



Futures News

September 2024

hillcrest.org.uk/futures





Welcome

Hello and welcome to the September edition of Futures News for 2024.

It is hard to believe that I have now been in post as the Director of Hillcrest Futures for over eight months, the time has really flown by.

During this time, I took every opportunity to visit as many services within Futures as possible and would like to thank everyone for their hospitality and taking the time to show me around their service. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting staff and the people we support to hear first hand their experiences, and was delighted to hear such positive feedback from individuals and their families of the impact Futures has on their lives. Having visited I now have a greater understanding of the highly diverse, complex, and professional services we deliver at Hillcrest and how I can hopefully assist everyone in continuing to deliver the positive outcomes for the people we support.

I was also delighted to attend the Hillcrest Staff Conference at the Caird Hall in Dundee in May and was grateful for the opportunity to present to staff my initial thoughts and to answer their questions. There are some exciting times ahead as we look to further progress the development and implementation of a digital care management system to support staff in their day-to-day roles, and the continuation of our innovative Faces of Futures campaign which has raised awareness of Futures' services and specialisms.

On behalf of all Futures staff, I would like to take the opportunity of thanking Brenda Fenton for her time and dedication to serving as Chair of Hillcrest Futures. Brenda has recently announced that she will step down from this role, but will continue to serve as Vice Chair for the time being. Brenda's commitment to the role has been unwavering, and her knowledge, advice and input as Chair has been invaluable. Thank you, Brenda.

It has been another busy time for our services and the individuals we support. As you will see in this newsletter, our staff continue to go the extra mile to enable people to live fulfilling lives and create special memories.

Futures News is distributed to a wide range of people throughout Scotland and is your opportunity to let them know what is going on in your service. If you would like to contribute to future editions, please let a member of staff know and they will help you. For our wonderful staff, do you want the opportunity to showcase the fantastic work you do? If so, then please get in touch with our Communications team by emailing communications@hillcrest.org.uk.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to this edition of Futures News, it is heart-warming to hear of some of the positive work happening in our services.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Booth'.

John Booth
Director of Hillcrest Futures

Scottish Learning Disability Week

The first week in May was Scottish Learning Disability Week, a campaign celebrating the rich contribution people with learning disabilities make to society, as well as working to ensure people receive full and fair access to all their rights.

Each year has a different theme and this year the theme was 'Digital Inclusion'.

To mark the week our learning disability services held a Conversation Café in Dundee to talk all things digital. People we support shared why digital matters to them, and we showcased how our staff support people to use digital technology and platforms safely to stay connected with friends and family, and access information and entertainment.



Join our National Involvement Network

Hillcrest Futures' National Involvement Network (NIN) helps people with disabilities and additional support needs to have their voices heard and be involved in decisions that affect them. NIN is implemented by ARC Scotland and created the Charter for Involvement.

Our NIN group is currently made up of people supported by our learning disability services in Dundee, but they would like to involve learning disability services in other areas too.

NIN meets every other month and is an afternoon of activities and a buffet. The group's aim is for people who use our services to have more choice and control over their lives and have a bigger say in how Hillcrest Futures is run. They also talk about getting involved in the wider community.

If you or someone you know would like to find out more about joining NIN, please contact TDalziel@hillcrestfutures.org.uk





Trip of a lifetime to Disneyland Paris

Shauna from our Alexander Street service in Dundee was recently accompanied by support staff Rosie and Jourdan on a trip of a lifetime to Disneyland Paris.

Shauna had an incredible time – flying, exploring Disneyland Parks, wandering round the shops, meeting the characters, watching shows, braving some of the rides, practising her French and swimming in the hotel pool to name a few things.

She really enjoyed the street performances that were on around the park and was amazed (along with her support staff) by the parade showcasing all of the Disney characters. The excitement on Shauna's face was lovely to see and she would love to go back one day.

Daniel's fancy dress birthday party!

Daniel from our Alexander Street service in Dundee recently celebrated his 26th birthday by having a fancy-dress meal with his neighbours and friends at Yamm Buffet.

He attended dressed up as his favourite character Tommy Shelby from Peaky Blinders. Daniel said he really enjoyed his lunch out with everyone. He was pleased with his birthday presents, and said he loved all his figures and the ring light stand which he'll use to create his TikToks. Daniel's keyworker Kimberley ordered some spooky themed cupcakes which Daniel said were brilliant.





Honouring Peter Fleming: A tribute to Ward 22

Hillcrest Futures support practitioners, Joan Mayor and Diane Hutchison made a donation in memory of the late Peter Fleming, who passed away last October. Peter was supported by our Milnab Street service in Crieff for 32 years, and by the Tayside renal unit for 10 years.

Tracy Wells, service manager at Milnab Street explains: “The renal teams at both Perth Royal Infirmary and Ward 22 at Ninewells Hospital always provided the best care to Peter. Joan and Diane wanted to thank them for the compassion and support they provided both Peter and them during a difficult time.

“The donations, collected at Peter’s funeral with the blessing of his next of kin, were used to purchase essential items for Ward 22, including blood pressure monitors, toiletries, and night lights to make the rooms more restful.

“Both the staff in Ward 22 and the team from Milnab Street ensured that Peter was never left alone, and they ensured that all the stories Peter loved to tell were shared. Whilst there were tears, there were also a lot of really good memories. Thank you Ward 22.”

Peter was supported
by our service for

32
years





An unforgettable trip to Blackpool!

A warm welcome from The Bond Hotel staff and glorious sunshine met Carol and Michael from our Alexander Street service and support staff, Ashley and Colt, to Bonnie Blackpool this June.

Sarah the receptionist and Gary the barman were especially happy to see Carol and Michael, who are Bond regulars, and renowned karaoke supremos.

The first evening was relaxed fun, with bingo, raffle, and stellar singing from beloved resident hostess Nicole. Michael was transfixed, blowing a few cheeky kisses to Nicole when she sang to him. Carol revelled in the company and enjoyed sipping her top tittle, rum and coke.

Saturday morning came with cooked breakfasts all round, fuel for an exciting day at the Blackpool Tower Circus. Michael laughed and laughed as clown brothers, Mooky and Mr Boo, got up to all kinds of hijinks. Carol especially loved the more high-octane performances, including acrobats and trapeze artists, leaping and flipping, from about 20ft off the ground - heart stopping stuff!

That evening was spent with karaoke, bingo and the teddy raffle, which Michael won, taking home a cute husky dog teddy which he has named Nicole. Carol belted out Lynn Anderson's

'Rose Garden', she knew every word by heart, and Michael treated the crowd to some Elvis (no surprises there!) and a bit of Bon Jovi, a tribute for Gary the barman.

On Sunday, everyone got their sun specs and lotions on for a hot day at the zoo. Michael wore all his best Scotland kit to bring luck for the football, which got him a lot of friendly comments from the locals. At the zoo, Carol and Michael saw majestic elephants, elegant flamingos and some very cheeky monkeys. They also got the chance to pet some very cute (though slightly smelly) farm animals: mini sheep, guinea pigs and a sleepy potbellied piggy. Carol adores pigs and was very taken with the snoring beastie.

After such a successful holiday, Carol and Michael are already talking about the next one!

Soup & Sip

Aileen from our Longfield Drive service in Dundee has been enjoying her time back at our Activities Hub, taking part in their group, Soup & Sip.

Aileen is pictured enjoying a cuppa and a game of Connect 4. The group gives people the chance to play games and socialise to reduce isolation.

The Activities Hub gives people with support needs access to a wide range of creative and life enhancing workshops and group activities.



Morgan's move to Montrose

Morgan who receives support from our Riverview service in Brechin has been living in temporary accommodation in Montrose after the floods caused by Storm Babet hit Brechin last year. Now that he lives in a main town, this has opened up a lot of social opportunities for him.

Morgan enjoys buses, trains and fire engines, so had a wonderful day out to Aberdeen's fire station where he got a tour of the premises and got to try on a firefighter's uniform. All of the staff at the station made Morgan and his support team feel very welcome.



RecoverMay initiative hits new heights with hike to Perthshire summit

A multi-organisational walk to show solidarity with those recovering from substance and alcohol dependency and poor mental health saw a number of people don their boots to tackle Ben Vrackie.

The walk was part of RecoverMay, an initiative that takes place over the month of May to raise awareness and recognise the resilience and resolve of those navigating the recovery from dependency and mental health challenges.

The walk was organised as a multi-organisational effort, involving Hillcrest Futures, NHS, Perth and Kinross Council, social enterprise Scotland All-Strong gym, and local fitness trainer MB Fitness who also treated the hikers to a fun warmup and cooldown.

Alan Hinrichs, Hillcrest Futures Project Worker, said:

“The Ben Vrackie trip was a collaborative effort. I had the privilege of accompanying individuals in recovery on this hillwalking adventure. Incorporating hillwalking into their recovery routine has a profoundly positive impact on those working their way out of dependency.”





Hillcrest's Faces of Futures campaign

Over the last 10 months, the Hillcrest Communications Team has been running a dynamic campaign called Faces of Futures. The campaign is designed to raise awareness of all the services within Futures, shining a spotlight on the crucial work that staff undertake and the impact this has on the people they support.

So far, the campaign has featured testimonials from staff and supported people in video and blog content across all of Hillcrest's digital platforms, and has showcased services including Homelessness Services in Edinburgh, Housing with Care for Elderly and also Learning Disability Services in Dundee, Drug and Alcohol Services at South Ward Road, and the Perth Prison Peer Service.

The campaign has been very well received with lots of positive feedback. The Communications Team would like to say a huge thank you to everyone that has taken part, particularly the people supported by Futures, who have been very candid in sharing their stories.

The latest phase of the campaign launched in early September, so keep an eye out on our social media platforms over the next month as we'll be featuring the Edinburgh Resource Hub, Angus Mental Health Services, and our Futures Leadership Team.



Keith's road trip to Loch Lomond

Keith from our Kinloss Park service in Cupar had a fantastic day out when he took a trip to Loch Lomond.

He planned the outing in his Motability car which he loves to spend time in going for long drives as it reminds him of days spent with his mum and dad as a little boy.

Keith and his support staff left Cupar and headed for Perth, passing through Crieff and Dunblane before visiting Blair Drummond to see the animals. After this they headed for Loch Lomond. Keith loved walking along the loch and watching the sea planes landing and taking off.

He picked his favourite place for tea, McDonalds, before heading home after a fun-filled, sunny day. As you can tell from the smile on Keith's face, he loved it from start to finish.



Cheering on Team GB!

Sam, Katie and Laura, who are supported by our Millview service in Dundee, had a get together to watch the start of the Paris 2024 Olympics.

Their cheers were so loud it helped Andy Murray get through to the next stage in the tennis men's doubles competition!

The trio got into the Olympic spirit by decorating the living room with Union Flag bunting, wearing their gold medals and waving Olympic flags. They really enjoyed cheering on Team GB and watching the games.





Hope Point marks first anniversary with special event

The team at Hope Point, based at Hillcrest’s South Ward Road facility, hosted a special anniversary event in August to mark its first year providing 24/7 support to people experiencing emotional distress.

Support at Hope Point is provided by peer practitioners from mental health charity, Penumbra in partnership with Dundee Health and Social Care Partnership.

The team used the twelve-month milestone to spotlight the range of support available in the building, including those delivered by Hillcrest Futures and Hillcrest Homes. In addition to mental health support, services include harm reduction and recovery programmes, community activities designed to combat social isolation, and financial support and advice.

The event featured a range of information stalls from various services and organisations, themed mocktails, games, music and a buffet.

In 12 months, Hillcrest Futures supported

1,248

individuals with harm reduction, recovery, reducing isolation and financial advice.

The team supplied

950

naloxone kits to be used to temporarily reverse the effects of an opiate based overdose.

World Down Syndrome Day

The 21st of March is World Down Syndrome Day (WDS), a global awareness day which takes place every year.

The date for WDS being the 21st day of the 3rd month, was selected to signify the uniqueness of the triplication (trisomy) of the 21st chromosome which causes Down Syndrome.

To mark the day, staff and people supported at our Millview service in Dundee took part in WDS’s Lots of Socks campaign by wearing odd socks to help raise awareness and keep the conversation going. Our support staff work hard every day to end the stereotypes and assumptions made about the people they support.



A butterfly trail to support mental health

Young people supported by our Peer Mental Health services in Forfar thought up an innovative way to raise awareness about mental health by setting up a butterfly trail. They designed and made resin butterflies and asked local shops to display these in their windows.

To encourage people to get involved, they asked the participating shops if they would like to donate a prize for a hamper, which the winner would be drawn out of all the entries. The shops in Forfar were so generous and they ended up with a lovely full gift hamper.

They needed to have a way of linking the butterflies to all the relevant support networks for people who may need them, so they designed a business card with two QR codes: one which took people to the service's Instagram page with key information for young people, and the other was linked to the 'Are You Ok Campaign', which launched during Mental Health Awareness Week for Suicide Prevention.

The feedback from people who participated in the trail was extremely positive! Well done to all the young people who pulled this together!



Remembering Tania

Tania, a much beloved resident at Alexander Street Service sadly passed away last December. To celebrate her life, the staff team and her friends were joined by family members for a day in the garden to celebrate what would have been Tania's 37th birthday.

Tania was honoured in a day of very special memories, and a lovely garden bench was also unveiled in her memory.

All of the people supported by the service participated in painting the bench in Tania's favourite colour purple, and a memorial plaque was later added. They baked cakes, created balloon arches and prepared a buffet to share

in the garden. The sun shone down whilst some of Tania's favourite music was played, including songs by Daniel O'Donnell.

Tania's family expressed that Tania would have loved the bench and the garden celebrations.





Dundee's Young People's Service park-themed mural

People supported by our Dundee Young People's Drug and Alcohol service have created an impressive mural on their service building in Baxter's Park, Dundee. The artwork was designed and painted by the young people in collaboration with local artist, Pamie Bennett.

The project was made up of 21 youngsters and was funded by the Hillcrest Foundation. In the early stages, the young people discussed and doodled ideas with Pamie, and decided on a 'park' theme by including drawings of flowers and animals.

During the sessions, the young people's creativity and confidence grew and they designed their own ideas which Pamie encouraged and managed to tie it all together to make a fantastic piece of art. Since the mural's completion, passersby have praised the mural and it has helped to raise awareness of the service.

The Young People's Service works in partnership with The Corner Dundee to deliver STRIVE, an initiative supporting young people aged 12-21 and families affected by substance use in Dundee.

In May the team held an open day for staff and partnering organisations. The event was held in the Baxter Park office where attendees had the chance to see the space, meet the team, find out more about the service and network with other partners.

Aaron gains more independence

Aaron from our Alexander Street service in Dundee has recently been gaining more independence by going out shopping.

Aaron uses a key-chain with pictures of the specific items he has to purchase, which helps ensure he gets everything he needs from the shop.

With the assistance of his support worker, Mitchell, Aaron is really smashing his independent shopping goals and particularly likes meeting staff at the tills.



An Open Day at the Edinburgh Resource Hub

In June, Hillcrest Futures Edinburgh Resource Hub held an open day to give staff, managers and professionals from other services, agencies and local authorities the chance to find out more about the service.

The Hub supports people to learn independent living skills and experience a range of recreational, educational and social opportunities. Service manager, Piotr Jankowski commented:

“Our first open day was a busy and a successful one! We would like to thank everyone who visited our project and came to meet us. This included staff and colleagues from so many different services and organisations of our city and beyond, all the newcomers, Councillor Tim Pogson for Southside Newington for accepting our invitation so kindly and making time to be with us at such an important event, Graeme Brown, Hillcrest Futures’ business manager who has a special connection to the Hub. Last but not least, thank you to our very own Sophie and Stevie who were here to share their stories and their Hub journey.”



Pitkerro Court days out

Once a month our Pitkerro Court service in Dundee has been having days out for the people they support to give them the opportunity to try new things and socialise with each other.

Recent activities have included a trip to Ferry Potty, West Fest and the Deer Centre. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the trips.





Green fingered gardeners take part in the RHS Big Sow

Members of our Dundee Activities Hub Gardening Group are taking part in the RHS Big Sow.

Based at the Duntrune Therapeutic Garden, the keen gardeners were provided with a range of seeds and will be able to share their progress with other growers across the UK. The team is successfully growing cosmos, fennel and rudbeckia plants. They are also growing brussel sprouts for Christmas dinner and a pumpkin each for Halloween.

Not only do the group maintain the garden, but they also take part in arts and crafts and have created some slate and stone labels for their plants.

World Autism Acceptance Week

World Autism Acceptance Week, which took place in April, is a campaign aiming to help more people understand what autism is, as well as the ways it can affect life for people with autism.

To mark the week, various teams from Hillcrest Futures held awareness-raising events and activities. People supported by our Millview service in Dundee created a colourful canvas with their artistic support worker, Amanda. The artwork was then displayed at our Student Support and Longfield Drive services' stall at Dundee Science Centre to promote both the

campaign and our autism support services. Our Alexander Street service in Dundee had a great time baking and decorating puzzle piece-shaped cookies in a range of bright colours. This was followed by an autism-themed quiz, which everyone enjoyed.



Lauriston in Leith summer fun

The ladies and staff at our Lauriston in Leith service in Edinburgh have been enjoying a range of activities thanks to the Hillcrest Service Improvement fund.

After being awarded £300, the people living at the service have had weekly movie nights, tried new baking recipes, gone on days out and made the most of the sunny weather with a BBQ in the service's garden.

Holding these regular activities brings everyone at the service together, creating a sense of inclusion and community. The residents have commented that they've enjoyed trying new things and can't wait for future activities.



Glasgow service managers undertake crucial harm reduction training

In November 2023 and June 2024, Service Managers at our homelessness services in Glasgow participated in some unique training to enable them to provide crucial harm reduction services to people who need it most.

Laura Murphy, based at Queen Mary Avenue and Holly Robertson, based at Portman Street, completed The Advanced Harm Reduction Workers Training Programme, delivered by the NHS.

This is a comprehensive training programme that was developed to increase the skills and knowledge of frontline harm reduction workers across Greater Glasgow and Clyde (GGC). It is aimed mainly at those services participating in the WAND initiative, to ensure that staff delivering this initiative are competent in conducting all associated interventions.

The WAND initiative was launched in September 2020 as part of NHS GGC's response to drug crisis and is a way to incentivise the city's most hard to reach communities to engage with harm reduction and health services. It offers a holistic approach to addressing drug harms such as overdoses, blood borne viruses and injecting related complications.

The initiative comprises:

- W – Wound care
- A – Assessment of injecting risk
- N – Naloxone provision
- D – Dry blood spot testing (Hep B, Hep C and HIV)

Both Glasgow services are currently going through the process of being set up as sites to offer this service to the people we support. Once up and running, they will be hoping for more staff to be able to participate in this advanced course. This is a great opportunity for Hillcrest to be involved in offering potentially lifesaving advice and reducing the risk of drug related deaths and complications.





Helping people live better lives

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