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## A GREAT VENUE AND A GREAT GROUP - A WINNING COMBINATION

It is the ideal location, and the ideal venue. But since the formation of the Friday Club Coldstream Community Centre has also become a home from home for members.

Community Centre committee member Catherine Hadshar wanted to offer up the venue as a base for a new community group and the idea has transformed into a genuine success story. Catherine said: "I was determined to get a group going in Coldstream to combat isolation and the lack of opportunities. It has been brilliant to see the level of interest since we formed and people are so fabulously positive about what is on offer. The club has a warm happy feeling.....*Continued on page 2*



**A fun evening**

## Keeping it simple is the key

For volunteer member Donald Mann he feels the recipe for Friday Club success is keeping it simple.

Donald, along with Catherine Hadshar, Kate Borthwick and Nina Robertson helped start the Friday Club more than two years

ago, and they have never looked back.

Recalling the moment, Donald said: "Catherine came to me to ask if I fancied forming a small group. We had a couple of planning meetings with Interest Link who agreed to co-ordinate

the group and it seemed in no time it was up and running. It has developed into a really nice group.

We have enjoyed some great feedback from members and whatever the weather they are here which is a great endorsement."

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## BBQ and archery evening

The sun shone almost as bright as the smiles of the members of the Friday Club who enjoyed a beautiful social evening which featured a BBQ and loads of different activities including



Croquet, giant Jenga and indoor archery.

Claire McKenzie said: "The BBQ was really enjoyable everyone was involved in planning that. I enjoyed trying croquet for the first time."

The group decided what food to buy and many helped with the cooking. The final result was extremely impressive and the plates were cleared in double quick time.

Katherine Gray simply loved the event, she said: "One of my highlights was the summer Barbeque it was such a fun night and it was nice

to see so many people there. I hope we can do this again soon."

The social side was also a hit and William Clark took great pride in helping organise the archery aspect of the evening.

He added: "I wanted others to try out something I enjoy and it went really well."



## A WINNING COMBINATION

*Continued from page one*

...to it. Some people may be going through tough times but once a month on a Friday night they are amongst friends and with people that help them feel good about themselves.

Catherine's words were echoed by Kate Borthwick who said: "The group has a great atmosphere, everyone is encouraged to try

things, there is a great fun atmosphere that shines through and everyone can relax in each others company."

As far as the participants and

*people are so fabulously positive about what is on offer. The club has a warm happy feeling about it*

volunteers are concerned the Friday Club has quickly become a part of community life and has filled a vital gap in the lives of all those involved.



## CURTAINS UP FOR A PERFECT PANTO

One of the most enjoyable trips which was littered with laughter was the visit to the Maltings Theatre in Berwick to watch the post Christmas Panto 'Jack and the Beanstalk'.

An entourage of cars made the journey on Jan 23. For some it was the first time they had ever been to a show, others it was an opportunity to re-experience something they had previously enjoyed. Group members

were quickly absorbed in the humour, and were able to sing-a-long to the tunes.

Roisin O'Donnell said: "I had a brilliant night, it was something that we had been looking forward to for months and it certainly lived up to all expectations." William Clark added: "I have been to shows before but attending with the group was really enjoyable it was a really friendly, fun

atmosphere and I would certainly go again."

And while the panto may be behind them, oh no it isn't, oh yes it is, there is little doubt the group will be back !



## Happiness

Happiness is that feeling that comes over you when you know life is good and you can't help but smile.

Happiness is also a sense of well-being, joy or contentment.

Being part of the Friday Club helps group members experience that feeling. Being around friends and other positive thinking people including an inspiring team of volunteers does a lot to develop that feel good factor.

Once a month the Coldstream Community Centre becomes an oasis of happiness. It is a chance for great friends to come together to chat to

each other, to try out new activities together, to reminisce about past outings and to plan future outings. It is a vital event.

For many without this once monthly meeting place they would be stuck at home.



William Clark said: "It gets me out the house which is really important, and I really enjoy the atmosphere. I mark the date on my calendar as it means a lot to me. I have thoroughly enjoyed going on the various trips over the years."

Katherine Gray said: "When I leave at the end of each session I always feel really good about myself, I feel I can be me in this group which is nice. Normally I would be sitting at home bored in my house, coming here is so nice, it is great."

Involvement is important to developing the happy atmosphere as far as Volunteer member Kate Borthwick is concerned, she said: "We always chat to the group about what they want to do. They drive the group forward. It is always so nice to see everyone and it is just as important to me as it is to group members. As well as doing activities and going on trips the social aspect is equally important. We have always been inclusive, and coming to the Club gives people the chance to be themselves in a safe supportive environment."



### *Continued from page one*

Donald added: "It seems like they (the group) are all one big happy family, laughing with each other and getting along really well. They are under no pressure to participate in what we do, sometimes they are just happy to come along and hang out together."

### Keeping it simple

The success of the group is listening to what the group want. Donald said:

"We don't try to overcomplicate what we offer here and in many ways keeping it simple is very effective. Everyone coming together for a takeaway or a barbeque is a really enjoyable experience. Not only do the members get a lot from the group but I do as well. When I come here it really gives me a lift. If I didn't enjoy it I am sure people in the group would pick up on it."



"It is a strong group of people and we all have a close bond together." - William Clark

# Self Belief and Confidence

Low self confidence isn't a life sentence. Self-confidence can be learned, practiced and mastered just like any other skill. Once you master it, everything in your life can change for the better.

Being part of an encouraging fully supportive group brings with it these potential benefits.

Volunteer Catherine Hadshar has no doubts that the Friday Club does just that. She said: "We offer a safe environment which encourages group

members to be sociable in their own space."

She added: "Allowing members to be involved brings with it a chance for everyone to shine."

Suggesting an activity for others to be involved in and then watching it come to life is hugely reassuring.

Group members are admired by others and develop their own self belief to suggest activities or trips. And each member is given a platform to find their own voice and confidence.

One of the biggest and best examples of watching group members grow in confidence was a group trip to the Edinburgh Butterfly Farm.

To watch people handle a giant centipede or a tarantula is an incredible endorsement.

While relatively new group member

"We offer a safe environment which encourages group members to be sociable in their own space.....a chance for everyone to shine"

Marion Pryde said: "I can be myself here it makes me feel good about myself."

She added: "I am often shy about trying new things but with this group I feel completely different. I don't feel people are judging me, I feel they are encouraging me."



## Photo Gallery



## Life skills

Members of the Friday Club are encouraged to try new activities. They are supported in developing social skills and join in a host of games.

This helps them develop important life skills almost without them even realizing it.

Volunteer Donald Mann added: "Everyone coming together for a takeaway or a barbeque is a really enjoyable social experience. They are responsible for handling money as part of the takeaway evening and also for choosing what food and activities are part of the barbeque."

Claire McKenzie loves the chance to try something new, and recently brought along her own quiz, just organised it herself and took the role of quizmaster. She said: "Being involved I feel I am learning lots of new things. I love sitting with people in the group and having a

chat with them and I know they enjoy me being with them. I feel stronger in my life because of joining this group."

*Choosing and planning activities together or helping with the teas and coffee are all part of the club*



## Photo Gallery



# Friday Friendship that lasts forever

## Friendship

Walking into the Friday Club for the first time you are immediately met with a welcoming atmosphere. No-one knew me, but it didn't matter I was quickly put at ease *writes Graham Ford*

This has clearly been one of the strengths of the group since its inception several years ago.

To be part of the group is one thing, but to be part of a group where you get meet up with friends, genuine friends, each month is something special.

William Clark joined the group at the start, he said: "The group has grown bit by bit and I certainly have made a lot of friends."

For Jack Coltherd, a visit to the the Coldstream Community Centre is better than a visit to the doctors he said. "I have been involved for almost three years. This is a nice group. It is like some important medicine each month as it always makes me feel better. I like the fact that there is no pressure on us. We can just be ourselves."

The group has a nice mix of people of all ages from people in their fifties and beyond to

members who are barely out of their teenage years. But it makes no difference.

Katherine Gray said "I feel like the baby of the group but have always felt welcome. I have been coming along for about two years from Chirnside and it is always a really good night."

While Roisin O'Donnell recalled: "My mum brought me along the first night, but I quickly felt welcome and felt safe to come on my own. Now I look forward to meeting all my friends. I like going away on trips, going as a group is brilliant and I really enjoy it."

And when it comes to an end each month Claire McKenzie feels quite emotional, she said: "I am always sad at the end of the night as I have had so much fun. I like each and every person in the group and I am happy to sit with everyone."



Friendship -  
The state of being a friend.  
To value a person's  
Friendship  
Something that is much  
underrated in our society



### TRACY IS POTTY ABOUT POTTERY

Tracy Cockburn was really proud of her pottery creation.

She really enjoyed the pottery night and spent much of the time proudly decorating her drinking mug. Taking her finished project home at the end of the night. Tracy said: It was nice to try out this. It was a lot of fun and something new and I was really delighted with my efforts."

### BEST BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS FOR ROISIN

Roisin O'Donnell had a 21st birthday to remember at the Friday Club.

Lots of group members attended a celebration party with everyone bringing along birthday cards or presents."

Roisin said: "It was a brilliant experience. People were so kind and I was so happy to to receive a birthday cake. And I was only too happy to share it with everyone."

Milestone memories indeed!



Roisin O'Donnell couldn't think of anywhere better to celebrate her 21st birthday, and with a great bunch of friends.

## Members stories

### BEACH TRIP IS A BIG HIT WITH EVERYONE

The Friday Club members certainly love to be beside the seaside.

However, the opportunity to step into the ocean and experience sand between your toes isn't always possible

But it all happened by way of a convoy of cars and some forward planning by the Friday Club team.

Members enjoyed a chance to sample some fish and chips at Spittal. To wander along the sand and try some kite flying. Group member Jack Coltherd said:

"Without being part of the group I couldn't see me getting there."

And while it wasn't quite totally tropical the seaside adventure didn't disappoint and there are plans for a return visit



*Fish & chips at the end of the evening*

### FRIDAY FRIGHT NIGHT

Participation and fun were the key words for the special Halloween celebrations and it proved to be a huge success.

Judy Kay said: "Most people went for it and decided to dress up and they loved participating in the many activities that they had organised.

"The evening had been planned by the group and it went really well."



## GAVIN GRABS HIS OPPORTUNITIES WITH BOTH HANDS



Gavin Brunton

Gavin Brunton has been involved with the Friday Club for almost two years and he certainly knows how to make the most of his time at the Friday Club.

Recalling the last few years, Gavin said: "I have been part of the group for roughly two years. When I was invited to be part of the group I wasn't totally sure what was all involved but it quickly became one of my favourite activities.

There is always something different to do and I like

trying the new activities that are offered. I have made lots of new friends here and it is great that I am able to talk to them and find out what they have been up to. I also really enjoy it when we go on trips. Some day I would like to go on a trip to watch my favourite football team Newcastle United."

## NEVER A DULL MOMENT

Members of the Friday Club enjoy a rich and varied calendar of activities.

Everyone is encouraged to come up with ideas and everything can happen. Over the last few years the list has included darts, table football, cooking, creative arts and crafts, take-away food nights, badminton, table tennis, cake decorating, quiz nights, making biscuits, indoor bowls, crocheting, toasting marshmallows over BBQ, bocchia, bingo, beetle drive, movie night and really much, much more.

**"There is always something different to do and I like trying the new activities that are offered."**

# A WEE WORD FROM JUDY.....

What a pleasure it has been to be involved in this Club. Since it started in September 2013 local people with learning disabilities have come along to meet old friends, make new friends, try new activities and simply enjoy themselves. It's so easy for people to feel isolated or left out of the community they live in and our Club brings people together. It feels a privilege to be able to help

The Club is held in Coldstream Community Centre which is very central and has easy access for everyone. We have use of the comfortable café area which opens

onto the large hall next door.

Together these rooms are perfect for anything from chatting, table games and craftwork to darts, badminton, table tennis and lots more besides.

As well as all these usual activities our members also decide on something extra they would like to do each month and a many of these have already been mentioned in this magazine. They really do go for it!

It's very heartening for me and our volunteer helpers to know how much people get out of coming to the Club: whether it's seeing people proud of what they've made or achieved, their

developing friendships and interests or the growing confidence we see in people or just the laughter we hear. It's a busy, fun-filled Club where there's a place for everybody and it's our friendly members and our happy bunch of volunteers who make it such a success.

Thanks everyone!



**Judy Kay, Interest Link  
Berwickshire Co-ordinator**

## A BREATH OF FRESH AIR FOR BERNADETTE

She is one of the newer members of the Friday Club. But as far as Bernadette Smith is concerned it is one of the best decisions she has ever made.

Bernadette joined earlier this year and is feeling inspired as a result.

She said: "I only joined the group a little while ago. It has been a real eye-opener. It has been a real breath of fresh air in my life."

And she would encourage other people to take the plunge if they are thinking about it.

Bernadette added: "I would certainly encourage others to get involved. It is a group of people who help each other, support each other and it all happens in a really fun environment."



**Bernadette Smith**

## The Friday Club roll of honour

### Group members –

Bernadette Smith, Claire McKenzie, Gavin Brunton, Jack Coltherd, Murray Shiells, Tracy Cockburn, William Clark, Katherine Gray, Roisin O'Donnell, John Hope, Jack Keightley, Tawny Wright, Marion Pryde,

### Volunteers – Kate

Borthwick, Catherine Hadshar, Donald Mann, Nina Robertson, Lucy Hamilton-Woods,

**Branch Co-ordinator – Judy Kay**

## A big thank

## you goes to the Coldstream Group's principal

