



H's Story

Live Well Happiness Hubs

H is a female in her 40s who is an adoptive parent and carer for her two teenagers, she supports her children and her partner works full time. H lives in the local community and wanted to support her emotional wellbeing become more involved and make friends in the area, to try something new and do something just for her.

H attends Empower Fitness and Chill and Chat, initially started off very reserved, quiet and lacking confidence in chats and discussions. Over the 6 months H has become completely at ease in all of our sessions, she loves having a safe and nurturing space where she can chat freely about the strains of teenage children with additional needs, she has connected with other adoptive parents who attend and is now a source of support to them too. Sharing her knowledge and experience with others in the group has given H a great boost in self-esteem and self - worth.

H values the diverse range of sessions she now has a wardrobe of fitness clothing and is shocked at how many new forms of fitness she has tried and enjoys, she actively encourages others to try new things and is a true example of the benefits of stepping out of your comfort zone. H has found the programme has helped her to stop and have time for herself and that this has supported her home life which can be difficult and mentally draining, she knows she has specific times in the week that are just for her and she says how this has hugely benefitted her whole family.

Recently one of her children has started accessing another programme we run for teens she loves that he is able to have support downstairs at the same time she attends a yoga session upstairs. Over the six months she has grown so much in herself with confidence and self esteem so much so she is keen to volunteer her time and help others access this programme too.



K and D's Story

Live Well Happiness Hubs

K and D are friends living in Sacriston. Their children, whom have additional learning needs, attend our holiday club and children's group on funded places.

K and D started attending our lunch chill and chat sessions and have benefitted greatly from the support of Live Well coaches and other community members. They are able to enjoy a safe place to discuss issues and challenges, gain help and support with official paperwork and advice regarding supporting their children's health and wellbeing. They also enjoy a healthy lunch and signposting to other support services.

Both have now become more involved in our wider organisation, are accessing training externally and express that their wellbeing has improved.



C's Story

Live Well Happiness Hubs

C is a mum in her 30s with two children with additional needs. When C came to us she was on long term sick leave due to her low/poor mental health and also receiving support from social services. C saw our Empower Fitness and contacted us via our Facebook page. After a couple of weeks of chatting via messages and telephone calls she felt able to attend our sessions face to face.

C suffers with depression and anxiety and when she planned to come to her first face to face session we were able to ensure we could meet her from her car, show her our venue before the session was due to start. This helped ease her anxiety and enable her to feel comfortable in her new surroundings. C attended a fitness session and discussed how she used to love fitness but due to her depression struggled to be able to leave the house. Her fitness sessions are lead by fully qualified instructor who is also qualified in supported adults with mental health needs and has had lived experience, C discussed how this was a brilliant way for her to engage and feel genuinely understood and supported with no pressure to do anything she wasn't sure off.

C explained she wanted to do more sessions as she knows how it really supports her wellbeing but one of her barriers was having her youngest child not at school, we had already seen a need for sessions where the children could be looked after so adults could access sessions so as part of the programme we then offered all fitness sessions and wellbeing sessions to be fully inclusive with additional staff to ensure children were able to play in a safe, welcoming environment and have their wellbeing needs met as well as enable adults to receive the support they require.



C's Story

Live Well Happiness Hubs

C started to get more involved, every week she would attend the fitness and chill and chat sessions. Over the weeks she started to feel happier, more confident and expressed how the programme has given her the support she really needed to start her recovery and be able to better manage her mental health.

Over time C developed the confidence to bring both her children to our after-school sessions where they accessed wellbeing support too and made new friends. C grew in confidence and her self - esteem was increasing and she then felt able to fully integrate herself in a lot of the other sessions we offer.

C developed new friendships through our chill and chat sessions and she was able to slowly start a phased return to work. During this time C was strong enough to start the process of an autism assessment for her youngest son, previously she wasn't able to cope with the amount of paperwork and appointment she had to attend so she was overjoyed she now had the mindset and support from our team to help her with her return to work and the support with her children's needs.

C is now back at work full time, her children and herself are thriving



Harry and Joyce Happy Minds

A couple (we'll call them Harry and Joyce) were both active lunch club members prior to the pandemic and had taken part in making a short video talking about the difference that the lunch club made to their lives. They had a very tough time during the pandemic. Harry's health was already vulnerable after a stroke some years ago, when his speech was left unclear.

In 2020, Harry was rushed to hospital after becoming increasingly frail and Joyce rang us for help. He was in and out of hospital for a while. Her lunch club leader Kim supported them throughout with weekly phone calls, arranging a volunteer to call around when the phone had been left off the hook and we couldn't get through, and delivering them a meal with our Meals@Home service in 2021. Joyce poignantly said: "Taking the lid off the food reminded me of the excitement of going to the lunch club. The food was good but also the smell worked wonders!"

Sadly, Harry passed away in 2021 leaving Joyce alone. We continue to support her, and she was able to come to the small support group and then return to her lunch club when it re-opened and take comfort from her friendships group, which has helped her to recover from her bereavement and difficult year.



Teesdale Clubs Happy Minds

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Horden Community Allotments

When I started to attend the allotment it didn't seem I wouldn't like being there, but after a while, it had grown on me, staff promote me to build raised beds and pathways, and meeting new people learning new skills, the allotment has been good for my mental health, and meeting other customers who share the same interests. And being able to help other new customers who come to the allotment and pass on what I have learnt over the last year.

Being at the allotment has helped me with my depression and anxiety, and staff have helped me get support with issues I may have when I haven't been able to deal with the problems

In May 2023 I will be signing up for the WEA course to learn. This is something positive and looking forward to learning and hopefully helping me to get a job in the future.





Activate the Arts Café

Christine has early onset dementia and was referred to the sessions by the Alzheimer's Society – she lives locally and has a keen interest in arts and creativity which has supported her through her diagnosis. Christine also attends our Let's Meet Up Art group which is specifically for people with early onset dementia but values the opportunity to mix with both groups. Her daughter commented 'My mam comes and it's actually changed her life and outlook, she has early onset dementia and these classes have given her a purpose and I am truly grateful thank you'.

Laura lives locally and lost her husband in the last few years – Laura has taken on a voluntary role as part of the group, facilitating the refreshments for the group, making sure the register is complete and organising card making activity when the tutor was unable to attend due to sickness.



Blackhall

A lady in in early 30s when she arrived at CREE she was shy, introvert, lonely and suffering from issues as a result of abuse from her childhood. She is now a regular at the group – every week without fail – she was referred to CBT therapy and attends every week she is an active member of the group now and has progressed to joining the gym which she now attends twice a week. She is grateful that we make time for her and now volunteers for the community centre, her way to give something back.

A young man with baby daughter was isolated. He achieved the ability to take his daughter out for a walk and instead of walking all the way to park and back and not speaking to anyone he bumped into two people that he now knows from the centre and he and chatted and made conversation and this allowed him to feel noticed and worthy. He feels he now has a purpose and is getting involved in all kinds of Community projects such as the Community Cook Book.