

News Matters

Autumn 2021

Independence Matters *'the life you choose...'*



INSIDE:

Zoe shares her love of kickboxing and we go batty for Halloween!

Welcome to the autumn edition of News Matters

I'm loving this edition, it's full of people and fun, with so much activity happening. Zoe's kickboxing and Sara's cold water swimming are amazing and feel like extreme sports next to my gentle walking. I love their inspirational 'have a go' approach, and taking the opportunity to raise funds for others is brilliant!



Another standout in this edition is all the creativity, painting, music and gardening - so fantastic to see. The poem by Harford Hill customers and Eyebrow Arts is really evocative of the season, along with all the Halloween pictures and I'm looking forward to meeting our newest resident; Pine Lodge Pete.

I do hope that our colleague Gavin doesn't get 'sent down' by that Jury; we'll have to start a campaign to get him released!

It's also fabulous to feature and showcase the work that our vital support service colleagues do and we get to meet new faces and find out about their roles.

Congratulations go to colleagues and customers who have carried on learning and completed courses, some gaining merits and distinctions. We are very proud of you and Lorraine for receiving the Connect2Care Award for the Best Community Outreach Programme.

You must watch the great video by the Hub recyclers, although I was a bit concerned about the amount of crisps we are all consuming.

Finally, Christmas is on its way, so [click on the email link](#) to reserve your Brewery Festive Ale before it runs out! 😊

Sarah Stock, Managing Director
Independence Matters

Cold water swimming boosts mental health

Home Support Matters HR Advisor, Sara Basey-Fisher, shared this brilliant photo. She is a member of 'Mental Health Swims', a community that welcomes and empowers people of all body shapes, skin colours, ages, backgrounds, genders, sexualities and abilities to enjoy the healing power of cold water and community.

Sara took part in a wild swim at Bawburgh Mill on Sunday 10th October to recognise World Mental Health Day and told us: "It was a great reset to the body and mind with a cool 12 degree water temp, followed by a lovely hot cuppa and movies on the sofa".

That looks a bit cold to us, but if you're feeling brave and would like to find out more visit:

www.mentalhealthswims.co.uk



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Zoe's kickboxing her way to fitness

Cover star and customer Zoe is a happy individual who is always smiling. She has lots of friends and describes herself as 'big hearted'. Zoe has been completely deaf since she was a baby but doesn't let her disability stop her from enjoying life. She had a cochlear implant five years ago and now, in her sixties, has taken up kickboxing.

It might seem an unusual hobby to take up in later life, but Zoe is a high energy individual so it really suits her. It's also a very social environment, Zoe told us: "I enjoy it, it's fun and I meet new people".

Classes are done as a fitness workout with punches and kicks thrown into the air or onto pads. Zoe works with a regular partner during her sessions and finds it a great way to keep fit and burn calories. Colleagues have already noticed the positive difference it has made to her weight and overall wellbeing.

Trevor Davies, owner and instructor at the martial arts gym she attends, is impressed by her enthusiasm, 'have a go' approach and attitude to life. He told us: "She is doing really well, joins in with everything and everyone says she's lovely!".



Zoe is determined to keep going with her new hobby and has set her sights on doing a sponsored session to raise funds for cancer research. Trevor is keen to help her make this happen and is looking to pair her up with an experienced to complete the challenge early in 2022.

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Our Dementia Care Hubs welcome back visitors

With the rollout of the vaccine and easing of Covid restrictions we've been able to safely welcome back some familiar faces and four legged friends.

EyeBrow Arts also made a welcome return to our dementia care hubs, with artists Dot and Sorrel delivering a session that looked at magpies and collections.

The group explored Sorrel's grandma's collection of miniature elephants, shells and pebbles and a poem that Sorrel wrote about them. This led to thinking about why we are attracted to small objects and a story Dot has about a small gold ring that her grandpa found in the mud years ago.

They then explored magpies and their links to folk law, sayings, behaviours and style, putting the words of the ancient poem 'One of Sorrow, Two for Joy' to the tune of 'Greensleeves'.

Customers made nests using small twigs, filled them with precious items and used homemade charcoal to draw feathers. Dot said; "It was a lovely, chatty session and typically varied. We left some charcoal and feathers at Harford Hill for customers to use in their own time."



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Ian from Musical Keys visited Harford Hill to deliver a fun and interesting music session, bringing different types of instruments to show customers and inviting them to play percussion. Ian also sang some well known songs and played guitar. Everyone was really engaged and especially liked participating in the rain dance!

We have very kindly been offered free fortnightly sessions from Musical Keys which is great news and we know customers will enjoy seeing Ian again soon.



Rescue dog Biffy is happy to be back visiting Harford Hill. She and our customers both love the visits, owner Rachel says "Biffy adores Brian and would sit next to him for hours given the chance!"

Autumn Poem

by Harford Hill customers and Eyebrow Arts

When the clocks go back and it's dark by tea
The leaves fly all about
you clear them up and they blow right back
whether they're in or out. 

When the clocks go back and it's dark by tea
leaves cover the ground
you gather them in, let them rot right down
they're good for the garden you see.

When the clocks go back and it's time for tea
the wind says "leaf us alone"
It's pleasant to touch, I can feel its ribs
crinkly old leaf that's grown. 

When the clocks go back and it's dark by tea
the rain brings out the smells
of everything; of flowers and leaves
so through the forest I weave.

When the clocks go back and it's dark by tea
we kick the leaves and laugh and shout
till leaves are flying all about
and it's definitely autumn again. 

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A day in the life

Home Support Matters HR

Sara Basey-Fisher (HR Advisor) and Rebecca Waldron (HR Administrator) tell us about their busy roles

A day in the life of HSM HR is never boring and no two days are ever the same. The day always starts with checking the HR and Recruitment inboxes to see what has come in overnight, and ends the same way prioritising what needs to be done the next day.

We keep an 'open door' regardless of whether we are working remotely or not, always making ourselves available to anybody who needs to talk to us. When not talking about HR issues we have our heads down working on recording absences, dealing with recruitment internally and also liaising with external agencies. Much of our time is taken up with the onboarding of new employees, employment relation issues, wellbeing, liaising with the training team for new joiners, processing information on iTrent, updating employee details, checking the information we hold is in line with GDPR and lots of reporting for compliance purposes, payroll and Independence Matters.

There are meetings to attend to discuss people strategies and employee demographics, as well as keeping up to date with what's going on in the HR world outside the company, particularly the legal side of things. So there is plenty of reading to be done and meetings to attend to ensure we are on the ball – an example of which is the settlement status for all current and new employees, which changed significantly this year. It was a big change and one that we worked hard to get right.



Sara Basey-Fisher



Rebecca Waldron

We are not here as you may think to do the horrible tasks and our only interest is for the management team, we actually sit outside of the hierarchy to work for the business but also for our employees who are welcome to call us on 01502 457422 or email hr.hsm@homesupportmatters.org.uk – we are here for you, to answer any questions or source support as you need it.

A large role for HSM HR is looking into how we support our employees mental health and wellbeing. We also never know which 'curve ball' might be thrown into the mix and some situations can be highly charged and difficult to deal with, sometimes emotionally draining as well.

We support each other and are keen to keep communication channels open, working collaboratively as a team, so that if one team member is out of the office, another can cover without a break in service to our internal customers.

We do have to really like people, to work in HR, but we must also like admin, processes, figures and deadlines! It's all go and that's how we like it!



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Independence Matters are winners at new 'Heroes' awards

Independence Matters was awarded 'Best Community Outreach Programme' employer at Connect2Care's first 'Heroes' awards.



This award goes to any sized employer who has successfully implemented a programme to connect the local community and raise awareness of their apprenticeship offering and apprenticeships within their sector.

Colleague Lorraine received the award from Connect2Care (right), with the results announced in an online ceremony. We were sent a wonderful hamper full of fresh scones, jam, clotted cream, tea and artisan lemonade to share whilst we watched. As it was impossible to share with everyone involved, Lorraine opted to gift the hamper to customers at our Crossroads Community Hub.

Colleague Marie made it up into a fabulous tea trolley (below) saying; "Our customers really did enjoy the treat, thank you so much for thinking of us".



Data security matters

IM Group Data Protection Officer, Rachel Miller, appeared in the [summer edition of Norfolk Care News](#) talking about her experience of completing the Data Security and Protection Toolkit (DSPT).

This online self-assessment tool allows health and care providers to evaluate and improve their data and cyber security. A version designed specifically for adult social care providers launched in 2020 and should be completed annually by all adult social care providers in England.

Rachel said: "Completing the DSPT has proved a very positive exercise for me as DPO and for our organisation and will be a useful addition to our data protection audits."

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Preserving summer memories

Pressing flowers is a lovely way to keep them on display long after summer has gone. Customers at William Day Centre used flowers pressed in the summer to make these beautiful cards to send to friends and relatives.



New baby joy for HSM couple



In early November, HSM colleagues Andrew Thurtle and Sarah Jervis welcomed the arrival of baby Braiden Ray who was born a month early, weighing 6lb 8ozs. Sarah and Andrew already have five children between them, so Braiden Ray will get plenty of cuddles from his brothers and sisters. The Home Support Matters team sends love and best wishes to the whole family.

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Gardens get ready for winter

With the arrival of autumn and winter on the way, our Hubs have been busy preparing their gardens for the months ahead. The last of this year's warm, sunny days were an opportunity to plant out winter flowering pansies and sweet Williams, along with cauliflower, sprouts and broccoli.

Customers in the Studio Gang were really chuffed when they purchased a load of winter flower trays for just 20p each! They also decided it was a good idea to take down and store their greenhouses which, along with scarecrow Worzel, are now safely tucked up in the summerhouse waiting for next spring to arrive. The gardens now look very bare, but everyone is looking forward to next year when they'll be able to grow lots more lovely fruit and veg, and hopefully make lots more chutney.



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Donated easel helps Brian keep painting

In our last edition we featured Harford Hill Community Hub customer Brian, who brought in an amazing collection of his watercolour paintings.

Colleagues were determined to support new customer Brian to continue with his hobby, and we're delighted to report that he is back behind the easel, thanks to a kind donation.

Colleague Rachel told us: "Brian has started painting again and we are all really pleased.

My Dad donated the easel to Harford, it used to belong to my late Mum, so it's lovely to see it being used again".



Hub recyclers awarded for their hard work

A big well done to members of the Studio Gang who have received an 'Environment Award' certificate from Lisa Warman at the Co-op to thank them for their recycling efforts. The group collects and sorts waste packaging on behalf of Hallswood Animal Sanctuary, who use it to raise funds through their recycling scheme.

The Gang opened their 'recycling station' during lockdown and work with the Co-op to get the sorted materials to the sanctuary. Working together they not only help raise valuable funds for the animals, but also reduce the amount of waste that goes into landfill.



Watch a fun video of the Gang sorting and packing the waste materials here:
<https://vimeo.com/user115864213/review/644278591/da3ccff331>

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The Brewery reopens

We are delighted to welcome back the Equal Brewery to our Ipswich Road Community Hub after a long absence due to the pandemic. Now operating three days a week with a dedicated group of volunteers, working alongside chief brewer and baker, Bill Russell, to support customers to develop skills for work.

Brewing is already well underway, with a blond beer fermenting and a special Festive Ale already bottled and awaiting its specially designed labels before it goes on sale in the run up to Christmas.

When the group is not busy brewing and bottling beer, customers develop their skills in the kitchen by making a variety of baked goodies, including flapjacks, madeleines, pastry tarts and Chelsea buns.



Like to try our
Festive Ale?

[Click here
to email us](#)



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Introducing...

Samantha Wiseman

Sam joined us earlier this year, taking on the new role of Quality Assurance Business Partner she is responsible for ensuring our services are compliant with recognised standards and good practice, and that the support and care we deliver is based on each customer's own expectations and outcomes.



What is your background?

I have a long, almost 30 year career in adult learning disability social care. I've had the pleasure of working with a wide range of individuals during this time, in direct care and support roles through to service management, and the last 10 years or so training and quality assurance.

Tell us about your new role

I support managers and their teams to ensure that our customers experience high quality support and care, based on their own expectations and outcomes, and that all Independence Matters services are safe and comply with recognised standards and good practice.

What have you achieved so far?

This year we have focused on the rollout of the Access Care Compliance system (ACC) which helps us to monitor governance, regulatory compliance and audits, giving us a view of compliance across all Independence Matters services.

Colleagues across Independence Matters have access to ACC via their work mobiles and will be able to log incidents, access and complete audits and view actions. Quality assurance is not just a management task, it is everybody's business.

We've also conducted comprehensive audits of our respite/replacement care services which have identified the great work, support and care that is happening and led to suggestions on how to improve areas and ensure consistency in practice.

We are now repeating the process with supported living services and working with colleagues to develop a range of internal audits for services and service types which we hope to roll out in early 2022.

The relationship between individuals who use services and those who deliver them are at the very heart of high-quality care and support, therefore everyone should be involved in implementing effective quality improvement and reviewing and auditing practice and systems.

Are you enjoying the role?

What has been very evident to me in my new role is the drive and commitment of everyone in Independence Matters to continue to provide the very best services for vulnerable individuals during an unbelievably difficult time. The kindness, respect, and compassion that I have seen so far makes me feel very privileged to be a part of the Independence Matters team.

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Colleague congratulations!

Congratulations to our latest group of newly-qualified colleagues.



Jane Abel - Level 5 Certificate in Leadership in Health and Social Care

Robert Chattaway - Level 3 Lead Adult Care Worker Certificate - passed with a distinction

Lina Gardeikiene - Level 3 Lead Adult Care Worker Certificate - passed with a merit

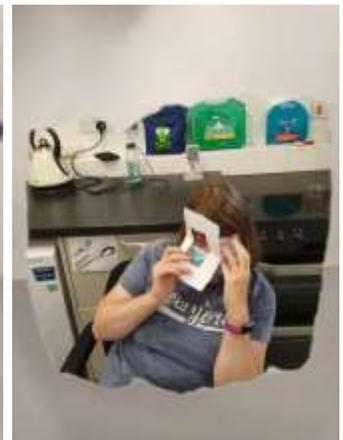
Merits and distinctions are not easy to obtain so a big well done to Robert and Lina.

EYEBROW ARTS

creative Zooms are back

Our customers were really pleased to have Eyebrow Arts return in the autumn with another run of specially commissioned creative Zoom sessions.

Our photos show their 'Art in a Frame' session which asked: "What can we be? What can we see?". Everyone made a frame and used it to change how they looked at the space around them; creating framed portraits, changing their expressions and positions to show something new, and had great fun putting themselves and objects in their frames.



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Halloween Spooktacular!

Anyone visiting our Hubs this October could be forgiven for feeling a little bit spooked by all the ghoulish goings on!

We went batty for Halloween and customers had a great time decorating, making themed edible goodies and carving traditional pumpkin lanterns. Trick or treat – we'll let you decide!



Spooky circus time

Customer Lee went on a dream trip to the Halloween event at Great Yarmouth's historic Hippodrome Circus, accompanied by colleague Elliott.

Lee very rarely gets out of the car for his support, but he will if it's for the circus! And as you can see from these fabulous photos, they had a really fun time.



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Spooky decorations abound at Hubs

Across our learning disability Hubs, customers and colleagues had enormous fun creating grisly and ghoulish decorations!

The ones pictured here at Dereham were done by the Studio Gang and include papier mâché masks (right) and the skeleton (below) who we found hanging out in the Boardroom. No wonder it says 'KEEP OUT!' Who's spooked?



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Fantastic masks!



Customers at Sprowston had fun making these fabulous pumpkin faces to wear as masks and held their own fabulous fancy dress competition.



Ghoulishly yummy cakes

Customers at Crossroads had great fun creating these brilliant pumpkin orange cakes, described as "Nearly too good to eat!". They also made these beautiful spooky flower arrangements using a colourful array of seasonal flowers and foliage.



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Tricks & lots of treats!

Colleagues and customers at Rosewood had a wonderful day of Halloween fun. They played games of trick or treat where customers were asked to put their hands in a hole and either receive a trick, or if they were lucky, a treat.

Another game involved wrapping items in toilet paper and whoever finished the quickest - and whose item looked most like a mummy - won. Win or lose, everyone enjoyed Halloween treats of hot dogs and cakes.

The games kept everyone occupied for most of the day and included a Halloween-themed quiz.

All in all it was a day full of fun and laughter which everyone enjoyed.



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A monstrosly good time



It took place during the day but this special Halloween event at Holt Hub looked more like fright night.

Colleagues and customers got into the spirit (see what we did there) and dressed up for a day of fun, games and dancing - courtesy of a disco provided by one of the customers. But did they do the 'Monster Mash'?



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Introducing Pine Lodge Pete!

Colleagues and customers at Pine Lodge took a unique approach and combined two traditions by making a Halloween Guy Fawkes.

Cosied up on the sofa we don't think he's in any danger of ending up on the bonfire. In fact he's so popular they've decided turn him into a mascot and named him Pine Lodge Pete!



Furry friends join the fun

It wasn't just customers and colleagues who enjoyed the Halloween fun, as demonstrated by this resident cheeky squirrel at Rosewood Hub who was caught happily tucking in to their discarded lantern.



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Customer's criminal montage

Hub customer Jonathan was inspired when colleague Gavin wore a stripey top to work. Thinking he looked like a convict, he created a collage that tells the story of Gavin being arrested and appearing in court in front of a judge and jury made up of colleagues and customers.

Jonathan has a big interest in Victorian times and loves 'Horrible Histories' hence his own appearance as Lord Nelson. The group plans to use the montage to role play different scenarios around a courtroom theme.



The story so far: criminal Gavin is arrested by the police (Jo) and put behind bars by prison warden Kalani. He is about to appear in court and be tried by judge Andrew. Cowboy Tom is trying to blow up the prison and help Gavin escape.



Witness Debbie is featured taking the oath on the Bible, accompanied by Admiral Lord Nelson (Jonathan) and trusty sailor (Shirley).

Arabella chose to be the courtroom cat.



The jury is a diverse group made up of medics Dr Stephen and nurse Katie, scuba diver Vicky, ABBA fan Chloe, Inspector Gadget (Lewis), bus driver Peter, Power Ranger Jacob and Norwich City player Kim. We hope Gavin gets a fair trial!



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Supporting the launch of **TRICKY FRIENDS**

A short animated video made by the
Norfolk Safeguarding Adults Board

Back in the summer we were delighted to be asked to support the launch of 'Tricky Friends' a short, animated video made by the Norfolk Safeguarding Adults Board (NSAB) with screening events at our Dereham and Holt Community Hubs.

Designed specifically for people with learning disabilities and autism, the video is fun and informative. It aims to reduce the risk of harm and exploitation to vulnerable people by demonstrating the differences between good friendships and harmful ones, for example people borrowing money and never giving it back, or turning up to your home uninvited.

The launch was delivered by guests from Norfolk County Council and the NSAB, with all visitors taking Covid tests on arrival and following safety procedures to keep everyone safe.

Customers were able to watch the launch screening in their individual 'bubble' groups and afterwards discuss what they'd seen and the issues highlighted with colleagues and guests.

Watch the Tricky Friends video on YouTube:
<https://youtu.be/tEx8uFuNZGU>



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News *in* Brief



edp24.co.uk
Volunteers help rangers at north Norfolk beauty spot

A group of customers and colleagues were [captured by the EDP](#) making a return to volunteering at Holt Country Park. Steven, Danny, Matthew, Simon, Heather, Chloe and Harry were all delighted to be back with the Muddy Boots volunteering scheme, supporting the park rangers in maintaining the park's woodland and wildlife habitats.

While out for an autumn stroll, a customer and Hub colleague spotted a young hedgehog curled up in a ball near the road. Knowing that seeing one out during the day isn't a good sign, they put it in a box and piled on some nearby leaves to provide protection. Back at the Hub, they contacted Norfolk Wildlife Rescue who took it back to the sanctuary to be looked after.



Colleagues at our dementia care hubs are always finding new ways to celebrate the seasons and get creative with our customers. These decorative autumnal trees have been made from fallen leaves by customers at Crossroads and are a lovely way to brighten up a dull November day.

This fabulously psychedelic display was done by colleagues and customers at William Day Centre for their local church flower festival. Customers coloured and cut out all the fish and helped with the submarine, whilst colleagues Doreen and completed the flower arrangements.



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