

The SUN

Service User News

DEAR ALBERT SPECIAL ADDITION

Working out whats **best** for you

The new peer-led organisation Dear Albert has been busy developing new ways to help individuals to stop drinking alcohol and taking drugs. Becoming increasingly successful in Leicester and Leicestershire, the company is providing real chances to those who are wanting to move away from substance misuse and towards a better life.

Working towards sustainable recovery with Dear Albert by working out what's best for you.

If you would like help and information on how to address any form of addictive behaviour or substance misuse, or if you are looking for answers on behalf of a family member or a friend, loved one or associate, then you can give them a call.



Dear Albert team delivering group work at Widening Horizons

Dear Albert also specialises working directly with providers of substance misuse services and other organisations to help them achieve better outcomes and an improved quality of life for their service users and families.

Able to act as a genuine and independent voice for service users, Dear Albert can also help improve existing services by identifying issues and then coming up with solutions, solutions that *'all to very often coming from the service users themselves'*.



Starting to get well with Dear Albert

THIS ISSUE:

- What do We do?
- Updates & interviews
- Mutual aid timetables
- And a special introduction to...

'Our Albert'



About Us

Offering choices...

At Dear Albert we know all about addiction, both through the story of our founder, and through the strengths, experiences and on-going training of the whole team. Dear Albert knows all about the fears and challenges that face those reaching out for support and appreciate how hard asking for support can be.

We also know about how to provide that support. Addressing substance misuse is probably the most significant action a person with a history of drink or drug abuse will ever do. We understand how difficult taking those first steps towards personal discovery and recovery can be. Dear Albert knows how to ensure that when people do take those first tentative steps towards asking for help, the right kind of support is waiting for them. That's the focus of Dear Albert: 'we've been there, done that', and now we can show you how to do it too'.

Dear Albert in the first instance can be the first step to resolving the problem and getting access to the help required.

From this secure base Dear Albert delivers targeted support, combining innovative approaches with evidence based initiatives. Our proven approaches can be directed towards individuals and organisations that come into contact with those suffering from active substance misuse. This also includes supporting those that have already achieved abstinence/sobriety, but who want to remain connected to a recovery community as an on-going resource.

We can also help organisations not directly involved with substance misuse, but would nevertheless benefit from some of our approaches in terms of reducing costs, utilising existing community assets and peer mentor training.

“Accepted on behalf of the community”...



What do We do?

Supporting full recovery

Helping you decide how to say goodbye to drink & drugs. Our groups provide informed insight into various Mutual Aid groups: what they are all about and how to connect. Building confidence, self-reliance and resilience by facilitating positive change in social networks and encouraging better decision making.



**you
do the
MAFs**

Connecting participants with local, regional and national recovery communities.

"You do the MAFs" (Mutual Aid Facilitation Service) is abstinence focused, evidenced based, peer-led recovery groups.

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**Make
a fresh
start**

Recovery support for those with chaotic life styles.

Designed as a rolling group, no graduation, and is specially for criminal justice clients and for those in supported housing.

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ACT Peer Recovery

Focus On Behaviour

page 5

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)

The Matrix is a modern form of CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) based on scientific and extensive research focusing on behaviour... ***'If you stop and think about it, behaviour is what determines our quality of life'.***



Dear Albert

A film by **Nick Hamer**

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Effective poignant learning tool in a number of settings.

The feature length documentary charts the life and death, trials and tribulations of local people moving on from a life previously dominated by alcohol and drug use.



- Qualified & professional 1-2-1 counselling
- Resource mapping – finding existing assets within the community that can help resolve substance misuse problems.
- Provide non-judgemental peer-led drop-ins that generate recovery communities as a support structure
- Create effective new ways of communicating recovery and promoting the benefits of engagement
- Develop new group interventions that actually work
- Give work opportunities to those with substance misuse histories.

dearalbert.co.uk
0116 291 7298

email: hello@dearalbert.co.uk



Recovering communities:
www.facebook.com/DearAlbertRecovery



News and announcements:
[@dearalbert](https://twitter.com/dearalbert)

Getting recovery noticed...

Communicating recovery in new ways.

Most people with a drink or drug problem are not engaged in services. Dear Albert develops new ways of communicating with those not yet in treatment.

Meet 'Our Albert', developing themes and story lines with resident artist Andy Arnold.

Thanks Andy, we look forward to hearing a lot more about 'Our Albert'



you[®]
do the
MAFs

Saying goodbye to drink and drugs...

Request a booking form or call for a chat:

07712 707999 email: hello@dearalbert.co.uk

you[®] do the MAFs

MAF's = Mutual Aid Facilitation Service

Mutual Aid, Mutual Respect, Mutual Benefits

"There are many paths up the mountain, all leading in the right direction. The only person wasting time is the one at the bottom, telling everyone that their path is wrong but not starting their own..."

What is Mutual Aid?

Simply put, Mutual Aid is about people with similar experiences coming together to help each other in a structured way. Dear Albert helps you to find out more about these groups in an empathic, informed manner and helps to discover what suits you best.

Dear Albert The Film

Using British filmmaker Nick Hamer's documentary 'Dear Albert' both "You do the MAFs" and "Make a Fresh Start" incorporate meetings and discussions about some of the film's themes and characters, and how we worked with them to support their recovery.

The Recovery Consultancy Ltd.

Here at Dear Albert we're independent, impartial and specialists in meaningfully connecting participants with local, regional and national recovery communities. "You do the MAFs" (Mutual Aid Facilitation Service) and "Make a Fresh Start" are abstinence focused, evidenced based, peer-led recovery groups. These structured, researched sessions introduce a choice of recovery themes/concepts in a learned environment; pro-actively directing into positive social networks.

Saying **goodbye** to
drink and drugs...

Everyone successfully completing our exclusive You do the MAFs[®] course receives a gift from our You do the MAFs[®] course completion hamper*

Gifts include recovery literature or a book of your choice, helping you stay well and learn more, a recovery t-shirt or even a shopping voucher (obviously drugs, booze, fags excluded!) to help you on your way!

We look forward to working with you soon.

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*Terms and conditions apply. Call for details.



Ask for a
booking
form

Recovery
Hamper

dearalbert.co.uk
0116 291 7298

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You do the MAFs *'A big thank you to Phoenix Futures'*

Some latest news is that our 'You do the MAFs' programme is being featured in an International journal all about how we help people get off drink and drugs.

As you can imagine, having international recognition showing how our groups actually work is great news for service users in Leicester and Leicestershire.

The article will be based on the six month evaluation carried out by researcher Laura Aslan when she worked at the research and marketing department of Phoenix Futures.

To think our popular recovery group has travelled all that way shows the evidence base is strong.

Make A Fresh Start

'A big thank you to Criminal Justice drugs team and Community Rehabilitation Company'

Make a fresh start

Any other developments?

Yes, we've got a refined version of our 'You do the MAFs' called 'Make A Fresh Start'. It's similar but designed as a rolling group, no graduation, and is specially for criminal justice clients and for those in supported housing.

A lot of the new format is still all about getting people involved with positive social networks, exposing those still struggling to recovery communities, etc, but without so many PowerPoints, LOL – so even more good news! Taster aspects on all the mutual aid approaches are still there, but the group is ongoing.

Dear Albert now delivering in HM Prison Leicester and Mansfield police station.

Peer-led ACT *'A big thank you to Swanswell for their backing'*



We've just completed a 12 week full-on training course with a guy called Mark Webster in Nottingham with professional treatment

workers from Double Impact at Sobar.

Mark wrote this 'matrix' (find out more at www.actpeerrecovery.com) which is all about how we can work together to change our behaviours. We've been trying it out with the lads on the Avenue project and they love it.

Christine, Dear Alberts support facilitator and recovery peer said "It's already making a big difference".

Josh, 23, new to the Avenue said:

"I'm not happy about some NA and SMART stuff put this peer-led Act gets you doing things differently without being told what to do. I really like it"

Dear Albert is now one of a few organisations in the whole Country able to deliver what is already promising to be a fantastic new approach to peer-led work. We are also planning to become accredited trainers – so more good news!

We are open trialling at:

2:00pm Wednesdays in the LASS training suite we use next to the Dear Albert office at 53 Regent Street, Leicester.

Feel free to come on down but we are only just starting so are not properly promoting yet.

Dear Albert Film

Devon's 'Ripple Effect' kicked off their annual conference this year with the Film and it went down a storm.

We also delivered a workshop on the day. It was great meeting people in recovery down there and they made us all feel so welcome. Chester had a sneaky screening too.

To think the Film has been out in the UK for getting on two years now.

1000s and 1000s have seen it already, and yet still 1000s and 1000s haven't.

Coventry was one of the best screenings, although we had technical issues in Durham Cathedral, a shame because it was such an amazing venue. In the Prison when we screened it you could have heard a bit drop.

Already had a couple of enquires for Recover Month later this year. Some of the universities are interested and it's shown at Leicester University. Renaissance House continues to show the 47 minute version; the one Nick originally cut for Canadian TV, for new Leicester Recovery Partnership service users. It's proved an intimate and thought provoking introduction to treatment.

We are currently making a workshop to explore some of the themes in more detail as a learning resource.

The film remains, of course, an important aspect of our MAFs programmes.



Some wonderful letters have been received from viewers in America, just wondering how best to share them in order to help others find recovery.

News & updates... continues on back page.

INTREPID*
FACTUAL FILMMAKING BY
NICK HAMER

CALGARY INTERNATIONAL
FILMFESTIVAL
2014 OFFICIAL SELECTION

OFF
CINEMA
FESTIVAL

Dear Albert

A film by **Nick Hamer**

The feature length documentary charts the life and death, trials and tribulations of local people moving on from a life previously dominated by alcohol and drug use.

This thoughtful and internationally acclaimed film (world premiere at the International Film Festival Calgary) is a must see. Particularly for all those interested in how it's possible to move away from active addiction and towards a more meaningful life free from substance misuse and the chaos and devastation it will eventually cause.

Members of the cast will be around before and after the screenings to help answer questions and provide more information about what supports available and how Dear Albert can help.

"In rehab, one of the things they asked me to do was to write a letter saying goodbye to the addict within. Usually these letters start Dear Addict. When I went back to read what I'd written, I realised that I'd written Dear Albert. At that moment I started to understand what was really going on; that my drug use had become part of an elaborate lie. From that moment I decided that I didn't want to be Albert anymore."

MILL's: Mutual-aid In Leicestershire+ List

Accurate as possible
from 03/03//2016

Meetings will differ in group dynamics so if you perhaps don't enjoy one meeting you might get something from a different meeting. Remember to focus on the similarities and not the differences.

Mutual Aid | Mutual Respect | Mutual Benefits

Narcotics Anonymous meetings in Leicester | Helpline: 0300 999 1212

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|-----------|---|-------|
| Monday | ESH, 24a Coton Road, Nuneaton , CV11 5TW, (O) | 19:00 |
| | Salvation Army Lifehouse, Harnall Lane West, Coventry , CV1 1EZ | 19:00 |
| Tuesday | Woodgate Resource Ctr, Frog Island, Leicester , LE3 5GE (O) | 19:30 |
| | The Jesus Centre, 7 Lamb Street, Coventry , CV1 4AE (C) | 19:30 |
| | Blue room Methodist Church, 106 Knighthorpe, Loughborough LE11 5JU | 19:30 |
| Wednesday | Michael Wood ctr, 53 Regent Rd, leicester , LE1 6YF | 19:00 |
| | St Peters Centre, Charles Street, Hillfields, Coventry , CV1 5NP (O) | 19:30 |
| Thursday | LIFT, Nelson St, Leicester LE1 7BA | 16:45 |
| Friday | Bishop St, Methodist Church, Leicester (C) | 19:15 |
| Saturday | LGBT Centre, 15 Wellington St, Leicester (O) | 17:00 |
| | Salvation Army Lifehouse, Harnall Lane West, Coventry , CV1 4EY (C) | 19:30 |
| Sunday | Bishop St, Methodist Church, Leicester (C) | 16:00 |

SMART meetings in Leicester | www.smartrecovery.org.uk 01463 729 548

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| Monday | John Storer House, Wards End, Loughborough , LE11 3HA | 18:00 |
| Tuesday | Widening Horizons, 2 West Street, Leicester , LE1 6XP | 17:30 |
| | Substance to Solution, 20 Carrington Street, Kettering NN16 0BY | 22:00 |
| | Spring House, 39 Billing Road, Northampton , NN1 5BA | 18:00 |
| | Symington Building, Adam & Eve Str, Market H'borough , LE16 7LT | 12:30 |
| Wednesday | Bassett Centre, Bassett St, Wigston . LE18 6NX | 15:00 |
| Thursday | LIFT, Nelson St, Leicester , LE1 7BA | 11:00 |
| | Marlene Reid Ctr, Belvoir Rd, Coalville , LE67 3PM | 18:00 |
| | Phoenix House, Nottingham Road, Melton Mowbray , LE13 0UL | 19:00 |
| Saturday | Renaissance House, 20 Princess Rd W, Leicester ,LE1 6TP | 11:00 |
| | 36-38 Abbington Square, Northampton , NN1 4AA | 10:15 |

(C) Closed meetings— Only those that have a desire to stop drinking / using may attend
(O) Open meetings— Any interested party wishing to experience the fellowship

Alcoholics Anonymous meetings around Leicester

Support line: 0845 769 7555

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|-----------|--|-------|
| Monday | Bishop str, Methodist church, Leicester , LE1 6AF (C) | 19:30 |
| | Parish Hall, Lady of Victoria , RC Church, Fairfield Rd, Market Harborough , LE16 9QQ (C) | 20:00 |
| Tuesday | Methodist church, Bishop St. Leicester , LE1 6AF (C) | 12:00 |
| | The Samworth Centre, room 1, 8 Burton St, Melton Mowbray , LE13 1AE (O) | 19:45 |
| | Friends meeting house(upstairs), Queens Rd, Leicester , (C) | 20:00 |
| | St Mary's church, coffee bar, Church walk, Hinckley | 20:00 |
| Wednesday | Methodist Church, Bishop St, Leicester , LE1 6AF (O) | 19:30 |
| | John Storer House, Wards End, Loughborough , LE11 3HB (C) | 20:00 |
| | Marlene Reid ctr, 85 Belvoir Rd, Coalville , LE67 3PH | 20:00 |
| | Syston Methodist Church, High St, Syston , LE7 1GP | 19:30 |
| Thursday | Methodist Church, Bishop St, Leicester , LE1 6AF (C) | 18:30 |
| | St Pauls Church, Barnabus Ctr, Hamble rd, Oadby , LE2 4NX | 20:00 |
| Friday | Friends Meeting House, Queens Rd, Leicester (c) Big Book meeting | 19:30 |
| | Methodist church, Bishop St, Leicester , LE1 6AF WOMENS GROUP (C) | 11:00 |
| | Methodist church, Bishop St, Leicester , LE1 6AF (C) | 19:30 |
| | Samworth ctr, 8 Burton St, Melton Mowbray , LE13 1AE | 19:45 |
| | Parish hall, L.o.v., RC Church, Fairfield rd, Market Harborough , LE16 9QQ (C) | 20:00 |
| | Trinity lane church, Hinckley , LE10 0AQ, (Big Book mtg, (O) on request | 20:30 |
| | Salvation Army, Burleigh Rd, Loughborough , LE11 3BA | 19:30 |
| Saturday | Methodist Church, Bishop St, Leicester , LE1 6AF (C) | 12:00 |
| | Methodist Church, Bishop St, Leicester , LE1 6AF (C) | 18:30 |
| | Kavanagh Suite, L.o.V, 1-3 Fairfield Rd, Market Harborough , LE16 9QQ, WOMENS GROUP | 12:00 |
| Sunday | Methodist church, Bishop St, Leicester , LE1 6AF (C) | 18:00 |
| | St Mary's Church, coffee bar, Church Walk (off Station Rd), Hinckley | 20:00 |

SMART Recovery – Family & Carers groups

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| Thursday | John Storer house,, LE11 3HA, Loughborough | 18:30 |
|----------|---|-------|

ACT Peer-led Recovery

| | | |
|------------|--|-------|
| Wednesdays | Dear Albert at The Michael Wood Centre 53 Regent Road, Leicester , LE1 6YF. | 14:00 |
|------------|--|-------|

For further information or local support please call: 07427 560538 / 07562 268997.
07712707999 / 07872 674147

If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got'

Sustainability

Q. (Sun reporter): As a social enterprise I know Dear Albert develops products and takes them to market. Any news?

A. (Dear Albert): Well, the Dear Albert ethos is that by harnessing the recovery capital of others we facilitate contagion.

Q. 'Harnessing recovery capital' and 'facilitate contagion' why the fancy words, what does this mean?

A. Yes, sorry, good point. I swallowed a dictionary for breakfast. Better put, I'm talking about people in recovery spreading recovery. Dear Albert builds services that can make this happen in a better way. If those responsible for providing services really mean what they say about helping more people get well and build a life away from the use of drink and drugs, then they will see how we can help with this. We develop ways of saving money too. In the past some services have been very expensive compared to what they achieved. Dear Albert cuts waist and builds more recovery. We are always looking at securing ways of making sure the positive differences we deliver can carry on happening. We believe in devolving more responsibility to those in recovery.

Making recovery happen

A massive thank you to all service users and team members of Dear Albert, specially our group facilitators, recovery peers and community builders – **to be featured in our next special addition... SUMMER 2016.**

QUIZ TIME!

Q: Which well-known film does this quote comes from:

'Getting busy living or get busy dying'

Post your answers on our **Facebook** page: /DearAlbertRecovery

First correct answer posted will win one of our hand-designed T shirts by Mark Warner.

Have your say...

These are genuine, word for word, TEXTS/MMS as received without being requested from our successful recovery graduates...

"ps – 8 months clean yesterday, couldn't have done it without the kick-start wakeup call Dear Albert gave me last summer. Words cannot adequately express my gratitude. X"

"Thanks for your message but back at work now after your help but please keep me posted on anything I may be able to attend in the future many thanks again"

Want Dear Albert to help you say goodbye to using drink and drugs? Get your treatment worker to give you our number and give us a bell: 07712 707999.

Dear Albert is here to help...

Dear Albert,
I've been having trouble with boredom in the evening, then sneaking out to buy alcohol and drinking secretly on my own. Once I've started sometimes go out, again on my own, and try buying drugs. I feel full of self-loathing and shame and think I might die without ever changing my life.

Response:
"You might die prematurely unless you change your behaviour. Boredom can sometimes be viewed as slow release anger. Trying going to a meeting and getting a sponsor or coming to a Dear Albert group."

Why not write in with a problem you want to share with Dear Albert? Write to: 'Dear Albert' The Micheal Wood Centre, 53 Regent Rd, Leicester LE1 6YF

DearAlbert
The Micheal Wood Centre,
53 Regent Rd, Leicester LE1 6YF



RECOVERY BREAKFAST

NEWS Flash...hot off the hob!
Community Café...

New Recovery breakfasts being offered: **Every other Thursday morning (9.30)** at the new Dear Albert premises. Kindly provided with support from all those at 53 Regent street –thanks to LASS!
Come on down and enjoy a bacon butty or egg cob cooked by the loving hand of our very own Michelle.
Why not stay for the DA team meeting upstairs afterwards and contribute to how we can be helping more people find recovery.

