

Anxiety Care UK

Working with you towards recovery

AGM

1st October 2018 to 30th September 2019

ANNUAL REPORT

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1. Introduction

Anxiety Care UK is a Community Organisation and a Company Limited by Guarantee, Company Registration No. 7813120. Our Registered Office address is Crown House, 151 High Road, Loughton, Essex IG10 4LG

Anxiety Care UK was established in 2011 and is run by a Board of Directors who also make up the committee. All volunteers who have signed a volunteer agreement are automatically members of Anxiety Care UK and are eligible to vote at meetings. Clients and other interested parties can become members, giving them a voice in the decision making process and a vote at the AGM.

This report has been prepared by the Directors and the Financial Statements have been prepared and submitted to Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs by our Accountants, Alwyns LLP, Crown House, 151 High Road, Loughton, Essex, IG10 4LG.

Directors

Chris Gardner
Liz Nicholls
Suzanne Owers
Denise Wallis

2. Directors' Report

We have now been “in business” for 8 years and we are feeling like a well-established organisation. We continue to run our services from The Living Well Resource Centre in Chadwell Heath Lane, provided by L.B. Redbridge, who also give us funding. In addition, we use the Centre for our meetings, supervision sessions and training.

Our Contract with London Borough of Redbridge has been extended until 2020 at which point they will review the services that we provide. We hope that the funding will still be available going forward.

Our numbers have improved over the year.

We have links with OCD Action who are a nationwide organisation, providing help and support for people with OCD.

We also have contact with local IAPT services (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) and keep them updated on our activities.

One Place East (formerly Redbridge Concern for Mental Health) continue to process our DBS checks for us.

We have carried out training this year and welcome 4 new volunteers into the organisation. We look forward to their input and hope that they find the work rewarding.

3. Services

**Our Groups and Counselling Sessions are held at:
The Living Well Resource Centre,
372 Chadwell Heath Lane, Romford, Essex RM6 4YG**

Monday Mutual Support Group

We open our doors open at 6.45pm, giving time for refreshments and a general chat/time for questions etc. until 7.00 when we start the facilitated group which runs until 8.30pm.

There are currently 2 Recovery Support Workers for the Monday Group: Felicia and myself. Helen took the decision to take time out for health reasons and will be missed. We have a new trainee, Chimene, starting very soon.

Felicia and I have worked together well as a team for some time now and I think that I can speak for both of us when I say that we find the work very rewarding.

Client numbers have improved this year and we have had groups of sometimes ten or more.

Apart from an initial individual assessment with a new client, we work only in a group and provide a supportive environment where clients can bring up whatever is troubling them. We listen; we provide information about anxiety and how it works, as well as looking at paths to recovery using CBT methods. Where possible we try to give clients something to work on between sessions. We encourage clients to offer suggestions and ideas to help with recovery.

We find that our group is often the first port of call for anxiety sufferers and the overwhelming response we get is how clients feel that they are not alone, that they can be heard by someone who understands what they are experiencing. The interaction between clients can be a very powerful thing and can help them to realise that they are not the only ones with anxiety.

It has been encouraging to have returning clients and to see their progress. This is what makes our work very worthwhile.

We have enjoyed regular supervision with Jackie Meyer and find her insight and suggestions very helpful.

Liz Nicholls
Monday Support Group Lead

Tuesday Structured Recovery Evening

Tuesday has had a mixed year. After restarting the Tuesday Structured Recovery evening in September 2018, Suzanne took a sabbatical. Liz stepped in and we continued with Liz taking the group and Denise doing all the 1-1's. By Christmas Liz was unable to continue indefinitely as doing Mondays, Tuesdays, and Training was too much, so we took the decision to temporarily close the Tuesday group on 8th Jan 2019, took contact details for the purpose of contacting the current group members when we were able to reopen.

When the trainees reach their second module they need to visit groups to see how it is run and look at what group they would like to work in so we needed to reopen the Tuesday group. It reopened with Denise and Liz on 2nd April with no 1-1's. Charlotte and Harriet joined the Tuesday group in June and Liz stopped facilitating on Tuesday's. Charlotte and Harriet finished their 3 month probation period in September when we were joined by Asher who should finish her probationary period in December. We are hoping to begin 1-1's before Christmas depending on how confident the new volunteers and new probationary trainee become in running the group by themselves.

Denise Wallis
Tuesday Structured Recovery Evening Lead

Structured Recovery Outreach Service

We are not offering this service at present due to a shortage of volunteers. I am still speaking to our one outstanding client on a weekly basis, encouraging her with recovery tasks.

Liz Nicholls

Structured Recovery Outreach Service Lead.

Training

We began training new volunteers in January this year and would like to welcome Charlotte, Harriet, Asher, and Chimene to our organisation. Denise, Chris and Liz were the trainers for the first Module and Denise and Liz were the trainers for the second Module. We have placed three new volunteers into the Tuesday group and one into the Monday group

Denise Wallis

Training Lead

E-Counselling

This service is for clients who are unable to attend counselling sessions or groups for any reason and are residents of the UK. Denise is the only Volunteer working in this service.

Client and counsellor do not usually meet in person so any visual or tonal messages are lost and because of this there are some restrictions in who can be counselled online. Because of this a brief assessment needs to be completed before counselling commences. This includes brief details about what they would like counselling for and what they are looking to achieve. We have had several unsuitable clients try to access the services with issues such as eating disorders or drug issues and at the moment we have one client working within this service.

Denise Wallis

E-Counselling Lead

Counselling Service

Based on suggestions brought up in the last AGM we are looking at implementing a protocol that anyone wishing to access counselling needs to be within a group before being referred. There is the issue of what happens to clients who are unable to manage a group and we are in the process of looking at this.

At the moment clients can be referred from other services after they have attended for at least 2 weeks, in order to better assess how we can help them. It is hoped that by raising their self-awareness and engaging in the group, it will help them to make better use of the counselling sessions allowing them to be more focused about their needs and goals (if any). By having clients used to the groups as well as counselling it helps provide support before and after the counselling sessions have begun as well as if there is a break in counselling for any reason, such as illness or holidays.

We have one client access in this service. We had one client referred to this service this year but when they were contacted to give an appointment they declined as they had engaged in the groups and felt this was all they needed at that time.

Denise Wallis
Counselling Lead

Recovery Information Email Service

This Service is ideal for people who have any queries about anxiety but, because of their geographical location, are unable to physically access any of our local services; it is also an introduction, to the services we provide, to anyone who is too shy/anxious/unwilling (for whatever reason) to do so.

Recovery Information (RI) also provides information and details about our services to anyone who is able to access them – thus encouraging prospective clients to make face to face contact with us. Anybody working

within this service needs to be aware of the current status of each of our services in order to provide the correct information. Any new/amended information is supplied to RI by the relevant Service Lead.

RI sends replies to the emailed queries and, if necessary, forwards certain other queries to the appropriate Service Lead.

Once somebody has emailed RI, they receive a reply within four days.

Generally, the Service provides 'one-off' help and informs enquirers about any relevant articles which can be accessed from our website. Occasionally the Service is required to provide more than that 'one-off' help – although it is not aimed at being an open-ended one.

The Service runs smoothly thanks to Val Symonds – who has been the sole Facilitator for several years. Val is very experienced in the field and seems to have all the required information at her fingertips! We very much appreciate the fact that she works within this service as, without her, we would not be able to provide it.

As Val does not live in the local area, she receives telephone supervision on a regular basis.

Liz Nicholls
Recovery Information Email Service Lead

Website

The website is running well, with Martin continuing as our webmaster and Luke dealing with day to day aspects and updates.

We are aware that last year we said that we need to review the leaflet and information sheets/booklets which appear on the website. Some of these need to project a more modern 'feel' and some of the information needs to be updated. It is quite a difficult task as we have feedback from some people who like the current leaflets, while others find them long winded and old fashioned. These are on the new site and will be reviewed as time allows.

During the period 1 October 2018 to 30 September 2019, we had upwards 122,000 visits to the site.

Liz Nicholls
Website Lead

Facebook

We use the Facebook account for inquires, advertising services (or AGM's) and updating information should we need to close the group due to weather. We do not use it for quotes and inspirational messages as it is difficult to find appropriate affirmations that do not tell people what to do, imply they are not doing it right, or involve a religious angle.

We get inquiries from people ranging from questions about opening times, to help in starting a recovery plan and support for carers of anxious people. We try to not engage in therapy over the Facebook messenger but do try and give help and support if needed over a couple of messages.

Denise Wallis

Facebook Administrator

4. Financial Report

We are very fortunate that we do not have very many expenses. We do not employ any staff and although we do pay volunteer expenses, not many are claimed. Our premises are provided free of charge by L.B. Redbridge.

We receive approximately £300 per month in funding from L.B. Redbridge.

Our expenses are low. They are a mix of office expenses, volunteer expenses, refreshments, supervision and volunteer training, as well as website costs.

To sum up, we are still in a good financial position at present and have available funds for the future.

5. For the Future

We are looking forward to working with our new volunteers and are confident that they will fit smoothly into our services. We can then look at the possibility of expanding the services which we provide.

6. Thanks

Finally, we would like to thank the following people/organisations: -

1. London Borough of Redbridge, for funding, use of their premises for our groups, 1:1 counselling and for access to training.
2. Martin Sandler for being our “Webmaster” and overseeing our website.
3. One Place East (formerly Redbridge Concern for Mental Health) who process our DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) checks which all RSW’s need to have.
4. Last but not least, all our volunteers who devote so much of their time as well as the family and friends who support them. Without all of you, none of this would be possible.

7. Conclusion

We feel that Anxiety Care UK has had a good and productive seventh year, providing help and support to many people who experience anxiety to such a degree that it has a detrimental effect on their lives. We hope to go from strength to strength in the future – and continue “Working with you towards recovery”.