

JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 2024

# THE 'KEEP THE HEID' NEWSLETTER!

From North Ayrshire Justice Services Service User Involvement Project



## WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING?

It has been a busy start to the year for Justice Services! We have been hard at work redecorating our interview rooms in the office to try and make them more welcoming and we're hoping to run a wee competition to have our service users come up with names for each room. They certainly look a lot better and we've had positive comments from service users and staff about the changes!

We're also working on our latest cookbook and we have our Project members sharing some of their favourite recipes so we can use them. We can't wait to have that finished so our cooking challenge group can start trying out new recipes.



# RECOVERY IS A JOURNEY...



In this edition we bring you part one of our Recovery Development Worker, Paul's story. We shared a story of Paul's before when he was struggling with his own recovery during lockdown. This is part one of his new story, in his own words:

*"Hi ma names Paul and I'm an addict, well that's how I used to identify a lot has happened since I last wrote for the Making a Difference (MAD) newsletter.*

*The last time was late 2020 I was just getting over a relapse and was not in a good place, As much as outwardly my life was on the up internally I was miserable,*

*I had been waiting to start an SVQ placement in South Ayrshire that fell through. I had been doing a lot of Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meetings and was doing my best to link in with a sponsor and get into Glasgow to attend physical meetings and I had been gifted a chance at going through Second Chances which is a Twelve step abstinence-based day programme.*

*However, I wasn't in a place where me coming off my medicated assisted treatment (MAT) was viable for me to do to a successful outcome at that time so Second Chances was out too, in all seriousness I felt lost again.*

*I had decided to take a step back from NA it was becoming counter intuitive for me. I was leaving my sponsor feeling ignored and like what he wanted was more important to him than what I wanted for me was and in all honesty I was feeling really controlled and for me personally raking over the coals of the past wasn't serving me well, I had healed a lot of that stuff.*

*I got myself plugged back in with the team at Turning Points Prevention and Early Intervention Recovery Service (PEARS) service in Stevenson and I had been sign posted to a wee mental health support group in Irvine called Umbrella group.*

*The majority of my 2021/2022 was spent me grafting hard to hold onto my recovery and deal with life as it comes at me. It has had its challenges. I began to attend Changes group every week, I was head dishwasher in Café Solace (Chief executive of the sink!) and I had got involved with recovery community development stuff in North Ayrshire.*

*I am actually a really blessed person I do have a lot of good qualities and attributes and over the course of my recovery I've been on some really good courses and training where I've further deepened my own skill set.*



## CONTINUED...



*As a result of my involvement with PEARS I was offered to go up to the POD in Glasgow at Turning Points headquarters and was lucky enough to get a spot on the Buddy programme which I completed.*

*The buddy programme was really good for me, my confidence had taken a knock and all I got at the POD was lots of positive feedback. At the rewards ceremony after the buddy programme the feedback from the guys was really humbling for me, but it was also a reminder of who I was and that yes I had had a relapse and yes I did have to go back on MAT but none of these things were the end of the world or my life. Nor were they, as I had begun to tell myself, the end of me being a worker in the recovery field.*

*As a result of the work I was putting in and the fact that all of the people around me knew I was serious about bettering myself and stepping into the world of work where I could be an asset to an organisation an opportunity came up for me to apply for a sessional post with CHAP (Community Advocacy Housing Project) for a lived experience advocacy worker on a sessional basis, I made it to the interview stage and got the job.*

*I was absolutely blown away I had convinced myself that I had destroyed my career and my future with my last relapse so to be stepping into a job with an organisation like CHAP was a big big deal. As much as yes I do have a lot of skills and I am good with people this was a whole new experience for me, I had never had a "real" job before.*

*The CHAP experience as short lived as it was, was a good learning experience for me and a really strong introduction to the world of work and living life as a professional and a person who works for an organisation. I had to leave CHAP as the funding for the post expired and once again the negative person who lives in my head tried to rear his ugly head and convince me that I was wasting my time.*

*If you have read the last MAD newsletter article I did, you would have seen that I was peer volunteer with the Making a Difference project as well as being on the peer worker programme in south Ayrshire . The New Street team and my involvement with the MAD project were the bedrock of my recovery. Their desistance worker at the time was my main support and encouragement when I come home from treatment in 2019.*

Paul's story will continue in our next edition...



# LAST BUT NOT LEAST...



For this month we made salt and chilli chicken. It went down very well!

## Ingredients

(makes two portions)

2 chicken breasts  
2 peppers  
1 onion  
1-2 red chillis  
Chilli flakes  
Garlic salt  
Salt and pepper  
130 g rice  
Breadcrumbs  
Soy sauce  
1 egg

## Method

Cut the chicken into pieces.

In a bowl, mix the breadcrumbs with chilli flakes, garlic salt and some salt and pepper.

In another bowl, break the egg and whisk with a fork.

Dip a chunk of chicken into the egg and then into the breadcrumb mix and coat evenly, then place on an oven tray.

Repeat this step until all of the chicken is coated.

Place in a pre-heated oven (at Gas mark 5, or 190C) for 30-40 minutes.

Dice your onions, chillies and peppers. In a wok, fry off your onions, peppers and chillies. Boil your rice whilst doing so.

When the chicken is cooked, add into your wok with vegetables and add soy sauce.

Drain and serve the rice with the chicken on top.

*"THAT, FOR ME, WAS THE BEST MEAL I'VE EVER HAD, SO FAR, FROM Y'ALL. IT WAS SOOOOO GOOD. THANKS SO MUCH".*

(MAD PROJECT MEMBER)

