

Options
Support | Empower | Enable

Living life to the full!

Celebrating

25 years of Options

Richard's Welcome...

Dear Reader,

I'm really pleased to be able to introduce the latest Options' Annual Report - particularly because it is so important to recognise the achievements of people we support, our staff and many community partners. Presenting awards at our recent Oscars ceremony for people we support, and a week or two before that to staff and teams at our Staff Awards Lunch, has given me the opportunity to reflect on the importance of both achieving (in whatever form that takes) and of being recognised or thanked for those achievements.

When I was six or seven years old I took part in a sports day at my dad's work in Northern Ireland. Not being the best runner in the world I came in third place in what was probably (it was a very long time ago) the fifty yards sprint, and was presented with a medal from Mary Peters - who was then an Olympic Gold medallist. She had achieved in absolute terms far, far more than me, but at the moment the medal went around my neck, I was really proud, as I hope my mum and dad were.

It doesn't matter what the level of achievement is - what matters is that each of us achieve what matters most to us, reflecting where we each are in life, and that we each receive recognition for that. That recognition builds self-esteem, confidence and helps us to see ourselves and the world in a better light.

So I am delighted to introduce the achievements and fabulous moments of so many people in this report. I am delighted to say well done to each of them.

Options has had a tough but good year. I believe our support continues to develop and improve. We are supporting several people we have not supported before and we sadly acknowledge the passing away of several people we have supported.



A fabulous 2018!

Through the year there have been lots of individual compliments to staff from families, social workers and the community. We have a great staff team despite the pressures social care is under, and we have several exciting initiatives under way.

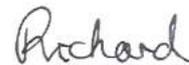
You will be able to read many inspiring and heart-warming stories in the pages that follow.

For me, I would like to personally thank everyone who has contributed to Options being the best it can be in the past year, everyone who has gone the extra mile, everyone who has bravely challenged themselves and others, everyone who has ensured people we support, their hopes and aspirations and what they want from life is at the centre of all we do.

This includes our staff, volunteers, families of people we support, the community groups we increasingly work with, our partners in delivery – local authorities, housing associations, clinicians and many others.

Social care faces immense pressures and no one organisation can solve that. We must all work together to ensure people we support have the opportunity to live life to the full.

With best wishes,



Richard Williams, Chief Executive



Hello, we're Options, and we exist...



To support, empower and enable people with disabilities to live their lives to the full!

That's what we do.

Why? Because we believe all people should live a fulfilled and meaningful life in their local community.

We're person-centred.

We believe that every person is important, of infinite value, unique and has a contribution to make to the community in which they live. For us, this is what person-centredness means.

We're local.

We support children and adults with learning disabilities, autism and acquired brain injuries across Merseyside and the surrounding areas. We're big enough to cope, but small enough to care.

We're a charity.

We put people before profits, we always have and always will. It's one of the things that makes us a bit different. Every penny of our income is spent on providing fabulous support.

Our Beliefs

We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to live fulfilled and meaningful lives which include:

The power, authority and resources to control our own lives.

A sense of belonging and acceptance for who we are.

Being treated with dignity and respect.

Participating as valued members of our own communities.

Having new life opportunities and enriching life experiences.

Meaningful and loving personal relationships.

The opportunity to express our own cultural and spiritual beliefs.

Good health.

Taking responsibility for what we can and ought to do for ourselves.

Caring about and helping those around us.



Our Aims



Through our work Options aims:

To support people to have a fulfilled and meaningful life.

To support families and carers to enable people we support to achieve the lives described above.

To provide a challenging, rewarding and supportive work experience for staff, where they are able to use their gifts and talents for the benefit of people we support.

To help and engage with communities to understand how they can support people with disabilities to live valued lives in those communities.

To provide excellent value to people we support and to those who purchase that support.

To work in partnership with local authorities, health bodies, specialist trusts, housing associations and others to provide excellent support.

To share our learning, successes, mistakes and our experiences with others, and to constantly learn from others.

To develop and strengthen Options as an organisation in order to fulfil our mission.

Our Working Values

- ✓ **Vision** - We have a clear sense of purpose and direction.
- ✓ **Listening** - We listen to each other, and don't jump in with our own views before considering others. This reflects our respect for each other.
- ✓ **Enabling** - We support each other to develop our skills and abilities, and to use them effectively for the benefit of those we support. Therefore we don't jump in to do everything ourselves, but look to develop and use the skills of others.
- ✓ **Integrity** - We seek in our actions, in what we do, to reflect what we say and believe. We say what we mean and do what we say.
- ✓ **Teamwork** - We recognise each other's different skills, experiences and abilities and seek to use each to work as a team, and to support each other in good and in bad times.
- ✓ **Recognition and Encouragement** - Appreciation and encouragement are great motivators. We seek to identify opportunities to praise and encourage each other, and we celebrate success.
- ✓ **Challenge** - We rigorously debate our differences of opinion and see such debates as healthy and positive. Once a decision is made we work wholeheartedly towards the agreed decision.
- ✓ **Commitment** - We work hard to enable people we support to achieve their goals. When the going gets tough we stick in there. But we are also committed to balanced lives. As we seek full lives for people we support, we also seek to ensure staff do not work excessive hours, and have time for themselves and others outside of work.
- ✓ **Confidentiality** - We share specific, private information on a need to know basis, and within supervision systems. We do not gossip about others, and we do not create negative reputations for people we support.
- ✓ **Rigour** - We act and make decisions on what makes a real difference to the quality of life of those we support. When necessary we take hard and painful decisions.
- ✓ **Risk Taking** - We are willing and keen to take thought through risks and make productive mistakes.
- ✓ **Learning** - We are creative and try different ways of doing things. We make mistakes, but after they occur we learn from them to ensure they do not happen again.

Our 2017-19 Development Plan

The Development Plan describes the key things that Options will focus on improving and developing. It sets out the priorities for our time, our skills and our energies.

Options' vision is for strong local communities, with people with disabilities fully included and participating as valued members. We want people with disabilities to have opportunities to fulfil their potential, with that potential recognised as the same for people without disabilities.

The September 2017 - March 2019 Development Plan set out 8 major objectives, coordinated by our Leadership Team, for us to achieve our vision.

The 8 objectives we worked towards:

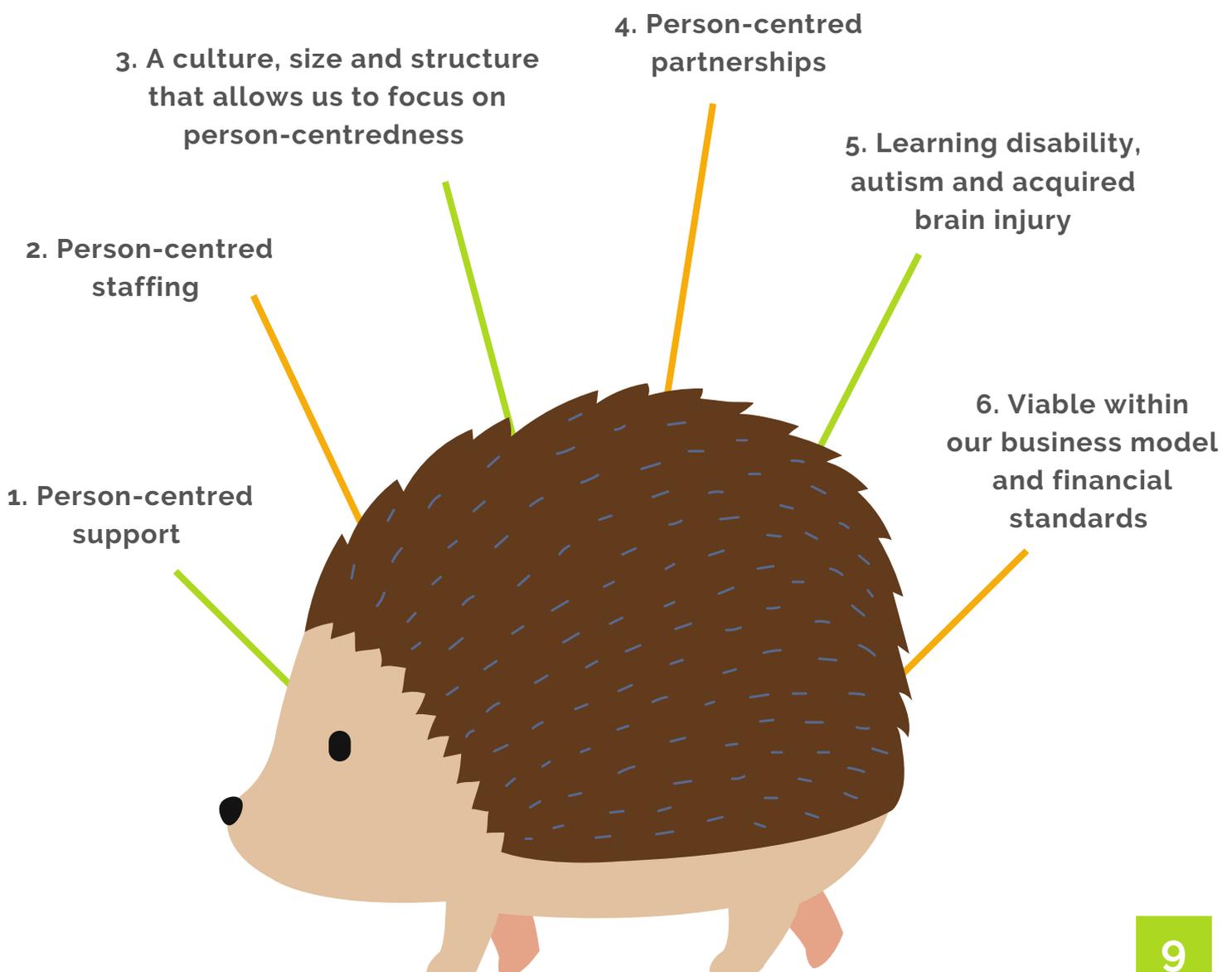
1. Maximise outcomes and quality through continuous improvement.
2. Recruiting a full and fabulous staff and volunteer team.
3. Sustaining a full and high performing staff team.
4. Sustaining high performing leadership at all levels of Options.
5. To bring diverse partners together to contribute to communities, with people with disabilities at the heart.
6. To ensure fabulous support for everyone who uses Outreach.
7. Expand to provide more great support and ensure financial viability.
8. Ensure great delivery of what we do.

Our Hedgehog

As part of our Development Plan, we established what Options is and isn't fundamentally about - this is **Options' Hedgehog**.

No matter what the circumstances, a hedgehog does one thing, and does it really well - curling up in a ball to protect itself. The Hedgehog concept is about finding the most important things that Options does, and doing them really well.

For us that is fabulous, person-centred support.



A little about us...

During 2018, we supported **163** people

Supporting **90** individuals in Supported Living and **73** on Outreach



are aged
under 18



are aged
18 - 30



are aged
31 - 45



are aged
46 - 64

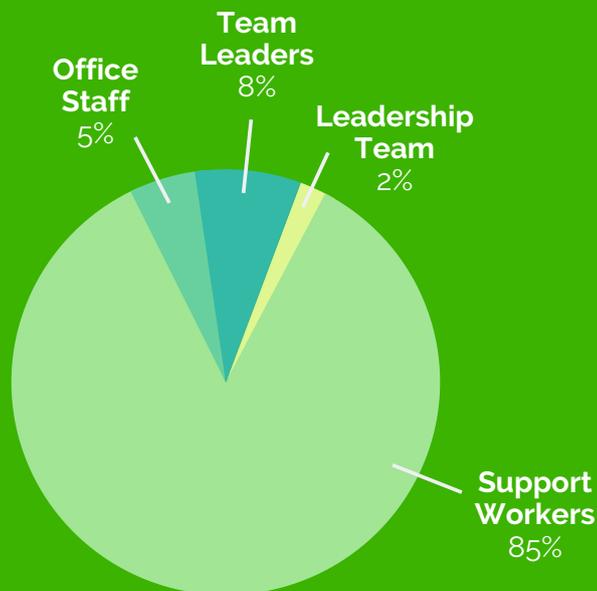


are aged
65 and over

On average, in 2018 we had

318

members of staff
working for us



Throughout 2018...

we provided

425,235

hours of support
to people



we supported **8** new people,
equating to an additional

614 hrs

of support provided

How Do We Add Up?

Between April 2018 and March 2019
we had a total income of

£7,191,118

The funding we received can be broken
down into the following areas...



We also received £16,891 from funders!

This income helped us to give people we support opportunities for new activities and interests, including their inclusion in local communities.

Having received some new grants, we're looking forward to our upcoming arts and lifeskills projects. For more information, contact our Fundraiser Barry O'Toole at barry.otoole@ofsl.org.uk





Welcome to some of the
Moments
that made
2018
Fabulous





The moment we...

Took to the Stage for Open Mic Night

We kicked off 2018 by preparing for our highly anticipated Open Mic Night. After weeks of practice, it was time for the performers to take to the stage of the Saddle Club. There was a range of performances - from Alan playing his guitar and Val taking to the piano, all the way to wonderful tunes by Pink Floyd, Bowie and The Beatles sang by Jimmy, Jamie, Anita, Evelyn, Brian, Sarah and Jill.

All soloists then surprised the audience by teaming up for a group drumming rendition of 'We Will Rock You', where they were joined by Mark, Jane, Jim and Almey.

The evening was all about bringing the community together, and saw people we support expressing themselves creatively and showing everyone what amazing skills they have. For some people we support, this was the first time they had performed in front of a live audience and they did wonderfully!

The night was brought to a fabulous close when Krista, who had been in the audience cheering everyone on, got up to do an impromptu performance of 'My Heart Will Go On' and was joined by bartender Sian... and soon everyone in the room was singing and swaying along with them!

Our Inclusion Lead Sue said: "When I first started this, I couldn't have imagined how many people would benefit from being involved. So many outcomes, people's confidence growing, everyone supporting each other and friendships being made."



We were so pleased to have worked with local band Shout who accompanied our incredible performers and Steve from Rhythm Reaction who taught everyone drumming skills!

The moment we...

Celebrated our 25th Birthday with a Ball

Having been founded in 1993, 2018 marked 25 years of Options. We came together to celebrate with a grand ball at Aintree Racecourse on Saturday 13th October - the date of our birthday.

We used the evening to reflect on our successes, recognise the contributions staff have made and their fabulous work in supporting people to live their lives to the full.

During the evening, our Chief Executive Richard proudly presented five surprise awards to two individuals, a volunteer and two support teams - thanking them for all their achievements.

We sat for a three-course meal, were amazed by magicians and danced the night away while band The Funtime Frankies took to the stage.

There were plenty of prizes won throughout the evening but we also held an additional special raffle in recognition of the outstanding commitment of our staff - with top winner Angela, a support worker of six years, winning a £1,000 holiday voucher.



While much has changed since 1993, what remains the same is the nature of what Options is about - we existed back then to support, empower and enable people with disabilities and we exist today for the same reason.



The moment...

One Wirral Returned to Birkenhead Park



Following our success of hosting One Wirral Festival in partnership with charity Wirral Mencap in 2017, we really wanted to bring it back bigger and better in the summer of 2018.

This wouldn't have been possible without the support we received from the community and local organisations, who through crowdfunding raised £10,235 to cover the costs of the event that celebrates inclusion and diversity.

One Wirral returned to Birkenhead Park for the second year running on 18th August. Around 4,000 people, including the Mayor of Wirral, turned out for the borough's most inclusive event. There was plenty for everyone - from singing and signing performances, local musicians, dog shows, donkey rides,

arts and craft activities, drumming workshops, zumba and ribbon dancing... just to name a few!

The festival was created for everyone - regardless of age, disability, culture or background. We wanted to show other organisers that with a few small adjustments, events can be made accessible for all. This is why One Wirral featured inclusive elements like mobility scooters, sign language interpreters, a Changing Places facility with hoist, sensory activities, fun accessible bikes and even a whole zone dedicated to cultural diversity with foods and dances from around the world as hosted by Wirral Change.

A massive thank you to people we support, staff and friends of Options who volunteered to help make the festival run smoothly!





The moment...



Our Holmwood Farm Partnership Blossomed

Our partnership with local urban farm Holmwood Farm only strengthened throughout 2018. Teaming up with Neil and Sarah there has led to some great opportunities for people we support, staff and everyone at Options to get involved and feel included in our own communities.

Jimmy and Jamie especially got a lot out of our successful connection with the Heswall based farm, and now head down there on a weekly basis, getting hands on and helping out. Jamie used to be quite nervous travelling to new places without support, but by working at the farm, his confidence has really grown and now he travels there on his own.

It was fantastic to continue working with the farm and getting to be a part of the developments there. We got to witness the road being laid so it's more accessible and barn being built, which meant we were able to have even greater projects take place there!

This new barn has an activities space where we have made Christmas wreaths, held barn dances, created decorations out of recycled materials for One Wirral Festival and played Easter games. It also has a kitchen for making jam and chutney (and a well needed cuppa or two) and an accessible toilet. Another room it features is for incubation and hatching of eggs, as well as a petting area for small rescued animals such as rabbits and guinea pigs. Claire has absolutely loved heading down to spend time with and look after the animals.



Claire loves visiting the animals at the farm!



Jimmy gets hands on to help Neil every week



The moment...

Ste Overcame His Fear

For a number of years, Ste would become anxious on public transport and as a result, was missing out on activities in his area.

Through the support of his team, Ste got to tackle this fear and in 2018 conquered it altogether! His support staff were encouraging, re-assuring him when he would start to become upset. They soon realised that it wasn't actually being on the bus that would make Ste anxious but instead it was waiting for one. So his team came up with a great idea!

Ste likes to keep moving, so he and his team will go to the next bus stop rather than waiting around.

He now likes to try more things, visit new places and feels more comfortable to stay out longer.

In fact, he's been going bowling, to the cinema, and attending discos - where he's apparently a mean dancer and total party animal! His team are so proud of his achievement and nominated him for an Options' Oscar award - which he won!

Nicola, who supports Ste said: "He's always happy and absolutely loves being on the bus, it's great because he will go to something different every week, which is really good for him."





The moment we...
 Held an Award Winning
 Night at Options' Oscars!



After an amazing response to nominations from staff and people we support, we held a glam-filled evening for our Options' Oscars! It was a great night celebrating the outcomes and achievements of 28 people we support.

Our top winners of the Oscars were:

- **Anita:** For becoming more confident within herself.
- **Jamie:** For his outstanding voluntary work, commitment to Holmwood Farm and support for Options' projects.
- **Mark:** For his help and hard work in making monsters for the Halloween Party.
- **Dawn:** For her long serving commitment to volunteering for the charity Help Link.
- **Sarah:** For stepping out of her comfort zone after years of practice and performing at the Open Mic Night.
- **Ricky:** For his help around the office and with Reception.
- **Stephen:** For conquering his fears of public transport with a positive attitude.
- **Sue:** For her outstanding charity and fundraising work for places such as Claire House and Alder Hey.
- **Malcolm:** For his determination and continuing to live life to the full after a tough year.
- **Linda:** For always joining in on projects such as Voices R Us and her hard work with her horse riding lessons.

Winning Positive Attitude Awards were:

Juanita, Jane, Ste, Dave, Tony, Andrew, Irene, Evelyn and Phyllis.

Winning Adventurous Awards were:

Chris, Wendy, Brian, Lynn, Tim, Jane, Danielle, Jill and Jimmy.

The evening saw some fantastic performances from people we support. Including Anita who was surprised when we invited her up onto the stage to sing.

A highlight of the night was when Neil from Holmwood Farm swapped his boots for a suit to present Jamie with his award. There were a few tears and cheers throughout as everyone was moved by their award.

Thank you to National Lottery players for their support, without their funding, our amazing staff and people we support, this evening wouldn't have been possible.

The importance of our Oscars

"Thank you to everyone who contributed to and/or attended a great night. It was fabulous to see so many people so proud and emotionally overwhelmed to receive an award.

Options is all about outcomes for people we support and our Oscars night reinforces how important it is for each of us to be recognised for our achievements and outcomes. For people with learning disabilities those opportunities for recognition are sadly much less than for those without learning disabilities - so a huge thanks to Sue and the team who created a great night of recognition and made it all happen."

- Richard





Anita was awarded for becoming more confident and we surprised her by asking her to perform!



Dave got an award for his positive attitude! He's always smiling and being a great gentleman.



Mark posed with his parents after being presented with an award for all his help with events!



Jim was celebrated for always being adventurous and trying new things!



Jane was recognised for her enthusiasm in bringing people together!



Craig took to the stage for an impromptu performance with guitarist Mark!



Phyllis was all smiles receiving her award for being fiercely independent.



Neil from Holmwood Farm suited up to give Jamie his award for outstanding commitment and voluntary work!



Evelyn posing with Lisa and Jill before being awarded for her fearlessness and for always giving things a go!



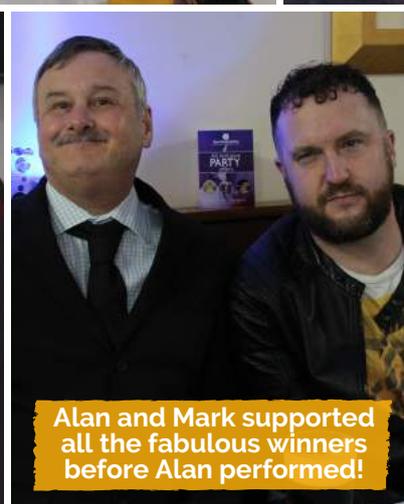
Richard gave Ricky an award for his amazing work while volunteering at Options' office.



Irene was overwhelmed when she got an award for being supportive!



Linda was also moved she was celebrated for all her hard work.



Alan and Mark supported all the fabulous winners before Alan performed!



Anita got a positive attitude award and then got up to sing and dance!



The moment we...

Had the Community Celebrating Equality



2018 marked the year we held our fifth Vintage Tea Party in the gardens of St Nicholas Church. We once again invited everyone in the community to join us for tea and cake, this time to celebrate the theme of equality and 100 years of women's rights to vote. Hundreds of people gathered for the event, including local councillors Mirna Juarez and Gillian Wood. There was an incredible set from Hoylake Hands and Voices, who drew in a crowd with their singing and signing performances.

For this year, we formed a Tea Party Commit-TEA - a committee made up of people we support, staff and volunteers who teamed up to plan and prepare our

annual event. The committee explored the history of women's votes, learning about the struggles faced in the fight to receive rights and the importance of celebrating the topic. They created booklets that outlined women in politics over the century so they could share what they found out with everyone who came to the tea party. To show support the Commit-TEA wore sashes and decorated using the whites, deep purples and greens used by the suffragettes.

Following generous donations from members of the public on the day, we raised £153 that we put towards other Inclusion events.



The moment...

Anita Started to Challenge Herself



If you had met Anita before 2018, you wouldn't think she is the same person she is today. She was quite reserved and didn't feel confident to get involved in activities. But throughout the year, Anita challenged herself to try new things and she's never looked back. With the encouragement of her support team and other staff she's met along the way, she started to grow in confidence and learn more about herself. And it all began with our Open Mic Night...

Anita reflected back on her 2018:

"I had never sung in front of other people before and I never planned to either. It was my Support Worker Sue who said I should try getting involved in the drumming performance taking

place that night. I wasn't sure, but she knew I liked music and was really encouraging. She saw how great I was during the workshops and suggested that I do a solo. I'd originally said no, there was no chance! But I thought about it for a little bit and then decided to go along to watch the singing rehearsals.

I saw how everyone was enjoying themselves and thought 'You know what? I could do that too!' I practised two songs – 'Ticket to Ride' by The Beatles and Coldplay's 'Yellow.' I was so nervous just before I got up to the mic, but my support workers cheered me on. I knew then that I could do it, and I did. It was the best thing I've ever done, because just look what I've got out of it. I started to realise that I could do things that I didn't think I could.

So when the opportunity to take part in a sponsored bike ride came around, I decided I'd give it a go. It felt like a double challenge because I had never been on a bike before. But I rode the bikes with my support workers and raised £96! It was a great day, I tried something new and my confidence of going on a bike grew. I can see myself





doing it again, something I'd have never dreamt of before the Open Mic Night.

The next thing I challenged myself to do was join the 'Commit-TEA' – a group of other people supported by Options, staff and volunteers who were organising a Vintage Tea Party. Again this was something really new for me to enjoy. It gave me the chance to build new and stronger friendships, work with people that I don't get to see a lot and brought us closer together. I've got involved in loads of things since being in the Commit-TEA. Honestly the list is huge! From singing and signing as part of Hands & Voices, to helping at Options' Christmas party, One Wirral Festival, Bananas Bingos, the picnic in Vale Park, you name it, I've done it!

I was invited to present a speech in front of Options' Trustees to tell them everything I had done. While presenting was something new, I felt like I had proved to myself that I could achieve anything. I felt confident and excited to

share my experiences with them."

To sum up my 2018 in a few words:

"It was an amazing, fantastic year – filled with new, exciting opportunities and experiences. With the help and support of Options, I learnt there's no such word as "can't" and instead realised that you can only really know what you're capable of when you try. So if I had to recommend one thing to anyone out there, it's just give it a go, you might surprise yourself just like I have. I feel like a new Anita – for the better!

During 2018, I was encouraged by staff and people at Options, but now I'm asking. I'm seeing what's coming up, what things I can get involved in so I can prepare myself to take part. My next goal is to organise something from scratch and take lead in planning. Thank you to all Options' staff for their support along the way."

- Anita

The moments we... Focused on Our Health!

At Options, we're fully committed to the health and wellbeing of people we support, our staff and volunteers. Unfortunately, people with disabilities face health inequalities and as a support provider, we want to help improve and promote good health.

In 2018, we appointed Christine for our new exciting role - Health Lead - to support everyone to live healthier and happier lives.

Reflecting back on her first 12 months at Options, Christine said:

"I'm really pleased with the connections I have built with Learning Disability Teams in Wirral; it has been beneficial in helping us to be more responsive when supporting people in hospital - when it is most important that we're achieving our best! It has been really important for me this year to work and maintain these close professional relationships with Learning Disability Teams at local hospitals, and I look forward to developing relationships with those in Liverpool and Sefton.

I must admit promoting Learning Disability Annual Health Checks and discovering how to support our staff to get relevant



information from GPs has been tricky, but empowering people we support and their staff to ask the right questions is an achievement and a step in the right direction.

Working closely with our Team Leaders and highlighting important information during team meetings has led to some brilliant outcomes for people we support, and also in the personal development and understanding of support staff. Supporting people to consider their health is effective in reducing health inequalities - this is something that I, alongside Options, am very passionate about."



"Teaming up with Greenbank Sports Academy to deliver our new sports days known as Active Afternoons was a massive pleasure. As a result of this relationship and the success of everyone enjoying doing something active, we were not only nominated by Greenbank for their Partnership Award but from the end of 2019, we'll be running a year long introduction to different sports with the Empower Project.

Another amazing health highlight that took place in 2018 was seeing people we support independently run activities. For example, our walking group has been led

by Russell, Alex and also Neil, and Glenn and Ste have been organising bowls games.

We even considered our own health as staff members, so we could further our own knowledge and experiences to successfully support others with theirs. I've loved writing recipes for healthy meals in my monthly updates for staff to share with people we support and their own families, and seeing staff opt for activities for team building days such as playing rounders and visiting the great outdoors together."

Summing up her year, Christine added:

"I think my top highlight for 2018 has to be supporting people to find joy in healthy choices. Seeing people choose healthier options for what they eat and how they spend their time. How people look after their health will always be the most significant part of my role.

And if you are interested in joining our year long introduction to sports, get in touch with our Fundraiser Barry on 0151 236 0855."



We believe all people should live a fulfilled and meaningful life which includes:

- Good health
- Having new life opportunities and enriching life experiences.



The moment we... Became Explorers!



We were so pleased to be a part of Project Art Works' Explorers Project yet again in 2018. Taking to Tate Liverpool, we were encouraged to explore different materials to create our art.

During the sessions, people we support developed their artistic skills and gained confidence, expressing themselves in a creative and fun environment.

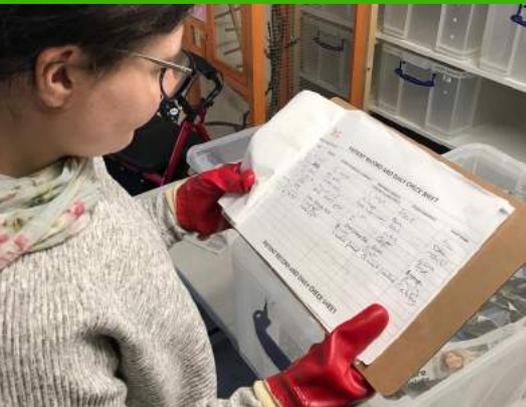
This was Ste's second time taking part and he enjoyed it just as much - he especially loved the fact the artists there remembered him.

Project Art Works' "Explorers: Illuminating the Wilderness" project is an innovative programme of art and discussion that challenges perceptions through creating

supportive and deep interactions between people with and without disabilities. It aims to increase awareness of the extraordinary contributions people with complex needs can make to mainstream culture. It was absolutely amazing to be involved in such an important project.

Our Chief Executive Richard also gave a talk during one of their events, spreading awareness about who we are and what we do. He said: "It's great to see a project challenging social norms and expectations. It's really important to give people opportunities to learn and grow together!"

The moment... Gabby Volunteered to Help Rescued Hedgehogs



Since becoming a member of the Vintage Tea Party Commit-TEA and learning how much she loves helping out, Gabby wanted to try other volunteering opportunities.

Her favourite was working to take care of rescued hedgehogs and animals every week in Hoylake. As part of her role, she weighs the animals, checking to see if they

are healthy enough and feeding them to make sure they have the nutrients they need.

Gabby said she would really recommend volunteering to others, because she believes it's great to be a part of something bigger!



The moment... Alan Got an Award

During 2018, Alan took part in an environmental award scheme called the John Muir Award at Dale Farm in Heswall. This scheme encourages people to connect with, enjoy and care for wild places.

And that's just what Alan did! He got involved in beekeeping, learned about wildflowers, built bird houses and found out more about bird feeding.

From this, Alan received the Discovery Award! Talking about his success, he said: "It's been fun, I've been getting to learn all about the animals."



We believe all people should live a fulfilled and meaningful life which includes:

- Participating as valued members of our own communities
- Caring about and helping those around us.

The moment we...

Recognised Some Of Our Fabulous Staff

Without our amazing staff, we wouldn't be able to provide fabulous, quality support. We're always looking to recognise and celebrate staff for the contributions they make to our mission and for their great work.

Alongside training opportunities, personalised thank yous from our Leadership Team - such as letters from our Chief Executive Richard - and social events, we also hold staff focused award ceremonies.

In 2018 we held two Staff Awards Lunches, celebrating a total of five support teams and 23 individuals - plus an additional three individuals and two teams at our 25th Birthday Ball.

Our winners were recognised for a

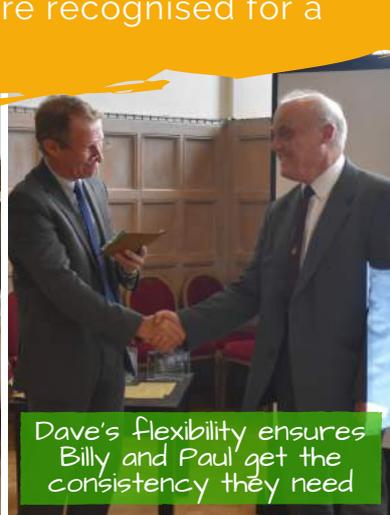
range of achievements - from focus on teamwork like Jenny was, being proactive and supportive as our ISSW Team was, supporting people to achieve their aspirations as Jan did, to outstanding commitment to the individuals they support as Louise, Kristie and Joe were.

It was exciting to bring our gathering to the Sir Giles Gilbert Scott Suite of Liverpool Cathedral for the first time - making our celebrations grander.

We want to take this moment to thank all our staff for their hard work and dedication. Options is absolutely driven by great staff, highly motivated to make a difference.



Mal's team were awarded for supporting his independence



Dave's flexibility ensures Billy and Paul get the consistency they need



Angela provides fabulous support to Billy and Alan



Joe always has the person he supports at the centre of what he does



Working Values:

Recognition and Encouragement - Appreciation and encouragement are great motivators. We seek to identify opportunities to praise and encourage each other, and we celebrate success.



Our fabulous staff celebrated their awards in the Sir Giles Gilbert Scott Suite at Liverpool Cathedral



Jan with Sue before she received an award for supporting people to achieve their aspirations



Jess received an award for having great values, being proactive and supportive of others



Gemma was recognised for building a genuine relationship with Irene through volunteer support



It was a very special and emotional moment when PC Helen Tennyson presented an award to Lydia for supporting Gwen during a difficult time



Kris, Peter and David's team got recognised for working as a team to enable people they support to have more active lives



Jade and Sharon posed before their team was celebrated during the awards ceremony



Our ISSW Team are supportive, proactive and positive across different teams



Max was awarded for keeping motivated and being a brilliant team player

The moments we...

Remained committed to the development of our staff

We pride ourselves in being a learning organisation, investing heavily in the talent and development of our staff. We offer many training opportunities to ensure staff have all the skills they need to work well and be fabulous in their roles.

Between April 2018 and March 2019

we spent

£99,980

on training to develop our staff teams



we provided around

10,540

hours of training and shadowing!

Throughout the year, we continued to deliver core training through our in-house Learning Disability Foundation (LDF) course to all new starters and refreshers for existing staff; covering our values, what it means to be a support worker, health and safety, and safeguarding. We organised additional opportunities such as leadership training, workshops aimed at developing practical skills, and epilepsy awareness sessions... just to name a few.

We supported 26 staff to complete NVQ qualifications in Health & Social Care to enhance their knowledge. We also gained two new Positive Behavioural Support (PBS) Practitioners when Team Leader Jenny and Support Worker Hayley underwent training to understand the person-centred approach to challenging behaviours.

Staff who attended training from speaker David Pitonyak

116

Number of staff that completed an NVQ in Health & Social Care

26

We proudly gained

2

new PBS Practitioners

Completing our PCL course

15

members of staff

Total completing LDF

57

members of staff

Developing Personal Effectiveness

35

members of staff from across Options

The moment...

David Pitonyak taught us to look at behaviours differently

David Pitonyak – a leading thinker in the field of learning disabilities – travelled over from America to visit us. David gave some inspirational and motivational advice, insight and coaching on great person-centred support and helped us to look at things differently. He shared his practice based upon the simple idea that difficult behaviours result from unmet needs; that these behaviours are messages that can tell people important things about a person and their quality of life. Covering the concept of the social brain and the importance of relationships, David highlighted how people with difficult behaviours are often missing things such as a sense of value, things to look forward to, meaningful connections with others and their community, or power and control over their own life and choices.



David's wisdom and experience within the areas he covered are invaluable to us as a support provider. It led to discussion and made us re-evaluate how we perceive behaviours, both within our roles and everyday lives. We feel very fortunate to be able to receive training from some of the best trainers from around the world.



The moment... We boosted our personal effectiveness

Team Leaders at Options face many priorities; they need to feel comfortable in managing and balancing these so they and their teams can continue to provide excellent and effective support. During 2018, our Team Leaders, Support Workers focused on their personal development and members of our office team took part in training delivered by The Management Centre to improve personal effectiveness. Staff learnt strategies and practical solutions related to time management, handling challenges of working with others and insight into the importance of a good work-life balance.

Following the workshop, Jennie said: "The programme has changed my thinking in work and life goals. I feel I can more confidently manage multiple priorities."

The moment...

Our staff recognised their amazing potential

Each year, we run our Person-Centred Leadership (PCL) course which all staff are invited to apply to. The contents of this six day opportunity remains one of our best kept secrets. So while we can't tell you much, what we can say is that it explores leaderships skills and supports individuals to recognise their potential. PCL is not just for those who want to take the next steps to become a Team Leader but for those who are interested in becoming leaders in other ways; such as mentoring or furthering responsibilities within their team. From this training, staff are continuously supported to develop in many areas so they can achieve great personal outcomes.



Leanne would often describe herself as quiet and lacking in confidence, so when her Team Leader recommended that she should attend PCL she was unsure. She never saw herself as possessing qualities of a leader but that's since changed upon completing the course.

"I've grown as a person, feel less shy and so much more confident. I have already developed in my current role and will keep working to progress within Options. I've realised things about myself that I didn't know, got more faith in my abilities and would even consider becoming a Team Leader in the future. I know there are some things I need to continue working on, but it feels like a step in the right

direction. Overall, I've really developed since I started working here, I think it's a fantastic company who sees potential in everyone. I'd recommend anyone to get involved as much as they can and not to pass up on all the opportunities Options offers."

Leanne

Outreach Support Worker



So many amazing outcomes have arisen following PCL; including how Deb is more confident, Lynn is now a Team Leader, Lisa has supported other staff in their development, Andrew took part in organising health projects for people we support and Karima went on to receive a Staff Award for her successes!

The moment we... Were Guild Charity of the Year

Each year the University of Liverpool's Guild of Students supports four Key Charities. These are nominated by their societies and chosen to reflect issues at the heart of the campus and Merseyside. We were very proud to be selected alongside other incredible causes for students to focus their fundraising and volunteering efforts on. During the year, we went along to their impressive Freshers' Fairs and spent a glorious evening at the Guild Awards celebrating fabulous students.



The moment we... Launched our Gardening Project



We teamed up with Vale Park in Wirral to transform the old rose garden into a space where bees and butterflies could thrive. Ronnie, Adele, Barry, Jim, Ashling, John, Ste, Donna, Phil and Jimmy fetched their gloves to sand down the benches and plant hebe, lavender and echinops. They did a wonderful job in time for the opening of the Memory

Garden - which Jimmy gave a speech at when unveiling the memory stone! We absolutely love being able to help our local communities to improve. It not only gives us opportunities to give something back, but chances to develop our skills, build relationships and learn new things.



We believe all people should live a fulfilled and meaningful life which includes:

- Participating as valued members of our own communities.
- Caring about and helping those around us.

Just some of the moments we...

Supported Charities and the Community

We have often been asked why, as a charity ourselves, do we fundraise and support other causes. Well, at Options we believe everyone should live a fulfilled and meaningful life which includes participating as valued members of our own communities, and caring for and helping those around us. This is why we together have a commitment to Charity and Community Work.

While we have previously nominated a 'Charity of the Year' to focus our efforts on, during a Voices R Us meeting where people we support come together to discuss ways we can improve, everyone came up with the idea to instead use 2018 to support a number of local charities and campaigns.

Fundraising not only helps important causes, but brings our organisation and the community together and often presents opportunities for people we support and staff to face challenges or try something different.

We started the year with our first winter clothing collection for Birkenhead based homeless charity, the Charles Thompson Mission. We gathered an incredible 7 boxes of men's clothing, 6 boxes of women's, 2 boxes of shoes and 5 bags of toiletries. On the back of this, we were able to donate some pieces to the RSPCA, who protect vulnerable animals.



Roy with the team at Charles Thompson Mission after handing in our donations

Proud of our achievements from earlier in the year, we challenged ourselves in the lead up to Christmas to top the amount we donated to the Charles Thompson Mission and we did just that! Our office was packed with items generously purchased and donated by people we support and our staff. We also raised £65 for them to continue their work of supporting individuals facing poverty. Team Leader Jemma did a great job reaching out to get community support, speaking to organisations like Regatta and asking them to take part in our collection!



Another campaign we took part in during 2018 was the World's Biggest Coffee Morning, raising funds for Macmillan who support people facing cancer. People we support, volunteers and staff baked cakes and treats to join us in the office for the gathering that saw us raising £85 from donations!

We surprised our Office Manager Angela by collecting £60 for The Candice Colley Foundation, a charity close to her heart which works to raise money for local Leukaemia patients and make life a little easier for the families of those suffering from Leukaemia or going through Bone Marrow Transplants.

We also got involved in Radio City's Mission Christmas by doing a children's toy collection for the second year running - and we were actually one of the drop off points for people in the community to pop by and hand in their donations. Alongside some of the gifts we received, we raised £70 to go towards additional presents for the local radio station to give to kids experiencing poverty and lead to them missing out on gifts at Christmas.

After any events we organised, we made sure not to waste any remaining food. By donating leftovers to Shrewsbury House Youth Club and Hostel following our Film Star Night meant they had enough for their after school club, youth senior football team and the hostel. We donated food from our Oscars evening to Wirral Churches' Ark Project, which is fighting against homelessness.

While this is only a small act to carry out, it can have big impacts on others in the community and we encourage all organisations of any size to do this too.



We really loved being a part of and helping different campaigns throughout 2018! If you have any ideas and would like us to get involved with fundraising for a local cause, please get in touch with Angela on 0151 236 0855.



Moments We Supported 'Options'

While we're dedicated to supporting local causes, there were also moments during 2018 that we raised money that we invested back into projects that promote **health** and **inclusion** for people with disabilities in the community. These are just two of our main focus areas at Options because we believe everyone should have the opportunity to live fulfilled and meaningful lives which include good health and a sense of belonging.

Organising a sponsored bike ride around Birkenhead Park was not only a fun and exciting way to stay active and try out accessible bikes but together everyone raised over £200 for future health activities! There was more than just festive spirit when the community came together to take part in Liverpool's Santa Dash. Ricky, Jon, Christine, Barry and Will took on the 5K run dressed in Father Christmas' famous red suit - collecting over £100 that has gone on events like cooking classes and active afternoons with Greenbank Sports Academy.

By hosting Bananas Bingo - a hilarious twist on playing bingo - in partnership with fellow charity Wirral Mencap, we raised £211 which was split between us and has since gone on inclusion events like the Picnic in the Park. Following bucket collections, crowdfunding and a raffle at One Wirral Festival 2018, £2,501 was generously raised by people in the community, which we shared with Wirral Mencap. We have put this towards organising One Wirral 2019! We're so pleased we can support organisations and partners like Wirral Mencap in their fundraising aims by working alongside them.



The moment we...

Celebrated Volunteers' Week

Between 1st - 7th June, we celebrated Volunteers' Week 2018, thanking our volunteers for all their contributions to our mission.

We also recognised the importance of the week's theme 'Volunteering for All' - celebrating the fact our volunteers come from various communities and walks of life, giving their time in so many ways.



“Options has a very relaxed and welcoming atmosphere where staff are friendly and fun. There are lots of events and gatherings for everyone to get involved and come together. Volunteering here also comes with opportunities to learn and develop skills. What's important, is that I feel respected when I'm working here, so it feels like there's an appreciation between me and Options.”

-- Bronco, Marketing and Events Volunteer

Danielle, Befriender for Emma, used the week to explain her experiences of volunteering with us:

“I've always wanted to do volunteering since I've been in Liverpool and saw Options on a website. When I came in for the volunteer chat, I immediately felt an air of homeliness, love and care that emphasises Options' culture. Everything feels very genuine and you can tell that everyone at Options cares about those who they're supporting.”

Our Chief Executive Richard said:

“Options has been, continues to be and will be developed through the fabulous work of our volunteers, contributing their life experience, enthusiasm, skills and knowledge.

Individually and collectively, they improve the quality of the support we provide, either directly in working with someone we support, or indirectly through their help to the office team.

I am so pleased to be able to thank those brilliant volunteers and to encourage those considering it to have a go and join us as a cherished volunteer.”

The moment we...

Enjoyed the Festivities Together

Coming together to celebrate Christmas is important to us at Options. Every year we hold various fun festive events for people we support, staff, volunteers, families and friends of Options. And 2018 was no exception!

It was our Xmas Fun Day that had us kick starting our festivities. Our office was packed and full of cheer as everyone gathered to warm up with hot chocolates, tuck into mince pies, play Christmas games, create ornaments for the tree and put up decorations.



We continued our tradition by organising a Christmas party for children we support and the young relatives of staff. Everyone had a super time at the hero themed event that saw Batman, Wonder Woman, Poison Ivy and even the Powerpuff Girls make an appearance.

There was also a special visit from Santa Claus who brought gifts for all the children.



We believe all people should live a fulfilled and meaningful life which includes:

- A sense of belonging and acceptance for who we are.
- The opportunity to express our own cultural and spiritual beliefs.
- Meaningful and loving personal relationships.



Peter was one of the winners for Christmas Jumper Day!



Evelyn had her Pink Floyd shirt under her festive jumper ready for her surprise performance

We then held our annual Options' Christmas Party at a local social club in Birkenhead. The dance floor was packed as we enjoyed live music from band The Northern Lights as well as some amazing impromptu performances from people we support. Julie sang a beautiful love song for her partner Simon, while Anita and Evelyn gave us wonderful moments to reflect back on our Open Mic Night that had taken place at the start of the year, sharing the tracks they had learnt. There was also a fabulous buffet, incredible raffle prizes and an igloo shaped photobooth which saw everyone sporting silly hats to take some festive snaps.

Other Christmas events we got involved in included going for roast dinners, Christmas themed bowling and taking part in Christmas Jumper Day - which saw staff and people we support competing for prizes if they had the nicest or ugliest festive sweater.

Togetherness through events is important to us at Options because we believe everyone should have opportunities to form relationships and experience a sense of belonging.



Rory and Cheryl enjoying a Christmas roast at the pub



The moment we...

Held a Carol Service for the First Time

While Options has existed since 1993, and have organised a variety of events that have brought people we support, staff and the community together, one thing we had never held was a Christmas Carol Service! That changed in December 2018 when we held our first in St Nicholas Church.

Local musician John O'Connell welcomed everyone into the Parish with song, before Reverend Michelle Montrose led the service. Michelle was part of commissioning Options and our support in an earlier role, so this was particularly touching for her to be involved during our celebrations.

Hoylake Hands and Voices, a singing and signing choir which many people we support are members of, had everyone in good spirits and singing along with festive carols.

Dave Morton, father of Phil who we support, gave a beautiful speech about the importance of Options for his family and in Phil's life. He noted how Phil has become much more independent by being supported by us and living the life he wishes to lead.

Phil and his support worker John then laid a wreath at the altar in remembrance as Team Leader Bryan took a moment to reflect on the people we support who have sadly passed away over the last 25 years.

We cannot put into words how grateful we are to have been a part of the lives of those we have lost and glad we could use this special occasion to take the time to reflect upon and share memories.

A big thank you to Marie Binns, one of our Development Managers, and Jennie Little from our Innovations Team, who planned and coordinated this event.



The moment we...

Received Amazing Feedback

During 2018, we sent everyone we support a questionnaire asking them to tell us what they think about their support. As a person-centred organisation, knowing what people we support think about Options is incredibly important as it allows us to constantly be working hard to improve and build on the support we provide.

We're very pleased that we got a fantastic response and the average star rating was...



5 stars out of 5!

Around 96% of the people who responded said they thought the support we provide is either Very Good or Good when it came to quality. We also asked about reliability and 89% of responses said we were Very Good or Good – meaning we try our best to do the things we say we will do. This was absolutely amazing to hear!

When filling in his form, Paul said: **"Thanks for everything you do to support me and keep me safe."**

Tom commented: **"Keep up the work, do not stop!"**



I think Options is amazing!
-- Danielle

Danielle wrote: **"I think Options is amazing. My team leader (Jenny C) is very nice and I love having a lovely cup of tea and seeing everyone in the Options' office."**

On receiving feedback, we sent out thank yous and set clear actions for support teams where there was something specific that we could do to improve someone's support (e.g. if they said they wanted to watch more rugby or start going to a new club).

Read more about the feedback results we received in 2018 by visiting www.optionsforsupportedliving.org/news/5-stars-for-options

The moment we...

Developed Options' Vision for the Future

Following our celebrations for Options' 25th Birthday, we set out to look at and explore our future as an organisation and where we want to be in the next decade.

We held a series of events centred around sharing ideas and creating discussion. Together with people we support through Voices R Us meetings, their families, our Trustees and staff, we aimed to shape Options' future.

We're excited that come the end of 2019, we'll have shared our new vision with everyone - that we'll have set direction through objectives to help us collectively achieve that vision.

We've had an incredible 2018 and we can't wait to see what the next 10 years holds for us. We definitely recommend and hope that you stay in touch or get involved with what we're doing. So feel free to contact us or follow us on social media.



Working Values:

- Vision - We have a clear sense of purpose and direction.
- Challenge - We rigorously debate our differences of opinion and see such debates as healthy and positive. Once a decision is made we work wholeheartedly towards the agreed decision.

Trustee Brian Celebrates our Successful Year



I wanted to mention two amazing Options' events I have recently attended, and the impressions they have left on me.

The first was the Vision Workshop attended by a range of staff from across Options – support workers, team leaders, the Senior Leadership Team and Trustees. The idea of the workshop was to try and together form a vision for Options for the next few years, amidst all the political turmoil around social care and ongoing reductions in funding.

I was amazed at the level of enthusiasm and participation of everyone who attended. Everybody displayed a fantastic grasp of Options' values and used their imagination to work out new ways of sticking to our core values whilst coping with budget cuts and increasing demands from our commissioners to move away from pure person-centeredness towards fitting people we support into a predetermined service.

I came away from the two days feeling very optimistic that Options is in safe hands and that we will all work towards supporting and enabling people to live the lives they choose.

The second event was the Staff Awards Lunch held in the glorious Anglican

Cathedral. This was the first award ceremony I had attended, and I was again impressed with the magnificent way our staff support people they work for, both as individuals and as teams.

Some of the key words I picked out were "enthusiastic", "supportive", "adaptability", "positive" and "thoughtfulness". It was great to hear that we have staff who possess these qualities!

These two events reminded me why I have been a Trustee for so long – it's been nearly a quarter of a century since I became a part of Options! From the start I have been impressed with the values and dedication of Options' staff (all of you, in every role) and so it continues. One of the functions of Trustees is to safeguard the values of the organisation. The superb work of all staff makes this an easy task.

On behalf of the Trustees I would like to thank all staff and volunteers for their great work.

Brian Simpson

Brian Simpson, Chair of Trustees

Things to know about Options

1. We were founded on 13th October 1993.
2. We support people in Liverpool, Sefton and Wirral.
3. Our Mission is to 'support, empower and enable people with disabilities to live their lives to the full!'
4. We employ 330 staff - most who are support workers.
5. We support around 170 people with learning disabilities, autism and acquired brain injuries.
6. People we support have raised over £15,000 for cancer, children's, animal and homeless charities in the past couple of years.
7. Christine our Health Lead works to support the health, fitness and wellbeing of people with disabilities and our staff.
8. We've hosted three community festivals called One Wirral in Birkenhead Park promoting inclusion and equality.
9. We partner with an urban farm, called Holmwood Farm in Wirral, who grow veg and rescue animals.
10. Each year we hold a free community Tea Party in St Nicholas Church gardens.
11. For the past 2 years, people we support have taken part in Project Artworks at Tate.
12. We have 15 volunteers working across various areas from befriending to events.
13. We employ people based on their great values and beliefs, not their experience.
14. We offer fabulous training opportunities to all staff, volunteers, family members and anyone we support who would like to get involved!
15. Each year we hold our Options' Oscars to recognise outstanding achievements of people we support.
16. Our photography group have held two exhibitions at The Bluecoat and auctioned off some of their work.
17. People we support often take part in the interviews we hold for new staff members and get involved in some of the training we do.
18. We have forums called Voices R Us run by people we support who meet regularly to discuss the support they receive and other aspects of our organisation.
19. There are people we support who volunteer at the Royal Liverpool Hospital, Tranmere Rovers Football Club, charity shops and Hedgehog Rescue - amongst many other places.
20. Our Tech Lead Will is developing projects around assistive technology to further improve independence for people we support.



Options
Support | Empower | Enable
Living life to the full!

Did you know...

Following our recent inspection from the CQC, in August 2019 we received an '**Outstanding**' rating. This is an incredible achievement and we feel it reflects the amazing contributions our staff make to our mission!

Inspected and rated

Outstanding 



Options

Support | Empower | Enable

Living life to the full!

*Keep up to
date with us!*



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