



FLOAT • Information & Advice • Face-to-face

# CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER

# ACHIEVE

with NERAF

December 2014

ACHIEVE WITH NERAF

Issue 7

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This longer than usual edition features the launch of our new Sunderland Hub on John Street and our Gateshead office at the Trinity Church. Pictures of our Sunderland launch event will be published in next month's newsletter.

Read on to find the details of our up and coming Christmas Parties!!

**VOLUNTEER PAGE**  
Introducing our volunteer page, making a regular appearance in future Newsletters. Keep an eye out for new articles and announcements!

### The Freedom Programme

We are running The Freedom Programme from Achieve with NERAF every Friday morning at 10am.

#### **What is the Freedom Programme?**

The Freedom Programme is a domestic violence programme which was created by Pat Craven and evolved from her work with perpetrators of domestic violence. The Programme was primarily designed for women as victims of domestic violence.

The Freedom Programme examines the roles played by attitudes and beliefs on the actions of abusive men and the responses of victims and survivors. The aim is to help them to make sense of and understand what has happened to them, instead of the whole experience just feeling like a horrible mess. The Freedom Programme also describes in detail how children are affected by being exposed to this kind of abuse and very importantly how their lives are improved when the abuse is removed.

For more information or if you would like to refer yourself or somebody else onto the programme please contact Michelle Hope on 0191 5656688.



## Official Launch of The Achieve with NERAF Recovery Hub in Sunderland

On a freezing cold morning of 20<sup>th</sup> November I arrived at work at 7.30am to prepare for our launch event. With my brand new shiny key, for the brand new lock, I went to unlock the door..... the lock wouldn't budge, after an hour of trying, and a locksmith on stand by along came Jude to save the day, nope Jude's key didn't work either. We weren't too worried as Adam was due to arrive soon, which he did and guess what?? His didn't work either. By then I had called a locksmith who didn't sound too happy about being dragged out of bed.

To make matters worse, Graham came around the corner laughing hysterically at our misfortune, by then I was thinking about guests and buffet arriving. Not a good start to the day. Because there was only one of the 3 locks on the door that we couldn't open, all was not lost. Jude and Adam somehow managed to get into the building and then we could start (Don't tell them where you live!!).

Shellie brought in a cake she had made using our Achieve logo, what a lovely surprise (there's not much left of it now). Staff and volunteers were working hard to make the final preparations for the day ahead, I was in head office having a meltdown at this point.

The photographer from The Sunderland Echo arrived to report and take photographs. Both myself and Graham were standing on the steps having our photos taken, my face wouldn't keep still and was twitching constantly. I'll be amazed if a photo could have been taken.

Guests started arriving and there was a genuine buzz in the rooms. The event began shortly after 11am with our Chair of Trustees, Lynn Dougan welcoming everybody and introducing the day. We then had Graham Frend our Director speaking about Achieve with NERAF and the future. Norma Coates who has been a Service User, a Volunteer, a Recovery Coach and again is a Volunteer spoke about her own personal journey and what she gains from her current role. After Norma, Tess Gooch who is the wife of the late Ian, who volunteered with us, spoke about what Achieve with NERAF meant to Ian and how much he loved his volunteering role. Just before we broke for lunch the Performing Arts Students from Newcastle College performed to "The Only Way is Up" which was fantastic.

After a lovely buffet lunch the afternoon sessions were broke into workshops. Megan Thompson who works as a Recovery Coach facilitated an open SMART Recovery group and Rob Etherson from Clean and Sober Living chaired an information session about 12 step abstinence based recovery. Shellie Nichols-Key our Volunteer Co-ordinator led a crafts session, afterwards Lynn Rowlands and Michelle Hope our FLOAT Workers led a discussion regarding the families and loved ones of those with problematic substance

misuse, and what Achieve with NERAF can do to support those.

All in all the whole day was a huge success, there were over 80 guests in attendance. It was really lovely to hear comments about the warmth within the organisation and how happy everybody appeared. Thank you to all who attended.

I personally would like to thank everybody who was involved in planning and making the day the success that it was. I would particularly like to thank Tess and Norma for sharing their stories, both of which were from the heart and very moving and inspirational. Thank you everybody!

Maria





## Healthy Body, Healthy Mind, Healthy YOU!!

We are delighted to announce a new programme beginning on Monday 1st December. The programme will run every Monday from 4 – 5pm from our John Street premises.

**Healthy Body, Healthy Mind, Healthy YOU !!**  
*A programme of structured group work for individuals following treatment for substance misuse*

- Relapse Prevention
- Emotional Resilience
- Physical Health
- Healthy Eating and Recovery
- Money Management
- Understanding Self and forming healthy relationships
- Mental Health

**ACHIEVE**  
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The programme is a rolling one of structured group work aimed at individuals who are coming to the end or have completed treatment for substance misuse.

You can self-refer to the programme, or be referred by an organisation you are working with.

If you would like further information regarding the programme please contact Megan on 0191 5656688, or email [megan.thompson@neraf.org](mailto:megan.thompson@neraf.org).

### Sunderland Men’s Health Network and Alcohol Awareness Week



Achieve with NERAF are a member of Sunderland Men’s Health Network. Sunderland Men’s Health Network is a city wide project run by a steering group of 12 members ranging from the VCS, Statutory and private sector organisations. They have been around since 2011. Working together for Alcohol Awareness Week we attended various locations throughout Sunderland to raise awareness of alcohol, units and alcohol related cancers. We gave out unit measurers and disposable one use breathalysers to members of the public. The week was a success with information being given to many people in Sunderland. Many thanks to all who were involved.



# Sunderland Christmas Party !

*Join in the fun festivities*

*at the Sunderland*

*Christmas Party !!*

*With Annual*

*Christmas Quiz and*

*Buffet*

*16th December 2014*

*1pm - 4pm*





**Congratulations**

A massive congratulations to Karen and Debbie two of our Gateshead Volunteers, who both received Distance learning Students of the year awards last month from the City Sunderland College. Keep up the good work. You are both doing amazing!!!



**Peer Mentor Announcements**

We are very excited to announce our New Peer Mentors from the Left we have (from Sunderland) Martin and Megan (From Gateshead) Karen and Peter. Massive congratulations for completing the training and becoming Peer Mentors with Achieve with NERAF. We are so pleased to have you with us!!



**Massive Thank You**

On behalf of Achieve with NERAF a massive thank you to all of our volunteers who have helped us with the Sunderland Launch, Gateshead Launch, Sunderland Men’s Health Alcohol Awareness Workshop and Alcohol awareness week. We could not have done it without you. Our volunteers have given up their free time this week to help promote Achieve with NERAF and alcohol awareness week.



**Volunteer Opportunities**

NERAF has always provided volunteering opportunities in the role of Group Facilitator but we have recently restructured our volunteering program.

We are now providing exciting opportunities in the following roles;

- Advocacy
- I.T Facilitators
- Groups
- Events
- Receptionist Duties

For more information about volunteering opportunities contact Shellie on 0191 5148520 or 0191 4785422 or email [shellie.nichols-key@neraf.org](mailto:shellie.nichols-key@neraf.org)



# GATESHEAD LAUNCH

ACHIEVE with NERAF launched our new Recovery Hub in Gateshead at the Trinity Centre in Gateshead on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> November supported by The Gateshead Safer Communities Team.

The new service will focus on substance misuse prevention and aftercare through one to one appointments, a Drop in Facility, Mutual Aid Groups, Recovery Workshops, Digital Inclusion, Arts and Crafts, Events and Activities, Community Projects and Fundraising for local charities through the 'Giving Something Back' campaign and lots more.

The day started with Shellie Nichols-Key ably assisted by Michelle Drinkald taking residents of Gateshead, staff from various organisations, volunteers and clients out for a 3 Mile (5 Kilometre) stroll down to the Quayside, over the water to Newcastle, along to the High Rise Bridge, back over the water and then back to the Trinity Centre just to get their appetites going.

The launch itself started at 12.30 with the arrival of Councillor Peter Mole and representation from the Gateshead Safer Communities Team and Public Health Departments, Managers and Staff from partner organisations and the return of the walkers.

Our guest speaker for the day was Geordie and England Legend Malcolm Macdonald who told the guests his inspirational story of his own battle with alcohol and his recovery followed by Councillor Mole and the Director of ACHIEVE Graham Frend, but the star of the day was undoubtedly one of our own volunteers; Karen McLaughlin who told the story of her recovery and how NERAF had helped her through her past and present issues in addition to supporting her through her a difficult period in her life but in reality the strength was her own.

All in all a fabulous day was had by all with huge thanks to The Trinity Centre staff, Gateshead Council and the ACHIEVE staff, volunteers and clients who worked so hard to make the day a huge success.





## Empowering change - Alcohol Awareness Week in Gateshead

Achieve with NERAF would like to thank our clients, volunteers, fellow colleagues at the Trinity Centre and the Safer Communities team at Gateshead Council for all their support throughout Alcohol Awareness week. This year we have successfully achieved a community outreach project throughout Gateshead that will hopefully provide the general public with the information they need to make informed choices surrounding their alcohol consumption.

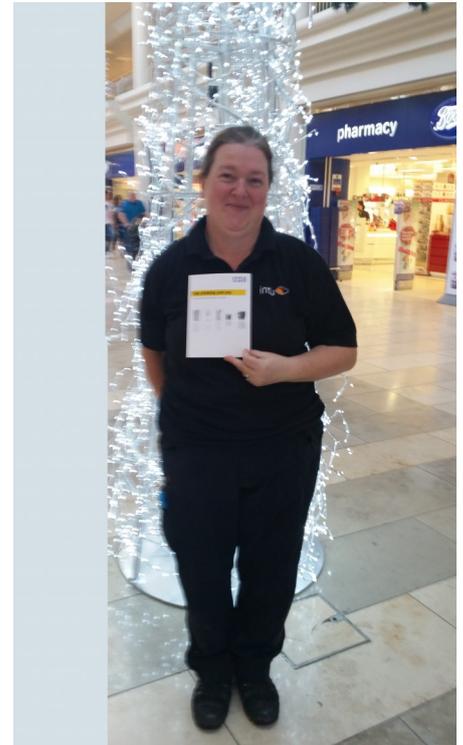
Throughout alcohol awareness week Gateshead Achieve with NERAF was given the opportunity to work with Blaydon housing office, Intu Metrocentre and Gateshead Collage, achieving an overwhelming response from the general public.

The events also provided networking opportunities with other organisations within Gateshead; increasing partnership working that will hopefully benefit Achieve with NERAF clients and their families in the future. We are hoping to draw upon these networks to achieve an outstanding Dry January and welcome all to participants in our future events.



DAY 1: ACHIEVE WITH NERAF SUPPORTS ALCOHOL AWARENESS WEEK IN BLAYDON HOUSING OFFICE

DAY 2: ACHIEVE WITH NERAF WORKS WITH INTU METRO CENTRE TO RAISE AWARENESS SURROUNDING UNIT CONSUMPTION



“Wanted to say a HUGE thank you to you and all of your staff for helping us out last week to promote Alcohol Awareness Week. I think we managed to get lots of important information out to lots of people, which wouldn't have been possible without your help “

Nicola Johnson  
Safer Communities Coordinator | Commissioning and Business Development | Safer Communities Team .  
Gateshead Council



# Gateshead Christmas Party

Join us in the festive  
fun at the Gateshead  
Christmas Party

With Buffet, Games  
and Cake

19th December 2014

2pm-4pm





# Walking Back To Happiness

This month at Gateshead Shellie organised a 5k recovery walk, called walking back to happiness, any one was able to participate. The aim of the walk was to promote recovery and show people that they are not alone and that there are people out there who can help. We started off at the Trinity Centre in Gateshead high street walked across the road and down towards the Sage and down to the river side. We then went across the river to Newcastle using the Millennium Bridge.



We then walked down the river side and back over the river using the Swing Bridge which leads us back up to The Trinity Centre. So after I calmed down after being so overwhelmed at how many people had turned up for the walk we decided to get started. The walk started off with a quick brief of where we were going and also pointing out any potential risk.

We then got started and set out walking on our 5k journey, we had been walking for 5 minutes and everything seemed to be going well, I still had everyone together and pointed out potential risks on the way such as stairs so that no one would face any surprises during the walk.

So as we went on I decided that we would slow down and let people catch up and thought this is good opportunity to take a photo. So I started to walk backwards and take some photos, everything was going well and I had some fabulous pictures. Then all I heard was Shellie mind the wall, yup you guessed it...bang walked straight in to a wall banging my knee. Needless to say idiot walk leader deciding to walk backwards was not risk assessed but I'm pretty sure I won't be walking backwards in a hurry again.

The rest of the walk went really well, everyone was in such high spirits and seemed to really enjoy the walk. Everyone completed the walk and I didn't hear one person say that they couldn't finish it, not sure if that's because there was a buffet at the end but I'm claiming that they really just wanted to complete the walk.

Everyone said they had a really good time and many asked when we would be doing the next one. I would like to say a massive thank you to everyone who participated and a massive thank you to everyone who helped me make this work, together we will show people that there is support available. I would also like to say a special thanks to Home Bargains who donated bottles of water to give to people for the walk and also a special thanks to the Recovery Centre who let us use their facilities half way round the walk, it means so much to Achieve with NERAF that you supported this cause. Shellie.





## Support Groups

Day	Venue	Time	Location
Monday	Gateshead/Mixed	1.00-3.00	Trinity Centre, Gateshead High St, NE8 1EP
Monday	Sunderland/Women's	11.00-12.45	56, John Street, Sunderland SR1 1QH
Monday	Sunderland/Mixed	1.00-4.00	56, John Street, Sunderland SR1 1QH
Monday	Sunderland/Mixed	5.00-7.00	56, John Street, Sunderland SR1 1QH
Tuesday	Sunderland/ SMART RECOVERY (structured)	11.00-12.00	56, John Street, Sunderland SR1 1QH
Tuesday	Sunderland/Lunch with achieve	12.15 – 12.45	56, John Street, Sunderland SR1 1QH
Tuesday	Sunderland/Mixed	1.00-4.00	56, John Street, Sunderland SR1 1QH
Wednesday	Sunderland/FLOAT Group	9.30-11.30	56, John Street, Sunderland SR1 1QH
Wednesday	Sunderland / Lunch with achieve FLOAT	11.30 – 12.30	56, John Street, Sunderland SR1 1QH
Wednesday	Sunderland/Mixed	1.00-4.00	56, John Street, Sunderland SR1 1QH
Wednesday	South Shields/Family & Carers Group	5.00-7.00	NECA Unit 17 Cookson House, River Drive, NE33 1TL
Thursday	Sunderland/Mixed	1.00-4.00	56, John Street, Sunderland SR1 1QH
Thursday	Gateshead/Mixed	2.00-4.00	Trinity Centre, Gateshead High St, NE8 1EP
Friday	Sunderland/Women's	11.00-12.45	56, John Street, Sunderland SR1 1QH
Friday	Sunderland/Mixed	1.00-4.00	56, John Street, Sunderland SR1 1QH
Friday	Gateshead/Family & Carers Group	10.00-12.00	Trinity Centre, Gateshead High St, NE8 1EP
Friday	Gateshead/Mixed	2.00-4.00	Trinity Centre, Gateshead High St, NE8 1EP
Sunday	Sunderland/ Mixed	11.00-13.00	56, John Street, Sunderland SR1 1QH

**Drop in sessions run between 9.30 and 4.00 in Sunderland when groups are not on**

**Gateshead, South Shields, Sunderland**



## Achieve with NERAF

“Our mission is to deliver and enable real positive differences to the lives of people affected by substance misuse and their family networks”

If you need help finding the Route to Recovery whether it is from a substance addiction or if you are caring for someone with an addiction Achieve with NERAF can support you.

We offer;

- Face-to -Face mentoring
- Motivational work
- SMART Groups
- Volunteer opportunities
- Peer Support
- Group work
- Partnership working

If you want more information about our service please contact

[info@neraf.org](mailto:info@neraf.org)

Or

Tel. 0191 5656688

Tel. 0191 5148520

Fax: 01915656715

Fax: 0191 5101827

## Substance Misuse Peer Mentor Opportunities



Do you want to help people to get on their road to recovery and share your story?

Do you have life experience that you want to share and could benefit people who are where you were a few months/years ago?

Have you ever thought you wouldn't get where you are today?

**Become a Peer Mentor Today !!!**  
Contact Shellie on  
**0191 5148520 or email [shellie.nichols@neraf.org](mailto:shellie.nichols@neraf.org)**



Achieve with NERAF

56 John Street  
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Fax: 0191 5656715



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