

# Disability News

Winter 2018 / 2019



Peer volunteer Sue exhibiting her artwork at Orleans House Gallery

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**Richmond AID**  
Advice and Information on Disability

# Latest news

## New Chair of Trustees, Andrew Craig writes....



Having spent eight years as treasurer of Richmond AID I am delighted to have the opportunity to support the organisation in a new role as Chair of Trustees.

Carol Long, who in turn superseded Sue Ball, has had to step down as Chair for health reasons but will remain on the board. Claire Newton will take over the role of Treasurer. Pauline Hill remains in the role of Vice-Chair.

I am very grateful to all of the trustee team and staff for the ongoing success of Richmond AID. As for me, when I don't have my head buried in a spreadsheet, I spend a lot of my time helping people with disabilities to enjoy my sporting passion which is sailing. Do ask if you would like to try it!

## Our Peer Network hosts a thriving timetable of weekly social activities....

These take place around the borough including The DAAC, Ellera Hall, Bushy Park, Teddington Lock and The Castlenau Centre in Barnes.

If you'd like to come for the first time, or know someone who would, contact Christine Hill for more details: [c.hill@richmondaid.org.uk](mailto:c.hill@richmondaid.org.uk) / 020 8831 6129 or 07927 550774. See page 5 for more news about the network.



Visit from Matthew Ryder, Deputy Mayor of London

## Adult Social Care is 70 too...

**Like the NHS, Adult Social Care (ASC) also began in 1948.**

Whilst often overshadowed by the NHS, care services are vital for wellbeing. Both the NHS and ASC were created through the 1948 National Assistance Act. Health services were made free at the point of use, whilst social care is means-tested and not nationalised. Help to have a bath or visit the toilet, rise and get dressed in the morning are some elements of social care. Sadly social care is facing unprecedented demand yet care providers are going out of business.

For more information, The King's Fund has published a report entitled 'What's the problem with social care, and why do we need to do better?' This can be found on their website: [www.kingsfund.org.uk](http://www.kingsfund.org.uk)

# Birthday celebrations

**Birthdays are always a cause for celebration, but each one marks a unique time and beginning. Richmond AID is no exception!**

**In 1988 our organisation began as a telephone advice line, run by disabled advisors for the local disabled community.** We are lucky enough to have a copy of the first newsletter from that very year (see page 7).

**As 2018 marks our 30th birthday, we are celebrating in style on 29th November at York House in Twickenham.** We will also be holding our annual general meeting on the same day, before the party. We have chosen this point in the year to celebrate as it is very close to the International Day of Disabled Persons on 3rd December.

The party is shaping up to be a very informative and enjoyable affair, with special guests including Mayor of the Borough Councillor Ben Khosa and Kiko Matthews, local record breaker and environmentalist.



Kiko has battled a life threatening brain disease on more than one occasion and continues to maintain an inspirational attitude. You may have heard about her incredible feat earlier this year when she set the world record for fastest female to row solo across the Atlantic Ocean?!

We think Kiko's bravery, purpose and determination is exceptional and demonstrates that a serious health condition not only need not limit your dreams, but may even help achieve them. Kiko will tell us her story, including visuals, and give us an insight into her next challenge.

Other features of the party will include a talk on the history of disability by Stephen Lee Hodgkins, a quiz on the history of Richmond AID and disability rights, a performance by our in house choir and volunteer awards. There will be a buffet lunch at the start of the party and chance to network at the end.

If you're interested in finding out more, joining us as a guest or helping with the preparations, please send an email to Clare: [c.taylor@richmondaid.org.uk](mailto:c.taylor@richmondaid.org.uk) or call **020 8831 6411**.

In the meantime you can find and share the event on social media at our facebook page: [www.facebook.com/richmond-aid](http://www.facebook.com/richmond-aid)



# Services

## Celebrating our successes over the last year !

The last year has seen a lot of positive change for us here at Richmond AID as our service offers expand. We have run a couple of very successful pilots and recently set up some new services. Read about our new Counselling Service on Page 7 and our Peer Network overleaf on page 5. Below are four of our successes we want to share with you. All of these projects have ended but have given us great experience and insights and we are always developing new ideas and ways to support disabled people.



From October 2017 to June 2018 Richmond AID delivered a **Social Prescribing** pilot, commissioned by Richmond Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) across 3 GP Practices in Barnes. We received referrals directly from GPs to refer people to services in their community rather than receiving medical solutions. We worked closely with organisations in Barnes such as FiSH, Castelnau Community Centre and Age UK Richmond upon Thames.

Our Community Navigators worked with people to develop plans to help improve their health and wellbeing. We referred to a range of community solutions from exercise classes to befriending, from walking clubs to gardening, and to many other interest groups. We also worked with people to address wider social issues such as poverty, debt, housing and relationship problems which were impacting on their health and wellbeing.

Richmond AID also carried out a one year **Journey to Employment (J2E)** pilot based in Brixton and Harlesden, ending in July 2018. We ran a series of eight 12 week employment courses for people that were referred from the job centres. We had some great successes with people getting into employment, volunteering opportunities and experiencing increases in well-being and confidence.

After 4 years of delivery our **Independent Support** project, which has provided advice and support for parents and carers of children and young people transitioning from statements to Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP), has come to an end. Independent Support was always intended to be a time limited resource, supporting the transition from statements to EHCPs. Information, advice and support will continue to be provided by local SEND IASS and the national Contact helpline. For more information about where to go for support please have a look at our website <http://www.richmondaid.org.uk/independent-support-partnership/>.

Our fantastic **Sports Inclusion** project came to an end in March 2018. We gained some valuable insights and understandings of the barriers that disabled people face when participating in sports and physical activities. We had some great successes too with people trying the gym, archery, swimming, companion cycling, sailing, climbing and more. We ran an event in December 2017 to encourage people to give sports a try. We are currently seeking funding to continue this project.

# Friendships and fun

## Richmond AID's Peer Network began in 2017 with a flying start.

**We have tried and tested a few things** (art, cooking, book club, fishing, choir, discussion/scrutiny, drama and more..) and now have a number of regular groups running, led by our fantastic team of peer volunteers.

Adults of all ages and health conditions, learning difficulties and mental health issues come together to form the groups. Everyone is very welcoming and supportive to new and current members and friendships are blossoming outside of the group.

I am no longer depressed, I have some structure in my life & I have met some great people. I now wake up in the morning and feel happy because I know that RAID is there for me, I feel safe.



**The art group meet on a weekly basis every Thursday.** We are extremely lucky to have Sue, a peer member, lead the group. As well as being an accomplished artist she is a very sensitive empathetic leader who knows how to inspire people to overcome their lack of confidence, so much so, the peer art group were invited to display their work at the Orleans House Gallery Art & Soul exhibition in May this year (Sue is on the front cover with her artwork).

I am now much happier and more self-confident again. I have a talent that it is a joy to use. I love to give to people and it is so much appreciated in the group. I feel that I have got my life back.



## **Richmond AID were visited earlier this year by Matthew Ryder, Deputy Mayor of London.**

The Peer Network group met with Matthew to share their experiences of coming to the Peer Network group. They were able to show off some of their art work and sing a song. He said he "so enjoyed their singing and the art". He was so impressed, in fact, that the Choir have been invited to perform at an Award ceremony in City Hall on Monday 15th October 2018. They are very excited to be performing and are practising hard in preparation for singing in front of a hall filled with more than 300 people!

**Comments to the right were made by peer group members to Matthew Ryder when he visited Richmond AID.**

I feel like I have got a new family here.  
I am feeling relaxed, stress free.



# Access to Work Scheme

**Did you know you can get help at work if you're disabled or have a health condition?**

**Access to Work empowers disabled people by putting the right support in place to enable them to flourish in the workplace.**

Your employer may not know about Access to Work - so you can tell them about it.

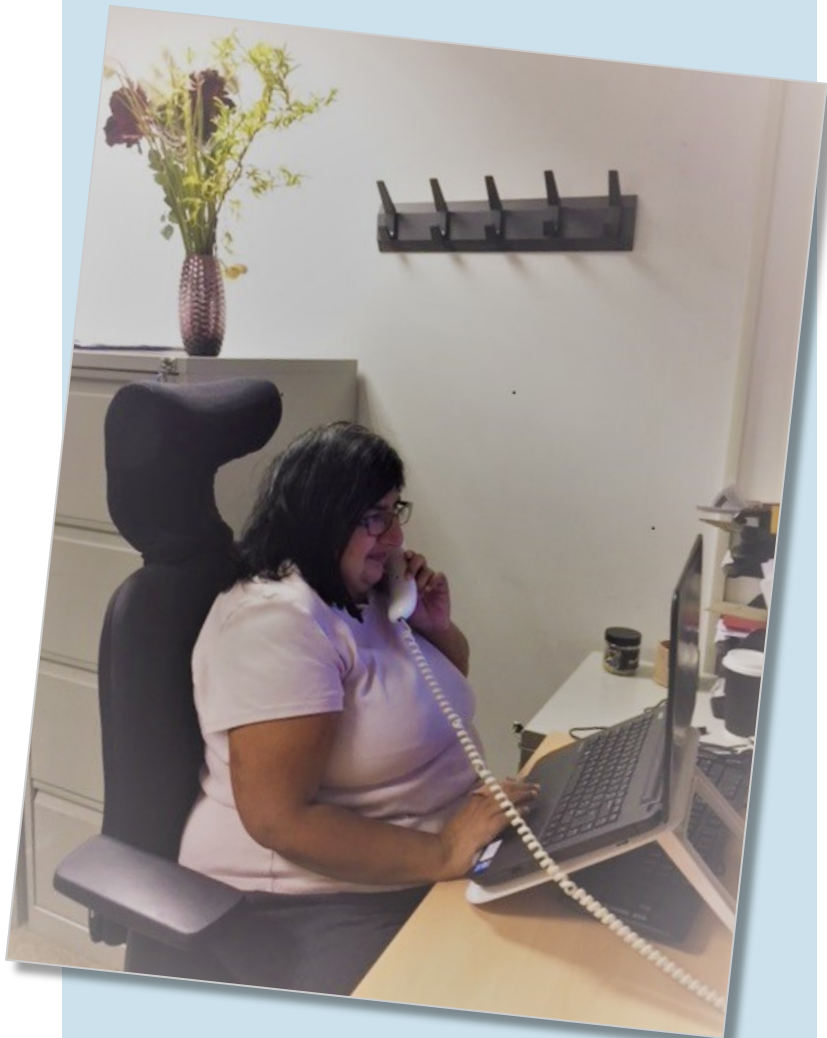
Venna works at Richmond AID. As her employer, we applied to Access to Work to ensure that Venna's workplace was as accessible as we could make it.

An advisor came to our offices to speak to Venna about her needs and make some recommendations. Following their advice we ordered a chair that was specially adapted for Venna and also a voice recognition software and an ergonomic stand for her laptop. Richmond AID also adapted Venna's hours as she was finding the full day too tiring.

If you are finding it hard to carry out your work as a result of a disability, then employers have a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments. If the help you require isn't covered by your employer, you can apply for support from Access to Work.

This is a government scheme which provides advice and support to people with a disability or long-term health condition (mental or physical) to help them to take up or remain in work. You need to have a paid job or be about to start one, which can include self-employment, an apprenticeship, or a work trial.

You'll be offered support based on your needs in the workplace. This may include a grant to cover the costs of taxi fares if you cannot use public transport, the cost of specialist equipment, or a support worker who can help you with things like answering the phone or attending meetings. The maximum grant awarded is up to £57,200 per applicant. You don't have to pay this back.



If you would like to know more about Access to Work or you want to apply online go to [www.gov.uk/access-to-work](http://www.gov.uk/access-to-work), or call the Jobcentre Plus on **0800 121 7479**. Once you've applied, an Access to Work adviser will contact you to discuss your options.

If you are unsure about your rights you can speak to an advisor at Richmond AID on **020 8831 6070**.

**“All these adaptations meant I could carry on working and do the best I could in the job and it also meant I would be pain free whilst I worked”**

# Counselling

**Richmond AID is pleased to offer a low cost counselling service, available to anyone over the age of 18 years in the local community.**

**The service operates on Wednesday evenings and Friday mornings in Teddington, where we provide the privacy and quiet you need to explore your issues.**

We keep our fees as low as possible. The cost of the initial assessment is £40 and the cost of ongoing sessions is £40. We also offer low cost sessions operating on a sliding scale of fees from £10 to £25 based on your income which will be agreed with you at your assessment.

We offer a calm and confidential space to explore your feelings and talk through any problems you have, no matter how difficult you feel they may be. Whilst Richmond AID has specific expertise in supporting people with long term health conditions, disabilities and mental health difficulties, the counselling services is open to any resident in the Richmond Borough with or without long term health issues. We work with a range of problem areas to help you cope with everyday issues such as stress, anxiety, depression, loneliness, low self-esteem, relationship issues and sexuality. You may be considering making some changes in your life or just simply want to talk things through.

To talk to us about how we can help and to arrange an initial meeting please call **07821 503943** or email [counselling@richmondaid.org.uk](mailto:counselling@richmondaid.org.uk)

## Richmond AID—going back to our roots!

**Continuing from our page 3 article, we still have a copy of the first ever Richmond AID newsletter from 1988.** The newsletter included information on Dial-A-Ride, classes at Richmond Community College, and explanations of what council services were available and for whom. No internet then!



There was also a 'demo memo' - details of a protest against the 1988 Social Security Act. The Act revised welfare benefits such that some disabled people lost between £5 and £50 a week in Income Support, amongst many other changes.

As you can see, there were also some rather clever and quirky cartoons that have been penned especially for the newsletter.

Do you know who the artist was...?

# Richmond AID services

## **ADVICE SERVICE**

Advice, information and guidance for disabled people, carers and professionals on subjects including housing, benefits, aids and adaptations, support services and more.

## **BENEFITS SERVICE**

Expert help and support from a team of Benefits Advisors with form-filling and advice on all aspects of benefit claims, appeals and general queries.

## **VOLUNTEERING**

We have lots of volunteering opportunities, from advice, administration, editing and media to gardening and access work. Excellent training and support in a warm and friendly environment.

## **COUNSELLING**

Therapeutic counselling delivered by experienced professionals. Cost operates on a sliding scale, depending on what you can afford.

## **SPADE GARDENING**

SPADE provides a gardening service to disabled and older people in Richmond Borough. This popular project is staffed by a team of committed volunteers.

## **EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT**

Helping disabled people into work, training or education. We provide a weekly job club in a calm and supportive environment.

## **MONEY ADVICE**

Support with money and debt issues including payment plans and negotiating with creditors and applying for grants.

## **PEER NETWORK**

We operate a range of hobby and interest groups, including art and a choir. Groups are lead by volunteers who have lived experience of disability.

**BUDDY UP** Matches young people with a disability aged 14 to 17 with a buddy to go to fun social events together.

**If you would like to know more about Richmond AID's services please contact our Advice Team on **020 8831 6070** or email [advice@richmondaid.org.uk](mailto:advice@richmondaid.org.uk)**

**Other Formats:** Disability News is available in a larger format or on tape. Please contact the Advice Service on **020 8831 6070** or text **07894 215 835**.

**Disclaimer:** Although Richmond AID checks all information carefully, it cannot accept legal liability for any inaccuracy or omission. Richmond AID does not recommend any product nor do the views expressed in Disability News necessarily represent the views of the organisation.