



2018-19 Impact Report

A Year of Achievements



Merton Centre for Independent Living

Run and controlled by Deaf and Disabled People
for Deaf and Disabled People

☎ 0203 397 3119 | 💻 www.mertoncil.org.uk | 🐦 @MertonCIL

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Picture on the front cover: 3 of our Volunteers at the volunteer awards, receiving 100 hour awards and Value You discount Cards.



Picture: Trustee Sarah Henley cutting Merton CIL's 10th Birthday Cake with then Mayor of Merton Councillor Mary Curtain. **2**

Welcome to our Impact Report 2018-19

Introduction from Our Chair Roy Benjamin.

On behalf of the board, it is with great pleasure that we present to you our impact report for 2018-19. Over the past 12 months Merton CIL members, supporters, volunteers, trustees and staff have come together to help Deaf and Disabled People to live independent lives.

We are proud to support Deaf and Disabled People and during the year we faced increased demand while maintaining a high quality AQS-accredited service. We implemented our new strategy and developed our senior management team.

This year's impact report shows the difference that our unique service, members, volunteers, supporters and staff make to the lives of Deaf and Disabled People in Merton. Our annual survey found that 100% of Deaf and Disabled People believe that we address the issues that are important to them. Feedback like this confirms people value our efforts and support our strategic direction.

Merton CIL has participated in a number of consultations, written extensive reports and developed campaigns speaking up for Deaf and Disabled People, and helped to make Merton and the wider community a better place.

We are very grateful for the continued support from our funders during the year, you can find out more about them on page 16

We are very sad to say goodbye to Lyla who will be stepping down from the position of CEO in August.



Picture: Roy Benjamin Chair and Lyla Adwan-Kamara CEO, up until August 2019.

Lyla has helped Merton CIL to reach new heights over the past few years and we are extremely grateful for her hard work. She will be missed. Our new CEO Tom Lichy, will be in post from mid August 2019 and we are really looking forward to welcoming him to Merton CIL.

I will finish by thanking staff and volunteers of Merton CIL, whose hard work and dedication to supporting local Deaf and Disabled People is the reason why Merton CIL goes from strength to strength. I would also like to thank my fellow trustees who have supported and guided us so expertly throughout the year.

Let's continue to fight for the rights of Deaf and Disabled People, in Merton and Beyond!

Roy Benjamin, Chair of Merton CIL

Headlines 2018-19

ACCESS TO BENEFITS



1392

Sessions of in-depth support delivered¹

Advice & Advocacy and Hate Crime support provided in

423 cases

Top Areas of Support

Benefits and Low Income
Community Care and Health
Housing
Independent Living
Hate Crime



£819,045



Contributed to the local economy through our work. This is a 19% increase on last year²

322 Members



A 22% increase on last year

311

Unique individuals supported through our casework services¹



10 out of 10



people agree that we address the issues that are important to Deaf and Disabled People and nearly 9 in 10 strongly agree³

Information, signposting and guidance and connection provided in a further

155 cases

to people who Merton CIL could not support in depth¹



24

events and activities held including Craftivism & Chat, pop ups across Merton and My Voice Matters



100%

of service users agree that **we are welcoming**⁴

VOLUNTEERING



Volunteers and Trustees gave us

Over 420 hours

"Merton CIL is a great voice for local Deaf and Disabled People"



Nearly

1000 hours

spent working on policy and strategy issues on behalf of local Deaf and Disabled People

"You helped me when I was low. It was great to know that you were there"

18

Consultation responses on behalf of our members



We're motivated and guided by our members

94%

agree that Merton CIL is compassionate⁴



"Being able to have someone with me at tribunal was magnificent. I did not feel alone"

"You helped when I was very low and it helped to know that you were there"



43%

of service users have improved well-being after using our services⁷

10

10 films made showcasing our work and service users



1451

people engaged with Merton CIL in person through events activities outreach and another

3328

across our social media platforms



BEING LISTENED TO



100%

of service users agree that we listen⁴

45%



of people have increased resilience after using Merton CIL⁶

"You helped me get benefits that I did not know I was entitled to"



Nearly 4 in 10

people have increased confidence after working with us⁵

"Merton CIL does great work for Deaf and Disabled People"

Footnotes:

1. Correct as of 17/07/2019
2. Amount obtained directly for Deaf and Disabled People, including social value and net salaries of local Disabled staff
3. Based on our 2018-19 annual survey
4. From in-depth feedback collected covering 2018-19
5. Based on the ladder outcomes "I am confident talking to professionals", "I can speak up for myself", "I am aware of my rights" for people whose case ended in 2018-19
6. Based on the ladder outcomes "I can access the services I want and need", "I feel listened to", "My finances are secure", "I feel safe"
7. Based on the ladder outcome "I am satisfied with my life, I am optimistic about my life and I am confident taking control in the future"

Advice and Advocacy

Supporting Deaf and Disabled People to live independent lives.

Merton CIL is the only user-led, pan-Disability Deaf and Disabled People's Organisation in Merton. We delivered **1392** sessions of Advice and Advocacy support last year, covering benefits, community care, housing, health and hate crime against Deaf and Disabled People.



Photo: Service users at a Merton CIL event.

Our Advice and Advocacy service provided **1392** sessions of in-depth support to **311** unique individuals.

We provide home visits as standard for people who face barriers getting out and about, and support people at formal meetings like benefits tribunals.

£819,045 contributed to the local economy through our work.

If you would like to learn more about Advice and Advocacy and help us to provide support in the local community, why not apply for our **casework support volunteer role**. You can read more about the role and how you can apply on our website - <https://bit.ly/2TwBVSN>

This is how our Advice and Advocacy service helped Raj:



Raj* is one of the several thousand Merton residents who are in the last group of people to transfer from Disability Living Allowance (DLA) to Personal Independence Payment (PIP). Generally this group have the highest levels of impairment and have been on DLA for more than five years.

Under DLA Raj had been awarded the highest rate for daily living and mobility. Following the PIP application and health assessment, which Raj did himself, he was awarded zero points for daily living and mobility and was going to lose his Motability car, which he relied on heavily.

Raj approached us for support with reviewing the decision. This is called a Mandatory Reconsideration (MR). Unfortunately, the MR was not successful. We then helped him to apply for a tribunal by completing a form called an SSCS1, in which reasons are given for the appeal.

Outcome: Following the SSCS1 form, we would expect to go to court for the tribunal to be heard. However, the DWP decided to award PIP at the highest rate for both daily living and mobility based on the information in the SSCS1 form. Raj did not have to go to tribunal and received a back payment. Although successful, this case should never have gone to appeal, and even the DWP criticised the original assessment.

*Names have been changed. Posed by a model.

If you need support or you are an organisation that would like to discuss making **6** referrals please contact 0203 397 3119 or info@mertoncil.org.uk

Disability Hate Crime Prevention

Supporting Deaf and Disabled People to report Hate Crime and feel safe.

Providing support to Deaf and Disabled People on issues they identify as a Disability Hate Crime. This can be support ranging from reporting a hate crime, to addressing a neighbour dispute. Our work only covers the tip of the iceberg but we hope that it will make a difference to tackling hate crime against Deaf and Disabled People in Merton.



We attended **7** pop ups across Merton to speak about Hate Crime.

Photo on the Left: Hate Crime caseworker Lizzie and Tell Mama on Hate Crime pop up stall at Merton Civic Centre.

2 Hate Crime Support groups which **100%** of attendees rated good or great.

How our Hate Crime service helped Ella:

Ella* and her father got in touch because of a dispute over a Disabled parking space. An individual within the local area who did not have a Blue Badge, was continually parking in the only Disabled bay outside Ella's father's house.

Ella has a disability which affects her mobility and her energy. When the bay is blocked, Ella struggles to walk the extra distance when she is going to visit her father. When her father raised this with the individual continually parking in it, he was verbally abused. The parking then increased and Ella felt that this was being done deliberately and targeting her because of her Disabilities.

Outcome: We were able to explain what Disability Hate Crime is, make a referral to Safer Merton and to get the Safer Neighbourhood Team involved. Following this, Ella met with the local Safer Neighbourhood Team and for now the parking issue has been resolved.

*Names have been changed. Posed by a model.



Keep an eye on our Craftivism and Chat group agenda as we regularly have hate crime support groups or respond to hate crime related consultations.

If you need support or you are an organisation that would like to discuss making referrals please contact 0203 397 3119 or info@mertoncil.org.uk **7**

Policy and Strategy

Supporting Deaf and Disabled People to Speak Up!

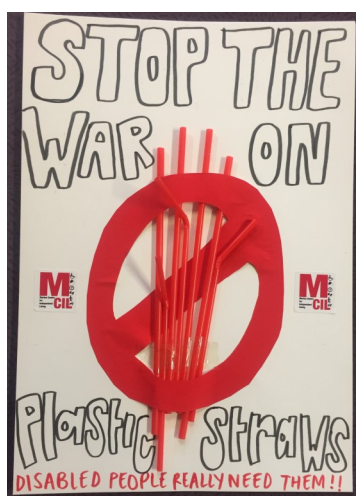
Our Policy and Strategy project enables Deaf and Disabled people to speak up and make change happen on a local level. We support people to be aware of their rights and have the confidence to be involved in decision making. We also ensure that the priorities of local Deaf and Disabled people are represented in groups, forums and consultations.

18 Consultation responses on behalf of Local Deaf and Disabled People.

Nearly 1000 hours of Policy and Strategy work on behalf of Deaf and Disabled People.

10 out of 10 people agree that we address the issues important to Deaf and Disabled People.

Read about some of our policy and strategy work from 2018-19 below:



Save our Straws, We Need to Drink!

In Sept 2018, Our members got together to respond to the proposed straw ban. Members talked about how straws were essential for access and independence for Disabled People who need them. Some members voiced their frustration at how they feel invisible in the debate on plastic. In summary, we said we want to save the environment too, but, please don't ban plastic straws until there is a real alternative (there isn't one yet), because some Disabled People need them to drink.

Merton CIL were also invited to share our views at a Merton Council Task Group on single use plastics, we hope we did justice to our members' views. You can read more on our website - <https://bit.ly/2Y0tJTG>

Photo on the left: Poster created at Craftivism and Chat after consultation.

The future of social care panel discussion

On 25th October 2018, we hosted a panel discussion, which brought together a panel of speakers who reflected on best practice in terms of social care locally and nationally. This was also the launch of our report on social care in Merton. We hoped that the panel discussion combined with the report would help start a conversation around co-production in Merton. You can read more on our website - <https://bit.ly/2KR8WFA>

Photo on the right: Panel and crowd at the panel discussion.



Peer audit of Personal Independence Payment health assessment centres

We collaborated with our members to carry out an audit of PIP assessment centres. We raised concerns about the accessibility of the centres and made a number of recommendations. You can watch a video that we made on our YouTube channel - <https://bit.ly/2KKRMJt>

Photo on the left: Trustee entering Croydon assessment centre on mobility scooter.

Mary's Story: Housing Situation takes 15 months to resolve

This is a case study showing how we helped Mary avoid homelessness.

Mary* is a young lady with learning disabilities who had been evicted by her landlord and sent to a homeless shelter by the Local Authority. Mary told us that she felt anxious and uncomfortable sleeping at the shelter that was located in a large hall, as most people there were men. Mary had approached other advice services for support but she found it difficult to get to them and she found it difficult to understand their advice, so one of her friends had suggested she contact us.



Mary felt unsafe at the shelter, so she started staying with a friend instead. However, they now wanted her to move out. Mary said she had tried to go to the Council for support but had been put off. Our caseworker accompanied Mary to an appointment with the Council's housing team. Mary found the meeting very difficult because she was unable to remember or explain her situation very well. Our caseworker supported her to explain what she wanted to say.

Mary's immigration status meant she was not eligible for Council support through the housing team. But, she was potentially eligible for support because of her learning disability. At first, the Council said she wasn't eligible for this support because one part of the Council hadn't let the other part know about her learning disability.

We tried to get further support for Mary with a Law Centre. Mary struggled to attend the evening drop in sessions on her own and worried about the cost of the bus fare.

As Mary's situation became more difficult, she was facing having to sleep rough. Support options for Mary were very limited and our caseworker talked to her about how to stay safe and warm, which included possibly riding the night bus.

Mary's situation became very challenging and we made a safeguarding referral. She also needed mental health support and this proved to be a breakthrough in her case.

Outcome: We were able to work in close partnership with the mental health team and ensured that Mary was assessed and received a care plan. This meant she was then entitled to support with housing and she was moved into emergency accommodation, and later into something a little more permanent. Mary is now has somewhere to live and is volunteering regularly in her local community.

Craftivism and Chat

Reducing isolation and loneliness for Deaf and Disabled People. As well as getting them involved in decision making.

Following feedback from members, volunteers and supporters, we gave our members group a makeover in August 2018. It is now controlled by members and volunteers. They decide what is discussed. They have creative space. And, the opportunity to be supported to get involved in local decision making.

Picture below: Craftivism and Chat attendees with Christmas wreaths they made in a craft session run by a volunteer at our December 2018 group



100% of attendees over the past year have rated the group good or great.

"The group has helped with my wellbeing. It is helping me cope with my anxiety".

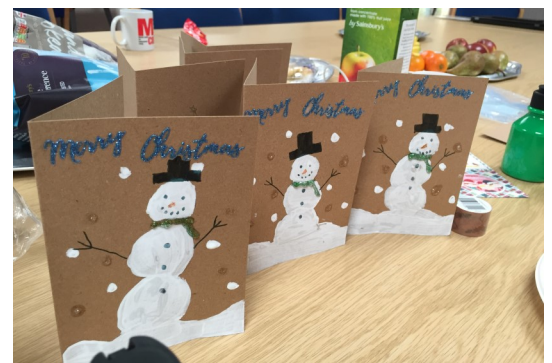
35 unique individuals got involved at Craftivism and chat.

How Craftivism and Chat has helped Lavinia:

"Coming along to the Craftivism and Chat group gets me out of the house and stops me feeling so lonely and isolated. It is nice to get to speak to people about issues that matter to us".

Our Craftivism and Chat sessions are fun and friendly. All sessions are developed to help reduce social isolation and loneliness in a relaxed way. Craftivism volunteers support newer members to feel welcomed and confident.

We also encourage people to host supported craft or chat sessions. If this interests you please get in contact. We would love to hear from you.



Picture above: Christmas cards created in the group which have been used to help us with fundraising at events and on pop up stalls.

Find out more about past groups and what is happening at future groups on our website - <https://bit.ly/33xarkG>



Picture to the left: Craftivism and Chat Group Attendees.

10 Years of Supporting Deaf and Disabled People

During 2018, we celebrated our ten year anniversary with the local community at My Voice Matters 2018.

On July 5th, we celebrated our 10th anniversary of supporting local Deaf and Disabled people with a party at The Everyday Church in Wimbledon. Merton CIL's engagement with the local community was evident from the crowd that turned up on the day to celebrate all that it has achieved, with nearly 100 people partying with us. The Mayor of Merton, Councillor Mary Curtin even came along to help us cut our birthday cake, with trustee Sarah - picture below.



One of the highlights of the event was when John Kelly, a local musician and former policy and strategy manager at Merton CIL, performed a new song called The Winds of Change Will Come. Everyone loved the song and you can watch his performance here: <https://bit.ly/2Z7MZLi>

There was an exclusive screening of Merton CIL's short film - #Here2Stay. If you missed out you can watch it here - <https://bit.ly/31F9gho>

There was lots of positive feedback following the initial screening of the film. A local parent said "the film has changed the way I view Disabled People" and a local resident said "the film made me fall in love with the ethos of the organisation". Merton CIL are extremely grateful to everyone that came along and all of the support and interest that was received.

Celebrating our Volunteers

We are very grateful to all volunteers supporting Merton CILs work and Deaf and Disabled People in Merton.

Merton CIL is an independent organisation and we rely on the generosity of the community to keep our important work going. We offer volunteering opportunities to anyone that is interested in getting involved and supporting Merton CIL and local Deaf and Disabled People.

Merton CIL Volunteers were awarded the **silver award** in the **Best Volunteer team** category at the Merton Partnership Volunteer Awards 2018.

335 hours of volunteer support provided in the office and at events.

Picture to the right: Merton CIL Volunteers accepting an award at the Merton Partnership Volunteer awards.



Our User Led Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Group

We would like to thank the five Merton CIL members who come together with staff to volunteer and run the monitoring and evaluation steering group. This group aims to help improve Merton CIL both internally and externally. The M&E group has been responsible for the development of Craftivism and Chat, staff surveys, volunteer role development and much more.

Picture to the left: Merton CIL volunteers, families and staff at Merton partnership volunteer awards.

Outreach and Events

Volunteers have supported us on a record number of pop ups, outreach stalls and events this year. We have raised lots of money and gained new members. Our Volunteers have also helped with craft sessions and discussions at Craftivism and Chat.

Admin/reception and Casework support

Without our volunteers we would not have achieved all that we did throughout 2018-19. Their support within the office has been invaluable.



Picture above: Volunteers at a Pop up Stall in Merton Library. **12**



Rhianne helps us and this is how volunteering helped Rhianne:

Rhianne started to volunteer at Merton CIL in 2016. When she first started she struggled to interact with the team and stuck to simple tasks. Three years later and Rhianne is a successful volunteer. She completed over 100 hours of volunteering. She helps to run Craftivism and Chat by providing support to other volunteers. She is a wizz on our database and has developed her confidence so much that she is now able to public speak at Merton CIL events.

“Volunteering helps me feel connected. I feel as though I am making a difference. I can really see how much of an impact volunteering has and that feels good”.

A huge thank you to **Rhianne Birchmore, Estifanos Habetesallasie** and **Raheema Olajide** who completed their 100 hours of volunteering at Merton CIL during 2018.

Picture below: Volunteers at the MVSC volunteer awards receiving 100 hour awards.



“Volunteering at Merton CIL has been a useful and often educational distraction. It has added to my sense of self worth also”

Debby Cross, Volunteer at Merton CIL

Picture to the left: Debby’s dog at our 10th anniversary event.

If you are interested in volunteering, please get in contact. We are keen to get more people involved!

We are hoping to fill the following volunteer roles over the next year

- 1.Admin/reception
- 2.Casework Support
- 3.Events and Outreach

You can see role descriptions on our website.



Superhighways Impact Aloud Awards

We were delighted to be awarded one of Superhighways highly commended impact aloud awards. We received this award for our work in better communicating impact.

Merton's Best Business Awards 2018



We were proud to be selected as a finalist at the Merton Best Business Awards.

Derek's Story: Offering a Personalised Approach to Benefits Support

This case study is about how we helped Derek with his benefits and promoted his independence.

Derek* was receiving Employment Support Allowance (ESA).

He had been awarded ESA less than a year before, and he had already been recalled for a reassessment. This meant he needed to complete a lengthy form. This caused him significant stress and anxiety, and a deterioration in his wellbeing.

We typically offer home visits. Derek did not want us to come to his home. We therefore offered an office visit instead, which he felt would help get him out of the house.

Ordinarily, we would complete an ESA form with someone in 1 or 2 hours. Derek wanted to complete the form himself rather than have us complete it.

Our caseworker went through all the questions in the form with him over several sessions amounting to about 7 hours work.

Although this was much longer than we would normally spend with someone, it was really important for Derek's confidence and self-respect. We also saw this as supporting Derek to live an independent life.



Outcome: Derek was re-awarded ESA without further assessment. He was very happy with this outcome.

We are now supporting him with a benefits check in case he is eligible for anything else. We have also signposted Derek to get some mental health support.

*Names have been changed. Posed by a model.

Thank you

We would not be able to provide our services without the support from funders, supporters, our local community and volunteers. We rely on their generosity and we are extremely grateful to everyone.

A huge thank you to everyone who supported us financially in 2018-19. Your money helps us continue to support local Deaf and Disabled people and keep our important work going.

Thank you to the following organisations:



A special thank you to our anonymous donors, also Patrick Coleman, Laura Johnson of Merton & Sutton Rethink, Sally Yarwood and Staff at Towergate Insurance. As well as everyone who made generous donations at My Voice Matters 2018, via give as you live, wonderful, PayPal and at our pop up stalls across Merton and in Sainsbury's Local Morden.

We asked you to help us raise £10,000 for our 10th anniversary to help keep the important work we are doing in Merton going. Thank you to everyone who got involved because we raised a whopping **£7,716**. This money will help us to continue to provide a unique and valuable service in Merton.

Also a big thank you to; Our hard-working staff, all our enthusiastic volunteers who have supported us at events, consultations and on the front line. Our committed trustees who have steered the organisation. Our service users, members, supporters and partners. We appreciate you all! We are achieving our aims due to your continued support.



Sainsbury's Local Charity of the Year

Sainsbury's Local on Central Road in Morden named Merton CIL as their charity of the year from June 2018.



Merton CIL would like to say a special thank you to the staff and customers of Sainsbury's Local Central Road Morden, who voted us their charity of the year. They wanted to support Merton CIL as they felt that we make a big difference in the local community.

We raised over **£500** on nine pop up stalls with Sainsbury's Central Road Morden.

Picture above: The Sainsbury's Local Morden team and Charlotte opening Merton CIL's first pop up stall.



Picture above (left): Poster in Sainsbury's Local store. Picture above (right): Sainsbury's Local Central Road Morden team and Merton CIL members presenting prize at event.


This opportunity provided us with the chance to engage with the local community, increase our visibility in the local area, fundraise and sign up new members. Our volunteers and members also used our pop up stall in store to fundraise with crafts they had made at Craftivism and Chat. Please keep an eye on our website and social media to find out when we will next be in store.

Partnership Work

Working with organisations to support Deaf and Disabled People across London.

Pan London Hate Crime Project with Inclusion London and Stay Safe East

Throughout 2018-19, we partnered up with Inclusion London and Stay Safe East on a pan-London Disability Hate Crime Project.

Pan-London Hate Crime Project Launch 

We identified a number of Deaf and Disabled Peoples Organisations (DDPOs) across London and worked with them to build and develop their hate crime projects. We did this by providing a seconded hate crime advocate, developing their recording, evaluation and monitoring approaches. This will provide them with strong evidence to try and secure funding to keep their hate crime services going. This project has been very positive and we have learned a lot.



Hate Crime Awareness week with Safer Merton

Throughout hate crime awareness week we worked closely with Safer Merton to run a number of pop up stalls across the borough raising awareness of Disability Hate Crime, where to get support and how to report it.

Merton ACCORD partnership

We worked hard with a number of local advice organisations to pull together a six partner advice bid which was presented to Merton Council. Unfortunately, the bid was not as successful as

we would have hoped. A number of partners successfully received funding from Merton Council and were able to keep their important work going. However, none providing specialist support for Disabled People.

Independent Living Strategy Group (ILSG)

Merton CIL attends the Independent Living Strategy group in Parliament. As part of this we have contributed to the work of the Equality and Human Rights Commission. We also supported the editing of a national report on social care charging issues and visited ADASS representatives on behalf of the group to discuss Direct Payments issues and attended a meeting with the Information Commissioners Office to raise concerns about the use and data handling of pre-payment cards for social care users.

Picture above: CEO Lyla and Vice Chair Gina at Hate Crime stall. Picture on right: ILSG at Parliament.



Getting Involved with Merton CIL

All of our services are provided through funding which we have to raise. At a time where cuts are continuously made to services and Deaf and Disabled Peoples rights and entitlements are reduced, we rely upon the support of the community more than ever.

We can do this Together!

We are looking for new and innovative ways of doing things and we would love to work in partnership with local organisations who share our vision. We have some ideas for how this might work, and we know that you will have some great ideas too which we are keen to hear! Here are some of ours:

- We can provide Disability Awareness & Equality or Independent Living Training for your staff teams
- We can offer volunteer opportunities or management challenges
- Advertising space in our quarterly newsletter
- We can host consultations and research with your Deaf and Disabled customers
- We can be your Charity of the Year
- You can refer Disabled staff or customers to our services like Advice & Advocacy
- We can promote your support for our events or you could help us host an event
- You can be part of our circle of support offering advice around legal, HR, IT, etc
- You could sponsor a service or member of staff
- You could offer benefits and discounts to our members
- You could donate food, catering or prizes for raffles at events
- We can help evaluate the impact of your work, for example for community groups

Making a donation - Help us Raise £ to keep our important work going

Merton CIL relies upon the generosity of donors and we are extremely grateful for any support that we receive. You can make a donation online here - <https://bit.ly/2KyHRrA>

We understand that not everyone can afford to make a financial donation. We have developed a list of activities which you could carry out to raise funds on our behalf - <https://bit.ly/2Twh39p>

Sign up as a member of Merton CIL - It's free

By being a member of Merton CIL you will support our work and values, receive our monthly update and quarterly newsletter, invitations to our events and much more. Please share the link below with your networks and help us to grow our membership <https://bit.ly/2HoTiSS>

Why Join Merton CIL?

- It is free and easy to join - you can also leave at any time
- You will have a say in how we run our organisation
- We will keep you updated with our monthly bulletin
- You will be the first to receive our CIL Matters quarterly newsletter - which you can contribute to
- You will receive personalised invitation to our events and socialising opportunities
- We fight for the rights of Deaf and Disabled People, having more members with us helps everyone to be stronger together

Ines's Story: Supporting Access Needs puts Ines at the Heart of Decision Making

This case study is detailing how we helped Ines to make her own decisions.

Ines* has communication needs which mean that she cannot speak or write. Ines's sister is her appointee and got in touch with us for help because Ines was previously on Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and had just been informed that she would have to apply for a Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

As appointee, Ines's sister would need to be involved in the process. However, we would only take on the case if Ines herself could give us clear direction. Ines could use facial expressions to communicate and could point. She could say some words, but sometimes would say yes when she meant no, and vice versa.

Our caseworker developed a communication guide with pre-set options which Ines could point to. These options were based on the PIP descriptors. Before starting to work through the lengthy form itself, we did a trial run by asking whether Ines could make a sandwich. Ines indicated she could but her sister said she needed help. Ines appeared frustrated by this and indicated she could do it herself, so our caseworker checked whether she could do it herself with supervision, and she agreed she could.

Our caseworker checked with Ines whether she would prefer to answer the questions herself or have her sister do it. Ines wanted to answer the questions herself. Our caseworker established that although Ines can struggle with processing and mix up yes and no, there are ways of mitigating this such as repeating questions and giving enough time to answer.

Outcome: The form was completed by Ines and our caseworker over a number of sessions. We wanted to take the time to hear from Ines. Ines was successful and received a higher rate of PIP than her previous DLA benefit as well as a back-dated Severe Disability Premium. We are working with Ines to review eligibility for other benefits and her financial assessment for her care package from the council.



*Names have been changed. Posed by a model.

The Year Ahead

Plans for the next 12 months at Merton CIL.

Our 2018-23 co-produced strategy has 3 priority areas 1) Increased financial security and resilience; 2) Greater ability to live independently; 3) Being able to live safe and well. We have secured funding to ensure delivery across core areas and our benefits and community care advice service has grown in size in 2019-21.



However, loss of funding from London Borough of Merton resulted in the closure of our housing advice and health advocacy services from May 2019.

Over the next year our Policy and Strategy Manager will be working on developing a report on housing for Deaf and Disabled People, to check the need for disability specific specialist housing advice in Merton and to support future funding applications. Please get in contact if you would like to get involved and share your housing experiences.

We are also developing our use of volunteers to support delivery of health advocacy. Original 2019 growth targets for the development of new services around Young Disabled People, and Debt Advice (for which we would need additional registration) have been put on hold until 2020, however, the development of an Independent Living Toolkit is on schedule.

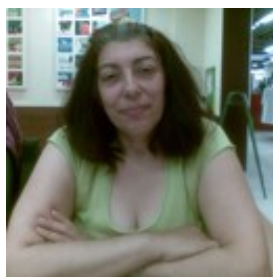
We have been given notice on our current offices as London Borough of Merton has decided to sell the building. Our tenancy ends 30th November 2019 and we are in negotiations for alternative properties.

Trustees

Get to know Merton CIL's Board of Trustees:



Roy Benjamin, Chair has worked in the social care for a number of years and has been campaigning for equality for over 30 years.



Gina Vettese, Vice Chair has been Disabled since she was 13 and has been part of Merton CIL from when it was just a steering group. Gina is a talented seamstress.



Sally Yarwood, is a chartered accountant & worked as a Finance Director for over 20 years. Sally is married with children and has lived in Merton for over 33 years. Sally has partial hearing loss.



Claire Benjamin, is a visually impaired mum of 2 Disabled teenagers. She has lived in Merton for over 20 years. She is also our Health and Safety Champion.



Amanda Edwards, was previously a social worker & worked on policy at Department of Health and SCIE. She has seen that a strong voice and good support can make a difference to people's lives.



Fitzroy Dawson, is CEO of Merton Community Transport (MCT). He has been involved in Community Transport for nearly 35 years. He has family experience of Disability and mental health.



Slim Flegg MBE is extremely active locally having been a local councillor and Mayor of Merton (twice) in the past, and helped found both Go4M and Merton CIL



Estifanos Habtesellasi, has been involved with Merton CIL since 2015. He represents Merton CIL at a number of meetings. He is also a founding member of our M&E steering group



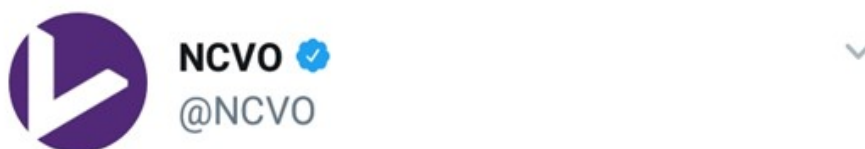
Sarah Henley is Disabled and lives in Merton. She brings her sense of fun and adventure to every board meeting. Sarah enjoys skiing and painting.



Raheema Olajide is Disabled and has an interest in helping others. She previously worked as a Civil Servant and is a founding member of our M&E steering group

Interested in Becoming a Trustee at Merton CIL?

If you think that you could bring something unique to our Board of Trustees please find out more below about how you could join the board.



What difference do you make as a trustee? | #TrusteesWeek



Picture above: NCVO tweet for trustee week featuring our trustee Estifanos.

This is a great opportunity to join our dynamic user-led Deaf and Disabled people's organisation in Merton and to support our continued growth, strategic direction and governance on the trustee board.

You could be part of our great team enabling Deaf and Disabled people to take control over their lives, be independent and challenge discrimination.

What are we looking for? We are looking for someone who can actively contribute their views, brings lived experience to the trustee role, and is able to question and challenge the organisation and always work in the best interests of Merton CIL.

You can find out more about the role on our website - <https://bit.ly/2nKps2r>

Please get in touch as soon as possible if this is a role that interests you.

Finance

Statement of financial activities for year ended 31 March 2019

	Un- restricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2019 £	Total Funds 2018 £
Incoming Resources				
Incoming Resources from Charitable Activities	-	394,956	394,956	332,049
Voluntary income	7,716	-	7,716	266
Fundraising Income	-	-	-	-
Other Income	273	-	273	862
Total Incoming Resources	7,990	394,956	402,946	333,177
Resources Expended				
Charitable Activities	-	386,039	386,039	344,479
Governance Costs	-	5,198	5,198	5,378
Total Resources Expended	-	391,237	391,237	349,857
Net Incoming / (Outgoing) Resources	7,990	3,719	11,709	(16,680)
Transfer between funds	8,480	(8,480)	-	-
Total Funds Brought Forward	53,177	49,638	102,815	119,495
Total Funds Carried Forward	69,647	44,877	114,524	102,815

There are no recognised gains and losses other than those in the statement of financial activities. Therefore no statement of total recognised gains and losses has been prepared.

All the above amounts relate to continuing activities.

All notes and explanations can be found in our financial statement which you can read on our website - <https://bit.ly/2Z0w4WZ>

Finance

Balance Sheet at 31 March 2019

	2019	2018
	£	£
CURRENT ASSETS:		
Cash at bank and in hand	155,896	125,862
Accrued Interest and prepayments	1,628	679
	157,523	126,541
LIABILITIES:		
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	42,999	23,720
	114,524	102,815
NET CURRENT ASSETS	114,524	102,815
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	114,524	102,815
RESERVES		
Unrestricted Funds	69,647	53,177
Restricted Funds	44,877	49,638
TOTAL RESERVES	114,524	102,815

For the year ending 31 March 2019 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of Companies Act 2006.

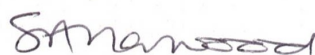
The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The Directors' acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts. The financial statements were approved by the Board on 25th July 2019 and signed on its behalf by:

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD



----- Gina Vettese (Vice Chair)



----- Sarah Yarwood (Treasurer)



A Company Limited by Guarantee
Registered in England 7645926
Registered Charity No. 1152825

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