

Chairs Report
AGM Dec 2020 via Zoom

It goes without saying that 2020 has been a very different year. The centre has been closed to users from the start of lock down and remains closed.

Our manager and staff have been fantastic in responding to this enforced change. I would like to take this opportunity to offer enormous thanks to them for this response. Their commitment to the Assynt Centre and our users has been wonderful.

Amongst the tasks undertaken have been the development of guidelines around safe working, the delivery of meals to centre users, shopping, prescription collection and the offer of trips out on a one-to-one basis which has had a small take up. These activities have allowed some distanced contact which has been incredibly important in helping avoid isolation. Uptake of meals has remained steady although with some fall reflecting natural decline in numbers.

Telephone contact has been maintained with centre users too, and the opportunity has been taken to redecorate the centre.

The NHS and the Care Inspectorate have been kept informed of these changes to our services and have been supportive.

Community Care Assynt has also been an active member of the Assynt Resilience Group set up to use funding from government to help support the community through the Covid pandemic. Our manager has been particularly active in the planning, setting up and running of the food bank, and acting as the point of contact for those in the community in need of support.

Looking forward the NHS completed its review of third sector organizations and we have had confirmation that our funding will continue for a further three years from 2020. This is extremely good news and reflects the fact that the NHS values the contribution we, and other similar organizations, make in supporting the elderly, and those with care needs, to remain at home in their communities.

Again, looking forward we are in the early stages of working out how re-opening might work.

Preparatory work has been done already to develop the plan and buy equipment we need to be able to do this. Obviously, the roll-out of a vaccination programme in the coming months will facilitate this process.

September 2020 was our tenth anniversary. This was to be an opportunity for some serious celebration of the contribution this community-based charity has made over those ten years to the wellbeing of older people in Assynt. Many of these would not have been able to remain in the community without the support of Community Care Assynt. Covid scuppered those plans, at least for now, but I would like to thank staff and volunteers past and present for the work they have done at the Assynt Centre, some of them for the entire ten years. It is also a time to thank board members past and present for the hours they have given to ensuring the centre remains compliant to regulations, responds to changing needs and changes in NHS policy.

As in previous Chairs reports I end with an appeal for anyone interested in being a director of Community Care Assynt to let myself or the centre manager know. Some directors are celebrating their tenth anniversary of involvement with CCA too! It is inevitable that we will need to recruit new directors to ensure the Assynt Centre remains open.

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