



Working together to change lives

2018/19

# What we do

Independent Lives is a user-led charity working with disabled people, people with support needs, and carers, to enable people to lead full, active and independent lives.



- We work directly with disabled people, people with complex health needs and parents and carers of disabled children. We provide a Direct Payments support service to help people arrange and manage their own personalised care and support. We offer banking, payroll, training and recruitment services so people can manage their own budgets and personal assistants. Our Care Service provides personalised home-based care and support. We engage with people in the local community through user-led social groups, our volunteer programme, and joint campaigns on the rights of disabled people.
- We work with health and social care professionals providing: training and training materials, consultancy, and recruitment support. We work closely with local authority social care teams and Clinical Commissioning Groups on support planning, personalisation and co-production, and health and social care integration.

[www.independentlives.org](http://www.independentlives.org)

# Welcome to our annual Impact Report

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We have lots of news and highlights to share with you from over the last twelve months...

This last year has seen Independent Lives be re-commissioned by West Sussex County Council to deliver Direct Payment services, taking us into our eighteenth year of supporting people to live independently through personal budgets!

We are fundraising with our customers, volunteers and staff for inclusive social activities throughout the year.

Our care service has gone through an expansion with new offices opening near Chichester and Burgess Hill. This means we can now offer care and support to people across the county.

And 2019 started with the launch of a new service that gives respite to carers living in Adur.

Supporting people to live independently and be able to participate in our community is at the heart of all of our work.

Both Sue and I are very proud of the achievements of our team and would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our staff, volunteers, members and trustees for their dedication and positivity!

Rebecca Smicle  
Chief Executive

Sue Lines  
Chair



# A year at a glance...



West Sussex County Council re-commissions Independent Lives to provide Direct Payment Information & Advice.

New service launch! Successfully tender to provide respite services for carers in Adur on behalf of West Sussex County Council.



Care service expands with new offices opening near Chichester and in Burgess Hill.

New trustees Jo Tuck and Claire Poke join the Board of Trustees. Both bring great expertise and lived experience to the board!



Fundraising for disabled people led social activities – We launch our series of fundraising events in the community.

Co-produce Strong and Vibrant Communities Conference, bringing together commissioners, representation from the public, the voluntary sector, and people using services to explore better outcomes for our communities.



Finalists of West Sussex Partners in Care Accolades Home Care Worker Award and Care Employer Award.

Our volunteers generously gave over a 1,000 hours of their time!

Direct Payment customer wins Skills for Care Best Individual Employer award.

# Fundraising to support disabled people to take part in social activities

One of the big issues disabled people in our community face is social isolation.

Chris volunteers regularly at Independent Lives and here talks about the importance of fundraising to combat loneliness and social isolation.

*"It's not often you get to take part in something so wholesome that has such a big benefit to so many different people - being a big part of that was an absolute joy!"*



The events Independent Lives put on to fundraise for disabled people are absolutely amazing. It's always great to see so many different people from all walks of life coming together to support such an amazing cause. All of people at the Halloween Fun Day were so happy, really enjoying themselves, and just generally having a fantastic time. The whole event was really well supported by all of the staff and volunteers, and it was great to see people like the Town Crier attending and lending their support to such a terrific cause.

It meant so much to me to be able to be there and take part. I met loads of different people, from the public, staff, Independent Lives customers, and other volunteers - I was introduced to lots of family and friends which was a really lovely experience. It was fantastic to spend time with other staff, and all of the wonderful people Independent Lives support, in a fun, social setting. Besides, who would have handled the candy floss if it weren't for me!

There's a real lack of funding available right now, and charities like Independent Lives need all of the help that they can get to continue to innovate and support their customers the best they can. Independent Lives do such amazing work both in and out of the community. Things are tough for everyone at the moment, but particularly so for disabled people like myself. There are lots of lonely disabled people out there, who without the events that Independent Lives are able to run thanks to the money raised by our wonderful public, would be completely isolated seven days a week.

*"These are the kinds of activities which we need to continue to ensure that disabled people are able to get out and about, as they deserve".*



# Connecting Volunteers

By providing personalised and supported volunteering opportunities through the Connecting Volunteer programme, disabled people are able to gain confidence, new skills, contribute to our community, and improve their wellbeing. Each role is tailored to help achieve the outcomes that are most important to them, in a supportive workplace.

We work with people with support needs, working together to identify a volunteer role. We talk about what they would like to achieve and contribute to our organisation, their skills and experience, confidence and enjoyment of the role. We also explore how they would like to volunteer - from home, online, in the office, hours and any support needs they may have.

All volunteers have flexibility and we support people with a diverse range of support needs.

Our volunteers can face barriers in the workplace and may need support with their mental health, communication or adaptations to equipment to facilitate their work.

**Our volunteers gave over 1000 hours of support to our charity and the community.**

**It is about seeing the potential and making it happen.**

Flexibility in the workplace, understanding reasonable adjustments and a culture that is inclusive and open, results in a productive workforce with a wide range of people with support needs.



Our volunteers  
have dedicated

1023  
hours

of their time  
in the past year

a 23% increase over 2017-18

We're incredibly grateful for everything our volunteers have achieved in 2018/19.

Five of our volunteers  
have moved into paid  
employment including four  
volunteers who now work  
for our organisation.

Two volunteers  
have gained the  
confidence to return  
to higher education.

There have  
been some very  
tangible outcomes  
as a result of  
Connecting  
Volunteers

Two volunteer  
has gained the  
confidence to move  
into their own home.

Two volunteers have  
gained experience and  
confidence to start  
looking for paid work.



# Branching out to make a positive difference in the care sector

**Sam Pegg, Director of the Independent Lives Care Service, talks about her experience, the sector, and the importance of expanding the Care Service into new areas.**

I have worked full time in health and social care for the past 15 years, starting my career as a Care Support Worker, before moving onto Registered Manager and now in my current role as Director of Care Services. I love working in the sector, especially for Independent Lives because we can really make a positive difference to people's lives. I enjoy working with different teams within the organisation to develop new services, from staff training and carers respite to new areas of domiciliary care service delivery across the county.

Over the past 15 years the partnership working and co-production of services with West Sussex County Council has improved dramatically and this has a direct impact on the quality of services that we can deliver as a charity. Our role is not only about customer support but ensuring Care Support Workers are valued as a workforce.

My main drive and passion is supporting people to stay independent in their own homes for as long as possible; the more that we grow as a charity the more opportunities we have to do this.

*"The impact of what we do for each customer is totally different, but enabling customers to remain in their own home is probably the biggest thing we achieve."*



We have supported customers with everything from getting a job to arranging doctor and hospital appointments. We really do so much for the people we support, which is why it's so important that we're always looking to expand into new areas.


By expanding we have been able to offer support to a huge number of new people who would otherwise be struggling to find the help they need; everything we do is completely personalised, and that kind of support has traditionally been unavailable in a lot of the rural areas we've recently moved into.

If you're looking for a new line of work, I couldn't recommend a career in the care sector more. The range of work you'll get to experience is unlike much else around, and you'll constantly be meeting new and interesting people – and will be making a massive difference in improving their lives.

There are so many development opportunities working in care, and all you need are the right values to get started. I really don't think any other career is as rewarding and impactful as what we do on a daily basis. By working in care, you are making a real difference. What our customers say:

*"I feel the carers are really loving, caring people. I feel this is giving me the independence to do things myself".*

Join our team!

  
Visit our website for  
current positions available  
in the care service.





## West Sussex Partnerships in Care Accolades

The West Sussex Care Accolades is an annual celebration of all that's good about care provision in the county. This year we were shortlisted as finalists in two categories.

### Home Care Worker: Emma Easey

"Her service delivery is outstanding. Her passion to support customers to remain independent and listen to their needs is flawless. Her kind, thoughtful nature and loving qualities is what makes her a perfect match to this role."

### Care Employer: Sue Ewing

"Having fully engaged, happy, and stress free staff is hugely important in successfully meeting the new challenges that come with shifting social care priorities."



# Engaging with influencers and decision makers in health and social care

The conference 'Strong and Vibrant Communities in West Sussex' held in November was a joint Supporting Community Based Solutions event led by Independent Lives with over 100 people participating.

The aim was to strengthen how commissioners and decision-makers engage with the third sector when designing and commissioning services.

One of the outcomes of the day was a commitment from West Sussex County Council to actively engage with the third sector, drawing upon our expertise in co-production and co-design of our community services.





"Networking is of enormous value.  
Inspiring to feel the passion at the event too".

"West Sussex has a vibrant voluntary sector that is  
prepared to innovate and challenge the status quo"

"Collaborative intent; sharing and energy for change"

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Watch a short clip from the Strong and Vibrant  
Communities conference on [YouTube](#)



Community Solutions Consortium

Payroll has **11%** more customers. Now support **1,545** people.

Banking has **2%** more customers. Now support **695** people.

Assisted **2,380** people through Direct Payment information and advice telephone helpline, covering **3,349** separate enquiries and requests for information.

Supported **461** disabled people to start to employ their own Personal Assistants.



= 100% excellent/very good rating  
& 100% people felt more confident in their role!

Trained **350** people

in **92** training sessions



**33%** increase in care service staff, opening new offices in the west and north of West Sussex.

# Ways you can support us

## Choose Independent Lives as your charity of the year

Independent Lives has been working with disabled adults and children since 2001, providing support so they can continue to live in their own home.

By choosing Independent Lives as your charity of the year you will help us to continue to provide this much needed care and support.

Visit our [website](#) for more information.

## Volunteer

At Independent Lives you'll develop new skills and build on existing experience and knowledge. You'll have the chance to give something back to the community, and to make a difference to those around you.

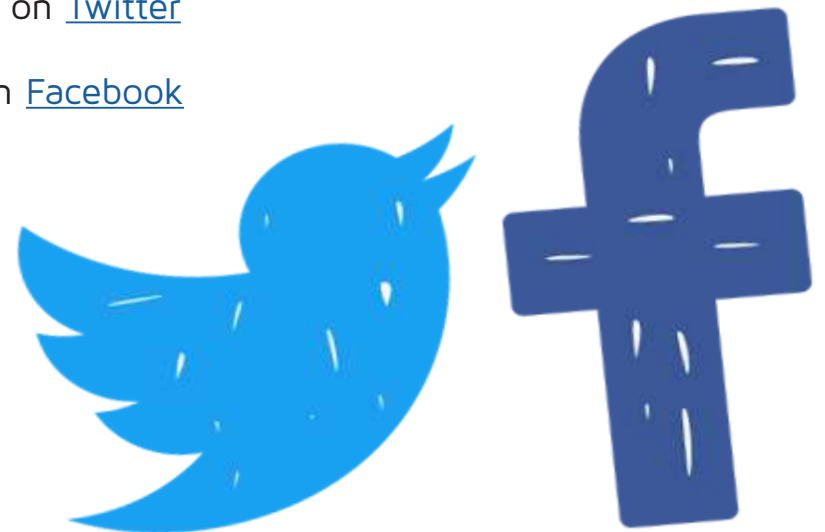
## Support us financially

By making a donation to our charity, however large or small, you will make a real difference to the lives of disabled people, carers and people with health conditions.

## Follow us on social media

Follow us on [Twitter](#)

Like us on [Facebook](#)





Working  
together  
to  
change  
lives





# Making an impact...

I would like to thank all of you for the tremendous support you have given me over the last six years. Without you it would have been an enormous and sometimes overwhelming task to manage Paul's personal budget. Your support enabled him to enjoy some very happy and fulfilling years living independently in his own flat

- Direct Payment customer living independently

Thank you all so much for your help in getting this sorted, I am just so grateful that Archie is being given the opportunity to be a normal 2 year old - something that we didn't think would happen earlier on this year!

- Training Service customer

Afternoon tea was very nice. It was really nice to meet other customers and staff informally. It got me out of the house for the afternoon which is always good!

- Care Service customer after a social event

Thank you so much for helping my parents, you have given my mum more confidence to make the transition.

- A carer of someone new to Direct Payments

"Your delivery and style of training is excellent. I admired your enthusiasm, you kept the group engaged the whole way through. You listened to their training needs and answered their questions clearly and with detail which I think is a skill in itself"

- Training service customer

"I would like to say a big thank you to all the carers who look after my parents. We are very pleased with the care and compassion shown to my parents. Everyone is very friendly and very helpful. Thank you very much for being so supportive" - Care Service customer

## What our customers say...

"We can't overstate our gratitude to you for the considerable amount of time you spent with us yesterday, but equally for the clarity of your explanation of the "inner workings" of the PHB process" - Personal Health Budget Information & Advice customer

"Jane is excellent! Course easy to digest & remember" - Personal Health Budget Information & Advice customer

"They are a lovely bunch, really helpful and so polite on the phone" - Payroll service customer

"Carers always ask if there is anything else they can do, they are very helpful. Carers are always friendly, caring, helpful they are carers that genuinely care" - Care Service customer



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Thank you!

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