

Kingston Centre for Independent Living (KCIL)

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023



Supporting disabled people to live as independently as they choose.



CEO'S HIGHLIGHTS

As we bid farewell to 2023 and another impactful year, it is with immense pride and gratitude that we reflect on the accomplishments and milestones achieved by Kingston Centre for Independent Living. The unwavering commitment of our team and the support of our community have played pivotal roles in driving positive change in the disability sector.

As part of our strategy to enable disabled people in southwest London to have choice and control over their lives and to diversify KCIL's income, we have successfully won two new exciting projects with an adjoining borough – the London Borough of Sutton - that helps to bring independence to a greater number of disabled adults and children and bolster our finances during a difficult period.

In April 2023 we launched a new service – Independent Travel Training – which is a fantastic programme to teach SEND children using Assisted Transport to travel independently on public transport, teaching road and personal safety skills, this builds confidence, improves social skills and allows the young people greater freedom. Our new trainer – Naomi Duhaney – has been touring schools, delivering workshops, training young people to use buses, timetables, journey planning and contingency planning.

In July 2023 we won and mobilised our 2nd Sutton service – PA Brokerage – building on the excellent work we have carried out within Direct Payments with Kingston council, we now help people to recruit a Personal Assistant across three boroughs – Kingston, Sutton and Richmond.

Following a challenging 2022 into 2023 where we saw three KCIL stalwarts retire (Robert Reilly, John Morris and Phil Levick) with a combined service of almost 40 years we have since recruited well and seen all new team members flourish in their new roles. Joanne Stafferton has taken over the Office Manager role and has expanded this to include marketing, promotion and operations. The entire KCIL marketing offer has been revamped by Joanne over the last two years and she has created multiple new KCIL brands that reflect our new diverse range of services.

KCIL's Direct Payment Support and Advice continued to help people to have choice and control over their support and our new recruiter – Aggie – has moved the speed with which we source staff to a new level, finding people with new methods, matching people to a PA much faster than in previous years. Our work with Achieving for Children has progressed well in the last year and we now support in excess of 180 families with SEND children in receipt of an EHCP to set up their personal budget. This work has now been extended into Adult Personal Budgets within continuing healthcare and the NHS. Helen Green, Maria Keskes and our new member Natasha Veeren have been spearheading this work over the last 12 months.

As we look forward to 2024, we know that we have some challenging times ahead of us, not least with our funding streams, pressures on local authority spending and the increased cost of operations. KCIL is fortunate to have a committed and passionate team in place that will strive to support our community with the issues that are important to them. Thank you to all our staff, volunteers, trustees and members for all their contributions over the past year.



DIRECT PAYMENTS

KCIL'S WORK IN 2023

Since January 2023 we have had 48 new referrals to the Direct Payments Support service with 188 adults including new and established users on average using the service.

The main reason for choosing a Direct Payment remains the same – having choice and control over your life

Since Aggie joined us as Recruiter in April we have reduced the time taken to match someone with a PA from 7 weeks to just under 5 weeks

The number of people receiving support from KCIL to set up their PA on the payroll service and to recruit a PA have both risen

In 2023 KCIL arranged training for 74 Personal Assistants and their employers in First Aid, Manual Handling, Safeguarding, Infection control. Since securing funding from Skills for Care every year since 2020 we have arranged training for over 500 sessions

What People said about us

“Very kind and helpful, nothing is too much trouble, they encourage people and not judgemental”.

“Always there for a chat or to help with budget planning or advice”.

“The staff at KCIL provide answers and if they can't they help to find an answer”.



CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

SHORT BREAK DIRECT PAYMENT SUPPORT

In 2023 we have assisted 114 families and children with Direct Payment Support and advice across Kingston & Richmond.

This service involves matching PA's to parents, providing support for parents to be a good employers, supporting with recruitment, paperwork and payroll.

“This service helps us to achieve balance through having short breaks from the stresses of caring for a child with complex needs”.

SEND BROKERAGE

In 2023 we have seen the number of families using the SEND Brokerage service increase to 182

We support families that are new to the process right the way through from initial application to sourcing services, staffing and equipment.

Helen and Natasha provide a person-centred approach to support SEND children and their families to arrange their personal budget. Feedback shows this personalised approach benefits the whole family.

KCIL has developed a pathway for EHCP co-ordinators to follow and now spends time in AFC offices upskilling and reviewing individual packages.



MEET THE TEAM

NEW KCIL TEAM MEMBERS

NATASHA



Can you tell us about your role at KCIL?

My role at KCIL is the Direct payment and SEND caseworker, I specialize in education budgets and work with the children and families in the Kingston and Richmond areas, on their personal budgets.

What do you most enjoy doing when you are not working?

I enjoy swimming, theatre, travelling, trying new restaurants and cuisines and spending time with loved ones.

Name three words that describe you?

Witty, understanding and Kind.

Could you name someone you admire and say why?

Sade is one of my favorite music artists creative and unique sound.

What was your previous job?

Site manager for private healthcare clinics

What are you looking forward to most in 2024?

Travelling to multiple hot destinations :)

AGGIE

Can you tell us about your role at KCIL?

I joined KCIL in March this year as a part-time Recruiter. It quickly turned out that the role requires more attention and since the 1st of July my position evolved into a full-time job.

My role is to find a suitable PA for our Service Users. The moment when you find a perfect match is the most rewarding moment of my job.

What do you most enjoy doing when you are not working?

When I'm not working, I try to juggle my time between my family, friends, my dog and the allotment. I'm also a soon-to-be grandmother as my oldest son and his girlfriend are expecting their first baby boy. I love socialising with other people, holidays, skiing (I'm not very good at that, but I love it). I would like to believe that I'm creative and artistic so sometimes I do some projects at home like furniture upcycling.

Name three words that describe you?

Loyal, passionate and uncensored

Could you name someone you admire and say why?

I admire ordinary people who are helping others, who can open their door to strangers in need. I was really touched by a big move of help in Poland when Ukraine was attacked by Russia. My real heroes are the ones we anonymously pass on the street, who have to deal with everyday problems (financial, emotional, etc.)

What was your previous job?

Before joining KCIL, I worked as a Financial Assessor at Bursary Administration Limited. My role included assessing financial information provided by parents applying for bursary at the independent schools across the UK. I had to do background checks, a home visit/zoom call, investigation of the family's financial situation and preparing a report to school.

What are you looking forward to most in 2024?

Definitely becoming a grandmother, but also my skiing holiday in February. On the professional ground, I hope to match as many Service Users with perfect PAs as possible.



NAOMI



Can you tell me about your role at KCIL?

Independent Travel Trainer for Sutton and KCIL, I developed the programme materials using a variety of resources including road safety guidelines, the needs of the young people within the community, and the desires of the parents and carers. I ensure that young people build confidence and resilience through travel training then eventually travelling independently, this leads to new work and training opportunities, friendships and so much more.

I work closely with schools across Sutton, liaising with SENDCO's, SEND coordinator's, teachers and TA's, ensuring the needs of the child/young person are consistently being met and the communication between the parent/carers, Sutton, the school and I, remains fluent. I have fortnightly meetings with COGNUS where we discuss current young people receiving ITT as well as potential candidates, this includes creating a timetable for the assisted transport team.

Soon there will be a new generation of travellers in Sutton that maybe would have never tried if it wasn't for Independent Travel Training.

What do you most enjoy doing when you are not working?

I enjoy spending time with my family, most importantly my daughter who is fast becoming an adult.

Three words that describe you?

Energetic, Professional, Caring

Could you name someone you admire and say why?

I admire those who allow the same level of care for themselves as they give to others! Too many great people only receive flowers when they are no longer with us.

What was your previous job?

I previously worked in education as a TA, assistant SENDCO and independent school SENDCO. In these roles I supported and implemented best practice through coordinating policy/legislation and

maintaining SEND strategies, I have been responsible for student assessments which allows for the identification of needs, and supported parent/carers and teachers by implementing interventions and ensuring quality communication.

What are you looking forward to most in 2024?

I am looking forward to new career opportunities, and further developing my skills and abilities. I am also looking forward to witnessing the first set of independent travellers.

LAUREN

Can you tell me about your role at KCIL?

My role at KCIL as Independent Living Advisor, is to guide service users through the process of Direct Payments and employing a PA to help them live as independently as they choose to do so. My job is to make the process as easy as possible, and to be there to support service users and their families each step of the way.

What do you most enjoy doing when you are not working?

When I'm not working, I love to spend time with family and friends and my two 'borrowed' dogs. I love going to watch my Godson Charlie play football on a Saturday morning, even when it's freezing cold! I enjoy cooking and am always looking for new recipes to try.

Three words that describe you?

Empathetic, organised (much to the annoyance of my partner who can never find anything because I've found a new home for it) and loyal.

Could you name someone you admire and say why?

Someone who I have much admiration and respect for is Sir David Attenborough. At 97 years of age, he is still striving to educate people of all ages about the effect that us humans have on the planet. His documentaries are awe inspiring and the way he communicates his passion for the natural world - mesmerising.

What was your previous job?

Before joining KCIL in September this year, I worked in the NHS at St. Helier Hospital as a Phlebotomy Supervisor and Domiciliary Bloods Co-ordinator. Basically, a professional vampire!



SUTTON INDEPENDENT TRAVEL TRAINING SERVICE

Sutton Independent Travel Training launched in April 2023. Independent travel training (ITT) supports young people in developing an important skill for life. ITT has a positive effect on the lives of young people, as well as those around them. Successful travel training enables young people to open their lives to more opportunities for education, employment and social activities. ITT increases confidence, independence and choice for young people.

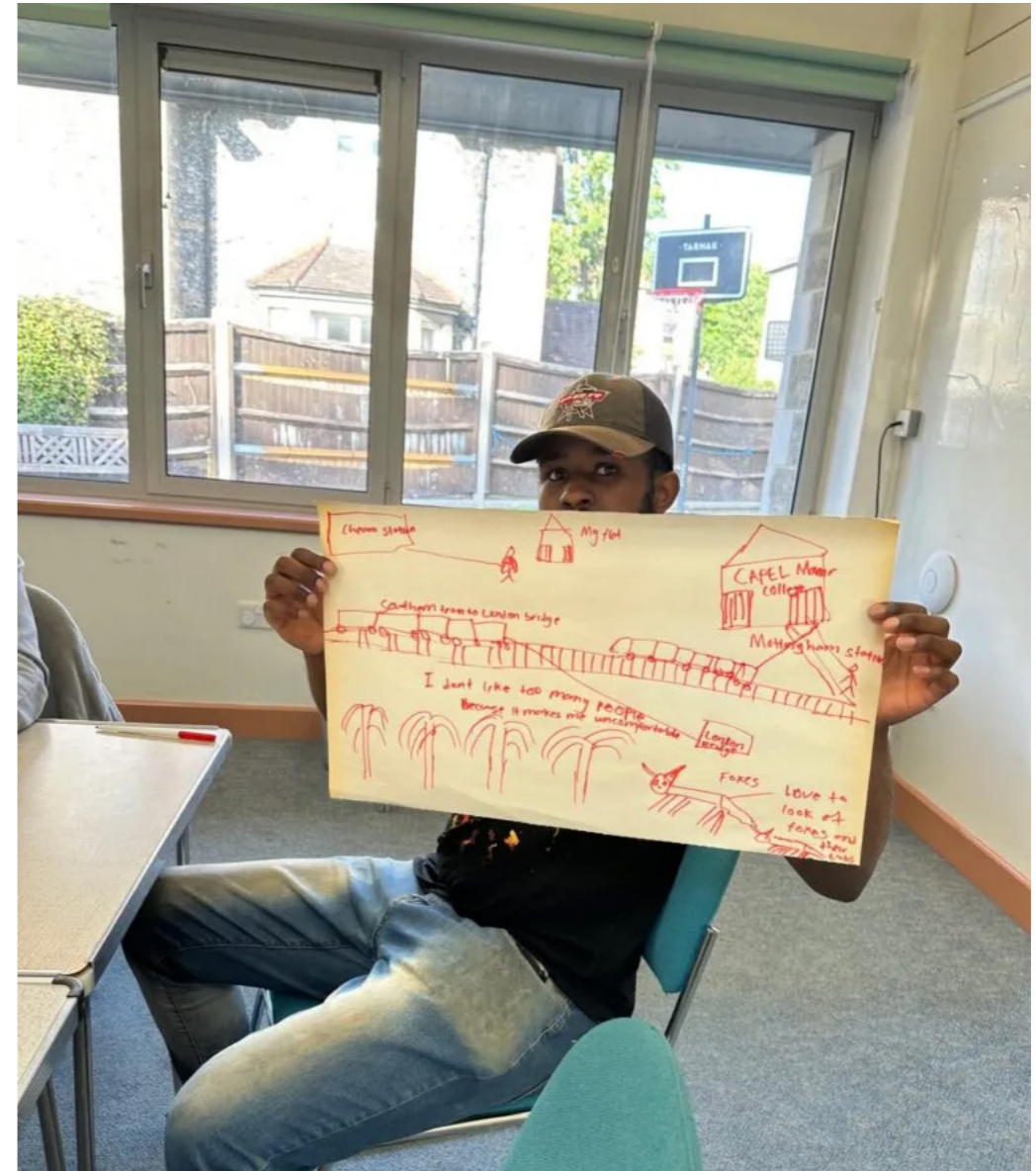
The ITT programme is an individualised travel training programme which includes:

- one-to-one personalised travel trainer support
- journey planning
- road and personal safety skills
- time management
- emergency strategies
- stranger awareness
- contactless payment methods.



SUTTON PERSONAL ASSISTANT SUPPORT SERVICE

Sutton Personal Assistant Support Service launched in July 2023, building on KCIL's expertise in recruiting PAs in the boroughs of Kingston and Richmond. Working with Sutton Adult Social Care and additional outside referrers, we're working with disabled people to highlight the benefits of having a Personal Assistant (PA). We're reaching out to potential PAs in the Sutton area through career events, coffee mornings and PA training sessions, spreading knowledge about the personally rewarding and flexible role of being a PA across South West London.



THANK YOU TO MALDEN GOLF CLUB

Since 2020 KCIL has been one of Malden Golf Club's chosen charities who benefit from their annual charity golf day and prize auction. For the last four years and even throughout Covid the charity committee have managed to raise funds for local charities and this year we were astounded and humbled to be presented with a cheque for £5,500 at the evening charity presentation dinner. We'd like to take this opportunity to personally thank John Driscoll who has been Chair of the Malden Golf Club Charity Committee for the last 13 years and club captain William Fairbairn who have driven these fundraising activities on behalf of local charities. These much-needed funds will go towards supporting disabled people in the borough who are socially isolated.

DEEPEST SYMPATHIES

This year we were sad to say goodbye to Christine Stuart. Christine was a fierce defender of disabled people, the RBK disability champion for many years and was a great friend of Kingston Centre for Independent Living. We want to thank Bruce and Andrew and their family for their very generous donation. And want them both to know how much we appreciate them thinking of KCIL.

We also would like to extend our deepest sympathies to our Chair – Monica Quinton – who sadly lost her husband just recently. Mark attended many of the KCIL social activities and peer group events and was much loved by all the KCIL team. Mark was a quick-witted character that could have a room in fits of laughter with one line. We will miss him and want to extend our love and thoughts to Monica who will always remain a friend of KCIL.



Kingston Centre for Independent Living (KCIL)
River Reach, 31-35 High Street,
Kingston upon Thames,
KT1 1LF

020 85469603 / enquiries@kcil.org.uk
kcil.org.uk