



Hunter Lodge Annual Report 2009–2010



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Introduction

Hunter Lodge is a clubhouse that meets the needs of people who have a physical disability, a sensory impairment, or a brain injury.

We offer a friendly relaxed environment, where we develop a programme with members, which includes access to further education, community mapping, social and cultural activities, and work based tasks.

Well again this past 12 months has flown by and we are now in our anniversary year.. !

Yes, it's been 10 years since we first arrived here and opened the doors to the most amazing 10 years we could of ever imagined. Together we feel we have moved forward and made real changes to the way we run as a service. We have had many success stories and have worked together to create an environment where people have developed in ways which are meaningful to each individual

Our main target again for the next 12 months is to continue to work alongside the Personalisation agenda and increase people's independence, choice and control over their lives. One of the things we offer is training in recruitment and selection which empowers people to be able to choose their own PA's to work with them outside of Hunter Lodge.

We have continued to offer people the opportunity to learn and develop their skills and have run a number of courses with Wigan and Leigh and Skelmersdale colleges where members of the public have also attended.

There has been a big push for us to promote Health and Wellbeing and we have supported people in many ways. We have run healthy eating sessions, health trainers have delivered training to promote healthy lifestyles and people have joined in various activities including steps to health, swimming and outdoor pursuits.. we've even had one person hanging upside down on a rock climbing wall .. much to his dismay!

As for the outdoor life at the allotment we have continued to be very self sufficient. We grow and sell our own organic produce and the hanging baskets were a real success, often being sold before they were even made.

After such a successful year I think that all that's left to say is a really big thank you for all the hard work and commitment from you all over the past 12 months and here's looking forward to the next 10 years together..

“ We may not be the first man on the moon but we are certainly taking big steps here on Planet Earth ...”



Health and Wellbeing

Hunter Lodge promotes a healthy life style and encourages members to recognise the benefits from a healthy life working with other groups within the borough.

Health and exercise

Over the 10 years Hunter Lodge has worked in partnership with:

The Primary Care Trust – who provided us with a healthy eating session, people made foods to taste from a healthy menu.

Disability Arts – we were invited to produce work for a healthy eating art exhibition at Wigan library.

Green Gym – a government scheme to promote a health lifestyle through gardening and exercise.

Health Trainers – to encourage healthy lifestyle choices.

Active Living Team – who have provided us with sessions to improve peoples health:

- Table tennis
- Crown green bowling
- Wheelchair dancing
- Outdoor pursuits
- Steps to health
- Health walks
- Wheels for all
- Swimming sessions
- Badminton

Three staff members have followed in this success and have completed the training run by the Active Living Team – ‘moving more often’. This has given them the knowledge to run chair based exercise sessions for members of Hunter Lodge.

Meal preparation

Hunter Lodge has maintained its partnerships and independence working with members to build their skills.

Members at Hunter Lodge will visit the local shops or supermarket and purchase ingredients to prepare their lunch. Working alongside the health trainers, people will plan their lunch menu recognising a healthy balanced diet.

Working with other agencies has proven successful and following the work done with the Primary Care Trust and the health trainers we continue to hold weekly taster sessions to encourage healthy food choices and for people to recognise the benefits.

Wellbeing training

This year we offered health sessions in both a men’s and women’s group.

The sessions lasted six weeks and ranged from healthy eating to physical well being. The training was run by staff at Hunter Lodge using resources from the Primary Care Trust. The purpose was to support people to look after their bodies and how to recognise and seek advice and support if needed.

The course was successful and plans are under way for new session to be implemented this year.

Health and wellbeing for 2010

Hunter Lodge will continue to offer members opportunities to be involved in the sessions run by the Active Living Team.

Hunter Lodge will continue to offer health walks within the community.

Hunter Lodge will offer an opportunity for members to be involved in taster sessions with resources from the British Heart Foundation. The group will cook and taste recipes from the booklet and promote healthy choices.

Hunter Lodge will offer more wellbeing sessions in the form of men’s and women’s groups.

Hunter Lodge will develop the swimming sessions and offer them on alternate days.



Learning and Development

Hunter Lodge works in partnership with Wigan and Leigh College, Wigan Council's Supported Employment Service, One Vision Media Productions, Skelmersdale College, PCT, private, voluntary and independent sector, Equal, Wigan Council volunteer service, Westleigh High School and Wigan and Leisure Culture Trust, to name just a few, to provide members with the opportunity to develop and learn new skills.

Over the 10 years Hunter Lodge has been opened the training and development programmes have been implemented in accordance to members' needs wishes and aspirations.

Onsite college courses

Hunter Lodge has worked with both Wigan and Leigh and Skelmersdale Colleges over the years to provide members with training and development courses on site:

- Relaxation
- Arts
- I.T
- Work preparation
- Food hygiene
- NVQ
- Learn Direct
- Glass painting
- Nail art
- Sign language

In 2009 Hunter Lodge members were involved in community course run by Wigan College. This led to a partnership between Hunter Lodge and the college and we are now a community resource centre which is used by the college to offer courses. The courses are open to anyone in the borough.

The courses have been successfully attended by Hunter Lodge members and members from the Marsh Green community. This year we facilitated:

- Spanish
- Literacy and numeracy
- Flower arranging
- I.T for beginners
- First aid

First aid

Hunter Lodge members requested first aid training. Following consultation with Wigan Council's Learning and Development service we were able to offer this with tutors from Westleigh High School, who also offer community courses.

The course ran for six weeks with members enthusiastic to get started each week. The sessions proved to be a learning opportunity for both members and the tutor with the methods used to adapt the course to ensure everyone had the opportunity to learn, practice and demonstrate their skills.



NVQ

From day one Hunter Lodge has been a user-led service.

Hunter Lodge members volunteered daily to work on reception.

As time passed this grew and reception became work experience. We decided that reception would be advertised and people would need to complete an application form and be interviewed for the post to gain valuable work skills and life experience.

Over time this has changed and members now volunteer and work together to cover the shifts.

Each member will commit themselves for 12 weeks.

As members become established and confident they support others to learn the skills. It was felt that this should be recognised.

Wigan Council's Learning and Development Service alongside Skelmersdale College, have offered the opportunity for people to gain NVQ level 1 customer service.

We have currently supported eight members to gain the qualification and have members waiting to enrol.

Drama

Hunter Lodge has worked in partnership with One Vision Media Productions to provide training and development opportunities at both venues for our members and their students.

This year they offered the opportunity for members to be involved in a drama group. Hunter Lodge members joined in and the sessions were filmed. Members enjoyed the opportunity to express themselves and received a copy of the film.

Recruitment and selection

Since Hunter Lodge opened in 2000 members have received recruitment and selection training.

Members have been involved in writing adverts, shortlisting applications and interviewing candidates for every post that has been advertised.

In the last two years, working towards the personalisation agenda, Hunter Lodge has offered members the opportunity to attend recruitment and selection training in line with direct payments. The sessions are aimed at members employing a personal assistant and cover how to go about this and support services available – Direct Payments Team and P.A.S.S.

We have supported members to seek direct payments and interview techniques.

We continue to run the group annually to ensure people get the opportunity to be involved and gain the skills and confidence to apply.

Safeguarding

This year we offered our first safeguarding training.

We used a training video to help people recognise what abuse is. After the short film we had a group discussion. Members clearly indicated what they thought.

We plan to hold the sessions again later in the year.

Disability Arts

For the last 4 years Hunter Lodge has worked with Disability Arts.

The group worked on the Perceptions Project, challenging the perceptions of disability. Members from Hunter Lodge were involved in art workshops and produced a number of pieces that have been on display in the Turnpike Gallery and Bolton Gallery.

Publicity group

In 2000 members at Hunter Lodge formed a publicity group. The group has developed and grown, achieving success over the 10 year period.

The group wrote the information for our webpage. Ten years on and we now have a staff member trained on maintaining our webpage:

www.wigan.gov.uk/HunterLodge

The group produced a members' leaflet and handbook. This has recently been replaced and updated with members of the group.

In 2002 Hunter Lodge was the first centre to offer internet access to its service users.

The group worked with One Vision Media Productions to produce a promotional DVD, involving everyone at Hunter Lodge. This can be found on our webpage:

<http://www.wigan.gov.uk/HunterLodge>

The group produce monthly newsletters to keep everyone informed of events and share stories.

The group produce a calendar annually, this is made up of photographs of events we have held.

Horticulture

In 2001 Hunter Lodge established its gardening group. We have worked with St Helens College and the Green Gym to provide education and support over the years. 2003 saw the group grow and develop and we purchased our greenhouse. From then on the group has been able to grow and nurture plants and seeds into the amazing displays we see today.

Today Hunter Lodge has a thriving garden with amazing displays in both summer and winter. Members of the horticulture group make hanging baskets and summer pots which are sold to make a small profit for more seeds.

Hunter Lodge has an allotment at Haigh Hall where we are growing our own vegetables. Last year was our first, in which we grew

sprouts: they proved successful. Plans are under way for the Summer vegetables, and potatoes are on the way.

Training opportunities for 2010

Hunter Lodge continues to make links and provide opportunities for members to grow and develop.

Alongside the courses we offer, we are liaising with members to look at plans and development opportunities for the forthcoming year.

We are currently taking names for money management and confidence building courses run by Wigan and Leigh College.

2010 will see Hunter Lodge members working with Supported Employment to provide 'World of Work', a training course to prepare individuals for work and the life balances and changes that will follow. The group will initially be held for one day per week for 10 months for six members.

We are planning to offer more recruitment and selection training to equip members with the tools they need to employ their own staff.

We have planned to host both safeguarding and dignity training on an annual basis.

Hunter Lodge will continue to work together in the publicity group to keep the public information up to date.

Hunter lodge will work with Westleigh High School to offer the opportunity for Mediterranean cooking sessions.



From 2000 Hunter Lodge has worked with members to use community resources and build relationships.

More recently the Community Connecting programme has enabled us to have champions in each workplace.

Community Connecting

One staff member from Hunter Lodge attended the Community Connecting workshops to become a champion.

The role as a champion is to:

- believe in Community Connecting
- understand the aims of Community Connecting
- promote Community Connecting throughout our own teams
- promote Community Connecting with individuals, family and carers, colleagues, wider community and other organisations
- use the Community Connecting tools within the workplace.

The workshops involved tools to complete with members to recognise dreams and aspirations and monitor progress.

The champions continue to meet regularly to offer support to each other and share information.

A Taste of Community Life

Hunter Lodge offered carers information days on site with an annual information sharing session per year. In 2008 the event had grown and it was suggested we work with other providers. We worked in partnership with Wigan and Leigh Disability Partnership to offer a carers information day 'A TASTE OF COMMUNITY LIFE'.

The event continues to be held annually at Leigh Sports Village it gives the opportunity for

services and support groups to showcase what is available to improve the quality of life for people within the community.

Coffee mornings

Members at Hunter Lodge attend weekly coffee mornings within the local community.

The sessions have provided an opportunity for people to make new friends and build confidence.

We hosted a coffee morning to raise money for Children in Need. With the relationships built it was a success and we raised £184.00.

Library events

Members from Hunter Lodge have built links and monitor events that are being held in the community. We have attended three events at local libraries:

- Water colour painting
- Craft chat
- Grow your own vegetables
- Card craft

Respect Reflex

On the first Tuesday of each month the Active Living Team hold a themed night at Reflex nightclub for people with a disability.

For the first sessions Hunter Lodge supported members to get tickets and went along for encouragement.

Members now organise to get tickets and go alone to meet friends.

Heritage

Following the closure of Mere Oaks we gained possession of a semi-circular bench.

The bench along with other items had been left to decay or be destroyed in the building plans. An advert was placed in the local paper to which we responded and the bench was ours.

The bench was in poor condition and needed restoration work. A member's husband volunteered to do the restoration work.

On completion it was returned and NPS returned to fit the bench in place.

People who attended Mere Oaks were pleased with the result and it brought back many a happy memory.

We invited John Barker, who initially saved the bench and found it new owners, to view the completed bench. He in turn invited the local press and an article was placed in the local paper.

Conference hire

In 2002 members decided that we would hire our conference room, providing a comfortable meeting venue.

We facilitated food hygiene training and offered buffet lunches at affordable prices.

From 2003-2009 we have generated £1788.75 for our amenities fund.

Fundraising

Over the 10 years Hunter Lodge has supported external charities alongside raising monies for our own amenities.

Hunter Lodge has raised £4780.84, generated through, raffles, Christmas and Summer fayres, a sponsored walk and the sales of flower pots. Hunter Lodge amenities fund currently stands at £4489.09. The funds are used to pay for social events or items, more recently members opted to use the funds to pay for training courses.

Supporting other charities we have raised £5472.79 through:

- £83.00 Jeans for Genes
- £417.50 Comic Relief
- £1801.05 Children in Need
- £2675.83 British Legion
- £152.00 Oxfam unwrapped

- £30.05 Marie Curie
- £118.00 Tsunami appeal
- £18.00 McMillan Cancer
- £107.55 British Heart Foundation
- £69.81 Wigan and Leigh Hospice

British Legion

For four years Hunter Lodge has supported the British Legion with the sale of poppies.

For the first year we sold poppies at Hunter Lodge and had a collection tin on reception – we raised £14.41.

Following this we worked with the British Legion to sell poppies in Wigan town centre for two weeks leading up to Remembrance Sunday.

Each year we push forward to raise more money for such a worthy cause.

- 2007 - £408.75
- 2008 - £845.74
- 2009 - £1406.93

We are planning 2010 and hope we can again raise more than the previous year.

Community Action for 2010

Hunter Lodge will hold a coffee morning inviting members from the local community.

We will continue to work in partnership to offer 'A Taste Of Community Life' information sharing event.

We will continue to offer our support with fundraising for both Hunter Lodge and charities.

To monitor events at the local libraries.

We are looking to invite other services to hold presentations at Hunter Lodge to keep us up to date on the opportunities available to members.

Personal Achievements

NVQ – By Carole Wilson

Since attending Hunter Lodge, and with the help and support of both staff and members, I have been given the opportunity to take part in a variety of courses and activities – first aid, sign language, flower arranging, glass painting.

I have enrolled with Wigan and Leigh College in the adult literacy and numeracy course which last year I passed level 1.

I am currently completing my NVQ. I have found the course to be interesting and informative and I am looking forward to completing and gaining my qualification.

This will then assist my way forward, not only obtaining more confidence and independence but also to gain either voluntary work or part time employment, finally leading to a paid position.

I would definitely recommend the course to other members.

Fingers crossed if I am fortunate enough to pass, I would like to complete level 2.

I have started to look for voluntary work and have recently applied to my local Wigan and Leigh Hospice shop.

So as the saying goes – for every step forward, take two steps back.

Well for me now, with thanks to Hunter Lodge it's one step back and four steps forward.

My time at Hunter Lodge – By Bill Matthew

I have been attending Hunter Lodge for about six years now. When I first began to attend I had lost a great deal of confidence in my ability to function as part of a group. I expected that I would need a power assisted wheelchair to get about in the clubhouse but I was persuaded that with assistance from the staff I would be able to cope without one. All of the support I needed was forthcoming and my mobility has improved greatly as a result. I have been encouraged by both staff and by the example of other members with similar disabilities to push the boundaries of my ability.

I have also found intellectual stimulation in assisting with the organisation in some of the clubhouse projects including the promotional DVD and the carers day A Taste of Community Life. These activities have helped me to rebuild my confidence to the level where I have felt able to undertake a short period of voluntary work, though my age now precludes the possibility of future paid employment.

My Journey so Far – By Joanne Rimmer

I have been a member at Hunter Lodge for almost 12 months and in that time I have made many achievements.

There have been personal achievements, such as building up my confidence in socialising here within Hunter Lodge and outside in many other areas, e.g using my walking stick as an extension of me! I need this most of the time and it is now natural to me – it is not an issue! So too is the use of my wheelchair, I have been able to accept the use of it and the help from other people.

I have made friends here at Hunter Lodge, there are so many wonderful people both staff and members whom I have the privilege of being involved with.

Hunter Lodge made it possible for me to train on courses such as basic first aid and flower arranging. These courses are not just learning skills, but also confidence building and helping me to socialise away from the safety of home.

There are so many opportunities on offer here. People at Hunter Lodge listen, this also helps psychologically with my terrible recurring depression. I have learned about others' conditions and everybody helps each other at Hunter Lodge.

I took part in an external course, thanks to Hunter Lodge, called Breathworks. This is quite well known within the mental health teams in the surrounding areas of Wigan and St Helens. The course is aimed at self help for people with chronic illness and pain, using meditation and other techniques.

The course seemed to be of more use than the counselling I have received! This has to be better than more tablets.

There are many people to seek advice from, again staff or members, concerning other issues such as outside agencies, benefits and help.

Hunter Lodge has shown me help and guidance and keeps me fresh and focused.



Developments

This year will see Hunter Lodge celebrate its 10 year anniversary. In recognition of this, people have been working together to hold a celebration to showcase our achievements.

Here is a few of our achievements to date:

In 2004 Hunter Lodge applied and received Charter Mark – a recognition of excellence.

Hunter Lodge members recognised a lack of support and advice when completing benefit forms. In 2002 a group was formed working with Citizens Advice to seek funding and set up Paveways, a disability advice line. This became a successful enterprise and is now run by members who previously used Hunter Lodge and Leonard Cheshire who has also branched out the services to include disability training.

Hunter Lodge members worked together and Hunter Lodge was the first Adult Services premises within the council to offer internet access to its members.

Hunter Lodge has worked with Embrace to offer partners in policy making and training for members who have then gone on to become disability trainers themselves.

For the next years we plan to grow and develop, looking forward to the personalisation agenda and how Hunter Lodge can adapt to ensure we continue to offer a service people want.

Development areas for 2010 and beyond:

Work together to devise and deliver expert training courses to offer initially to staff and carers with medical conditions. Two members have already come forward and are keen to take this on board.

We are working to produce jewellery using the shared skills from one staff member, to sell at the carers information day – A Taste of Community Life. If this proves successful we plan to grow and develop this into an enterprise.

We are continuing to hold the carers information day – A Taste of Community Life again this June. As this has proved successful, we will review this yearly to make sure stalls are relevant and in line with the personalisation agenda.

We will continue to work with members to develop skills to ensure they are equipped for the personalisation agenda.

We are working with Wigan Council Supported Employment to offer World of Work training to promote supported employment and the balance of a working life.



Service Review

Hunter Lodge works in partnership to ensure that the service offered is what people want and together we deliver. Each year members complete a questionnaire allowing us to monitor the service. The questionnaire sets the standards for the forthcoming year.

Customer satisfaction

Hunter Lodge produces annual questionnaires, the results set the standards for the year.

This allows us to ensure we offer a service that people want to receive and highlight any concerns.

Results are collated and a report produced. All actions are discussed on an individual basis.

From the questionnaire we have made improvements that people wanted:

- changed the testing day of the fire alarm
- refurbished the kitchen
- offered money management and are awaiting college training

Staff qualifications

To promote best practice, staff at Hunter Lodge are trained to the required standards for their job role and continued personal development.

Job Role	Qualifications Gained	Qualifications Working Towards
Manager	NVQ 3	NVQ 4
Centre Supervisor	NVQ 2,3,4	Leadership and Management
Development Officer	NVQ 2,3	
1 Development Worker	NVQ 2,3	
1 Development Worker	NVQ 2	NVQ 3
1 Development Worker		NVQ 2
Kitchen Support Worker	Skills for care, food hygiene	



Finances

Hunter Lodge members work together to set wish lists for each year's budget, where members put suggestions forward and these are collated into a wish list; the most popular being explored.

Over the years this has included:

- carpets and decorations
- I.T and office furniture
- Loop system
- Outside canopy
- Storage cabinets
- Electric doors
- Roller shutter in the dining room
- Accessible kitchen
- Laptop and projector
- Promotional items and many more.

One spend at Hunter Lodge was the transformation of the assessment room into a functional changing room. This incurred a large cost of £4767.00 but everyone agreed that it was money well spent if it allowed everyone the opportunity to access Hunter Lodge.

Promotion

Everyone at Hunter Lodge is involved in the promotional events and we regularly get the opportunity to hold stalls at local events to showcase the service.

We discuss the option of purchasing items to give away to enable people recognise us. With health and wellbeing we chose:

- Cotton bags for life
- Pedometers
- Pens
- Sports bottles

We take these to each event we attend and give them to members of the public.

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