



Our Yearbook

April 2017 - March 2018



A year in the life of our staff,
our trustees and our service users,
told through pictures and words...



**SERVICES FOR
INDEPENDENT
LIVING**

We hope you enjoy this rollercoaster ride of some of our best moments of our 2017 and 2018 year.

We celebrate the achievements of individuals, teams and the whole of Services for Independent Living.

You can also spot the SIL yellow jumper and Tshirts, how many can you see as you track back through the year.

The Great Spring Gardening Event

After weeks of glorious sunshine, the British Red Cross chose to host their annual event on what proved to be the coldest day of April!

However, this didn't stop SIL and WISH joining forces and attending the event. As well as being a useful networking event, it was also a great opportunity for Lisa Bradley to test the newly purchased SIL gazebo and the first of many outings of the SIL sweatshirt.



The David Price Award

The Making it Real Board (MIR) at Herefordshire Council has set up an award in memory of David Price, one of SIL's Service Users for many years.

MIR is looking for people who do their utmost to help with disability issues despite their own difficulties, as David did through his campaigning which started in 1995. In 1998 he became the first recipient of a

direct payment in Herefordshire and was the Chairperson of GILD (Group for Improved Living for the Disabled), where he inspired others to retain their independence and take charge of their own futures.

The thinking behind the Award is that it will go to someone who is a volunteer, however, it could be that someone who is a paid employee puts in the extra effort in their own time to support the vision of independence and would therefore be eligible to be nominated for the Award.

A warm welcome goes out to...

- Emma Little, Finance, Admin and Payroll Officer
- Pauline Taylor, Finance, Admin and Payroll Officer
- Kate Bucher, Support Worker
- Naomi Fulcher, Support Worker
- Chelsey Fulcher, Support Worker
- Martina Pritchard, Support Worker
- Linda Jones, Support Worker
- Jon Phelps, WISH Advisor



Compliments...

SIL staff pride themselves on going above and beyond the call of duty, and Carissa demonstrated this in abundance recently. She responded to an emergency support request giving up her Saturday afternoon and staying with the SU until 1:00am.

The level of support she gave feeds into all the CQC criteria; she provided a safety net for the SU even though we are not commissioned to support that person on Saturdays, she exhibited a high quality of care, she was totally responsive to the situation, and her support provided an effective security for the SU, as well as portraying leadership qualities that are highly commendable.

From IL@H.Management.

Congratulations...



Val Javens is our new Registered Manager. Congratulations Val.



Hooray for Debbie Griffiths who has recently been promoted to the role of Acting Team Leader.



Christy Dallow has been promoted to a new role as Payroll and Financial Admin Team Leader.



Long service award

It's plain to see why these three are so smiley as Lesley Davies celebrates 10 years of working for SIL.

May fun and frolics with Lisa Bradley in the spotlight

Lisa and her slow cooker were at it again, cooking up a baked potato feast for the WISH team and colleagues at the Hereford library.

She raised over £40 which, added to the amount she and Gemma raised at the Leominster Bingo event, increased their donation to St Michael's Hospice to well over £600. Any rumour that Lisa is setting up a WISH hub on an A49 layby to pursue her potato passion is definitely fake news!

Supporting Alheimers Society Demetia Awareness Week.



With one person developing dementia every 3 minutes in the uk, Lisa and Euan took their pledges to raise awareness for the cause.

Is anybody else wondering if Lisa can hold a tune?

She even had time to fit in a holiday to Japan and get the SIL brand out and about again... are you still counting?



Manchester Half Marathon



Gemma Lewis was back in her running shoes on the 28th May, taking part in the Manchester Half Marathon with her friend Claire from Kington Harriers.

The event took place just a week after the terrible bombing and thousands turned out to cheer on the runners, creating an amazing but poignant atmosphere. The run passed through many of Manchester's landmarks including the old Coronation Street set, Manchester City's football stadium the Etihad and Manchester United's football stadium Old Trafford.

Here they are with the Nando's chicken.

Dementia Awareness Week

Sally's Coffee morning in aid of Young Inset Dementia at The Priory was a great success.

Well done Sally and a big thank you to all those who attended!





Disability Confident Leader

In June we were pleased to announce that SIL had been awarded the recognition of being a 'Disability Confident Leader' and become one of only 25 organisations in the country to have achieved this accolade.

This means that as an organisation we are taking an active leadership role in encouraging and helping other employees on their journey to becoming Disability Confident and championing disability confidence within the local and business community, supply chain and our networks.

Cupcake Day

Taste buds were tantalised with the impressive spread of Cupcakes made for Alzheimer's Society Cupcake Day. A whopping £155 was raised for the charity and prizes were won by:

Guess the sprinkles – Carissa

**Guess the cupcake flavour –
Caroline**

**Pin the Cherry on the cupcake –
Abbie**

**Spot the city where the cupcake is
hiding – Rachel.**





SIL reaches new heights - volcanoes to palaces

The SIL brand reached new heights this month when one of our t-shirts was taken on a trip to Sicily. Here is Shelagh Callaghan, Marketing & Development Manager, wearing it on the beach on the tiny volcanic island of Stromboli, and who then ventured towards the summit of Mt Etna.

Next to Shelagh is Service User Colin Javens, who was also the Chair of our Trustees until September last year, proudly displaying a SIL Hoodie outside the gates of Buckingham Palace. Colin had been invited to a Royal Garden Party on the recommendation of Lady Darnley, the Lord Lieutenant of Herefordshire, to thank him for his work with SIL and other charitable endeavours supporting people with disabilities.

The Three Peaks Challenge

Not quite THE Three Peaks Challenge, but nevertheless a year after signing up to undertake the National Three Peaks challenge Gemma Lewis has finally achieved the Welsh Three Peaks.

Taking place on a very foggy day at the beginning of the month Gemma set out and climbed Snowdon, Cadair Idris and Pen Y Fan to achieve the challenge and the coveted Welsh Three Peaks medal. Can you spot Gemma in the fog at the summit of Cadair Idris?

This was a total of 17 miles walking and an ascent of 4920 feet. Despite being lower than Snowdon Gemma found Cadair Idris the hardest to climb, mostly due to the amount of scrambling over rocks involved.



Gemma, if you're there; well done, you've done SIL proud!

Practice makes perfect

All our staff are kept up to date in essential training courses from First Aid to Moving and Positioning. In June, they were learning life saving skills on the First Aid training course.

Here is Briony practicing her bandaging skills on Kate.



Compliments...

Lesley; for pulling out the stops and arranging cover for an urgent request from a DP Service User. IL@H demonstrated its flexibility and its ability to work across different departments in SIL and showed how responsive and effective our service is.

From: Val

Thank you so much Karen, you taught me so much so quickly.

From: Team Leader

WISH team; I just wanted to say an enormous thank you for coming to our Coffee Morning today. It was really a benefit to all concerned. We all felt that we now have a way of steering people in the right direction. You do such a worthwhile job, keep up the good work.

From: an External Organisation

Thank you so much to Elaine's team for working so hard to make Toni and his girls' stay so enjoyable.

From: a Family Member

Thank you to Martina , Elaine T, Teresa, Debbie and Pauline; for all their hard work and support for covering shifts when there were unexpectedly shifts to cover.

From: Lesley

Since Donna and her team have taken over my husband's care I arrive home every day to find him with a smile on his face. I know that he feels a great weight has been lifted from his shoulders and he now enjoys his supported days.

From: Mary, a SU's wife.

Investing in our team

All our staff receive training in our 'essentials', a set of courses which SIL believe are key to our staff delivering the best possible care and service to our customers. Our training team is made up of our colleagues, who bring hands on experience and knowledge, and external providers.



Here are some of our trainees proudly displaying their certificates.

Congratulations to everyone who successfully completed training this month

PEG Feeding:

- Rita Richards
- Lesley Davies
- Pauline McLaughlin
- Martina Pritchard
- Debbie Griffiths
- Linda Burgoyne

Social Media course:

- Karen Hunt
- Casey Jones

Foundation Course in Excel:

- Casey Jones
- Sue Robbins

Intermediate Course in Excel:

- Casey Jones
- Paulette White



Congratulations...

Lesley Davies has been seconded to the role of Compliance and Assurance Manager based in the Leominster office.

Lesley will continue to undertake some of her current duties and oversee team 2a but will play a vital role in ensuring all IL@H documentation is compliant and fit for purpose.

Mans best friend

The Staff Forum met at the end of July and were delighted to welcome Izzy from My Guide and Guide Dogs and her furry friend, the adorable Sinclair.



Compliments...

Thanks Graham for getting cover on Saturday evening, so that you could pop over to make this railway work for "Luke". From: Elaine Powell

The Great SIL Summer Garden Party

A fabulous time was had by all who attended this event on the 20th July, when luckily the weather stayed dry until just after the last guests had departed.



There were games, a raffle, bbq food and live music from service users Damien and Sheila. The Trustees who had attended a Board meeting earlier in the day stayed on to welcome visitors and we even had a visit from a reporter with the Hereford Times.

All the food and games were free as a thank you to both staff and service users who continue to support SIL and the work we do.

Nearly £80 was collected from a raffle which was raising funds for Euan and Gemma's sponsorship for the Great North Run. They will be running for Genetic Disorders UK.



Compliments...

I just wanted to say well done and many thanks to you and the Team for arranging such an enjoyable and successful Garden/Patio Party. The refreshments were much appreciated, the burgers were delicious and the stalls were great fun (Ping Pong Fury being my particular favourite!) The afternoon was obviously enjoyed by everyone, so thank you to all involved, proving yet again that SIL staff always 'go the extra mile'.

From: a Trustee



She's a star

Abby has won the crazy hair award for her sparkly hair at the Aspire Community Hub; here she is proudly showing us her prize.

Wheelie Big Cycle

SIL staff took to the roads around Herefordshire as part of the 2017 *Wheelie Big Cycle*.

The annual event raises funds for St Michael's Hospice and this year SIL was well represented by Gemma Lewis, Emma Little, Karen Hunt and Karen's 11 year old daughter Ruby, who also completed the 16 mile course.

To date the event has raised over £21,000 so well done to the SIL cyclists for being part of this successful fundraising event.



SIL's Euro aspirations

SIL has made it to the European Cup! Jennie Jones, Finance Officer, along with Ross Juniors FC, travelled to watch England play in the Women's European Cup in Breda, Netherlands.

Ross Juniors FC had been selected to be the England team mascots and were very proud to walk onto the pitch at the start of the game against Spain. We are delighted to see SIL with Kicky, Holland's official football mascot!



Hands on training

Take that!

Lesley takes on a blaze in the Fire Safety & Warden training.



Congratulations

Congratulations to the following employees who have successfully achieved their Care Certificates

- Paul Oldman
- Teresa Jones
- Martina Pritchard
- Marilyn Phillips
- Karen Bennett
- Kay Davies
- Linda Jones
- Pauline McLaughlin

Rounders Recruitment

SIL fielded its first ever rounders team at a tournament in Hereford last week and although the team may not have won the trophy, they all enjoyed it so much they want to do it again!

Back row, l to r:

Alice Leach, Peter Leach, Val Javens, Sue Robbins, Hannah Robbins.

Front row, l to r:

Emma Little, Georgie, Mary Leach, Paulette White and Lesley Davies.



Compliments...

I would like to acknowledge the enthusiasm and commitment of Lisa. Having attended an event at the library I realised just how many events Lisa supports on behalf of SIL and WISH, always with enthusiasm and a smile on her face. A great ambassador for the service and the organisation.

From: Euan

Donna, Graham, Gary – My partner is a changed person, when I arrive home from work he has a smile upon his face. He receives great communication, rotas within 2 hours of dates being sent out to the Team Leader and now feels a great weight from off his shoulders and loves his supporting days

From: a Service User

I would first of all like to say thank you for having me on the training. I very much enjoyed it and ask if there are any more things that we can attend

From: a Service User

Donna's focus is completely service-user centred, she practices an outcomes-based approach, and is dedicated to making the difference for SIL's service users. Her candour and determination to make things right for JW in particular, but all the SUs she works with, is an example for all, and I would like to thank her on behalf of SIL for her commitment and enthusiasm.

From: Val

Chelsey and Naomi, for willingly taking on the responsibility of feeding and looking after two pets during the time a Service User went on holiday' –

From: a Team Leader



SIL Meets Welsh Minister

In August 2017 Torfaen CBC were visited by the Minister for Social Services and Public Health, Rebecca Evans AM, to discuss Direct Payments after the implementation of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act.

Sam Morgan, Zoe Williams, Gill Pratlett (Head of Adult Services), Cathy Marshall (Team Lead, Central Cwmbran Wellbeing Team), David Clayton (Welsh Government) and the Minister's assistant discussed the new patch based teams, the benefits and challenges of Direct Payments and the working relationship between the local authority and SIL.

Having fun at SIL today

Guess the weight of the monster marrow to raise money for Genetic Disorders UK and support Gemma and Euan with their Great North Run fundraising.

Here's Briony nursing the whopping great green veg. It was worth it; SIL raised over £900 for the cause.



Congratulations...

To the following employees who have successfully achieved their Care Certificates:

- Chelsey Fulcher and Naomi Fulcher

To the following who successfully completed a course on Acquired Brain Injuries:

- Kristina Labanauskaite
- Vanessa Evans
- Graham Downing
- Kelly Ewins
- John Doyle
- Katie Loughran



And to the following who successfully completed a course on Autism:

- Suzi-Lee Cooke
- Claire Reynolds
- Natalie Hogg
- Lesley Davies
- Carissa Lam
- Katie Loughran
- Charlie Poolton
- Graham Downing



Certificates are given to all attendees after every training course, Here is Karen, happy at her work, ensuring she has got them all.

Compliments...

We know our team frequently go above and beyond and face some challenging situations. It is the passion and dedication of the team that makes SIL what it is but it's always nice for someone else to confirm it...

Darren, I can't thank you and your team enough for all of your help with this. It really is appreciated'.

From a WISH Service User

Elaine is always there and always ready to put herself out of her way to help, I just want to say that I so much appreciate it and I am extremely happy to be part of Elaine's team

From: a Support Worker

Briony, thanks for the excellent job you did on the SIL video for the AGM

From: a colleague

Thanks to Rhiannon for the help she has given me with my computer over the last week or so. She has been so helpful.

From: a colleague

The ILH team sprang into action to support someone who was having a crisis and had put themselves and their home at risk. With backup from Briony and Paulette in the office, they worked tirelessly to ensure the individual was kept safe and supported. We weren't obliged to help but we did, because it was the right thing to do.

Once again we responded to a situation effectively, with safety for our SU given paramount consideration. Stakeholders across the board became involved and our leadership demonstrated a steely determination to make things right for our SU. We cared enough to go the extra mile/s which, given the effort, in my view equates to going the extra marathon. From: Euan



Great North Run; great big achievement

Huge congratulations to Gemma and Euan for completing the Great North Run and being two among the 57,000 people who took part, making it the biggest half marathon in the world.

The SIL duo raised an amazing £990 for Genetic Disorders UK.



Still Counting?

Euan even found time to take the SIL brand to St James Park, home to Newcastle United FC and the Toon Army.

More Fundraising...

The WISH team got on their denims for #jeansforgenes along with colleagues from Hereford Museum. Sales of jacket potatoes and denim wearing donations made £47!





Cakes for a good cause

The Macmillan Coffee Morning hosted by WISH raised a fantastic £125.94.

Huge thanks to all those who donated and took part whether by baking, buying, serving or simply just eating!

Tanith's (pictured here with Jon) sister Penny won the Guess the Height of the cake at 94cm and kindly donated the £6.50 winnings into the fund.



Eyes Down, Legs Eleven...

The September SIL bingo and BBQ event, held to support Euan McPherson and Gemma's bid to take on the Great North Run, was a huge success with over 60 people turning up to support the event.

Contributing over £350 to their £990 total raised for Genetic Disorders UK, the bingo event was enjoyed by all.

There was a fantastic array of prizes for "lines" and "full-house" as well the ever popular raffle.

A brilliant team effort again from Gemma and Karen who spent hours of their own time ensuring the event was a success; to those in the office who helped before and on the day; to all the support workers who accompanied service users; and to everyone who attended and generously spent their money.





Congratulations...

The wait is over and last week Val Javens heard the news that she passed her CQC interview and is now a CQC Registered Manager.

This was the final hurdle in becoming a fully recognised Registered Manager despite being in the role since April.

Congratulations are also due to Lisa Bradley who has been appointed as ILH Deputy Manager and also to Darren Birch, WISH Advisor, who is replacing Lisa as the WISH Manager.

Lots of employees completed level 2 courses, so congratulations to the following:

- Karen Bennett – Certificate in Understanding the Care of Diabetes
- Carmel Savagar, Val Javens and Karen Hunt – Certificate in Counselling Skills
- Darren Birch, Mel Cookson, Rhiannon Evans and Simon Gregory – Information, Advice and Guidance

Congratulations to the following employees who successfully completed a course on Diabetes:

- Martina Pritchard, Katie Loughran, Anna Johnston and Marilyn Phillips.

Once again proving that our team really are committed to maintaining the highest levels of care.

Dave Hughes's Summer Fete



Dave's summer fete at The Hollies raised an amazing £700 to be split between a charity supporting Syrian refugees, SIL and the funding for his new powerchair.

There were stalls with a variety of produce including jams, pickles, eggs, cakes, apples and potatoes; a tombola and raffle and guess the name of the bear. There was also a jumble sale, bric a brac and the superb Titley Tea which consisted of cakes, sandwiches and sausage rolls.

Dave would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who attended and to all those who kindly made donations and gave raffle prizes, especially Gemma's mum who donated a chicken dinner plus pudding.

Donna added her thanks, with an especially big thank you to Dave's team and family who worked so hard to support him with this event.



Hard at work ...

One of our very skilled trainers, Lisa, leading a session on Mental Capacity and Deprivation of Liberty (or DOLs).

Compliments...

The Trustees would like to pass on their sincere thanks to Paulette and Briony for their adaptability and for going above and beyond your job roles to help ILH deliver its service. I am very pleased that the trustees have recognised your efforts and add my thanks too.

From: Val

Ruth Davies: thank you for kindly covering a shift at late notice.

From: Team Leader

Chris always picks up extra shifts with RO and this morning, even though he is on holiday, he picked up yet another shift. I am extremely grateful and really happy to have Chris as part of RO's team.

From: Team Leader

Emma thank you so much for your support and promptness in dealing with my error yesterday.

From: a Service User

To Marilyn, Fiona, Suzi-Lee, Karen, Katie and Elaine for covering shifts.

From: Team Leader

Thank you to DH's team, I am proud to lead you all, a large thank you from myself to each of you.

From: Donna

Thanks to Emma for all your help with a new member of staff when they first joined us.

From: Anon

Dementia Friends

Lisa Bradley (Deputy Manager ILH) has successfully completed her Dementia Friends Champion training and therefore can deliver information sessions on how to become a Dementia Friend.

Dementia Friends is about learning more about dementia and the small ways you can help; this may include telling others about Dementia Friends or visiting someone you know living with dementia.



Looking spooktacular

As Halloween approached we were quietly glad nothing more spooky than Abbie in her witches costume visited our office.



Pipped by a Dog!

SIL's resident runner Gemma Lewis took part in a fun-run this month to raise money for Hope Spring, which supports water aid projects in Africa.

The event which took place at Queenswood attracted a good turn out and Gemma was placed 4th. However, this would have been a bronze medal position had she not been pipped to the post by a four-legged runner, also sporting a numbered vest.

We still think Gemma deserves a round of appaws!

Congratulations

October's training graduates are the following who successfully completed the level 2 Epilepsy Awareness course: Pauline McLaughlin, Michelle Standen, Kate Bucher and Linda Jones .

...huge congratulations

It's always a pleasure to report on an internal promotion and this month we said congratulations to Emma Little, who was a Payroll Officer in the Hereford DPSS team.

Emma will be the new Finance Officer, replacing Jennie Jones who is sadly leaving SIL next month.

And to Paulette White who was successful in her application for Finance Admin and Payroll Officer in the Leominster office and will start her new role on the 20th November



Sad Farewell

Some of you may have met Kelly Jordan, a post-graduate student in Social Care, from Worcester Uni, who was on a placement with ILH.

Kelly undertook a feasibility study into whether or not assistive technology might help SIL be more effective at supporting some of its

service users. She then delivered a presentation at SIL's AGM outlining her findings. Her placement came to an end in October and we were sorry to see her go.

Abbie, who couldn't resist the photo opportunity helped Euan give Kelly her farewell gifts.



Celebrating successes at the AGM

SIL's AGM took place on the 5th October and this year the theme was Assistive Technology. It was a full agenda, with several guest speakers, all of whom talked about different aspects of AT. As well as Kelly talking about her research project; Katie Kendrick from Telecare demonstrated some of the practical AT equipment available; and the Chairman of the British Assistive Technology Association (BATA) talked about how IT is changing rapidly to adopt AT in software and other applications.

As usual, one of the highlights of the day was the ILH Awards, which were presented by service user, Ian. The winners in the categories were:

- * Andy Rachel, the Judy Phillips Memorial Award;
- * Charlie Poolton, the Ian Jones Memorial Award;
- * Dave Hughes' team won ILH Team of the year; led by Donna Tranter, they include Ruth Davies, Joyce Taylor, Margaret Price, Myfanwy Mitchell and Linda Jones.

Congratulations and keep up the good work!



Compliments...

Thanks to the Payroll Team for rectifying the error on my payslip so quickly. When I contacted you I thought I would have to wait until the next month, so I was really pleased when it was sorted out the same day.

From: a PA in Torfaen

Thanks so much Rhiannon for sorting the Indeed Jobs site out for us. It is going to be such a help; now we can tweet and facebook our job vacancies to our hearts' content.

From: HR

A really big thank you to the WISH team for working so hard to reduce the number of Managed Accounts on the directory. An especially big pat on the back to Jon whose commitment to the task has seen the figures drop dramatically.

From: The Management Team

Fiona, Marilyn and Elaine; thanks for being so accommodating and stepping in to cover shifts.

From: a Team Leader

So often in these messages the theme is team work; not just within the teams or departments but across the whole of SIL. This is what makes SIL a great place to work.



Blonde bombshells go networking

Gemma and Karen were let out of the office for the Anthony Collins HR conference this month.



Matt and the Giant Pumpkin

Matt, who uses SIL's Direct Payment Support Service in Herefordshire, grew a giant pumpkin, which weighed in at exactly 70kg, and used it as a fun prop to collect donations for Spinal Research.

Matt, who has a spinal injury himself and has been in a wheelchair for 17 years, decided on the plan to raise money to help future generations.

He raised around £380 on the day and a further £200 on his JustGiving page.

UNO Championships

Our service users are constantly surprising us with new and brilliant ways of raising money, not least Caroline Hill, who organised a marathon UNO event to raise money for SIL.

Supported by support workers Nicola Harwood and Vanessa Evans, Caroline raised a whopping £208 for which we are very grateful.

Vanessa generously baked an assortment of delicious cakes, which were eaten throughout the event to keep up the stamina of the players and other service users who came along to enjoy the unusual day.



Compliments...

Thank you so much to the WISH team for working through the managed accounts so effectively. Reducing the numbers from the hundreds to just 17 is an amazing achievement.

From: Senior Commissioning Officer at Herefordshire Council

Thanks so much for your continued support Rhiannon. It means a lot to both me and Daisy.

From: Service User

Linda and Juliette, you have both been amazing these past 3 weeks while I have been getting life back on track for a Service User, you are both a total credit to SIL. Picking up shifts at very short notice and also being on the end of the phone.

From: Donna

We are so delighted that Donna has become our team leader; she really is the best team leader we have ever had. She is firm but terribly kind, he worships her. What I would like to suggest is that for next year's awards you have an award for team leaders, chosen by SU's or their families.

From: a Service User's family

I would like to acknowledge that again you have put in the extra mile Kay Davies . This not only makes a huge difference to the lives of the people we support but actually makes a difference to the lives of everyone in SIL, knowing we have support workers like you - thank you - big time.

From: Val

Congratulations...

Congratulations to two star ladies;

- Juliette Stephenson has been promoted to Team Leader and
- Fiona Searle to Acting Team Leader.

And to the following who have completed their SIL inductions;

- Anna Johnston
- Judith Parry
- Juliette Stephenson
- Deb Hawkins

Hats off to Elaine Powell who has successfully completed her Level 2 Team Leading qualification

And warm welcome to;

- Deb Hawkins,
Finance
Admin and
Payroll Officer
- Jackie
Watkins
(Right),
Support
Worker



The Extra Mile...

A huge thank you to Donna Tranter for all the work she has done to support JW since he joined us, but particularly following his injury. The amount of work she has undertaken following the incident has been immense and has involved liaising with numerous different agencies and his family, as well as providing one to one support.

Donna rearranged personal commitments and shifts so that she could be available to support him whilst he was in hospital and ensured that Val and the management team were fully briefed at all times. Thanks Donna you are a credit to the organisation.

From: Euan.



Holidays are coming...

December is just round the corner and Karen and Gemma have been out shopping for Christmas goodies.

December; and then the snow came and came!



SIL staff are amazing – it's a proven fact!

The recent bout of severe weather proved yet again how fantastic the people who work in this organisation are. Independent Living @ Home staff in particular really dug in (or should that be dug out??) and were incredibly flexible and helpful in ensuring everyone that needed support got it. It sounds so easy, but it is not and it is down to the commitment of all our staff that we continue to provide services throughout the year.

Thank you all so much, you truly are a special bunch of people. From: Euan

No half measures...

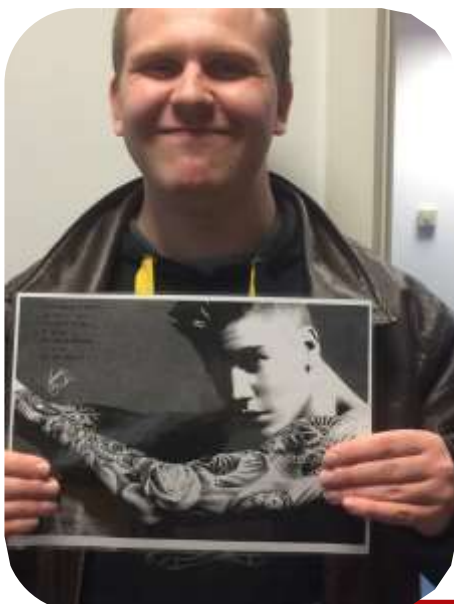
Not only we were overwhelmed by the amount of snow we had in December; just look at the number of newbies we had joining the team too. Welcome to SIL (left to right);

Taylor Fermor, Team Leader; Paula Palmer and Charlotte Alexander, Office Co-ordinator job share; Michelle Standen, (Euan, who was presenting induction certificates), Nick Gray and Viv Tourmoche, Support Workers.



HO HO HO Merry Christmas one and all...

Our crew got in the festive mood by wearing their Christmas Jumpers for Save the Children. A raffle, shared lunch and best jumper competition got everyone feeling jolly and raised a merry £66.



Barry the elf got himself in a very sticky situation.

Best Christmas ever

Justin Bieber fan, Damian was thrilled with his Christmas present; a signed photograph of his hero.

Compliments...

I would really like to thank Kay Davies for kindly knitting a poncho for a service user in her own time and planning to take her ponies to fulfil her service users personal objectives. It absolutely shows the depth and level that you go to ensuring excellent outcomes for our SU's.

From: Val

Graham was supporting an SU for 48 hours solidly over the weekend, went home for breakfast and then arrived at the office as he thought we might want the snow shovelled away from the entrance ramp... what commitment to the organisation.

From: Euan

I never have to worry that my training is out of date. Karen is always on top of things and lets me know in advance when the training is on. It is very well organised.

From: a Support Worker

I would just like to pass on to the team the Doctor's congratulations on what we have achieved. He has never seen AD looking so relaxed in his home. I'm very proud of you all, thank you.

From: Graham

Lesley, for being an excellent team leader. Always being there to listen, advise and deal with any problems. A caring and understanding person who I thank for all your help in the last 12 months.

From: a Support Worker

Could I have a special mention for Linda Newport. She is one of the kindest loveliest ladies, support worker, colleague and friend. To me; to all of us, she's a star. She cares about all of us.

From: a Support Worker

SIL welcomes in 2018; more fun, frolics and great achievements to be reported

The Greatest Staff Social

The first Staff Social of 2018 was off to a flying start with a visit to the Odeon, Hereford to see *The Greatest Showman*. The foot-tapping, joy-bringing extravaganza was thoroughly enjoyed by the group who stopped for a post show selfie.

Cheese!



Working with MIND - the importance of Mental Health

As you'll have noticed throughout this year book, in 2017, SIL chose to support Genetic Disorders UK by donating monies raised throughout the year at the Garden Party, Bingo event and Gemma and Euan's Marathon efforts to name a few.

This year SIL's chosen charity to work in partnership with is MIND. This charity provides advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem and campaigns to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding.

We will also be rolling out our Mental Health First Aid training to all employees this year and in addition, any money raised at our 2018 fundraisers will be donated to MIND, unless otherwise stated.



100% attendance

Our dedicated, happy, healthy team enjoy their jobs so much we can't keep them away!



Tai Chi

SIL Support Worker, Viv Tourmoche, has been practicing Tai Chi for a number of years and has found it has improved her posture, helped enormously with an aching back, made her feel stronger, calmer and a lot more able to deal with day to day situations

Tai Chi Movements for Wellbeing (TMW) is a specially-developed sequence of movements which promotes physical and emotional wellbeing. With origins in both Tai Chi and Chi Kung, the TMW sequence distils elements of these arts into a simplified form.

In March Viv is beginning training so that she can teach small groups of people TMW. Viv hopes to offer a taster session for SIL staff, once her training is concluded. Good luck Viv.



Compliments...

For the work Nick has done to support a Service User in his greeting card enterprise. Not only has Nick been really supportive of the Service User, but he has kept me informed all the way through as this was picked up from an article in our newsletter last summer. Yet another example of going the extra mile and being #partofthesolution!

From: Shelagh

Torfaen DPSS - A child on direct payments was diagnosed with a rare condition called Glut 1 deficiency. Knowing they had another service user with the same condition a member of the team liaised with both families enabling the son and his family to get some much needed peer support. Another example of how SIL staff think creatively to ensure their SUs get the best support possible.

From: Shelagh

Thanks to the DPSS Team for running my DP and Payroll, you have been so helpful.

From: a Service User

I think Donna is the most active team leader I have had. I like her very much.

From: a Service User

Congratulations to IB's team following a compliment received from IB's mother on a great family Christmas they have had this year; all down to the fantastic team offering support in the run up to Christmas; including trips to Santa, a panto, Santa tour and buying all his own gifts for the family from his weekly budget.

From: Val

Excellent Service from the DPSS Hereford Payroll Team.

From: a Service User

Dignity Action Day

Raising awareness for Dignity Action Day at SIL this month. Dignity Action Day gives everyone the opportunity to contribute to upholding people's rights to dignity and provide a truly memorable day for people receiving care.

Dignity Action Day aims to ensure people who use care services are treated as individuals and are given choice, control and a sense of purpose in their daily lives; something that is really reflected in our Mission, Vision and Values.



Welcome

Aletche De Meyer, the latest addition to our team of super Support Workers.



Happy Valentines

Paula brought a bit of Valentines love to the office this Valentines day with a huge sharing bowl of chocs.



Working with IT Schools for Africa

Have you ever wondered what happens to the old IT equipment that SIL can no longer use in its offices? If so, let us share a story with you.

Over the years SIL has amassed a large amount of IT equipment that we are unable to use or sell due to the confidential data stored on them and the costs involved in undertaking the removal process.

A few weeks ago we made contact with a charity, IT Schools Africa, who work towards transforming lives in Africa through access to IT. They work with other organisations such as The Prince's Trust, the NHS, Hereford and Worcester Fire Services and Remploy. On Friday 16th February they arrived to collect our equipment free of charge and will also provide us with a data cleansing certificate. Here's Charlotte helping Roger load up all our unwanted IT gear.



Congratulations

February's training graduates are:

- * Taylor Fermor who achieved a Level 2 Certificate in Epilepsy Awareness;
- * Euan McPherson and Val Javens who attended an ACT Mental Health Awareness Conference;
- * and Donna Tranter, Shelagh Callaghan and Val Javens who completed their Train the Trainer course.



Compliments...

Please send on my thanks to all at SIL for their years of service, especially Amy who was very helpful with facilitating the recent transition.

From: a Service User's family member

Chelsey and Naomi are a credit to SIL and the Service Users that they support. Nothing is ever a problem with both of these young ladies when I call them both. I am extremely proud of how far these two young ladies have developed within SIL and to have them on my team.

From: their Team Leader

Thank you for asking about my results, it's been awesome being with SIL it has really helped me get some independence.

From: a Service User

Beauty and the Beast

Another great night had by SIL staff and service users at The Courtyard in Hereford when they went to see Beauty and the Beast. The performance was held to support Pheonix Bereavement Support Services and included an opportunity to meet the cast. Here is Ian getting to know the Vicar.



Spring in our step and pride in our hearts

What's going on? - the spring is nearly here and we were still getting warnings for snow! The weather has really kept us on our toes this year and I have been absolutely bowled over by the lengths some of our staff have gone to, to make sure the people we support have received a service. I think I have been in touch with everyone who went above and beyond the call of duty during the severe weather, but if I have missed anyone – thank you.



Sheila is SIL Star Baker

Service User Sheila Hebbes is baking up a storm with her new enterprise; baking cakes and quiches to raise money for SIL. She has already raised £114. Thanks Sheila, you really are a star.



Sport relief Spinathon

Our sporting hero Gemma Lewis took part in a 4 hour spinathon on one of the coldest weekends of the year! Team Hawkins; 12 in all, raised over £1000 for Sport relief.



Congratulations



We have two new trustees joining the Board; Angela Pendleton and David Hughes (left and middle), both of whom bring a variety of useful experience and knowledge.

They will join Geoff Hopper, Maggie O'Neill, John Rogers, Tom Misselbrook, Sylvie Nichols and Angela Higham to bring our trustee count to eight and maintained our balance of at least 50% of the Board being disabled people or family carers.



And, congratulations to Graham Downing who is now SIL's certified PAT Tester.

Sad farewell to WISH and Shopmobility

It was a sad day on the 31st March when two services closed and SIL said goodbye to some valued members of staff.

On that day we closed The WISH hub and Shopmobility services in Hereford.

We wish Darren Birch, Jon Phelps, Simon Gregory, Tanith Rouse, Jenni Wicketts and Mel Cookson; and Shop mobility's Rachel Horry and David Muckles the best of luck for the future and thank them for their hard work and dedication to the SIL values.

Compliments...

Thank you for the email and your kind words Donna. I really enjoy my work with SIL and very much value being part of Donna's team. She is a great team leader, with a wonderful attitude towards her work. She is always at the end of the phone for all of us.

From: a Support Worker

I would like to thank Rachel for taking on extra responsibilities and Gill for her flexible approach to supporting her colleagues. Both have adapted to the pressures and taken on additional cases. I'm so proud of the Torfaen team having pulled together to deliver a seamless service

From: Sam

I would like to say a massive thank to Katie, Viv and Elaine who rallied round to support me during my recent ill health. I had 3 wonderful support workers who were an enormous help and comfort to myself and family. Thanks also to Euan, Val, Lisa and especially Lesley for going above and beyond in organising all of the cover at such short notice .

From: a Service User and Trustee

I would like to say a big thank you to the team at Torfaen who despite some serious challenges are continuing to deliver a first class service to their service users. One of their colleagues has been extremely ill and has been signed off work since early January. Sam, Rachel and Gill have ensured that new DP referrals are still managed within the expected timeframe and support to existing SU's has been unaffected. The team have taken on extra hours and moved working days to deliver a seamless service. Thanks

From: Shelagh

Thanks for joining us on our trip through the archives. We hope **you've enjoyed it.**

If you were counting the appearances of the SIL branded clothing, sadly there are no prizes; just the satisfaction of getting it right!
There were 16 by our count.



SIL Guiding Principles

- Respect for all
- Equality for all
- Improve through innovation and creativity
- Use the skills of disabled people and family carers



**SERVICES FOR
INDEPENDENT
LIVING**

Website: www.s4il.co.uk

Head Office:

Services for Independent Living,
1 Owen Way, Leominster Enterprise Park, Leominster
Herefordshire, HR6 0LA

Telephone: 01568 616653 • Email: contactus@s4il.co.uk

Unit 3, Raglan House, Llantarnam Business Park
Cwmbran, Torfaen, NP44 3AB

Telephone: 01633 877908 • Email: Torfaen@s4il.co.uk

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