



Kingston Centre For
Independent Living
Empowering Disabled People



ANNUAL REPORT

Kingston Centre for Independent Living

Registered Charity Number: 1123063

Our Mission

KCIL aims to meet the needs of disabled people in and around Greater London and beyond, particularly by representing and supporting their full equality and inclusion so that they might lead independent and empowering lives.



Our Services



Personal Assistant Support

Supporting disabled people and their families across Kingston, Richmond and Sutton, to employ Personal Assistants.



SEND Support

Supporting disabled children and their families across Kingston, Richmond and Southwark, to manage their Direct Payments, Personal Health Budgets and Education and Health Care Plans.



Independent Travel Training

Supporting children and young people, to learn to travel independently on public transport.



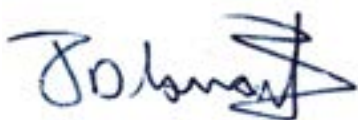
Information, Advice and Guidance

Supporting disabled people and their families with information, advice and guidance on disability and accessibility related issues.

CEO Highlights

Looking back over the last year KCIL has continued to strive for a society where disabled people can lead independent lives and have choice and control in their day-to-day activities. This past year has been one of change for KCIL as we negotiate the twin challenges of local authority funding pressures and increasing uncertainty across the voluntary and charity sector. During the last year the Direct Payments contract we held with Kingston council has been remodelled into a Personal Assistant support service and this meant we had to reduce our staffing levels. All members of the KCIL team and Board met this challenge head on and we have been pleased to win a number of bids that have funded several new projects. Our work in Accessibility has been bolstered with an award from the NHS Inequalities fund and we have again received a very generous donation from Malden Golf Club after their annual charity golf day.

With the pressure on local authority funding our strategy for the last year and beyond is to expand KCIL into new areas and borough's and we are now working in Kingston, Richmond, Sutton and Southwark. As we write this annual report in the last few days of 2024, we are really pleased to have been awarded a new 4-year contract with the London Borough of Brent, which is a completely new borough for KCIL to work with and fits well with our desire to see disabled people live independent and fulfilling lives. The Board and I continue to look for appropriate projects that fit the KCIL ethos and we hope to win new contracts and bring on board new team members in the coming years. As we are now working with 5 local authorities and the NHS we are in a much healthier place for future challenges. As always, I have been supported by an incredibly talented and dedicated team, and I want to thank them all for their hard work and commitment over the last year.



Jason Lamont
Chief Executive Officer





Personal Assistant Support

Sutton Council has commissioned KCIL, with our many years of experience in PA recruitment in the Kingston and Richmond Boroughs, to improve and develop the PA recruitment market within Sutton. KCIL staff have replicated the methods used in Kingston and Richmond to build a database and have successfully matched many PAs to Sutton Direct Payment holders since the beginning of the contract.

KCIL has continued working with Kingston Council and Achieving for Children to recruit PAs to meet the needs of the disabled adults and children we work together with. In a challenging recruitment market, KCIL has been innovative in developing regular recruitment sessions and interviews at local Job Centres, as well as building relationships with other local organisations that support people who may be interested in the rewarding role of a PA.

We have also used our experience in peer support for PAs and employers to develop a support network and have used funding from Skills for Care for mandatory training to enhance the skills of the workforce.

PA and Carer Training

KCIL's free PA, Carer, and Direct Payment employer training, funded by Skills for Care, continues from strength to strength. With core training courses in First Aid, Safeguarding, and Manual Handling each month, plus guest topics such as Mental Health and Epilepsy.

This year's exciting update to our training has been a new venue for our Manual Handling training at the OT assessment centre in New Malden. The trainees get to practice with a wide variety of equipment they may see in the home of the person they are supporting.

KCIL has also hosted Skills for Care's PA Training Directory for the first year, listing all the free training courses offered by the 25 charities participating in the project.



kcil.org.uk/pa-training-courses/

Personal Health Budget Support

Over the past year KCIL has been supporting 30 families with children in receipt of a Personal Health Budget.


The main focus has been to support each family with setting up and managing of their budget and to make sure it meets the outcomes highlighted in the assessment. Each case has also been closely monitored and any issues discussed during regular monthly meetings with ICB leadership.

Direct Payment Support


It has been a very busy year for Direct Payments across both Adult Social Care and Achieving for Children cases, with a total of 88 new referrals since January.

We continue to support service users and their families throughout the whole set-up process and beyond - people who are receiving DP support know that they can contact us and we will help them with any questions that they may have and advocate on their behalf when necessary. In 2024 we have assisted over 200 families with Direct Payment Support and advice, across Kingston and Richmond.

What people have said about us this year



I have been blown away by the outstanding service and support from two people who work for you and just had to let you know. Aggie Van Eijnsbergen who is recruitment and caseworker officer and Lauren Cullinane who is independent living officer both from Kingston Centre for independent living. I don't normally write but I honestly was so impressed with how amazing they both were that I thought it would be great to let you know."



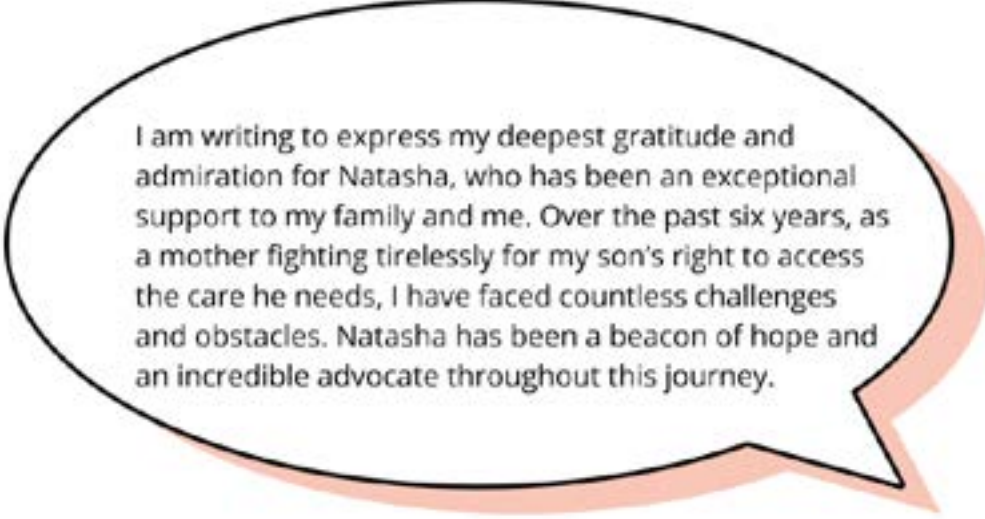
I was very happy to see you today because, in the past six months, no one has come to visit me who could ease my pain and bring me such peace. Today, I thanked God for people like you who are like angels, bringing comfort and security with their kindness and humanitarian spirit. I wanted to express my gratitude for your presence. My daughter and I will be forever grateful to you.

SEND Support

KCIL have continued to provide support to our existing and new families over the course of 2024. KCIL and AFC have had productive commissioning meetings over the year, with positive outcomes on how we can both improve and combine our services, communication, and internal procedures, which have proved effective over the year. This includes shared documents and data between the services which have been created and are now being used.

KCIL have continued to receive excellent feedback from parents and family over the year for our services and advice, which have helped 11 new families gain the personal budget funding they have needed to support their child. We have also supported a large number of our existing cases with revised budgets throughout the year. KCIL currently support 57 young people and their families in the Kingston and Richmond boroughs with new referrals coming in monthly.

This year KCIL also began our collaboration with Southwark Council, we provided our brokerage service for their Education personal budgets. This is the first time Southwark Council have sourced services outside of their internal services. We have had productive meetings with the Southwark Head of SEND service on our procedures and how best we can collaborate to provide the best support to young people and their families through the personal budget process. We currently support 8 families, with referrals coming in monthly.



I am writing to express my deepest gratitude and admiration for Natasha, who has been an exceptional support to my family and me. Over the past six years, as a mother fighting tirelessly for my son's right to access the care he needs, I have faced countless challenges and obstacles. Natasha has been a beacon of hope and an incredible advocate throughout this journey.

Independent Travel Training


Independent Travel Training for SEND children in receipt of Assisted Travel has been a welcome addition to the KCIL service. As the Sutton & KCIL Independent Travel Training team draws to the end of the year, we are looking back at what we have accomplished for 2024.

- ◆ Working closely with schools and SEND stakeholders, we have carried out multiple workshops, presentations and coffee mornings. During this time, we were able to talk with parents and carers about ITT and raise awareness on what it means to be an independent traveller.

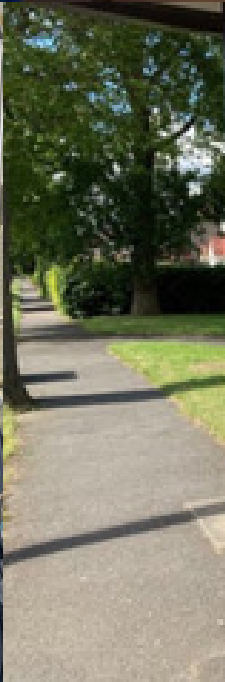
The workshops have allowed us to engage with young people and have open discussions on knowledge around independent travel. The team carried out live action role plays on how a bus journey might look for students (we had lots of fun with this!) and also Q&A's that parent's carers and school staff got involved in along with the students.

Advice on the ITT program was given regarding the application process, along with complementary ITT merchandise such as mini hand gels and stress balls.

- ◆ In 2024, we have carried out over 150 training sessions with SEND pupils in Sutton, navigating bus breakdowns, train cancellations, platform changes and typical British winter weather with the aid of their travel trainer.



Wonderful news! XXX was so very proud when he arrived home last night. Thank you for helping him to become independent. He has spoken very highly of you!

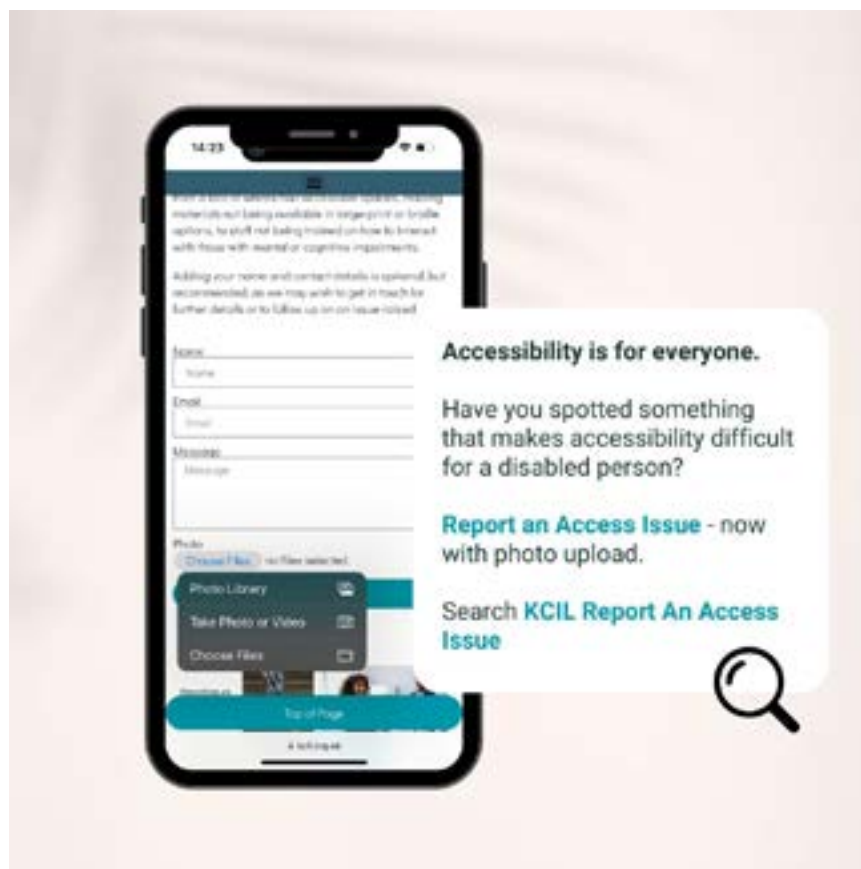


Accessibility

2024 was a big year for accessibility at KCIL, we built on the successes of last year as well as pushing the boundaries of what we can offer to both our service users and local businesses across the borough.

The Access Reporting feature on our website proved a huge success in 2023 and we were able to revamp the page and add new features in 2024. Users can now submit pictures along with their reports, a change that significantly improved our turnaround time on issues submitted as we no longer had to reach out for further information as often. As a result, we noticed an uptick of successful cases processed by approximately 13%.

As well as an increase in volume, we also experienced an increase in the reach of our access services, dealing with cases from 9 new postcodes. These came in response to a specific push to increase awareness of the Access Reporting service, as well as KCIL's own growth into new areas during 2024.



Befriending

2024 saw the return of our successful Befriending service in a new and improved form. Ten in-person group sessions were held at Queen Mary Hall, along with individual sessions held either over the phone or in our offices. Our goal was to create an accessible communal space where service users and local residents could come and socialise together or speak face to face with KCIL staff about their concerns. The project was a great success, reaching 116 individuals and solving a total of 103 Accessibility Issues throughout the duration of the project. As well as numerous referrals to other services within the borough or internally to KCIL, such as PA recruitment. Feedback was extremely positive, with KCIL staff being praised for both their warmth and patience as well as their knowledge on a variety of issues affecting the Disabled Community. Users reported that the project had a huge impact on their mental health, providing relief from the isolation and stress they often felt. In particular they expressed gratitude for our decision to extend the project beyond its original proposal to help foster a longer-term benefit for the community.



Events

Highlights of our Events programme this year included -

KCIL Boat Trip (July)

Our annual popular summer outing involved a scenic boat journey along the Thames, passing Hampton Court Palace and providing participants with a serene view of swans and riverbanks. This year, the Boat Trip was kindly funded by the Douglas Arter Foundation.

Picnic in the Park (August)

KCIL hosted a relaxed summer picnic in Canbury Gardens, Kingston. The event provided an opportunity for the community to gather outdoors, celebrate the season, and connect with KCIL's resources and support network.

Visit to Edith Gardens with Citizen Zoo (August)

KCIL collaborated with Citizen Zoo for an accessible nature outing at Edith Gardens in Surbiton. Participants explored the pocket nature reserve, met dragonflies, and learned about hedgehog rehabilitation.

KCIL Display at Kingston Museum (September to November)

KCIL was kindly invited to display in Kingston Museum's Community Case. Visitors to the museum had a chance to look over a selection from KCIL's long history, including old magazines, photos, posters and fundraising items.



kcil.org.uk/events/



Information, Advice & Guidance at KCIL

- ◆ Application forms
- ◆ Information about disability issues
- ◆ Blue badge applications
- ◆ Pension credit applications
- ◆ Attendance allowance applications
- ◆ Food bank vouchers
- ◆ Digital databank sim cards
- ◆ Accessing the internet and using technology
- ◆ Signposting and contacting other services.



kcil.org.uk/information-and-advice/

Small Grants and Fundraising

KCIL focused on increasing revenue this year by applying for a broader range of grants and small projects. KCIL team member Joanne Stafferton attended a Bid Writing course, doubling the number of trained bid writers on the team. Joanne was personally responsible for several successful bids and greatly enjoyed adding this to her skillset. The team applied for several grants over the year and successfully won funding for several projects. Revenue grew by 118% compared to the previous year.

KCIL continued its community fundraising, with highlights including donations from Malden Golf Club, the Douglas Arter Foundation and several local branches of Waitrose and Tesco.

Finance Report

Balance Sheet 31 March 2024

Current assets	2024	2023
Debtors	£69,473	£37,053
Cash at bank	£282,122	£204,989
Total	£351,595	£242,042
Creditors	(£88,963)	(£38,964)
Net assets	£262,632	£203,078
Total funds	£262,632	£203,078

Statement of financial activities for the year ending 31 March 2024

Income	2024	2023
Donations/Legacies/Grants	£37,889	£22,251
Independent Living contracts	£405,737	£302,594
Investment income	£3,219	£2,937
Total	£446,445	£327,782
Expenditure		
Charitable activities	(£387,291)	(£373,954)
Net income/expenditure	£59,554	£46,172
Reconciliation of funds	£203,078	£249,250
Total funds carried forward	£262,632	£203,078

Chair's Report and Letter to KCIL Members.

Dear KCIL Members

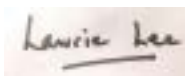
Back in early 2021 we established a small group to look at where we wanted KCIL to be by 2030. We knew we wanted to keep our values; our reputation for caring; and our commitment to playing our part in Kingston to enable people with a disability to lead fulfilled and independent lives. At the same time, we knew we were too dependent on RBK, and too small to make the impact that our members and users deserved. The name KCIL was loved by a few but unknown to far too many.

2021 and 2022 were difficult years for the World let alone a small charity in SW London. But we have made good progress in transforming where and which services we provide. We have a dynamic CEO with a lot of experience and contacts who has built up an excellent team. He started talking to a far wider group of commissioners and we learnt how to bid for contracts beyond our home base. By the third quarter of 2022/23 we started to win tenders. Although we made a deficit in that year, we started to gain momentum. In 2023/24 we made a good surplus, as you can see in the accounts. However at the end of the year we had a setback when RBK restructured our support of users of direct payments and we lost a sizable chunk of our contract. In practice we have taken it in our stride. If that had happened before our transformation, KCIL would have been in a hole.

We now have contracts supporting residents in RBK, Sutton, Richmond, Southwark, and Brent. We remain financially strong.

There is still so much to do to reach our vision for 2030, We have made a good start and I believe we have every chance of achieving our goals without losing sight of our values, our humanity and our commitment to our members and users living fulfilled and independent lives.

May I thank you our members, our staff, and our trustees for your part in this transformation and wish you all a happy New Year.



Lawrie Lee

Chair and Treasurer.

ps We are looking for someone to join the KCIL Board as Co-Chair. Do you know anyone suitable?

Contact

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Email

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