



**AJANI**  
"It's Your Choice"

# STUART LOW TRUST SPRING 2023

PRESENTED BY: LAWRENCE CURTIS

## STUART LOW TRUST EVALUATION 2023 AJANI

Who are The Stuart Low Trust

“The Stuart Low Trust (SLT) is a community charity based in Islington, supporting people living with or recovering from mental illness. We help over 1,000 people every year - those who are socially isolated, vulnerable, living in poverty and feeling suicidal - by providing free therapeutic and social activities celebrating the arts, nature and wellbeing.

Their mission is to ensure that local people, especially those experiencing social isolation or mental distress, have access to the support they need for better health and wellbeing.”

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### AIMS OF THE AJANI PROJECT – (AJANI IS AN AFRICAN WORD MEANING “HE WHO OVERCOMES THE STRUGGLE”)

PROACTIVELY PROMOTING BETTER HEALTH AND FITNESS

BUILD CONFIDENCE ABOUT LIFE, MOVING FORWARD

PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES TO BE MORE ACTIVE

CREATING AWARENESS OF WHY PEOPLE NEED BETTER NUTRITION

INSTILLING IN PEOPLE RESPONSIBILITY, THE NEED TO TAKE ACTION

DIRECTING PEOPLE TO THINK ABOUT THE CHOICES THEY MAKE.

CREATING A GROWTH MIND-SET MENTALITY

WE HAVE:

- Built Confidence and Self-Esteem.
- Re-Energized people through fitness advice and classes, demonstrating simple ways to include exercise into their daily lives.
- Improved mental health, with awareness around a healthy lifestyle.
- Helped people understand more about how their bodies work.
- Provided ongoing classes and events to maintain improvement.
- Promoted a Growth Mind-set mentality.
- Created strong links with the service users, quickly developing trust.
- Built awareness of the importance of choices, action, perseverance, listening, and behavior.
- Developed connections with other groups that have helped our participants.

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### NUMBERS ATTENDING

HMHB provided a flyer to The Stuart Low Trust for them to promote within their contacts. From that we arranged to do four evening sessions – two weeks apart for each – over April and May 2023, to be delivered at the Jean Stokes Community Centre, off Caledonian Road, N1.

On average, we had 15-20 people each week, and the feedback was fantastic. Stuart Low have said they would be happy to have us back whenever we wanted.

It was a full mix of people from young to old, able bodied to disabled, women to men, etc. Not everyone was able to attend every session, which was totally fine. When dealing with issues around mental health that can happen.

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## HOW DID WE DO?

Rosie Gaston – the Operations and Communications Manager – said:

We were delighted to have you, and all feel the events have been extremely positive, engaging and successful, so THANK YOU for offering us this fantastic opportunity, and for being flexible with how we ran it too. The feedback we've heard from participants really has been great."

### **FEEDBACK:**

#### **How was the course:**

"Excellent. The tutors were very knowledgeable but also very friendly and engaging. The different sessions were well throughout, so a lot of things were covered."

"Surprisingly well, given it was split into only short spells of exercises and longer very interesting talking part."

"It has been informative in a way that enables some audience participation. I have found it quite helpful and good to encourage some gentle exercise in a non-pressured way."

"Really inspirational + lots of very helpful information 2 take with me."

"Enjoyment, inclusive, fun, happy."

#### **Do you feel different from before the Course?**

"Bit more positive about what I could think about next week."

Yes, I feel more fulfilled."

"Loosened up, made me think ahead about life."

"Good better health."

"More energised & relaxed."

"More exhausted & tired in a good way. Invigorating."

#### **What did you like about it?**

"I enjoyed that each session was broken into segments, with a different theme. They were in nice size chunks and it also created an energy/ momentum to the course as it was never dull and there was a good mix and variety every evening. The interactive parts were my favourite as they were good ice breakers, for someone like me who is shy socialising in a group setting, and it also created a supportive and safe environment."

"I especially liked the bit about general knowledge, demonstrating the importance of source for information and the vagaries of memory in keeping the facts accurate. The leader seemed enthusiastic and engaging, inviting participation and making the session enjoyable."

"I think Lawrence's style is very warm and engaging and I think the participants generally enjoyed the two sessions I was present for. In particular I think people enjoyed the interactive parts, e.g. exercise, as well as the humour aspects. It was noticeable that there were three new participants at the last event, who arrived looking slightly unsure and left smiling."

“The best part of the course, for me was when we did the vigorous exercise.”

**What were the benefits?**

“I am glad I came. It was a very friendly place to come and I learnt a lot.”

“It motivates and inspires.”

“It helps being able to be proactive and to share with others and join in the activity.”

“I am very happy that I came tonight. These kind of things have been running through my head for a while now.”

**Anything Else?**

“Yes, I learnt a lot about nutrition, exercise and well-being. The course sent a message of little but often rather than setting high expectations, this made it more realistic and something which is easier to continue.”

“It's a fun, practical and useful course, you will learn a lot from it and also have a good laugh. Thank you. I would recommend this to others.”

“I only experienced the first session, but thought it was a fun introduction to exercise which I could recommend.”

**Plus – extras:** HMHB provide three Free exercise sessions a week, two Free health walks per week, a Free Zumba session every week. We also provide outings, and people on this course were invited to a Canal walk, a trip to Emirates Stadium (Arsenal FC) and a local history walk with Islington Walks, which we attended. We also have ongoing outings – in June we have a couple of theatre visits, a museum visit (Bank of England), and a comedy night. Our outings will continue over the summer.

**Plus – evaluation:** As we were working with Stuart Low Trust clients, they preferred for us not to be contacting their users directly, and instead they would collate the evaluation feedback and pass on to us.

**Plus – social media:** HMHB promoted our social media to all participants. We asked them to join our Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and maybe connect with our YouTube and Blog. We also discussed our 40-page Health Pack – and that we have PDFs for each of them online – and they can look back at previous copies. As HMHB, we promoted other organisations, such as Healthy Generations, who have over 60 local FREE exercise sessions of all kinds.

Finally, we also talked about mental health, stressing that if people are concerned about any issues to talk to medical professionals, such as their local medical practice.

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## THE FUTURE

HMHB really want to work with more community based projects that are trying to keep people active and energized. We found the client of Stuart Low to be engaging. Following the pandemic, there is even more of a need for projects like ourselves. The only way that can continue is with major funding.