

Resnews

SUMMER - No.2 2021



Rescare is here for you



The Society for Children and Adults with
Learning Disabilities and their Families

Registered Charity No. 1112766



www.rescare.org.uk

A Letter from the Rescare Chair

Rescare is once again reaching out to our members and beyond

Whilst times have remained very tough because of the Covid restrictions and regulations, we have been working mainly from our own homes in order to keep safe. Despite this the last months of Rescare have seen us not only maintain our services and outreach to members but also an increase in our campaigning activities. We can report the very welcome addition of Nicola Zielinski, who thanks to an external grant, will be with us for at least six months as our Project and Public Engagement Officer. Already Nicola has revamped our website, raised our profile on social media and created a special Campaigns section on our website. Do look at our website and see the difference.

Nicola has arrived just in time to join us in our new joint venture with family groups lobbying to keep the right to choose residential communities. Our networking with families from Save Furlong Close and Ravenswood has resulted in Rescare responding to the groups' request to write to a number of organisations and individuals to gauge likely enthusiasm for a new initiative to protect this much endangered provision.

We seem to have seen that in many good residential settings this larger model has succeeded spectacularly in containing the spread of the current virus, because there can be dedicated staff for one household and less need for rotating agency staff.

Our bi-monthly Rescare Forums have succeeded in drawing new people keen to discuss topics of interest to families with learning disabled members. Public law solicitor Alex Rook, who wrote here in Resnews on the subject of welfare deputyship a couple of years ago, gave a talk in July on the subject. There was a pleasingly large group of attendees at the Zoom. They were very engaged and questions were authoritatively responded to by Alex. Interestingly he reported that 19 of the 20 applications which his firm made to the Court of Protection have succeeded, which is more than I for one had expected. Veteran Rescare member Dr. Maurice Brook spoke of his work helping families trying to obtain deputyship and of how there was a need for total persistence. We all agreed that dropping the high application charges would make a difference to families. When asked how best to frame our lobbying, Alex replied that we need to keep on explaining how families should be key to the whole decision-making process. This has always been our strap line

As the government shuffles about talking about the need for increasing and financing adult social care, we are working to ensure that the much-overlooked area of provision for those with learning disabilities is highlighted. The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have launched a new commission to examine the gaps in social care.¹ The Commission aims to articulate the enduring values and principles which should underpin care and caring. It will seek to shape how we respond to ageing and disability in our society, challenging existing attitudes and models of care, where appropriate, and highlighting the positive and where things are working well. We encourage families and organisations who have experienced excellent care in places such as Camphill and quality residential communities to write in to the commission and share their experiences at www.archbishopofyork.org/contact-us Please do this if at all possible; it will help keep the sector in their line of sight.

The former vicar of Danby, Michael Hazelton, wrote eloquently for Action for Botton in 2015 when the volunteer co-worker ethos of Christian sharing was threatened by what he called the "consumerism" in care. Essentially, it is not possible to put a price tag on the wonderful levels of informal care that can often be seen in larger residential communities. Here it is often the residents themselves who can help and support others, through invaluable friendships, one of the most valuable antidotes to loneliness. Examples of this type are invaluable in moulding public support.

So thank you to all the friends and families who continue to support Rescare's work to protect and extend the value of such communities as Furlong Close and Ravenswood. Please note that our Annual General Meeting on Friday 17th September will again be virtual and I look forward to greeting as many of you as can join us.

With very best wishes

Anita Bennett

¹ www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2021/23-april/news/uk/archbishops-new-commission-will-examine-gaps-in-care-provision

Rescare Forums by ZOOM

We are pleased to say that our final forum of this current series will be on **Wednesday 8th September 2021** 10 – 11.30am

Title: **Care Act statute and reality**

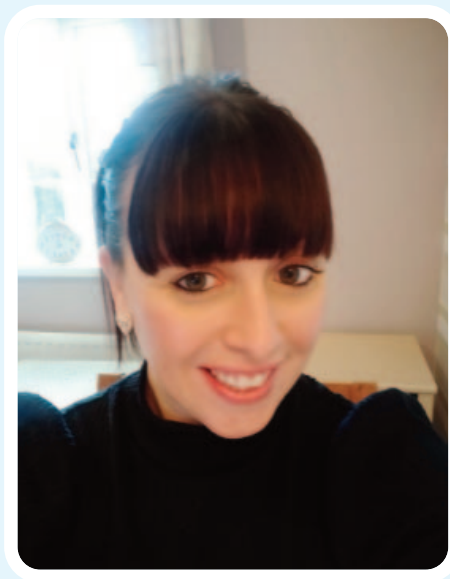
Register by email to: office@rescare.org.uk



Please note. We are planning a new series starting in November 2021. We would be delighted if members could suggest topics they would like to see us address. Email: Katie@rescare.org.uk

Meet the newest addition to our Rescare team.

Nicola is from the North-East of England and recently returned from New Zealand having lived there for 5 years working for a large government funded organisation that supported people with disabilities to find employment. Nicola specialises in the field of recruitment within the health and disability sector. Outside of work Nicola likes to spend time with her family, singing and playing her ukulele and she is passionate about mindfulness, holistic wellbeing and yoga.



Rescare's Befriending Scheme has commenced on 1st May 2021

As our members know we have always sought to promote the security and welfare of people with learning disabilities and their families. We work in conjunction with all concerned to secure an environment and facilities, to enable a full and happy life, with the type of care most appropriate to their needs and abilities.

Feedback from our members, both parents and siblings of people with learning disabilities, is that they worry about what will happen to their family member (often adults requiring significant care) in the future. We think that if we were able to train and match a volunteer to support the family this might be a way forward. We hope this person could contribute to helping the learning-disabled individual live a fulfilling life, giving peace of mind to the parents and friends that their relative was supported by a committed, capable volunteer. We have now been successful in obtaining some external funding to pilot this approach.

We are hoping to recruit and train up to 6 volunteers to befriend learning disabled people with elderly parents who may be becoming frail as time goes by. We are developing a training programme and have commenced advertising for committed and suitable people who might wish to help us and whom we can then match to families in need. We will support the volunteers through regular contact, reimbursement of expenses and ongoing training. Volunteers will meet regularly with their families, assisting them to meet varied and complex needs.

This voluntary opportunity is great for someone who either wants to give back to their community, is looking for something to contribute positively to or if you are progressing into a career in the health and wellbeing sector, this will be great experience. The volunteering commitment can be as little as 1 hour per week or whatever your personal schedule allows.

If you know anyone who might be prepared to help us test out these ideas, either as a volunteer or a person willing to be befriended, do get in touch with me Nicola.

Nicola Zielinski

Project & Public Engagement Officer

Rescare 07529 247 792
nicola@rescare.org.uk
www.rescare.org.uk

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Are you an empathetic person?
Do you enjoy helping others?
Have you got good listening skills?
Can you give some of your time to a family in need?
Can you commit to volunteering for at least 12 months?

To be eligible for this role we ask all of our volunteers to apply for a Basic DBS check which Rescare will fund



For more information contact nicola@rescare.org.uk

www.rescare.org.uk

Rescare is spreading the news about Venner.

Please pass on the message to your friends

Venner can deliver a plant-based nutrition box that feeds a family of up to 4 people

Britain's poverty and food insecurity statistics are worsening, and interventions are desperately needed to turn these trends around. However, the cycle of poverty cannot be broken on its own and it is a complex issue.

Poverty brings many life challenges and stressful situations, including poor nutrition, which has been linked with broader challenges like compromised physical health and wellbeing, difficulties in learning and developmental challenges in children. Nutrient deficiencies can also lead to various diseases, as well as compromised immunity.

Venner's nutrition and education solution is needed now more than ever! To avoid lasting damage, we must act now and provide all families and children with nutritious food that is urgently needed and essential to safeguard their future health and wellbeing.

Venner is for *EVERYONE*, so you can order the Venner Nutrition Box for your own family to enjoy, and you can also sponsor a Venner Nutrition Box for a family in need. You can also get involved by subscribing to our Venner's Kitchen platform which is full of veggie-based meal inspiration and nutrition know-how.

With the help of local charities, social services, businesses and individuals we are able to deliver a Venner Nutrition Box that feeds a family of up to 4 people for a week! All our food is plant based and nutrition focused because we are passionate about healthy people and a healthy planet.

We believe that with real food, new skills and support we can make a difference in the lives of so many families, nobody should go hungry, and everyone deserves access to healthy food!

"It was a fantastic box and well-received. My son really enjoyed helping me to cook for the family and he also learnt new skills in doing so." Feedback from a Venner Family

Rescare are proudly supporting the Venner mission. For more information check out the website www.vennernutrition.uk or ask Rescare for more information.

Helen White – Venner
helen@vennernutrition.uk

Rescare proudly supporting Venner's Kitchen

Healthy food at home belongs to everyone!

Check out the veggie-based food platform which is packed full of delicious recipes that will have you reaching for your apron



GET INSPIRED IN THE KITCHEN WITH TASTY RECIPES, FUN AND EASY TO FOLLOW VIDEOS AND LOTS OF TOP TIPS TO HELP YOU AND YOUR FAMILY ENJOY NUTRITIOUS AND DELICIOUS MEALTIMES

To get involved with a FREE 2 week trial visit the website and use the code **Venner 2WT**

VENNER



www.vennernutrition.uk

Ravenswood: a Village under Threat

In April 2021, Norwood, the charity which runs Ravenswood Village, announced a consultation period to discuss the future of Ravenswood, with the possibility of closure.

Ravenswood Village is a unique rural residential community in Berkshire for people with severe learning disabilities, complex needs and autism. It is specifically designed to meet the needs of people who would be over stimulated or feel confined living in urban environments. It is spacious, peaceful and fully accessible for the residents, who have the freedom to walk around safely and independently in a beautiful green environment, close to nature with easy access to the surrounding local community. There is a selection of specialist complementary services onsite, including a hydrotherapy pool, Riding for the Disabled registered stables offering riding and carriage driving, rebound therapy, sensory gardens and a vibrant café at the heart of the village, where residents can meet up with friends, play games or just pop in for a snack. Many Ravenswood residents have lived in the village for most of their lives, some from the age of 5 years old and have formed strong bonds with each other.

Consistency is important for everyone, but for people with complex learning disabilities and autism continuity of care and approach is absolutely vital. A large proportion of the well trained staff have been working at Ravenswood for many years and have watched the residents grow and thrive. The consistency of care they provide has given the residents stability. Staff have in-depth knowledge and understanding of each resident's care needs, routines and wishes. They provide a holistic, person centred approach to the resident's individual needs and have built trusting relationships with the people they support.

Staff members who have moved to different roles within the village continue to take an active interest and see residents on a daily basis - made possible by the village environment.

The consistency in staff, housemates and village environment has created a family atmosphere for the residents as well as for the families and staff. There are a number of siblings with different disabilities who live in separate homes but are able to live together in the Ravenswood Village community.



Parents and siblings of residents have described Ravenswood as an extension of their own family. Several children of staff members have also gone on to choose to work at Ravenswood themselves. It is also important to note that a number of residents either do not have any family or are estranged from their families- for them the Ravenswood community is the only family they have.

Since Ravenswood was created in 1953, it has truly been a lifeline for families and demonstrates just how much people with a learning disability can achieve when they are offered the 'Right Support, Right Care, Right Culture.'

Without Ravenswood Village the quality of life of both the residents and the communities it sits within would be diminished. The residents of Ravenswood are well-known in the surrounding communities of Berkshire. They regularly visit nearby shops, cafes, cinemas and the local pub, where the

staff know them all by name. They participate in activities at the Bracknell Sports Centre, the Coral Reef Water Park, the Pulse-8 Gym and Spa; all are facilities which are very much part of the local community. Local community groups and businesses regularly volunteer at Ravenswood, helping with gardening, maintenance and activities. Residents are also well known to their local MP, to the hospitals and doctors who are fundamental to their ongoing support.

As you walk around the village everyone says "hello" and knows each other by name. The 96 residents living there today are thriving and wish to continue to live at Ravenswood. They are living full, vibrant lives in a place where they feel happy, loved and safe.



Since the publication of the Government's Valuing People: A New Strategy for Learning Disability in the 21st Century (2021), there has been growing recognition of the importance of a diversity of provision for people with learning disabilities, including village or intentional communities. It is the wish of the residents of Ravenswood and indeed in their best interest to continue to live at Ravenswood Village. Like everyone else, they should have the right to choose where they want to live.

For some of our residents, even relatively small insignificant changes to care, environment or

continued over

routine can have a profoundly negative impact on their mental and physical wellbeing.

Major changes, such as moving to a new home even within the Village, have been exceptionally difficult for some of the residents, triggering severe depression and mental health issues.

A decision to remove them from their home and their community would be catastrophic for their physical and mental wellbeing. It is an extremely worrying time for their families too, who believed they had found a 'forever home' for their loved ones at Ravenswood.

Our survey of families found 98.67% of respondents agreed with the statement that



“Ravenswood Village is vital to the continued health and wellbeing of my loved one”

The past decade has seen a growing debate about where and how people with learning disabilities can live the best possible life. Across the UK, there is currently a national shortage of high-quality provision for people with learning disabilities, complex needs and autism, so Ravenswood should be celebrated and the model expanded, but definitely NOT closed! Indeed, there is space to accommodate many more residents with similar needs and scope to develop it into a centre of excellence for future generations.

Tracy Murrell For Ravenswood

We at Rescare are increasingly concerned about these threats of closure. Please see below an abridged version of a letter from Rescare to many possible partners. We are seeking expressions of interest in a campaign to shine light on the closure of residential facilities and the impact on residents of places such as Ravenswood and Furlong Close. Please do let us know if you have relevant contacts you suggest we include.

“The true measure of any society can be found in how it treats its most vulnerable members.”¹

We at Rescare are reaching out to a range of influential social care professionals, academics, politicians and families and friends of adults with learning disabilities, complex needs or autism. We want to stimulate debate and bring about policy changes to enhance lifestyle choice for the most vulnerable people in our society. Rescare was founded in 1984 and has members all over the UK. We have campaigned for, and always supported, the right to choose the type of care which is most suitable for each individual.

In the first instance, our priority is to seek to bring an end to the current national trend of breaking up long-established, residential communities of disabled adults², which is inflicting on their vulnerable residents the distress and anxiety (and, in some cases, life-shortening trauma) of being forcibly “moved on” from their long-term homes.

Our impetus is the distressing reality that this trend is eroding choice for adults with learning disabilities, complex needs or autism and inflicting real human distress on some of society's most vulnerable people. Our perception is that this is occurring because of a number of structural and practical defects in the current system which,

most prominently, include the following:

- * Commissioning practice
- * A distorted funding model
- * Apparent misuse of CQC guidance
- * Residential communities disappearing

There is a nationwide shortage of accommodation for adults with learning disabilities or autism with complex needs or challenging behaviours; and adults with learning disabilities are increasingly living into old age, when they are unable to be cared for by their aging parents. The fact that these vulnerable adults also experience poorer health than the general population and have a higher prevalence of mental health problems and early onset dementia, means that there is an increasing need for high-quality, residential care accommodation for them.

Further, there has been increasing recognition in recent years that well-run residential communities³, far from being the isolating

institutions of yesteryear, provide a model of communal care which can offer adults with moderate to severe learning disabilities, complex needs or autism:

For these reasons, we believe that the current national trend to closing down long-established, residential communities of disabled adults is a matter of real and urgent concern. We are writing to people with an interest in adult social care, like yourself, to open a line of communication with you and to ask you to register your interest in participating in our campaign. Depending upon interest we may be in a position to convene a national conference to share ideas and debate ways forward.

If you are interested in joining or engaging with us, or know of someone else who might be interested

in doing so, we would be very happy to hear from you. Contact: campaigns@rescare.org.uk
www.rescare.org.uk/campaigns

Anita Bennett *Chair RESCARE*

Dr Katie Booth *Trustee RESCARE*

¹ Mahatma Ghandi.

² Recent examples include the closure of Milton Heights in Oxfordshire in 2020 - <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-oxfordshire-51537724> - the announcement in October 2020 of the proposed closure of Furlong Close in Wiltshire - <https://www.facebook.com/StopHFTClosure> - and an ongoing review of the possible closure of Ravenswood Village in Wokingham - <https://jewishnews.timesofisrael.com/letters-to-the-editor-wrong-about-ravenswood/>

³ For instance, like Stanley Grange in Lancashire - <http://www.stanleygrange.org.uk/> - and Paradise House in Gloucestershire - <https://www.paradise-house.org.uk/>

Ravenswood has enabled Shahin to live an empowered and fulfilled life

Ravenswood Village has been home to my big brother Shahin for 23 years. I remember how hard our parents fought for him to live there; it wasn't easy to get in. We spent hours and hours in meeting after meeting trying to get him the very best life. I remember back then feeling very sceptical that anywhere would be better than our family home, but without a doubt Ravenswood Village has given my brother a home above and beyond anything I could have ever dreamed of. He has lived there for the majority of his life, since he was 16 years old. His life has been second to none and I am grateful every single day for Ravenswood.



We live in a world which has generally been made for the average person. Shahin has brain damage, epilepsy and severe learning disabilities; as a result he is non-verbal and uses a wheelchair. Growing up in London, everyday things were needlessly harder for Shahin. Ravenswood however was designed with people who are differently abled at the forefront. In doing so, Ravenswood has enabled Shahin to live an empowered and fulfilled life. Shahin has a vast array of activities on offer to him as well as the independence to choose whether he wants to be involved or not. He is safe to use all the facilities and the entire village is accessible for his needs.

Shahin's home has its own sensory room which stimulates his mind and is a lot of fun. For example he can sit on his bean bag and relax there or he can join in a karaoke party with his flatmates. It was here in this sensory room where he first met his nephew and they got to hang out together- proving himself the coolest uncle.

On the wall of Shahin's home, there is a photograph of him next to HRH Queen Elizabeth – she is the Patron of Ravenswood and Shahin met her when she came to the village to officially open his home. How many of us can say the same?!

Shahin enjoys music with Martin and art with Yulia. On Tuesdays he uses the hydrotherapy pool at Ravenswood, where he is able to exercise freely. It has sensory equipment projecting a light show onto the ceiling, which Shahin loves to look at while swimming and shouts in happiness. Being non-verbal, hearing Shahin vocalise his joy is a gift. Ravenswood has its own synagogue, where Shahin sits with all his friends in the front row each week (prior to the restrictions of the pandemic). Every festival is celebrated with his home covered in decorations. There is a vibrant café at the heart of the Village where we have; celebrated birthdays, danced at discos, played bingo and eaten ice-creams together.

Shahin loves being active, especially outdoors. Wednesday mornings Shahin cycles with the cycling team around the Village to his heart's content. There is also a stables at Ravenswood where Shahin and the other residents enjoy regularly seeing the horses. Every Wednesday afternoon he goes horse riding with the use of a carriage designed for wheelchair users. Shahin has the biggest smile on his face and it is wonderful to see him being in his element.

continued over

Shahin is over 6-foot-tall, but because he uses a wheelchair he is often below eye level, which means people look down when interacting with him. However horse riding gives Shahin a chance to feel as tall as he naturally is. Being around the horses brings him so much joy and I love nothing more than getting to cheer him on as he rides across the village. These horses are part of his world at Ravenswood, he has known the horses and the staff at the stables for many years.

Another highlight of Shahin's experience has been going skiing at The Snow Centre. I was excited to see Shahin's first time on the snow with my camera ready to take a thousand photographs... and standing next to me were Amy and Dan, Ravenswood staff members equally excited, clapping and cheering him on just as loudly. They and all the staff are my brother's family, and care for him as dearly as I do.

The majority of staff have been at Ravenswood for many years and have watched Shahin grow into the fantastic man he is today. As we walk around Ravenswood every single person says hello and knows my brother by name. This closeness does not by any means come at the cost of inclusivity or

openness- Ravenswood is a community within a community. When we are out and about around Wokingham, the supermarkets or to the garden centres- Wokingham locals often stop to say hello to Shahin. He reaches out to people- mostly with his facial expressions and sounds but also sometimes quite literally reaches out his arm to shake hands or slap people on the back (his highest compliment)! After all Shahin has been living in Berkshire and been going to these places several times a week his entire adult life- both with us each weekend as a family but also in his daily life with Ravenswood.

Shahin is well known- not just in Ravenswood but in the wider Wokingham world. My brother is part of the fabric of these communities and I am incredibly proud of him for that.

With Ravenswood, the world is a better place and our community one to be extremely proud of. My brother does not just simply exist in this world, he truly lives a full and vibrant life. We must protect Ravenswood, not just for the community living there today, who deserve to continue living their lives fully, but also secure its future for many generations to come.

Jasmine Zivari - Shahin's Sister

RESCARE SPOTLIGHT ON Benefits

We are reproducing with their kind permission this useful guide from Care Homes (see website¹ below)

Benefits for people with learning disabilities 2021/2022

If you have a learning disability, you may be eligible for certain benefits to support you to be as independent as possible and cover extra costs that you have due to your disability. These can support you financially with participating in work, education or day to day living.

Financial support for daily living

Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

If you are aged between 16 and state pension age, you may be able to receive Personal Independence Payment. This is for people who need extra support to be independent, due to a mental or physical illness or a disability.

PIP is made up of two components. The daily living component is for people who need support with daily tasks, such as washing and dressing, eating and preparing food, communicating and managing their medical needs. The mobility component is for if you have difficulty moving or getting out and about due to a physical or learning disability, mental health issue or sensory impairment.

How much money you receive (paid every 4 weeks) depends on how much support you need. You will be assessed and put into either the lower rate group or the higher rate group.

The current rates for PIP for the 2021/22 tax year are:

Daily living component: Mobility component

- * Lower rate: £60.00
- * Higher rate: £89.60

- * Lower rate: £23.70
- * Higher rate: £62.55

* To find out more about PIP eligibility using the [link²](#) from carehome.co

Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

Disability Living Allowance for adults is being replaced by Personal Independence Payments. You will only continue to receive DLA if you were born on or before 8 April 1948, but the adult scheme is not open to new applicants. If you have a child with learning disabilities aged 16 or under, you can still apply for DLA.

DLA helps cover the costs of the extra care they need, so how much they receive depends on how much extra support they require. As with PIP, DLA for children is categorised into two components, one for care and support with day to day living and the other for mobility. You can receive money for both components if both apply.

Rates for Disability Allowance for children 2021/22 (paid every 4 weeks):

Care component:

- * Lowest rate: £23.70
- * Middle rate: £60.00
- * Highest rate: £89.60

Mobility component

- * Lower rate: £23.70
- * Higher rate: £62.55
- * At work

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)

If your learning disability affects how much you can work, ESA can help make up for some lost earnings. You must be under state pension age to claim, and you need to have previously worked and have paid enough National Insurance in the last 2-3 years.

While you are being assessed, you will receive an assessment rate. The assessment period usually lasts 13 weeks. How much your assessment rate is depends on your age.

Weekly assessment rates for 2021/22 (paid fortnightly):

- * Aged under 25: up to £59.20
- * Aged 25 or over: up to £74.70

After your assessment, you'll be put in one of two groups, determined by whether you will be able to return to full-time work. If you will, you'll be put into the work-related activity group, and if you won't, you'll be put in the support group.

ESA rates for 2021/22 (paid fortnightly):

- * Work-related activity group: up to £74.70
- * Support group: up to £114.10

If you're in the support group, you may also qualify for a disability premium. ESA is replacing Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance see below³ for details

Disability premiums

A disability premium is an extra amount of money added to your Employment Support Allowance or Jobseeker's Allowance, or as a payment on its own. To qualify, you must either be getting certain benefits, such as DLA, PIP or Attendance Allowance, or have been unable to work for the last year due to a disability.

There are three disability premiums and their rates (per week) for 2021/22 are:

Disability premium

- * For a single person: £35.10
- * For a couple: £50.05

Enhanced disability premium

- * For a single person: £17.20
- * For a couple if at least one is eligible: £24.60

Severe disability premium

- * For a single person: £67.30
- * For a couple if both are eligible: £134.60

Access to Work grant

You have the right to reasonable adjustments to your job role to help overcome anything that you find difficult because of your learning disability. If there is equipment that you need, but your company cannot afford to buy it for you, you may be able to get funding for it from the link Access to Work⁴. They may also fund a support worker to help you at work or your travel to and from work. The scheme is available in England, Scotland and Wales.

IN EDUCATION

Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA)

DSA provides financial and academic support if you attend university or college. What you receive depends on how your learning disability affects your ability to study.

You will have a needs assessment to see what could help you with your studies. Some things you may be offered are:

- * Specialist equipment
- * A non-medical helper to support you with studying
- * Money back on extra costs related to your learning disability

You can find more information about DSA eligibility, what you could receive and how to apply look at website⁵ below.

RECEIVING SUPPORT FROM ANOTHER PERSON

Attendance Allowance

If your learning disability means that you need somebody to support you with day to day life, you may be eligible for Attendance Allowance to help with this. There are two rates available for different levels of support needed. If you need help often during the day, or to be supervised during the day or night, you may be eligible for the lower rate. If you need very frequent help, day and night, you may receive the higher rate.

The Attendance Allowance rates for 2021/22 are:

- * Lower rate: £60 per week
- * Higher rate: £89.60 per week

This is not the same as Constant Attendance Allowance, which is only available to people who are receiving Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit or War Disablement Pension.

Carer's Allowance

If somebody close to you supports you for at least 35 hours each week, they could receive Carer's Allowance⁶. Their support should include daily tasks that you find difficult, such as cooking, cleaning, collecting medication, using transport or personal care.

You also need to not be in full time education or earning over £128 a week for somebody to claim Carer's Allowance for supporting you. Only one person can claim Carer's Allowance for looking after you. You also won't be able to claim a Severe Disability Premium if somebody is claiming Carer's Allowance for your support.

Carer's Allowance for the 2021/22 tax year: £67.60 per week.

Funding for a personal assistant

A personal assistant (PA) is somebody who can support you with work, education, leisure and social activities, as well as personal care and help around your home. Your local authority may provide one or more personal assistants for you, or provide funding for you to hire one yourself. Speak to your local council about your goals and eligibility for a PA or to arrange a needs assessment.

From the article By Sarah Munson¹

Last Updated: 19 Apr 2021

¹ <https://www.carehome.co.uk/advice/benefits-for-people-with-learning-disabilities-20212022>

² <https://www.homecare.co.uk/advice/personal-independence-payment-pip-rates-and-eligibility>

³ <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/severe-disablement-allowance>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowance-dsa>

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/carers-allowance>

Also do not forget Citizen's Advice. They say:

To get clear information on a range of disability and work related benefits, please see: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/sick-or-disabled-people-and-carers

Individual circumstances vary and if you need more help and support, Citizens Advice can offer an appointment to check what benefits you might get. Please contact our Adviceline on 0808 278 7803 (freephone) to arrange this. Our lines are open Monday to Friday 8:30am to 5:30pm

We are delighted to let our members know about developments at Furlong Close

PRESS STATEMENT

FROM THE FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF FURLONG CLOSE.

A ground-breaking victory in the campaign to Save Furlong Close has been won thanks to a surprise climb down by the charity Hft which owns and runs Rowde residential community which is home to 34 vulnerable, learning disabled people.

But the future of Furlong Close now depends on Wiltshire Council making an agreement to continue to commission care from Hft or from another provider at the Rowde residential community.

The charity has agreed in a legally binding Consent Order to withdraw its decision to close down the residents' long-term home. Under the same Order Wiltshire Council has confirmed that it has taken no decision to stop commissioning care at Furlong Close.

Under the terms of the Order, which is expected to be/have been made by a Judge sitting in the Administrative Court, Hft acknowledges that it has withdrawn its decision to close and confirms that it will continue to provide care at Furlong Close for as long as Wiltshire Council continues to commission that care.

But this Consent Order is just one small step in the battle to save Furlong Close.

The Families and Friends of Furlong Close now call on Wiltshire Council and Hft to work together in good faith to secure the homes of the claimant and her fellow residents, not just for the next two years, but for the long term.

Polly Sweeney, the solicitor acting for the claimant, represented by her mother, in the Judicial Review proceedings, said,

"Whilst the claimant's litigation friend is of course delighted that Hft has now provided the assurances required to bring these proceedings to a conclusion, she is disappointed that legal proceedings were needed and hopes that when any future decisions are made, whether by Hft or Wiltshire Council that they will be made in such a way that is consistent with the ECHR Article 8 rights of the claimant and the other residents.

"The claim for Judicial Review was brought by the claimant in order to challenge Hft's decision to close/cease to provide care and support at Furlong Close. Hft has now confirmed that it has withdrawn its decision of October 13 last year and has made it clear that it has made no other decisions to close/cease to provide care and support at Furlong Close either now or in the future.

"Hft has also confirmed that it will continue to negotiate with Wiltshire Council regarding the current contractual arrangements in good faith. As a result of these assurances the claimant has been able to withdraw the Judicial review by consent."

This Press Statement was accompanied by an attached briefing note prepared by Mark Steele of the FAFF Campaign group. (See Rescare website campaigns@rescare.org.uk)

Rescare Form by Zoom – No. 4

Wednesday 19th May 2021 10-11am

Title: **Rethinking the Model: Residential & supported living what has been learned?**

The facilitators were:

Francesca Ribenfors & Anna Marriott



Francesca is based in the Department of Social Care & Social Work Manchester Metropolitan University. She is a Research Associate on the 200Lives project. She has an extensive background of working within a variety of learning disability services including those related to residential care and supported living as well as within both local authority and third sector organisations.



Anna is Programme Lead for Research and Evaluation at the National Development Team for Inclusion where she oversees the design, development and delivery of all research and evaluation work undertaken by the NDTi. Her specialist research interests over the past decade or so have focused on disability-related issues, with an emphasis on informing policy. From 2010-2013 she worked on the high-profile Confidential Inquiry into premature deaths of people with learning disabilities funded by the Department of Health.

This was a popular and very lively session; there were 20 participants in all.

The initial presentation concerned the 200 Lives Project an on-going study conducted by staff based at Manchester Metropolitan University, the National Development Team for Inclusion and the London School of Economics. The project is setting out to speak to 200 people with learning disabilities living in residential care or supported living as well as their support providers and family members.

This is in order to collect information about the costs of housing support services and the health, wellbeing and lifestyles of adults with learning disabilities. The information is intended to get good, up-to-date evidence on the quality and costs of supported living and residential care services to help commissioners, support and housing providers, families and people with learning disabilities make evidence based decisions in relation to housing and support for people with learning disabilities.

We were fascinated to hear about this study and the participants had many questions and comments for these two investigators.

In particular they were surprised to hear details of the imminent closure of two well respected residential facilities Furlong Close and Ravenswood Village. The experience of many of our members was valuable in providing insights into the problems of families whose relative was happy in residential care but now felt the placement was under threat.

Francesca and Anna were grateful for their introductions to some key informants whose family members were happy with residential care and an exchange of email addresses followed the meeting. We all found these exchanges of views enlightening and Rescare wish 200 lives good fortune for the future.

The accompanying notes of this session is still available on our website www.rescare.org.uk

Rescare Form by Zoom

Wednesday 14th July 2021 10 - 11.30am

Title: **Deputyship the on-going struggle**

We were very pleased with this our 5th Virtual Forum. Again there was a very responsive audience and we felt that our expert facilitator covered this complicated subject very well.



Alex Rook of:

Rook Irwin Sweeney LLP107-111 Fleet St
London EC4A 2AB

Alex's work has always focused on achieving social justice. He acts for individuals, charities and companies in the full range of judicial review cases, with particular specialisms in the law on

consultation, in health and social care, mental capacity and human rights law.

We reproduce below some notes from the session

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Code of Practice form the legal framework

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 came into force in 2007. It is designed to protect and restore power to those vulnerable people who may lack capacity to make certain decisions, due to the way their mind is affected by illness or disability, or the effects of drugs or alcohol. The Act also supports those who have capacity and choose to plan for their future. As a deputy, you'll be authorised by the Court of Protection to make decisions on their behalf.

Types of deputy

There are 2 types of deputy.

Property and financial affairs deputy

You'll do things like pay the person's bills or organise their pension.

Personal welfare deputy

You'll make decisions about medical treatment and how someone is looked after.

From: www.scie.org.uk/mca/introduction

How it works

(from the slide presentation by Alex Rook)

1 The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (the "MCA") is the main piece of legislation regarding mental capacity.

"P" means the person who lacks mental capacity.

The Court of Protection ("COP") has jurisdiction over matters relating to adults who lack mental capacity.

Under section 16, the COP has two options.

Section 16(2): The court may—

"(a) by making an order, make the decision or decisions on P's behalf in relation to the matter or matters, or

(b) appoint a person (a "deputy") to make decisions on P's behalf in relation to the matter or matters."

2 The court will have regard to the following principles under s 16(4):

"(a) a decision by the court is to be preferred to the appointment of a deputy to make a decision, and

(b) the powers conferred on a deputy should be as limited in scope and duration as possible."

* The court will only appoint a deputy if it is in P's best interests to do so (section 1(5))

* When determining P's best interests, the best interests checklist will be considered (section 4)

3 The Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice

* The Code provides guidance on how the MCA should

be applied in practice.

* The Code as currently drafted makes it clear that welfare deputyship orders will not be routinely made. It says:

Paragraph 8.3:

"In most cases, the core principles of the Act and the processes set out will be enough to –

- * help people take action or make decisions in the best interests of someone who lacks capacity to make decisions about their own care or treatment, or
- * find ways of settling disagreements about such actions or decisions."

However, three situations are given as examples of when a welfare deputyship may be necessary: these are:

- * particularly difficult decisions
- * disagreements that cannot be resolved in any other way, or
- * situations where ongoing decisions may need to be made about the personal welfare of a person who lacks capacity to make decisions for themselves.

"Deputies for personal welfare decisions will only be required in the most difficult cases where:

- * important and necessary actions cannot be carried out without the court's authority, or
- * there is no other way of settling the matter in the best interests of the person who lacks capacity to make particular welfare decisions."

(paragraph 8.31)

The Code sets out some examples:

- * "Someone needs to make a series of linked welfare decisions over time and it would not be beneficial or appropriate to require all of those decisions to be made by the court. For example, someone (such as a family carer) who is close to a person with profound and multiple learning disabilities might apply to be appointed as a deputy with authority to make such decisions...
- * ...the most appropriate way to act in the person's best interests is to have a deputy, who will consult relevant people but have the final authority to make decisions
- * there is a history of serious family disputes that could have a detrimental effect on the person's future care unless a deputy is appointed to make necessary decisions."

4 Property and Financial Affairs Deputyship

Note that the MCA as set out above applies regarding finance deputyships, but not the guidance regarding the "most difficult cases."

This means that obtaining a financial deputyship order is much more straightforward

Note however: Does P have any income or savings other than their benefits?

If not, an application to become the appointee of their benefits should suffice, and deputyship may be rejected for this reason

You do not need to be a deputy if you're just looking after someone's benefits. You can apply to become an appointee instead.

5 Our facilitator's advice to members considering these processes:

- * Most of the information you will need, including copies of the forms to complete, information on fees etc, can be downloaded from here: www.gov.uk/become-deputy/apply-deputy
- * In our experience, families are often able to apply for finance deputyship without the assistance of a solicitor
- * Applications for welfare deputyship are more complex, and a solicitor may help in particular with the drafting of a witness statement

What help do we need?

Rescare is run by, and for benefit of, families of learning disabled people, and of course learning disabled people themselves. We provide information and guidance, enabling families to understand their rights and access necessary support. Everybody joining our team receives support and training. A few hours a week would make such a difference to us. We are looking for volunteer support in a variety of areas, including:

- * Helping us to monitor and develop our social media
- * Local group members – Rescare has a tradition of local groups fighting local campaigns – could you join a group in your area that meets 3-6 times a year?
- * Telephone helpline volunteers – full training and support provided. Empathetic and kind people needed!
- * Fundraising volunteers – fancy a run for Rescare/ Zoom quiz/ sponsored silence? Every penny we raise helps support Rescare's campaigns
- * Befriending volunteers – keeping in touch with families who are struggling, by using phone/email/or in person.

Contact:

Nicola Zielinski *Project & Public Engagement Officer*

Rescare 07529247792 | nicola@rescare.org.uk | www.rescare.org.uk

Notice of the 37th Annual General Meeting

Friday 17th September 2021 Virtual Meeting
To be held by Zoom between 11.00am and 12.30pm.

Rescare has a duty to protect our members and staff during these difficult times. Last year we held a virtual meeting which avoided the need to travel. This was successful in maintaining the dialogue and discussion of our usual AGMs. The system we will be using this year again means members will be able to register for the meeting, watch the presentations, comment, ask questions in real time and vote on the propositions without running the risks of a face to face meeting. An AGM pack with the usual documents will be available before the meeting itself.

Members must register for the AGM in advance of the meeting by email to **office@rescare.org.uk** or by telephoning **0161 474 7323**

(or telephoning **07904 403 721** temporary number during Covid), Please do join us

A current email address is essential for your online participation.

RESCARE

Honorary Chair: Ms Anita Bennett
(Editor of Resnews)

Trustees: Mrs V. Davison, Ms E. Bailey
 Dr C. Booth, Mr N. Shearer
 Mrs J. Abbott, Mr J. Howell
 Mrs H. Wilman

Staff: Mr James Reid *(Helpline Co-ordinator)*
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