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Last month Achieve with NERAF joined the worlds largest coffee morning to raise money for Macmillan. See page 2 for how much was raised.



This issue sees our carers group took a trip to Minsteracres, read up on how they got on. Here's a few quotes from the day:

“The trip made me feel, safe, content and alive, everything was organised and everyone was helpful.”

“Beautiful scenery, tranquil surroundings, peaceful and calming. Wonderful staff who made you feel very welcome and I would definitely go back.”

**NEW GROUP TIME TABLE**

Following service user consultation we have made a few changes to our groups. See page 8 for the new timetables.

# MacMillian Coffee Morning

This month Achieve with NERAF joined the worlds largest coffee morning to raise money for Macmillan. We continued with last years theme of a bake off. Staff and Volunteers paid £2.00 to enter their cake into a bake off and guests chose which one they liked or looked the best.



The morning went very well with many staff and clients from Achieve with NERAF and Lifeline joining in. It was lovely it all sit together have a cuppa with some cake.....and lets not forget Lynn Rowlands delicious bread.

Now the moment you have all been waiting for.....who won star baker I can hear you saying !!!

Well.....

3rd Place—Adam Matthews with his delicious raspberry and white chocolate muffins.

2nd Place— Lynn Rowlands with her yummy cheese, onion and herb bread.

And....wait for it !

1st Place— Was me !! Shellie Nichols-Key with a very tall rainbow cake.

More importantly I would like to thank everyone who joined in with this event whether it was making cake like many of the staff and a Volunteer, donating cakes like we had from our Carers and also from Jennifer Wilson from the Biscuit Factory or donating money like many of us did. With all your help we raise a total of

**£110.05**

This is an amazing total to go towards an amazing charity !!

**Thank you all for making this possible.**



## MINSTERACRES CARERS TRIP 9<sup>th</sup> September 2015

Tess Gooch, the wife of the late Ian Gooch who volunteered with us for a number of years kindly invited members of our FLOAT Project (*Families and Loved Ones Achieving Together*) to Minsteracres Retreat Centre for a day trip. Myself and Michelle Hope attended also. Our Volunteer Mark Walker kindly offered to take us all in his mini bus and bring us back.

I made arrangements for the trip to be in September on the hope that the weather would still be nice. We arrived at the retreat at 10am. The weather was chilly and overcast but dry, our spirits were lifted when we were waited on with tea, coffee and biscuits, sat next to a fabulous roaring log burner.



The staff, Liz, Tess and Moira were very accommodating and made us feel at home from the start. We were taken on a tour around the buildings by Father Mark and given some history of the Retreat centre. We were then taken on a tour around the grounds which included the allotment where all of the food is grown that is used in the kitchen for guests. We were all given the option of sampling the fresh produce as the staff picked it. Marigolds are also grown and used to make body lotions with.

There is a quiet place where people can sit and read within the gardens if you need some 'me' time to clear your head.

After a walk around the grounds we went back indoors and huddled around the fire whilst Father Mark let us browse around his gift shop.

A two course lunch was served to us in the main dining room along with baskets of fresh fruit.

Not having too much energy after our lunch we were given the opportunity to participate in some Tai Chi. This made us feel amazing and chilled out afterwards.



We then were served with more tea, coffee, cakes and scones. We finished off the day with some meditation which was a good job as by this time as we were so full and relaxed we weren't capable of doing much else.

The day flew by and before we knew it 4pm had come around and it was time to make our way back home.

Our volunteer Mark then brought us all back to Sunderland.

Thank you to all the staff that made our day so special and also making it possible for us to spend a day with you all at the retreat.

Thank you to our Volunteer Mark Walker for the transport. Mark was also given the opportunity to join in on the day and seemed to enjoy it as much as we did.

Lynn Rowlands



## HERE WE GO AGAIN

Here we go again, Another day on the drink, It's the same every day, I feel like I'm on the brink.  
 Whisky, gin, vodka or rum, I really don't think he minds, Whatever he has money for, He will go & find.  
 Why should it bother me? He never lifts his hands, He really should be grateful, I do as he demands.  
 I should stand up for myself, & tell him how it affects me,  
 But there's always that fear, He will be blind drunk & not see.  
 I'm stuck in a rut, I don't know what to do, My life is in chaos, And my mood is blue.  
 Threats don't seem to work, I try them every day,  
 They only make things worse, And then he makes me pay.  
 Mental abuse, that what it is, How can he be so cruel?  
 He does what he wants anyway, and makes me look a fool.  
 One day I will leave him, That will give him a fright. I will secretly pack a bag, And leave tomorrow night.  
 Tomorrow never comes, I can't walk out the door. I can't leave him now, He will drink even more.  
 I wish I could end this torture, And stop all the pain. What's the solution I ask? What would I gain?  
 I must stay here and fight, The kids need me here. Here we go again, I'm here for another year.

*Written by Lynn Rowlands*

# Approved provider standards

This month Achieve with NERAF had an assessment for approved provider standard.

The Approved Provider Standard (APS) is the national quality standard designed specifically for all types of mentoring and befriending projects. After a full day of assessment about what we do and the support we provide, the assessor was very happy to tell us that we have been put forward for APS for our volunteering and mentoring project!!

We hope to hear the official outcome later next month, we'll keep you updated but keep your fingers crossed for us !!!

Approved  
Provider  
Standard





### Surviving Christmas and New Year

Sometimes people in recovery find the Christmas and New Year period difficult. Everybody seems to be having a great time and you're feeling worried or finding it difficult to cope. It can be worse when you have problems with drugs or alcohol, because you are trying to keep yourself safe when other people may be drinking and having parties. In addition to this, the services that you use may have closed or be limited for the period.

**YOU ARE NOT ALONE**, many people find the holiday period difficult. We have put together some hints and tips to help you keep yourself safe and well over the festive season:

- Talk to your support worker or key worker about what help you might need over the holidays. Come up with a plan for how you will cope and what you can do to keep safe and well.
- Make sure you have contact numbers of the out of hours and emergency services that will be available. Put this near your phone, or somewhere you can find it easily. Remember that the services will be open again in a few days.
- Check out the things that are on in places like local churches and community centres.
- Go to the library the week before the holidays. Stock up with books, DVDs, music - things to keep you going.

Some nice things to do alone:

- Watch a favourite film that takes you feel nice - and you can cry or laugh along with it.
- Play your favourite music.
- Get some nice smelly, pampering bath stuff. Then have a long soak - and do it each day if you want to.
- Go for a walk to your favourite place, or somewhere you want to see but haven't been to before.
- Have your favourite food.

Keeping yourself safe and well at parties and gatherings:

- Take a friend with you who will stay sober. Ask them to tell you, and get you to leave, if they think you are at risk of drinking, or if they feel the party is beginning to get a bit too wild or there is too much alcohol.
- Be in a safe place where people will respect that you are not drinking and won't encourage you to drink or take drugs.
- Leave when you are ready to go
- Take your own soft drinks.
- If you are visiting a friend or relatives who you know will be drinking, go earlier in the day before they have started drinking.
- Plan for a shorter visit, tell them you'll need to be away early.
- If you know that there could be a problem – which could be people who get you upset as well as alcohol or drugs there – don't go. Or go but only for a short time.

Remember that even if you have changed over the past few years, they might not have changed.



### WHY VOLUNTEER?

Ever wondered why people Volunteer their time for free to help other in need?

By giving us a few hours of your time you could really make a difference, not only to someone else's life but to your own as you could:

- \* Learn / develop new skills
- \* Meet new people
- \* Help people in recovery
- \* Gain work experience
- \* Help boost your CV
- \* Build Self Esteem
- \* Explore different careers
- \* Develop Career goals
- \* Increase the chance of employment this field
- \* Complete student placements

Achieve with NERAF value all their volunteers and love to see people progressing in their careers. Over the past three months, four of our volunteers have moved on to gain paid employment and many have gained experience to complete their college/ university course.

There is so much to gain from volunteering. Why not give it try contact us today for more information.

## VOLUNTEER

*all that's missing is U!*

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
- Admin
- One to one

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

You can also come to our Volunteer drop in on the first Thursday of Every Month and speak to Our current volunteers.



A big congratulations to Peter Currah who has taken up the post of Recovery Coach for our new exciting CRC contract. We wish you the best of luck with your future and thank you for all you have done during your time as a volunteer, just goes to show all that hard work paid off.



# SUPPORT GROUPS TIMETABLE

Day	Venue	Time	Location
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	Managing and Maintaining YOUR own Recovery!	11.00-12.00	56, John Street, Sunderland SR1 1QH
Tuesday	Sunderland/Mixed	1.00-4.00	56, John Street, Sunderland SR1 1QH
Tuesday	Healthy Mind, Healthy Body, Healthy YOU!	2.00-3.00	56, John Street, Sunderland SR1 1QH
Wednesday	Family2Change Carers and Loved Ones Support Group	10.00-12.00	56, John Street, Sunderland SR1 1QH
Wednesday	Sunderland/Mixed	1.00-4.00	56, John Street, Sunderland SR1 1QH
Wednesday	Healthy Mind, Healthy Body, Healthy YOU!	2.00-3.00	56, John Street, Sunderland SR1 1QH
Thursday	Sunderland/Mixed	1.00-4.00	56, John Street, Sunderland SR1 1QH
Friday	Managing and Maintaining YOUR own Recovery!	11.00-12.00	56, John Street, Sunderland SR1 1QH
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

## 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

Managing and maintaining your own recovery

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  
Sunderland  
SR1 1QH

Phone: 0191 5656688  
Fax: 0191 5656715



FLOAT • Information & Advice • Face-to-face

**ACHIEVE**  
with NERAF

[www.neraf.org](http://www.neraf.org)

