

November & December

Hello and Welcome to Avondalecare's brand new Newsletter.

We hope to use this newsletter to help those of you who use our service to keep up to date with all the future activities, days out and social events we have planned. We also hope to include encouraging examples (see Life Stories) that will show just how much can be improved and accomplished despite coping with the challenge of mental health problems.



Why not join in at the Social Inclusion Centre?

We want the SIC to be a place that makes it easier for you, our service users, to enjoy positive socialising and maybe develop a few new hobbies and interests. We believe positive social contacts and enjoyable activities can be a great help along the road to recovery. We always aim for the SIC to be a relaxing, pleasant meeting place and for it to be somewhere you can choose when and how you meet up with others. We also really want to help you get out and enjoy your wider community; for example after enjoying cinema trips arranged by Avondale some service users have started going by themselves as well, something they didn't have the confidence to do in the past.

The SIC steering group met earlier in the year and it was suggested that the SIC should be open more and that it has been of great benefit to service users. So since the 31st of October the club has gone through a few changes, for example the club is now going to be open every day from 12:00 - 3:00, this is so that everyone can rely on the club being open and for the club to provide support during these hours. Also during these hours we hope to maintain activities to suit everyone, there will be a whole range of things including art & crafts on Mondays and Bingo on Fridays. We hope that with all the activities and hours that we are now open that everyone will want to participate and find something they enjoy doing.

Volunteers

As of the 31st we have had 3 new volunteers join us. These volunteers are here for the personal development of the visitors of the SIC. Hannah is currently finishing her last year of a university degree in mental health and will be doing several workshops focused on the improvement of service users' mental health and wellbeing. Maria will be focusing on arts and crafts workshops, providing relaxing

SIC – Westgate



**Open Daily
12pm-3pm**

Monday 12-3pm Craft workshop

Tuesday 12-3pm & Ten pin bowling at 3pm

Wednesday 12-3pm

Thursday 12-3pm & Golf at 3pm

Friday 12-3pm

Cinema visit 14th Dec

Service user End of Year Meal 7th or 8th Dec.

Please note the SIC will be closed on Tuesday the 29th Nov.

Out of Hours Support

Avondalecare provide support during normal work hours, but what if you find yourself in crisis outside of work hours?

Please make use of our freephone support messaging line which is manned by a community support manager.

0800 0148367

and creative sessions for enjoyment and development of personal skills. Ben will also be joining us and will be focusing on the physical events such as an allotment in the summer, BBQs and beach visits.

Life Stories

"My mental health issues started in 1976, I was working in Ireland at the time when I had a mental breakdown, my family flew to Ireland to bring me home as I was not aware of anything that was going on, they kept me at home with them for a few weeks but my mental health continued to deteriorate and I was eventually sectioned under the mental health act to St Augustine's, Chatham. I was there for a few months, I was given ECT treatment and was put on medication, and I was eventually discharged to my parents. I have relapsed over the years resulting in me being admitted to hospital, I have had stays in St Augustine's, Chatham, Hallowick ward, Barnett, London, Airedale hospital, Yorkshire, Ashford hospital and Elm Stone, Margate. I was sent to The Embassy Support Unit in Cliftonville, where I remained for 8 years, and was happy there, until they closed 2 years ago. From there I was referred to Avondalecare, they came to visit me. Since I have been with Avondale my life has changed dramatically for the better with the support I get from all at Avondale, I attend the drop in centre daily where I meet others with similar illnesses as my own. There is always something different happening, in the nice weather we have BBQs on the beach and picnics in the park, there is bowling and golf if you like playing on offer weekly, we have trips out to the zoo, London museums, Canterbury, Dover Castle are a few of the places we have been. There has also been extra special treats to Royal Ascott and Cheltenham races, I'm hoping we can go again next year to Cheltenham races as we had a really good time. My only wish is that Avondale came into my life years ago, and hopefully others can benefit as I have with their continued support."



Support Workers Comment.

SJ was talking to me and said that he had always said when his mum and dad were no longer with him he would have nothing here and move to Yorkshire to live near his brother. He said that now he was with Avondale his thoughts had changed, with the support he gets, he said he feels like he is part of a big family, which he would not have there. He also said that his mum and dad had advised him of the same, so he said he has now decided to stay here where he has the club, the other clients that he has made friends with and all at Avondale.

Would you like to tell us your story? Please speak to your support worker about it.

'Have a Voice' Video Project

Hannah has been recording interviews with service users and staff as part of her university volunteer project. She is looking to promote communication and to empower service users to 'have a voice'. Would you like to be part of the project and tell us about your life experience and views of mental health services?



Twitter Photos



Avondalecare Questionnaire

What do you think?

We are always looking to improve the service we offer, and **so every 6 months** we would like to ask you some questions. Please also feel free to give us any positive comments, suggestions or complaints in order for us to help improve our service. Please circle your answers and either post to 33a Westbury Ave, Westgate, CT8 8QX, or hand them to any support worker.

Q1. Do you know who your support worker is and how to contact them?

Yes No

Q2. How well do you get on with your support worker?

Very poorly Poorly Ok Well Very Well

Q3. How would you rate the service that users receive? (where 0 is poor and 10 is excellent)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Q4. How would you rate 'the club' and the activities that go on there? (where 0 is poor and 10 is excellent)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Q5. Do Avondalecare staff respect your right to make decisions about your life?

Never Not Often Sometimes Most of the time All of the time

Q6. How well do Avondalecare staff listen to you about what you want to do?

Never Not Often Sometimes Most of the time All of the time

Q7. Do Avondalecare staff promote your independence?

Never Not Often Sometimes Most of the time All of the time

Q8. Do you feel safe when you are with your support worker?

Never Not Often Sometimes Most of the time All of the time

Q9. Do you feel comfortable talking to your support worker about your problems?

Never Not Often Sometimes Most of the time All of the time

We will reveal the results in the next newsletter.

Positive comment, suggestions or complaints:-
