

AUGUST 2021

# THE 'KEEP THE HEID' NEWSLETTER!

From North Ayrshire Justice Services Service User Involvement group



## WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?

We've had a busy month visiting some community hubs, sharing some of the things that have worked during a pandemic with other service user groups and learning more about the supports in the area for people in recovery. However, our very favourite news of the month is that one of our long-term group members has been successful in getting a Recovery Development Worker employed post. We are so unbelievably proud of him! He has said that he gained confidence in himself through being involved in sharing his story with us and then sharing his story with some of our other partner agencies. So we guess this is just another brilliant benefit to service user involvement groups... they give people a chance to see beyond their involvement with the justice system and see a future.

Eventually you'll end up  
where you need to be, with  
who you're meant to be with,  
and doing what you should  
be doing.

# DOING THE BEST FOR YOUR COMMUNITY...



"THE GREATNESS  
OF A COMMUNITY  
IS MOST  
ACCURATELY  
MEASURED BY THE  
COMPASSIONATE  
ACTIONS OF ITS  
MEMBERS."

CORETTA SCOTT KING



This month we visited a Community Food Larder in Kilwinning to learn a little more about what they are doing for the community.

The food larder we visited was the Woodwynd Wee Shoap based in the Woodwynd Community Centre. When we arrived we spent time speaking to one of the staff who runs the larder and learning more about what led to its creation. The wonderful staff had gotten involved helping with delivering food parcels and during lockdown realised how many people needed help with food and toiletries.

They wanted to create a community shop and help people get back on their feet whilst also feeling in control of what food they are selecting.

These food larders work on a membership basis and provide a mini supermarket-like environment where local residents have the opportunity to choose their own food. The Wee Shoap staff feel - and we agree - that this is a more dignified approach to food insecurity and helps make residents' money go further by giving them access to good food at a lower cost.

Anyone visiting the food larder will be asked to pay a membership fee of £3 per visit for families of up to four, and in return, can select a choice of food, including fresh produce, up to the value of £20. Larger families who require more food can pay £5 per visit to double their shopping.

We were blown away by the amount of care for the community the staff at the Wee Shoap showed. It really is an excellent community resource and the staff are genuinely dedicated to help improve the lives of those living within their communities.

Anyone wishing to help support the work being done here can donate items to the Wee Shoap - non-perishable items are always gratefully received.



# SUPPORTING RECOVERY...



This month we spoke to John, one of the Recovery Development Workers who work alongside Justice Services as part of the North Ayrshire Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service. He was kind enough to share his story and what working with those in recovery has meant to him.

*"I have been abstinent from drugs and alcohol from April 2014. This involved a great deal of hard work and a lot of support from my Social Worker, friends and family. When I was turning my life around, the power of example was hugely powerful and gave me hope that I could stop doing what I was doing, as I had seen others change their outlook to life.*

*Since beginning working in recovery, I have found that I can reach out to others who are in the grip of active addiction and transmit a message of hope that they can recover. The job I do involves helping people in the community where I am from, and where I used and sold drugs. I have personally seen addicts who were as hopeless as me change their lives around. I now support people by going into the prison where I was a prisoner, by giving them a structured person-centred support plan before their release back to North Ayrshire.*

*have been working with North Ayrshire council addiction/ mental health services for over two years as part of the health and social care partnership.*

*I have completed my SVQ3 in social care and now work in a team of Recovery development workers who have lived experience of recovery from mental health and addiction issues. I still attend my recovery meetings and connect with the local recovery community. I have also been involved with the prison recovery group where I work with NHS addiction workers to deliver group work and give hope and inspiration to others.*

*I believe that anyone can change their lives around from being a hopeless addict with years of prison time to being a trusted member of society again, as long as they can develop some courage to face their fears, listen to others and develop some resilience. There are opportunities out there for people who are brave enough to overcome adversity but it always starts with "can someone give me a hand here, I cant do it by myself?"*

*I have personally seen people who were once as beaten down by addiction as me, become great parents, employees, students and real assets to whatever their chosen path.*

*Everyone is capable of change it just takes determination and tapping into the inner strength that everyone has already inside of them. Don't give up, it only takes small steps every day for remarkable change to occur".*

**"THE THINGS IN LIFE WHICH I PURSUED LIKE MONEY, REPUTATION AND PRESTIGE HAVE BECOME A DISTANT PAST REMINDER THAT I WAS FOCUSSED ON ALL THE WRONG THINGS TO KEEP ME HAPPY. THE BEST GIFT I HAVE NOW IS BEING RELIABLE, TRUSTWORTHY, HAPPY AND CONTENT".**

# LAST BUT NOT LEAST...



It's tomato and mozzarella pasta bake this month!

## Ingredients

(makes 2 portions)

1 tbsp olive oil  
1 onion, chopped  
1 garlic clove, crushed  
400g tin of chopped tomatoes  
100g dry penne or other tube pasta  
50g mozzarella cheese, grated  
Slice of crusty or normal bread, grated  
Some crushed basil leaves

## Method

Heat the oil in a medium pan and fry the onion for 5 minutes until softened and lightly golden. Stir in the garlic and basil and cook for a further minute.

Mix in the tomatoes, bring to the boil and simmer for 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, cook the pasta according to pack instructions (tube pasta will have slightly different cooking times).

Heat the grill to high. Mix together the cheese and breadcrumbs.

Drain the pasta and stir into the sauce.

Put the whole mixture into a heatproof dish - a casserole one would be fine.

Scatter the cheese crumb mix on top.

Grill for 3-5 minutes until it is bubbling hot and golden.

*"THIS RECIPE IS  
SOMETHING NICE  
AND EASY THAT I  
CAN SEE ME MAKING  
ALL THE TIME!"*

(MAD GROUP  
MEMBER)

