

# The Independence

The newsletter from Possability People

In with the new

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## Volunteer



Possability People's volunteers are incredibly important to the organisation, allowing it to carry out the breadth and volume of work that it does.

Around 80 volunteers each commit to at least one, three hour shift a week. From being the meeters and greeters in the reception, to providing advice and information on a range of issues, to taking photos and being members of our Trustee Board, there are many, varied volunteer opportunities.

If you would like to volunteer at Possability People, find out more at [www.possabilitypeople.org.uk/volunteer](http://www.possabilitypeople.org.uk/volunteer) or telephone us on 01273 894040 for a chat.

Possability People's volunteers from across the organisation entered into the Christmas spirit at the last volunteer party.

The organisation holds regular social events throughout the year to thank its volunteers for their amazing contributions.

# Hire me!

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Shopmobility's fleet of mobility scooters and wheelchairs have just had their annual tune up.

The batteries are fully charged, tyres are pumped and the paintwork is gleaming, so why not take one of our scooters out for a spin?

Did you know you can hire a scooter or wheelchair for the day for just £5? With the beautiful weather we've been enjoying it's a great opportunity to dust off the cobwebs and have a trip out and about. The friendly team of knowledgeable volunteers will be happy to answer any questions and can even teach you how to ride a scooter.

Shopmobility can be contacted on 01273 323239 between 10am and 4pm, Monday to Friday. Overnight and weekend hire can also be arranged.

Making sure the equipment is ship shape before it leaves the office.



# Supporting people with MSK conditions

This year, Possability People's Right Track will be delivering two elements: MSK Social Prescribing (commissioned by the Sussex MSK Partnership) and Steady On (thanks to a successful bid to the National Lottery's Awards for All).

## MSK Social Prescribing

From March 2020 the Right Track team will be offering clinic-based appointments to MSK patients looking to make healthy lifestyle changes in Brighton & Hove, Mid Sussex and Crawley & Horsham. Appointments will last up to an hour, with a follow up after a couple of weeks. People wanting to use the service must be booked in by a clinician, such as an MSK physiotherapist.

## Steady On

A small, gentle exercise course is currently running at Montague House, Brighton on a Tuesday afternoon. This is open to any adult who feels unsteady on their feet and is looking for low cost, accessible and very gentle exercise to build up strength and stability when standing and walking.



Musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions affect the joints, bones and muscles, and also include rarer autoimmune diseases and back pain.

There are more than 200 musculoskeletal conditions which affect 1 in 4 of the adult population and have an enormous impact on the quality of life of millions of people in the UK.

The current course is now full, but from March referrals will be accepted for the next Kemptown course, due to start in mid-April.

Please get in touch with the team closer to the time if this is of interest to you or anyone you know who could benefit from it.

If you have any questions, contact the Right Track team by email: [right-track@possabilitypeople.org.uk](mailto:right-track@possabilitypeople.org.uk).



## Link Back

Rupert, Gwyn and Rosie from Link Back

# Link Back Hospital to home

Long-stay or short, emergency or elective, it's never a pleasant experience being an in-patient, and the transition from hospital to home after an operation can easily add to the stress, especially if there's no-one around to help in the days and weeks that follow.

That's where Possability People's brilliant Link Back team steps in. They run a unique service for patients aged over 55 and/or disabled or who have mobility concerns, and who are well enough to be discharged after an operation but need a little support once they get back home.

Working primarily with the Royal Sussex County Hospital, the Link Back team of Gwyn, Rosie and Rupert,

offers everything from an 'early response' service (funded via Brighton and Hove City Council's Housing Adaptations Team) - making sure a patient's home is safe to return to before they're discharged, and installing any adaptations or special equipment that might be needed - to a post-op home consultation with Gwyn or Rosie to check the patient is accessing all the services they could be entitled to.

Financed jointly by Brighton and Hove Clinical Commissioning Group and Brighton & Hove City Council, the Link Back team has been up and running for almost five years and is proving to be an essential link in patients' pathways from hospital to home. Long may they prosper.

Possability People's Advice Centre helps disabled people and people with long term health conditions with enquiries on:

- Disability benefits (ESA, UC, PIP, AA, Carers Allowance, WTC)
- Disability benefits appeals, including support at tribunal
- Some pension credit enquiries
- Some Council Tax enquiries
- Fuel debt or changing fuel providers
- Utilities debt
- Information on equipment or assistive technology
- Accessible holidays
- Food bank referrals



The group supports people attending assessments and tribunals.

## Support with benefits

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A benefit support group is being offered by Possability People, so that anyone working through a welfare benefit claim doesn't feel they have to go it alone.

Free, independent and confidential advice and support is available, including at medical assessments and at tribunals.

The support group, which meets monthly, is a chance for anyone who wants to access peer support to meet new people, chat with an adviser over tea or coffee.

The support group meets on first Friday of the month at Montague House from 10am to 12pm.

If you think the support group would be useful for you (or someone you know), please contact Chris at the Advice Centre on 01273 894050 or email [advice@possabilitypeople.org.uk](mailto:advice@possabilitypeople.org.uk)



Community Employment Service

# Getting set for work



Get Set Opening Doors is part of Possability People's Community Employment Service. It runs in Brighton and Hove, East Sussex and Surrey to support disabled people and people with long term health conditions or impairments (including mental health conditions) to overcome the barriers they might face in getting a job.

It provides long term, personal support alongside a range of courses. Support includes:

- building self confidence and self esteem
- managing anxiety and seeing past 'I can't'
- employability skills, CVs, cover letters, applications and interview skills
- learning or building on IT skills, from digital basics to digital employability skills
- condition management and managing health in work, reasonable adjustments and building WAPs to ensure work is sustainable
- talking to an employer about any health condition or impairment, and reassuring employers know it can be very easy to make reasonable adjustments.

The programme supports participants for as long as needed (including when they are in work), in a way which is personally designed just for them.

The service's ongoing long term support, planned around the individual's specific needs, coupled with its range of courses (whether the participants are in receipt of benefits or not), make it unique.

Get Set Opening Doors has been received positively, with over a dozen organisations in Hastings, Brighton and Hove referring people into the project already.

More than 50 referrals have been made to date, while weekly drop-in workshops and course sessions have started.

The project will continue for at least a year with people able to access it at any point.

The Community Employment Team can be contacted on 01273 208934 or email [work@possabilitypeople.org.uk](mailto:work@possabilitypeople.org.uk).



# Making a lasting difference



Possability People is the only charity in Brighton and Hove that supports people with a range of impairments and health conditions (sometimes described as 'pan impairment'). Not only does it support people practically, through a diverse range of projects and services, it also works to make positive changes in local and national policy, so disabled people can live their lives independently, with dignity and without prejudice.

- £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.
- £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.

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

## Leaving a lasting gift to Possability People

If you are thinking about making a will, Possability People has teamed up with Bequeathed, who offer free will writing and valuable advice. Their simple and convenient service allows you to make the right will for you in the way that best suits you – online, face to face or over the phone. Simply visit [www.bequeathed.org.uk](http://www.bequeathed.org.uk) and follow the steps to create a will online.

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"Thank you so much for your help. I can't fault it. It's been wonderful."

There's no obligation to leave anything to Possability People, but we hope it's something you will consider. Gifts in wills make a huge difference to the work we do across Sussex.

[www.possabilitypeople.org.uk/donate](http://www.possabilitypeople.org.uk/donate)



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

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.

If you need this publication in an alternative format and/or language, please contact us to discuss your needs.

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