

# CREATIVE LIFE

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2018

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# Editor's Letter

Welcome to this newly designed edition of Creative Life and the first of 2018. At Creative Support we are starting the year with a strong drive to continually improve involvement with the people we support. This will be spearheaded by the launch of our Be Involved campaign, which aims to improve planning events, contributing to initiatives like this magazine and submitting feedback on how we are performing as an organisation.

As part of the Be Involved campaign, we are also pleased to announce the launch of our 2018 grants programme, where you will be able to apply for funding to put on a special event or start a new project or idea. This is a great opportunity for staff and service user users across the country to get involved with the Creative Support community. See page 8 for further details.

Last year was filled with so many highlights and achievements that we are extremely proud of at Creative Support. We had our staff and service user awards gala where we recognised their fantastic achievements. The Black History Month Exhibition (pages 6-7), Pride celebrations all across the country and so much more. We can't wait to do the same in 2018 and hear what you are all up to!

*Joseph Brotherton*



## BE INVOLVED WITH CREATIVE LIFE

Have you been to one of Creative Supports recent events? What did you think about it? What do you think about the magazine? If you have an opinion on an article in Creative Life or an idea for something we could write about, please email your comments to:

[marketing@creativesupport.co.uk](mailto:marketing@creativesupport.co.uk)

or write to: Marketing, Wellington House, 131 Wellington Road South, Stockport, SK1 3TS.



# Your Stories

## Extra Care Working in the Community

Our Reading Extra Care services have been making strong links with children in the community. Three schemes have been paired with different aged school groups, who have been visiting regularly to take part in crafts and other activities. At one of the services, two and three year olds from a local Pre-school have been working with residents to make crafts for Children in Need, Christmas and St Andrews day. At Cornerstones, four and five year olds from the Nursery have been making friends with the residents. They decorated Christmas biscuits and moulded homemade play doh, which was our residents favourite! The entire nursery even came to show them their nativity play. Secondary school students came to another service and planned out activities with residents, they brought in memory boxes and made enormous paper chains!



These opportunities have been a lot of fun for the residents who enjoy the energy that the children and young people bring with them and doing something completely different from their usual routine. For the young ones it's an opportunity to meet new people and ask different questions. It's also a chance to meet people from a different generation with different life experiences than them. These partnerships have offered residents better opportunities to feel integrated, where accessing the local community can sometimes be difficult. We are looking forward to further opportunities like this.

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## Stand up to Cancer Event Raises Money in Blackpool



Many of the Blackpool staff pitched in to help set up an event to raise awareness of cancer, with the aim of raising funds in aid of the Stand up to Cancer campaign. The event was held at the local Leighton Institute and was truly a memorable night and tribute to anyone who has been affected by cancer.

Lots of fun was had and everyone who attended was treated to entertainment with Karaoke, bingo, games, a cake stand and even a joke-a-thon. One staff member had his beard shaved off and legs waxed to help raise funds! The event raised over £700, well done to everyone who was involved.



## Award for Calderdale

*Tim Ham (Service Manager) and Raymond Priestley (Chair of Creative Together), received a Silver Achieve Q Award from Anna Lunts (Chief Executive) at the Mercure Hotel, Manchester on 8th December.*

*The award was received for the joint work of the service and members of Creative Together, to promote the 'Be Healthy, Be Happy' Campaign in Calderdale during 2017. This included the successful Annual General Meeting earlier in the year. 'This is an award for everyone who has made an effort to be healthier during the last 12 months' said Tim after the event.*



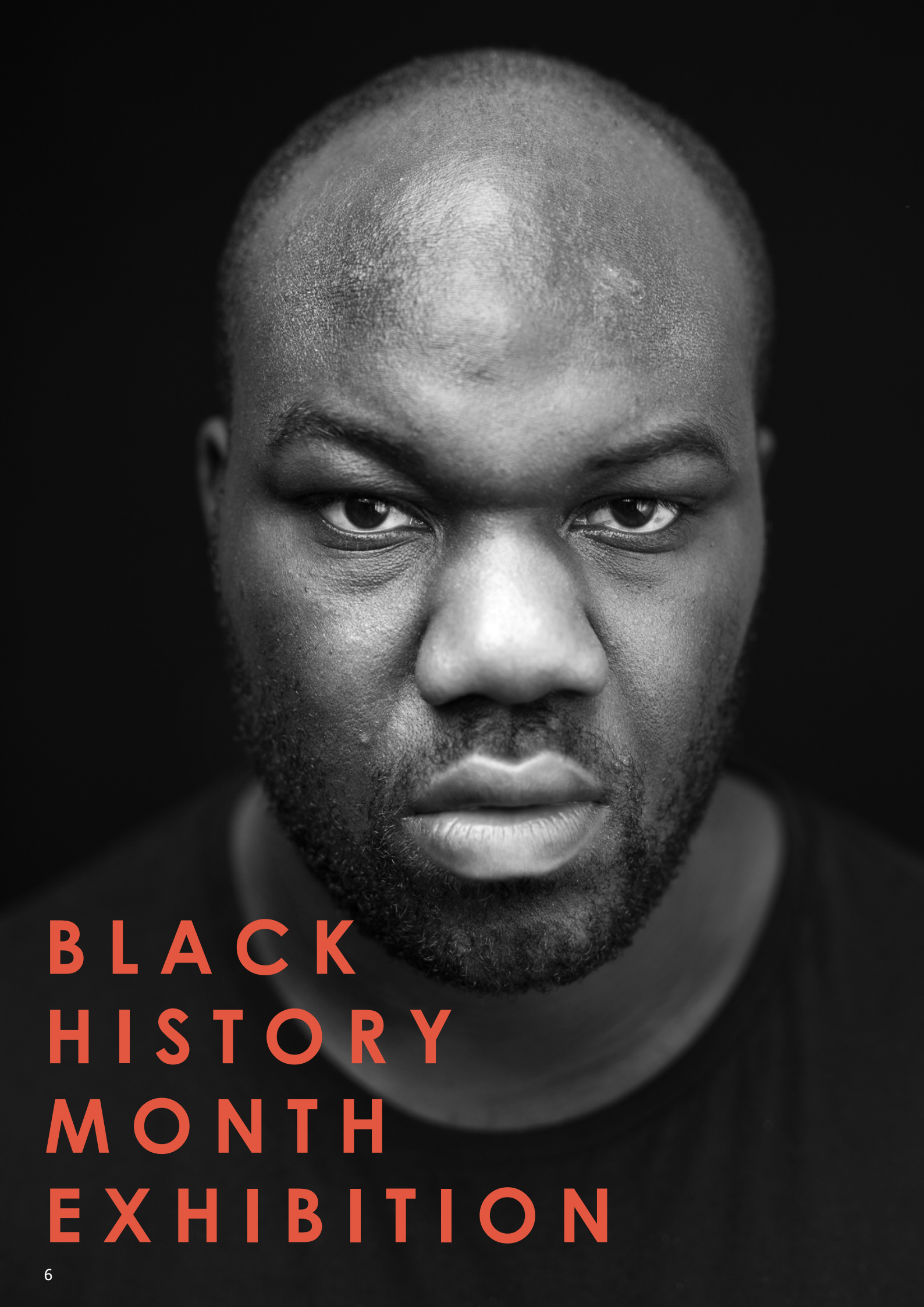
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## Green Fingers in Reading

*Our Bourne Stevens service has been busy with their weekly gardening group. Service users gather every Monday with their support worker Ruth, to plant, weed and water the garden. Ruth has also been teaching residents the different family groups that plants belong to and the different conditions which plants need to be able to grow and thrive.*

*The popularity of the gardening project has flourished with new people joining in each week. They received a large donation of plants and supplies from Dobbies Garden Centre last year and have grander plans for the project this year. One service user has a degree in architecture and has even started drawing up plans to re-landscape the garden! They are working together to fundraise for a large greenhouse in 2018, so that residents can continue with their gardening all year round and start planting some of the more exotic seeds. Everton, who regularly takes part in the Gardening group, has said "it is very therapeutic and motivates me to get out".*





**BLACK  
HISTORY  
MONTH  
EXHIBITION**



Last October was the 30th anniversary of Black History month in the UK – and to mark the important occasion we wanted to create an exhibition that would showcase the stories of some of the people we support and to celebrate and talk about their experiences.

In August 2017, we embarked upon our Black History Month project. For the project, we wanted to create an exhibition featuring a series of photographic portraits of six people we support. The portraits were then accompanied by personal interviews about what black history means to each person. We then created six very large photographic prints of each of the portraits and installed them along side the interviews on MP3 players with headphones. The interviews allowed visitors to listen to their stories whilst looking directly at the portraits (see participant Lloyd below for the layout).

The venue for the exhibition was at Marketplace Studios, Stockport – a part of Manchester Metropolitan University School of Art, and a great venue located right in Stockport's old market square. To celebrate the opening, there was a party and the Breakthrough music group played a gig to service users from across the area who had come to watch.

The project was not bound to Greater Manchester however, and was sent on tour to reside in our regions across the country. Prints were shown at Liverpool, London, Birmingham and the North East offices.

The focus of the project, in terms of the interviews, was to find out more about their own history and experiences

of life growing up in their communities. It was also a chance to talk about their history and thoughts on issues and life in the black community. Dawn, who was a participant in the exhibition (and featuring on the front cover) said "I felt proud of my Manchester upbringing and doing something that other people would see. I wanted to help other people understand what it is like to be bi-racial. On the day, I loved the meaningful feeling that I got from being involved and it was fun to see everyone else who was a part of it".

Everyone from Creative Support in the local area was invited to go down and view the exhibition over the month it was on show. There were plenty of visitors from the local community and lots of lovely messages were left in our guest book. Check out the quote from Manchester Artist Elton Darlo below.

creative ART  
is in the mind  
and heart, this  
ART establishes  
THAT.  
Elton Darlo  
Tate Modern ARTIST.

Lloyd checking out  
the exhibition



# Be Involved Grants



Exciting news is afoot - we are delighted to introduce the Be Involved Internal Grants Programme for 2018. The Strategic plan 2016-2020, has outlined that there will be funding available to apply for with the aim of improving staff and service user engagement within the Creative Support community. You will be able to apply for money that will be put towards events and initiatives that you want to set up. The grants could be put towards anything from recycling, to gardening, to community events and more.

You will be able to apply for a grant throughout the year, with grant application panels meeting every couple of months to select who has been successful in their application. Ideally, applicants will apply for money to put on events that will coincide with months from the Be Involved events and activities calendar. For example, you might apply for money to put on a 'Pride' themed event in August, as that is Pride month in the calendar. Other ideas and initiatives will also be considered that don't fit into the calendar, but are in line with the criteria and Be Involved aims. See guide for all the information.



Apply for  
a grant  
to put on  
an amazing event!

If you would like a complete guide of how to apply, including all the terms, then please email **[internal.grants@creativesupport.co.uk](mailto:internal.grants@creativesupport.co.uk)** and the team will be able to supply you with our Be Involved Grants guide and an application form. In the guide you can find all the specifics of the application process and answers to other questions.



# Tim's Thoughts on Brexit



## **So Brexit, where are we up to with everything?**

*Brexit is the culmination of decades of discontent, both within the disabled and non-disabled communities in the UK. Having joined tentatively in 1973, the then Prime Minister Harold Wilson put to the populace a referendum, lost by 2:1 ratio of votes just two years after joining the European Economic Community in 1975. Of all the shenanigans and kerfuffle supposedly happening with Michel Barnier and David Davies in Brussels, little concrete evidence has passed through to Westminster about a solid deal being formulated at all!*

## **How will Brexit affect people with support needs?**

*People with support needs may be affected severely as ESA and DLA benefits are cut and curtailed heavily in the near-future; the disabled are currently being transferred onto a reduced Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and far fewer people of the eligible millions are now in receipt of these benefits.*

## **What changes in EU law that benefit disabled people currently might change?**

*This could further muddy the pool of limited resources currently available to people with support needs.*

## **How have you been impacted / imagine you may be impacted by this?**

*I myself am currently on DLA and ESA, with a possible view to the government in the near future moving me onto perhaps a (slightly) reduced PIP, but this is all too uncertain still.*

## **What might change before the decision / terms of Brexit are made final?**

*Last year's referendum vote on 26th June 2016 kept the UK on track to leave by March 2019, but very little, if anything, has been done in Brussels. All too much of it seems to be mere political rhetoric and hot air on the politicians' part.*

## **Have your Say:**

**Send in your thoughts to Creative Life like Tim! Got a hot topic you want to discuss? Something that you feel passionate about, or you just want to let other people know about? Then send in your article to [joseph.brotherton@creativesupport.co.uk](mailto:joseph.brotherton@creativesupport.co.uk). If you want to be involved but aren't sure what to write about we can give you a hand!**

# 10 Q's

In each issue of Creative Life we introduce you to our service users and staff from around the country and tell you a little about them. If you'd like to appear on this page, send your answers to the ten questions below, along with a photo of yourself to [marketing@creativesupport.co.uk](mailto:marketing@creativesupport.co.uk)

## Roslyn, Sonali Gardens

### **What do you think is the best thing about Creative Support?**

I like the staff a lot and I have a good supportive group.

### **What's the best advice you've ever been given?**

Be happy and respect one another.

### **Tell us something nobody knows about you**

When I was young and living in Jamaica, I used to climb trees and play marbles.

### **What achievement are you most proud of?**

Raising my four children and having six grandchildren. My family make me proud.

### **What's your favourite meal?**

Homemade chicken soup.

### **What's your favourite holiday destination?**

Niagara Falls, we stood under the falls and it was so beautiful.

### **What do you do to stay fit?**

I used to go to the gym but now because of my arthritis I don't do anything to stay fit.

### **Who would play you in a film of your life?**

Oprah Winfrey.

### **If you were an animal what would you be?**

A bumble bee, something busy!

### **What makes you happy?**

I like to do my word-searches, listen to music, reading, gardening and seeing my grandchildren.





# BRIAN'S QUIZ

by Brian Holley

- 1) What is the name of the family in *The Sound of Music*?
- 2) "You are the weakest link" says who in the quiz of the same name?
- 3) Who was known as 'The Lady With The Lamp' during the Crimean War?
- 4) Before choosing Mickey, which name had Walt Disney considered? Mortimer, Malcolm or Matthew?

Find the answers on page 13!

## WORDSEARCH: SARA'S HOLIDAY

by Sara Whiteside

G	S	U	I	T	C	A	S	E	T
P	U	H	F	U	K	K	O	H	I
K	N	P	C	S	G	G	R	A	T
S	G	A	U	C	X	D	L	N	T
T	L	S	K	V	E	B	A	D	R
R	A	S	U	N	T	A	N	B	O
O	S	P	E	R	Z	H	D	A	P
H	S	O	S	F	G	B	O	G	R
S	E	R	T	S	H	I	R	T	I
L	S	T	D	O	L	L	A	R	A

This issue's wordsearch features some words selected by Sara to fit in with the theme of 'holidays'.

Why not try and see if you can find all of the words listed below?

ORLANDO  
AIRPORT  
PASSPORT  
SUNGLASSES  
SHORTS

SUITCASE  
TSHIRT  
SUNTAN  
HANDBAG  
DOLLAR

## WORLDLY WISDOM

Compiled by Peter Flynn

*You can cut all the flowers but you cannot keep spring from coming*  
**Pablo Neruda: Chilean Writer (1904 - 1973)**

*Spring is nature's way of saying, 'Let's party!'*  
**Robin Williams: American Comedian (1952 - 2014)**

*It is only the farmer who faithfully plants seeds in the Spring, who reaps a harvest in the Autumn*  
**B. C. Forbes: Scottish Journalist (1880 - 1954)**





# BE INVOLVED

Be Involved is our ongoing campaign and commitment to working as closely and as meaningfully as we can with the people we support. It is the umbrella for all of our co-production and volunteering opportunities for people who wish to have a greater say on how they are supported, learn a new skill or help others reach their potential.

We have launched the campaign alongside our annual Satisfaction Survey, so we can meet as many service users as possible and let them know about opportunities in their area, while also hearing their feedback on their own services.

This year we aim to cover as many of our services up and down the country as we can. If you have an idea for an event or new opportunity in your area please let us know.

We have also put together a new Be Involved 'How To Guide' that we will bring along to all of our events.

The guide looks at each area of co-production which people can get involved in, with the views from others who've enjoyed their involvement role. The guide will be accessible and available to all so we can work with more of a diverse group of people and perhaps people who've not had an opportunity before.

How to 'Be Involved' is totally up to you, from organising and taking part in events at your service, through to producing articles for Creative Life or appearing in our YouTube videos. The more people who get involved, the more vibrant, diverse and full of life Creative Support becomes.

Everyone who contributes to the Be Involved campaign will get an exclusive Be Involved badge and certificate to say thank you for engaging with the Creative Support community.

Please email [beinvolved@creativesupport.co.uk](mailto:beinvolved@creativesupport.co.uk) if you would like further information on events





# Service User Awards



Each month, the Service User Awards judging panel is held in a different service in a different part of the country. Here are what judges on our last two panels thought of the experience:

In November, Neil one of our Volunteer Befrienders at **Liverpool Links** supported Greg and Dave whilst they chatted about each of the nominations. They couldn't believe how many amazing stories had come from our service users in just one month! Photo – Neil (middle) with Greg and Dave.

In December, **Breakthrough (Manchester)** received a large number of nominations in December, which meant the panel had a tricky job of deliberating over 19 entries each with an inspirational story. Peter, a service user who attends our Breakthrough service, was moved by nominations for service users who had become more independent. Peter said these were accomplishments he could relate to personally, as he understands how difficult it can be to break down barriers and feel more confident. Photo – Peter (far right).



Could you host a panel in 2018? Panels can be held from any kind of service, simply register your interest by emailing **business.development@creativesupport.co.uk** or calling the Business Development Team on **0161 236 0829**.

**Wayne from Scunthorpe (pictured right)**, was top prize winner for the service user awards in January, winning a £20 Love-to-shop voucher. The judging panel were impressed by the progress that he had made since moving into supported housing from his previous accommodation in 2016. Wayne has been working to achieve his goals by managing his bills and budgeting successfully, as well as attending all his appointments. The panel were also impressed that Wayne has become a lot more socially active and is a great neighbour to his fellow residents. As a result of all these positives changes, he has resumed his hobby of playing the keyboard and is involving others in his hobby.



X	S	U	I	T	C	A	S	E	C
W	U	U	I	S	G	I	O	H	H
B	N	P	S	X	B	N	R	A	O
S	G	A	E	R	T	K	L	N	T
T	L	S	X	X	Q	Z	A	D	R
R	A	S	U	N	T	A	N	B	O
O	S	P	A	N	S	J	D	A	P
H	S	O	L	E	R	X	O	G	R
S	E	R	T	S	H	I	R	T	I
S	S	T	D	O	L	L	A	R	A

## Quiz: Answers

- 1) Von Trapp
- 2) Anne Robinson
- 3) Florence Nightingale
- 4) Mortimer



# Volunteer Update

In May we celebrate the achievements of our fantastic Volunteer Befrienders and introduce the new befriending programme here at Creative Support. Befrienders complement the work we do as an organisation and provide companionship and support to our service users, whilst empowering them to achieve personal goals, build self-confidence and try new things!

Jenell, has been a Volunteer Befriender at one of our London services over the last year and has befriended Roy, who accesses our Floating Support service. Jenell first applied to volunteer because she's interested in a future in Drama Therapy, and wanted to gain experience while doing something that gave her the opportunity to work with service users on a regular basis. She has found volunteering incredibly rewarding and has gone above and beyond her role. Jenell's dedication to empowering Roy to make positive differences in his life has been evident through his achievements, which have included him focussing on healthy cooking and eating, finding the confidence to go to the gym three times a week and losing an amazing five stone! Throughout the time Jenell has known Roy he has also put in place necessary requirements to save up for a holiday to Croatia; this has been a lifelong dream and will be the first time he has travelled abroad.

## **What skills have you developed through volunteering with Creative Support?**



Before this role I hadn't had any experience working with service users in any capacity. I first had to establish the difference between personal and professional which is not only imperative but challenging when you start out. I have learned to listen, read situations and develop strong connections.

## **How has volunteering benefitted you?**

Volunteering has helped me in the sense of being able to give something back, but I have also learnt a lot about myself, which I feel has helped me in my personal life as well as a befriender. It has helped me to appreciate the work all volunteers do and it has helped me to separate my own personal feelings to that of others. It has also opened my eyes to how giving just a couple of hours a week could help change someone's life for the better.

## **What are your plans for the future?**

After a year of volunteering with Roy and seeing his success, especially with his weight loss, I am committed to continuing with him on his journey and supporting him so he can get to where he wants to be.

Look out for Your Befriending Pack and further information in May! If you would like to have the support of a befriender or find out more about befriending at Creative Support, kindly contact the Volunteer Team on **0161 236 0829** or **[volunteer@creativesupport.co.uk](mailto:volunteer@creativesupport.co.uk)**



# Getting Creative

Lesley, a new member at one of our Manchester services and now a volunteer with Creative Support, has sent in a list that she has created of how her life has changed since joining us. It definitely brightened our day to receive it. Here are her thoughts.



## Friendships

- Since starting at Creative Support I have made many new friends
- Felt elevated & Empowered
- Increased my Independence
- Become more involved in this little Community (Manchester Area)
- Reached out to other people
- Been Welcomed and Support to Join in and be part of the group

**We need your help!**



We've heard some great success stories over the last few months of ways that volunteers have benefitted our services and service users. We are keen to continue developing volunteer opportunities which enhance our service provision and in order to do that we need your help!

If you have an idea for a volunteer role at your service, or you would like the support of a volunteer, we'd love to hear from you. You can get in touch with the Volunteer Team by calling 0161 236 0829 or sending an email to [volunteer@creativesupport.co.uk](mailto:volunteer@creativesupport.co.uk)



# creativity corner

## KNITTING FOR SUCCESS!

*Creative Life interviews Wendy about her love of knitting, plus Jackie's story about her knitting and teaching others.*

### **How did you get into knitting? How long have you been doing it?**

My Mum taught me how to knit when I was around 5 or 6 years old. I still remember it like yesterday! She bought me a kit with mini red knitting needles and some different wool colours. She had to sit and show me a few times before I got the hang of it. I tried to teach my own children, but they weren't quite as keen!



### **What do you love most about creating? How does it make you feel?**

I love the end bit the most, when I show people and it makes them smile. Knitting keeps my hands busy and my mind active, even when I am sat watching the TV, It is just a very therapeutic activity.

### **What advice would you give to someone who is new to creative things like knitting?**

You just have to keep trying, it's something that you have to practice to get good at. There are still things that I can't do. For example, there was a pattern recently for a jumper with a heart in the middle. The heart was a different colour wool so it was quite complicated, but I finally worked it out! It is important to only do it if you enjoy it though.

### **What are your plans for your knitting in the future?**

I am looking forward to finding something different to knit. For Easter this year I have been making wreaths and cream egg covers. I have also made Easter finger puppets! For my great-grandchildren I am making an Easter bag with a bunny rabbit face! After Easter we will have to wait and see!



*Creative Life got sent in a lovely story by Jackie, who is also a fan of knitting. Jackie learnt knitting from her grandma Jackie enjoys teaching other people to knit and loves transforming a ball of wool into something beautiful. She's currently in the middle of making a cot blanket for her new born granddaughter and has two cardigans to finish off for her.*

**Jackie is pictured above left.**

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## IN-STYLE: SHOW US YOUR FASHION

We are excited to announce a new feature for Creative Life - if you are interested in fashion and want to show off your individual style, why not get in touch to be involved. Call **0161 236 0829** or email [marketing@creativesupport.co.uk](mailto:marketing@creativesupport.co.uk)





## Heavy Looks

John, from Manchester is wearing shoes from Rocker's, Silver Jacket from Primark, Elvis belt from Blackpool Seafront, Gold watch (a present from his wife Donna for their wedding anniversary) and Shirt also from Rocker's Manchester.





# WHAT'S ON THE BOX?

Wonderful news has floated in from London. Dec, a film buff, local hero, and artist, and Ben, his Support Worker, were successful in winning a place at the 'Together! 2017 Disability Film Festival' with their film 'Dark Dark House'. The film is in the horror genre, was made in Highgate park and features Eminem with a chainsaw amongst other stunning elements! Dec, who original proposal and script for the film was submitted to our 'Pitch Your Film' competition a couple of years back and made with the help of the team. Dec has also made other films before with the Creative Support Media team. This wasn't the only good news for Dec had last year either, he also managed to get a place at the Coastline Film Festival in Colwyn Bay, North Wales. His film Zoltan vs The Devil, a short wrestling film, which was written, directed and filmed in just one day, was selected to be shown at the up and coming festival. Dec is no longer supported by Creative Support, but Ben told Creative Life that Dec's time making the films was one of his favourite and he still talks about making the films with the team all the time. We are really proud of Dec's achievements and can't wait to see him develop his film making career further.

You can check out Dec's films, as well as all our others at [www.youtube.com/crtvspprt](http://www.youtube.com/crtvspprt)

## Jumanji: Welcome to The Jungle

Film Review by Brian S. ★★★★★

In a brand new Jumanji adventure, four high school kids discover an old video game console and get drawn into the game called Jumanji. You must survive in order to beat the game and return to the real world. They have to go on the most dangerous adventure of their lives to discover what happened to Alan Parrish (the original main character in the first Jumanji film)

20 years ago. They also have to change the way that they think about themselves, or they will be stuck in the game forever to be played by others without a break. The main four actors are Dwayne Johnson who starred in Baywatch, Karen Gillan who starred in Guardians of the Galaxy, and Kevin Hart and Jack Black. I would give the film four and a half stars out of five because there was not enough at the beginning. Overall it was filled with lots of comedy moments for the whole family to enjoy. I would recommend Jumanji to all action fans of Dwayne Johnson. It made me laugh the most when the Rock punched Kevin Hart in the film. It made me the most surprised when Karen Gillan killed herself to help the Rock.





# Achieve Q Update

The Achieve Q Awards are a fantastic opportunity to promote and recognise the achievements of our staff. It acknowledges the **Aspirational, Compassionate, Hardworking, Inclusive, Effective, Value Based** and **Empowering** staff we have.

In 2017 we had over 150 nominations and received heart-warming and inspirational testimonials, celebrating individual and team achievements.

For 2018 we are hoping to increase the number of nominations we receive from across the country. We have introduced the Dignity in Care Category, which is dedicated to our teams and individuals who provide compassionate and dignified end of life care. Managers, staff, or service users and their families are all able to nominate individuals or teams for the Achieve Q Awards. This is to ensure that our members of staff are recognised for their excellent work!

If you know a team or individual that is doing a great job and deserves to be recognised, please email: [achieveq@creativesupport.co.uk](mailto:achieveq@creativesupport.co.uk) for a nomination form or for more information.

The logo features the words "ACHIEVE Quality" in white, with a stylized white 'Q' that has a checkmark inside it, all set against a red circular background.

## Total Number of People Nominated Since The Awards Began in 2017



47  
Teams



106  
Individuals

## Number of Gold and Silver Winners



Gold



1  
Team



5  
Individuals



Silver



15  
Teams



20  
Individuals

## Achieve Q Silver Award - Cumbria

The outreach team in Barrow-in-Furness received the Silver Achieve Q Award for their continued outstanding service. Over the past two years they have received a total of over 100 compliments from service users and other agencies and completed 51 positive outcomes with service users, from which, three have won service user awards.

Working with some of our service users, they came up with the idea to hold a fundraising event. The team have now raised over £3,000 for starter packs for homeless people in the area. Proceeds from the event were then put towards provisions like a duvet, pillow and cutlery.

If you would like to nominate a team, whether you are a service user or staff member, you can do so by emailing [achieveq@creativesupport.co.uk](mailto:achieveq@creativesupport.co.uk). You can also nominate an individual staff member as well.

# LET'S END DISABILITY HATE CRIME EVENT

Creative Support is actively involved in the issue of disability hate and mate crime. Over several years we have worked to both support and inform service users of strategies that can help and empower people to report and stay safe.

## What is disability hate crime?

Disability hate crime is when someone is abused verbally, physically or financially because of their disability. This could be victims being called names, having property damaged or being taken advantage of.

## What is mate crime?

Mate crime is when someone befriends a vulnerable adult and takes advantage of them. This is harder to spot as the person committing mate crime may seem friendly. Behaviour that would signal mate crime would include things like asking to borrow money and not returning it.



With funding from Manchester City Council through MACC and GMCVO, we were able to host an awareness event on the topic. The Manchester Lets End Disability Hate Crime Forum brought together disability groups, law enforcement officials and people who identify as having a disability to discuss, learn and help spread awareness around disability hate crime. This was a half day event made up of a series of interactive presentations and workshops. These workshops helped illustrate the issue as well as providing information on how to identify and report incidents. The participants were then encouraged to discuss aims or actions that will help to prevent and raise awareness around disability hate crime. The content of the event was informed by a consultation with our Creative Support service users.

The Charter was signed by those attending and will be sent to advocacy groups, law enforcement officials and politicians to sign and consider. There was the chance for attendees to make video contributions toward the short film which will be distributed after the event. Martin (pictured Above) took part in the film and said "We need to get the message out there that all disabled people should have a chance to live their lives no matter what. We should show love and not hate - love builds and hate just divides". Moving forward, Creative Support will look to create a national disability hate crime survey to be sent out later this year. This will provide us with a valuable insight into the experiences of our service users which will in turn inform best practice going forward. For more information on the event or the survey please contact Luke Price, Greater Manchester Development Officer, [luke.price@creativesupport.co.uk](mailto:luke.price@creativesupport.co.uk).



# Meet The Property Team



One of the lesser known departments at Head Office is the Property Services Team. Their work includes repairs and maintenance, renovating or converting properties and finding buildings to buy or rent for our service users or to use as local offices. The team also ensures that essential safety and utility records are kept up to date and that every property with gas appliances is safe. Creative Support currently owns around 140 properties and leases or has management responsibilities for many more.

Finding a new offices or accommodation, involves a lot of work to find exactly the right building, negotiate terms and then fit out the inside to suit the needs of the service. New office space in the past 12 months includes an office in Kendal in Cumbria, an office and service user hub in Droylsden and a new office in Doncaster. The property

team was heavily involved in co-ordinating the Head Office move to Stockport last January, and the subsequent move of our Learning and Development team a few months later.

Earlier last year the landlord of a property where our service users were living was told that they would have to move because their house was being sold. The Property Services Team were able to find a replacement house nearby and carry out extensive works just in time to beat the New Year deadline for them to move out.



The team have also been busy building some brand new properties.

In partnership with Warwickshire Council, Napton House opened providing supported housing for 18 people and, in August last year, six new townhouses in Stratford-on-Avon and four houses and two bungalows with full disabled adaptations were built in Alcester. They have just started work on site at the last of the schemes in Rugby which will be a mix of town houses, flats and bungalows, many with adaptations for tenants with physical disabilities.



Plans are now being made for the coming years!

If you wish to speak to a member of the Property Services Team please contact our helpful Administrator Stacey Robb on **0161 236 0829** or e-mail **[stacey.robb@creativesupport.co.uk](mailto:stacey.robb@creativesupport.co.uk)**

For repairs and maintenance queries contact **[repairs@creativesupport.co.uk](mailto:repairs@creativesupport.co.uk)** or phone **0161 238 7660** for property related services please contact **[propertymanagement@creativesupport.co.uk](mailto:propertymanagement@creativesupport.co.uk)**.

# MY JOURNEY

**Our special feature where we catch up with a Creative Support member and hear about their journey.**

*In this issue we speak to Samo from Liverpool about his story. If you are interested in being featured in another edition of Creative Life, get in touch with [marketing@creativesupport.co.uk](mailto:marketing@creativesupport.co.uk)*

My name is Samo, I was born in Walton and grew up there as well. I lived with my mum, dad, and two brothers. I like my toast in the morning on a Tuesday and a cup of tea or coffee. I was bullied at school but I am a survivor and I am here to tell my story.

In my spare time I love to watch my two favourite football teams, Liverpool and Barcelona! I can't always afford to go and see the Mighty Reds but I always go to the charity matches with my friend Tim, who is also a big Liverpool fan. I went to the last Hillsborough memorial at Anfield, it was very emotional.

Since I was 13 I knew that I was different. I didn't like wearing skirts or dresses, even though I had to for school. When I was at home I used to wear my jeans under my dress. I was unsure whether I was bi or not, but I then realised that I am a trans man. This was only a few years ago. I only recently came out as trans to my doctor. I am now being referred to a gender clinic in Leeds. I am nervous about going, because it is far away and I don't know Leeds. It will be a challenge for me.



I want everyone to see me as a male, e.g. his, him, he. I want people to say him and not her. I know in my mind that I am male. I dislike being trapped in the wrong body.

I love doing colouring in and drawing in my spare time. I do all kinds of drawing, I have recently won my PIP appeal so I would like to save up for an iPad and Apple pencil to help me with my drawing skills.

Another thing I like to do is collect charity badges. I have over 100 in my collection so far and I've put them all on a Liverpool scarf.

I also love to come to the coffee mornings at Links every Tuesday morning to see my friends. My biggest dream is to go to Disneyland Florida, as I am a big kid! I would love my friend Laura to come with me.



# What's on

Check out our guide below you'll find plenty of events and activities to keep you busy for the next few months!

## Autism Awareness Month

April is dedicated to raising awareness of Autism throughout our services. As part of this month, we will be returning to our successful Autism Good News Stories – available on our YouTube channel.

[www.youtube.com/crtvspprt](http://www.youtube.com/crtvspprt)



May



## Befriending Month

May's focus will be on volunteer befriending and how this can benefit our services and service users. A Befriending Pack will be available for anyone who would like the support of a Befriender.

To find out more information contact:  
[volunteer@creativesupport.co.uk](mailto:volunteer@creativesupport.co.uk)

## Volunteers Week

A great opportunity to thank our volunteers across the country for all of their hard work and also to promote the volunteer opportunities we have available. Contact our Volunteer Team to find out more:  
[volunteer@creativesupport.co.uk](mailto:volunteer@creativesupport.co.uk)

June



# Contacts

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Service User Involvement Team

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