their friendship.

Throughout the afternoon, many people we support shared heartwarming stories about their favourite activities, memories and objects at home.

"My home is beautiful, it's nice and clean and my carers come in twice a day to make sure it's clean and tidy.

I've lived here for 39 years. Going back, I've got lots of lovely memories. I love my carers and everybody who comes to my door. I used to get told by my parents never to answer the door, but now that I'm 60 and I'm a lot older, I answer the door whenever I like," said Lawrence.



"At home, I love knitting, and I love listening to ABBA while washing up," said Anne.

"I've got loads of clocks in my home, about 150 clocks. I like to hear them chime on my dressing table in my bedroom. They all tell the right time and go dong, dong, dong, dong. Staff help me put the batteries in as some are quite heavy. I find them in charity shops. I like filling my house with what I love," said Carol.



"I love my home because it's homely and I love the people who live in it. I love all my friends, the staff are brilliant, really helpful. I can't ask for anything more than



that. My favourite memories in my home are when my brother comes to visit. I like dancing in my house like no one's watching," said Paul.

"I like my housemates; I like watching the football and going on my tablet," said Fiona.

At the end of the afternoon, Lawrence said "I've enjoyed coming to the workshop, it's a great opportunity to see people and be creative."



If you'd like to come to one of our Engagement Workshops across the country in 2026 email us to book a place: social.valueteam@creativesupport.co.uk

Kalash's Passi

Kalash has an eye for finding glitz and glam at her local charity shops!

We visited Kalash at her home in Doncaster, where her bedroom is filled to the brim with different styles and accessories that she has collected over the years. With over 50 handbags and hundreds of pairs of shoes, Kalash takes time putting together an outfit: "I love dresses and shoes and bags. My favourite colours are blue, red, green, and orange, but I wear red the most. I like matching my dresses with the same colour jacket and shoes."

Kalash has always had an interest in finding colours that complement each other and making coordinated outfits. She is inspired by

Disney and loves Minnie Mouse, so her style has a timeless 1950's look that really captures her vibrant and elegant personality.

When Kalash isn't busy buying a fabulous outfit, she enjoys getting her nails and hair done so that she's picture perfect for any occasion. If Vogue is ever looking for a new model for the front cover, then they don't need to look further – Kalash is ready for the camera!

"My favourite colours are blue, red, green, and orange, but I wear red the most. I like matching my dresses with the same colour jacket and shoes."

Kalash showing us her stylish outfits



on for Fashion!



Kalash's perfectly manicured, colour-coordinated nails



By choosing what she wears every day, Kalash feels more confident and in control. Her social calendar is usually very full and she plans outfits around where she is going - whether it's to the horse races, to parties with friends where she enjoys karaoke or for special occasions where she'll wear one of her saris from her gorgeous collection.

Most of Kalash's fantastic wardrobe comes from local charity shops. Her favourites are Save The Children and Barnardo's because the selections are big, the quality is good, and prices stay cheap!

Kalash's advice for people looking to get into fashion is "you don't need to spend lots of money" in order to express yourself in a way that you want, and that the first step is to "just buy something you like and get the same colour clothes to match."

A huge thanks to Kalash for sharing her beautiful looks – they are truly fit for the runway!



Kat and Keelie



Kat and Keelie live in Wellingborough and have been married for six years. Their journey began in supported living, and since then, they have moved into their own home, with their cheeky Maltese dog called Woody.

Kat and Keelie share a love of helping others and with support from staff, they have coordinated several community projects together over the years. They wanted to share their heartwarming love story with us in the hope that it inspires people to follow their hearts and dreams in life.

Kat spoke fondly as she remembered the first time she met Keelie: "I used to live in 24 hour supported living back in 2009, and would organise Macmillan coffee mornings to get more involved in the community. I've always liked helping others and 'doing my bit'. Keelie would come in and help out in whatever way she could." Keelie said "Everyone said sparks were flying anytime we spoke."

Kat told us there was a special moment that made her realise Keelie was the one: "There was a time where I wanted to do an auction for charity and Keelie had bought nearly everything at that auction. I think I knew it then. She likes helping people, it's what we have in common."

Keelie added: "I even bought an iron that day that I didn't even need! I just wanted to help."

When asked what they love about each other, Kat said: "For me, it's her eyes and the way she makes me laugh and feel safe." Keelie agrees: "Kat's the love of my life. Her sense of humour makes me laugh, she's very slapstick. It just means the world to me being with her."

Reflecting on what they had been through over the years, Keelie gave us some advice: "It doesn't matter if the relationship is man and woman, woman and woman, or man and man – it's just about who you fall in love with."

e...a love story

It's all about the chemistry you have with that person. My advice for people who are falling in love is to just do it." Kat added: "Don't hold back. Life is for living."

In 2019, Kat and Keelie dressed up in their smartest outfits and tied the knot at the registry office! Friends, family, and close staff were all there to celebrate their union. However, soon after they got married, lockdown hit – and the two of them had to live apart: "For two years we couldn't live together, because of Kat's support needs and I had to stay shielded," Keelie said. "It was horrible being away from her, I missed Kat so much! Any chance we could see each other, we would. There were lots of phone calls during that time."

"My support at the time helped me see Keelie as much as possible. We got through it and I'm grateful that we now get to be together in our own home," said Kat.

Kat and Keelie bought their gorgeous bungalow two years ago and Keelie said: "When we first moved in together, the first thing I thought about was all the adventures we were going to have. We could finally start planning a life together."

Last year, Kat and Keelie bought a car so they could go on more adventures. Kat said they've "gone to Overstone Manor in Northampton quite a few times" as well as "Twycross Zoo for the 'Lanterns of the Wild' light display. We also go out to watch the football, it's given us loads of opportunities to explore."

"We go on holidays too, we love going to Butlins and Haven. We actually had our honeymoon at Butlins, during the music weekend. There were loads of DJs and we had pool parties with the music playing. It was

"My advice for people who are falling in love is to just do it. Don't hold back. Life is for living."



Kat and Keelie being showered in confetti at their marriage celebration

just the best weekend being with my wife," said Keelie.

Their calendar is jam-packed with trips and fun activities, but they always make time to work on community projects together. Last year, Kat and Keelie won the Creative Stars award as 'Community Champions' after taking the lead on organising and launching a new monthly bowling meet-up.

Kat and Keelie hope that people are inspired to make their own community events in the future, as Kat said about being in the magazine: "It gives us a chance to tell our story and let people know what we love about each other and working in our community!"

Culture Nights in Stoke

Over the past few months, brothers Alex, Gen and Thomas have held fun 'culture nights' at their home in Stoke, where they have been getting to know more about other countries and their cultures through food.

Enjoying meals from around the world has been a great way for the trio to learn about unique traditions and customs. They've already ticked off Mexican, Kenyan and Greek cuisine from the list!

For their Mexican-themed night, Alex, Gen and Thomas played Mexican music, made bunting using Mexican flags, and printed off fact sheets about Mexico's culture and history. Afterwards, they made delicious fajitas and nachos. Alex really liked the Mexican tradition of wearing sombreros so he bought one of his own for the evening.

For the Kenyan-themed night, they enjoyed tasty dishes like chapatis and lamb stew. Leonard, their support worker, is from Kenya, so it was a really great opportunity to learn and celebrate Kenyan culture together, sharing delicious food.



The idea came about as all three of them are huge foodies. The staff team supported them to start the culture nights so they could try new, healthy meals. So far, the brothers have had fun learning new dishes which involve one of their favourite foods, cheese!



Gen, Alex and Thomas waving the Mexican flag

Fittingly, when they held their Greek night, they cooked and ate a very cheesy dish! "We had moussaka!" Alex said.

Lesley, who manages the service, explained that linking meals with these celebrations helps everyone to better understand other cultures and learn new things. The brothers even want to schedule it in every month!

The three of them have started going to a local club in the village every Tuesday, where they learn cooking skills and how to run a kitchen. Everyone now has their own role when they prepare meals – Gen dedicates his time to grate the cheese, Alex enjoys being Head Chef, and Thomas has the very important job of taste-testing the food!

The brothers have also been busy learning dances from different cultures! They love dancing, especially Alex and Thomas who busted some incredible moves at the Gala last year. Alex has learned a cowboy triangle dance which might be good for a Tex-Mex night!

Rumour has it that the next cuisine theme could be a Nigerian culture night, as staff members Paul and Alex are from Nigeria, and staff who work with the trio love to get involved and share their best recipes. However, Jamaican BBQ and Chinese night are also on the cards, so we will have to check in to see what they will celebrate next.

Hull Culture Day



Mandy and Violet enjoying the cultural celebration

We caught up with Debbie, Mandy, Victoria and support worker David about their recent Culture Day at Cecil Gardens in Hull. This event brought together over 50 people celebrating the rich cultural backgrounds in their community.

What were your favourite moments from Culture Day?

“The traditional Nigerian robes. I couldn’t believe how beautiful they were. I also loved it when some people sang songs from their culture, their voices blew me away. A lot of the speeches were really inspiring too,” said Debbie.

“I absolutely loved Culture Day. I am proud of the staff who organised the day as it helped everyone learn about different people’s cultures and foods. It is one of my favourite days of the year. The next one will be amazing,” said Victoria.

“I am proud of my Welsh heritage, so Culture Day was a great day to talk about that. I was pleased to hear other people talk about their cultures too including staff like Josh and David,” said Mandy.

What do you love about your own culture?

“I’m from Hull and I’ve lived here all my life. When I was a child, Hull had a big fishing industry, so a lot of people like my own dad worked on the docks. A lot of this closed in the

late 70s’. I listen to Hull City on the radio and my family goes to the football games. I enjoy Hull and I’m happy here,” said Debbie.

“I’m from Nigeria. It’s an English-speaking country in that when you go to school, you start learning English, but we also have about 50 ethnic groups, each with its own language. We have staff who are Yoruba and Igbo but also Nigerian, for example. A lot of people showcased their cultures and let others know how we greet, how we dress, the foods we eat and the songs we sing,” said David.

Why is Culture Day important to you?

“Culture Day is part of ensuring Hull is somewhere that is friendly and welcomes people from other cultures who enrich our lives. Our community really celebrates each other’s cultures and that’s how it should be.

“I have a great relationship with my carers, some of whom are from different cultures to mine, and I love hearing their stories. I’ve never been abroad, so it’s important for me to hear about other places in the world,” said Debbie.

“Culture Day makes everyone feel seen,” said Mandy.

If you’re inspired by this Culture Day, why not organise one at your own service? Contact the Social Value Team if you’d like help with planning it: social.valueteam@creativesupport.co.uk



Creative Fun at

Venture Arts is an amazing not-for-profit organisation, dedicated to supporting learning disabled and neurodivergent artists in Manchester to create art across various mediums.

For years, Venture Arts has worked with over 190 artists, including Michael and Josh, who we support in Trafford. Over the past few months, we checked in to see what creative projects they have been working on. Not only have these fantastic artists made some thought-provoking creations but both are making an impact in the art world!

Michael made history by being the first neurodivergent and learning-disabled Artist-in-Residence at the Manchester International Festival (MIF) last year. His live show, 'Experiments in the Lab', involved creating a ten-metre-long tapestry in front of an audience. The performance posed questions

such as: 'What happens in an artist's studio?' and 'How does a working environment impact creativity?'

Michael began the live show by painting vivid brush strokes on a huge scroll, while a team dried the artwork with hairdryers. The scroll shifted along the table and snaked onto the floor – a tapestry that looked truly alive.

Surrounding Michael, professional dancers and musicians improvised in response to his art, using movement and melody that changed with the mood of his work. By the time Michael finished an hour later, he had left the audience in awe.



Michael posing next to his lovely tapestry

t Venture Arts

Running alongside the live shows was Michael's solo exhibition, featuring brightly coloured, large-scale canvases. The works repeat names of cities, famous towers, and graphic signage layered on top of one another in striking compositions.

Michael's passion for travel influences his artwork and he typically enjoys multiple disciplines, including painting, illustration, and ceramic sculpture. Support Worker Ivett has supported Michael since 2012. Ivett told us:

"Michael has been creating his art at Venture Arts on Wednesdays since I've known him. He really likes it there. I am so incredibly proud of Michael. Watching him put so much effort and wonderful joy into his artwork has been truly inspiring. His amazing project not only impressed us, but also reminded us how capable he is. He's got something truly special."

"I am so incredibly proud of Michael. Watching him put so much effort and wonderful joy into his artwork has been truly inspiring."

We also visited Josh at the studio, who has been going to Venture Arts for over nine years. Josh is revered for his abstract designs. He enjoys combining pencils, watercolours, and photography to capture his ideas. When we visited Josh, he was working on a piece titled "Colours of the Carnival". This included swirling patterns of fluorescent pinks, yellows, greens and blues. Josh had also spent time on a larger piece, which was placed opposite his art desk and featured experimental patterns on reels of canvas.

Josh is looking to expand his artistic projects but he is only able to work on one desk at the moment as this accommodates his mobility needs. Venture Arts have committed to fundraising £25,000 to make their new premises fully accessible by increasing the



Josh smiling away with his large donation cheque

space. This includes the installation of a hydraulic lift for wheelchair users, which would support Josh to develop his art across two floors! As part of our Christmas raffle last year, Creative Support fundraised £1,000 to support Josh and meet the goal of making Venture Arts more accessible for their artists.

Thanks to all the donations, Venture Arts will install a new lift and wider floorplan by the end of March, meaning Josh will have more access to the art facilities very soon. Josh said he wants to go to the dark room upstairs to develop photos, as he is really passionate about his photography.

It is amazing to see how Josh and Michael have paved the way for more inclusive exhibitions and events in the art world in Manchester. We're looking forward to seeing what they come up with in the future when the centre is refurbished.

We also filmed a short video of Josh creating his artwork, which you can watch on our YouTube Channel!

Bedford Crystal Gala

For the past three years, services across Bedford have come together to celebrate Christmas and each other with a very special event – the Bedford Crystal Gala. This annual festivity brought together over 130 people last December. They all dressed up to eat, drink and be merry - setting the scene for a great start to 2026.

Staff spent months searching for a beautiful space that would have everyone feeling like royalty, and found the perfect venue at the Mercure Hotel. Once plans had been confirmed and invites were sent out, staff and people we support immediately got on the hunt for dresses and suits to mark the occasion. For weeks beforehand, the folks in Bedford prepared for the night of the year and were so excited for the evening to come.



 **YouTube**
Visit our channel to watch a video of the event.

Everyone all dressed up for the annual Gala

The day finally arrived and everyone spent the day getting ready. Everyone came dressed to impress and looked like Gala perfection. With a delicious three-course meal, plenty of dancing and the opportunity to bring everyone together, the Gala was truly a night to remember.

Once the music started, everyone got up on their feet to show off their moves. Hei Tsae Tang, who we support in Northamptonshire, showed people some of his new dance moves and even won Best Male Dancer!

“I think there’s nothing better than seeing the smile on everybody’s faces.”

Registered Manager Emily said: “It’s a chance for our guys to get together and celebrate Christmas. We’ve got people from all across our Bedford services, from residential and supported living. It’s giving people the chance to network and build relationships within our Wellingborough and Northampton services.”

“Doesn’t everybody look smashing? I think there’s nothing better than seeing the smile on everybody’s faces, and everyone enjoying themselves dancing,” said Emily, commenting on how beautiful all the attendees looked in their glad rags. “Right come on, let’s all have a great time!”

Michelle said, “I’m having a great time, I’ve been dancing all night!” She then very kindly showed everyone how to dance almost as good as her!

If you want to know more about this fabulous event, you can check out the video on our YouTube channel by searching for ‘Creative Support’, or scan the QR code on page 2.

With even bigger plans for the Gala in 2026, we cannot wait to see what the wonderful folks in Bedford do later this year!

Christina's Volunteering Journey



Christina recently starred in her own YouTube video where she told us "I work in Manchester at Grounded!"

Grounded MCR is a community café in Cringle Park, Levenshulme. They work with adults with support needs that want to develop barista and

hospitality skills, whilst creating a safe space for the local community.

We caught up with Christina while she was serving customers at Grounded, and filmed a video all about how she got started as a volunteer.

Natalie, who runs Grounded MCR with her wife Kerry, told us: "One of our first customers was Christina and her family. We knew as soon as we met them that they would become friends. Christina was really interested in coffee and us – we all got along very well.

"Soon after we met Christina, she expressed how keen she was to learn more about making coffee and how she'd like to help us out in the future as a volunteer. We were thrilled about this, as Christina has such an infectious, bubbly personality and wins over everyone she meets. Working together would be an opportunity for Christina to learn new skills and Christina would be a friendly, familiar face for customers each week."



"We went to our supplier to show Christina where the beans come from, how they're roasted, how to steam milk, and even taste the coffee. Christina took to it all, like a duck to water - her skills have never stopped improving, with the help and support from the care staff, her sister Fredericka and partner Chrissie."

Christina's sister Fredericka added: "A lot of people that come to Grounded have actually said they love coming on the Thursday because they love seeing Christina and being served by her because she is just so lovely. Her confidence is amazing – she's really good when she is serving. She's giving something to the community and they're giving her something. She's even got her own personal tips, so that says a lot!"

Natalie added: "Christina is so friendly with customers – they just absolutely love her – and she is great at making hot chocolates. She is a tonic for other staff, who also gain so much from teaching Christina new skills. We have seen a lot of improvement in her confidence and she is such a valued member of the team."

All about Creative Space Centre



Manager Jane shares the joy of the centre

Have you heard of Creative Space Centre? Our Creative Space Centre in Preston is the largest multi-sensory centre in the UK, providing sensory experiences for adults and young people with additional needs.

The Centre is the only one of its kind, using lighting, visuals and sound to create a fully tailored sensory experience for people to enjoy relaxation, exploration, learning or fun. The rooms can be further adjusted to meet the individual needs of people enjoying the sessions.

The Centre currently offers three sensory rooms, meeting rooms, a historic garden with a woodland walk, accessible changing facilities, a dining room and even a cinema! There are three different sensory spaces in the Centre, with Space 1 having recently been refurbished.

Jane, who manages Creative Space Centre, told us: "We've listened to what everybody had to say when we were renovating Space 1. We've got loads of interactive visual things, a waterbed, bubble wall, texture board with loopy tubes, and loads of things to touch and feel. The ball pool's really good for body awareness and having a bit of fun. The bubble tubes are really multi-sensory – you can hear

them, you can feel the vibrations. We've got a new climbing wall, a sound and light dance floor, a vibrating bed, and a trampette which is really good fun. We've also got extra equipment we can bring into the room depending on a person's needs."

"Space 2 is the biggest room, with different kind of swings we can swap and change, and an interactive screen where you can squash bugs as they come up on the screen. You can even roll around in the tubes which are great for stretching."

"Space 3 is the smallest room and includes a water bed, bubble wall, lots of comfortable seating and a projector screen where you can watch whatever you choose."

"All rooms are wheelchair accessible and have a hoist installed so everyone can enjoy the activities."

If you'd like to visit the Creative Space Centre and enjoy all the wonderful things it has on offer, please call 01772 760 403.

If you want to see a tour of the Centre, check out the Creative Support YouTube channel by heading to [youtube.com/@crtvspprt](https://www.youtube.com/@crtvspprt). Don't forget to like and subscribe for more content from the Creative Community!



One of our wonderful multi-sensory rooms!

Get Involved in Our Events



Sian

Hello, I'm Sian, the new Events and Activities Lead for Creative Support. I have been part of Creative Support for 11 years, working in services until two years ago when I joined the Marketing Team in Head Office.

As part of my new role, I will be organising and hosting a lot of events across the organisation, everything from finding the venues, getting caterers, decorations and most importantly, making sure the event is filled with lots of fun things to do like dancing, performances and activities.

In October 2025, I hosted my first larger event supporting the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team to host our Black History Month evening in Manchester. The event was a wonderful celebration of staff, historic figures, cultures and the premiere of our Black History Month Film, and I was really proud to be a part of it.

This year, I'll be supporting with an even bigger year organising Creative Support's 35th Birthday parties in Leeds, Birmingham and Manchester. I have already started making arrangements with venues, food choices and DJs. I am hoping this will mark our best birthday yet, and I am looking forward to meeting many of you there.

The other part of my role is managing our Online Activities Programme. We host a weekly online activity which range from games of

bingo, escape rooms to everyone's favourite, our Big Fat Quiz of the Month. We also host a monthly Creative Club in-person art session in Manchester, which explores different crafts and mediums each month.

You can also usually find me travelling out to services hosting art sessions. In December, I hosted a Christmas Crafts road trip, travelling to different services each week in areas like Barnsley, Liverpool and more, creating lots of wonderful crafts like snow globes, chocolate boxes and cards.

To promote all of the new and fun things we are hosting across Creative Support, we have launched our new Creative Support Noticeboard, where you can find out all the details of events and things to do near you, hosted by Creative Support.



Scan the QR code to see the noticeboard

2026 is lining up to be a really exciting year, packed with opportunities for fresh ideas and lots of activities. If you have any questions regarding events or activities, you can get in touch by emailing me at Sian.Yates@creativesupport.co.uk

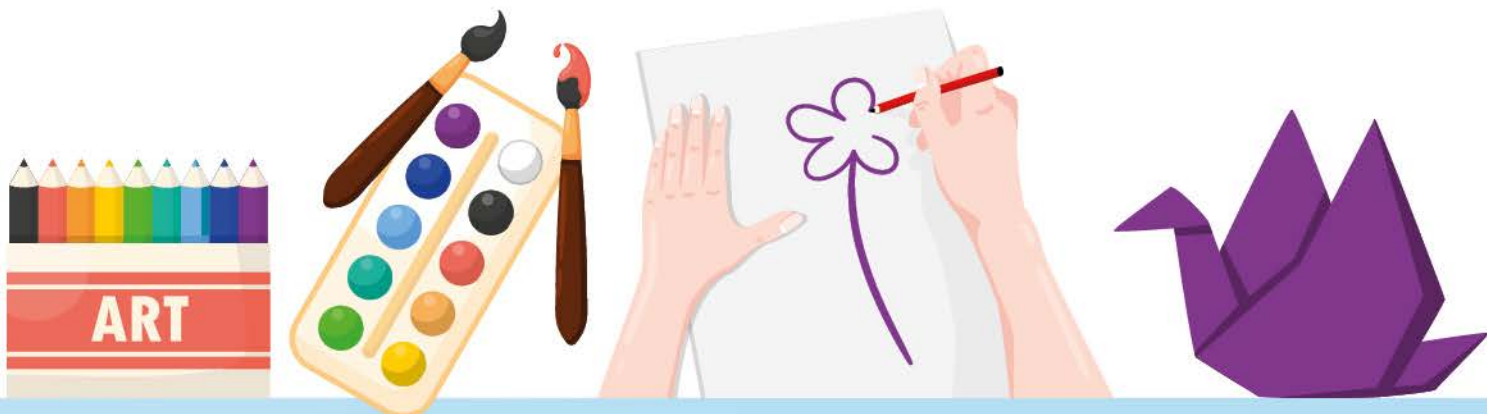


A selection of photos from events Sian has arranged

Word Search - Arts and Crafts

S	O	O	G	N	U	R	X	P	P	S	E	L	H
O	I	M	A	G	I	R	O	A	E	A	H	R	T
R	R	E	M	M	A	H	I	N	W	S	P	N	E
A	C	R	Y	L	I	C	O	P	A	E	P	E	C
P	M	C	I	A	I	C	M	H	A	R	S	R	R
E	P	E	M	I	I	E	H	R	U	R	N	N	G
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C	I	Y	I	C	R	R	M	K	M	A	I	I	P
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MUSIC PAINT BRUSH HOTGLUE SILICONE MARKERS ACRYLIC
WAX PENCIL ORIGAMI PAPER HAMMER



Would you like to appear in this magazine?

Email: communications@creativesupport.co.uk and send in your story!

Spot The Difference

There are 10 differences in these two pictures, grab a pen or pencil and see how many differences you can find! If you find all 10 you could be in with the chance of winning a £10 Love2shop voucher.

Take a picture of your answers and send them to: marketing@creativesupport.co.uk

A



B



Remember to take a picture of your answers and send them to:
marketing@creativesupport.co.uk

Introducing the 'I' Statement Journals

What are the 'I' Statements?

You may have heard that Creative Support has made a series of 'I' Statements for the people we support, but what exactly are 'I' Statements?

An 'I' Statement is a sentence which starts with 'I' and expresses a person's needs, opinions or experiences. Creative Support worked with people we support to write nine 'I' Statements. These sentences form part of Creative Support's Mission and Purpose.

Our nine 'I' Statements for people we support are:

I live my best life in a place I call home

I feel listened to, respected and valued

I enjoy choices and rights and have control over my life

I am supported to feel safe

I am doing the things that matter to me

I enjoy relationships with others

I am connected to my community

I am supported with my wellbeing

I feel able to reach my full potential



What are the 'I' Statement Journals?

At the beginning of this year, we launched our 'I' Statement journals!

We created nine colourful journals packed with prompts to get you thinking about what each 'I' Statement means to you and how they relate to your life. The journals are stored in a binder which you can customise to make your own. In the back of the binder there is space for you to keep photos, certificates and any other keepsakes.

Throughout the year, within our magazines, on our website and on social media, we are looking at each 'I' Statement in turn and exploring what they can mean to each of us as individuals.

If you'd like to give us feedback about the journals, or if you have any questions, please email marketing@creativesupport.co.uk or ring 0161 236 0829 and ask for the Marketing team.



Contact Us



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