

January to April, 2023

NEWSLETTER

CLI MARKS 10 YEARS IN STYLE

In January we had the pleasure of celebrating the 10 year anniversary of Community Led Initiatives. Founded in 2013 by Peter Atherton, our CEO, and Matthew Kidd, CLI has gone on to establish itself as one of the leading peer-led organisations in the country. The night was an opportunity for our North and South teams to come together and celebrate all that CLI has achieved over the last decade.

Reflecting back over the last 10 years Pete said,

"When I think back to the windowless, dingy little storage cupboard we had for an office in Tameside when we first started 10 years ago, it was a month by month battle for survival for CLI. I was so occupied with striving to get CLI accepted in its own right rather than a Probation owned project, that it was hard to have certainty for the future. But here we are 10 years down the road and recognised as a leading light in the voluntary sector and beyond!"



"It was a perfect celebration of what we have all achieved and I feel immensely proud" - Pete Atherton, CEO

The night was also a great chance to celebrate the team and an awards ceremony was held with winners including **Elizabeth Martin** and **Clive Sterling** who won the 'Above and Beyond' awards for the North and South. **Jessica Galley** and **Heidi Larvin** were awarded the North and South 'Shining Star' awards and **Charlotte Parsons** was awarded 'Peer of the Year' as well as the 'CEO Award'. A huge congratulations to all of our award winners, the incredible work CLI continue to do would not be possible without you all.

When asked about the night Pete said,

"Our Birthday Bash was emotional, entertaining and really connected us a whole team. I've got so many happy memories of that night and I hope it had the same impact for you all. It was a perfect celebration of what we have all achieved and I feel immensely proud of you all and especially our amazing award winners! "

MENTEE SUCCESS STORIES

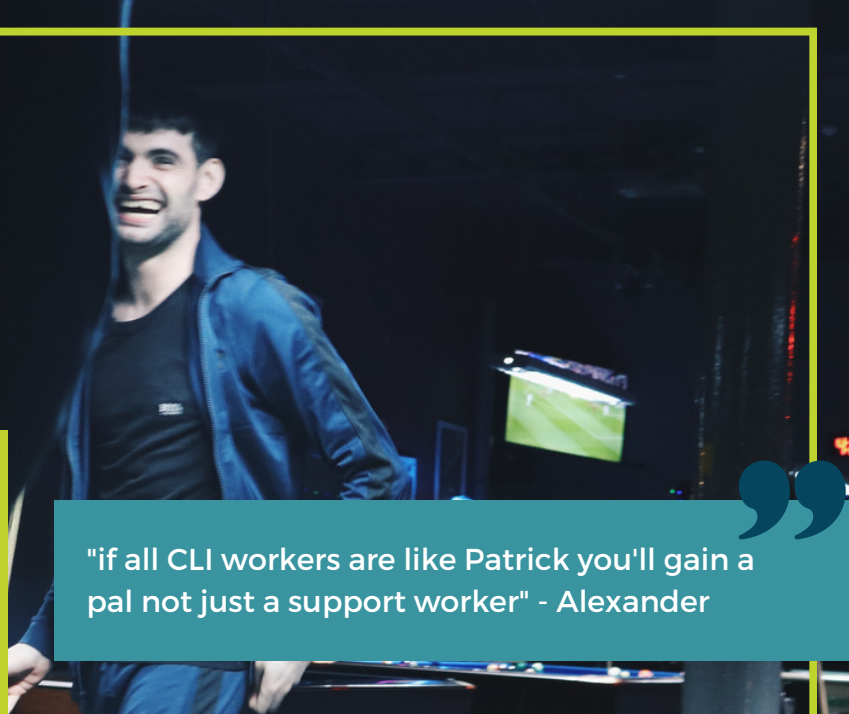
ALEXANDER & PATRICK

Our Peer Support mentors provide practical one-to-one weekly support and constructive activities to help those we support with the hard internal transformation needed to build positive change in their lives and achieve their goals. Our support workers are the heart of CLI and continue to achieve incredible outcomes and make hugely positive impact to peoples lives.

Below is the story of Support Worker **Patrick Kapinga** and his mentee Alexander .

ALEXANDER'S STORY

"My background was bad, I was homeless at one point, I was sofa surfing, I dealt drugs and took them heavily. I wasn't a stranger to violence and I had a son who I didn't see and family I barely kept in touch with. I had no ambition or get up and go to the point I ended up doing a sentence in Altcourse. Since coming out of prison I've got another son on the way and since working with Patrick he's helped me with multiple things like my provisional licence, my doctors, a birth certificate, a bank account and requested PIP which I've been awarded. Without Patrick's help I would have not of done any of those things and wouldn't have known where to start. I'm now happy as can be, me and my partner have moved into our house, I have fully stopped taking drugs, I attend all my appointments and now I'm ready for employment which Patrick's also helped out with, I strongly advise anyone with problems or life choices like my old ones to accept all help available and if all CLI workers are like Patrick you'll gain a pal not just a support worker ."



"if all CLI workers are like Patrick you'll gain a pal not just a support worker" - Alexander

PATRICK'S VIEW

"Alex arrived at a point in his life where he felt ready for something different. Although he had been dealt a bad hand in life, he accepted his own mistakes and decided that he wanted to take his future back into his own hands. He began his journey with CLI in November 2022. At his initial assessment he had no support ties to the community but what Alex did have, was a desire to work on himself, and a drive to become a positive role model for his children.

We began to work on the basics. We supported him to obtain a birth certificate and a provisional driving license; a bank account; and a GP. We also worked together to get Alex into a more financially stable position, by helping him get the financial support he was entitled to. Accomplishing these goals helped Alex to gain a greater level of independence and a feeling of control over his own life. More importantly, the motivation and emotional support provided to Alex throughout his journey empowered him to believe in himself. He began to show confidence in what he could achieve and accomplish things independently. He is now getting ready to complete training and become employed in a meaningful career. I have absolutely no doubt that he will accomplish this feat. It has been a joy to witness Alex's incredible and inspiring growth. We at CLI wish him all the best for his future!"



MENTEE SUCCESS STORIES

"I've never really had people who have cared about me as much as they've cared here, it means the world to me." - Billy



CHARLOTTE & BILLY

Another one of the projects under the CLI umbrella is SAMAS where our support workers help their mentees on their journey towards sobriety, below is the story of one of our service user's Billy, where he and his mentor Charlotte discuss the success Billy has found on his road to recovery.

BILLY'S STORY

"I've done all the courses related to drugs and recovery and it wasn't until I came to CLI that I received the help I was needing, before I knew it a few days had turned into a few weeks, a few weeks turned into a month and then months turned into a year, I'm now 2 years clean.

If it wasn't for Charlotte I don't think I'd have done it, I don't think I'd have coped. Just being able to speak to somebody for 10 minutes helps massively, just to have someone there to give you that little bit of reassurance, that's all I needed. I've found that at CLI everyone feels like family. I've never really had people who have cared about me as much as they've cared here, it means the world to me.

I'm going in the right direction now and I couldn't be happier, some times I sit and think about how much I've achieved over the last 2 years, I can't wait to see what the next 5 bring, for me the future is looking bright."

CHARLOTTE'S VIEW

I first supported Billy in 2021. When Billy first came to our service, he was a month abstinent from class A drugs, he was extremely anxious, socially isolated and had a big mistrust in services, Billy was under probation services but wanted to make a change in his life.

Through our work together Billy and I formed a positive trusting relationship, we addressed issues Billy was facing together. With consistency and support Billy's self-belief grew along with his confidence and his positive mindset to want a different life for himself. Billy regularly attends our community group where he has made friendships but also became a positive valued member of the group supporting others on their journey.

Billy is now in employment this is the first time he has been employed since his teenage years by Penrose roots, he is project manager of their Bedford gardening project where he supports volunteers to reduce isolation, have connection and a purpose.

Billy recently won the Daniel Miller award for recognition at an awards event in London for his hard work, this was an amazing achievement, and I am extremely proud of Billy for all his hard work and determination he has shown even through the struggles along the way. I am honoured to have been able to be a part of his journey and to continue to see him shine.



AN INSIGHT INTO RECOVERY

Within CLI we have some excellent work being done under our SAMAS project which focuses on giving help to people on their path to recovery from addiction. One of the ways we work towards this is by offering support in the form of groups, the biggest of which being the Bedford Check-in Group. Below is an insight from one of our Support Workers **Nikki English**, who runs the group, and group attendee Louise, here both ladies discuss the impact groups like this can have on people's journey to recovery.

NICKY'S VIEW

"On a Tuesday morning in Bedford we are lucky to have a great venue that we are able to use for a support group.

This is a safe space where our service users can come together and be open about the things they need support with, their achievements and how addiction has effected them.

We share that in recovery the best way to stay well is to keep busy and connect with others that they can identify with.

Upon arrival everyone at group is welcome to coffee and biscuits, as well as at a break time. This is a great time for anyone who may need extra support or advise can go to either a staff member or volunteer for this."

"The recovery group gives me hope that things will get better." - Louise

LOUISE'S VIEW

"The recovery group gives me hope that things will get better. It gives me a place where I can be 100% honest about what I'm doing, be it good or bad.

If I'm feeling overwhelmed by my situation at present Nikki and the other staff members try to flip it and help me see the progress I have made over the last 2 1/2 months. In the same hand if I'm in a happy mood they bolster me even more.

I don't have much to look forward to at present but I always make sure I'm there on a Tuesday.

I've lived a double life for over 35 years, I could never be honest with anyone about my drug use. I can do that there with no recriminations. I can be totally honest which has helped towards my total abstinence over the last couple of months."





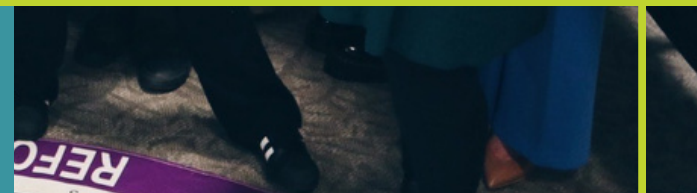
COLOURWORKS WORKSHOP

"Colourworks was a fantastic opportunity to learn not only about myself but my colleagues." - Charlotte Bold

In March the North team gathered to attend the Colourworks workshop which was delivered by Fiona Venton Harvey. The Colourworks workshop gave us all a chance to explore the differences in our personalities and work styles to enable us to better understand ourselves and our co-workers.

Regional Manager for the North, Rebecca Holmes said of the day,

"The North Team came together for the long awaited colorworks training day, and what a day it was! It was great to see so many people engaged in something that CLI feel so passionately about. Colorworks has helped us develop our communications over the years with its strength-based person-centred approach to understanding people and ultimately getting the best out of our teams. We have a great mix of different colour energies in the North and I was proud to see how open, honest, and vulnerable people allowed themselves to be on the day. I hope people's profiles allow them to work on their areas for development with confidence and acceptance of who they are and what incredible skills and qualities they bring to the organisation and the people they support."



Team Leader Charlotte Bold attended the event and when asked of her experience she expressed, **"Colourworks was a fantastic opportunity to learn not only about myself but my colleagues. There was a great energy in the room, and it was brilliant to see everyone engaging so positively; this is testament to not only the staff's attitude towards CPD but also the quality of the training. Understanding different colour energies was fascinating and insightful, it will no doubt be very valuable to everyone who attended. It gave me a greater appreciation of how we are all different but complement each other, making CLI a diverse, colourful and connected place to work."**

Our team in the South's Colour Works work shop will be held at the end of April.

JOIN THE TEAM...



VOLUNTEER WITH US!

Become a Mentor with CLI and make a real difference to someones future. Our volunteers are the driving force for helping people to turn their lives around.

[http://](http://volunteer-with-us)  volunteer-with-us



WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT CLI?

Follow our Socials :

 Facebook - @CommunityLedInitiatives

 LinkedIn - Community Led Initiatives CIC

 Instagram - @CommunityLedInitiatives

 www.communityled.org.uk

 hello@communityled.org.uk

CURRENT VACANCIES WITHIN CLI

We are currently looking for new team members to join the CLI family in the following roles:

Grow Trainee (Milton Keynes)

Project Coordinator SAMAS (Milton Keynes)

Engagement & Support Worker (Bedford Borough/Central Bedfordshire)

Engagement & Support Worker (Milton Keynes)

Recovery Community Development Coordinator (Bedford Borough/Central Bedfordshire)

For further information on all roles please see the link below:

[http://](http://vacancies-communityled.org.uk)  [Vacancies - Community Led Initiatives](http://vacancies-communityled.org.uk)

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