

# Kingston Independent

SUMMER 2016



## *In this issue*

Update from CEO  
.....

User's Journeys  
.....

Visual Impairment  
Parliament  
.....

Consultation  
into Charges  
.....

Holiday and  
Equipment Grants  
.....

Self-Directed  
Support  
.....

In the Community  
.....



**CHOICE AND CONTROL FOR DISABLED PEOPLE**

KCIL is working hard to increase the voice of disabled children, young people and adults in Kingston and Richmond. We have a number of different areas where you can get involved and we would really like to hear from you.

## Now is your time to speak up!

We are organising a conference for the autumn which will give people an opportunity to speak up about what it is like to live in Kingston if you have a disability. Please keep an eye on our website for more information:

[www.kcil.org.uk](http://www.kcil.org.uk)

We are also gathering feedback from people regarding the Royal Borough of Kingston's consultation on charging. Please read the article on page 6 and get involved.

KCIL's main service supporting people in receipt of personal budgets and direct payments is also undergoing some changes. John Morris, Team Leader, and Lisa Ehlers, CEO, are in the process of visiting all the social work teams in Kingston to inform them of the changes and to encourage better communication.

We would also like to raise awareness with the users of this service. Please read the articles on pages 8 and 9 to find out more.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome a new member to our team at KCIL, Kezia Coleman, who is facilitating the Visual Impairment Parliament. This role is a partnership with Thomas Pocklington Trust. We are excited about this opportunity to work with a national charity and to increase the influence of visually impaired people locally.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Roy Staniland who ran the London Marathon for KCIL raising an impressive £2,189 for KCIL.

I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter and finding out more about what is happening with KCIL.

Lisa Ehlers



## ALI

25 year old Ali, who lives in Kingston, came to the UK from Iraq in 2003 following a rocket attack where he not only lost both his arms but also the majority of his family. He was brought to the UK to receive medical treatment and care for his injuries and was accompanied by his uncle, who has been his primary carer ever since. Because of the care provided by his uncle, Ali has been in receipt of a small personal budget meaning that he cannot provide for himself and has had to rely on the goodwill of others.

KCIL became involved when Ali's contribution to his direct payments was increased and he wanted to find out why. Despite having an appeal refused on two previous occasions, KCIL, working alongside an advocate, was successful in securing an appeal on the basis that mistakes had been made and that Ali had been unfairly treated. This resulted in a reassessment that established the unfairness of the original award, and as a consequence of this, the award has been doubled.

The upshot of this is that Ali's quality of life and well-being will be greatly improved. He will now be able to employ more PAs, allowing him to get out and about much more and to pursue his interest in sport. His uncle will also have some much needed respite.

**Ali commented: "I am so much happier now that this has been sorted. KCIL has been very supportive; they are always happy to help with any problems I may have."**



## SEB

One family was pointed in the direction of KCIL after the Clinical Commissioning Group suggested they may be right for a personal health budget. Seb has complex health needs and support was being provided by an agency. The main problem was that because the young man's needs were so complex only certain staff could support him which meant at times no one could cover the hours needed and on a few occasions no one turned up.

After school clubs and holiday activities were subject to similar problems meaning that unless certain staff were free he was not able to attend these activities with his peers.

By undertaking a personal health budget the family were able to pool some funds with the school and the local authority to train more staff so that the young man could attend his after school clubs and holiday activities. His Mum has been able to employ the staff she would like and organise their training herself. It's still early days but we are hoping that the family will receive more consistent support, manage it in a way that meets their needs and the young man can go to all the activities like his friends.

So far Seb thinks his outings have been brilliant! And is hoping to go on many more.

# Visual Impairment Parliament

**The Kingston Visual Impairment (VI) Parliament, originally formed by the Thomas Pocklington Trust in late 2014, found its new home in April of this year at Kingston Centre for Independent Living.**

The VI Parliament's volunteer MPs each champion a specialist area that impacts the sight loss community including education, employment, health, social and leisure activities and transport.

Quarterly public meetings provide an essential platform for visually impaired residents to discuss the issues which impact them. Guest speakers from organisations such as ComCab, Kingston Libraries, and Kingston Council, attend the public meetings to discuss their services and resolve issues.

The MPs use their experience of living with a visual impairment to make a positive change, tackling issues brought to light in the public meetings. MP, Gloria Tripi, spoke at the House of Lords in March about employment, while Elise Crayton has been busy campaigning with the RNIB about inaccessible cycle path developments.

The Parliament also runs regular social events such as trips, audiobook swaps, and quiz nights.

**To join the mailing list and hear about upcoming events and meetings, contact:**

**Kezia Coleman**  
@ [kezia.coleman@kcil.org.uk](mailto:kezia.coleman@kcil.org.uk)  
☎ 0208 481 1441  
🐦 @KingstonVIP



# Introduction to Kezia Coleman

For the past three years I have worked for the Thomas Pocklington Trust, an organisation that supports people living with sight loss. There I carried out research and held consultations to assist with the development of vision strategies in several London boroughs.

I have undertaken training in Deaf Blind Awareness and am currently developing my touch talk skills.

I have recently joined KCIL, where I will continue to run the Kingston Visual Impairment (VI) Parliament. Outreach is a very important part of what the VI Parliament does. It aims to support as many people as possible, and shape Kingston into a more welcoming and accessible place for visually impaired people.

In my spare time I enjoy Kingston's varied live music scene.



## New look newsletter

**We hope you like our new look *Kingston Independent* which we will be bringing to you twice a year.**

In between times, we would like to keep you up-to-date with what is happening at KCIL and any news relating to disability in the borough by sending you our eNews.

Make sure you don't miss out by emailing [robert.reilly@kcil.org.uk](mailto:robert.reilly@kcil.org.uk) with eNews in the subject box!



# Consultation into Charges Increase

The Council is conducting a consultation into an increase in charges for people who receive care and support at home (non-residential), day care, direct payments or personal budgets.

You should receive a letter in the post from the Royal Borough of Kingston explaining this proposal and asking for your feedback if you receive these services.

Contact:  
Lisa Ehlers, CEO at KCIL, via email [lisa.ehlers@kcil.org.uk](mailto:lisa.ehlers@kcil.org.uk) or phone on 020 8481 1444 to share your views.

We would really like to encourage our users and members to speak up on this vital issue. Please tell us how an increase in charges would impact your lives.

Your concerns will then be fed into the consultation and given to the elected members who will be making the final decision on this increase.

The Council will also be holding consultation events at the following times and locations:

DATE	TIME	TOWN	LOCATION
28 June	5.30pm – 8.30pm	Kingston	Quaker Centre
04 July	12.30pm – 3.30pm	Chessington	Hook Centre
14 July	9.30am – 12.30pm	Surbiton	Royal British Legion
21 July	12.30pm – 3.30pm	New Malden	Malden Centre

We would like to encourage as many people as possible to attend these events to express how this increase will impact on disabled people and their carers and families.



# Holiday grants are back...

Many of you will know that KCIL used to administer the Kingston Council Holiday Grant Scheme until it was discontinued in March 2016.

The Scheme was very popular with our service users and KCIL's Board of Trustees had been considering how to meet the need.

The new funds are very restricted and people will be asked to complete an application form for either a holiday or a piece of equipment.

We are delighted to announce that at a recent Board meeting a decision was taken that KCIL would create not one but two funds that offer:

Each application will be considered on a person's individual circumstances. In each case there will be a maximum amount that can be awarded.

- Financial support to disabled people wishing to take a holiday
- Financial support for purchasing pieces of disability-related equipment necessary for daily living.

**If you wish to be considered for either fund, please contact Robert Reilly at [robert.reilly@kcil.org.uk](mailto:robert.reilly@kcil.org.uk) or on 020 8546 9603 to discuss how to apply.**



# Support with Personal Budgets and Direct Payments (Self-Directed Support)

Direct payments and personal budgets are payments from the local council for adults and children who have been assessed as needing help, and those who would like to arrange and pay for their own care and support services. This allows you to organise care services yourself, choosing the services that are right for you.

- Home visits to explain the service in more detail
- Advice and information on being a good employer
- Independent Living Insurance
- Support with recruiting a personal assistant via our Find-a-PA website
- Information on Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for your personal assistant
- Access to training
- Invitations to user group meetings for peer support
- Signposting and liaising with payroll services
- Ongoing support with guidance for the correct use of the funds

## Find-a-PA website

Since April this year KCIL has been using Find-a-PA website to support both service users and personal assistants (PAs).

Containing a database of PAs looking for work and employers looking to employ, it helps match those looking to employ a PA with those looking to work as a PA. You can browse the site and look at potential jobs or PAs available.

Find-a-PA website is free to use for PAs but, as an employer, you may need to pay a membership fee to join.

If you are a KCIL service user and would like to register for free please contact Maria Keskes at KCIL on 0208 481 1440.

Once you have registered and added your profile details, you can log in at any time and contact an employer or PA using the secure message facility which means you don't have to give away your personal information.

If you require support with registering or managing your profile please contact Maria who will guide you through and support you.

For more information please log onto [www.find-a-pa.co.uk](http://www.find-a-pa.co.uk) or email [maria.keskes@kcil.org.uk](mailto:maria.keskes@kcil.org.uk).

# Self-Directed Support (SDS) WHO'S WHO AT KCIL

## JOHN MORRIS SDS TEAM LEADER

John oversees the day to day management of the SDS Service and liaises with social workers, finance departments, insurance providers, payroll companies and service users.

@ [john.morris@kcil.org.uk](mailto:john.morris@kcil.org.uk)  
☎ 020 8481 1445



## MARIA KESKES PA SUPPORT AND MONITORING

Maria supports service users with using the Find-a-PA website, with recruiting PAs and monitoring for Achieving for Children

@ [maria.keskes@kcil.org.uk](mailto:maria.keskes@kcil.org.uk)  
☎ 020 8481 1440



## MEL WARREN OUTREACH WORKER

Mel offers support with becoming an employer, setting up insurance, linking with payroll providers and understanding employment responsibilities.

@ [mel.warren@kcil.org.uk](mailto:mel.warren@kcil.org.uk)  
☎ 020 8481 1446



This is what our SDS service users have to say:

*"I believe that knowing KCIL is there offering support and advice is invaluable."*

*"KCIL helped me to navigate the system, dealt with the council on my behalf and made the paperwork easy for me. Their speedy response meant that I got the extra help I needed quickly and with minimum fuss."*

*"They have kept me informed at every stage of the process and helped me to set in motion the support I need to manage day-to-day life."*

# In the Community

## London Marathon Success for Roy

Congratulations to Roy Staniland, Director of Surbiton Racket & Fitness Club, for completing the Virgin Money London Marathon in April, not only rising to challenge of running 26.4 miles but also raising a fantastic £2,189 for KCIL.

We would also like to thank the staff and members of the Club who supported Roy by sponsoring him and buying cakes at the cake sale we held just before the big event.

The money Roy raised will ensure that more than 12 local disabled people will be able to receive grants towards essential equipment or allow them to have a much-needed break.

A big thank you to Roy from KCIL's staff, members and service users.



## Community Matters to Waitrose in Kingston

A very big thank you to customers at Waitrose in Kingston for placing their green tokens in the KCIL Community Matters box.

We received a cheque for £358 which will pay for an outing for some of our service users.

## A Sunny Day on the River

Service users and staff enjoyed a sunny boat trip on the River Thames in May thanks to the Thames Boat Project.

Leaving from Canbury Wharf in Kingston, the Richmond Venturer, a specially converted Dutch barge which is fully accessible to people with disabilities, travelled downstream to Shepperton before returning later in the day.

Our thanks to the Thames Boat Project volunteers who ensured the trip such a success.



## Exploring Historical Kingston

In April the Kingston Visual Impairment Parliament organised a historic walking tour around Kingston town centre.

Margaret Woodrow, a knowledgeable retired tour guide, kindly led the group, adding detailed descriptions of Kingston's structures for visually impaired attendees.

Despite slightly adverse weather, the group had an enjoyable time learning about the various historical features of Kingston, including the famous Coronation Stone, an ancient sarsen stone block which is believed to have been the site of the coronation of seven Anglo-Saxon kings.

The group also viewed more modern features of Kingston, such as the stunning iconic mosaic, next to the Rose Theatre, inspired by the work of Edward Muybridge, pioneer of moving photography.

After the walk the group warmed up with a lovely cream tea in the market house.

## SAVE THE DATE

**Monday 12th September**

**Join KCIL at the University of Kingston for the first conference discussing 'Living with Disabilities in Kingston'.**

With speakers covering topics such as transport, health, independent living and disability hate crime, stalls and your chance to have your opinions heard at forums, this event should not be missed.

Ensure you are among the first to know when booking opens by emailing [robert.reilly@kcil.org.uk](mailto:robert.reilly@kcil.org.uk).

# Get in touch

For further information, please get in touch.

## Self-Directed Support Services

John Morris  
john.morris@kcil.org.uk  
020 8481 1445

Mel Warren  
mel.warren@kcil.org.uk  
020 8481 1446

Maria Keskes  
maria.keskes@kcil.org.uk  
020 8481 1440

Information and Grants  
Robert Reilly  
robert.reilly@kcil.org.uk  
020 8546 09603

## Support Brokers

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joanna.alesky@kcil.org.uk  
020 848101442

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sophie.marshall@kcil.org.uk  
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lisa.ehlers@kcil.org.uk  
020 8481 1444

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Donate now: [www.localgiving.org/donation/kcil](http://www.localgiving.org/donation/kcil)



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