



Aphasia Re-Connect

Registered charity No.1176125

www.aphasiareconnect.org

April 2021 Update

New Opportunities

After a year of social distancing and three National Lockdowns, Aphasia Re-Connect is alive and well.

- **9 regular weekly virtual groups** on zoom with breakout rooms and supported conversation
- **2 additional physical groups** opening up this April and another in May
- Over **80 volunteers** with and without aphasia
- Of these, **43 are buddies** connecting via video link with people living alone
- Also, **4 peer befrienders** connecting via Zoom with those at home
- We have had **23 students** on placement between September 2020 and April 21 Plus
- A **further 17 students** on placement from April to July 2021
- **Applications** are **ongoing** at a rate of 8-15 per month
- We are reaching **people physically unable** to get out or who are **distanced**
- As things open up, we **hope to open more physical groups**, but will **retain some zoom groups** as they are so successful
- We **continue to signpost** to research and other opportunities as they open up

What is new?

Between the Lines



- A virtual reading group
- Developed from interest sparked by a journal club
- 22 attendees, breaking into smaller group rooms over last term.
- A focus group revealed, the group:

- Ignited a **love of reading**
- Improved **confidence**
- Gave a **chance to read aloud**
- **Supportive environment**
- A **safe space** to make mistakes
- **Discussion** around texts



The Virtual Photography Group

- Formerly a physical group walking the streets of London
- Another new initiative from the Journal Club focused on skills:



- I feel more confident about taking photos because I have attended the group.
- I've very much enjoyed the Group

Impact Evaluation

Kat Elliot

Has looked at **how Aphasia Re-Connect impacts people living with aphasia** as part of her MSc research project. She conducted 9 **qualitative interviews** with a **cross-section** of people who were willing to share their experiences and views. **Seven themes** have emerged:

- Social Interaction and friendship
- Shared experience of aphasia
- Improved confidence & wellbeing
- All forms of communication accepted, supported and valued
- Opportunity to practice conversation
- Finding a sense of purpose
- Acquiring a role – helping others
- Exposure to new opportunities
- Maintaining social activity

Kat will be writing this up formerly and thanks everyone who took part.



New Staff

We welcome two new members to the team at Aphasia Re-Connect.

Sarah Johnston

- **Speech & Language therapist**
- Experienced
- Fun
- Capable
- Formerly at Luna
- 3 days a week



Hannah Harvey

- **Communications, admin, and website co-ordinator**
- Also, a speech & Language Therapy Student, well known to many
- Fun
- Capable
- 2 days a week
- Volunteers too!



Coming up

Reconnect at City

Starts: Wednesday 14 April

Time: 1pm to 3pm

Where: The Roberta Williams Centre, City, University of London

Who: Sarah

Thursday Drop in

Starts: Thursday 29 April

Time: 10.30 to 1pm

Where: Christchurch, 27 Blackfriars Road, SE1 8NY

Who: Sally & Sue

For further information, go to:

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www.aphasiareconnect.org