

Newsletter for Kingston Centre for Independent Living

Kingston Independent

Winter 2019

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CHOICE AND CONTROL FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

Update from Lisa



Welcome to the Winter edition of the KCIL Independent.

In this edition you can read about the highlights from the past few months at KCIL, including KCIL's annual conference and AGM where KCIL continued to bring people together to discuss important issues such as access to services, transport and information and developments in adult social care.

KCIL celebrated its 50th Anniversary at our AGM in November with a birthday cake provided by Balance Community Interest Company and a talk from Councillor Margaret Thompson, Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care.

Members were also given the opportunity to ask the Councillor questions regarding social care and the local council's plans for the future.

At our 'Access All Areas' conference, members provided feedback about what makes 'good' and 'bad' access. This will now feed into KCIL's new Access and Mobility Committee, which you can read about on page 6.

Changes are beginning to happen with the local council consulting the Access and Mobility committee about issues that are impacting on disabled people around the borough. This is only the beginning, but we hope it is heading in a positive direction.

We also had a visit from a South Korean delegation in November who wanted to learn more about Independent Living and how it developed in Kingston.

KCIL staff (including myself, John Morris, Robert Reilly and Elizabeth Olarewaju) along with KCIL's patron, Ann Macfarlane gave a talk on the history of direct payments and discussed current issues affecting disabled people in the UK. Supported by an interpreter, we were able to share experiences and discuss what was happening in South Korea, where the voice of disabled people is gaining momentum.

In early December, KCIL and the Royal Borough of Kingston hosted an International Day of Disabled People's event. This year's theme was music and we were treated to some amazing performances by Kington Mencap and Dramatize following a talk and video from a local music therapist.

In the New Year, KCIL plans to work with members, trustees and staff to develop a clear plan for moving forward. With the ever increasing austerity measures that the local authority and NHS are experiencing, KCIL needs to look at what we can do to diversify our funding while finding new ways to make real change for our service users and members. We would really value your input on how we can make meaningful improvements locally so please get in touch with us.

Join us

As a user-led organisation, KCIL members have an important role to play. Annual individual membership costs just £12 and, by becoming a member, you will:

- Be involved and have a say on issues affecting local disabled people
- Be part of a local user-led organisation supporting independent living
- Have access to small grants for equipment, holidays or education/training
- Be able to vote on matters affecting you at our Annual General Meeting
- Get a free ticket to KCIL's annual 'Living with Disabilities in Kingston' conference
- Get a free 'Radar' key giving you access to locked public toilets around the country
- Keep informed on events and issues



For more information, contact Robert Reilly on 020 8546 9603, email robert.reilly@kcil.org.uk



Chessington South Railway Station

Chessington South Railway Station will be accessible from the end of March 2019 thanks to our Disability Champion, Councillor Chris Stewart and her energetic campaigning work with other local partners.

This is really good news for local disabled people, many of whom have not been able to use the station and have had to travel to other stations in the borough.



If you've had access issues, tell us so we can try and do something about it.



Living with disabilities conference

Our 2018 Conference was a great success thanks to the people that came and our brilliant speakers and workshops.

Steve Brown (top right), broadcaster and paralympian, was our keynote speaker and what a great inspirational speaker he was. Thanks Steve.

Suzanne Bull from Attitude is Everything told us about how her charity works with the music industry to make live music more accessible and inclusive for Deaf and disabled people.

Ana Crome from Tourism for All gave a presentation on the work they do to inform disabled people on accessible holidays and travel and how they advise the tourism industry to be inclusive.

Amy Edgar from Transport for London told us about her work to make public transport in and around London easier for disabled travelers.

We also had three great workshops from AccessAble, the YMCA, Involve and KCIL's Access and Mobility Committee. For a full report of the day go to: wakelet.com and search for KCIL. Happy reading.



Disability Champion appointed



Kingston Council has appointed its first ever disability champion, Councillor Christine Stuart (Chessington South Ward), to mark International Day of Disabled People, which fell on December 3rd.

Councillor Christine Stuart has warmly agreed to take on the role which involves being an advocate for children, young people and adults with disabilities who live in the borough.

Kingston Independent



- Got an opinion about the newsletter?
- Want to share your story?
- Are you or your PA willing to talk to us about your experience of getting or giving support?
- Got some ideas or suggestions for improving our newsletter?

We want to hear from you!

enquiries@kcil.org.uk

Tel: 020 8546 9603



Being a KCIL Trustee

By Kezia Coleman

I decided to apply to be a trustee for KCIL, because of the important work they do in enabling people in the community with disabilities to have better access to care, support and independence.

KCIL is a warm and vibrant organisation, who champion disability rights and put disabled people at the heart of decision making. My brother has Prader-Willi Syndrome, so I know organisations such as KCIL are vital to supporting people like him and their families.

Trustees are the people who lead the charity and decide how it is run. Being a trustee means making decisions that will impact on people's lives. I had never been a trustee before, and I was worried I was lacking in some key skill areas, but the team have been really supportive with helping me understand the financial aspect of the role.

Not only have I learnt new skills, but I am able to bring my own skills to the role. I work for a sight loss charity, Thomas Pocklington Trust, campaigning alongside blind and partially sighted people for better access, inclusion and services. I am passionate about access for people with disabilities. I believe that people with disabilities should be able to access their local community without facing barriers. For me, the most important aspect of being a trustee, is making a difference to the local community and helping KCIL champion access and inclusion!



Make a difference to the lives of local disabled people

We are looking for an enthusiastic and committed person with an understanding of disability to join our friendly and dedicated team of KCIL Trustees.

You will attend Board meetings 5 times a year and contribute to KCIL's work to empower local disabled people to have an independent life through good information advice and support.

If you have skills in finance, HR, the law, so much the better but if not don't worry as we still need practical, can-do people with life experience and common sense.

We offer full training and support to make sure you have all the back-up you need. All your reasonable expenses will be covered. This is an exciting and important opportunity to make a real difference to the lives of local disabled people.

To find out more, or to talk things over, please contact Lisa Ehlers on: 020 8481 144 or email her at: lisa.ehlers@kcil.org.uk

We look forward to hearing from you.

KCIL's Access and Mobility Committee

By Robert Reilly

KCIL's Access and Mobility Committee held its inaugural meeting in June 2018.

The Committee has eight members, including myself, and most of us are local people:

- Kezia Coleman, Thomas Pocklington Trust;
- Helen Nixon , Secretary of PAMS (Positive Action for MS);
- Cllr. Patricia Bamford, Chair of the Development Control Committee at Kingston Council;
- Ali Kashmiri, Principal Access Officer at another London borough and an accredited Access Auditor;
- Kadian Thomas. Kingston First;
- Sue Harrison, KCIL member
- Barry Lomax, Kingston Council's Group Manager

The Committee meets four times a year. Its objectives are to:

- Deal with all aspects of accessible transport and travel for disabled and older people in the Royal Borough of Kingston;
- Encourage a barrier-free environment for all;
- Assist Council officers with responsibility for the built environment;



- Raise awareness of the access needs of disabled people, living, working, or visiting the borough;
- Provide a forum for representation and consultation for other professionals and organisations working to improve the built environment;
- Highlight existing access problems to public buildings, transport facilities and the 'Streetscene' environment;
- Maintain contact with local and national organisations, and;
- Encourage the involvement of disabled people, who work or live in the Borough, in the work of the Committee.

The Committee had an early victory when we made a successful submission to the Environment & Sustainable Transport Committee last September on what we would like to see included in Kingston's Local Implementation Plan for the Mayor of London's Transport Strategy. We are also involved in looking at the different options for the re-design of Kingston's Shopmobility service. Over the coming months the Committee will be looking at a number of major planning applications so it can have a say at an early stage on how projects are designed and delivered.

If you are disabled and have an interest in access issues, and think you could add something worthwhile to the Committee, call me on 020 8546 9603 for a chat or email me at: robert.reilly@kcil.org.uk.

Soloman's story

By Sarah Cocker

The NHS Kingston Clinical Commissioning Group referred Solomon for a Personal Health Budget.

Solomon has complex health and social care needs and requires the right staff to support him properly.

Solomon's family were finding it hard using agency staff to provide the right support for Solomon as there wasn't the consistency with the staff who were coming.

They wanted to use their Personal Budget to employ someone, a Personal Assistant (PA), who would get to know and understand them and Solomon on a permanent basis.

Jeom, Solomon's mum, says...

I found Sarah and KCIL very helpful and supportive with my application for a Personal Health Budget. I was encouraged to add my input to writing up Solomon's support plan so the plan actually reflected his needs.

The support plan is very important to get right as it is the basis for organising the person's care and support. Solomon's support plan is working very well to meet his needs.

Sarah has arranged training for Solomon's PAs and the cost of training so all we needed to do was to send them on the courses.

Sarah also arranged insurance and the link with the payroll company. Each month we send our PA time sheets to Paypacket, the payroll service, and they arrange for our PAs to be paid.

KCIL can also support you with employing PAs. Employing the right person can make your whole family's life so much easier.

We have been using our Personal Health Budget since August 2018 and we feel we are now in control of our lives again.

”



Left to right -Solomon, his mum Jeom, sister Gusandra and PA Marisha.

Choice and independence through Personal Budgets



As the SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) Support Broker at KCIL, I work with children, young people and families living in the Royal Borough of Kingston or the London Borough of Richmond who are looking for support through a Personal Budget as part of their Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or related to Continuing Health Care (CHC).

Personal Budgets aim to provide people with more choice and independence and can be used to fund health, education or social care needs as an alternative to having a service arranged for you.

The amount of money allocated to a Personal Budget depends on a child or young person's needs and follows a process of assessment by education, health and social care professionals.

How I can help

My role is to help people through the process of setting up their Personal Budget as well as providing advice, support and guidance with managing the finances.

Following a request for a Personal Budget as part of the EHCP process, I can support you to develop a strong Support Plan and submit this for a panel decision.

I also cost the proposed Support Plan, looking at how much each service would cost and exactly how the money would be spent. And, once approved, I can support you to carry out the actions in the Plan and then help you to monitor the expenditure of the finances.

If you want to find out more about Personal Budgets, please get in touch with me on: 020 8481 1442 or at: sarah.cocker@kcil.org.uk.

Direct Payment Advice and Support

We regularly run different Direct Payment advice and support sessions but if you can't wait you can just pop in to our office or get in touch by phone or email.

Direct Payment user meeting

This is your chance to meet other DP users, learn from each other, listen to a guest speaker and enjoy a free lunch together.

When: Wednesday 13 March, 12.30-2.30 (free lunch provided)

Where: St James Church Hall, New Malden, KT3 5QD.

Being a Good Boss training

Find out about the things you need to know to be a good boss and how to stay on top of your responsibilities.

When: Wednesday 6th March, 10.30 to 1.30.

Where: KCIL office (lunch will be provided).



Drop-ins

Get the information, advice and support you need with your questions and concerns.

When: Thursday 21 March, 1pm to 3pm.

Where: KCIL Offices, River Reach, 31 – 35 High Street, Kingston KT1 1LF.

Know your Rights workshop

Find out about what your rights are when it comes to social care assessments and reviews of your support needs.

When: Thursday 14th March, 10.30 to 2.00.

Where: Venue to be confirmed.

Lunch will be provided.

Please book your places now.

Follow Us



- Can't wait until our next newsletter?
- Want to keep up with our news as it happens?
- Looking for a PA?
- Follow us

Facebook: @KingstonCentreforIndependentLiving
LinkedIn: KingstonCentreforIndependentLiving
Twitter: @TeamKCIL
YouTube: KCIL Kingston

Kington's VI Parliament update

By Sophie Camara



Kington's Visual Impairment Parliament holds quarterly public meetings where speakers come along to inform people with visual impairments about various opportunities in the community.

We believe it's beneficial to have guest speakers at our events as it's important for people to learn about different health conditions and to be aware of what's out there, assistance wise. This also gives people an opportunity to raise any issues they may have.

We attend all meetings or events which we feel are relevant to Kingston's VI Parliament and I, along with our volunteers, meet up monthly to report back to each other. We then update people at our public meetings.

Kingston Station

We have continued to work with the designers of the Kingston Station forecourt to discuss tactile paving to try and come up with a suitable design which will benefit both the VI community and other residents.

Rain Gullies

We are still in contact with Kingston Council about the rain gullies around Kingston town centre.

There has been several issues raised so we are trying to make them safer.

Sight and Hearing Roadshow

In conjunction with Kingston Association for the Blind, the Kingston VI Parliament will be holding a sight and hearing roadshow. Various organisations attend the roadshow to tell people about the different services available which they may find helpful.

The Kingston VI Parliament will be having their own information stall so come and say hi! There will be opportunities to have a look at and test different technology/devices which may help people with sight loss.

ROADSHOW

Wednesday 27th March 2019,
10:00am - 3:00pm
St James Church Hall,
Bodley Road, New Malden, KT3 5QD.

Public meeting

Our last public meeting in February was well attended and it was good to listen to our guest speaker, Councillor Hilary Gander, Portfolio Holder for Environment & Sustainable Transport. We will give a fuller report on our meeting separately. Please get in touch with me if you have any good news stories or any issues to do with your visual impairment.

Sophie Camara

Kingston VI Parliament Coordinator

Tel: 020 8481 1445

Mobile: 0779 239 5894

Email: KingstonVIParliament@KCIL.org.uk

Workshop

- Have you recently had your support needs assessed or reviewed by Kingston Council's social workers?
- Did the assessment or review leave you feeling a bit left out and not listened to?
- Have you had your support hours cut?
- Have the charges (your financial contribution) for your care and support gone up and affected your quality of life?
- Do you want you to find out about your rights during the assessment and review and how to make sure you are listened to?

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

If Yes, then join the Know Your Rights Workshop we are running with Inclusion London on:

**Thursday 14th March
10.00 to 1.30**

United Reformed Church,
Eden Street, Kingston KT1 1HZ
Lunch will be provided.

Please book your place now.

International Day of Disabled People

Together with Kingston Council, RBK's Disabled Staff Group, Kingston MENCAP, UNISON and Dramatize, we celebrated the contribution disabled people make to society and to acknowledge our long and ongoing struggle to be recognised as equal members of society.



This year our theme was 'a Celebration in Music' and we enjoyed a performance of music and song from Kingston Mencap's All Stars, Na Won Kim and Josh Taylor (pictured) who played the legendary Freddie Mercury brilliantly. The event took place on 6 December at Kingston's United Reformed Church and was opened by Steven Taylor, head of Kingston's Adult Social Care.

Letter from your Patron

Dear Members
and Friends

As many of you are aware, KCIL staff work hard to support all disabled people in Kingston. KCIL receives funding from Kingston Council to particularly support people who receive Direct Payments, also known as Personal Budgets. Other money comes from Membership subscriptions, and donations, and we are very appreciative of these.

These sources of income help but do not give us money to cover all that KCIL needs to achieve to provide additional services vital to the wellbeing of all the people we endeavour to serve. Our Grants to Members to support their holidays, education and equipment needs has already been exhausted for this financial year and we are uncertain of the future of this funding. Quite a small budget has supported many disabled people, but we now have to turn disabled people away.

Apart from money, we urgently need disabled people and our allies to come forward with a willingness to observe our Board Meetings to see if this is something with which you could help. The Board meets every two months for two hours and, importantly, shapes KCIL's future plans and work. In the last few months, a volunteer disabled person has come forward to provide help with answering telephone calls and this is proving invaluable.



We all have skills that can not only support KCIL but are a useful way in which to improve confidence and job prospects. KCIL has arranged a yearly Conference that has proved very successful and we are obliged to hold an annual AGM. Training and workshops are held with disabled people and all activities are free but paid for by KCIL and our Supporters. Participants enjoy these get-togethers. To keep these activities going we need more financial and practical support from Members and Volunteers.

To be successful, KCIL needs you to tell us what we are doing well, what you want to see happening at KCIL and in the community and we need you to let us know when you need support so we can carefully monitor issues for which we may qualify for funding. Charitable organisations and trusts usually want to give funding for projects, not for core funding to run an Organisation like KCIL. This means we have to prove our existence. KCIL has played a key role in Kingston's community. It is because people, such as yourselves, have offered time, expertise and commitment that has ensured its survival.

KCIL has been important for disabled people for over fifty years at a time when there was nothing for disabled people to do except sit indoors and stare at four walls. KCIL has made huge efforts to change that and we can see the positive results. I have faith in you all, and I know you will be in contact with KCIL when you have carefully considered how you might support us; you may even decide that you can leave us a donation in your Will. This, too, will make Board Members and Staff and me happier, champions of disabled people and our non-disabled allies.

ARE YOU A PEOPLE PERSON?

Try working as a Personal (care) Assistant (PA)



www.find-a-pa.co.uk gives you instant access
to people who need support and are looking to
employ someone like you!

Contact KCIL on 020 8481 1446
or seye.norman@kcil.org.uk

Get in touch

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**Kingston Centre For
Independent Living**
Empowering Disabled People



CHOICE AND CONTROL FOR DISABLED PEOPLE