



Catalyst AGM

Annual General Meeting

This year's Annual General Meeting is being held on Monday 22 April 2013 at 7 pm at Langham Community Centre, School Road, Langham, Colchester CO4 5PA. Buffet refreshments will be available.

2000th Customer for the Short Term Wheelchair Loan Charity



The Short Term Wheelchair Loan Charity is going from strength to strength. The start of the New Year saw wheelchair loan number two thousand being made. Shown assisting Mr. Vic Mead is one of our volunteers, Sally Cheves. A few years ago ten wheelchairs were purchased with a start-up grant from the Catalyst Charity but such has been the success of the scheme that Bart Walsh now reports the stock has risen to well over one hundred lightweight collapsible wheelchairs.

The Wheelchair Loan Charity recently benefitted from a donation from the Waitrose supermarket in Colchester when they were chosen as one of their Charities of the Month for January and this grant has enabled the purchase of five more wheelchairs plus special leg elevators and 'comfort' cushions. The charity continues to operate from Catalyst House Monday to Thursday from 10.00 am until 12.00 noon. Wheelchairs are available on free loan to any persons living in this area and can be borrowed for up to three months.

New Innovative Boma Wheelchair

Catalyst is always on the look out for innovative projects, which can provide valuable new services that were previously unavailable. This was the case with the Boma wheelchair application.

We decided to part-fund the purchase of this all-terrain wheelchair (and a trailer to move it from place to place) with Natwest because it opens up a world of new opportunities for disabled people.

It allows users to visit hard to reach places, such as dense woods, beaches, remote fields and environments with steep hills, enabling them to explore natural places that are usually inaccessible to them.

The chair has already been used by a wide variety of people with disabilities within North East Essex. I am pleased to report that we recently agreed to part-fund the next stage of the project, which involves setting up a permanent base at Highwood Country Park's Visitor Centre.

This will allow members of the Boma wheelchair club to have immediate access to the woods inside the park.

Here is a quote from one of the chair's users:

"The fact that I can go for a walk with my children on gravelly muddy tracks and through puddles up and down hills – without relying on someone to push me is one thing. But the big advantage? I can be a parent, a walker, a partaker, without having to be a responsibility too.

"The Boma has given us the opportunity of an afternoon in the woods or a morning by the lake in our own community. It is inclusion in every sense of the word."



Tendring Specialist Stroke Services

Tendring Specialist Stroke Services has recently been awarded a Catalyst grant for carers' respite. The grant will be used to offer breaks to carers. Outings are organised to take carers out of their caring role in an enjoyable, carefree, cost and worry free way.

Carers can enjoy being together, laughing and chatting and having some time to themselves. With this in mind TSSS developed the carers' outings with the aim of making them feel looked after, cared for, cossetted and indulged.

Pretty newsletters, event programmes and invitations proved to be one of the many delights of the events. Something so simple gave so many people a lift in their day. Keeping the invitation in a prominent place gave them a feeling of wellbeing, plus a reminder of something enjoyable to look forward to.

Not having to worry about any costs at all was so important. Events included a pampering afternoon and a vintage tea party, visits to Beth Chatto Gardens, Braintree Freeport shopping village, Melford Hall and the Papermill Lock in Chelmsford. Everyone is picked up from their door so they have no worries about transport or driving.

TSSS is a local independent charity and has cared for the community of Tendring for over 35 years. They offer support in various ways to stroke survivors, carers, families and friends. Their aim is to assist in any way possible during recovery, rehabilitation and in the long-term.

Carers have always been an equal concern and for them knowing there is support for both stroke survivor and carer can feel like a lifeline. Often the main carer can feel forgotten and alone as all the attention is focused on the stroke survivor. Having someone to talk to who understands the impact of stroke helps people to cope better with the long-term effects of stroke.

Carers meetings are specifically for carers giving them a chance to meet informally with other carers. Many people say much of their support and information comes from other carers. "It's good to hear how others manage their problems and speak to carers who know what it's like to be a Stroke Carer."

The centre is owned and run by TSSS for its stroke rehabilitation activities. Daily groups provide tailored programmes for people with stroke, focused on reducing disability and increasing the prospects for a more fulfilling life. Their friendly staff are trained and committed to improving and enhancing the quality of life for Tendring stroke survivors carers and families



Please phone 01255 815916 for details of their services.

*"Meeting other people and being on the water, I felt I was escaping for the day, which meant going back didn't seem quite so bad."
"Every day was a down day until now, even the young lady on the boat couldn't do*

enough for us, it made me feel special for a while."

Tell us about your news

The Catalyst Charity is always interested in hearing how various projects are developing and your future plans involving our local caring organisations. If your group has an interesting story to tell, or you need to advertise future developments, please drop us a line. Articles and photographs should be sent to the Administrator at the Catalyst offices at Catalyst House, Newcomen Way, Colchester CO4 9YR or by e mail to info@colchestercatalyst.co.uk

Some of the major General Grants given recently

For more information check out our website: www.colchestercatalyst.co.uk

Brainwave Centre	£ 1,000	Changing Shelf
Mistley Kids Club	£ 1,500	Respite Kids Club
Walk Colchester	£ 2,475	Storage for BOMA
Colne Housing	£ 3,769	Disabled Access
Crossroads Care	£ 1,000	Bathing Facilities
Colchester Hospital Charity	£ 7,500	Birthing Pool