



2023 Newsletter



Issued March 2024

EQUALBASE

IN THIS ISSUE: A QUICK LOOK AT 2023

The Events of EqualBase - 2023

Welcome to our 2023 newsletter!

As we look back on the last 12 months, we revisit the highlights of a fun-filled year for our EqualBase family.

We hope you enjoy looking back at the moments that brought us so much joy both then and now.

Staff

This year we welcomed Michaela to the staff team. She has been a real asset, bringing new ideas, experience and enthusiasm. Michaela is a super support during sessions at the base and at the leisure centre.

Jasper completed their apprenticeship with a merit! We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate them again for their achievement. They were EqualBase's first apprentice and we hope to provide the opportunity to others in the future.

Gaya continues to provide her excellent gardening sessions. Our members have created their own sensory garden with a plant pot dedicated to each of their senses!

Sandra continues to deliver super sessions at the base, in particular

music and drama. These sessions have seen many of our members grow in confidence as they are given the opportunity to explore ideas outside of their comfort zone through performance.

In August, Amelia completed her Level 5 course in adult care with a distinction. We would like to say how proud we are of her achievement, well done Amelia! We were also able to purchase our 7-seater vehicle in April with the money secured from

another one of her successful funding applications.

At the end of the year Donna became our new Day Opportunities Supervisor. Donna is a dedicated member of the staff team who is always looking for ways in which our service can progress. We are certain she will excel in her new role in 2024. Tracey continues to lead the running of the base, seeking new opportunities for both members and staff. The staff team would like to thank her for the support she provides which allows us to be



creative and forward thinking ultimately impacting the sessions and services we provide to our members.

Last but certainly not least, we would like to thank Shaun for his hard work throughout 2023. Shaun brings fun and laughter to the staff team week in week out! He works hard and cares about his fellow colleagues and our members. He is the cherry on top of our 'staff team' cake!

Sessions

We continue to offer sessions Monday to Thursday at EqualBase including: Gardening, Music, Discussion Group, Computers with our wonderful volunteer Keith, Drama, Cooking and Arts & Crafts. Alongside this we have been supporting our members to access community bingo at St. Johns in Abbey Hulton. Here our members socialise with another day centre where they are warmly welcomed by staff and members alike. We have also been accessing voluntary placements at the charity shop and the floristry warehouse which give some of our members valuable work experience. On Fridays we have continued to provide sessions from the leisure centre with the help of Amy our dance teacher and Craig, Ollie and Sam from the Stoke City Community Trust.

Our Wonderful Members



2023 was another year bursting with moments which allowed us to celebrate our members. They continue to grow in confidence, social and life skills which make us so proud of them each day.



We feel incredibly lucky to have the pleasure of supporting such an affectionate, charismatic and talented group of people.

We welcomed some new full-time members and began supporting members through the school holidays who have been a fantastic addition to our group.

We have the pleasure of supporting so many unique individuals who despite their differences in age, interests and backgrounds, come together daily to support and celebrate one another.

Our members will always be what makes our EqualBase family so amazing and for that will always be thankful to them and to you for allowing us to support your family members.

Highlights

In January, we welcomed Janet to our music session. She brought with her a range of musical instruments from saxophones and violins to flutes and recorders, which our members learned about and had a go at playing.

We enjoyed world book day by attending the base in fancy dress. We loved to hear about the books our members enjoy and to see the creativity of their costumes.

We worked with the ladies from creative Cheadle throughout 2023 including, decorating lampshades for the high street display, creating crafts for the windows at Hollie' Boutique to commemorate the King's Coronation and including us in the Christmas tree display on the monument. They even donated us their sunflower which was created to acknowledge the work done by the Dougie Mac. It has taken pride of place in our garden.

Speaking of our garden, we had our transformation completed with accessible benches and raised planters. The members have filled them with plants bought from their trip to Jackson's nurseries, they even had time to stop for tea and cake in the café! They also created our scarecrow Fred who likes to relax on the garden bench.

The lovely Joey spent the morning with us showing us how to create some fabulous cards from the craft supplies she donated. We loved learning new skills which we have continued to use throughout the year.

We continued our partnership with



Leek Building Society who supported us with funding applications and a fundraiser. They welcomed the members to the Cheadle branch for a day of work. Our members welcomed customers, put together information

packs, contacted customers over the phone and counted the money! They also sent Beth and Laura to us for their community work days where they



helped us with our sessions.

We enjoyed some days out which included: afternoon tea at Leek & Buxton College, trips to the park where we also picked up litter, a day out to Uttoxeter Racecourse to cheer on the horses, the yearly Masque pantomime show, a wreath making workshop, Cheadle carnival where some of our members judged the dog show, a super fundraiser at St. Johns where money was raised for Mental Health charities, a morning of crown green bowls in Oakamoor, a visit to Mark's beautiful new home (who we miss a lot but is doing very well) to meet his new friends and many other lovely days. We worked with Painsley for another year

We had the pleasure of Rachel Latham who stayed with us all day to provide beauty treatments and relaxation therapies including, nails and massages. We were all extremely relaxed!

We made two new partnerships in 2023 with Emma from OUTSIDE and PCSO Jim. Emma worked with our members to create a mural of items they had collected from our garden and the surrounding areas. She plans on having this developed in to a feature that will be displayed on our building! She also worked with us to celebrate the moon museum coming to Cheadle. The moon will be on display to mark the 80th anniversary of Mary Adela Blagg's death. She was a pioneering astronomer and selenographer. We will be going to see the moon on display in March 2024. PCSO Jim visited us on a regular basis to check in with the members and answer any questions they may have regarding our local area. He also brought his police car for the members to experience and sometimes his lovely dog Eric came along too.

We would like to make a special mention to the Teankulele Club. They are a group of ukelele players who volunteer their time to entertain us at the base and gosh do they do that! We dance and sing to a range of different songs which are thoroughly enjoyed by all. This year they visited us three times each with different songs and themes. They were all fantastic!

We finished the year by helping to wrap Christmas toys for children in our local area who may not receive a gift. Our members were incredibly mature and respectful during this task and took so much pride in their wrapping.

They also made us extremely proud when they had the courage to turn on the lights at Cheadle Light Switch On. The joy they brought to our community in that moment was truly magical, they really are local celebrities!

Donation Acknowledgements

In 2023 we were so grateful to have the support of so many people in our community, here are some of the wonderful people who have supported us which has allowed us to provide so many lovely activities and treats to the members. The wonderful Dawn let our members shave her head! She raised an incredible £1,700. Dawn is an extremely generous lady within our community, we are very lucky to know her.

The Cheadle Buffalos supported us



with a cheque of £150. Neil and Ian paid us a visit to present the cheque, they have continued to visit and support us through last year and in to 2024.

Mrs Moss celebrated her 90th birthday, she very kindly asked for donations to EqualBase as a gift. Her friends and family donated an amazing £750!

David Frost made an independent, generous donation to the base. He also donated an Easter egg to each of the members, which were very much enjoyed by all.

The members who work at the charity shop made a very special friend named Fred in 2023. Fred visits the members when they are on shift to check in and see how they are. He brings treats for them to bring back to the base to share with their friends.



who welcomed us for a 'Wild West' theme day and a Christmas party afternoon where they put on different activities, music and crafts for us to enjoy. The students did a great job.

He also gifted us a beautiful Christmas decoration. We love to hear about Fred when the members return to the base, he is definitely a highlight of our week!

The community has also supported us by collecting change in charity boxes, donating to our stalls, purchasing raffle tickets and signing up to our Co-Operative member's charitable cause. Without the continued support of friends. Family and the community EqualBase would not be what it is. For that we will always be grateful.



Volunteers & Students

Another invaluable asset we have at the base is the support from our incredible volunteers and student volunteers.

This year we welcomed Betty who helps with our gardening sessions and Brian, who used his charitable work days to support us. The members even convinced him to perform in our talent show! Thank you for giving up your time to spend it with us, we have loved having you!

Throughout 2023 we continued to support student volunteers. This year we had Kira, Lucy, Beth, Amy, Abbie, Amelia, Rose, Bailey, Layla, Millie, Leonie and Joe. We hope they

enjoyed completing their hours with us and also took away some valuable skills for the world of work.

We also welcomed back Ruby and Liv, who completed their college hours with us in 2022. Ruby and Liv are now studying at University but chose to complete their new course hours with us too! It was our pleasure to have them back and great to see how much they had achieved.

A Peak in to 2024

This year we have made the decision to stop taking new placements at EqualBase. We want to focus on maintaining the quality of the service we provide ensuring our members continue to feel well supported during their days at EqualBase.

Part of maintaining this quality will see us focus on making improvements to our building to make it the most beneficial space. We hope to have a new up to date heating system installed and an internal wall removed making more space for sessions and comfort.

We will continue closing the base to members on bank holidays. This gives us the opportunity to complete building maintenance and staff training without disrupting the member's sessions.

We will also continue to close the base for one week in December and another at some point during a 'School' holiday. This helps us to reduce staff leave ensuring we can provide consistent support throughout the year.

We also hope to continue providing a few extra trips and treats alongside our sessions. As always, we will aim to keep providing an interesting, flexible and engaging timetable.

Tracey is working hard to develop a new website with the help of James. We hope to bring you an interactive page full of information and regular updates. It will still be accessed by our usual web address, www.equalbase.co.uk.

2024/2025 Base Closures:

Friday 29th March 2024

Monday 1st April 2024

Monday 6th May 2024

Monday 27th May 2024

Tuesday 28th May 2024

Wednesday 29th May 2024

Thursday 30th May 2024

Friday 31st May 2024

Monday 26th August 2024

Monday 23rd December 2024

Tuesday 24th December 2024

Wednesday 25th December 2024

Thursday 26th December 2024

Friday 27th December 2024

Monday 30th December 2024

Tuesday 31st December 2024

Wednesday 1st January 2025

(The base will re-open for 2025 on Thursday 2nd January)

Hope you've enjoyed catching up with our last year!