

Bulletin #27 - April to June 2023

Autism Acceptance Week event success



Thank you to everyone who came along and took part on our Autism Acceptance event at Preston Town Hall on Tuesday 28th March. It was amazing and it was great to see everyone!

We had fantastic performances from **Yanick** who played the guitar and sang, then singer **Bradley** who belted out a couple of upbeat numbers, followed by **Emma** who sang Scott James' song "Through my eyes" and we finished off with **Becky** who performed interpretive dances. Thank you to all four entertainers, they were all absolutely brilliant.

We would also like to thank the people who talked about their lived experiences of Autism - thank you for sharing your experiences and helping us to understand the barriers that you face.

We'd also like to thank the stallholders that came along:

- Wargrave House - non-maintained special school and independent specialist college for autistic children and young people aged 5-25 years.
- UCLan BSL & Deaf Studies team.
- Hft - A national charity providing services for people with learning disabilities.
- Lancashire Constabulary Community Cohesion Teams
- Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) Access to Work team.
- Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service.
- The Haven Central Lancashire for individuals struggling socially and emotionally with life challenges or in crisis.
- Lancashire Autism Peer & Self Advocacy Service providing self-advocacy and peer support service.
- Choose Health - Free NHS Health Checks across workplaces, places of worship and community settings.

Volunteer Vacancies

Disability Equality NW have the following volunteer vacancies:

Reception Volunteers: to be the first point of contact for enquiries and messages, either face-to-face or by telephone. Must be able to record enquiries and take messages. Located at DENW offices for 3 hour shifts on Mondays and Tuesdays and Friday mornings.



Events Volunteers: to assist staff at various community events and activities. Must be comfortable interacting with the general public and promoting DENW services and projects. Various times and locations to be arranged.

Co-trainer Volunteers: to support training events and workshop delivery for partner agencies and community groups. Must be confident talking to groups. Various times and locations to be arranged.

Friendship Friday Volunteers: to support the Friday afternoon drop-in sessions at DENW by helping to prepare activities, engaging with people attending the session and clearing tables as required. Minimum 3 hour shift alternate Fridays to be agreed.

General Criteria

We are looking for people with lived experience of disability who are able to travel independently. We will reimburse reasonable out-of-pocket expenses.

Applicants should have good communication and people skills, be a good listener, friendly and reliable. Successful applicants will need to attend all relevant induction and volunteer training sessions and agree to enhanced DBS clearance.

Applying

For an application pack please email: dean@disability-equality.org.uk

Telephone: 01772 558863 if you need additional support or information.

Please return completed applications by **Wednesday 26th April** to the above email address or by post to 103, Church Street, Preston PR1 3BS.

Informal Interviews **Wednesday 10th May** (times to be confirmed).

Induction Training **Wednesday 24th May** 1pm - 4pm.

Hate Crime and Social Model Training **Wednesday 14th June** 1pm - 4pm.

Lesley Finley Awards



We held the annual Lesley Finley Award ceremony at our AGM in January this year and were delighted to announce Emma Watkis as the overall winner. Emma runs an independent and informal Autism Group and was nominated for creating a 'safe place' for people on the autistic spectrum. An additional 12 disabled people received 'highly commended' certificates.

The award is in recognition of Lesley Finley, the former Chair of Disability Equality who sadly passed away in 2013. The disabled people nominated have all overcome their own personal challenges to make a positive impact upon the lives of other disabled people. This year we particularly wanted to reward disabled people who have helped other disabled people to be safe either in the community, in their home or in their relationships.



Meet the Medics

Disability Equality has facilitated 3rd Year Medical Students placements for quite a number of years now. It is really important that the UCLAN students hear about the first hand, 'lived experience' of disabled people engaging with clinical services to help them gain a better understanding of the issues disabled people face.

We always try to bring the medical students and disabled people together at various events and activities and our informal 'Meet the Medics' sessions. Our next session is on **Wednesday 19th April** from 1pm - 2.30pm at DENW. It is open to all disabled people, friends and carers. Save the date and enjoy having a cuppa and a chat with our doctors of the future!

Staff Updates

We are delighted to welcome two new employees to Disability Equality.

Ellice Booth is a new addition to the admin team for Lancashire Independent Living Service (LILS) and Natalia Pye has joined the Supported Banking team as the service Administrator.



Congratulations to both of you and welcome aboard!

Ellice Booth *Natalia Pye*

Disabled People and Safe Relationships

The Safety First team has been working with partner agencies and disabled people to find out what disabled people want from their friendships and relationships and how and where to get help and support if things start to go wrong.

We know that disabled people generally are twice as likely to be victims of abuse in their social and friendship groups but they are not accessing the mainstream services in the numbers we would expect. This is something we hope to change.

Julie Naylor, Safety First Project Worker said, “We really want mainstream services to get on board with this initiative that will encourage disabled people to access the specialist services available. We want disabled people to know that they have the same rights to safety and justice as non-disabled people and we want to remove any barriers to achieving this. In a nutshell, disabled people generally don’t know what is available to them beyond their own direct support networks”.



The Safety First team have established a core group of interested practitioners but are now looking for wider involvement from victims services, domestic abuse services, social and supported housing providers and others from across Preston, Chorley and South Ribble to build a groundswell of support for this issue.

Free Workshop

A short, free workshop has been arranged for relevant services to discuss and develop future actions on **20th April 2023** from 10am - 12pm at Disability Equality 103, Church Street, Preston, PR1 3BS. Free refreshments available and 90 minute free on street parking available directly outside the venue.

Please contact safetyfirst@disability-equality.org.uk or Tel: **01772 558863** (opt 2) for further information and/or to register your interest. The workshop content and more details will then be forwarded to you.

What people say about us

Below are some things people have told us about our services:

Supported Banking

- “Fab 🍌 u r good. I don't know what I'd do without you”.
- “Excellent service, a fast response and a fully detailed breakdown of the information requested”.
- “Thank you so much for your email and it's contents. You have certainly lessened some load off me”.
- “You are an angel. Thankyou”.

LILS

- “Extremely helpful, knowledgeable and patient. Thank you so much”.
- “Friendly, positive, very clear and helpful.”
- “Absolutely amazing easy to listen to and easy to understand went above and beyond.”
- “Helpful and informative in a very friendly manner.”

Safety First

- “The Staff have heightened empathy and heightened awareness of disability issues well done”.
- “Excellent project that make a real difference.”
- “Without the telephone support I think I would need antidepressant medications for the rest of my life Excellent Services saved my life with support thank you”
- “We have supported DENW in distributing the hate crime stickers in both Chorley and Leyland and both Becky and Andrew thoroughly enjoyed it and now feel safe whilst out in the community especially knowing there are safe places out there.”

General Advice / Training

- “Thanks again for talking to the students early June for the Graduate with Confidence-Inclusive programme. The feedback from your session was exceptionally positive with students saying it was ‘absolutely brilliant’ and ‘just what they needed’.”
- “The adviser went the extra mile.”
- “We'd like to take the opportunity to thank you for your time and contribution to our event. We will be taking important lessons away and are grateful for your participation.”
- “Thank you for all you're doing. It is greatly appreciated and means a lot to people like us who your service is invaluable to.”

Disabled People and Post-pandemic Loneliness

According to recent research, 41% of adults report feeling lonelier since the coronavirus pandemic lockdown. Some of the most vulnerable social groups are 'those living with long term physical and mental health conditions, people on lower incomes and those with limited access to digital technology and the internet'.¹

We know from our contacts with members and services users during and after lockdown that the impact of the pandemic has had negative consequences for some disabled people; there may have been changes in care and other circumstances that has contributed to low mood, lack of confidence and increased isolation.

We introduced the 'Safe and Well' calls during lockdown and reinstated them when we started the Safety First project last year. The calls are open to any disabled person from across Lancashire if they are feeling lonely or isolated for whatever reason.

Safety First Project Worker, Graham Bettany said, 'The calls really do make a difference to disabled people who may live alone and have had changes to their social contacts or support networks that may have left them feeling anxious. I usually 'touch bases' with people once a week to start with and reduce them as things improve. It is worth noting that we can facilitate text messaging on on-line contact for those who need it and I encourage people to attend our fabulous Friendship Fridays if they can'.



Please contact safetyfirst@disability-equality.org.uk or Tel: 01772 558863 (opt 2) to refer in, or complete our online form: surveyhero.com/c/safe-and-well

1. *British Red Cross; Life After Lockdown – Tackling Loneliness 2022*

Training Sessions

Did you know, we provide free training for community groups, volunteers, disability organisations and staff teams on:

- Disability Awareness
- Deaf Awareness
- Hate Crime Awareness
- Personal Safety Sessions

Please contact safetyfirst@disability-equality.org.uk or Tel: 01772 558863 (opt 2) for further information and/or to register your interest.

Safety First in pictures



Love Yourself event



Love not Hate event



Love not Hate event



Autism craft event



Love not Hate event



LGBTQ+ Awareness at The Haven



CPR Training



Hate Crime Training



Safe Places Leyland

Coronation Party

Join us to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III

Friday 5th May 2023 1pm – 3:30pm

Disability Equality NW

103 Church Street,

Preston,

PR1 3BS

Have a selfie taken with King Charles 📸

Games on the grass (weather permitting)

Free Raffle

Pin the diamond on the crown

Decorate a crown – prize for the best

Light refreshments will be available

Our aim is for this to be an inclusive and accessible event, please contact us if you wish to discuss your access needs:

Tel: 01772 558863

Email: hello@disability-equality.org.uk



Dates for your diaries - all FREE!

Please note that all meetings and activities are held at DENW unless otherwise stated. We will promote each event separately with exact locations and venue details nearer the time via our membership and on social media.

Please contact hello@disability-equality.org.uk for further information.

DATE	EVENT	TIME
19 April	Meet the Medics	1pm - 3pm
20 April	Disabled People and Safe Relationships Workshop for Partners	10am - 12pm
20 April	Safe Places - Lostock Hall	1pm - 4pm
5 May	Coronation Party	1:30pm - 3:30pm
16 May	Tea and Chat for Mental Health Awareness Week	1pm - 3pm
6 June	Safe Places - Chorley	1pm - 4pm
17 June	Preston Mela – Preston Flag Market	10am - 4pm
20 June	Tea and Chat for Learning Disability Week	1pm - 3pm
22 June	Caritas Care Birthday & LD Week Celebration at Plungington Community Centre	10am - 2pm
24 June	Refugee Week Celebration – “Compassion” at Plungington Community Centre	12pm - 4pm
SAVE THE DATE		
20 July	Summer Social at Meadow Street Labour Club	7pm - 10pm
22 August	Information Day at Plungington Community Centre	11am - 2pm
23 September	Preston Pride at Flag Market	10am - 4pm

Friendship Fridays

Drop in for a chat with good company, a free hot drink and a bite to eat EVERY FRIDAY from 1pm - 3pm at Disability Equality, 103 Church Street, Preston, PR1 3BS.

Everyone is welcome!



**Disability Equality
will be closed on the
7th and 10th of April.**

Disability Equality Services

Lancashire Independent Service (LILS):

LILS deal with PA vacancies, advertising vacancies on their job website or on their Facebook page. They also deal with Pre-Payment Cards, Cash Plus Cards, Gold Cards, Master Card and Direct Payments. They also deal with phone call from Social Workers and Lancashire County Council.

- **Monday to Friday:** 9am - 5pm
- **Telephone:** 01772 558863 (opt 1)
- **Email:** lils@disability-equality.org.uk
- **Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/LancashireIndependentLivingService>

Safety First:

The Safety First project supports disabled people from Preston, Chorley and South Ribble to maintain their safety at home, in the community and in their personal relationships.

- **Monday to Friday:** 9.30am - 4pm
- **Telephone:** 01772 558863 (opt 2)
- **Text:** 07841017472
- **Email:** safetyfirst@disability-equality.org.uk

Supported Banking:

Supported Banking is an administrative service assisting clients with their banking arrangements, including paperwork relating to a Personal Assistant (P.A.), their wages and invoices from an agency.

- **Monday to Friday:** 9am - 4.30pm
- **Telephone:** 01772 558863 (opt 3)
- **Email:** supportedbanking@disability-equality.org.uk

General Enquiries:

- **Monday to Friday:** 9.30am - 4pm
- **Telephone:** 01772 558863 (opt 4)
- **Text:** 07544809806
- **Email:** hello@disability-equality.org.uk
- **Facebook Page:** www.facebook.com/DisabilityNW
- **Facebook Group:** www.facebook.com/groups/94427530295
- **Twitter:** www.twitter.com/disabilitynw