



# Working for Choice, Independence + Lifestyle Wiltshire Independent NEWSLETTER

February 2018

Issue 45



Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living

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## ImaYDiT PROJECT UPDATE

The ImaYDiT ("I Made It") project is run by Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living in partnership with the University of the West of England and Wiltshire Council. It is funded by DRILL (Disability Research on Independent Living and Learning), and led by disabled people aged 14-25.

On Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February, we hosted our first two research events at Fairfield Farm College in Dilton Marsh. We ran one event in the afternoon with students from the college and a second event in the evening at the Youth Club.

The peer researchers were fantastic at hosting the event, assisted by members of Wiltshire CIL and the University of the West of England. Participants were invited to think about their hopes and dreams for their future lives, using photographs and artwork- they were encouraged to "dream big" and "be bold".

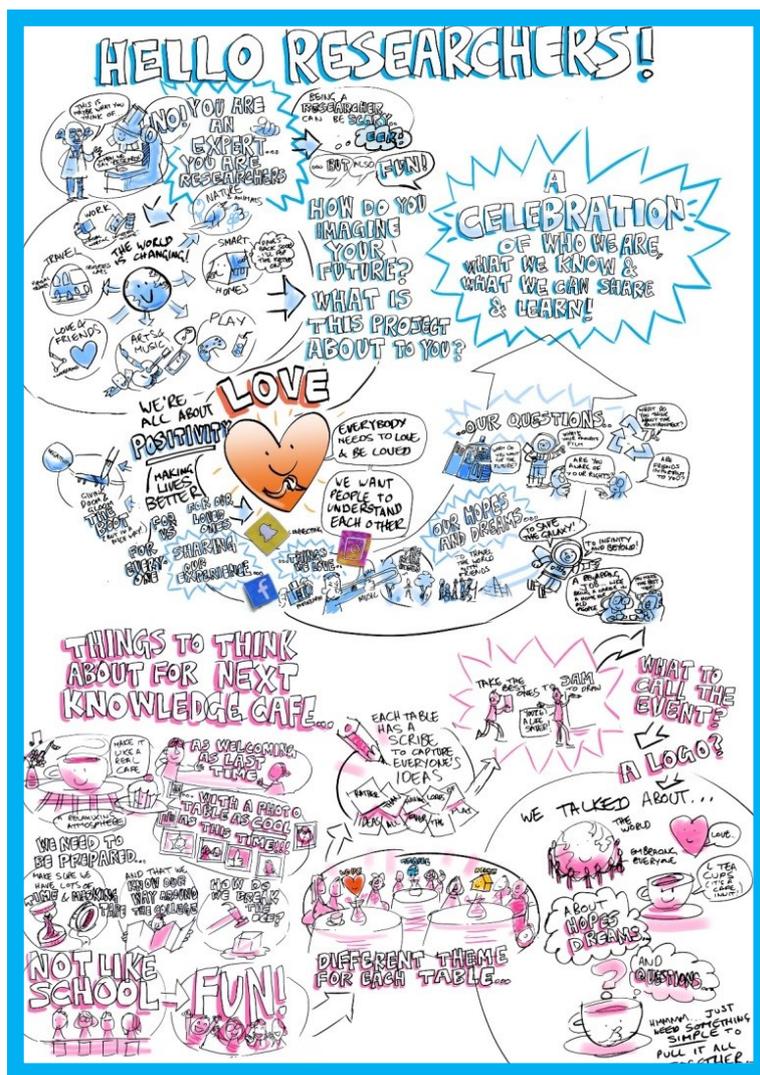
There were some amazing results and these were captured by Sam Church – a fabulous cartoonist and shown in the image on the right.

A massive thank you to everyone involved

We will be hosting a community event in March / April in the Devizes area. If you would like to take part in this exciting research event, please contact Nikki Cull (Project Co-ordinator)

[nikkicull@wiltshirecil.org.uk](mailto:nikkicull@wiltshirecil.org.uk)

07403553462



The Peer Research Team

# TOP TIPS FOR EMPLOYERS

## Employers with a Pension Scheme

In April 2018 and again in April 2019 the minimum pension contributions will be changed by law and will, therefore, affect your own contribution. We have set out the changes in the table below.

As an employer it is something you should be aware of, but you do not have to take any action as our Payroll Service will act to manage this change for you.

Date Effective	Employer minimum pension contribution	Staff pension contribution	Government pension contribution	Total minimum pension contribution
From now to 5 April 2018	1%	0.8%	0.2%	2%
6 April 2018 – 5 April 2019	2%	2.4%	0.6%	5%
6 April 2019 onwards	3%	4%	1%	8%

## Employer's Liability Insurance

If you employ a personal assistant (whether you use our Payroll Service or you do your own payroll) or you receive care from a self-employed carer, you should have Employer's Liability Insurance which is provided by the Council free-of-charge. The current provider is Mark Bates Ltd (trading as PremierCare). If you do not have a certificate of insurance or policy documents from this company in your possession or you aren't sure whether or not you should have this insurance, please give us a call on 0300 1233442 and we will be able to advise.

## TRAINING FOR PAs - INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYER FUNDING

The PA training arranged by Wiltshire CIL has now come to an end for this financial year. A big thank you to all of those employers and PAs who came along to the courses, we hope that you all found it beneficial. If you have any feedback on these courses please contact Lucie on 0300 1233 442 or email [lucie@wiltshirecil.org.uk](mailto:lucie@wiltshirecil.org.uk)

If you weren't able to access any of the courses, individuals who employ their own care and support can still apply for funding to pay for training for themselves and their personal assistants (PAs) from Skills for Care.

### What can Individual Employers use the funding for?

It can be used to pay for training such as first aid, moving and assisting, food and hygiene, or health and social care accredited qualifications such as diplomas. It can also cover any related costs, including backfill and travel expenses.

### How can individuals apply?

Visit [www.skillsforcare.org.uk/iefunding](http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/iefunding) : Read the guidance

Fill out an application form and send it to [funding@skillsforcare.org.uk](mailto:funding@skillsforcare.org.uk) or by post to Skills for Care before Wednesday 28 February 2018. Make sure you send also send the necessary documents.

## ID Badges for PAs Employed by You

Would you like your Personal Assistant (PA) to have an ID badge? If you feel that this would be useful when you are out and about we can provide a non-branded ID badge for your PA. There would be a small charge of £2.50 to cover printing, laminating and postage costs. Please contact Lucie on 0300 1233 442 or email [lucie@wiltshirecil.org.uk](mailto:lucie@wiltshirecil.org.uk) to request a badge.





# My success with the Southampton Choral Society

**What's  
Your  
Story?**

Dorothy Oliver shares her inspiring story of never giving up on joining a Choral Society despite previous knock backs.

I joined Southampton Choral Society in January 2015. At first it was rather daunting, but following a chat with our musical director, Peter Gambie, I soon felt very much at home. In April we were to perform Requiems by Campra and Faure. My first reaction was "How am I going to get all the words transcribed into Braille?" This however, was soon rectified by Rosaleen Wilkinson, the choir membership secretary, who said "Don't worry I can type what you need". Now, if they don't have the score, Rosaleen types the words which are then sent to Heather at the RNIB library for transcribing into Braille.

We are an auditioned choir of approximately 120 singers. Other works we have performance include Verdi and Mozart Requiems, Dream of Gerontius by Elgar, Works by Haydn and most recently Rossini. It is fantastic to be part of such a friendly choir.

I don't receive any preferential treatment because of my disability for which I'm pleased. I had to undergo an audition the same as everyone else. Being part of a choir involves commitment as we have to attend rehearsals in preparation for concerts.

A number of years ago, I was at college in another part of the country. I attended an audition and was told that although I had a nice voice I could not be in the choir. When one of the tutors tackled the secretary she said: "We can't have a blind person in the choir. She may come in at the wrong place. John Rutter is conducting our next concert so it would not look good to a professional conductor." I'm sure John wouldn't have cared who was singing in the concert as long as they knew the work, but I felt very downcast at the time. I'm so glad to have overcome this by trying again. I enjoy singing very much and feel so privileged to belong to this large choir. Our conductor has been a great support to my needs and his understanding I value very much. He wanted me to write something in order to attract others who are visually impaired who may feel this is something they can be involved in too. I don't read music but we have practice CDS or use Midi files which are very helpful.

This has been a fantastic experience for me and one I'm so glad to be part of. I wanted to share my story as other visually impaired people out there may wish to join a choir but are not sure where to start! Yes, it can be off-putting especially if you've had a bad experience. I'm sharing this to let everyone know that all choir committees and conductors are not the same. Most, I'm pleased to say, they look beyond the disability!

So anyone out there who's thinking of joining a choir or anything else for that matter, Go for it! There's nothing to lose. I'm glad to have taken the plunge!

Lastly and most importantly, I'm not writing this for my own glory. I want to thank the people in the choir who have helped to make it possible for me to take an active part. Firstly, to Peter Gambie, our conductor, for giving me this opportunity, secondly to Rosaleen Wilkinson, the membership secretary, for her invaluable work in laboriously typing large works. I could not have done it without her and finally, to Heather at RNIB Library for her support in assisting me in getting material transcribed into braille. Thank you all most sincerely from the bottom of my heart.

# TIDWORTH COMMUNITY INSIGHT PROJECT

Since January we have been interviewing local residents in their homes and also visiting local community groups to see how the community works for them. We have asked them 4 simple questions:

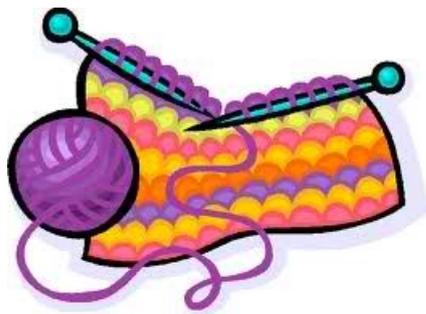


What does a good life look like to you? What and who is important to you?

What do you do, and what do you have? What would make things better?

We had a great response and heard some really interesting stories. Residents have shown us the importance of the 'ordinary everyday' connections and the small acts of kindness that contribute to making them feel less lonely and more supported. Put simply: we have found a trip to the local hairdresser or shop, gestures such as putting people's bins in for them or a casual chat with a stranger, can have massive social value that is often unrecognised.

Here is an extract from one of the interviews:



Jackie lives in a small village with her husband. Due to her husband's ill health she became increasingly isolated. She describes that she was starting to slide down, with feelings of loneliness. One phone call changed this for Jackie: someone asked whether she would like to contribute to a project knitting squares for blankets to help raise money for the church. Jackie started meeting people through this project and through discovering people with similar interests she decided to start a local craft group. Jackie says that if the blankets hadn't happened she doesn't know where she would be, and is amazed at how things have grown. She feels the lady who called her started a chain reaction of kindness as now Jackie has gone on to help others get involved. As Jackie remarks herself, 'out of little acorns grow big trees!'

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