

Information and news for disabled and older people and family carers

Independent Living News



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Edition 147 – December 2022

SIL – The Best Place to Work in Health & Social Care - Award Winner 2022

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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, 3rd February 2023

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.

Welcome



There are many unsung heroes that work throughout the social care system on a daily basis, and these people often do amazing things with little or no recognition.

Sadly, we have recently seen the passing of one such individual, Maggie O'Neill.

Maggie was a trustee of Services for Independent Living (SIL) and Chair of the Hereford Polio Group giving her time, commitment, and enthusiasm freely to both.

She had been a trustee at SIL since the organisation was founded over 25 years ago and during that time had been Chairman and Honorary President of the organisation, only recently stepping down due to health issues. Maggie was an excellent example of someone who was actively involved in trying to enhance the lives of others and the quality of services available locally. Like many others involved in these types of roles she expected nothing in return, only wanting to make a difference and improve things for others.

Rest In Peace Maggie, some people just shine, and you shone brighter than most. My thoughts are with your family and friends.



Maggie O'Neill

Christmas Closure



SIL's offices will be closed for the Christmas period from 5pm on Friday, 23rd December and will reopen at 9am on Tuesday, 3rd January 2023. None of our office staff will be working during this time.

However, this closure will not affect any support at home that you receive from either ILH or Homecare Services, and the out of office on-call numbers remain unchanged.



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.

The Best Place to Work



We've always known that Services for Independent Living (SIL) is a fabulous place to work, in fact we've always said it's the best – and now we have the proof because at this year's Hereford Times Health & Social Care Awards Ceremony, SIL was named as the Best Place to Work in Health & Social Care.



So, what is it that makes SIL such a special place to work? Is it the good rates of pay, the excellent benefits package, and the on-going support employees receive? Or might it be the staff events or the free monthly prize draw? Perhaps, it's because the organisation is made up of people who care about others and want to make a difference to people's lives.

Not only did SIL win this award, but team leader, Agnieszka Simpkin received the Care Hero Award, and SIL was also a finalist in both the Mental Health Award, and in the Carer in the Home category.

For more information about our services and our current job vacancies visit: www.s4il.co.uk

Safe Haven



The Safe Haven Team are warm and welcoming and will provide empathy, support, and safety to anyone experiencing high emotional distress and/or suicidal thoughts. As well as offering support, they will be able to refer and direct you to further services if you need them. Please phone them on the day you are looking for help and they can arrange to support you when you arrive. Alternatively call in, although if they are busy, there may be a little delay before they can see you.



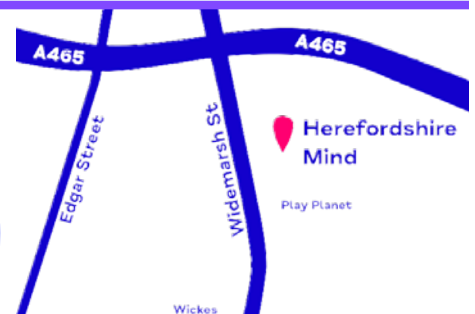
A safe, non-judgemental, evening space, for people experiencing emotional distress.

Open every day 5 - 10pm
Last admission 9pm

01432 372407

safehaven@herefordshire-mind.org.uk

Heffernan House,
130-132 Widemarsh Street
Hereford HR4 9HN



SIL's AGM



Our AGM took place at Luctonians Rugby Club near Leominster, at the beginning of October and we welcomed over 60 people to the event, which included the annual awards.

The event started with a buffet lunch, giving people the chance to catch up with old friends and of course make new ones! Lunch was followed by a very short meeting, which ran through the obligatory business side of the Annual General Meeting. After this was the highlight of the event – the annual awards.

This year there were awards for staff within ILH and HCS, and for the second year, an award to celebrate the PA of the Year, nominated by service users who use our direct payment support services (DPSS).

The nominations from all the categories were truly heart-warming to read and it was lovely to think that so many of our service users wanted to thank their support workers and PAs for “going the extra mile”.

We would like to thank all of our service users who took the time to nominate a support worker, a team, or their PA for the awards.

The Homecare Support Worker of the Year Award was given to Lisa Rossi and the runner up was Sandra Miles.



Sarah and Hayley



Elaine and team



Lisa and Sandra

Within ILH there are several categories, and the results are as follows:

The Ian Jones Award:

Winner Hayley Secker, runner up Sarah McGuigan

The Judy Phillips Memorial Award:

Winner Sam Gawler, runner up Abi Neville

Team Leader of the Year Award:

Winner Aggie Simpkin, runner up Katie Loughran

ILH Team of the Year:

Winning team - Sylvie P's team.

PA of the Year: Winner Jo Hanrahan

After the awards our guests were shown a short video starring our staff and service users and showing what we have all been up to across the past twelve months. The video closed with a moving tribute to Maggie O'Neill, our honorary president, who sadly passed away in the summer.

The event concluded with a game of SIL bingo with a very special caller – SIL's Chief Executive, Euan McPherson.

Our AGM's are open to everyone, so if you haven't been to one before but would like to find out more about us and meet our staff and service users, the date for next year's event is Thursday, 5th October – so why not save the date!

The video will be available to view on our website soon, but in the meantime if you would like to see the video, please email briony.phillips@s4il.co.uk who will forward a copy.



Buffet



Aggie



Katie

Autumn with our Service Users



Our Service Users have been busy this Autumn, so we thought we would share some of their stories.

Service user Sean likes to sing, so here he is with his mike belting out a song at a recent Yam Jams session.



Mark

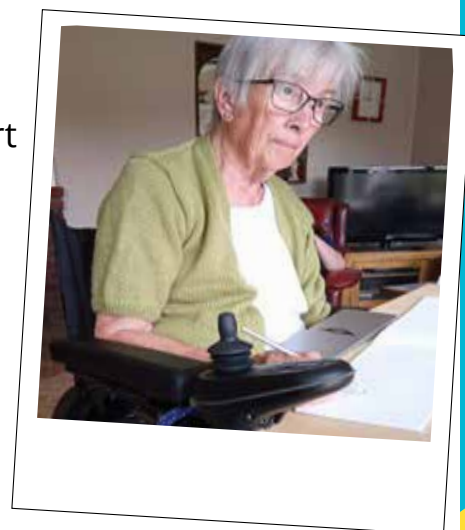
Support worker Graham's dog has certainly made a hit with service user Mark. He and his new four-legged friend love the woodland walks they are now doing together.

Service user Sylvie was able to join in the Halloween fun, thanks to the super scary pumpkin that support worker Amy carved for her.



Service user SS, has rediscovered her love of puzzles, however this one a little bit too easy. If anyone has any 'old' puzzles that they would be willing to donate that would be very much appreciated. Please make sure they have all their pieces and either drop them into the office or give us a call on 01568 616653 so that we can arrange collection.

Following the delivery of her new motorised wheelchair, service user AJ is finding life so much easier and she is able to plan her day as she so chooses. She is also back at her art work, which she is now able to do again.



Even granddads enjoy a princess day! Here is service user ND with his granddaughters before they returned to school in September.

Yay baby - service user Sheila felt the vibe while getting ready for her sister Sharon's Sixties Theme party. Sheila travelled to Derbyshire with Team Leader Donna Tranter for a week of celebrations.



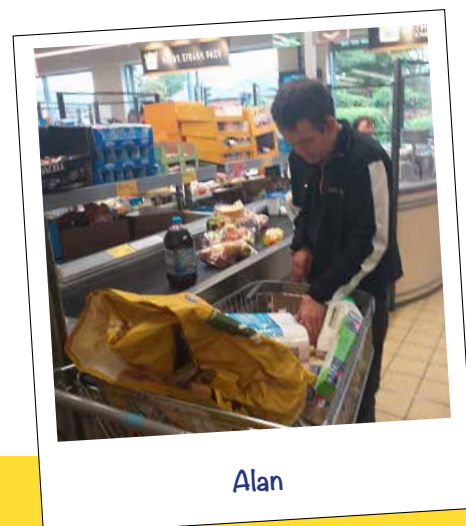
Sheila

Support worker Kristina and service user Luke enjoyed a day trip to Birmingham, where they spent some time by the Town Hall, amongst the agricultural exhibition, a temporary instalment bringing a bit of green to the city.



Luke

It's taken a couple of years of encouragement, but service user Alan now loves completing the weekly shop. He relishes stacking the groceries on the conveyor belt and then putting his goodies in his shopping bags. He enjoys the interaction with the cashier when it comes to paying too.



Alan

Snippets



Christmas Jumper Day - It's that time of year and so we invite you to celebrate Christmas Jumper Day with SIL in our Leominster offices, on Wednesday, 14th December, 1pm - 3pm to raise money for Save the Children. Wear your snazziest festive attire and join us for Christmas music, refreshments, games and a raffle. If you would like to attend, please email: reception@s4il.co.uk or call 01568 616653.

Christmas at the Courtyard - Hereford Courtyard's stage is set for magic and monstrous fun, as Beauty and the Beast is brought to life at this year's pantomime. As part of the production, there is an audio described performance on Saturday, 10th December at 2pm; a BSL performance on Sunday, 11th at 6.30pm; a relaxed performance on Monday, 2nd January at 10.30am and a Dementia friendly performance on Tuesday, 3rd January at 1.00pm

Snow White, for younger children is also showing at the Courtyard, Hereford in December. This magical and accessible Christmas show full of family fun, is perfect for children aged 7 and under and their grownups. On Saturday, the 10th at 2.30pm, there is a special relaxed performance. For details about this or the panto above, call the box office on 01432 340555 or visit www.courtyard.org.uk

Afon Support - is a free support service for anyone living in Torfaen who needs help with a general housing issue. From getting food parcels to grant funding for household items, the friendly team can help. For a referral, email: gateway@torfaen.gov.uk or call: 01495 766949

Chatty Cafes are hosted in venues where customers can sit at Chatter & Natter tables if they are happy to talk to other customers. Hundreds of venues have signed up to the scheme, in cafes, pubs, libraries, hospitals - anywhere that people can sit and chat over a coffee. The aim is to kickstart conversations, get people chatting and reduce loneliness along the way. Local ones include The Nest, Hereford Road, Ledbury and Costa Coffee, Cwmbran.

Playing Together is an interactive play session for older adults and pre-school children, along with accompanying parents and carers. This lively creative session supports communication through play activities, including music, movement, sand, puppets and visual arts. The sessions run every Tuesday during term time at the Courtyard, Hereford, between 10.30am - 12pm. For more information visit:

www.courtyard.org.uk/events/playing-together-autumn-2022/

Registered Office:
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