

# Possability People

Ensuring disabled people can live  
independently, with dignity and  
without prejudice

Annual review for the year  
ending 31 March 2019





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## Foreword by Stan Pearce, Chair of Trustees

Possability People works in a constantly changing environment, and this is certainly true this year, which has required us to be particularly fleet of foot.

Moving from a charity largely funded through statutory sector contracts, we have focused our attention on other fundraising methods. Successful applications such as to The Henry Smith Foundation mean we can support more disabled people when they desperately need our help. Our Advice Centre dealt with almost four and a half thousand enquiries last year, which puts it in perspective.

Our Payroll and Supported Bank Account team manage over 400 supported bank accounts and have over 400 payroll clients, which generates important income for the organisation.

Thinking outside of the box is where we seem to work best, and this sets the scene for our future, where we will fundraise to develop interesting services which meet the needs of disabled people. Our Community Employment Service, Right Track and Link Back are great examples of creative projects helping people with impairments or long term conditions. These projects look at the world from the point of view of the person themselves, which is why they are successful. Not only that, but they save money for all of us in the long run.

This year saw us rebrand our bespoke care service, from Continuing Independence Service to Possability People: At Home. Just because it's a care service doesn't mean it can't be innovative, and it certainly is.

I am very proud to have chaired Possability People through this last year, and I look forward to the exciting things our impressive staff and volunteer team have in store for the future. I'm sure it will be challenging, but I know it will be bright.

Stan

### Make a difference

£25 enables us to provide two hours of training for a disabled volunteer to support our finance team and gain valuable work experience. £5 enables a volunteer to travel to their volunteering role for that week.

## Making a difference: Possability People's annual review 2018/19

Possability People is a charity which supports disabled people and people with long term health conditions to live independently. Started in 1981, it runs a range of projects and services in Brighton and Hove, East and West Sussex, and more recently in Surrey.

### Trustees serving during the period were

Stan Pearce	
Dr Jon Hastie	Resigned 04/12/2018
Kathy Goddon	
Shoshana Ruth Pezaro	Resigned 04/12/2018
Sophie Reilly	
Maddy Hamp	
Linda Elisha	
Samantha Oakley	
Nicholas Simpson	Resigned 12/09/2018
Mark Green	Elected 04/12/2018
Mark Lawson	Elected 04/12/2018; Resigned 13/06/2019

Our enormous and grateful thanks go to everyone who has supported us throughout the year.

**Our Vision** A society where anything is possible regardless of ability

### Our Aims

- To improve accessible services
- To ensure people have good quality accessible information
- To enable people to live more independently
- To increase the range of options people have
- To have well trained and knowledgeable staff and volunteer teams



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## Advice Centre

The Advice Centre provides information and support on a wide range of issues. Disability benefits and appeals, some pension credit enquiries and Council Tax enquiries, fuel debt or changing fuel providers, utilities debt, equipment or assistive technology, accessible holidays and food bank referrals are just some of the things disabled people seek our help with.

Last year, the Advice Centre received 4468 enquiries and supported 2285 individuals. More than 300 appointments were delivered by a team of staff and volunteers, and 727 people dropped in for advice. Universal Credit enquiries went from eight in the previous year to 121 this year. 80 per cent of appeal decisions The Advice Centre challenge at tribunal are successful (the national average is 65 per cent).

When people get the allowances they are entitled to, they bring money back into the local economy. When people have the money they need to live on, they are more likely to better manage their health, reducing pressure on local services.

Through its partnership with the MS Society, The Advice Centre has expanded its client base from Brighton and Hove to include surrounding towns.

This year The Advice Centre met the Minister for Disabled People to discuss in depth the impact changes in the system for claiming and receiving Universal Credit had on disabled people.

## Advocacy: giving people a voice, choice and control

114 new people were referred to The Advocacy Service. With 31 active cases from the previous year, 145 active cases were dealt with. 87 cases were closed with 70 per cent of beneficiaries satisfied with the outcome. Referrals came from Possability People's Advice Centre, self-referral, community social workers, carers or PAs, volunteers, family or friends, Access Point, and Community Navigators.

## Community Employment Service

The Community Employment Service helps people who are thinking about work, or who are struggling to stay in work. Groups and courses enable participants to look at the support needs they have, how to organise them, and how to work with employers to make work a reality. It also works with employers to help them support disabled staff.

## Get Set Hastings

Get Set in Hastings was recommissioned in January 2019, increasing its contract from 60 people in 2018, to 100 people in 2019 (from Hastings & Bexhill Job Centre Plus offices).

Participants created CVs and cover letters showcasing their skills and experience, and they learned to talk confidently about themselves. Wellness Action Plans helped people manage their health on return to work, consider any reasonable adjustments or in-work support they might need, and acknowledge how to stay well, resilient and thrive.

"Possability People has let me see a future – my life is better, and I have hope. I will work and be well in work".

## Make a difference

£70 provides specialist headphones for a blind person to access a computer. £30 enables a disabled person to have a two hour appointment with a specialist adviser who can support them to make a claim for Personal Independence Payment.



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## At Work

At Work launched in January 2019 to enable people with musculoskeletal conditions (MSK) to stay in their jobs. Team members who have overcome their own health barriers at work support people who are signed off or struggling.

At Work liaises with employers, providing advice on reasonable adjustments and Access to Work funding; it brokers relationships between employer, employee, occupational health and even trade union representatives. The project, funded for 12 months, is making a significant impact.

## Citywide Connect

Over the last four years, Citywide Connect brought together 1,000 people from 215 groups and organisations across all sectors, through events, digital resources and outreach work, to find ways to use existing assets and resources, build new connections and cross sector relationships, and explore opportunities for collaboration, to prevent loneliness and ill health for people in later life.

930 cross sector actions were pledged; 80 per cent were carried out. They were a catalyst for culture change, led to more effective ways of joint working, avoided duplication and plugged gaps. They led to more choices for people in later life who might otherwise have been isolated or lonely. Citywide Connect was recognised in the city's Collaboration Framework for its good practice.

## Engagement and Inclusion

The Get Involved Group (GIG) provides a platform for people with a lived experience of disability to have their voice heard on issues that directly affect them. The Disability Collective brings together disability organisations that support disabled people. It works in partnership with Enhance the UK, a national user led, pan disability charity committed to changing society's perceptions whilst supporting disabled people to lead active and rich lives. Eight GIG meetings were held through the year, with an average attendance of 29 people.

"The group is really friendly, I've made some good friends here that I can actually talk to about real issues without feeling like I'm being judged, or making friends and family feel awkward about hearing about my health problems".

## Link Back

Link Back has supported hospital discharge at the Royal Sussex County Hospital and Intermediate Care Units since 2015. Vulnerable patients over 55 years old are supported after discharge into community services and activities, reducing the number of avoidable readmissions and supporting clinical staff in reducing A&E attendances of high intensity patients.

Additional capacity through the Early Response Service enables more timely discharge from hospital by getting home adaptations and equipment through the Disabled Facilities Grant, ensuring people remain safe and well at home at a vulnerable time recovering from a hospital stay.

People have received digital support, carer support, mobility aids, pet support, community transport, telecare equipment, falls prevention services, community health team, advocacy, faith based or pastoral support, bereavement and other counselling, care options for self funders, meal delivery, mobile hair and nail cutting services, home help, social activities, lunch clubs, day centres, reablement befriending, home fire safety, disability and benefits advice, and access point.

"I have used the services that Link Back offers on numerous occasions. I have used them informally for advice and guidance and have made many referrals to them for my clients. Possability People is the first organisation that comes to mind when I am trying to source community support or social activities for a client. The new Early Response Service has been brilliant in supporting a couple of my clients recently. Without this support these discharges would have been delayed or clients' welfare put at risk".

## Shopmobility: low cost mobility scooter and wheelchair hire

Brighton Shopmobility hires out mobility scooters, powered and manual wheelchairs to visitors and residents of Brighton and Hove. Over the last year it helped 536 residents and visitors live their everyday lives independently, visit family and enjoy holidaying in the city.

There are 41 items for hire: six small four wheeled scooters; eight medium three wheeled scooters; six medium four wheeled scooters; one large four wheeled scooter; three powerchairs; four bus scooters; two children's wheelchairs; five self-propelled wheelchairs, and five assistant propelled wheelchairs. Shopmobility operates from three citywide locations: Churchill Square Car Park 1; Providence Place Car Park, London Road and Montague House, Montague Place, Kemptown, Monday to Friday 10 – 4pm.

## Right Track: Supporting people to better manage MSK conditions

Right Track enables people to confidently manage their health and wellbeing, making good use of community assets which work alongside GP's and physiotherapist's support. It receives an average 25 new referrals from people with musculoskeletal conditions (MSK) every month. It offers two levels of support: 'light touch' and 'in depth' support.

The Right Track team collect and collate the information about activities they gather, listing them on It's Local Actually ([www.itslocalactually.org.uk](http://www.itslocalactually.org.uk)): Brighton and Hove has 538 activity listings and West (Mid) Sussex has 290 activity listings.

"I wasn't confident enough to attend groups but chatting on the phone gave me confidence to start swimming with my daughter. I am exercising and spending time with her, something I didn't do before. I now go once a week and plan to increase this. It's really helping. Right Track was better than I had expected. I never felt pressured to do any activity but was given great information and support".

Link Back: 249 people have ongoing support, a 53 per cent increase on the previous year. 29 delayed transfers of care achieved through early response support. Nine high intensity users were supported through the Acute Floor Project, launched in January.

## Possability People: at home

Possability People: at home is a Care Quality Commission registered care and support service. It received an overall rating of 'Good' at its April 2018 inspection. It provides care for people living with a range of health conditions, such as physical or sensory impairments, dementia or memory loss, as well as supporting people with learning difficulties, older people and people with mental health problems.

"I have had the same person since the start; it's good as now we are just like friends. I think we are matched very well".

Previously known as The Continuing Independence Service, the service changed its name to At Home in November 2018, to better reflect the broad way it helps people. Over the year, it has improved systems which help it to grow as a social enterprise and reinvest in Possability People, supporting its charitable aims and objectives.



"Margaret enjoys going out and spending time in the community, she is under a Deprivation of Liberty and it was a condition that she is supported to do this.

Sadly at the current time we could not support this in house, Possability People came to the rescue.

They have now been coming along weekly; they take Margaret for long walks, shopping and coffee breaks. The next trip is the church as this means so much to her.

Margaret comes back very chatty and really enjoys this time with the staff at Possability People".

## Online

Possability People uses digital technology to offer several online services.

PA Noticeboard helps disabled people in Brighton, Hove and East Sussex seeking to employ their own care and support staff. It allows potential PAs and potential employers to post adverts and communicate with each other safely and effectively, removing many of the barriers to PA recruitment disabled people have experienced in the past.

<https://panoticeboard.org.uk>

<https://eastsussex.panoticeboard.org.uk>

It's Local Actually (ILA) is a searchable database of free and low cost activities taking place in the community each week – for many of these micro providers, ILA is the only online presence they maintain. We have also developed the Support at Home element of this database, allowing people to connect to home visiting providers of a range of services such as opticians, nail cutting, gardening and hair dressers. Its Local Actually has been expanded through our Right Track service to encompass West Sussex with new activities added regularly.

<https://www.itslocalactually.org.uk>

## Volunteering

This year, Possability People has supported a team of 64 (+ seven trustees) volunteers. Together they have provided 19,968 hours of support per year, an equivalent contribution to 11 (11.3) full time equivalent members of staff and valued at £179,712 if paid the Brighton Living Wage of £9 per hour.

Our volunteering programme has been awarded The Queen's Award for Volunteering.



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## Income and Expenditure

	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000
Fundraising & Donations	6.4	6.4
Trading (Payroll and SBA)	291.1	218.7
At Home	454.5	511.6
Citywide	79.5	64.8
Get Involved Group	59.9	71.3
Right Track	115.4	104.7
Community Employment Service	92.6	99.0
Link Back	89.7	89.7
Advice	48.7	70.7
Possability Place	7.8	14.3
Shopmobility	37.3	38.2
Advocacy	38.6	43.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>1321.5</b>	<b>1333.0</b>



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## Make a difference

A donation of £10 a month will allow two disabled people to run errands, visit friends or take part in leisure activities with a day on a mobility scooter. Possability People relies on the generosity of its supporters. If you can help, please visit <https://www.possabilitypeople.org.uk/donate>