
Your Livability

Spring Edition
2022



Ride On

Raphy discovers the
joy of horse riding

It all adds up to

Livability

Dear Livability supporter

It's always a privilege to introduce the latest edition of Your Livability newsletter. We speak a lot about wellbeing at Livability because we believe that people with disabilities have a right to a full and flourishing life. Wellbeing is central to our work and a key part of our commitment to providing the best possible care.

In this edition, we'll delve a little deeper into what this looks like for people in our services and just how, with your support and generosity, we improve wellbeing to the hundreds of children, young people and adults we work with.

Yours sincerely,



Sally Chivers
Chief Executive



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Ride on

The people we support can experience huge benefits to their wellbeing and physical strength, by learning to ride and by being around horses and other animals. For those on the autism spectrum, research has shown that levels of oxytocin, the hormone which promotes social interaction and increases bonding and empathy, increase when interacting with horses.*



Raphy is supported by our services in Somerset. He has profound learning disabilities and physical disability and has found confidence and joy through riding. Enabling support worker David Trotham realised that going to the stables was a learning opportunity for Raphy that encompasses more than just riding: 'We have a therapeutic riding centre nearby and when we first started, I arranged with them that Raphy and I could turn up an hour before his lesson.'

David explains the day's schedule for Raphy, who is non-verbal: 'In the morning, Raphy learns horse and stable care. He loves grooming and engaging with the horses – his favourites are

'Coming to the stables made so much difference to Raphy. After two years, he was accepted as a student, and with staff support, he now attends one day a week.'

David - Raphy's Livability support worker

Sergeant and Biscuit. He walks donkeys and sheep out into the field, feeding the animals and herding the goats. He then has a group gym session to build core strength. After lunch, Raphy has a riding lesson and a short classroom session, as he's working towards a horse-care certificate.'



Being around animals can reduce stress and increase our wellbeing

'Preventing sensory overload is important for Raphy. This affects what he will touch and walk on,' explains David. 'Wearing gloves proved to be helpful, with a slow introduction to touching new things. Raphy also found walking on wet grass difficult, but now with someone accompanying him, it's a breeze.'

*www.autismawarenesscentre.com/horses-can-benefit-those-with-autism

Your support can help to fund more staff hours, enabling more of the people we support to try new, beneficial activities, like horse riding. To donate today please visit livability.org.uk/spring-news or call 020 7452 2121



Get ready for improved wellbeing!

Livability continues to build upon the enormous success of online sessions, such as storytelling, exercise classes and access to live streamed entertainment, to improve wellbeing for the people we support.

Planning co-ordinator Lee Ashcroft, is developing the programme with participative Zoom cookery sessions, which will rely on staff support, along with a taskforce of volunteers. Activity packs for all services will include fun and engaging, seasonal ideas and resources.

Fellow wellbeing champion Nicole, has also started to lead online activity sessions at Livability Anvil House, with older, non-verbal adults. 'The pack has given me fresh ideas to use with resident for our activity sessions,' she says.

'People we support from all over the country come to the Zoom sessions, from a wide range of services including supported living and residential care. I find the activities can be adapted for any age and mobility, with a little bit of adjustment. We did some silly fun things like party dances, and finished with a calming, mindfulness relaxing session.



'We ensure all the people we support have access to activities that promote and improve their wellbeing,'

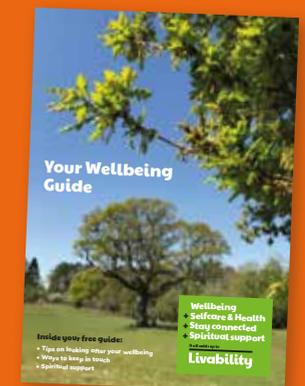
Lee Ashcroft - Livability Planning co-ordinator

People love joining with others from different services. Taking part is fun, both for the people we support and staff who are involved.'

Promote your own wellbeing

We've put together a helpful guide of a few simple things that you can do to help keep your wellbeing on track and maintain resilience through challenging periods. In 'Your Wellbeing Guide' find tips on looking after your wellbeing, ways to tune into your needs and spiritual support.

Please visit livability.org.uk/spring-news to download your free wellbeing guide



Learning for the future

Enabling children and young people to be as independent as possible by using technology is in the DNA of our special education centres, Livability Nash College and Livability Victoria school. Cutting-edge technology allows students with profound disabilities to communicate, get online and manage their environment.

Lorraine has worked in Victoria School's therapy team for 16 years and finds her work deeply rewarding. 'It changes every day for me – that's the joy of working in a school. I work with students from nursery age to 19 years, and I particularly love working with AAC

[augmentative and alternative communication]. So that might be eye-gaze technology or using head-operated switches to communicate. I work one-to-one and in communication groups and create lots of resources such as communication books to support language learning.'



Helping children and young adults to achieve independence and confidence



Lorraine tells us. 'One young man learned to use an iPad with direct access and specific communication software. He then told his mum he loved her, for the very first time. That's why I do this job!'

Head of Therapy Gemma told us about another student, Luke*. 'Luke is a very shy student with high levels of social anxiety. We worked with him on using his voice to order food and drink when visiting a café. A skill

that many of us would take for granted.

Before visiting a café with him, we gave Luke a script and assisted him on where to look. I just remember him saying, 'I'm so proud of myself, I did that all by myself.'

For a young person who cannot communicate verbally, learning new communication methods, often digital, can lead to deeply poignant moments for them and their family.

*name changed

To support students at Livability Victoria School to live life to the fullest, please donate at livability.org.uk/spring-news or call 020 7452 2121

A mother's generous gift



Mothers' Day on 27 March highlights a time for us to be grateful for our mothers and caregivers for their selflessness in loving and nurturing us.

The late Mrs Nora Humphrey's son William has lived at Livability's Keefield Close residential home in Essex for over 20 years. William's vision is weak in both eyes and he uses a wheelchair. He has a profound learning disability and needs 24-hour specialist support from the dedicated staff for his everyday needs.

When Mrs Humphrey made her Will she decided to leave a very special gift that would support not just William but everyone who is cared for at Keefield.

Mrs Humphrey's legacy meant that Livability was able to fund a much-needed minibus that has given new opportunities for the residents to go on trips out. However, the beautiful new bus arrived when Covid-linked travel restrictions were tight.

Setting the wheels in motion

Recently, Keefield have finally been able to make use of this fantastic vehicle and Service lead, Sandra Wilson tells us: 'We're indebted to wonderful people like Mrs Humphrey who so kindly left

us a gift in her Will to fund this specially adapted minibus. As a result of her generous gift, we've finally been able to get out and one of our first trips was to a pets corner at a local park.'



Livability
Keefield resident
William

I think Mrs Humphrey would be happy to know how much of a difference her gift has made to life at Keefield.'

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 **020 7452 2121** or email us at supporterservices@livability.org.uk

Mark's party beats isolation



Mark shooting some pool



All of us have experienced isolation to some degree over the past two years. Nearly four times as many people with disabilities report feeling lonely 'often or always' compared with non-disabled people.*

When Mark turned 60 recently, staff and housemates at Livability Netteswell Rectory were determined to make it a day to remember – especially as restrictions prevented Mark seeing family and friends.

Enabling support worker Sue takes up the story: 'Everyone had a homemade headdress and part of Mark's present was a Wild West costume. He was absolutely amazed, he was out there boogying and he got quite emotional when he made a speech, saying how grateful he was.'

Importance of a holiday

In non-Covid times, Mark loves to go on holiday. Service delivery lead Theresa says that Mark loves 'every minute of doing the research, deciding where to go, booking and getting there'. Covid has meant Mark hasn't been able to get away for a couple of years and staff are working with him to overcome a loss of confidence in going out, brought on by living with restrictions for so long.

Caring for the wellbeing of the people we support, and not just their material needs, is a given for her team, says Theresa.

'We're all dedicated to giving people a really good quality of life, whether that's empowering them to make decisions, or achieving to the best of their ability. We build up a real rapport with the people we support and see how it builds confidence. It's very rewarding for staff to see progress like that.'

**Theresa - Service Delivery Lead,
Livability Netteswell Rectory**

*ONS (2019) report: Disability, wellbeing and loneliness.

Support more people like Mark to overcome isolation and promote their wellbeing. Please donate today at livability.org.uk/spring-news or call 020 7452 2121

Music for the soul

Our chaplaincy group, which meets online weekly, invites the people we support and staff to come together to sing, get to know each other, explore faith and grow together spiritually.



Singing is hugely beneficial to the wellbeing of the people we support

Chaplaincy Manager Elizabeth Harrison tells us, 'we've reflected on what it means to share 'Our Father' with people around the globe'.

Many people who attend the weekly chaplaincy group love to sing and we asked members to share their favourite hymns and songs with us. Here's what they said:

- Danny, who lives at Livability Talbot Manor, chose 'Kum Ba Yah': 'This song reminds me of happy times around the campfire with the Scouts, and singing together at Livability Victoria School.'
- Mary at Livability Marion House chose 'All Things Bright and Beautiful'.
- Maggie, a volunteer with Livability, picked 'Onward Christian Soldiers': 'This song brings back good childhood memories for me.'
- 'Silent Night' got a double billing, from Elsa and Paul at Livability Hafan y Coed: 'We like Christmas songs the best, and this one is very calming.'
- 'Shine Jesus, Shine' was Ruqaiyah and Yeshim's choice, at Livability Bradbury Court: 'Our house sings this together on Sundays – it's our favourite!'



Elizabeth Harrison – Livability chaplaincy manager

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?

TBALSE

CYNPLAHICA

EMTSOCU

NIAOSILTO

NECDFIONCE

Wordsearch

Can you find all the hidden words? There are 10 to find

- + Enabling
- + Autism
- + Wellbeing
- + Digital
- + Inclusion
- + Success
- + Assisting
- + Skills
- + Independence
- + Activities

G	U	P	D	A	C	T	I	V	I	T	I	E	S
U	E	S	U	C	C	E	S	S	U	L	I	L	N
C	C	A	N	I	E	I	A	P	T	T	N	L	T
D	N	S	B	I	W	L	D	U	N	N	C	L	C
I	E	S	N	G	E	I	E	E	T	V	L	L	I
G	D	I	N	I	L	G	N	E	L	I	U	C	E
I	N	S	C	D	L	C	A	L	G	A	S	S	K
T	E	T	S	N	B	S	B	S	I	G	I	M	T
A	P	I	G	A	E	L	L	K	N	S	O	A	T
L	E	N	I	N	I	S	I	I	A	N	N	S	N
N	D	G	T	S	N	S	N	L	B	S	I	G	S
C	N	C	I	L	G	P	G	L	N	E	U	W	S
I	I	L	D	S	I	I	N	S	L	T	C	U	C
U	A	I	I	C	S	N	A	Z	E	D	E	L	D

Answers to the Word Scramble puzzle:
Stable, Chaplaincy, Costume, Isolation, Confidence