

Spring Edition
2021

Your Livability

Keeping you connected



The road to recovery

How Livability Icanho
supported Tony's
rehabilitation

It all adds up to

Livability

Caring + Compassion + Action

It all adds up to

Livability

Reflecting upon the past year, I could not be more proud of the outstanding level of care and dedication that our staff have provided for the people we support.

Members of staff have had to make huge adjustments in their daily lives and routines. As you will read in this issue, they have demonstrated that they are extraordinary role models who demonstrate Livability values through their work. Your personal support and goodwill has enabled people in our care to live life to the fullest and stay connected with loved ones, even in these very challenging times. I send you my wholehearted thanks, and I know you will enjoy reading the latest edition of Your Livability.

Yours sincerely



Sally Chivers
Chief Executive



In this issue

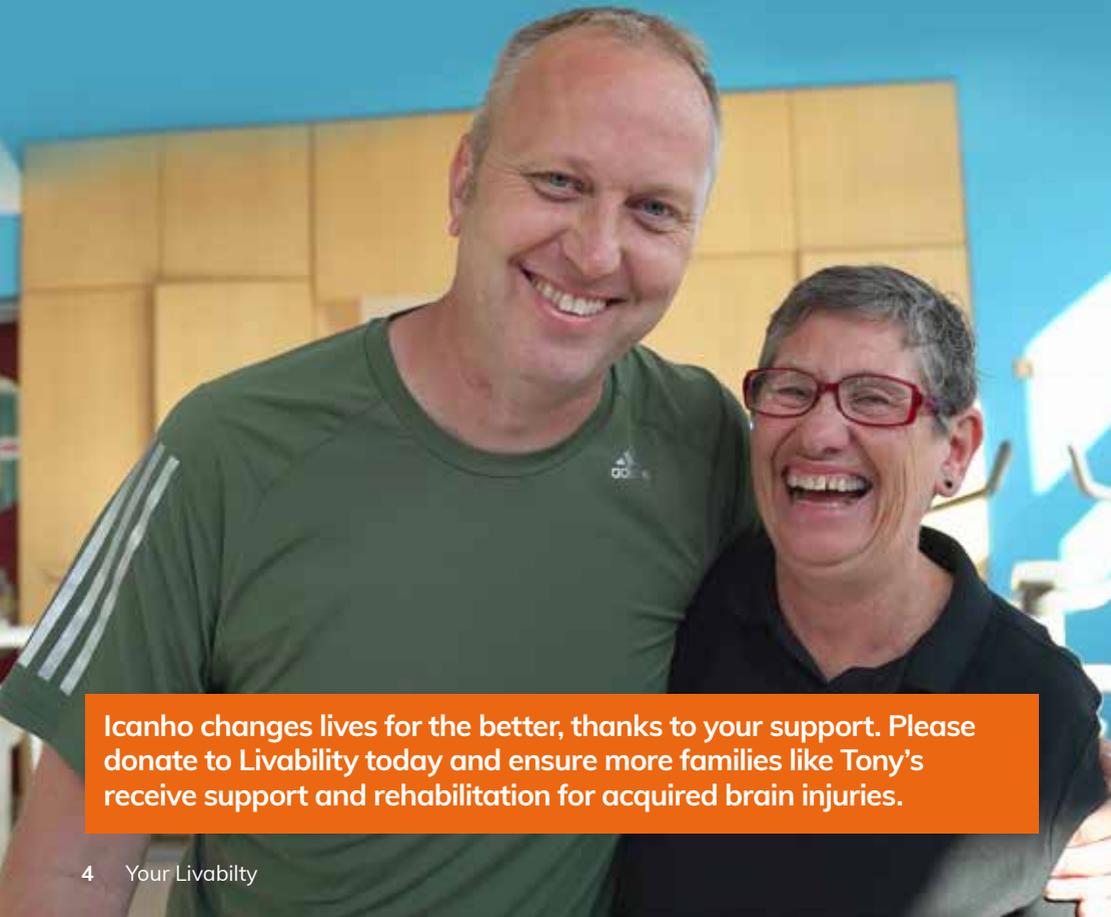


Tony's road to recovery at Livability Icanho

- 02** A message from Sally Chivers, CEO
- 04** Out of the blue: Tony's road to recovery from a stroke
- 06** Making the news
- 08** Keeping spirits high at Livability Treetops
- 10** From architect to Livability care worker
- 12** Animal Magic: on Safari
- 14** Keeping students connected
- 16** Puzzles

Out of the blue: the road to recovery

Following a serious stroke, with Livability Icanho, Tony and his family were able to start putting the pieces back together.



Icanho changes lives for the better, thanks to your support. Please donate to Livability today and ensure more families like Tony's receive support and rehabilitation for acquired brain injuries.

When Tony arrived at Livability's rehabilitation centre Icanho, he was not in a good place physically or mentally. With a young family, he struggled to cope with disabilities that had been caused by a stroke six months earlier.

The strain and frustration of an acquired brain injury and constant pain was making family life difficult too. 'Tony was struggling to control his temper and that wasn't good around the kids,' wife Angela remembers.

Being referred to Suffolk-based Livability Icanho's highly specialised team helped Tony deal with the impact of brain injury on his life. Support is available for clients' families too, and Tony's family were reassured that experiencing tension and frustration is not unusual after a brain injury.

'The psychologist here is amazing,' says Angela. 'Tony would not be where he is today without that help.' The couple were given support and were offered strategies to help them cope with challenging issues. This has all added up to a huge turnaround for Tony and his family, as Angela explains, 'I don't think we'd still be together if it wasn't for this place.'



My stroke not only changed my life but also that of my family

“Looking back, I thank God that I had the help of Icanho and dread to think where my life would be without them.”

Tony

Says Tony: 'Looking back, I thank God that I had the help of Icanho and dread to think where my life would be without them. My stroke left me with many mental and physical hurdles, but more than this, there were even more hurdles that perhaps no one could ever have considered. These included the way my stroke not only changed my life but also that of my family. Icanho helped not only me but in turn, my family to understand how to move forward with me in my recovery.'

Anita



Sam



Making the news

Sam, Anita and Pascal love to write, whether it's stories, lists or copying recipes. When coronavirus restrictions meant they had more time than usual on their hands, Livability staff members Paula and Georgia had a bright idea - why not use their talents to produce a local newsletter for friends and family?

“I like to write about sports, history and facts.”

Pascal

The writing trio are adults with intellectual disabilities, who are supported by Livability's East Anglia service. Each has a passion they wanted to share with their readers. Pascal says: 'I'm a sporting person. I have played school team football, hockey and dodgeball. I like to write about sports, history and facts.'

Anita, who loves to cook, decided to expand her range of healthy recipes. 'Fruit and banana cake and healthy homemade quiche are my favourites,' says Anita. 'Usually I like to share my cooking with friends, but not at the moment because of Covid-19.' She shares her special Scotch egg recipe in the newsletter.

Sam regularly visits the Livability office, which happens to be in a 16th-century manor house. So he decided to write a potted history:

'I like Ingatestone Hall because it's an amazing building and I like to see Paula and Georgia for a meeting.'

Working with their support staff, Sam, Anita and Pascal created the accessible newsletter, including some local updates and an invitation for more writers to contribute to the next edition.

They are delighted with the result: 'I'm so proud of the newsletter - even the staff say it's amazing,' says Sam. He would like 'all people to be involved' in this inclusive project, to 'share all our ideas'.

The newsletter was circulated online and in print, to increase its accessibility. 'Some people we support are living at their family home during the pandemic and we thought this is a nice way to beat isolation and bring people together,' says Georgia.

Thanks to your generosity, we're able to continue providing a safe and supportive environment for the people we support.



Keeping spirits high at Treetops

As Covid continues to dominate life in the UK, Livability's staff remain determined to make life as great as possible for the people they care for.

For our services, this means doing much more than taking care of routine needs. It means making sure there are high points in everyone's week. We caught up with Mandy Nixon, area manager for Livability Treetops, our Colchester residential home for people with high dependency needs.



Mandy Nixon

How is the Treetops team 'keeping the show on the road', Mandy?

'My team is amazing and stays positive and upbeat, even when we're feeling frustrated because restrictions mean what we can offer our residents seems much less than usual. But our activities coordinators make sure there's always something going on here!'

What's on offer during a typical week?

'Well, our folk were missing a trampoline exercise class they usually attend locally, so we found the money to buy a trampoline for Treetops, which we set up in the dining room. The residents absolutely love it! We play music during the session and it's fun and great for wellbeing. It also helps physical issues for our people, like digestion. And we've been doing cooking with the residents, which included making our Christmas

puddings this year, and cakes. Plus the odd silly thing, like messy games where you get to put your feet in disgusting-feeling things like baked beans!'

How much does Covid add to your admin workload?

'We have 21 residents here and 72 staff. We're testing staff for Covid three times a week, and residents get a regular covid-test too. This means a huge amount of data entry, taking many extra hours. Of course we want to do this and anything else that keeps people safer, but we also won't let it subsume our main purpose here – enabling the people we support to live well and enjoy life.'



Activities like boxercise help to keep residents active.

Thank you for your continuous support. Without the generosity of people like you, we couldn't provide this exceptional care.



From architect to care worker

When architect David found himself out of a job, an email from his local council calling for more carers caught his attention. He reflects on his time caring for adults with disabilities at Livability's St Ronan's Road

What made you choose a job with Livability?

I wanted to do something that made a contribution to society. I knew I would be temperamentally suited to caring.

How did it go?

I shadowed another member of staff for two weeks and completed online training. I'd stated from the start that this would be a temporary job for me, and I was really impressed with the huge investment Livability made in my training. When I started work, I was impressed by how well everything was set up to care for people, and that absolutely everything I'd learned in training was actually carried out in practice, if not more so. I really liked my job title – 'enabling support worker'.

Who were you caring for?

Five adults with a wide range of disabilities, including learning disabilities, deafness, blindness, dementia and varying speech abilities.

"Care work is hugely skilled... it's about imagining the place where someone else is."

"I was impressed by how everything was set up to care for people."

How did you approach care?

Using the 'softer' skills; of reading the body language of those who have no words, entering the world of someone with dementia to help them where they are. So touch can reassure someone, or recognising the different tone someone might use verbally, even if not with words. There are times when care is a bit dull, other times messy, but always a privilege to enable and support those people.

What do you now think of a caring role?

Care work is hugely skilled... it's about imagining the place where someone else is. For me, my care role was also about expressing God's love for the people I cared for. I think the famous passage about love in 1 Corinthians 13, "Love is patient, love is kind" ... actually sums up what good care is.



Animal magic: on safari safely

Having a day out has become a rare treat for many of us living with Covid restrictions. For housemates Bernard and Chris, being supported to plan a day trip was a much-needed boost.



More than twice as many people with disabilities say the pandemic has adversely affected their mental health, at 41%, compared with 20% for people without disabilities, recent research shows.

Office of National Statistics Survey – September 2021

The two men, who have learning disabilities and are supported by Livability East Midlands in a house-share, are usually busy and active. 'I've missed going out shopping and seeing people,' says Bernard, and Chris has 'missed my family the most'. On top of these changes, the two had recently lost a close friend, so were coping with additional loss.

Support worker Georgina and other dedicated staff made sure the guys kept busy at home, with games, puzzles and gardening, but felt a trip would do Chris and Bernard the world of good. 'Last summer I knew we could do this safely if we planned every detail so I asked the guys where they'd like to go,' says Georgina. 'And the answer was – Woburn Safari Park!'

Maintaining stringent safety standards meant much to plan: risk assessment; wearing PPE all day, and washing all clothing on returning home. 'Chris and Bernard didn't mind how much they had to accommodate, they were happy to do whatever it takes,' says Georgina. 'We all wore masks and sanitised our hands, and kept our distance from others,' Bernard says.

And the best thing about the day? 'Seeing the lions and seeing giraffes and their big tongues!' says Chris. Georgina adds: 'Obviously a trip like this demands more work from staff, there are barriers to overcome and you can't just get up and go, but it was worth it. Chris and Bernard were so happy to be out for the day!'

Keeping students connected

In 2020, we witnessed so many new and incredible acts of kindness. Whilst Joe Wicks was keeping many people active last summer, our very own Mr Higgins, PE teacher at Livability's Victoria School, was also doing something extraordinary.

You may recall from our last newsletter how Simon Higgins delivered online inclusive PE videos that helped students with disabilities stay physically fit, stimulated and connected from home.

This year he has continued to provide PE lessons through YouTube, along with Livability's dedicated Occupational Therapy team who've been working hard to deliver fun activities online for students learning from home. Students and families have thoroughly enjoyed taking part in the arts and craft lessons the Occupational Therapy team has delivered – from making volcanos using vinegar and cardboard cups to messy play with shaving foam.



Simon Higgins

Twice as many people with disabilities aged 16 to 18 are not in education, employment or training compared with their non-disabled peers. Between 25% and 40% of people with learning disabilities also experience mental health problems.

Did you know?

Motivated by the need for inclusion and accessibility for all, both Joe Wicks and Livability staff at the school have effected positive change to the lives and futures of many.



Students we support at Victoria school.



Transforming the lives of children in the years to come

There are many dedicated staff at Livability who support the people with disabilities we care for but it's not just our staff that are there for the children we support.

Many of our amazing supporters have chosen to support us with a gift in their Will to help transform the lives of children we support in the years to come. These gifts will help the school continue providing the children with the very best specialist education and therapy they deserve.

Livability's Free Will Scheme

If you're thinking about updating or perhaps making your Will for the first time, you may be interested to know that Livability has a partnership with the National Free Wills Network and can offer you the opportunity to have a simple Will written or updated with a local solicitor for free. The Network has been running for over ten years and work with hundreds of solicitors to support the scheme.

For more information on our Free Will Scheme, please contact our friendly supporter services team on 0207 452 2121 or email us at supporterservices@livability.org.uk

Puzzles

Welcome to our fun puzzle page. Make yourself a cup of tea, sit down and see how quickly you can complete them. Good luck!

Word Scramble

Can you change the order of letters in each word to reveal the correct words?

GINRAC

NNIABGLE

AOCIHN

TNROHIEALTIAB

CHOSIILT

Wordsearch

Can you find all 10 words in our wordsearch?

- + Community
- + Inclusive
- + Wellbeing
- + Enabling
- + Livability
- + Open
- + Together
- + Courageous
- + Care
- + Support

P	N	C	L	P	A	I	N	L	S	L	P	U	I
A	I	A	S	G	I	C	E	N	I	M	U	U	N
C	E	R	M	R	R	R	T	L	E	W	I	O	C
U	T	E	T	G	N	I	L	B	A	N	E	L	L
C	S	T	O	G	E	T	H	E	R	S	E	I	U
O	U	G	S	A	U	T	U	E	C	W	B	V	S
U	P	G	S	I	C	A	R	O	B	E	Y	A	I
R	P	I	O	P	E	N	M	L	E	L	R	B	V
A	O	A	C	A	G	M	E	T	E	L	N	I	E
G	R	E	O	I	U	I	U	G	N	B	O	L	W
E	T	E	U	N	O	I	T	P	E	E	P	I	P
O	A	M	I	G	O	C	I	E	T	I	L	T	I
U	N	T	A	L	G	L	L	O	L	N	P	Y	E
S	Y	E	E	G	E	I	T	T	B	G	U	I	P

Answers to the Word Scramble puzzle: caring, enabling, canho, rehabilitation, holistic