

## Positive People Care - reaching new heights

### Introduction to group

Although Positive People has been running for a while as an informal self-help group it only became a formal association in October 2012.

The aim of the group is to help and support people who are trying to get over a long mental health illness and who have been discharged from hospital or day care centres. They are able to offer members activities and opportunities to improve their confidence and improve their quality of life. This is achieved by

- Helping them venture out into the community
- Get back into social activities or employment where appropriate

Positive People holds two support sessions a week and takes members out shopping, on coach trips and organises two holidays a year at Butlins in Skegness and Scotland.

The group now has 18 members from March, Chatteris, Wimblington, Doddington and Wisbech.

Members presently pay all the activity costs themselves, but this is becoming more difficult and several members are not able to attend some events because they can not afford the travel or accommodation costs.

Coach and shopping trips plus the holidays have a positive effect on people with mental health problems within a supportive and safe environment such as.

- Help people deal with new situations
- Dealing with travelling.
- Coping with challenges/new activities
- Socialising over a longer period of time.

### The Need

This group's first contact with CCVS was at the Fenland funding fair in September 2012.

The group was growing and felt it should become a constituted organisation with a committee. This would allow them to

- share the organising of activities,
- be able to negotiate better group rates,
- have a bank account in the group's name,
- take out public liability insurance of its own and
- be able to make some funding applications to cover the raising administration costs and to help some members who did not have the resources to cover the full costs of their activities.

## What was done?

CCVS has helped with

- Developing a new constitution based on templates that we hold and working with the group to help them understand this and what the implications and responsibilities of association are.
- Finding appropriate insurance and bank accounts. Whilst we do not make recommendations we keep lists of banks and insurers that have a track record of working with small voluntary groups. We also help them understand what they need to look for when choosing a product.
- The development of a code of conduct for members. This helps them manage expectations and also resolve any possible future disputes.
- Training for 2 committee members on 'what to do once you have received a grant'. This training explains the basics of keeping good records of how money is spent, as well as helping groups understand the importance of monitoring and reporting.
- A workshop for 2 committee members on Awards for All funding, this is an event we run with BIG that introduces groups to this funding stream and allows them to discuss any ideas they have.
- 1/1 help with completing an Awards for All application. Whilst we do not complete applications for groups we help them by providing a project framework and helping them complete this. We can then act as a critical friend once an application has been completed.

## The Impact/change

As a result of the hard work of the group and the assistance they have had from CCVS the following have taken place.

- The group is now a constituted organisation. It has a committee, a bank account, insurance and has become a member of CCVS.
- The committee members have attended training on fundraising.
- Ten of the group went to Scotland in June and seven members went up to the top of Ben Nevis by cable car. Patrick Bennett the chair said,

*“A couple or more years ago some of these members would not come out of their houses or get on a bus and now they went to the top of Ben Nevis. How they have moved on speaks for its self. That is the purpose of the group (to move them on). They all have suffered from mental illness, with one having had cancer & been made homeless a few years ago and another attempted suicide on several occasions”.*

- Awards for All Funding of £2992 received in June 2013, after working with CCVS for several months. This will help towards costs for the planned trip to Butlins.
- 18 members regularly attend weekly meeting in March
- Fourteen members booked to go to Butlins in Skegness in October
- A comprehensive programme of day trips have been planned for members

## Testimony

*This is available on a video. This is available on the CCVS website but **it is restricted for use** as we have not edited it.*