



Learning about fire and personal safety in our communities

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A group of people we support in the West Midlands learned about staying safe at home and what to do in an emergency, with a helping hand from the local fire service.

HAPPY AND SMILING AGAIN

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CARE HOME OF THE YEAR AWARD

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Healthy living

Ann Marie has transformed her eating habits over the last year and is now happy and healthier after reaching her goal weight.



Through making healthier food choices, Ann Marie has lost over two stone and has learned how to cook a variety of home cooked meals.

She tells us: "Reaching a healthy weight was a goal I really wanted to achieve. I didn't know where to start so with my support team I considered different options. I wanted to join a group - I liked the idea of having a support network of people that were in the same position as me. After considering costs and locations I decided to try Slimming World."

Ann Marie's goal to eat healthily and lose weight was recorded in her support plan. Ann Marie and her support team made sure that her support hours were flexible so she could attend the classes. Together they planned menus and shopping lists each week in advance to ensure she remained on track with her goal.

Cooking is one of the most important skills a person can ever learn and share. Many of us know that home cooked meals are often the tastiest and Ann Marie's housemates couldn't agree more. Ann Marie's support worker, Bev, says: "The other ladies in the house are all very supportive. They love picking up new cooking tips and enjoy trying the new recipes together."

Each week time is dedicated to assist Ann Marie with cooking. This is an opportunity for Ann Marie to experiment with new recipes from her group. Bev continues: "Ann Marie's cooking skills have really improved and she now understands how to make healthier lifestyle choices."

After one year Ann Marie has now reached her ideal weight; she tells us that the journey to reach her goal was not always an easy one: "The hardest thing about following a healthy eating plan was getting up in the morning and knowing I had to stick to it. It made me feel better knowing that I was fully supported to reach my goal. I found the people at my group, my support team and my housemates all very supportive."

She continues: "The journey was worth it. The best thing is I can now wear clothes that didn't fit me before, it's like I have a whole new wardrobe!"

Change4Life is the NHS campaign to encourage us all to live healthier lifestyles. To find out more, go online and visit www.nhs.uk/change4life.

The website is full of useful tips to help you do more exercise, eat well, and drink less alcohol.

Smartphone users can also download a free Change4Life app to keep track of their physical activity, sugar intake, and other important information.

So why not join over one million people who have already pledged to improve their wellbeing with Change4Life?

Happy and Smiling Again



Paul shares how he conquered his biggest fear.

"I had toothache and an infection and lots of scale on my teeth. I hate dentists and haven't been for years. But I knew I had to go. I went to the local dentist who said I needed three or four teeth out and some fillings as well as a really good clean. My Support Worker, Pearl, told them how scared I was so they sent me to a special ward for people with learning disabilities. They understood me and said they could put me to sleep to have the treatment.

Pearl came with me on the day even though it was her day off. She is really

good at keeping me calm. I had my own room. I put on my gown and special socks. They put me to sleep, and did all the work on my teeth. The dentist said it took ages to give them a good clean and get all the scale off, but they feel really good now. There is also a possibility that I may be diabetic so they did blood tests too.

When I came round they brought me lunch and let me go home. I was sleepy so I went to bed. My mouth is still a little sore and I am eating mainly soft things but it is getting better every day. I am looking after my teeth

and mouth now, brushing and using the mouthwash they gave me to make sure I don't get infected again.

I am really pleased and proud of myself for going after all these years. Thanks to Pearl for going with me. That really helped."



Integra Care - Runners Up in Care Home of the Year

We are delighted and very proud to announce that the Integra Care team have been awarded second place for Care Home of the Year at the Hampshire Care Association Awards.

The awards are a celebration of excellence and are aimed at promoting best practice and paying tribute to those teams who have demonstrated outstanding care to those they support.

The team was commended for their commitment to creating new opportunities for community engagement. During the year the team invited the local community to a variety of events, including art exhibitions, garden parties and coffee mornings hosted by the people we support. Beverley Hambidge, Registered Manager tells us: "The people that we support, thoroughly enjoy planning and attending the

different events. It has helped them to develop confidence within the wider community through strengthening and building relationships."

Debbie Corti-Young, Business Manager of Hampshire Care Association explained: "the awards are a really important event in our calendar as they are an opportunity to recognise all of the care staff and homes that have gone above and beyond the call of duty during the year. It has been a turbulent year for the care sector, so I think it was especially important this year to acknowledge everyone's hard work."

Beverley concluded: "We are thrilled that our staff have been recognised for all their hard work and dedication, enabling people to live active and fulfilled lives."

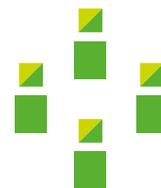


Registered Manager Beverley Hambidge and Team Leaders Doreen Blake and Alex Harper attended the presentation to collect the award on behalf of the whole staff team.



My Day in Parliament

Beulah travelled to the Houses of Parliament to voice her concern about how government cuts to services and programmes like People First, would affect her and her community



Beulah has been volunteering at People First in Birmingham for many years. She is also a self-advocate member of the Partnership Board. In this role, she gathers feedback from people with learning disabilities about what they want from all aspects of their care and support including supported housing, day services, employment, health services and community groups. She attends regular meetings in her area where she represents their views, and has her say in how services are developed.



Beulah and the group went to London in January to meet their MP to talk about People First's funding cuts and what this would mean for people with a learning disability in Birmingham.

Beulah told us about her experience:

"It was an early start for me. We got all the information and had to leave from our office by 8am. We walked to New Street for the train then travelled across London by taxi. To get into the Houses of Parliament we had to have our bags searched and go through a security scanner.

We met our MP, Steve McCabe, to tell him about People First. I have worked for People First for years and I am worried we may have to close because there is no funding.

We told him what People First do and how we work to help other people with learning disabilities. We are an advocacy organisation.

We go to Partnership Board meetings to talk about the issues that matter to us. We train people to know about learning disabilities. We offer information. We campaign for what is right.

Birmingham City Council has less money but say they are trying to keep us open. We really need to find money from somewhere else to stay open. We are all volunteers except for Sandra, our Supporter, who is the only part-time paid employee.

It was important to tell the Government how we feel and it was a real experience to meet our MP at the Houses of Parliament. He understood and told us what to do next.

We wrote to our councillors to tell them how we feel. Some of us have been at People First for a long time. We will be really sad if it closes and bored at home with nothing to do. We will need to find new jobs. A lot of people with learning disabilities will be affected."

To find out more about

People First's self-advocacy services for people with learning disabilities, visit their website:

www.peoplefirstltd.com



If Beulah's story has inspired you to have your say by getting involved in politics, you can visit www.everyvotecounts.org.uk for easy read guides to voting and other useful resources.

Fire safety at home

A welcome visit from the West Midlands Fire Service provided valuable advice on staying safe at home.

As anyone knows who lives on their own, staying safe is a key life skill to learn. For anyone who is getting used to more independent living for the first time, fire safety may seem a little bit daunting. So when Wendy got in touch with us to ask for further support in this area, we jumped at the chance to create an event to help people maintain their independence.

We contacted the Community Liaison department of the West Midlands Fire Service to see how they could help. Fortunately for us, they were setting up 'Make Your Home Safe' forums and were happy to come along to our Birmingham office to meet with a group of people who were keen to learn more.

Wendy, Andy, Ahmed and Amjid came along for the day and were able to get some much needed answers to their particular concerns.

About Wendy

Wendy lives alone in a block of flats and wasn't sure what she should do if there was a fire in her home. She was aware that she needed to leave the building, but not what was important when she reported the fire.

Paul's tips:

Using role play to set the scene, Paul explained how important it was for Wendy to give an accurate address to the Fire Service. He also stressed how important it is to get out of the building to a place of safety.

Wendy told us:

"I feel much better about what to say now to the fire brigade."

Amjid and Wendy took part in an interactive fire safety demonstration and there was plenty of discussion and time for questions.

Andy enjoyed the forum so much that he told us: "I would really like to learn more about fire safety."

Safety tips!



- Keep bedroom doors firmly closed at night to stop smoke entering the room if there is a fire.
- If the alarm goes off you should go to the door and use the back of your hand to see if the door is hot. If it is do not open the door, get a blanket or duvet to cover the gap at the bottom of the door and then call 999.
- If the door is not hot you can open it slightly and see if you can see smoke. If you can, close the door and again cover the bottom of the door and call 999.
- If you can't see smoke, it is safe to investigate further, but remember that the priority is to get out of the building.
- If there is a fire in the kitchen, close the door behind you and leave as quickly as possible. Don't try and put the fire out with a wet towel, just call 999 as soon as you can.



Is there something you would like to know more about?

Don't forget that your support team's job is to ensure you feel safe and in control. If there is something that you would like to learn more about, speak to them about your wishes.



New supported living scheme in Sandbach



We are really excited to reveal that work has now started on Sandbach's first purpose-built supported living development: Foden View.



We are creating a community with our partners Inclusion Housing and HB villages which will be warm, welcoming and above all inclusive. With our support, Foden View will enable people to enjoy activities locally and access a wide range of opportunities in the community.

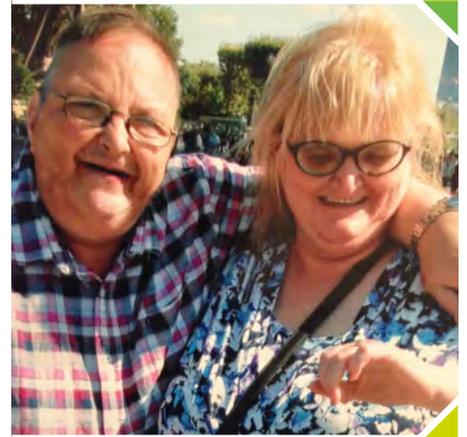
People will be able to choose the design of their home, its decor and if they need it, state of the art assistive technology which will be tailored to their individual requirements. We believe in 'Just Enough Support' and this community will give people the freedom to move into greater independence through managing their own homes and lifestyles, with support only when they need it.

Mark Dyson, Head of New Build Development, said: "We are delighted to be part of such an exciting and innovative development, adding to the landscape of services available in Cheshire East."

Sarah Waters, Corporate Services Director of Inclusion Housing, said: "Inclusion Housing is proud to be part of this development and the best bit is yet to come; welcoming the tenants into their new homes. We look forward to working in partnership with Lifeways and Cheshire East Council in making this a valued resource for years to come."

Congratulations

Romance has blossomed between neighbours Marion and Alan! Marion shares their story with us:



"My name is Marion and I live with two ladies and next-door-but-one, is where a man named Alan lives. Alan has lived there for around four years. Last year Alan and I became good friends and I would go to chat with Alan in the evening.

On occasions Alan and me would go into town and have lunch or tea out. About four months ago Alan asked me to get engaged. I was so excited and told my support workers. After a long chat over a holiday to Disneyland Paris with Alan and our support workers, Alan and I decided it would be special to make our engagement official under the Eiffel Tower.

This was a very special time for both me and Alan. Alan had bought a beautiful sapphire ring for me to wear. We made the occasion special and went for a beautiful meal to celebrate."

Keep up to date with our latest developments on our Facebook page:

 www.facebook.com/thelifewaysgroup

Marketing focus group held in Liverpool

In February, we invited people who use our mental health services in Liverpool and their support workers to join us at a marketing focus group, and share their views on how we promote our organisation. Over 15 individuals attended.



Photo by Paul Hitchinson

Participants shared their favourite brands and explained how they make decisions as a customer. They told us what they thought of our website and this newsletter. They also discussed the importance of providing information in accessible formats such as easy-read, video and Braille so that everyone can understand.

The people we support know better than anyone what they expect from our services, and that's why we ask for their opinions whenever we're making important decisions. We were pleased to hear lots of positive feedback and suggestions for improvement from the group, and we're looking forward to putting everyone's ideas into action.

It's all part of our ethos: We Listen, We Respect, We Deliver.

In the coming months we'll be holding similar consultation events around the country, so if you'd like to get involved please contact us at marketing@lifeways.co.uk to find out more, or look out for information in future issues of Lifelines.

DJ Andy Rocks Da House!

Andrew, AKA DJ Andy, enjoyed playing his biggest gig to date at a Christmas party for people supported in the Swindon area.

Andrew has been enjoying DJing for a while so relished the opportunity to play to a bigger audience, as over 50 people attended the party.

With a carefully planned playlist of party favourites, DJ Andy was

the star of the evening - keeping everyone dancing all night. Andrew said: "I liked it very much, the best bit was choosing all the records to play. I would like to do it again - I can do all of Lifeways' parties in the future!"



WHISTLE BLOWING

I NEED TO
SPEAK OUT!
I NEED TO
BE HEARD!



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Poem by Sam

Poet Facts: Sam is 23 years old, she loves to write poetry, she is very active, used to play wheelchair basketball for her home town of Warrington and also carried the Olympic torch in 2012, which she still has!

Sam likes holidaying abroad, she and her brother visited Egypt recently. She loves, loves, loves music, especially if it's played loud!



You look and stare, so easy to judge

You tell your friend, with a simple nudge

My scars are visible, but my story is hid

It all began, when I was a kid

You don't know why, but don't even ask

I'm a survivor, sheltered by a mask

But I'll fight the stigma, and break free

No longer hidden, soon I'll be me



To share your voice please send your poems, artwork, photos, short stories or reviews, in fact anything that you'd like to share to yourstory@lifeways.co.uk.



Find out more, keep in touch or share your story:



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we listen
we respect
we deliver