

AGM NOVEMBER 2023

ANNUAL REPORT HIGHLIGHTS



Groups

Numbers of people supported in the last year.

97 Participants per term – New College Durham Courses

60 Participants in the last year – Waddy Feel Good Service (Physical)

100 Participants per week – Daily Social Sessions

29 Participants per week – Saturday Support Group.

7 people were supported with Housing

10 people were supported by the Young Adult Support Café (YASC)

30 people supported with digital support. Via our Digital Champion Project

12 Participants per week – Men's Cree

17 Participants per week – Women's Cree



Reflections on the last year

Another busy year for WSC, this time with an Alliance focus. In April 2022 the Durham Mental Wellbeing Alliance went live. Thirteen providers (now fifteen) coming together to provide a range of support services with an emphasis on prevention. This has been a new way of working for us, however, it has been a great opportunity to streamline our services and think long and hard about our core business and what is important to us. As a result, our Board of Trustees decided that we should move away from the delivery of supported accommodation because our Alliance colleagues - Home Group and Richmond Fellowship, do this on a larger scale. We supported our tenants to source new accommodation. All of our tenancies ended by December 2022. Thanks must go to our landlords: The Hospital of God at Greatham, St Margaret's PCC and Davison Holdings for their input over this hectic and transitional period. This change has allowed us to concentrate our attentions on the development of a service which focuses on promoting good physical health. This is an increasingly important area and it is our great pleasure to support our members to become fitter and make better choices. Our Waddy Feel Good Service offers one to one support and group activities including; Badminton, Football, Gym, Walking and New Age Curling. We are grateful to our community partners, including Durham University for inviting us to use their facilities and receive support from their student volunteers.

To celebrate the arrival of the Durham Mental Wellbeing Alliance we had a launch event at the Raddison Hotel in June 2022. The event was a great success and brought us some positive attention. As the Alliance lead for Co-production and User Engagement, we were delighted to co-write and deliver a presentation about user voice with people who have lived experience.

It felt particularly important to those using our services to have the spotlight.

As an organisation and community, we have had to navigate many changes in the last year. In addition to the ongoing challenges of Covid and the more recent 'Cost of Living Crisis,' it has meant that we have needed to work even more closely as a team.

Camaraderie and team spirit have never been more important. Our tiny team became smaller as we said farewell to our Digital Champion - who'd been with us for three years. Their contribution has supported members to become digitally included and have safer access to the internet.

We also said goodbye to our Young Adult Support Café (YASC). After seven years we felt that the needs of the group had changed and with funding challenges it seemed appropriate at this juncture to call it a day. This work was made possible by our strong partnership with 'Investing in Children.'

As a delivery partner of Stamp it Out - Mental Health Anti Stigma and Discrimination Campaign Group, we were part of a joint research project with Northumbria University. We explored the service user experience of stigma and discrimination (including self-stigma). The results, which are as yet unpublished, seek to bring about greater understanding and hopefully change. Stamp it Out became a sub-contractor of the Durham Mental Wellbeing Alliance in October 2023. We look forward to working with them even more closely. We want to ensure that across everything we do, people are treated with the dignity and respect they deserve.

We've also focused our time on the planning and creation of our new Business Development Plan. Our priority areas in the plan are: Finance, Relationships, Staff and Members, Co-Production and Looking After our Premises. As we head into an uncertain future we want to make sure that our foundations are sound and stable.

Most importantly though, our last year has been about supporting our members through these increasingly difficult times. We are constantly aware of the demands and challenges our members face. Issues of poverty are very real and many of our members have limited funds. All the more reason for WSC to provide good quality activities and services which are free and inclusive. Thanks to the kindness and generosity of financial donors we were able to offer the Centre as a warm space from November 2022 to March 2023. Simple gestures like providing free hot drinks and soups were welcomed and appreciated by our members.

As much as we benefit from the kindness of others we also like to give back to our community. In May 2022 we purchased an Acer King Crimson tree for Wharton Park. We like to visit often, with staff and Waddy Members, and its central location will mean it is enjoyed by all for many years to come.

Ali Lee, Centre Manager

Successes and Achievements 2022/2023

- Our part in the launch of the Durham Mental Wellbeing Alliance (DMWA)
 - Our continued role within DMWA and its development.
 - Raising £26,000 through our own fundraising activities.
 - Purchasing and planting a tree in Wharton Park.
- Completing a research project in partnership with Stamp it Out and Northumbria University.
 - The return of our monthly Poetry Jam.
 - The continued growth of the Waddy Helper initiative.
- Getting back to 'In person' meetings after Covid restrictions.
- Providing a warm space for people over the winter months.
 - Launch of our WFGS, Physical Health Service.
- Successfully winding down our supported housing and rehoming our tenants.
 - The drafting and creation of our 2023-2026 Business Development Plan.

Aspirations for 2023/2024

- Maintaining good financial health.
- A new member of staff for the support team.
- Greater focus on supporting those from the LGBTQ+ community
 - Recruitment and training of new volunteers.
- Developing stronger Co-production activities for WSC and Alliance Service Users.
 - Visiting other services to learn from good practice.
 - Being 'greener' in our daily practices.



DONATIONS

Annual Target	Amount Raised
£20,000	£26,530



Donations helped us to support: new lighting in our art studio, Minibus running costs, maintenance of our lift, providing free hot drinks over Winter, buying equipment and resources for our activities and courses.

FINANCES

Financial Review

The financial results for the charity are detailed in the annexed Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet, together with the related notes.

In summary, WSC made an overall deficit of £90,778 during 2022-2023 (compared to a surplus of £38,328 during 2021-2022). Included in the deficit it is worth noting that £43,360 was spent from restricted funds (funding received in a previous tax year). This year's deficit was due to the charity going through a major change in funding, from an individual service level agreement to a partnership agreement via the Durham Mental Wellbeing Alliance (DMWA). WSC joined DMWA on 1st April 2022 guaranteeing funding for 7 years (with possibly an additional 3 years). The closure of the former housing provision provided through the service level agreement had a significant impact on the funding income decrease within the year.

Trustees are aware going forwards that the DMWA annual funding, which is not index linked, is not covering the cost of the Centre's Alliance service provision. This contributed in part to the deficit last year. As a result, additional funding is being sought from additional sources to enable WSC to continue to provide a similar level of service provision to its members.

*For more detailed information read our full Annual Report at www.waddingtoncentre.co.uk

