

THIS ISSUE IS ALL ABOUT INDEPENDENCE AND ACHIEVEMENT



KEN'S A GLOBETROTTER AT LAST

FIND OUT HOW KEN OVERCAME HIS FEARS AND BECAME A VIP!
ON PAGES 10 AND 11

STILL JUST SEVENTEEN

JEANETTE FINALLY GETS TO
SEE HER IDOL LIVE.
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TALKING WITH JESSICA

CHECK OUT OUR NEW FEATURE,
WHERE A MEMBER OF THE
EDITORIAL TEAM INTERVIEWS
SOMEONE WHO SUPPORTS THEM.
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Meet some new members of the Editorial Team



Hi! I'm Dennis, I'm 67 years old, and I share a flat with three other men including Kevin who is a good friend and has also joined the editorial team. I really like football, I'm a Chesterfield FC supporter.

I also really enjoy playing walking football, it's a really good way of staying fit. I love cooking and shopping for food. I especially like baking, cakes mostly, my specialty is chocolate brownies which everyone loves.

I'm really looking forward to my first assignments as a reporter for Lifelines, I have written a feature about my holiday in Scarborough (page 9) and another piece about a meeting I was invited to the Chorley office to report on a new group wide event (page 15).



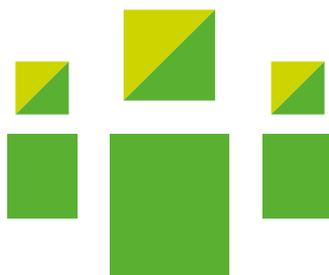
My name is Kevin, I'm a big football fan, and I support my local team Chesterfield FC. I go to all home games with my housemate Dennis and we have a great time. I like playing walking football, it's a good way of keeping fit and its fun to do with your mates.

I like to go train spotting and to the local motor bike shop, but that's because they do a cracking breakfast! I really like my food, I enjoy cooking, baking – mostly cakes because they are delicious.



Hello! My name is Amanda and I have just joined the editorial team, I love baking cakes, doing colouring in and I work in the Lifeways office doing the shredding. I will be turning 50 soon and have been planning a big party with lots of friends, family, food and a DJ for a while and I can't wait to celebrate.

I love collecting CDs, especially the "Now That's What I Call" collection. I have 56 so far, I would like to get the full 101! I love all kinds of music as long as it has a beat and you can dance to it.



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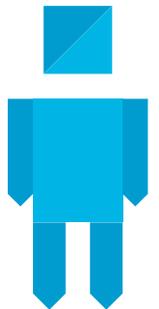
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Challenging Myself

Written by Krista

Hi my name is Krista and I have been living in supported living for just over 4 years. A few months ago I asked my support team to help me find a voluntary work placement. They asked me some questions about things I like to do, what kind of job I wanted and what I didn't want to do.



I told them I wanted to work with animals, I like being outside and I didn't want to be stuck in an office or shop. I really like dogs, my mum has a pug called Tula and I really enjoy walking her. They helped me to find a placement at Babbington Rescue centre, they take in stray and abandoned dogs. It's a lovely place, they don't put dogs down and they vaccinate, micro-chip and neuter/spay so they can find a forever home.

I started working at the centre about five months ago, I had an induction so that I knew what I was doing. I go every Tuesday morning, I have to catch 2 buses to get to Babbington and then walk about half a mile to the centre. Between the journey and walking the dogs I am getting very fit! There are lots of health and safety regulations you have to remember to follow, especially things like making sure to walk 2 meters away from another dog, that keeps me and the dogs safe.

All the staff are really helpful, polite and have taught me a lot about how to care for the dogs. I walk up to 4 to 5 dogs depending on what time I have. Some of the dogs are friendly and love going for walks. If you love dogs then this is the very best job.

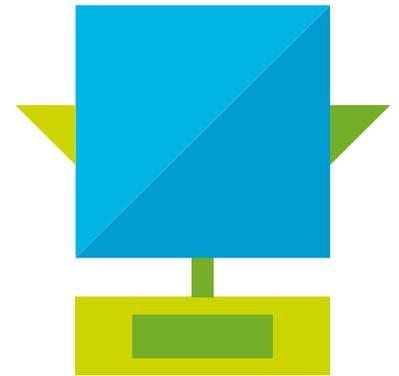
I have really enjoyed walking the dogs but I feel I am ready for a bigger challenge now so I am hoping to start volunteering with horses from April. Horses are my favourite animal, I love them and used to have horse riding lessons a few years ago. It's my goal to get a permanent job working with horses.

Rocky



Written by Dave's team

Dave is now a fitter, healthier and happier version of himself due to his love of boxing. Dave had been taking ADHD medication twice a day for over twenty years. His new psychiatrist was very keen for him to stop but we needed to manage this very carefully.



With support Dave cut down from twice a day to once a day for six months, then one every other day for a year. At this point the doctor stopped the medication altogether.

As with most medication for ADHD reducing it can cause changes in someone's behaviour, and Dave was quite anxious about this. Dave's behaviour did change, he became more alert, confident and friendly and we found he has a fantastic sense of humour.

The only negative effect of Dave coming off his medication was that he quickly started to gain weight. The support team talked Dave through the disadvantages of gaining weight, how it would affect his overall health and fitness. Dave said he didn't want to carry on gaining weight and wanted to get fit, and he thought that boxing would be a good way of doing this.

The team did some research and found that Paul Lane Personal Training had done lots of work with people like Dave. We booked a meeting with Paul so he and Dave could discuss what Dave wanted to do and how. Paul agreed to work with Dave and ourselves, he put a training plan together, that was two hourly sessions a week. One session was boxing themed where they played the music from the film 'Rocky' to spur Dave on. The second session was based around army training because Dave would love to go in the army.

Dave has been going to the gym for a year now and has lost 7kgs, that's about 20 cans of tomato soup! He's fitter, healthier and his concentration and coordination has improved immensely. Dave has made it onto the wall of fame at the gym for hitting his target weight, but most importantly he really enjoys going to the gym.

You must speak to your doctor before making any changes with regards to prescribed medication.

The Great Bunkhouse Bake Off

Written by Kirsty Morgan – Administrator at Loch Park

Loch Park held their first ever Bake Off, the venue was not quite the Bake Off tent, but it was their lovely bunk house. The hope is that they will be able to convert it into a café for the local community and tourists and that the people we support will be able to run it.

Two teams fought for the honour of being Bake Off champions, lemon drizzle and carrot cake were their weapons of choice!

It was a really close fight with only three points between the two teams, the carrot cake won the day due to its fantastic presentation and the special ingredient – carrots! Alex, Alistair, and Graeme were the winners.

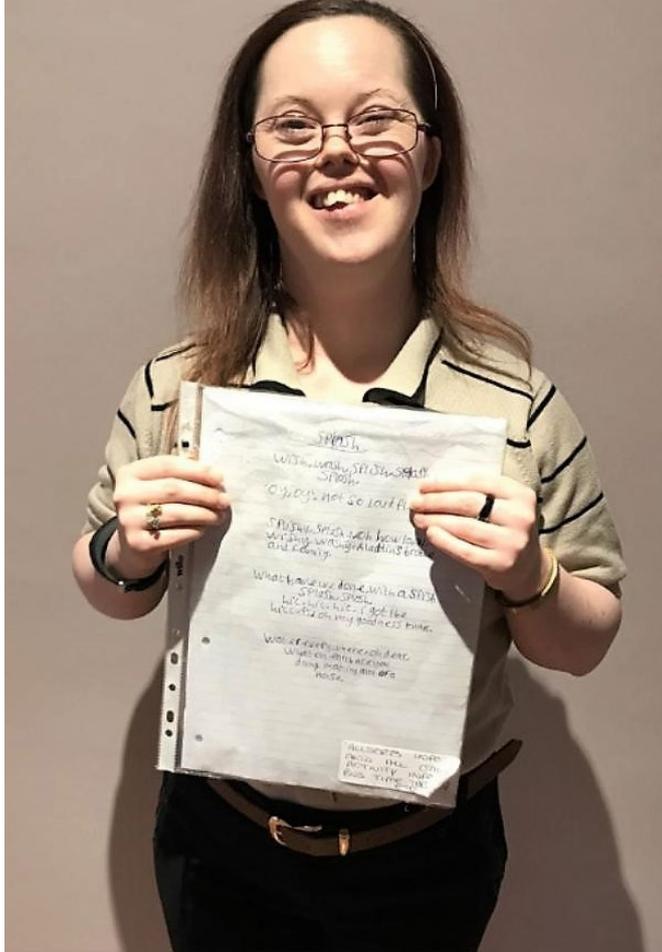




The runners up amazing lemon drizzle cake was a firm favourite with the surprise judge Mary Berry! (see photo below).



Thank you to the judges, Christopher, Raymond and Liam (AKA Mary Berry) for all their expert cake tasting on the day and not a soggy bottom was seen!



Flip Flop is from a book of poems that Rachel has written over the last few years. She really enjoys writing and says "I am on top of the world because I like rhyming up words from my head and putting them down to make them sound funny, crazy and important. My imagination inspires me."



Flip Flop

by Rachel

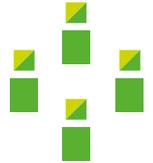
Rachel the ragdoll likes to dance
Gone to France for a romance
Away for a day say, say, say
Flowers in May that's okay
Audience clapping, Paolo rapping
Tap, tap, tapping, flap, flap, flapping
Outer space, find your place
These streets duvet in sheets
Growing up beside you, this is news
Shoo, shoo, shoo, I do, I do, I do
Rewind, rewind, can I find
Please be kind, would you mind.

Cricket and the Sea Fret



Written by Dennis, a member of the Lifelines Editorial Team

I wanted to have a holiday for a few days and watch the cricket, I love cricket, it's a great sport to watch.



I used to go to Scarborough when I was a boy with my family and have lots of nice memories of it. So I asked Steven, who is part of my support team to see if there were any cricket matches coming up and he supported me to do the planning.

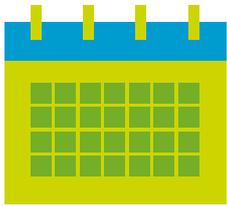
Steven asked me where I would like to stay and I picked a guest house that I had heard had a really good breakfast and was just across the road from the cricket ground, which meant we didn't have to waste time travelling each day.

The match was four days long and was really important as Surrey were at the top of the league, it was thrilling to be there! The cricket ground is really big, we had really good seats and it was packed full of people from Surrey and all over Yorkshire. We had a great time talking to people that we met and I even got to meet a famous umpire called Dickie Bird and he shook my hand. The weather was really good but on day two the players were taken off for sea fret (fog to you and me) it was so thick the cricketers couldn't see the ball.

The price of tickets to the cricket, guest house, travel and food and drink were all really reasonable and very good value. We watched the cricket every day, grabbing quick lunches at local pubs and the chip shop. In the evenings we popped into Scarborough town centre for meals at some lovely restaurants and pubs to discuss the day's session over a few pints. It was a great holiday and I will definitely be going again in the future.



A Globetrotter at Last



Ken is 49 years old, he moved into his own flat five years ago, having spent most of his adult life living in residential care.

Ken suffers from anxiety. He has planned lots of holidays, even getting as far as paying the deposit but always ended up cancelling them. Two years ago Ken was supported to accompany a friend, on an overnight trip to Blackpool. After this trip Ken started talking about going on holiday again, but this time he wanted to book the holiday of a lifetime! Ken loves thrills, rides and scares so where on earth did he go?

Ken: I chose to go to the Halloween Horror Nights at Universal Studios in Orlando, Florida. It's a lot bigger and better than the English theme park horror nights. Going to America was the chance to have a holiday of a lifetime, to do and see things I've never done or seen before.

We arranged for TUI to help with the planning and booking of the holiday. The travel agent showed me lots of videos and brochures. 3 hours later I had a package holiday to suit my needs. Spending time going over everything really helped me to feel comfortable with my choices and watching the videos meant I knew exactly what to expect.

Right from the start of the holiday I was treated like a VIP, the travel agent had spoken to the airline about my needs and I was given a lanyard which meant their staff knew to help me through security quickly and they made sure I was OK. I would recommend





everyone to ask for the lanyard it makes getting through the airport so much easier. On the plane the crew gave me a model of the actual plane we were on and at the end of the flight I was taken into the cockpit to meet the pilot!

I chose to stay at WorldQuest Orlando Resort because it was near Universal Studios and we could have a 2-bedroom apartment and not just a room. I had a big double bedroom with my own bathroom, Bev and Jodie (my support workers) had their own room. I felt really safe at the hotel and liked that I could sit out on the patio for a cigarette during the night and didn't need one of my support team to be there. Being in an apartment meant that I could get away from the crowds and relax in private, this really helped me to feel chilled.

Sometimes I found Universal Studios hard work and tiring, with lots of walking and people, but when I wanted a break there were places that were quieter and I could relax. The Halloween Horror nights were good, it was funny watching the actors chasing and scaring people. I enjoyed lots of the rides, especially Transformers which was great.

I took a limo to Planet Hollywood where I had the biggest burger you've ever seen, it was massive and so good. The limo was so big I didn't know where to sit. I only went for a week and that wasn't really long enough to do everything. But because it was the first time I had been out of the country and flown I didn't want to overdo it. If you want to go take plenty of money as there are lots of good things to buy there. Take extra money because you have to pay tax on everything you buy. I had a budget of around \$1000, this covered meals, taxis, spending money and any emergencies.

The cost of the trip to Florida was worth it but the parks are very expensive. I am definitely going on holiday this year, maybe a more chilled beach holiday somewhere like Greece.

Flying High



Written by Tracy

I love watching helicopters and planes taking off and landing, I go over to Sywell Aerodrome all the time and I even spent the day at the Blackpool air show on my last holiday!



Flying in a helicopter has been on my bucket list for years and as I was 40 last year I thought it was about time to do it. So when I got back from my holiday in Blackpool my support team and I started researching places I could have a helicopter flying experience. We looked online at all the different packages to see what was good value and not too far away. We found the perfect one and I invited my mum and dad to come along so they could share the experience.

I absolutely loved it, we flew at over 100 miles an hour! Our pilot James asked me if I was scared, but I just laughed and said "No I'm brave". My mum was really scared, she said "We were so high that cars and people looked like Lego!". It was great fun and I just loved it so much that I hope I can do it again.





Talking with Jessica

Hi I am Sharon and I am a member of the Lifelines editorial team, this is the first in a series of interviews the people who support us.



I chose to interview my key worker from the day centre I attend. We've been working together for ages and Jessica also runs the sketch group, which I really love being part of as I enjoy drawing and sketching a lot.

Sharon: Do you enjoy your job?

Jessica: Yes, I do, every day is completely different. It is a special role to be a part of people's lives as I am.

Sharon: What do you enjoy about it?

Jessica: There are many things I enjoy in my job. I especially like the sketch group I run at the centre. It is always a fun group who enjoy learning new skills. Being a key worker to someone means I get to know them a little bit more which is nice. It means I get to see how they progress and help them to achieve their goals.

Sharon: What is hard about your job?

Jessica: It is important that I find the right level of support for the person I am supporting. Everyone is different and it is important to get that right.

Sharon: Did you always want to be a key worker?

Jessica: To be honest, I wasn't familiar with this work before coming into it. But I wanted to try something new and the opportunity came up.

Sharon: Can you tell me about a special moment working here?

Jessica: Well, I have been here for over 12 years now, so I have had a lot of moments that have been special. It is too hard to choose just one.

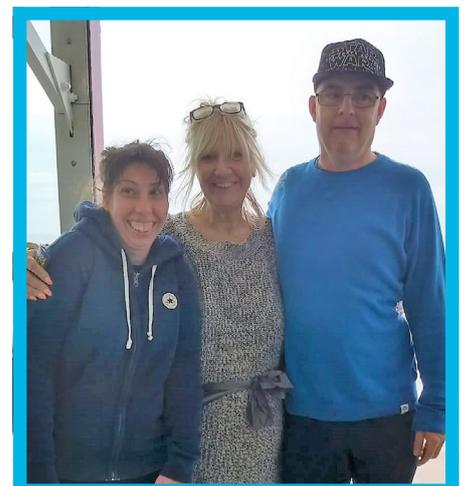
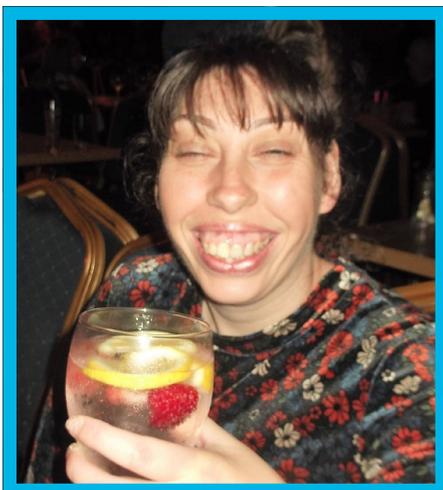
Sharon: Do you ever get fed up with your job?

Jessica: There are some days that can be hard. But you learn how to deal with the issues and then move on. Even when it's challenging the job is very rewarding.

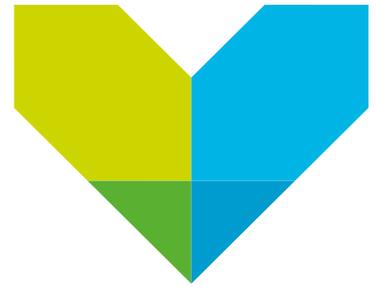


Winter Holiday Fun

Friends from Dudley enjoy a winter break in Blackpool



Wedding Bliss



Adam had a fantastic day recently attending his sister's wedding.

Adam is 31 years old, and has been supported by his team for the last 14 years. Adam struggles with being in busy and unfamiliar places, this causes him a great deal of anxiety and results in challenging physical behaviour. However, in the past few years he has learnt to challenge himself and control his behaviour, and he is becoming more independent. Adam's sister recently got married and he was very happy and proud to be there.

Adam's mum Mandy said "We had a wonderful day, made extra special by Adam being able to be with us. Only a couple of years ago we could never have imagined that Adam would have been able to cope with such a busy and overwhelming day. It just goes to show how far he has come since he has been supported by you. It was lovely for Adam to see all of his cousins, who he had not seen for several years and he remembered them all!"



Fighting Fit

Shaun loves boxing and attends Fight Factory boxing gym in Gloucester every Friday afternoon.

He goes along with his housemates and others who have varying needs. Shaun says "I work really hard and really enjoy it, we have even got a punch bag at home now to help us keep fit and train."

The boxing sessions are for people with learning disabilities, run every Friday at 3pm and cost £5 for 45 minutes – if you live in Gloucester and would like to find out more please contact adamgreene1986@gmail.com or Jennifer Collins the Office Manager at our Gloucestershire Office on 01453 766 441.



Still Just Seventeen



By Joanne McPartland – Acting Senior Service Manager

I have supported Jeanette for a very long time and she has been dreaming of seeing Kylie Minogue live forever! I promised her that if she ever played in Liverpool I would take her. So when Kylie announced her UK tour, we checked and sure enough she was playing in Liverpool.

Jeanette and I have always had a great relationship and she loves talking to me about how we used to buy 'Just Seventeen' when we were kids and plaster our walls with posters of Kylie and Jason!!

First we had to get permission from her appointees to purchase the tickets and check with her brother that he was happy for Jeanette to go. Her brother was really pleased that she was finally getting the opportunity to see her idol.

Lisa, one of Jeanette's support team was tasked with getting up very early on ticket sale day. The show sold out in minutes, but Lisa managed to bag 3 tickets, including a free one for a carer, which enabled Jeanette to take 2 staff with her!! The Liverpool echo arena were very understanding of Jeanette's needs and this really helped.

Jeanette can become very anxious when visiting unfamiliar places. Planning was really important to make sure we managed Jeanette's anxiety and expectations. We started off by showing her photos of Kylie on tour, then photos of the arena to explain how big it is. Finally, we showed YouTube videos of Kylie on tour so she would know what to expect on the night.



Jeanette can become very anxious on public transport, she sometimes shouts out at members of the public, which upsets and embarrasses her. We asked Jeanette if she would rather travel in Lisa's car which she readily agreed to. Lisa and Jeanette took a few trips before the show so that she was familiar with the car and the journey. Jeanette was adamant that she did not want to visit the Echo Arena before the show, so we did not put this into the plan.

Jeanette felt comfortable with all the plans for the journey etc. now the only thing she was worried about was what to wear! We supported her to choose a new jumper, leggings and matching boots, she looked amazing. She even made sure that myself and Lisa dressed up too!!

Jeanette wanted to make the most of her trip to Liverpool so we went early, when we arrived we saw one of the giant flip flops being pulled out of the Mersey, Jeanette was mesmerised. We had a lovely meal and popped into a local bar. Jeanette really enjoyed a cocktail, which she has since been asking for in her local pub. We had a little dance and had a chat with some people who were also going to see Kylie.

We got to the Echo arena, found our seats and the lights went down, the music started and Jeanette went very quiet. We wondered if Jeanette was not happy and might want to leave. I was about to ask her if she was ok, when suddenly Kylie appeared on stage and that was it, Jeanette was up on her feet. She danced all night, to every song and had Lisa and I up dancing too!

It was an amazing night, to see the pure joy and excitement on her face and watch her achieve one of her dreams. Going to the concert has given her lots of confidence, she has since been to Blackpool to another show and she is planning a holiday in Benidorm this summer.

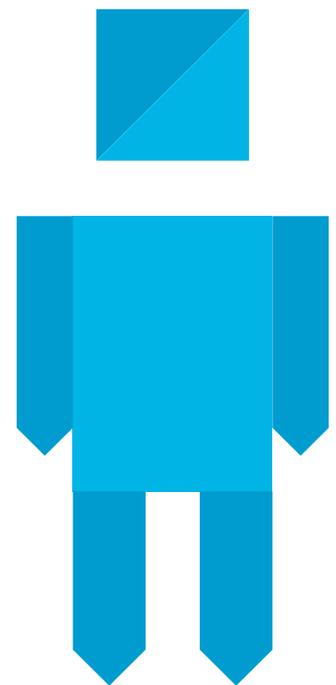




Celebrating in Style

by Maxine Crampton – Team Leader

Philip celebrated his 70th year in style. He has always dreamed of going on a cruise ship and visiting as many countries as possible. For a while it looked like this might not be possible, as Philip was diagnosed with bowel cancer. During his treatment Philip was very positive, he never let his illness get him down. He was always smiling and making new friends at the hospital. The consultant did his yearly check-up and found no issues, so Philip decided to start planning.



First thing for Philip to decide was who would go with him on the cruise, top of his list was Harry. Harry and Philip have been housemates for over 20 years and get on really well, they always choose each other to share activities with. Philip asked myself and Patrick if we would support them on their amazing journey, we were really honoured to be asked and set about supporting Philip to book his dream holiday.



We spent some time researching different ships, countries and travel agents and in the end we decided to ask the manager at TUI Macclesfield to help us as there was so much choice. She found a package called Sail the 3 Seas, which sailed from Croatia and travelled to six countries, just what Philip wanted, so we booked it!

We flew from Manchester to Croatia where we joined the ship. There was so much to do on board, luckily our second day was spent at sea so we had plenty of time to explore. The ship was so big there were shops, a spa, bars, a casino, coffee shops, a library, a theatre and lots of great restaurants.

We visited Malta, Sicily, Kefalonia, Greece, Montenegro and then back to Croatia. Philip said, "Montenegro was so beautiful, the scenery just took my breath away."

One day it rained and Philip chose to go to the spa for a leg and body massage, and had a facial treatment, he really enjoyed his pamper day.

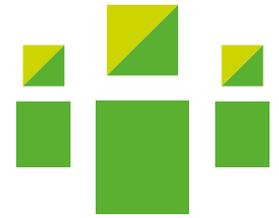
He loved the ship and all the facilities, he enjoyed the mini bar in the cabin, he tried out the spa and had a massage and facial which he really enjoyed. As the cruise was all inclusive, Philip and Harry tried lots of different cocktails, they even joined a cocktail making event and went to a quiz. We spent most of our evenings watching a show or entering the gameshows, dancing with other holiday makers and joining in the karaoke! Everyone was very friendly and Philip and Harry smiled the whole time.

Philip said, "I wanted to go on a boat holiday and visit many places and drink cocktails. I enjoyed my holiday, we had fun, we went to lots of shows and there was always lots of food and they put drinks in your room every day. We met the captain and have a book of memories now to look at."

Philip has the travel bug and we are already planning his holiday for this summer, he's decided on something a little slower paced probably a beach holiday in Greece.

Pride Festival

Written by Lifelines editorial team member Dennis



I was invited to attend a meeting hosted by members of the Our Voice coproduction group recently. They are really busy planning the first ever Lifeways Group LGBTI+ Pride event.

The event will be for everyone, it will give us all a chance to meet, celebrate who we are and make some new friends. It sounds brilliant fun, there will be entertainment like musical performances, games and art activities – as well as stalls offering advice and information. There will be lots of events over the summer to help raise money for the festival, such as bake sales, car washes and supermarket bag packing.

Pride will take place on 26th September at Chorley Football Club, and there will also be local events taking place across the country. Everyone is invited, so look out for full details in the next issue of Lifelines and on our Facebook page. If you want to get involved talk to your support teams about what you would like to do and they can support you to plan events and fund raise.



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



Head office:
The Lifeways Group
56 Southwark Bridge Road
London
SE1 0AS



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