



August 2026 Newsletter

CAPITAL Updates

Creative Space: A Fond Farewell for Now

This month, we sadly held our final Creative Space session at the CGL building in Bognor, at least for the time being.

Creative Space was developed in response to a need identified by our community for a safe and welcoming place where people could come together, connect with others, and take part in creative activities when other services were closed. The group has provided a valuable opportunity for people to express themselves creatively, build confidence, and form meaningful connections with others.

Unfortunately, our current funding has now come to an end, which means we are no longer able to cover the costs of peer facilitators, supervision, and art materials needed to continue running the group.

For our final session, our wonderful member Emma prepared a fantastic spread of food, and we spent the afternoon enjoying good company, laughter, creativity, and reflection. It was a lovely way to celebrate everything the group has achieved together.

Over the months, Creative Space grew steadily in size, bringing together people from both CGL and CAPITAL and helping to create lasting friendships and supportive peer connections. It has been wonderful to see the positive impact the group has had on those who attended.

Our members also helped us to evaluate their experiences, and their feedback will be invaluable in supporting future funding applications. Common themes included increased confidence, the enjoyment of having a safe and supportive space to be creative, improved wellbeing, and the friendships and sense of belonging developed through the group.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to CGL for generously providing us with the use of their building and for supporting the group throughout its journey. Their kindness and commitment helped make Creative Space possible.

We would also like to thank our funders. DAP funded the first year of Creative Space, and we are incredibly grateful for their support in helping us establish and grow the group. We would also like to thank Sussex Community Foundation, who funded the final six sessions, enabling us to continue offering this valued space for our community.

Finally, we would like to say a heartfelt thank you to all of our Creative Space members. Your creativity, enthusiasm, and support for one another are what made the group such a special place.

While this is goodbye for now, we remain hopeful that we will be able to secure further funding and continue this important work in the future. We will, of course,

keep you updated on any developments and hope to welcome everyone back to Creative Space again soon.

Peer-Led Men's Group

Our six-session online Peer-Led Men's Group is coming to an end this month. The group was initially launched as a pilot project to explore whether a peer-led space would be beneficial for men seeking connection, support, and the opportunity to share experiences in a safe and supportive environment.

Group members have also completed evaluations of their experience, and we look forward to reviewing their feedback to help us understand the impact of the pilot and inform any future development of the group.

Throughout the pilot, the group has explored a range of topics that are important to men's wellbeing, including: Stress and everyday pressures, Emotions and the impact of bottling things up, Relationships and loneliness, Coping strategies and self-care, Reflection, growth, and next steps.

The openness, honesty, and mutual support shown by the group members have helped create a welcoming and meaningful space where participants can learn from one another, build confidence, and recognise that they are not alone in their experiences.

We would like to thank everyone who has taken part in the pilot and shared their experiences. Their feedback and evaluation responses will help us assess the impact of the project and explore opportunities for future peer-led groups. We look forward to sharing any future developments with you.

Peer-led Anorexia Support Group

We are currently in the planning stages of a new online Anorexia Support Group, which is due to begin in late autumn/winter.

The focus on anorexia has been chosen by our planning group members, whose lived experience has helped shape the project. The group discussed the possibility of covering all eating disorders but felt that this would be too complex, as different eating disorders can present in very different ways and often require different approaches and support.

This six-week group aims to provide a safe, supportive, and understanding space where people can connect with others who have shared lived experience.

If you, or someone you know, would benefit from taking part in the group, or if you would like to be involved in the planning and development of the project, we would love to hear from you. Please get in touch for more information or to express your interest.

Walking with Wheels

Unfortunately, two of our lived experience members have recently had to step down from the Walking with Wheels planning group, and we are looking for new members to help shape this exciting project.

Walking with Wheels aims to explore how people with limited mobility and/or mental health challenges can access and enjoy nature, recognising the important role that spending time outdoors can play in both our mental and physical wellbeing.

While the project has a particular focus on improving accessibility for people with limited mobility, we are also keen to hear from people without mobility issues who have lived experience of mental health challenges and understand the positive impact that connecting with nature can have on wellbeing. We believe that a range of perspectives will help us create a more inclusive and effective project.

If you have lived experience of limited mobility, use a wheelchair or mobility aid, have an interest in accessible outdoor spaces, or would simply like to contribute your mental health lived experience to the project, we would love to hear from you. Your insights and experiences can help ensure that Walking with Wheels is shaped by the people it is designed to benefit. If you would like to get involved or find out more, please get in touch. We'd be delighted to welcome you to the planning group.

NHS Shine a Light on Co-Production: Turning Lived Experience into Community-Led Solutions

This month, CAPITAL had the opportunity to contribute to the NHS Shine a Light on Co-Production programme, showcasing our work on the Drug and Alcohol Partnership (DAP) project- Turning Lived Experience into Community-Led Solutions.

The session highlighted how people with lived experience can play a vital role in identifying community needs, shaping projects, influencing services, and developing solutions that make a real difference to people's lives. At CAPITAL, co-production sits at the heart of everything we do, ensuring that lived experience is not only heard but actively informs decision-making and service development.

The presentation explored how community-led approaches can create meaningful opportunities for connection, empowerment, and change. It also shared examples of how CAPITAL members have worked alongside services and partners to improve support, reduce stigma, and develop initiatives that reflect the needs of local communities.

We would like to extend a special thank you to Dan Barritt & Robert Whitehead (West Sussex County Council), Tracey Horne (Lived Experience Representative), and Jenny Robinson (Lived Experience Representative), who joined Duncan and Sara in delivering the presentation. Their insights, experience, and commitment to co-production helped bring the session to life and demonstrated the power of working together to create meaningful change.

We are proud to champion the value of lived experience and would like to thank everyone who has contributed their insights, ideas, and expertise to help shape our work. Their voices continue to drive positive change across West Sussex and beyond. *To view the full presentation, please visit the [NHS Futures platform](#).*

To read WSCC evaluation on CAPITAL and DAP co-production work please visit our website and we look forward to sharing CAPITALs multi-media presentation on completion in the autumn.

Contact Sara with any questions: sara.shepherd@capitalcharity.org

Duncan featured in Exchange Magazine: Spirituality and Peer Support Issue

Duncan reflects on the role of spirituality, personal recovery and peer support in his article. Drawing on both his lived experience and years of working in mental health, Duncan explores the importance of hope, connection and meaning in recovery.

Read more: www.capitalcharity.org/duncan-featured-in-exchange-magazine-on-spirituality-personal-recovery-and-peer-support/

Duncan's NSUN blog: 'From involvement to accountability: why lived experience must hold power'

Duncan explores why lived experience must move beyond involvement and towards genuine accountability. Reflecting on the growing recognition of lived experience across health and social care, he asks an important question: who is really holding power, and who is being held accountable?

It is a thoughtful read that challenges us all to think more deeply about how we work alongside people with lived experience and what meaningful co-production should look like in practice.

Read here: <https://www.nsun.org.uk/from-involvement-to-accountability-why-lived-experience-must-hold-power/>

The CAPITAL Story by Alison Faulkner – More coming soon!

Alison Faulkner has been listening to the stories, memories and experiences of the people who make CAPITAL what it is. Here are stories of challenge, hope, connection, recovery, purpose and the power of people supporting one another. We can't wait to share the full project with you all.

Thinking about applying to be a CAPITAL Trustee?

Now is the perfect time to do so! You can find out more about CAPITAL Trustees here: www.capitalcharity.org/board-of-trustees

Or apply here: www.capitalcharity.org/job-opportunities

Burgess Hill Community Hub Volunteer Facilitators Needed

We are urgently looking for volunteer facilitators to help with the monthly Burgess Hill hubs, which are booked until September. Expenses can be claimed for travel and activity/craft expenses. To find out more and have an informal chat about the role, contact us.

Email: enquiries@capitalcharity.org

Callout for Art and Crafts Materials

Do you have any spare or old magazines, newspapers or craft materials (paints, pencils, paper etc) which you could donate to our groups? Thank you

Contact: enquiries@capitalcharity.org



Art from the Burgess Hill hub in July

Member Updates

Monthly Online Members meeting

Come along to our monthly members meeting, held on the last Wednesday of each month at 6pm.

Link:

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82187471358?pwd=ShPD0LhxliClog7IErcQge0qClOQRJ.1&f_bclid=IwY2xjawNLM-lleHRuA2FlbQlXMAABHhIGYrMgYXIKrjlh9-qO99QiSFBsDRYyK2pAgM-JNDDY-YR7j6VSW7gwpmxs_aem_5AUC04EKc24TJQtLsQKtrA#success

Contact Lin: lin.gibbs@capitalcharity.org

LEAG Updates

We're pleased to share the next chapter for the West Sussex Lived Experience Advisory Group (WSX LEAG), with our refreshed strategy setting out our priorities for the year ahead. You can see our infographics on our socials, and the strategy on the LEAG webpage www.capitalcharity.org/leag

Our focus is on growing and diversifying membership, strengthening communications and visibility, and further developing our independence.

We're also still looking for a Communications and Campaigns Volunteer to help us share the work of WSX LEAG. If you're interested in supporting lived experience-led change, please get in touch to find out more.

Read more: www.capitalcharity.org/job-opportunities

Contact: leag@capitalcharity.org

CAPITAL Connections Podcast – Episode 6 out now!

We are excited to share our sixth episode with you, featuring Javel Watt from Beyond the Narrative, talking about his fantastic projects – High on Health and Guidance Vs Grooming.

Find us on YouTube (linked below) or Spotify under CAPITAL Connections and email us if you'd like to be involved or have any feedback!

Contact: capitalconnections podcast@capitalcharity.org

Donating and Supporting CAPITAL

Support CAPITAL & Win Big! Join the Giving Lottery for just £1 per ticket.

Read more: <https://www.givinglottery.org.uk/support/capital-project-trust>

You can also nominate CAPITAL for Benefact's Movement for Good.

Read more:

https://movementforgood.com/draws/1000?dm_i=6MG6,1B411,6I0SX2,64ZE0,1

Direct donation links and more info: www.capitalcharity.org/support-us

Whatever you do to support us, now or in the future, thank you!

Thank you for reading our newsletter! - Your CAPITAL team

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