

IMAGINE ACT SUCCEED



Listening with intent, acting with purpose

IAS Newsletter Edition 38



Andrews swim victory

Andrew swims competitively for the Cheshire Penguins Club based in Northwich.

Recently he competed for the North West team at the Special Olympics in Sheffield

The games are held every four years for athletes with an intellectual disability and included teams from as far as the Scottish Highlands and Cornwall, participating in 20 sports over three days

Andrew had a brilliant time, winning a bronze medal in the 50 metres freestyle and just as essential at the Olympics, improved his social interaction, confidence, patience and independent living skills.

Everyone who attended the Olympics were inspired by the athletes, there was a great atmosphere, intense competition and good sportsmanship, whilst exemplifying the positive side of disability



A very Happy Birthday Meal

This year, for Adam's 33rd birthday a birthday meal out was arranged with his Mum and Dad to make Adam's day special.

This was a huge success for everyone involved. Adam's staff team had planned this well prior to taking him on his birthday and it resulted in a real treat for Adam and his Mum and Dad as this was the first time in Adam's life that he had celebrated his birthday in a pub, having a meal with his parents and staff.

Adam really enjoyed his lunch and seemed very happy and relaxed. This was such a positive achievement and will continue the meal out as a once a month event with Adam's parents and staff.

A Stella(r) day out

Stella had recently moved in with Julie, and Julie suggested that they went on the train "somewhere", a perfect opportunity to get to know each other. Both Stella and Julie were looking forward to it and laughing with each other. We travelled to Liverpool and once there we headed to the museum. Julie and Stella chatted and laughed about different statues, as well as dressed up in Roman and Viking outfits. There was a lot fun and laughter and it was a fantastic day all round and Julie and Stella were on a high all the way home. It was a lasting memory and the beginning of a great friendship.





Grass roots

Our gardening service began with Rob who we support taking on the role of gardener at one of the apartment complexes where IAS support people. Nicholas then wanted to work in this well and it seemed like a great opportunity to build a business enterprise. Now they have been joined by William and they are working together two days a week providing a purposeful gardening service to nine properties, as well as miscellaneous ground maintenance and tending a grave.

We will soon also be working on a community allotment alongside a number of community groups. Anything that is grown or produced on the allotment will be given to those in the community in need.



A year at the “Helm”ridge!

A year on at Elmridge!

It is now a year since we took over the service at Elmridge Court Extra Care Scheme in Lowton. It has been a year of lots of learning and nurturing of vision is to make Elmridge a great place to live and work and a thriving community hub.

Here are a few things we wanted to share that have happened or are going on at Elmridge Court.....

Henry's Chicken shed

Henry lives at Elmridge, he used to work on a farm and is an early riser. We talked to him about his dream and he told us it is to have his own chicken coop with chickens. Sharon (Community Circles) has been working with us supporting Henry to make this happen. “Lucky Hens” (Chicken Rescue) came to Elmridge and brought some chickens for people to pet. This was to help people understand what keeping chickens involved and an opportunity to ask any questions.

As you can see this went down a treat and you can see from people's faces the pleasure this brought. Hopefully Henry will have his chickens soon!

Henry's only stipulation is that they lay, as he tell us “you can't beat a warm egg in the palm of your hand!”



Reading group

Kim (support worker at Elmridge) is now fully trained and facilitates a reading group every Tuesday...This is well attended and people are getting a lot from this with regards to being around others with a similar interest. Several other people who have been quite isolated are now part of this group, we have seen them grow in confidence and can see real friendships developing. People are also telling us they are “having fun!”.



Rugby Trip

Alan and Norman, Wigan Rugby fans enjoyed going to the big match. They were accompanied by Adele (support worker and another avid Rugby fan). There was a lot of banter between them all building up to the match and as you can see a celebration with a pint afterwards.



Dog Walking

Two people we support have dogs who mean the world to them. Due to health issues they were both struggling to exercise them as much as they needed and were really anxious about the possibility that they may have to give up their beloved pets.

We then decided to ask within the network if any people we supported loved dogs and would be interested in becoming a volunteer dog walker. Peter and Robert now regularly walk the dogs and it has been a positive outcome for all. They feel they are doing something worthwhile, the owners are reassured they can keep their pets and the dogs are happy too!



OOMPH!

Two support workers, Lorraine and Adele have recently attended the "OOMPH!" Training. They are now qualified to facilitate this class at Elmridge Court. This is an exercise workshop which focuses on wellbeing, activity and exercise. People are enjoying this and have told us it is good fun!



Marie and animals

Marie is a real animal lover, and being around animals makes her feel happy and relaxed. Staff have found a number of local places where Marie spends time petting and feeding animals. We have seen how this has helped her general

wellbeing and the pleasure she gets from this.



First Aid Training

We talked to the people who live at Elmridge Court about how we could support them to look after themselves and others. Following these conversations one of the things we decided to do was put on a First Aid session for them. This was really well attended and people told us they enjoyed this and learned things about how to keep themselves and others safe. We are now planning to run another session and offer some places out to the local community.

Throughout the last year there have also been a number of events & celebrations...

These have included the Royal Wedding, Pub Quiz, Brass Band, Trips Out





A BURNING INTEREST

I have a real interest in the emergency services and what they do, in particular the fire service. I was very keen to know more and was talking to Paul, one of my support workers about this. He arranged for us to visit a local fire station and we had a great experience.

We met a couple of fire fighters and they talked to us about what they do, they even asked me questions to see how much I knew about fire safety!

They then gave us a tour of the station and showed us the equipment that they use. Our visit ended with spending some time in the fire engine, which was fantastic! They did say they welcome showing people more about what they do and helping people to understand more about fire safety.

John

Stepping Out into Christmas



The annual "Stepping Out into Christmas" sing a long was a festive success as always. Everyone joined in singing the Christmas songs along with family and friends. It was a joyful, fun evening that was full of laughter and music. There were lots of confident performances on the stage, with everyone showing off their musical talent, all topped off with a brew and mince pie afterwards. Roll on next Christmas!

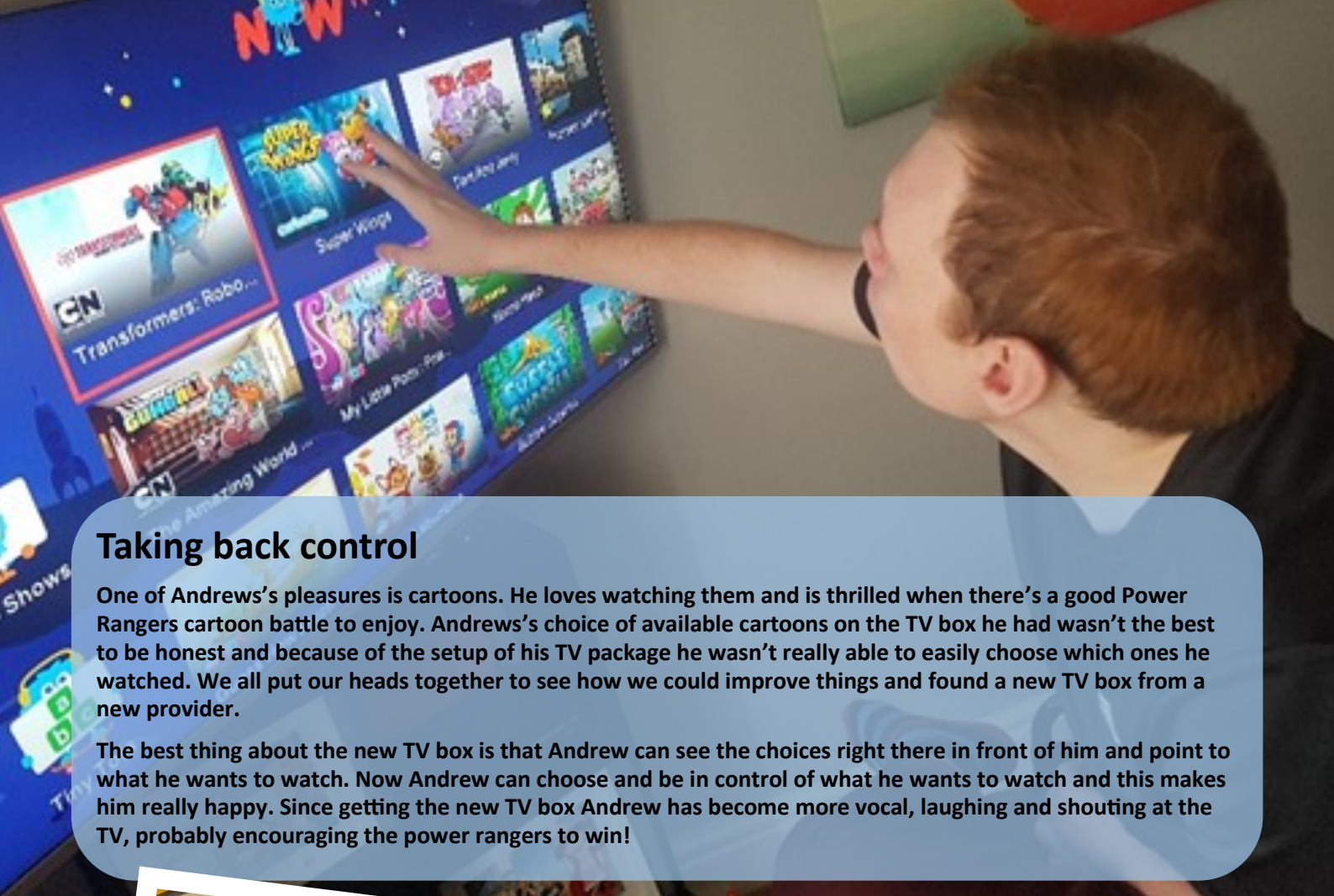


More than just a shop

Stepping Out run a shop at two extra care schemes in Wigan, Elmridge Court and Wickham Hall. Residents were getting taxis to shops and so there was a need for a shop selling sundries and essentials. Six people supported by Stepping Out volunteer at the shop in Elmridge Court. The volunteers went through a recruitment process including an interview. Their employment experience includes stocking shelves, customer service, taking and counting money, cleaning, contributing to the day-to-day running and planning, and fundraising.

Soon after the shop opened it started to build up a regular customer base and it was clear that it was going to be more than just a shop. It gave residents a reason to come out of their flats, friendships were developed and people that were isolated had contact with other people. Both residents and the volunteers supported by Stepping Out have benefitted from the shop. Residents have befriended the volunteers, and in turn volunteers take shopping to residents when they need it. People congregate in the shop area and its become a really social situation. This has paved the way to other social gatherings at Elmridge meaning that the communal lounge there that was largely unused becomes a hub of activity and a place to gather together.

Following from the success of the Elmridge Court shop, we applied for funding from The Deal for Wigan to open a shop at another extra care scheme called Wickham Hall, creating another 5 volunteer positions. This shop opened only recently and some of the benefits are already being felt, for example one lady living in Wickham Hall was able to buy herself a newspaper for the first time in ten years!



Taking back control

One of Andrews’s pleasures is cartoons. He loves watching them and is thrilled when there’s a good Power Rangers cartoon battle to enjoy. Andrews’s choice of available cartoons on the TV box he had wasn’t the best to be honest and because of the setup of his TV package he wasn’t really able to easily choose which ones he watched. We all put our heads together to see how we could improve things and found a new TV box from a new provider.

The best thing about the new TV box is that Andrew can see the choices right there in front of him and point to what he wants to watch. Now Andrew can choose and be in control of what he wants to watch and this makes him really happy. Since getting the new TV box Andrew has become more vocal, laughing and shouting at the TV, probably encouraging the power rangers to win!



IAS Saved my life

In early December I became ill with an infection which soon became severe, one of my IAS staff rang my GP and insisted that I be seen that day. She knew that I wasn’t well even though I never complain about my health. I was given a blood test form and the staff made sure I had my test promptly. This showed that I was very ill with septicaemia. I was told I had to go into hospital that day. I was in hospital for 4 weeks.

I had more visitors than anyone on the ward. My friends from IAS made sure I had a visitor every day for several hours and I often had more than one visitor. They came from as far as Wigan and EVEN on their days off. Three of them, who no longer support me on a daily basis but were with IAS when I moved in to my flat 11 years ago, all came to see me. My flat mate John came most days thanks to the team.

It is so important to see friendly faces when you are ill and that support was as important as the fantastic care at Wythenshawe Hospital.

I was finally ready for home but couldn’t manage alone so to avoid having to go into respite care IAS arranged 24 hour support for over a week. They had to sleep on my settee!

I continue to be supported by a team of people who all work beyond the call of duty. I have had to ask for so much care and support recently. There is absolutely no doubt that IAS helped to save my life and this was due to the dedication of a team that takes the time to understand and know me so well.

Thank you Barbara, Chloe, Dominique, Jill, Kaye , John, Liz, Mark, Nuala and Patrick for all playing such an important part in my recovery .

Nick