

WEST AREA PROJECT

For adults with learning difficulties

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Charity Number 1182653

The West Area Project Annual General Meeting 2022

Starting at 7.00pm Wednesday 23rd November 2022,

at the Lenton Centre, Willoughby Street, Lenton NG7 1RQ

Agenda

7.00 Registration and refreshments

7.15 Welcome by the Member Representative:

7.30 Manager's Report.

8.00 Chairperson's Report by Alf Stiegler: Chair of Trustees

- Apologies
- Declarations of interest
- Minutes of last AGM
- Treasurers Report and Review of our annual accounts
- Appointment of Auditor
- Resignation of Trustees
- Nominations for election of new Trustees and Board

9.00 Any other AGM Business.

Welcome to the WAP 2022 Annual Report:

Introductions by our member representative Martin:



Martin welcomed everyone to the 2022 AGM. He mentioned the challenges and responsibilities that came with his role as the member representative for West Area Project. He explained that before every Trustee meeting he tries, and normally succeeds, in interviewing every member to ask about their experience of WAP. Martin is very alert to how members are managing at the Project and what changes they may like to suggest. He also has no fear in pointing out when 'things are unfair!' Martin provides a very valuable 'quality control' service at WAP and Yvonne expressed her immense gratitude for his excellent work.

Rachel used to be a member representative besides Martin but is so busy at college now that she struggles to attend WAP outside of holiday time when she can join us full time. This means that Rachel attends Board meetings to offer a 'user voice' based on her long term knowledge of WAP, which is very welcome.

What a team!!!

1. Manager's Report by Yvonne Pearson

2021/22 proved to be a very interesting year for WAP in so many ways!

Firstly we had an invasion of **Kick Start workers!** The government set up the Kick Start scheme to help to tackle youth unemployment by offering work experience and on the job training for young people. WAP was successful in gaining 5 Kick start part time workers who brought with them such fun and energy. We also started a programme of detailed weekly staff training sessions which gave us, as a project, an opportunity to revisit our values and reflect on our practices. This served to remind us of what we wanted to achieve with the WAP service. We also developed better ways of communicating because sharing necessary information quickly between 4 workers is far easier than trying to achieve this with 9!! As in the happy WAP tradition, we very much learnt by our mistakes!



Also, Kyle and Zoe assumed more responsibilities as they became supervisors to the Kick starter workers which again enhanced their experience and practice skills.

In terms of staff development, we went into the Covid period with Zoe studying for a Level 2 Fitness Instructor course. Later WAP was awarded funding to enable Tez and

Kyle to enrol on qualifications in Positive Behavioural Support run by BILD (British Institute for Learning Disabilities). Although everyone tried hard to enable Tez and Kyle to incorporate their studying into work time, this proved really hard to achieve. Eventually it was agreed with the course providers, that Tez and Kyle could defer for a year. Although this has spread the pain, as an organisation we have learnt a great deal from their studies. We have incorporated so much of their learning into our work at WAP and their courses have had a direct influence on how we have approached our member's challenging behaviour which has, in turn, informed each person's care plan.

The Kick start scheme was funded for 6 months but we decided to continue to pay our Kick starters until March 2022 so they could all leave at the same time. The group had developed strong bonds with the project; its members, the staff and each other.

In many ways these young workers were just the lift the project needed over a difficult time where we did not feel safe to resume using community resources (including buses). WAP members and staff continued to wear shields and masks and up to Christmas 2021 we were relieved to see that none of our members had been affected by Covid. Sadly, a few days before the Christmas party two people became infected due to sharing our small kitchen space with a symptomatic outside worker. Such are the challenges of using shared facilities! Consequently, we were forced to close WAP early for the Christmas and New Year holidays and we therefore missed our Christmas party..

Sadly we found that coming into 2022 we lost a few of our long term members for reasons such as moving house or moving country! Equally, those members who lived in some supported settings were being told they couldn't attend because of their organisation's Covid policy. Happily, the majority of our members had returned by March 2022 however one member who has health vulnerabilities has chosen to continue with the outreach service instead of coming in. We are happy to accommodate this as it adds to an already interesting week if we spend time with them in the community..

Activ2 started back with a bang on 1st June 2021 when 12 members turned up to its first session! Sadly I could not arrange for a nursing student to do blood pressure and weigh ins and I still hadn't managed this by the end March 2022. Equally, where we always had a lot of volunteers at Activ2 we have not been able to attract any. There seems to be widespread shortage of volunteers since Covid. Sadly, this has made the Activ2 service more expensive to run as in the absence of volunteers I have had to allocate more workers to run it. This is discussed further in the Activ2 Report at the end.

I want to use this opportunity to thank one family for their very generous donation which frankly we have relied on to keep the service running at a time where it was difficult to recruit new members.

In summary, although the year has been stressful there is no doubt that WAP benefited a great deal from the energy and enthusiasm of our Kick start workers and I want to thank Katherine, Leticia, Chloe, Luke and Ryleigh for their contribution to the project.

1. Chairperson Report by Alf Stiegler

Alf thanked all the staff for their commitment to the project. He acknowledged that WAP continued to face many challenges but the staff team could always be relied on to go the extra mile. He also said how delighted he was to welcome a new potential Trustee to the WAP Board. Ruth had been observing at Board meetings for some time now and had agreed to stand as a Board member at this AGM.

2. Minutes of the last AGM meeting

WEST AREA PROJECT AGM MEETING

held on Thursday 16th September 2021 at 5pm at The Lenton Centre

Those present:	In attendance	Apologies
Alfred Stiegler – Chairperson/Trustee Farrah Athar – Secretary/Trustee Russell Jays – Trustee Mary Harrison – Treasurer Ann Stiegler –Trustee Joan West –Trustee Rita Beard Trustee	Yvonne Pearson - Project Manager) Martin Stiegler Member Rep Rachel Sharp Member Rep	Fay Deller – Trustee

Agenda Items

1. **Apologies:** Fay sent her apologies.
2. **Conflict of interests.** None were declared
3. **Welcome by the member representative:**

Martin welcomed everyone to the meeting which was again organised in line with WAP's COVID policy. Rachel commented by saying how good it was to be back at the centre which she had missed as WAP was like a family. Martin reported that the members were happy with the service.

The representatives also mentioned the importance of keeping in touch with the families of the members who had died which led Rachel to suggest creating a memorial plaque with people's names on. This seemed like an excellent idea and Yvonne promised to look at different ways to follow this up.

4. Manager's Report

Yvonne's report was dominated by how WAP managed the Covid situation and the stresses of providing a safe service for members and staff. The report also outlined the financial issues relating to the Covid

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period. It was a scary time and it was only thanks to the financial support of Nottingham City Council that WAP could both continue to employ our workers and provide an outreach service to our most vulnerable members.

In the discussion arising out of the report Alf queried what WAP's future business model should be. This was taken into account the apparent withdrawal of many social care and welfare services both to our members and to the wider community of those with learning disabilities and/or autism.. This prompted a useful discussion about WAP's role and the possibility of extending its service beyond the provision of day care and into community outreach.

Yvonne commented that the work traditionally offered by social workers and community nurses such as supporting people to everyday appointments such as; GP, hospital, chiropody, OT, pharmacist, housing, banks, post offices, benefits, utilities, essential clothes shopping and other matters were rarely being supported by community services. Yvonne offered the example of one member with dementia who she had to arrange to move into a nursing home without any support from statutory services besides them sending a directory of homes to visit and finally arranging the funding on a temporary basis. It was agreed that this matter warranted further discussion at a future Trustee meeting and the Trustees thanked Alf for raising this matter.

Introduction to AGM business:

Minutes of the last AGM Meeting:

The minutes of the last AGM meeting of Wednesday 28th October 2020 were discussed and agreed as accurate and signed by Alf and Mary

Chairperson's Annual Report:

Alf thanked the staff for their work and commitment in getting WAP through the Covid period. He also said that we still needed to recruit more Trustees to ensure WAP's future as many of the Trustees were not getting any younger! Indeed Joan, WAP's oldest Trustee was about to celebrate her 88th birthday!!! Although it was acknowledged that there was a nationwide shortage of Trustees Yvonne hoped she may recruit some new Trustees from those volunteers/trainees presently involved in WAP. If not, Yvonne committed to advertising in the NCVS newsletter in the New Year.

Treasurers Report

Although Mary tried not to start her treasurer's report by saying "This year has been challenging...." we could forgive her this time given what the project had faced during the Covid period!

She also highlighted the issues around the Council charges for social care and the impact that has had and continues to have, on WAP. Put simply, if the Council raises its charges less people will be able to afford to attend WAP and the project becomes financial unviable. This is a situation which despite good financial management, would put WAP out of business.

Appointment of Auditor

Clayton and Brewill were proposed by Alf Stiegler and seconded by Farrah Athar to remain our auditors for next year.

Elections

The whole Board resigned and was re-elected.

Other business

As there was no other business the meeting was declared closed

3. Treasurers Report April 2021 to March 2022

Firstly I would like to say thank you to Anne for her many, many, bank visits and also to Yvonne for finally getting our bank account sorted so it has returned to its original name.

Once again it's been a difficult year financially. Although we ended the year with a closing bank balance of £13,226 which looks quite healthy, without donations totalling £12,600 during the year we would have been in a very serious position at the end of March 2022.

We would like to thank everyone who donated to WAP this year, each contribution made a difference:

- WAP received a very generous private donation from a family involved with the project.
- The Jesse Spencer Foundation's funding enabled us to buy in a wide variety of masks and shields to keep our members safe.
- Local Giving/Small grants for activities to promote physical exercise.
- The Quigley's gave a donation in honour of their son Chris who used to attend the project.

We had lost income because of the reticence of some users to return to the project and this was further compounded by the enormous hike in contributions inflicted by Fairer Charging which had a great impact on many carers/parents. Yvonne worked really hard to ensure that all monies due were received and I would like to thank her also for her sterling work in this respect.

This year we were able to give work experience to several young people on the Kick start Scheme which although short lived was successful and Yvonne managed to get additional funding for 2 young people until March 2022.

The staff have been outstanding again this year and so we were delighted to give them a Xmas Bonus again which has been richly deserved.

We are still having to live with the effects of the pandemic and so I expect the next year will be as challenging as this one.

Mary Harrison, Treasurer

WAP ACTIVITIES 2021 to 2022

At the West Area Project we have always prided ourselves on the variety of activities on offer to our members:

Swimming sessions

In 2021 we started having swimming sessions at TLC with our own exclusive use of the pool. These came about because TLC were awarded funding to give free sessions to local groups. The swimming sessions have proved incredibly popular and are a big draw for people considering whether to attend our service. Eventually WAP had to fund these sessions ourselves but we were very grateful to TLC for starting these sessions up.



Dance and movement sessions with Catherine Chivers

In April Dance classes at The Lenton Centre finally were back to in person, which was fantastic. It still felt a little odd as WAP members continue to wear masks whilst there and I am required to teach in a visor. Classes back at this time were generally in the WAP room rather than in the hall so predominantly chair based. Numbers were lower at that time but have steadily picked up since then which is great! Sessions throughout April and May were on Thursdays. From June to March 2022 we danced together on Mondays as well as Thursday mornings. WAP numbers were picking up and this offered the opportunity to dance and exercise together with more of the members at a time when the group were still unable to go to play snooker and had less visiting artists. There is still a noticeable shift in mood during and after classes- the dancing, laughing, music and exercise is so beneficial for everyone.

Sessions always start in a circle either seated [if in the WAP room] or a mixture of seated and standing [in the hall]. We always begin with an aerobic, dance warm up lead by me, then often lead by the group in turn. It's wonderful to see the different styles and movements that everyone feels comfortable performing! We still often go round the circle choosing a movement and going around the circle each adding a move until we have a repeated 'routine' of movements to dance to the music. This is often based on a theme- sport, Halloween, Birthdays etc. We have quite a repertoire of seated dances which we often dance. Blame it on the Boogie and Geraldine's Routine are particular favourites! Props are as popular as ever- pompoms, streamers, glow sticks and especially the coloured lines! The members love placing the line markers around the space and we play a musical chairs style game with a line being removed after a few goes of dancing and stopping on a line! We often have a theme for the shapes we make when we freeze- something related to the colour we land on, dinosaurs, sport etc! There are some very competitive members who always manage to win! It's been great that certain members who don't cope well with losing have managed to deal with this and join in enthusiastically now! Sessions always end with a cool down- usually lead by me but sometimes lead by members of the group who are now confident to take on this role.

I am ever grateful for the privilege of being a part of the WAP family and love sharing dancing, games and giggles with you all!

Arts and Crafts and seated line dancing: Deborah Clarke from Nottingham College

In the arts and craft sessions we always work to a theme, developing the pieces over a few weeks, starting with a discussion and members designing their ideas on paper with pens, paper and ink. We try to use as many found objects and up cycled them where possible. Themes are taken from nature where possible and matched to the season.

Below are the stone-painted cacti in pots, painted and decorated with felt flowers, in a pop bottle painted jar



.Our Easter cards above

Autumn leaves newspaper wreathes, old newspapers and coloured cards onto cereal packet bases below



Christmas includes snowmen hanging decorations, using pre-cut card snowmen which are decorated with finger daubers and ink, finished off with a fabulous scarf and hat.



January-

New year starts with jars positive affirmation jars, I pre-printed out some affirmations, and they worked in groups with a helper to choose an affirmation. The jars were decorated using a decoupage technique from paper napkins, the affirmations were then written on a label and placed around the neck.



Thursday afternoon seated line Dancing Line - Yee-Haw!

This session aims to promote; team building, communication skills, coordination, socialising, patience, counting, and music appreciation, mental stimulation, strength building, mobility and fun. Oh, so many Yee-Haw, thigh-slapping, cockerels crowing, toe tapping, foot stomping and anything else we can throw in!

We start with a warm up game, this includes a posture check and a discussion about why we warm up and how. The game is fun and gets nearly everyone participating and if a member chooses not to participate they are involved instead through judging, 'quality control' and tossing the coin to start (all Lizzie's responsibilities)!

A new dance is learnt, broken down, with lots of repetition, all with themed moves, and to country music. We revisit the dances over the weeks, having old favourites.

We then have a game with two teams, the team captain (who changes each week has to pick the next person to go, collect up the bean bags, and encourage team members. The quality control person checks for fair play!

The games are rotated- Chuck a chicken, Cowboy hats, Easy-peasy Boccia, and Quoits “down the line”.

Cool down – members are also encouraged to contribute their own unique moves, which we all practice together.

Once tried, it’s a session not easily forgotten and very much enjoyed by all!



Space to create with Meander Theatre at Nottingham Playhouse

Some WAP members have enjoyed taking part in a series of creative sessions run by Meander Theatre at the Nottingham Playhouse on Tuesday morning. These included: 'Puppet Making and Puppetry' and 'Creative Writing and Story Telling'.



Whether we just enjoy wandering around or working at litter picking as 'Clean Champions', there is always something going on at WAP!



Review of WAP Activ2

Zoe Fletcher Activ2 Co-ordinator and Amy Whitmore, Fitness Instructor

Active2 made a grand return back on June 1st 2021 and what a successful return we had. It was uncertain times, and we were unsure as to how many clients would return, however, it was a fantastic surprise to have seen all the familiar faces that came through our doors. All the clients were excited to see familiar faces and enjoy a much needed catch up. The atmosphere was full of laughter and joy which is one of the most important aspects of Active2. Since returning the participants have engaged in a variety of activities which include fitness circuits in and outside of the gym, sports games (AKA Cricket, volleyball, tennis, basketball ECT) as well as fitness classes (AKA Zumba and Yoga) and let's not forget the power walks around Lenton park and the Canal.

It has to be said however that Activ2 has not quite been as well attended since the pandemic, we have had up to 10 members each Tuesday evening whereas before we would have expected up to 18. This is due to care homes strict Covid guidelines around mixing with external clubs and projects and in some cases the care homes being so short staffed they are unable to escort their service users to us. It is to be hoped that numbers will rise again in the near future.

Here at Activ2 our goals include; trying to help each member achieve their physical fitness goals whether this is to lose/maintain or even increase their weight, improve their physiological measures (AKA blood pressure, blood glucose levels and resting heart rate) or to improve their mental wellbeing by reducing social isolation. It is clear that for many of our Activ2 members COVID has had a very negative impact on their mood, levels of physical activity and weight management. All of these components have a huge impact on our day to day lives. We want to make sure each individual is living their life to the fullest and enjoying every opportunity that comes their way. This is achieved by one-one support from the staff as well as nursing volunteers to help with the physiological testing.

In addition to the support we offer at Activ2 which is focused on physical and mental well being, we are also alert to the fact that some of those attending require more complex help. To address that over the year we have had to offer; drinking diaries, safeguarding reviews, urgent social care reviews, CPA meetings and on occasion have alerted health care providers to important issues such as suicidal and fire setting intentions.

On a more mundane week to week basis, some of our Activ2 members have also needed support with managing their behaviour at Activ2. Although we are aware that our members only attend Activ2 for 3 hours a week, we are happy they feel able to come to us with their issues and expect us to act as their advocate. On a day to day basis the workers at Activ2 have dealt with these issues by setting up individual

behavioural support programs. These programmes include dealing with unwanted physical contact and using behaviour books where a daily summary of behaviour is recorded.

Adopting these measures has improved the service for the other members who attend Activ2 and it has made it more positive for the staff who support and work with those individuals.



Unfortunately, we have not yet been able to introduce volunteers due to the COVID regulations with both Active2 and the university procedures, this has put a little extra strain onto the Active2 staff and the paid WAP workers who have to cover. We do believe that we will be able to attract some new volunteers in the future when the rules start to relax as the group provides new knowledge and understanding with regards to supporting adults with learning difficulties. Let's keep our fingers crossed for a bigger and brighter Active2!