

ACORN COMMUNITY CARE

2023 – 2024



Making a difference
by being the difference

ACORN COMMUNITY CARE

The Charity's aim is to provide Day Opportunities and Supported Living for people who have a learning disabilities and other complex health needs in the North Yorkshire area

CONTACT DETAILS:

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Charity No: 1095207 **Registered Company Number** 4525689

INFORMATION ABOUT ACORN AS A BUSINESS:

Members of Staff: 44

Volunteers: 3

Trustees: 5



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WHO WE ARE

Acorn Community Care is a small Charity that provides Day Care Services and Supported Living for adults with learning and physical disabilities based in Ryedale. We are a registered provider for North Yorkshire Council and North Yorkshire ICB and are registered to provide care by the Care Quality Commission.

WHAT PEOPLE SAY ABOUT US

“Acorn Community Care are Gold Standard for Supported Living Services. People are always treated respectfully and valued for who they are. In turn, that makes my role more straightforward as I can place trust in what I am being informed of. I think particularly for autistic people, it is rare for support teams to understand them so well.”

Dr Julian Whaley – Consultant in Psychiatry of Learning Disabilities

“I feel extraordinarily lucky that in the midst of a family crisis Acorn Community Care went above and beyond in their endeavours to support us. In creating a lovely home where my son would feel safe and happy they brought me a peace of mind.”

LF – Parent of a Supported Living ...

I have found that both the care staff, and management within Acorn all work towards ensuring that the individual's they support are truly achieving their personal goals. The team empower the individual's they support, giving them a voice and the confidence to speak up for themselves. Acorn have ensured they do not follow a one size fits all policy when it comes to supporting individuals. Each individual they support is involved in ensuring their package of care meets their needs and is what they want, an example of this is allowing the individual to have involvement in the recruitment process for their team. It is wonderful to see how Acorn has grown over the years to now being somewhere that adults with additional needs can be supported in a person-centred way to achieve independence.

Anon Social Worker for Ryedale

The staff within Acorn are very caring towards the service users they support. They are understanding and thoughtful towards how instances may affect their mood and situation at the time. The way the staff interact and support is very effective, you can distinctly see that there is a bond between service users and staff.

There seems to be a management team and team leaders who are extremely supportive, it is a very well led service.

Francesca Marshall, North Riding PCN Care Coordinator

SUMMARY OF ACORN'S ACHIEVEMENTS FOR THE YEAR APRIL 2023 TO MARCH 2024

- Continuing to give care and support to 19 individuals with learning and physical disabilities at our Day Service Unit and helping to advise their families and carers.
- Continuing to provide Supported Living for 13 individuals with learning & physical disabilities. We provide this care over 7 different houses in the local area
- We have encouraged a person in our Supported Living to be more proactive in their care discussions. This person now attends their own meetings and is encouraged to have more personal control over their finances.
- Staff at Acorn have worked very hard to support a person in our care to achieve a lifelong wish of learning to ride horses. The person has complex needs and receives 2:1 care and because of the determination of our staff to make it happen, this person has now been attending riding lessons for the last 12 months. This has helped enormously with his social skills and he now attends a lot more of the social events that Acorn provide.
- We have empowered one of our Supported Living users to encourage him to go into town on his own. He now does this regularly. The same person has also been attending Slimming World and the new Cookery Classes where he is learning about good and bad things to eat and is now much more aware of food ingredients and calories.
- We have helped to facilitate 4 people from our supported living to volunteer in the community. 2 people volunteer at local charity shops where they help with stock and serving customers. Also 2 people are volunteering at the Milton Rooms, one as a stage scenery painter and another helping the sound and lighting technicians.
- Acorn have collaborated with The Cooks Place in Malton to provide cookery lessons for our people in Supported Living. These lessons have proved very successful in not only teaching cooking skills but also in using the local shops to source and buy the ingredients. We are growing some of the vegetables needed on the farm and this helps to show the 'seed to table' process and teaches a deeper knowledge of what is used in food products. We are continuing to raise funds to try and make sure this worthwhile project can carry on.
- We have been working with a local fitness trainer, Ollie Varey, to provide weekly gym sessions here at Whinflower Hall. The last 12 months have been very successful and the people attending have improved their level of fitness. They are fun sessions, and everyone looks forward to them.
- We have welcomed two new people to our Day Service and two people who were already using the Day Service facility have increased their days from three to four.
- We have enabled and facilitated holidays for the people we care for by providing 1:1 or 2:1 care for the duration of the holidays. Every supported living user has had at least one holiday in the last 12 months.

- In the last 12 months we have organised over a thousand day trips & activities for our supported living users.
- We have helped a person using our Supported Living services to choose and buy a disability car
- Acorn staff have helped to facilitate Music & Movement therapy for a supported living person who is also a wheelchair user. These sessions have been very beneficial to this person and will be continuing. We have also enabled people to go to live music events such as Jess Glynn, Tom Ordell, Lost Voice Guy and New York Brass Band.
- We had a very kind donation of a large amount of different craft supplies. Some of Acorn's staff worked in their spare time to install a craft area in one of our training rooms which is now used regularly for all things crafty!
- 3 of our Supported Living and Day Service Staff have achieved level 5 Leadership and Management in Adult Care.
- We now have 2 staff championship roles in place one for Dignity & one for Personal Centred Support. The aim is to promote new ideas and drive change within the company.
- 5 of our staff have been promoted to Senior Support Roles with added responsibility
- We have increased staff salaries so that we can continue to keep above national living wage & continuing to provide a competitive and robust pension scheme to our staff and this year introducing an option for salary sacrifice.
- We are continuing to provide private health care for all employees and changing to a different provider to achieve a more competitive and pro-active healthcare package.
- We have new & improved audits that are in line with CQC 'we statements' These statements show what is needed to deliver high quality person centred care.
- In the last year our 45 staff have completed over 600 training courses collectively
- Recent In house training for Positive Behavioural Support already proved beneficial
- We are proud that Acorn does not use any agency staff and manage to provide our high level of care from our existing staff base.
- Improved induction procedures where we have assigned a Manager specifically assigned to new starters induction. There is a specific set of tasks to be completed on the first day of induction and the new member of staff spends time with payroll and admin manager
- We have been proactive to secure grants and donations from local councils and clubs and also organising our own fundraising events raising nearly £9,000
- Building work doesn't stop here at Whinflower Hall and the renovations on the facilities here continue to enhance the day to day use of the service.
- Work continues on our new property at Potter Hill in Pickering. The renovation project is going to take some time and we are working hard to raise funds towards the costs.

MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO CHRIS HOLLIDAY



‘To be part of such an amazing and caring Charity is such a privilege. This isn’t a job for any of us, it is a way of life.

Many of the people we support, I have known for most of their lives, and to see how strong and independent they have become is just so humbling and rewarding.

The absolute core of everything we deliver is through our Care Team, and we have the best. ‘



MESSAGE FROM OUR HEAD OF OPERATIONS JOHN STORR

This year, we have seen significant growth in our services, from the expansion of our Day Service to the addition of further development with our current supported living projects. The stories shared in this report, from learning new skills to engaging in community activities, highlight the positive impact we have on the lives of those we support. From fundraising events to securing grants and donations, the support from our community has been overwhelming. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who has contributed to our cause. Your generosity enables us to continue offering valuable services and creating meaningful experiences for people.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS

FAY WALLS



As a trustee for Acorn Community Care, I have chaired 4 meetings in 2023/2024. I am able to pass on horticultural skills to the people that Acorn care for and give them an understanding of what goes into meals and the process between seed to table. I find that when people see the seeds grow into things that they can eat, it encourages a more adventurous pallet.

We are all excited about the collaboration between Acorn and local chef, Gilly Robinson. Gilly runs The Cooks Place in Malton and has been giving cookery lessons to some of our supported living people. I have been liaising with Gilly and making a plan for this next years crop. If we can grow some of the produce needed for the recipes here at Acorn, then they can be taken to The Cooks Place for the cookery lesson and then eaten, there is no better way to show the seed to table process. We very much support Gilly's ethos of keeping things local, using the local independent shops for as much of the ingredients as possible and then also growing our own.



STATEMENTS FROM OUR BENEFICIARIES

Steve Neal

"I have always loved animals and when I saw the new RSPSA charity shop in Malton had a poster in the window asking for volunteers to help, I thought this would be something I will enjoy doing. In Sept 2023 I filled in a form with help from my support worker and met Charlotte the shop manager who helped me to settle in. I told my dad about what I was going to do and my Auntie Maggie, who has two rescue dogs. I help to look after and care for many animals at Acorn Farm, but I know there are other animals in life that are not so



lucky, so I like the charity work the RSPCA do. I love that the money raised in this shop goes towards helping animals in need at local animal shelters.

I volunteer on a Friday afternoon each week with my support worker; I talk to people about how buying things in the shop helps to care for animals in shelters. I talk about how the money goes towards buying food for rescue animals, it pays staff to go out to save animal who have been neglected and pay for vets to keep the animals in good health.

I help to put labels on clothing and keep the books, DVD's and CD's tidy and in order. I found this a bit hard at the start, but I am learning how to put them in different groups like comedy, horror, dramas and documentaries. I help tidy the storeroom, take in bags of donated things from people and sort through children's toys and games. I look forward to my 2 hours on a Friday, I have met a new friend who I invited out for a Christmas lunch last year at the Yorkshire Tea Room in Malton. My volunteering makes me feel I am helping animals in a positive way."

Toby Bell

"I have learnt to using the welder at Acorn. I wanted to make something different in the metal workshop and came up with the idea of a BBQ smoker. I have made it out of an old barrel by recycling it. Andy helped me to weld it onto a stand I made. I then put a chimney on one side and bought some hinges to make a lid. It was a good project; it took me a few



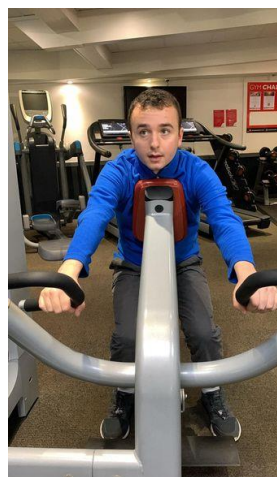
weeks to make. I enjoyed making it and when it was finished I have it in the garden at home and will be firing it up in the spring and summer time to cook and smoke different meats. I am making another one for a staff member at Acorn. On Facebook I have started to follow Terry Black's BBQ in Dallas who is really good at smoking meat. I hope to go there when I visit Dallas on holiday next October.

I love cooking and I really enjoy going to the Cooks Place in Malton with a group of friends from Acorn where I can practice my cooking skills with help from Gilly Robinson. It's great fun"

HOLIDAYS, DAY TRIPS & ACTIVITIES

Our dedicated staff have enabled individuals from our supported living services to go on holiday, have day trips out to many places and enjoy activities that they have an interest in. Every supported living user has had at least one holiday in the last 12 months. Acorn believes that it is vital for individuals to go on holiday to experience new things, meet new people and do the things that they enjoy. These holidays include a trip to Amsterdam, trips to Centre Parks, Cropton Forest Lodges, Alton Towers, Northumberland, Lake District and Blackpool. More holidays are being planned for this next year, including a trip to Texas!

Day trips and activities through the year are so beneficial to everyone we support and our staff. We are very proactive in facilitating the wishes of people we support. Participating in fun activities can help people with learning disabilities feel more confident, improve important skills like communication and boost their happiness by building relationships. We have achieved over 1,000 trips and activities over the last 12 months! The list is endless but includes Riding Lessons, Cookery Lessons, trips to the gym, Castle Howard, Dalby Forest, Country Shows, Boccia, Go Ape, Golf, Flamingo Land, The Deep, Theatre trips, Bowling, Pickering Steam Railway, Cinema, Sports events and many, many more.



FRIENDS OF ACORN COMMUNITY CARE

A way of keeping family and friends informed of everything that is happening at Acorn is via our Facebook page, Friends of Acorn Community Care. We have increased our members to 633 and have daily contributions on the page that show how much fun is being had that day. If you would like to become a member, please search on Facebook for Friends of Acorn Community Care.

FUNDRAISING, GRANTS & DONATIONS

Anyone who knows Acorn Community Care will know that we provide far more than supported living and day care services. We have a farm full of animals, we grow our own vegetables and we teach woodwork and metalwork. All these extras we are not funded and we have to find ways of raising money to be able to provide these much loved assets. The metal workshop is a very rare commodity to have in a care setting such as ours and the costs to keep it running can be high. This said, the benefits of having this onsite facility, where we can teach all sorts of metal fabrication and welding, are huge. The horseshoe sculptures that are made here are very impressive and we are able to sell some of them which then brings in revenue to help to keep it going. Andy Lyon, is an Acorn support worker and also teaches our service users to weld and work with metal. He also has great enthusiasm for thinking of new projects that people will enjoy. We now have a regular stall at Thornton le Dale Show where we sell some of the items and talk to people about Acorn Community Care and our facilities. A lot of our Day Service and Supported Living users come down to the show to help out on our stall and enjoy chatting to the customers.

One of the recent sculptures, a full size metal horse, is displayed outside the Talbot Hotel in Malton. We are hoping this will become a talking point and raise awareness of our charity and the amazing things we do.



FUNDRAISING

We have had a busy year putting on our own fundraising events to raise money for Acorn. We wanted these to be enjoyable events that would raise the profile of Acorn Community Care while also bringing much needed funds. We couldn't put on these events without our amazing staff giving up their free time to come and help out so a big thank you to all of you!

The fundraising events included comedian Lost Voice Guy, real name Lee Ridley, as top of the bill for a comedy/music evening at The Milton Rooms. Lee won the 12th series of TV's Britain's Got Talent. After Lee performed the audience then danced the night away with the band Mojo Catfish. We had a Bingo evening at Pickering Memorial Hall which was very popular and we will hopefully be doing it again soon. Thanks to our own Becky Cutsforth for all her hard work with this. In the summer, one of the of the people we support, Kris Klavenas, decided to do his own sponsored walk from Pickering to Malton and raised £180 for Acorn Community Care. He also filmed part of the walk with his drone. Excellent work Kris!

In November, the fantastic New York Brass Band teamed up with Ryedale Stray Notes to put on a fantastic musical evening at the Milton Rooms. The event was a sellout and we have the same event booked for November 2024. In December, Angus Ashworth ran our Christmas charity Auction for the second year running at the Milton Rooms and we had 32 lots ranging from a Christmas cake to a 55 inch smart tv! Angus was absolutely brilliant and has agreed to host our Charity Auction this year too. The Nobodys band got everyone up on the dancefloor after the auction. A big thank you to everyone who donated towards the auction, there is a list below.



GRANTS & DONATIONS

In the last 12 months we have secured grants and donations from:

- . Charles Ruddock and Malton Rotary Club to provide a Defibrillator at our headquarters on Whinflower Hall.
- . Malton Town Council for the Wear it Together Scheme.
- . The Lions Club towards housing for 30 rescued battery hens which are now safe and happy at Whinflower Hall.
- . Pickering Rotary Club towards the renovations at our new service property at Potter Hill, Pickering.
- . Norton Town Council for assistance with the new toilets and cloakroom.

PEOPLE TO THANK:

Pickering Rotary Club	Ollie Varey
Lions Club	Bright Steels Club
Malton Rotary Club	Norton Town Council
Malton Town Council	Charles Ruddock
Angus Ashworth	Gilly Robinson – The Cook’s Place
RMS Pump Tools	Fay Walls
Juliette Baker	Jane Varey
Lawrence Clarkson	David & Jean Holmes
Cayton Sequence Dancers	New York Brass Band
Ryedale Stray Notes	BATA
The Nobody’s Band	War Memorial Hall, Old Malton
Nesfields	Steam & Moorland
North York Moors Railway	Whole Hogg
Cedar Retreat	Old Lodge Hotel
Lee (Lost Voice Guy)	York Racecourse
Tyke Garage	Derwent Swim & Fitness Centre
Jewsons	Raithwaite Hotel
Yorvik	Beetle Bank Farm
Station House Vets	Bagdale Hall
Palace Cinema	Castle Howard
Flamingo Land	Spice4U
Morrisons	Scampston Hall
Middleton Tea Rooms	Passage to India
Spencer’s Bar and Grill	Mojo Catfish

