

Information and news for disabled and older people and family carers

Independent Living News



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Edition 143 – December 2021

#partofthesolution - 1996-2021, celebrating 25 years of promoting independent living

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If you would like a regular copy of the SIL newsletter, and to help us adhere to our environmental policy to reduce production and postage costs, please forward your email address details to shelagh.callaghan@s4il.co.uk

Deadline for article contributions in the Spring newsletter is Friday, 28th January 2022

Email to shelagh.callaghan@s4il.co.uk or post to the address on the back of this newsletter. Don't forget the prize for every star letter/article printed is £25.



Hello and welcome to the latest edition of the SIL Newsletter.

I'm sure you are all aware that there has been a lot of discussion on the national news about social care and the crises facing organisations due to poor recruitment and funding issues. I am pleased to say that SIL is in a much better position than most, our staff turnover is far lower than similar organisations (most staff stay with us for many years) and financially we are currently in a good position.

We are not completely immune to some of the challenges, and we would love to recruit a lot more frontline staff, especially as I am really pleased to announce that we have been selected as one of the key homecare providers for the Herefordshire Local Authority in a recent contract exercise.

We work hard to provide the best possible working environment for staff and will continue to improve our staff benefits in the future. So, if you know anyone who is looking to work in social care and wants to work for an organisation that really values their employees, please tell them about SIL and ask them to contact us on 01568 616653. For more information about us as an organisation and to learn more about our current vacancies, please visit our website www.s4il.co.uk

As a 'not for profit' organisation we don't have shareholders or owners to pay, we reinvest any surpluses we make in the services we provide and our staff.

'Train people well enough so they can leave, treat them well enough so they don't want to' – Sir Richard Branson

Caveat: Please note we print articles provided by third party organisations in good faith. SIL takes no responsibility for the accuracy of the information or content. Dates and times of events and activities are correct at the time of going to print.

Elf Day



Sprinkle your year with some festive cheer and unleash your inner Elf! Alzheimer's Society are launching their Elf Day and they need your support. This Elf Day spread some festive cheer and raise money for people with dementia.

Sign up to Elf Day, which takes place on the 3rd December, and you'll receive a fundraising pack filled with festive inspiration to help you raise money for people with dementia. From festive bake sales to sponsored fancy dress, anything goes – all that matters is getting festive for people with dementia. To register please visit www.alzheimers.org.uk/elfday

Safe Haven



Herefordshire Mind Safe Haven is open 7 nights a week, 365 days a year; including the Christmas holiday period. The meeting space is at Heffernan House, 130 -132 Widemarsh Street, Hereford, where they can provide 1:1s [by appointment only], with a social space where participants can be around like-minded individuals, and light refreshments are provided.



A safe, non-judgemental, evening space, for people experiencing emotional distress.

They open between 5.00-10.00pm daily, with a last admission at 9.00pm, and also provide a supportive, empathetic listening ear via telephone on 01432 372407.

For more information or to book an appointment email: safehaven@herefordshire-mind.org.uk or call the number above.

SIL's Red Carpet AGM



The long awaited 25th anniversary celebrations took place at the Courtyard, Hereford, at the beginning of October. The formal AGM was just a small part of its silver celebration, which marked SIL's journey over the past 25 years and played tribute to its service users, staff and trustees during this time.

The red carpet was rolled out for the annual awards for outstanding support workers, which always forms part of the AGM. However, this year there were new awards for office based teams and also for the outstanding personal assistant (PA) of the year, nominated by those holding their own funds and using SIL's Direct Payment Support Service. There were so many nominations that as always, choosing the winner in each category was very difficult for the judges.

After the awards, it was time to launch the new SIL videos, which can now all be viewed on YouTube and will soon be uploaded onto SIL's website, which is being redesigned to mark the start of a new era. As well as the new professionally made videos, there was a potted history of SIL with some lighter moments in a home-video produced by two talented members of SIL's staff, Paula Palmer and Briony Phillips.

A delicious buffet lunch was provided by the Courtyard and a fabulous celebration cake made by Cakes & Catering completed the day, which was enjoyed by everyone who attended. We would like to thank all those

who took part in the planning and delivery of the event, and to those who attended, and say we hope you'll continue supporting us for the next 25 years!

The winners of each award are:

The Judy Phillips Memorial Award - Support Worker of the Year ILH (Peer Nomination) winner:

Pauline McLoughlin

The Ian Jones Award - Support Worker of the Year ILH (Service-user Nomination) winner:

Zara Cook

The Adam Cove Award - Team Leader of the Year ILH (Support Worker & Service-user Nomination) winner:

Donna Tranter

ILH Team of the Year - (Service-user Nomination) winner:

MB's team, support workers Dave Hopkins, Richard Baynham, Nick Gray and Nikyta Carey

Homecare Services Award of the Year - (Service-user Nomination) winner: Carolyn Layton

Outstanding PA of the Year - (DPSS Service-user Nomination) winner: Jackie Innis

Congratulations to them all.



Anni Choesang and PA Jackie



cake cake cake



Donna Tranter and Ian Bambrough



Katie Loughran and Patrick Fortey



Lisa, Euan and Tara



Richard Baynham and David Hopkins

Festive Productions



Each year the Courtyard produces relaxed performances for a range of its productions especially for those who find the theatre or cinema experience a little overwhelming. During 2020 The Courtyard underwent a huge renovation programme and the “new” theatre is better than ever and fully accessible.

This winter season there is a relaxed performance of the Snow Queen on Saturday, 11th December at 2.30pm and also on the 11th, at 2pm, an Audio Described performance of this year’s pantomime Jack and the Beanstalk. At 6.30pm on Sunday, the 12th December, the pantomime is a BSL signed performance.



Monday, 3rd January at 10.30am, hosts a relaxed performance of Jack and the Beanstalk, while on Tuesday, 4th January a dementia friendly production of the show takes place at 2pm, with doors opening at 1pm.

For more information call the Box Office on 01432 340555 or visit www.courtyard.org.uk/

The Newport Festive Run



St David’s Hospice are organising a Festive 5 Fun Run for Friday, 10th December. Starting at 6.30pm the fun five-mile



run will take place along the sweeping river front pathways that light up the city and celebrate the festive season. Runners must wear head or body torches but apart from that, runners should choose festive adornments or fancy dress to ‘glitter up’ the city! The minimum age is 15, and each runner who completes the run will receive a medal. The proceeds from the event will be used to support hospice patients throughout the community.

To enter visit <https://stdavidshospicecare.org/event-details/festive-5-fun-run/>

Snippets



Torfaen Citizens Advice - For advice and help with welfare benefits (including appeals), debt and money advice, employment law, consumer issues, food vouchers, and more, you can speak to someone using a video advice drop-in service on Mondays and Fridays, 10.30am – 1.00pm. They are also recruiting volunteers to help the service. For more information about either of the above, visit: torfaenvideoadvice.org.uk

Listening Books provides an audiobook lending service for anyone with a physical or learning disability, mental health condition, illness, or learning difficulty, who finds that it affects their ability to read, or hold books in the usual way. They currently have a number of free memberships available for people living in Herefordshire, who might like to join, but would find the usual membership fees a barrier. For more information visit <https://www.listening-books.org.uk/what-we-do/free-memberships> or call 020 7407 9417.

Keep Herefordshire Warm offers an Energy Advocacy Service, which is available to anyone living in Herefordshire, who is struggling to pay their energy bills and keep their home warm. Amy, the service's Energy Advocate, can offer friendly and professional advice to help with understanding and managing bills, fuel debt, meter issues, liaising with energy companies, keeping warm on a budget, and switching tariffs and suppliers.

To find out more visit www.keeptherefordshirewarm.co.uk or contact Amy: advocate@severnwye.org.uk

Disabled Ramblers is run for and by people with reduced mobility. They organise about 30 rambles each summer, as far apart as the Scottish Borders to Cornwall. Rambles vary from 5 to 8 miles per day. The routes are carefully chosen to offer varying difficulty, but always through beautiful countryside, on public Rights of Way, National Parks and over National Trust estates. Ramblers use electric mobility scooters - or hire one from the Disabled Ramblers loan fleet. The Ramblers often visit the Malvern Hills, so if you would like more information about the organisation, visit: <https://disabledramblers.co.uk/>

Hereford Men's Mental Health Group which meet on the second and fourth Monday of each month, has been working on a book project. Members of the group contributed to Further Beyond Words which showcases original poetry and short stories by men who use creative writing to help them deal with anxiety, depression or other mental health issues. The books, illustrated by students from the Hereford College of Arts, can be bought for £6.99 from SIL's Head Office or via Paypal – simply email reception@s4il.co.uk For more information about joining the group email: HMMHgroup1@gmail.com

Health & Social Care Awards 2021



In October virtual posh frocks and tuxedos were donned to attend the Hereford Times Health and Social Care Awards for 2021. We are very pleased to announce that, for the fourth year running, SIL's nomination for one of its support workers won the Home Carer of the Year Award. The winner was Oliver Dale for the way he stepped into the unknown as a support worker at the height of the pandemic. He quickly adapted to working within social care, changing his approach to ensure each of the service users he supports receive the independence and security they require.

Lisa Bradley, SIL's Registered Manager, collected the award on Oli's behalf and said in her acceptance speech, "I am so proud that Oli has won this award, he truly deserves it and he has been a great asset to our company – he really is what SIL is all about".

SIL'S CHRISTMAS BINGO

Our Virtual Bingo is back.

Thursday 16th December 2021

Join us at 6.15pm to be ready to start at 6.30pm

£5 to play (1 book of 5 games)

Email us for more information about how to join in the fun!
Reception@s4il.co.uk

Save the Children

All the money raised goes to Save the Children

Registered Office:

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