



Options
Support | Empower | Enable

Living life to the full!

Welcome to our
2020/21
Annual Report

Emma David
THIS TOGETHER Thomas

HOPE

Richard's Welcome...

Dear Reader

Sometimes writing the introduction to our annual update can feel a little like more of the same from previous years. That certainly isn't the case this year. It has been a remarkable and unprecedented year and one which I hope to never see again. It has been a really hard year for the people we support, for staff and for many of the families of the people we support. We will be pleased to return to something closer to normality, to how things have previously been. We must also recognise that some things will never be quite the same again and that the future holds several uncertainties. For many, the recovery from the experiences of the last year and a half will not be immediate and may stretch into the next 18 months and beyond.

So what of the last year?

Well I must, and want to, give a huge thank you to our staff who have been absolutely fabulous through the Covid pandemic. Our staff turned up for work when nearly everyone was staying at home and being told it was unsafe to go out, when no-one was sure what Covid was about or what it might do. When we were battling to find enough PPE, they turned in for work day in day out, providing support despite all the restrictions in what they could do. When temperatures soared they wore PPE for long shifts. Staff volunteered to go wherever the need was greatest and to stay for as long as was needed.

Options gave staff a £500 thank you in recognition of their work. We paid staff



An unexpected 2020

who were sick from Covid or having to self-isolate full pay. Our Government gave nothing more than an encouragement to clap on a Thursday night. There was no funding of a one-off thank you (as there was elsewhere in the UK) and there was no additional funding from our Councils to allow us to pay staff more. We only received a partial amount of funding that supported us to pay staff that were required to isolate due to Covid. I'm afraid that tells me where Government priorities lie and it is not social care. Social care staff are dedicated, committed, professional and skilled. We look to the future and to a funded social care plan for England and a hope that it will allow us to reward our staff at a level appropriate to their dedication and skills. This is why we started our own campaign for the Real Living Wage across social care.

People we support have been incredibly resilient, as have families, coping with lost opportunities to get out and about, coping with lost opportunities to see those nearest and dearest to them, coping with those around them dressed in ways many could not understand (PPE). The resilience of people with disabilities and their families has been astonishing.

I also want to thank our commissioners. In these unprecedented times we have met weekly, week after week, with limited information and with no experience or easy solutions to the problems we faced. Together we have worked out the best solutions we can and there has been a 'freedom' in decision-making which I hope might be continued.

And what of the future?

Well, much of it will include the recovery from the last year and a half. We have invested in mental health training and awareness to help those who will need it in the next year. The pandemic also reinforced what we already know – that friendships, relationships, purpose, and good health are all really important to a good life for all of us. As we re-build we will be focusing on these things again.

The pages that follow will give you a glimpse into the last year, the challenges and the celebrations. I do hope you enjoy the stories and the pictures and hope that when we come to the next report there will be much more that we will have enjoyed and celebrated.

With best wishes.



Richard Williams, Chief Executive

Hello, we're Options, and we exist...



To support, empower and enable people with disabilities to live their lives to the full!

That's what we do.

Why? Because we believe all people should live a fulfilled and meaningful life in their local community.

We're person-centred.

We believe that every person is important, of infinite value, unique and has a contribution to make to the community in which they live. For us, this is what person-centredness means.

We're local.

We support children and adults with learning disabilities, autism and acquired brain injuries across Merseyside and the surrounding areas. We're big enough to cope, but small enough to care.

We're a charity.

We put people before profits, we always have and always will. It's one of the things that makes us a bit different. Every penny of our income is spent on providing fabulous support.

Our Beliefs

We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to live fulfilled and meaningful lives which include:

The power, authority and resources to control our own lives.

A sense of belonging and acceptance for who we are.

Being treated with dignity and respect.

Participating as valued members of our own communities.

Having new life opportunities and enriching life experiences.

Meaningful and loving personal relationships.

The opportunity to express our own cultural and spiritual beliefs.

Good health.

Taking responsibility for what we can and ought to do for ourselves.

Caring about and helping those around us.



Our Aims



Through our work Options aims:

To support people to have a fulfilled and meaningful life.

To support families and carers to enable people we support to achieve the lives described above.

To provide a challenging, rewarding and supportive work experience for staff, where they are able to use their gifts and talents for the benefit of people we support.

To help and engage with communities to understand how they can support people with disabilities to live valued lives in those communities.

To provide excellent value to people we support and to those who purchase that support.

To work in partnership with local authorities, health bodies, specialist trusts, housing associations and others to provide excellent support.

To share our learning, successes, mistakes and our experiences with others, and to constantly learn from others.

To develop and strengthen Options as an organisation in order to fulfil our mission.

Our Working Values

- ✓ **Vision** - We have a clear sense of purpose and direction.
- ✓ **Listening** - We listen to each other, and don't jump in with our own views before considering others. This reflects our respect for each other.
- ✓ **Enabling** - We support each other to develop our skills and abilities, and to use them effectively for the benefit of those we support. Therefore we don't jump in to do everything ourselves, but look to develop and use the skills of others.
- ✓ **Integrity** - We seek in our actions, in what we do, to reflect what we say and believe. We say what we mean and do what we say.
- ✓ **Teamwork** - We recognise each other's different skills, experiences and abilities and seek to use each to work as a team, and to support each other in good and in bad times.
- ✓ **Recognition and Encouragement** - Appreciation and encouragement are great motivators. We seek to identify opportunities to praise and encourage each other, and we celebrate success.
- ✓ **Challenge** - We rigorously debate our differences of opinion and see such debates as healthy and positive. Once a decision is made we work wholeheartedly towards the agreed decision.
- ✓ **Commitment** - We work hard to enable people we support to achieve their goals. When the going gets tough we stick in there. But we are also committed to balanced lives. As we seek full lives for people we support, we also seek to ensure staff do not work excessive hours, and have time for themselves and others outside of work.
- ✓ **Confidentiality** - We share specific, private information on a need to know basis, and within supervision systems. We do not gossip about others, and we do not create negative reputations for people we support.
- ✓ **Rigour** - We act and make decisions on what makes a real difference to the quality of life of those we support. When necessary we take hard and painful decisions.
- ✓ **Risk Taking** - We are willing and keen to take thought through risks and make productive mistakes.
- ✓ **Learning** - We are creative and try different ways of doing things. We make mistakes, but after they occur we learn from them to ensure they do not happen again.

Our 2020-24 Development Plan

The Development Plan describes the key things that Options will focus on improving and developing. It sets out the priorities for our time, our skills and our energies.

Options' vision is for strong local communities, with people with disabilities fully included and participating as valued members. We want people with disabilities to have opportunities to fulfil their potential, with that potential recognised as the same for people without disabilities.

The February 2020 - July 2024 Development Plan set out 14 major objectives, coordinated by our Leadership Team.

The 14 objectives we are working towards are:

1. To increase everyone's understanding and application of person-centredness.
2. To increase the aspirational focus of everything we do.
3. To carry on recruiting and retaining great staff.
4. To focus on - and deliver - more outcomes for people we support.
5. To enhance the quality of our work.
6. To shape, influence and learn from communities using Asset Based Community Development.

Looking to the future...

7. To enhance the education and understanding of communities in relation to people with disabilities.



8. To share our experience and learning inside and outside of Options, and to lobby for better, more person-centred support.

9. To model good practice.



10. To develop models of support to reflect our beliefs.

11. To become a more efficient and effective organisation.

12. To create a culture to deliver our vision.

13. To develop High Performance Leadership throughout Options.

14. Gentle growth.

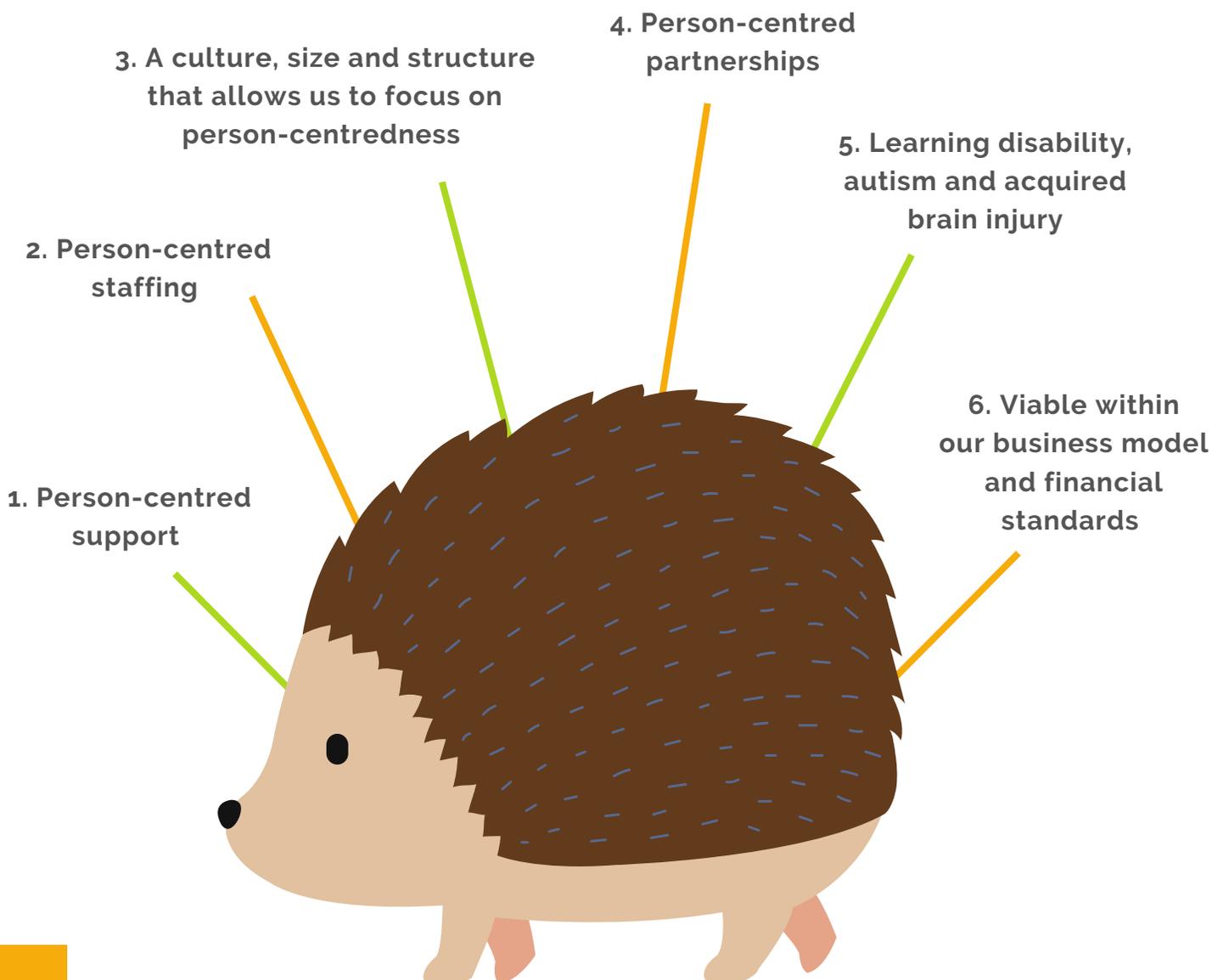


Our Hedgehog

As part of our Development Plan, we established fundamentally what Options is and isn't about - this is **Options' Hedgehog**.

No matter what the circumstances, a hedgehog does one thing, and does it really well - curling up in a ball to protect itself. The Hedgehog concept is about finding the most important things that Options does, doing them really well, and not getting distracted by other things.

For us that is fabulous, person-centred support.



A little about us...

During 2020, we supported **178** people

Supporting **110** individuals in Supported Living and **68** on Outreach



were aged under 18*

were aged 18 - 30

were aged 31 - 45

were aged 46 - 64

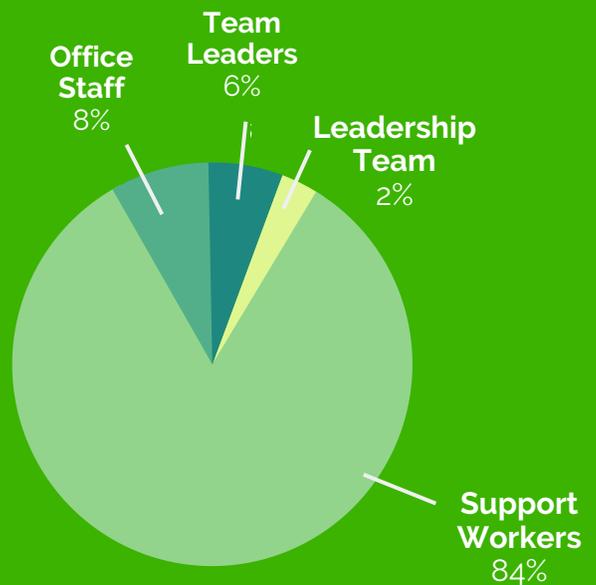
were aged 65 and over

*we now support 5 children

On average, in 2020 we had

354

members of staff working for us



Throughout 2020...

we provided

437,120

hours of support to people



we supported **7** new people, equating to an additional

127 hrs

of support provided

How Do We Add Up?

Between April 2020 and March 2021
we had a total income of

£8,473,609

The funding we received can be broken
down into the following areas...





Welcome to some of the

Moments

that made

2020/21

Fabulous



The moment we... Faced a global pandemic

2020 was a year unlike any other we have lived through, and one we are unlikely to forget.

It was an unprecedented and challenging year, with many losing loved ones to the Covid-19 pandemic. The introduction of restrictions, weekly testing, social-distancing and PPE meant that life as we knew it changed completely. We lived through not one - but two - national lockdowns, and were unable to see our friends and family. It wasn't easy, but here at Options our fabulous staff demonstrated unparalleled dedication and resilience.

We faced the new challenge of how to support people to achieve their aspirations, while balancing this with keeping people safe in their homes. Luckily, the creativity of our support staff made this happen. During both lockdowns our support workers became hairdressers, technology experts, sports instructors, arts teachers, dancers, DIY-ers, inventors, life-savers and everything in between.

People may not have been able to do everything they planned, but they still managed to achieve goals and try new things while staying safe at home. People we support put their cooking skills to the test, learned to play instruments and tried their hand at decorating. They baked, gardened, exercised, and got creative. Birthdays and special occasions were celebrated at home, and people used technology to keep in touch.

The way we did things may have changed a lot but due to the brilliance of our staff, Options managed to adapt and overcome challenges faced, and still provide the person-centred support that is at the heart of what we do!



The moment we...

Began to build a Community Team

After spending 3 years as Health Lead, in September Christine Bithell stepped up into the exciting new role of Community Engagement Development Manager! Christine now sits on the Leadership Team, and is building a Community Team here at Options.

Christine's biggest focus in her new role is Options' Vision, which was launched back in October 2019. Our vision is ...



“

A better world where people with disabilities contribute as unique and valued members of dynamic and inclusive communities.

”

Christine will be leading two objectives on our new development plan, which will work towards achieving our vision. These objectives are:

Objective 6 - Shape, learn from and influence communities using the ABCD model

Objective 7 - Enhance the education and understanding of communities in relation to people with disabilities

It's as Easy as ABCD...

For a while now, Asset Based Community Development has been used to empower local communities. Christine will be using the ABCD model to achieve her two Development Plan objectives.

The principal of ABCD is that you start by identifying what's strong within a community - not with what's wrong, or what needs fixing. We think of the things that we can do for ourselves, and what we're already good at. Then we think about sharing these skills and abilities with others in our local communities. ABCD is all about relationships. It's about who you know, how they can support you, and how you can support them.

ABCD is about who's at 'the table', making sure that the community is represented and that professionals are there to support people when needed. Every person is valued and every person has a contribution to make. It is led by communities, for communities.

Meet the Team!

Christine is currently working to build a Community Team at Options alongside people we support, their fabulous Support Workers and Team Leaders.

As well as Christine the Community Team currently consists of Alice, our Health Lead and Barry, our Fundraiser. As Health Lead Alice promotes and supports the health of people we support. Barry's role as Fundraiser involves applying for funding to deliver our vision. Danielle also joined the community team as our Online Activities Coordinator which has been vital in keeping us all connected during the pandemic. The most recent addition to the Community Team is Clara, our Inclusion Coordinator. Clara's role focuses on Objective 6 - shaping, influencing and learning from communities.

What's Next?

The focus of the community team for the next year will be on:

- Developing a fundraising strategy which will include a large bid alongside smaller pockets of funding to support the work that Options does
- Delivering health focused actions to support people to move and be more active, eat well and successfully access healthcare when needed
- Promoting new life experiences for people we support, raising people's aspirations and supporting people to be active members of their communities

The moment we... Made new memories together

Until the pandemic hit we had a great time trying out new things at Friendly Fridays and making lasting connections with each other!

Friendly Fridays was a project that was funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, and ran from 2019 right up until we entered lockdown in March. The aim of Friendly Fridays was to bring people together to share new experiences and build friendships. The group got to choose a new activity to try each week, and everybody gave it a go. Some of the new experiences we tried out in 2020 included:

- Going on a Liverpool Tour Bus
- Skiing at Chill Factor
- Rock-climbing at Awesome Walls
- Visiting the Beatles Story
- Cycling at Greenbank
- Recording music at Coverstar Experience
- Going to Liverpool Comic Con

People got to share their interests with others in the group and try things they hadn't had an opportunity to try before. Some people discovered new passions and interests; Gabby and Irene have a new-found love of rock-climbing. Phil had such a great time metal detecting at Holmwood Farm that he's even considering getting his own metal detector!

We're all looking forward to being able to share more new experiences together in the near-future!





We believe all people should live a fulfilled and meaningful life which includes:
- Having new opportunities and enriching life experiences



The moment...

We hit the slopes

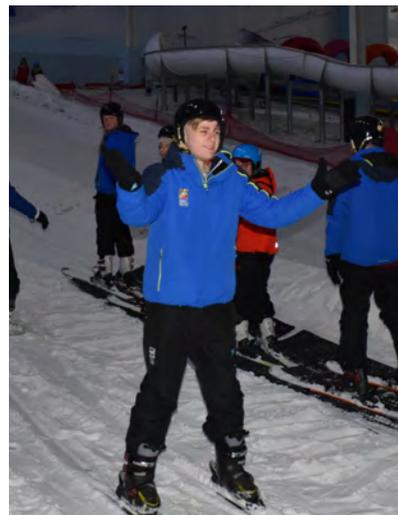


In February, 13 people we support and 19 staff hit the slopes during two indoor ski taster sessions at Chill Factore in Manchester!

The sessions were funded by Sports England, who aim to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity. Options applied for the funding to provide more opportunities for people we support to engage in a variety of adapted sports taster sessions to help improve their mental and physical health.

The idea for the session came about through a friendly chat between Tom Rooney, who we support, and Lisa Goulding who is part of our Leadership Team. Tom asked Lisa about her plans for the weekend, and Lisa explained she was off on a ski holiday. Tom said that he'd love to try skiing and one of his own aspirations is to go on a ski holiday. Lisa's response was 'okay, lets make this happen'!

It turned out a number of people we support (and staff) shared Tom's aspiration. We teamed up with Disability Snowsports UK (DSUK), who have fabulous facilities and trainers on-site at Chill Factore to make skiing accessible for all. Everyone had a brilliant time, and more sessions are planned for the future. We're even planning a ski holiday for those who have taken part in the training.



The moment we...

Made digital art

In March, a few people supported by Options met up at DoES Liverpool to take part in a sensory technology workshop to make some digital art!

DoES is a self-funded, community interest company. As an innovative maker-space - a place where people can get together to co-create and share resources - DoES has an exciting workshop with a range of tools and equipment that can be used to create some amazing art.

The workshop was led by artist Laura Pullig who creates art using unconventional materials. Laura specialises in using techniques like

paper electronics and e-textiles to make interactive artworks.

Everyone had a great time experimenting with sensory technology during the workshop. People used buzzers, lights and vibrations which changed when they moved! These sensors were used to make digital art with a computer. The brilliant artworks that people created then got printed onto t-shirts which meant that people could wear their art!

The workshops went down brilliantly and it's definitely something we'd like to try again in the future, so watch this space!



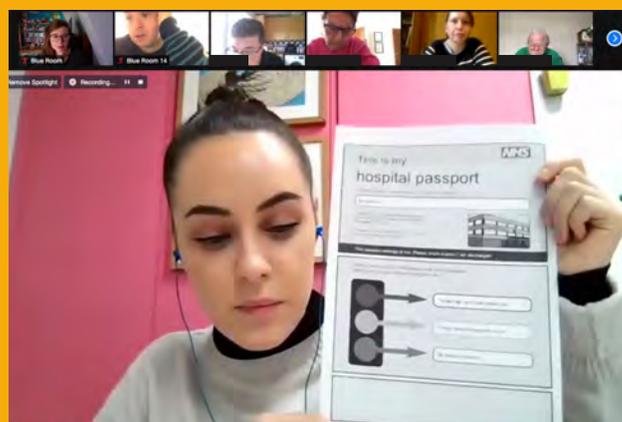
The moment we...

Focused on making good health accessible!

Unfortunately, people with learning disabilities often face barriers when it comes to accessing good quality health care, which can result in poor health. Here at Options we strongly believe that everyone is entitled to good health, and we are passionate about supporting the health and wellbeing of people we support.



At the end of 2019 we received funding from NHS England to publish '5 Steps to Health', a booklet that aims to promote ways to make good health more accessible to people with learning disabilities. The project consists of a booklet for Health and Social Care staff as well as families and friends of people with learning disabilities. There is also an accessible Easy Read version of the information too.



Each of the steps are based on recommendations from the 2018 Learning Disabilities Mortality Review. The 5 Steps to Health relate to:

1. Knowing the symptoms of Sepsis and Pneumonia
2. Asking for reasonable adjustments and accessible information
3. Having a Hospital Passport



4. Getting a Health Action Plan
5. Understanding The Mental Capacity Act

Work on the booklet was delayed due to Covid, but in September Sophie Kervin joined Options as our Health Research Assistant to work on the booklet alongside Christine Bithell. As part of the project, Sophie led workshops on Zoom throughout November and December with people we support, and with our Project Collective collaborators Blue Room. During the workshops, people discussed the different barriers they have faced when trying to access good healthcare.

Sophie talked about each of the 5 Steps to Health, and people took part in some activities based on the steps. Everyone took part in a 'spot the reasonable adjustment quiz' and drew what they'd like to be included in their Hospital Passport. Thinking about their last visit to their GP surgery, people made artwork based on how they felt during the appointment. The feedback and artwork created in the sessions, as well as people's stories and experiences, will be included in the printed booklets.

While working on the Easy Read version of the booklet, Sophie also got to meet with Mencap's Easy Read experts. The experts went through the information and pictures in the booklet, and gave feedback on how to improve it and make it more accessible.

Sophie said:

'The process of making the booklet has been very collaborative, with lots of people from both inside and outside of Options sharing their stories, artwork and feedback. Making the booklet showed why partnerships are so important here at Options'.

Keep your eyes peeled for printed copies of the booklets! If you'd like your own copy of the booklet you can contact our office on **0151 236 0855** to request one.



We believe all people should live a fulfilled and meaningful life which includes:

- The power, authority and resources to control our own lives
- Good health

The moment we...

Won a national award



We were really proud and excited when Project Collective won the Collaboration (Integration) Award at the Markel 3rd Sector Care Awards! The award recognises ways of working in partnership with other organisations or services, achieving outcomes that would otherwise not have been achieved.

Project Collective is the collaboration of six organisations working towards the same goal of improving access and inclusion for artists with learning disabilities. Options work with Blue Room; Tate Liverpool; Mencap Liverpool and Sefton; Acorn Farm and Natural Breaks as part of Project Collective.

Tom Rooney, who is a member of the Steering Group for Project Collective and is supported by Options, attended the awards ceremony. Christine Bithell, our Community Engagement Development Manager and founding Project Collective member, also attended the ceremony. The awards took place online which was a little bit different to their usual event, but it was a great celebration nevertheless. Tom and Christine attended the virtual awards ceremony and even got to meet Esther Rantzen! Afterwards, Tom and Christine met with other members of Project Collective via Zoom to celebrate their big win.



A huge congrats to Tom and everyone at Project Collective!

The moment...

Katie became a Donation Coordinator

Throughout the pandemic Katy, who is supported by Options, showed amazing community spirit through her volunteer work. Katy joined a local group called Wirral Support During Coronavirus, a non-profit voluntary service, which offered practical support to people shielding and isolating in Wirral.

Katy supported the group by working from her garden to sort out food donations which were then delivered throughout the community. Due to her hard work and dedication, Katy was made Coordinator for the Donation and Distribution of Non-Perishable Food Products!

Katie played an incredible role in helping others during such a difficult time, providing a vital lifeline for people in her community.

Well done Katie!



We believe all people should live a fulfilled and meaningful life which includes:

- Caring about and helping others around us
- Participating as valued members of our own communities

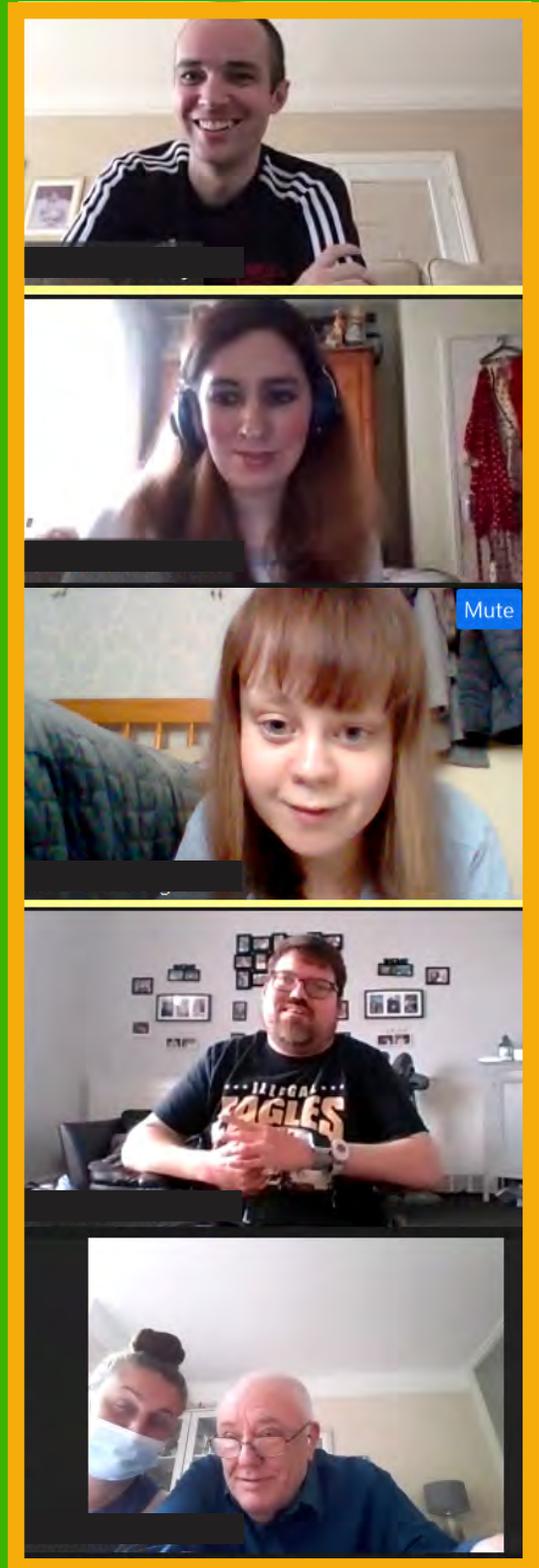
The moments we... Partied on Zoom!

For most of us, staying connected was difficult during lockdown. Household bubbles and stay-at-home guidance meant that the way we stayed in touch with our friends and families changed completely. Not being able to see each other face-to-face made it easy to feel lonely and isolated. Luckily, here at Options video-calling on Zoom made keeping in touch a whole lot easier!

The Good Things Foundation kindly donated 32 tablets to Options (including data, cases and other accessories) for people we support. People with learning disabilities disproportionately face digital exclusion and the tablets provided a vital lifeline for many, helping them stay connected during the pandemic.

In May 2020, Options began to host our 'Friday Zoom Parties' - weekly hour-long sessions where people we support could get together and have some fun. During our Zoom Parties people we support were invited to host activities and share their interests. A lot of people hosted quizzes based on things they enjoy - some were based on soaps, music and even transport. Other highlights included a virtual tour of Holmwood Farm, Sarah's DIY Christmas card demonstration and Chris treating us to a DJ set!

Keeping connected virtually took some getting used to. Initially, a lot of us were apprehensive about using Zoom, but after a few months (and a lot of technical difficulties) it's fair to say that



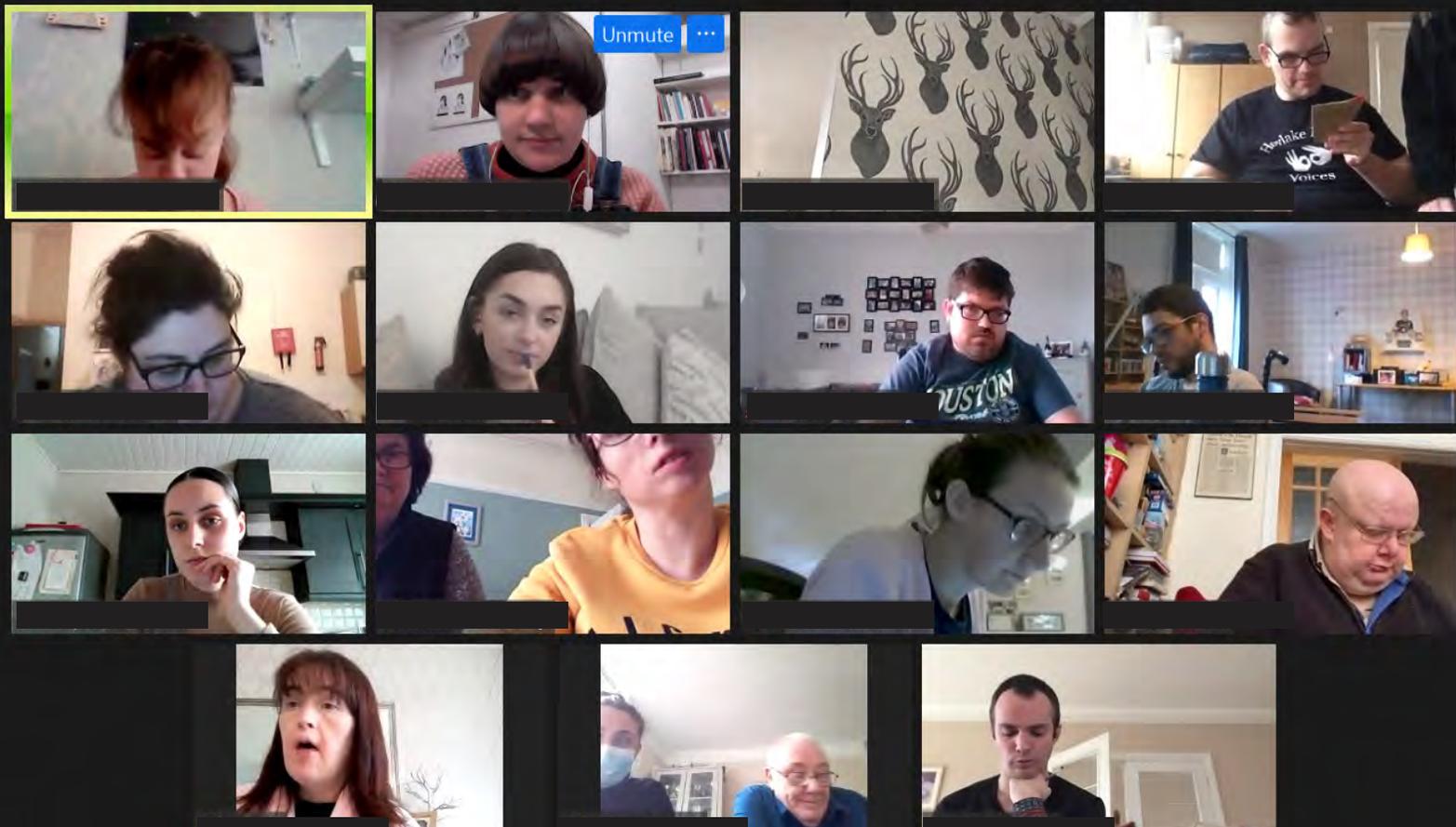
some of our Friday Party attendees became nothing less than Zoom experts. Some people we support were even able to share their Zooming skills with their families, helping them to stay in touch while they couldn't meet in person.

Our Friday Zoom Parties would not have been possible without our host Danielle Hodgkinson, who played a vital role in keeping everyone connected during lockdown.

Prior to the pandemic Danielle volunteered for Options, supporting our then Health Lead Christine. As our office staff adjusted to working from home during the first lockdown, Danielle began to help organise activities for people we support. Danielle was a natural at using Zoom, and as her skills became apparent, Options hired her to become our Online Activities Coordinator. The Online Activities Coordinator role involved planning and hosting our Friday Zoom Parties, as well as other virtual activities that took place throughout the year.

Danielle said:

'I really enjoyed my time as Online Activities Coordinator. I developed a lot of new skills and my confidence has really grown. I loved meeting new people and trying out activities on Zoom. It was great that people from outside of Options sometimes joined in too, so we all got to make new friends as well as staying connected with our old ones.'



We believe all people should live a fulfilled and meaningful life which includes:

- Participating as valued members of our own communities
- Having new life opportunities and enriching life experiences



The moment we...

Celebrated our fabulous staff



Without our amazing staff, we wouldn't be able to provide fabulous, quality support. We're always looking to recognise and celebrate staff for the contributions they make to our mission and for their great work. Alongside our Covid thank-yous received by all staff, the following staff received a personal thank-you from Richard for their individual contributions.

A huge congratulations to:

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| Matthew Heath | Lynn Jones |
| Jemma Simpson | Jessica Robinson |
| Amanda Hill | Dawn Outram |
| Simon Lockley Evans | Danielle McEvoy |
| Samantha Chamberlain | Vicki Irving |
| Jane Pennell | Bethan Price |
| Graeme Waddington | Angeline Chikuruwo |
| Diane Barrow | Lisa Goulding |
| Daniel Johnson | Andrew Hughes |
| Charlie Ward | Helen Inman |
| Brian Duckworth | Jean Smith |
| Tracy Thomas | John Maxwell |
| Terri Kearns | Karen Betney |
| Ste Baxter | Kerry Todd |
| Sharon Macdonald | Lynsey Ainscough |
| Paul Smith | Natalie Georgitsis |
| Barbara Leary | Colin Hardy |



Ethan C'Ailceta

Jess Cross

John Hughes

Joyce Gurrell

Julius Kililiku

Kenny Campbell

Linette Woodham

Lisa Nesbeth

Michael Broom

Pamela Shrimpton

Peter Evans

Wayne Slaven

Phoebe Richmond

Stacey Walton

Alice Bentley

Alisha Owens

Angela Edwards

Chris Yates

Gemma Slaven

Nicola Anderson

Karen Ferguson

Jaqueline Murphy

Anne Woodiwiss

Patrick Mooney

Paul Casey

Paul Harper

Paula Lavery

Phillip Burkhill

Rachael Challinor

Steve Hill

Thomas Crawley

Tracey Hoijord

Helen Willingham

Sam Epps

Alex Lind

Danielle Guttormsen

Dave Kerr

Craig Kimber

Vanessa Costa Novo

Jan Corless

Roz Gibson

Pauline Smith

Tracey McDermott

Rebecca Clare

The moment we... Celebrated at home

Between stay-at-home guidance and social restrictions, the way we celebrated birthdays and other milestones changed completely during 2020. Not being able to see loved ones was tough and many plans had to change, but people we support managed to celebrate their special occasions regardless.

Gwen turned 23 with a birthday cake and a nice bottle of beer to mark the occasion. Jane enjoyed a birthday afternoon tea with plenty of Mickey Mouse cakes and balloons. David and Emma threw a joint Mad-Hatter's tea party, complete with some impressive decorations. For Roy's birthday, his neighbours threw him a (socially-distanced) party in their communal garden. They put decorations up when Roy went to bed so he woke up to balloons and a big banner on his door. The whole street signed a card for Roy, which really lifted his spirits.

It's fantastic that despite the tough year people still managed to mark those special moments in style!



The moment...

Emma walked 10,000 steps a day

Keeping fit and active can sometimes be a challenge, but Emma Rothwell is a great example of how changes to our lifestyle can have a big impact!

In February, Emma put on her walking shoes and took on the challenge of walking 10,000 steps (which is around 5 miles) a day! All that walking enabled Emma to lose a stone while also getting outside in nature and enjoying some fresh air. Brilliant work Emma!



The moment...

Tom ran an art giveaway

For many of us, art was a creative outlet during lockdown, helping us to get through the tough times.

In October, Tom Rooney ran 'Think Before You Draw', an amazing art competition aimed at helping people use art to express their feelings during lockdown. There were 7 prizes to give away, which included art materials and a booklet of art activities to try. To enter, people were asked to create a picture of how they felt during lockdown. Tom even advertised his competition by creating a Youtube video with Christine which explained how to enter the competition, and what prizes were up for grabs!

Well done Tom - your competition made a real difference to people's wellbeing!



Samo with his prize!

The moments we...

Remained committed to the development of our staff



We pride ourselves on being a learning organisation, investing heavily in the talent and development of our staff. We offer many training opportunities to ensure staff have all the skills they need to work well and be fabulous in their roles.

Between April 2020 and March 2021

we spent

£117,839

on training to develop our staff teams



we provided around

9,553

hours of training and shadowing

Throughout the year, we continued to deliver core training through our in-house Learning Disability Foundation (LDF) course to 66 new starters and refreshers for existing staff; covering our beliefs, what it means to be a support worker, health and safety, and safeguarding. We organised additional opportunities such as leadership training, and person-specific training such as epilepsy and Moving and Handling sessions... to name just a few.

In February 2021, 40 staff attended 'Handling Difficult Conversations' training with the Management Centre. We also had 4 managers begin Emotional Intelligence coaching, and 88 of our staff have completed Advanced Purpose and Beliefs Training.

Completing Vision Training

77

members of staff

Handling Difficult Conversations

40

members of staff

Total completing LDF

51

members of staff

Advanced Purposes and Beliefs

88

members of staff

The moment we...

Revamped Recruitment

.....

During 2020 we made some changes to our recruitment process, and established our Recruitment Team.

Jennie Shaw has worked for Options for 10 years, spending 7 of them as a Team Leader and Liv has been at Options for 2 years as a Support Worker. Jennie and Liv became our new Recruitment Team, and their understanding of what's needed to be a great Support Worker meant that they knew exactly what to look for in new candidates. It was difficult to recruit during Covid, but Jen and Liv made it happen by using Microsoft Teams to interview some fabulous support workers.

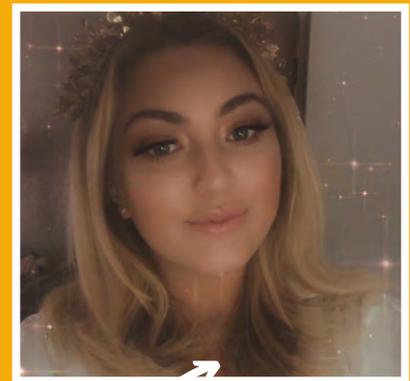
Our Recruitment Team worked to simplify the application process to join Options; the old application form was lengthy and dated so they redesigned it to make it more person-centred. The new form asks about the person's hobbies and interests and why they want to be a Support Worker. This way, we get to know more about the person, and make sure they're the right match for people we support.

Another big change Recruitment made was to how we advertise our roles. A highlight during 2020 was our bus advert for Support Worker roles. People we support were able to get involved in our competition to spot the bus, with two people winning vouchers.

Keep up the amazing work Liv and Jennie!



Jennie Shaw -
Recruitment Lead



Liv Campbell -
Recruitment Assistant



Craig Hornby with
our bus advert!

The moment we...

Enjoyed the festivities together

Coming together to celebrate Christmas is important to us at Options. Every year we hold various fun festive events for people we support, staff, volunteers, families and friends of Options.

This year, things were a little different than usual, so Lisa and Amy became Options Elves with a mission - Operation Make Christmas Happen!

As we couldn't meet in person, this year we celebrated Christmas with a virtual party. Zoom allowed us to get together, despite restrictions.

The party was full of festive fun including a Christmas quiz, bingo, a best dressed competition, dance-offs, hampers and lots of prizes to be won. Everyone had a great time!



Irene Dunn won the 'best dressed' competition!



We believe all people should live a fulfilled and meaningful life which includes:

- A sense of belonging and acceptance for who we are.
- The opportunity to express our own cultural and spiritual beliefs.
- Meaningful and loving personal relationships.



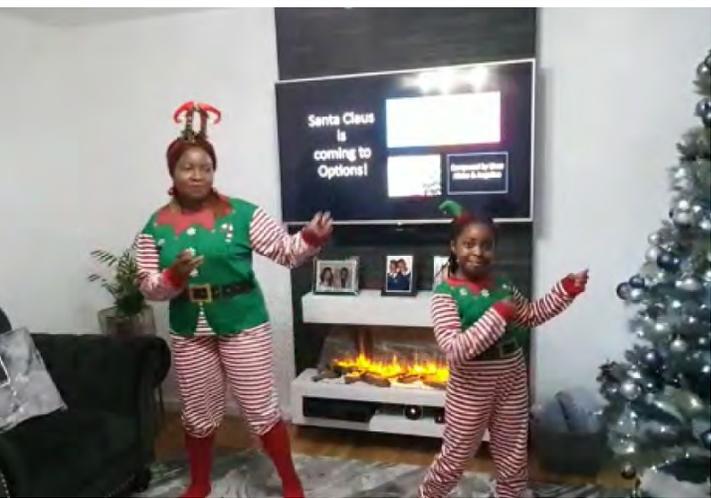
Make Christmas Happen was an operation to try to bring back some Christmas spirit after a tough year. Each team in the office had to make a music video for a song from a Christmas film.

HR and Innovations made a hilarious video for Frozen's 'In Summer', featuring an Olaf costume which all of the team dressed up in. Jess stole the show with a brilliant tap-dancing solo!

The Quality and Community teams put Dave and Christine's musical talents to use in their Home-Along themed video. The team signed along to an original recording of White Christmas in their video.

Angeline and her daughter featured in Finance and Admin's video. Dressed in matching Elf-outfits Angeline and her daughter showed off their impressive choreography, while singing a funny Covid-themed version of Santa Claus is Coming to Town.

It's safe to say that 'Operation Make Christmas Happen was a big success, and Christmas cheer was restored at Options!



The moment...

Juanita had a special Christmas

This year Juanita got to spend a special Christmas with her son, daughter-in-law and granddaughter who visited her all the way from America. Unfortunately, the last-minute change in restrictions meant that they only got to spend one day together, instead of the 5 they'd originally planned, Juanita had a fabulous Christmas Day regardless, and her family still visited her from her garden on the other 4!



Remembering those who we sadly lost in 2020



Marie Clare

Marie sadly passed away in hospital in April.

We supported Marie for just over 7 years after she moved from Girtrell Court into one of the bungalows at The Dales. Her family have all said her moving into the bungalow made a huge difference to Marie and these last 7 years were the best days of her life.

Marie was a very caring person and looked after everyone. She loved her family and was a very loyal friend. Marie loved going to Hands and Voices and loved to perform with the group.

Marie will be missed so much and has left a big hole in the hearts of everyone who knew her.



Jane Poynton

Jane sadly passed away in October. We had supported Jane since February 2013 when she moved into one of the bungalows at The Dales.

Jane had a brilliant sense of humour that was mischievous and very contagious. Jane had all her staff team and friends laughing right up to the end. She had a smile that lit up the whole room and a voice that was just as big. Jane had a fighting spirit and determination to live her life exactly how she wanted and wasn't going to let anything or anyone take away her independence.

Jane will be missed by her family, friends and everyone here at Options.



Jill Sutton

Jill sadly passed away in hospital in November. Jill had been supported by Options for 9 years.

Jill was 74 years young and everyone that met Jill loved her. Her team have said "She's left a massive hole in everyone's hearts, she was kind and caring, really interested in talking to everyone and had a brilliant sense of humour. You could never be in a bad mood around Jill as she would always have you in hysterics. She was one in a million - you could travel the world and never find another Jill."

Jill will be sadly missed by everyone here at Options.

**'When days are grey and your heart is sad
remember me and the fun we had
I'm with you still as you carry me
in your thoughts your heart and memory,
forget me not'**

- Sara Alexander

What To Expect In 2021

We couldn't resist. So, we are revealing a few of the fabulous things you can expect from us in 2021...

- We have published our 5 Steps to Health booklets and have begun distributing them across Merseyside
- We have hired a brand new Inclusion Coordinator to shape, influence and learn from communities
- We are focusing on making our aspirations happen
- We will be using business intelligence and data to shape and support the way we do things
- We petitioned for the Real Living Wage for all Health and Social Care Staff, and continue to provide it to all our staff

Things to know about Options

1. We were founded on 13th October 1993.
2. We support people in Liverpool, Sefton and Wirral.
3. Our Mission is to 'support, empower and enable people with disabilities to live their lives to the full!'
4. We employ 366 staff - most who are support workers.
5. We support around 180 people with learning disabilities, autism and acquired brain injuries.
6. People we support have raised over £15,000 for cancer, children's, animal and homeless charities in the past couple of years.
7. Alice our Health Lead works to support the health, fitness and wellbeing of people with disabilities and our staff.
8. We've hosted three community festivals called One Wirral in Birkenhead Park promoting inclusion and equality.
9. We partner with an urban farm, called Holmwood Farm in Wirral, who grow veg and rescue animals.
10. Each year we hold a free community Tea Party in St Nicholas Church gardens.
11. For the past 2 years, people we support have taken part in Project Artworks at Tate.
12. We have 15 volunteers working across various areas from befriending to events.
13. We employ people based on their great values and beliefs, not their experience.
14. We offer fabulous training opportunities to all staff, volunteers, family members and anyone we support who would like to get involved!
15. Each year we hold our Options' Oscars to recognise outstanding achievements of people we support.
16. Our photography group have held two exhibitions at The Bluecoat and auctioned off some of their work.
17. People we support often take part in the interviews we hold for new staff members and get involved in some of the training we do.
18. We have forums called Voices R Us run by people we support who meet regularly to discuss the support they receive and other aspects of our organisation.
19. There are people we support who volunteer at the Royal Liverpool Hospital, Tranmere Rovers Football Club, charity shops and Hedgehog Rescue - amongst many other places.
20. Our Tech Lead Will is developing projects around assistive technology to further improve independence for people we support.



Options
Support | Empower | Enable
Living life to the full!

Did you know...

In August 2019 we received an '**Outstanding**' rating. This is an incredible achievement and we feel it reflects the amazing contributions our staff make to our mission!

Inspected and rated

Outstanding ☆





Options

Support | Empower | Enable

Living life to the full!

Keep up to
date with us!

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Follow us on social media!



@OptionsEmpowers