



The Wiltshire & Bath Independent Living Trust Limited

(A company limited by guarantee)

Charity Name: The Wiltshire & Bath Independent Living Trust Limited

Company registration number: 2535179

Charity registration number: 10000659

**Report and Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2020**

Report of the Trustees for the year ended 31 March 2020

The Trustees, who are also the directors for the purposes of company law, present the directors' report and unaudited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2020.

Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name: The Wiltshire & Bath Independent Living Trust Limited
Known As: The Independent Living Centre (ILC), Semington
Company registration number: 2535179
Charity registration number: 10000659
Registered Office and operational address:
The Independent Living Centre, St George's Road, Semington, Wiltshire BA14 6JQ

Trustees

Trustees appointed as directors on 8 October 2019 (unless stated differently)

Dr A K Clarke (President)
Professor N Harris (Chair)
Mr J Hurn
Dr J Bradbrooke
Mrs C Leake
Mrs L Jeggo
Mrs J Hillier
Mr E Clifford
Miss C Gregory - appointed as trustee October 2019
Mrs S Harding - appointed as director April 2013
Mr B Wade - appointed as director Sept 2008

Chief Executive Officer

Mr Kevin Fairman

Company Secretary

Mrs Julie Hervin

Independent Examiners –

Haines Watts - Chartered Accountants. Enterprise House, Timbrell Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8PL

Bankers -

Lloyds Bank, Trowbridge

Our Aims and Objectives

Purposes and Aims

Our charity's purposes as set out in the objects contained in the company's Memorandum of Association are:

To advance the care, treatment and education of people with disabilities, in particular by the provision of a permanent exhibition of a comprehensive range of aids and equipment.

Our aim fully reflects the purposes that the charity was set up to assist older people (65+) and adults/children with disabilities to remain in their own homes and maintain independence by helping them and their carers by recommending practical solutions to the challenges of daily living, and the charity

- provides impartial information and assessments to members of the public and professionals,
- provides training opportunities for Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists and other allied Health Professionals, and
- advises on disability benefits, help complete forms, and aid with appeals.

Ensuring our work delivers our aims

We review our aims, objectives and activities each year. The review looks at the success of each key activity and the benefits they have brought to those groups of people we are set up to help.

The review also helps us ensure our aim, objectives and activities remained focused on our stated purposes. We have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aim and objectives and in planning our future activities.

In particular, the trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set and consider our approach to risk management.

The focus of our work

We have continued our work to provide information to people who require disability equipment, which empowers them in the purchasing process from suppliers, or provision through social services. We aim to provide a consistent high-quality service and have introduced systems to collect feedback on our performance from our clients.

The strategies we used to meet these objectives included:

- Upgrading the ILC website to make it more accessible and provide more information.
- Attending events and promoting the ILC on community websites, newspapers and contacting community organisation such as charities, doctor's surgeries, to ensure residents of Wiltshire and BANES know about our services.
- The provision of free assessments of our clients' needs, liaising with local suppliers to ensure up-to-date equipment is available for demonstration. The Occupational Therapy team is then able to provide an independent recommendation to our client.
- Continue to provide advice on disability benefits, assist with the completion of benefit claims forms, and with appeals.
- The appointment of a Chief Executive (part-time) to direct our work and seek opportunities to develop our services.

How our activities deliver public benefit

All our charitable activities focus on the empowerment of people with disabilities and enabling them to live as full and active life as possible.

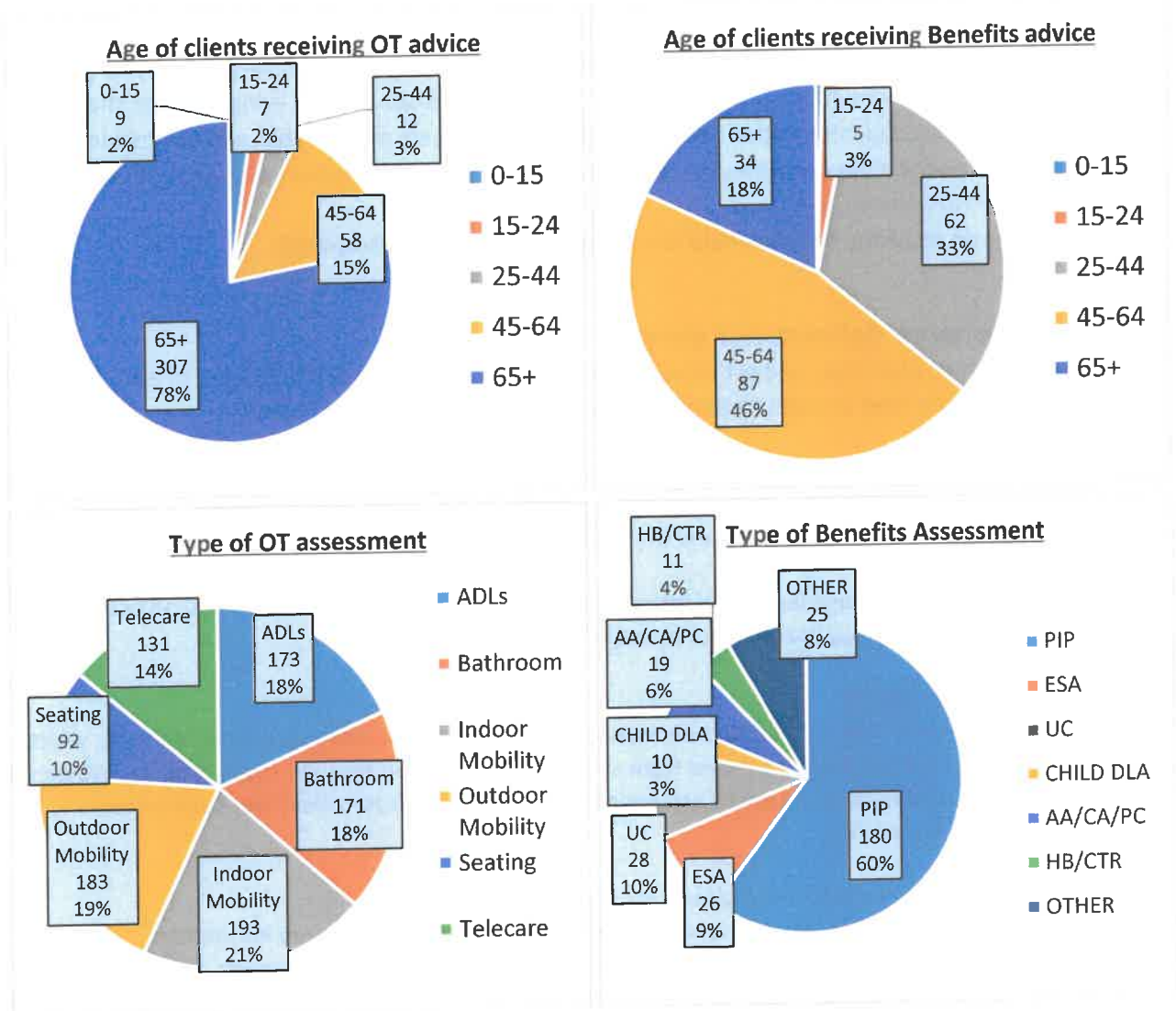
Who used and benefited from our services?

Funding provided by Wiltshire and Bath & North East Somerset (BANES) limits the services we provide to residents and professionals who work in these two geographical areas.

The Occupational Therapy team is employed part time and can only provide 12 full assessments a week. However, we increase the number of people we support by offering advice and information via email and phone. All our services are provided free of charge to our clients.

Equal access to our services is an important issue for us. We monitor access by age, gender, disability, and location, and seek to provide a high quality experience to all communities that use our services.

Key performance indicators of our work are shown in the charts below.



Guide to acronyms

ADLs	Assisted Daily Living, e.g. dressing, bedroom, kitchen
PIP	Personal Independence Payment
ESA	Employment Support Allowance
UC	Universal Credit
CHILD DLA	Child Disability Living Allowance
AA	Attendance Allowance
CA	Carers Allowance
HB	Housing Benefit
CTR	Council Tax Reduction
PC	Pension Credits

Chair of Trustees Report

This is the 30th Anniversary year of the ILC, which is certainly something to celebrate.

Up until 1988, the ILC building was St George's Hospital, looking after what was termed geriatric patients¹. The empty building was leased to the Wiltshire & Bath Independent Living Trust which was established on the 29th August 1990.

Since that time, we estimate that our Occupational Therapy team will have carried out 12,000 assessments, offering detailed advice on mobility, bathroom, kitchen and aids for daily living. These products can transform the lives of those with disabilities enabling them to live safely and independently in their own homes.

In 2009 we established a benefits advice service, to help those with long term disabilities to access the support they need and are entitled to - often a complex and difficult process. During this time the service may have helped as many as 5,000 people access payments to which they are legally entitled.

Sadly, our anniversary celebrations have been overshadowed by the Covid-19 crisis. As I write this, many of us are still working from home and we are still some weeks off widespread return to work and the reopening of our high streets. After being shut down for some 6 weeks, the team at the ILC are working to put in place new operational procedures so that we can safely resume full delivery of our services and also safeguard the well-being of our tenants and visitors. We are aware that now more than ever, people need support to continue to live safely and independently at home and help to claim the benefits to which they are entitled.

The Covid-19 crisis has also had an adverse impact on our finances. The retendering for the Wiltshire Community Equipment and Independent Advice service has been delayed, probably until the autumn, and we have also lost income from room bookings and training sessions

If you are one of the many who have benefited from our services, or would like to help ensure that we can grow and help even more people over the next 30 years, we would welcome your help as a fundraiser or volunteer. Please do get in touch with us. Contact details are available on our website - ilc.org.uk.

¹The full history of the Hospital is on our website. <http://ilc.org.uk/history-of-the-workhouse/>

Chief Executive Report

We would like to recognise the ongoing support through the coronavirus crisis from the other charities that share the building in Semington with the ILC: Carers Support Wiltshire, Healthwatch, Wiltshire People First and Wiltshire Service Users Network.

We would also like to thank the grant awarding bodies that have enabled the ILC to continue to provide its benefits advice service in the last year. They are Herman Miller Cares, the Area Boards for Westbury & Trowbridge, and the Girdlers Company Charitable Trust.

The following reports highlight some of the achievements in the last year of which the ILC should rightly feel proud. We provide a much needed unique service in the local community and are proud of our 30-year heritage which we are looking forward to celebrating later in 2020.

In early 2020, a facilitated strategy session between Trustees and ILC based employees was held to discuss our future direction, including the opportunities and risks of each of the options. The outcome of this session was an action plan covering the next three years, which we will now implement in partnership with other charitable partners.

Occupational Therapist Report

Service overview

The ILC continues to be a valuable resource for residents and professionals in Wiltshire and BANES. We operate a self-referral system and an ability to welcome clients of all ages with a wide range of medical conditions who seek assessment and advice on equipment for independent living.

Equipment for independent living is now more widely advertised in magazines and online. It is easy to think that choices are straightforward and the product should fit, if the description ticks all the boxes. From our experience, clients are often persuaded by companies to make rushed decisions and not to compare and contrast items against other manufacturers. The ILC excels in bridging this gap to help the client reach informed decisions alongside actually being able to try out the items to compare and contrast for themselves. We have a friendly team responding to a wide range of enquiries on a daily basis. The wide range of equipment and our ability to offer dedicated professional time in appointments helps to ensure that clients have a positive, unpressurised experience from start to finish. More importantly, we help to 'get it right'.

It is important to reflect on changes in recent months due to Covid-19; however, moving into 2020/21 we can be reassured that we have been able to quickly adapt to continue to provide advice over the phone and by email along with posting out information to reach clients.

Professional Learning Experiences

The ILC organises and provides professional learning opportunities. Over the past year we have held study sessions on: Dementia and Parkinson's. We have held equipment training sessions on: sling selection and application, specialist seating, bed management systems and single-handed care. We have also held a forum on bariatric care and equipment.

We are very thankful to all of those that have given up their time to speak at, demonstrate at or attend these days. It is with the community support that these learning experiences continue to be a really valuable resource.

Raising our profile

The ILC has worked solidly towards raising our profile with a lot of hard work done by the staff and Trustees to keep raising awareness of the ILC services. Over the last year the ILC had a good presence at a wide range of events and talks covering BANES and Wiltshire. Interagency connections are very valuable and enable us to increase our awareness of the range of local groups and services that might be crucial support links for our clients.

Positive relationships

The ILC is thankful to Medequip, Wiltshire Council, Disabled Living Foundation, Medvivo, and local retailers. Also UK equipment companies who offer their time to provide training on equipment, charity groups, and other services for their continued support. With these good relationships we have been able to update our stock demonstration items to keep in touch with the current equipment market and keep our literature and resources up to date and comprehensive for information sharing.

Stats

Over the last year we completed 387 face to face assessments. A further 625 clients were helped by advice and guidance over the phone and by email along with 139 professionals.

Client Feedback

We have had very positive feedback from clients. The uniqueness of the ILC is the ability to have impartial assessment and also try out the equipment. Here are some of the feedback comments we have received:

"Seeing possible equipment in action, new ideas."

"The very clear demonstration by the OT of alternative items of equipment to sort our needs, and the ability to try out the apparatus."

“Being able to try out the beds, chairs and trolleys. Having advice from an OT, particularly about my individual needs.”

“There was a large range of products which was really helpful. Spacious rooms enabling easy assessment of products. Parking facilities are very good. Centre well positioned and easy to find from the main road.”

Benefits Adviser Report

The complexity of the benefits system can make it difficult for people to understand what their entitlement might be, or even how to apply. There is often confusing and misleading information in the press and social media. Although our benefits service tends to focus on disability benefits, we will advise on any aspect of the benefits system and carry out a complete benefit check. This is because many of the benefits are interlinked and entitlement of one can lead to entitlement or increase of another. It is also possible to be worse off financially, so it is important that a check is carried out.

Referrals for advice come from many different sources such as GP surgeries, the local Jobcentre Plus offices, Social Services, Housing Associations and voluntary organisations, as well as word of mouth and our website. The demand is very high. The advice and support provided ranges from a benefit check by phone, form filling, challenging an unfavourable decision and representation at Tribunals-First Tier and Upper Tribunal.

Types of Benefit Enquires

While the majority of our clients only require one appointment for advice and/or form filling, there are several occasions where the same person is seen more than once. This will usually be the case where someone wants to challenge a decision because that involves complex paperwork and submission writing (which requires non-contact time). Therefore, the statistics here reflect the number of appointments rather than the number of clients.

Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

104 appointments – new claims, Mandatory Reconsiderations and appeals.

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)

24 appointments – completing working capability forms and appeals

Attendance Allowance

6 appointments – new claims

Disability Living Allowance (for children)

6 appointments – new claims

Universal Credit

10 appointments – completing working capability forms and appeals

In addition to these main categories, other appointments have included Child Benefit appeal (1), Housing Benefit appeal (1), Discretionary Housing Payment (1), Jobseekers Allowance (1), Blue Badge applications (2) and several better-off calculation appointments. Another appointment involved mediating between the client and two officials from the Medical Services regarding a complaint made by the client about the PIP assessment.

Appeals

This year there have been 19 requests for support to make an appeal against decisions. So far 14 have been successful, four are waiting to be heard and one withdrawn. There are two appeals ongoing from previous years, one has been to a tribunal twice and is now waiting for another hearing, while the other started in 2018 and is still with the Upper Tribunal.

Value of Awards

The year we have helped our clients access £511,474 of benefits, to which they were entitled. The final figure is likely to be higher as some clients have not received a decision yet, and some clients have not been in contact to confirm the amount they were awarded.

Financial Review

The Charity reported an increased deficit for the last financial year of £(32,127). We have set a budget for the financial year 2020-21 that aims to reduce this deficit by one third. This is based on higher tenant occupancy at the ILC building and also the development of a fundraising strategy, which started to achieve positive results in 2019-20.

Free Reserves now represents 11 months of operating expenses.

Principal Funding Sources

Our advice and assessment service is funded by Wiltshire County Council, through a contract with Medequip, and directly from BANES Council.

A contract has recently been signed with BANES, securing the advice and assessment service until March 2022. The Community Equipment Service contract that Wiltshire Council has with Medequip was extended for 12 months last year. It was expected that the re-procurement process would commence in Spring 2020, but currently, there is no date for the process to start. This extends the period of uncertainty, which is very difficult for our ILC based employees.

The Centre has a retail area, with a range of small goods, such as walking sticks, cups, cutlery, medication aids; this provides a small income, via sales commission.

The benefits service is supported entirely by grants and donations, income from hiring out meeting and training rooms, and the rental of office space in our building to other charities.

As a result of decreased rental revenue, the charity is seeking to increase funding from other sources so that we can extend our services and help more people.

We welcome donations from visitors to the centre, and via the website.

Investment Policy

The Charity does not have any significant capital investments.

Reserves Policy

The charity continues to hold a minimum of £20,000 of the unrestricted funds as cash on deposit or in the bank to cover the redundancy costs of the three ILC staff.

Free reserves at year end (unrestricted reserves not represented by fixed assets and investments) amounted to £114,820. Further details are given in our annual accounts.

Plans for the future

The charity plans to continue the activities outlined above in the forthcoming years, subject to available funding.

We have continued to operate at a deficit, which has reduced our reserves and is not sustainable in the long term. The trustees have conducted a strategic review and aim to generate additional funds through the development of a donated income stream, grants and the generation of commercial revenue from new services.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

The Wiltshire & Bath Independent Living Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 29 August 1990 and registered as a charity on 25 October 1990. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association.

Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

The directors of the company are also charity trustees for the purposes of charity law. The Trustees are elected at the Annual General Meeting, with any casual vacancies arising during the year being filled by the co-option of additional Trustees. The Trustees are chosen for their breadth of experience in disability issues and business skills, although persons with additional and wide ranging skills are encouraged to become Trustees to add to the overall skill levels available to be called upon. In an effort to maintain this broad skill mix, Trustees provide a list of their skills (and update it each year) and in the event of particular skills being lost due to resignation, these are highlighted in recruitment advertisements.

All Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. Any expenses reclaimed from the charity are set out in note 7 to the accounts. The Honorary Treasurer receives an Honorarium, documented in the accounts.

Trustee Induction and Training

We have a Trustee induction programme, which includes familiarisation with the work of the ILC, by attending sessions with the Occupational Therapist team and Benefits Advisor.

We are a member of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and provide access to their on-line training materials.

Risk Management

The Trustees have conducted a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed. A risk register has been established and is updated at least annually. Where appropriate, systems or procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the charity faces. Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for authorisation of all transactions and projects. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety of staff, volunteers, clients and visitors to the centre. These procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the charity.

Organisational Structure

The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that the charity delivers the services specified and that key performance indicators are met, and has responsibility for the day to day operational management of the Centre, individual supervision of the ILC staff team and also ensuring that the team continue to develop their skills and working practices.

A management committee meets bi-monthly, reviewing performance, risk management, and operational issues.

Dr AK Clarke is the President of the Charity. The board of Trustees appoints a Chair and Honorary Treasurer at the Annual Meeting.

Related Parties

The ILC independent advice service is delivered in partnership with Medequip, who provide the Community Equipment Service for Wiltshire Council.

Responsibilities of the Trustees

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charitable company as at the balance sheet date and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure, for the financial year.

In preparing those financial statements, the trustees should follow best practice and:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is not appropriate to assume that the company will continue on that basis.

The Trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 1985. The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Trustees, who are directors for the purpose of company law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report are set out on Page 2.

In accordance with company law, as the company's directors, we certify that:

- so far as we are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditors are unaware; and
- as the directors of the company we have taken all the steps that we ought to have taken in order to make ourselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditors are aware of that information.

Independent Examiners

Haines Watts were re-appointed as the charitable company's Independent Examiners during the year and have expressed their willingness to continue in that capacity.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (issued in March 2005) and in accordance with the special provisions of Part VII of the Companies Act 1985 relating to small entities.

Approved by the board of Trustees on 23rd June 2020 and signed on its behalf by:



Professor N D Harris, Chair of Trustees, Director