

The Wiltshire & Bath Independent Living Trust Ltd



**The Independent Living Centre
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Annual Report 2018/2019

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Reg No. 2535179 Charity No. 1000659



The Wiltshire & Bath Independent Living Trust Ltd

President: Dr A K Clarke F.R.C.P.

Patrons: Mr John Bush O.B.E
Lady Ruth Hawley
Dr Andrew Murrison M.P.
Ms Michelle Donelan M.P.

Board of Trustees: Dr Nigel Harris
Mrs Sandra Harding*
Mr John Hurn*
Dr Jeremy Bradbrooke*
Mrs Christine Leake* – appointed October 2018
Mr Brian Wade
Mrs Janet Bragg – resigned March 2019
Mr Henry Lumley – resigned August 2018
Mrs Lisa Fife – resigned January 2019
Mrs Liz Jeggo
Mr Chris Hubbard – resigned May 2018
Revd Tony Parfitt – resigned October 2018
Mrs Janey Hillier
Mr Ian Harrington – resigned January 2019
Mr Eric Clifford – appointed January 2019

*Members of the Management Committee

Company Secretary: Mrs Julie Hervin



**The Wiltshire & Bath
Independent Living Trust Ltd**

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Many people are unaware that part of the independent advice service that we provide is delivered in partnership with Medequip, as part of their contract with Wiltshire Council to provide a community equipment service. This system has generally worked well, but after 7 years the Council were required to review the arrangement and in March they embarked on a re-procurement process.

The new contracting arrangements separated out the provision of the equipment from the advice service, which provided us with the opportunity to review and update our service offering. The Trustees considered the option of submitting a bid to directly for the charity to independently run the advice service, but considered that a partnership arrangement with the equipment provider offered better long term financial stability. This meant that we had to prepare documents detailing all the aspects of our service and engage in detailed discussions with a range of potential suppliers. This process took some months and culminated in submission of bids in April. I would like to acknowledge the hard work and support of the Trustees, led by Christine Leake, who had oversight and contributed to this process.

Bids were submitted by three national providers for evaluation. Unfortunately, due to some technical issue with the process, it was not possible for the Council to award the contract and we are going to have to repeat the process sometime next year. The consequence of this is that it extends the period of uncertainty, which is very difficult for our ILC based employees. I would like to express my gratitude to the team, who continue to work through this and who provide such an excellent service to our many beneficiaries.

On a more positive note, we are very pleased to welcome Mr Kevin Fairman as our Chief Executive, working one day per week. The Trustees felt that this post was essential to strengthen our management capability and provide input into our strategic development. Kevin joined us in August, having stepped down as CEO with Brunelcare, so brings with him a wealth of experience and expertise.

I would like to conclude by acknowledging the hard work and success of The ILC Benefits Advice Service. This was established in 2003 to advise people about their entitlement depending on their circumstances, helping with claims, including completing forms and assisting with appeals if the claim is not successful. In the latest financial year, we raised around £400,000 for clients in claims and appeals. This figure was achieved even though Sheila, our Benefits Advisor, only works 15 hours per week. There are many clients whose illness or disability has meant they are not able to work or only work part time, so this can make a huge difference to them. The service is supported entirely by income from letting out our rooms and offices. This income is down again this year and we are running at a deficit. We would

welcome ideas for fundraising, or ways of raising donated income, so that we continue to support this valuable service. Please do get in touch with Kevin, or myself, if you would like to help with this. Contact details are available on our website - www.ilc.org.uk.

Nigel Harris
Chairman

Hon Treasurer's Report 2018-19

Copies of the accounts will be available for you to collect after the official part of the meeting. They have been prepared by Accountants, Haines Watts. To comply with the Charity Commission and Companies House Regulations, they are somewhat lengthy nowadays but you can get a good picture of what goes on here by looking at page 15.

I am pleased to say the spending on the building has reduced again this year to a lower figure of £14,138.55. Most of the work in accordance with the fire regulations has now been completed.

We have installed a new CCTV system at a cost of £2,398.80 and had a large flat roof repaired at a cost of £6,372.00. Due to the age and size of the building you will appreciate it always requires maintenance.

The building work, a large empty office and an additional suite of offices to lease, as well as a reduction in the uptake of daily room bookings of the Conference Room and Manual Handling Room, has amounted to a deficit of £25,216, which is covered by the reserves. If anyone would like to discuss the empty rooms or booking the rooms, I will be happy to speak to you at the end of the meeting.

During the year the lease for the defibrillator was renewed for a further 4 years at a cost of £2,160.00. This covers annual training as well as servicing the machine.

I am pleased to say the retail unit which is housed in the coffee lounge still continues to prove popular with clients and visitors

We were pleased the contract with Medequip was extended by Wiltshire Council in early January 2019. We continue to work well together and meet on a quarterly basis.

I would like to thank the staff for the help they have given me and my fellow Trustees during this financial year.

Sandra Harding
Hon. Treasurer

Occupational Therapist's Annual Report 2018-19

The ILC maintains an important and unique position in how it operates to serve the general public residing in Wiltshire and BANES with impartial advice and assessment with aids and equipment. In most areas of the UK there is reduced funding for aids provision, there is also a notable increase in advertising of expensive equipment to 'answer all problems'. An appointment at the ILC allows the client time to understand how the equipment might work for them, considering their medical condition, home environment and budget.

Referrals for assessment over the last year have been constant and we are working hard to continue to provide a responsive service on the current funded hours. In the last year we supported 442 clients for face to face assessments. We supported a further 755 clients by telephone and e-mail, and 120 professionals. In total we reached 1,314 providing professional advice regarding equipment.

The feedback questionnaires completed by clients at the end of appointments show that people highly value the service we provide and are very satisfied with the service they receive. (refer to appendix)

The Independent Living Centre offers dedicated appointment time, this opportunity may be the first time someone has had to piece together diagnosis with appropriate equipment and professional advice. It is common that clients and their relatives will visit the ILC as they are planning ahead to future proof their home. Often with a long term or degenerative condition it can be a difficult and upsetting time, the ILC supports the client to join the dots to the appropriate care, benefits and equipment. For example, a client with Motor Neuron may wish to discuss mobility, kitchen and bathroom layout, for example the pros and cons of a power chair over a scooter and try both items of equipment. A client with Parkinson's may have a wide range of needs such as mobility, falls prevention, eating and drinking, bathing and getting in/out of bed.

As well as providing assessments we also have a comprehensive resource of information including access to the DLF database. Information requests come from a variety of health professionals and the general public. Lindsay, OT assistant works on reviewing and problem solving the request with OT support. This enables therapists and clients to make the right choices which saves both time and money by avoiding unnecessary purchased equipment which may not meet the clients need. We also offer information on specialist holidays and we publish a 'Days Out' booklet containing information on local attractions and the facilities they offer e.g. wheelchair accessibility, and scooter or wheelchair hire.

The training and learning opportunities we provide for Occupational Therapists and other allied health professionals are well attended. They help

OT's update their knowledge and skills and help them meet criteria for their Continual Professional Development. In the last year have held study days on Parkinson's and Dementia. We held equipment forums on bariatric equipment, commode and shower chairs and held training on: Sling application, bed management systems and specialist seating.

We are very grateful to all the retailers who donate equipment on loan to the centre and support organised trials of more specialised equipment, this enables the ILC to remain impartial and allows a broad range and variety for clients to trial. The ILC supports joint working and we continue to network with our colleagues in specific patient groups, third sector and charitable groups by liaising regarding referrals and attending networking talks and events. At the ILC we feel fortunate that we can make a positive difference and impact and we look forward to the future.

Chris Bott
Senior Occupational Therapist

Appendix

Some client feedback from questionnaires:

"Extremely helpful and informative"

"We have been very well informed with the information required."

"Introduced to many possibilities for future care, many thanks."

"Extremely helpful and friendly staff. They took their time and did not rush my husband who has Parkinson's and can get confused."

"Very helpful, lots of useful info and advice. Will help improve everyday living a great deal."

"Very useful and informative visit. Thank you for the great ideas."

"Very helpful and pleasant and informative."

"Excellent range, helpful OT. Thank you so much."

"Couldn't be more helpful."

Benefits Advisor's Annual Report 2018-19

There is a huge demand for benefits advice because of the complexity of the benefits system. Although the Government does provide advice about benefits online, it is not always straightforward and often people prefer to be able to ask questions about their entitlement, particularly if they have never claimed before. At the Independent Living Centre, we offer impartial advice and support. We advise clients what they could be entitled to, help with claim forms, and offer support if someone wants to appeal against an unfavourable decision.

Referrals for advice come from different sources. We advertise the service on our website. Referrals come from organisations such as the Adult Care Team within Social Services, Housing Associations, GP surgeries, JobcentrePlus, and voluntary organisations such as Alzheimer's Support, Stroke Association and Citizens Advice. There is also word of mouth and returning clients. I used to make home visits to housebound clients, but we had to cease the service due to overall demand for advice-it was taking up a lot of time to visit clients, time which could be better spent seeing clients in the office. I work 15 hours per week over two days.

Types of Benefits

The benefits system is made up of a mixture of disability related, contributory and means tested benefits. Universal Credit has incorporated the means tested benefits, ie Housing Benefit, Working and Child Tax Credit, Income Support, income-based Employment and Support Allowance and income-based Jobseekers Allowance. People wanting to make a new claim for any of those benefits must claim Universal Credit and the Government is gradually migrating existing claimants of those benefits onto Universal Credit. The disability related benefits are still claimed separately and it is these benefits that I get the most referrals for. I made 176 appointments, including phone advice, this year.

The main benefits that I have been asked to help with are as follows:

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) – **72** appointments

Completing new claim forms, review forms, Mandatory Reconsiderations and appeals

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) – **29** appointments

This includes completing medical questionnaires, Mandatory Reconsiderations and appeals.

Disability Living Allowance for a child – **18** appointments

Completing claim forms and appeals

Universal Credit (UC) – 8 appointments

Helping clients' complete forms for the medical aspect of UC

Attendance Allowance claims – 5 appointments

Appeals

There have been 27 requests for support with an appeal. The categories have been as follows:

PIP (17), ESA (6), UC (3), Child Benefit (1) – a total of 27 appeals.

Of these appeals, 19 were successful, 2 were not successful and 6 are still waiting to be heard- one is with the Upper Tribunal and one is with the MP.

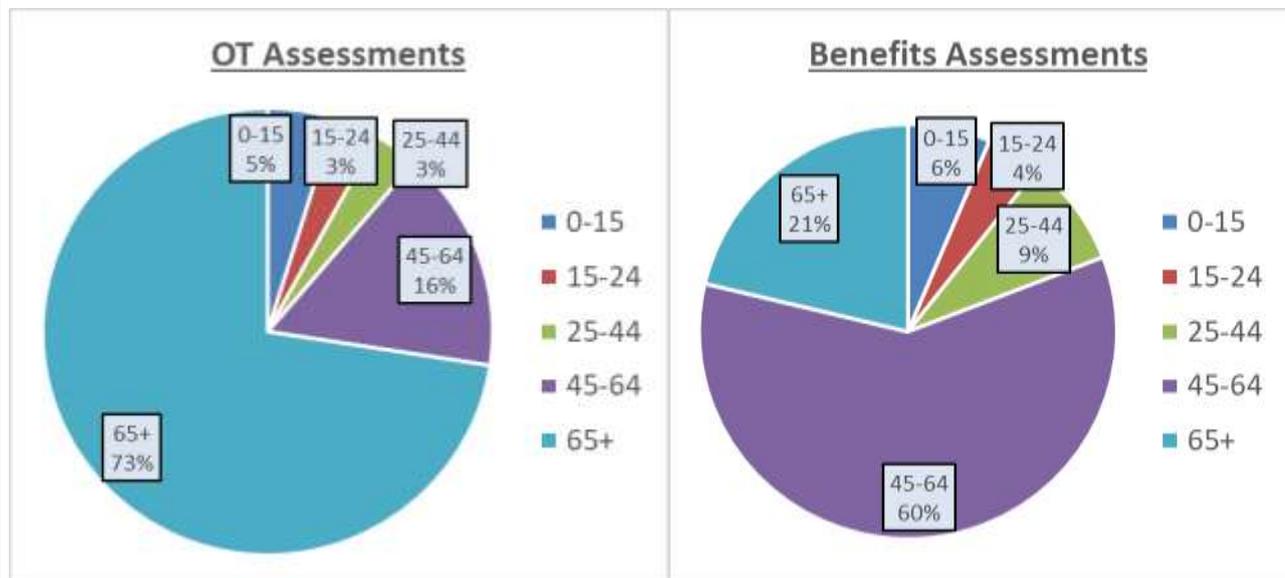
I have also helped clients to make claims for Carers Allowance, Blue Badge, Disabled Facilities Grant, Pension Credit, Council Tax Reduction, Discretionary Housing Benefit and Statutory Sick Pay. I have given full benefits advice on the phone to clients who did not require an appointment.

Value of Awards

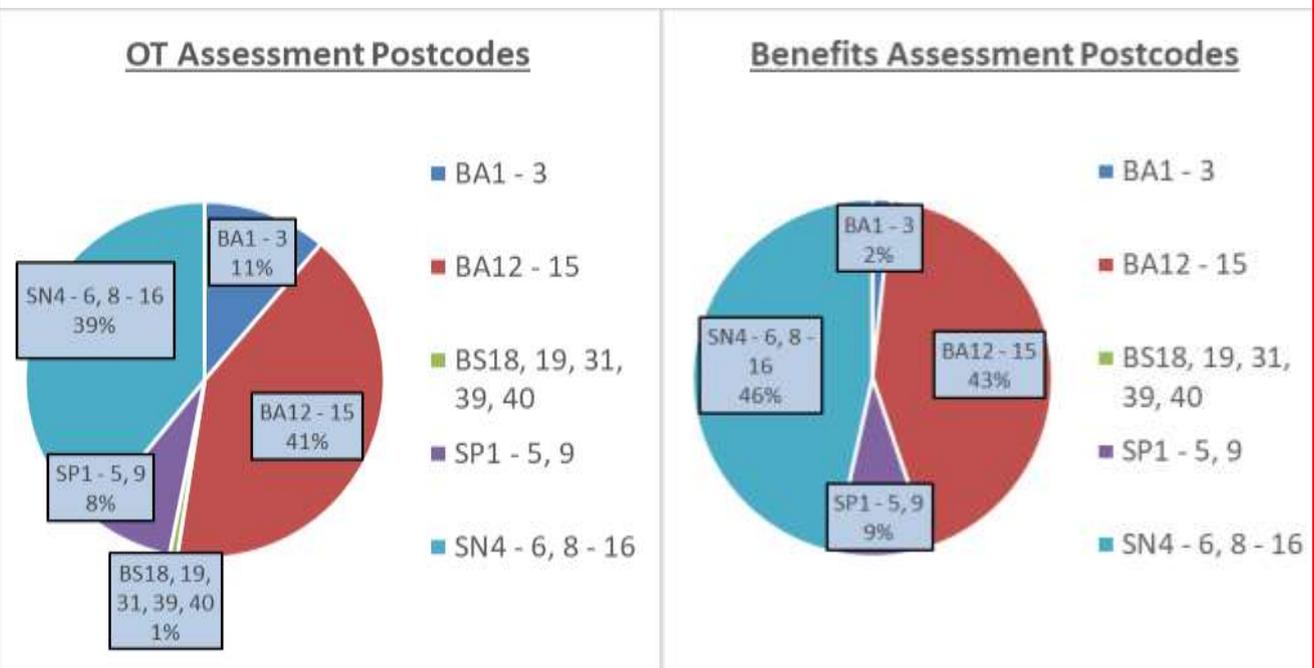
In this period I have raised £397,788.26 in benefits for clients.

A Flavour of our Activities – 2018

Age range of clients visiting the centre July – Sept 2018



Postcode area of clients visiting the centre July – Sept 2018



Reason for visiting the centre July – Sept 2018

