

You First

ISSUE 30



Accredited Success | Championing Dignity | Memories of a Lifetime



Neil's Foreword

Hello and welcome to the first **You First** of 2012.

In the last edition of the magazine I told you all about my excitement at joining CIC as our new Chief Executive.

As I'm sure many of you will know, when you start a new job you often have your own first impressions and ideas about how things could improve and develop. However, rather than simply making assumptions, I think it's important to take the time to meet your colleagues and customers and to listen to what they have to say, so that you can get a true picture of life in your new organisation.

Because of this, one of my main priorities over the past few months has been to meet many of the people who are supported by CIC, the staff who work for us and the organisations who partner with our charity. These meetings have been invaluable, giving me a very positive sense of CIC and many new ideas.

In particular, it has been a real pleasure to visit our services across England and Scotland with some of my Executive Team colleagues, hearing the stories of our staff and the people we support and getting their feedback on life with CIC. It has been an inspiration to see first-hand the amazing work that goes on in our services and I'd like to thank everybody I have met for their wonderful hospitality.

It is this sense of inspiration that has really driven the Executive Team and me as we consider our plans for CIC in 2012-13 and beyond.

Over the past few months we have been looking at our charity and the care market in general to evaluate opportunities to enhance and develop the services CIC provides. The culmination of these efforts will be our 2012-13 Business Plan, which we will be launching soon and I hope to tell you more about this in the next edition of **You First**.

The pages of this magazine will give you just a sense of some of the dynamic work that I've witnessed since I have joined CIC: from championing inclusion and valuing the opinions of the people we support (p22), to advocating everyone's right to dignity and respect (p20-21); supporting people to remember the happiest memories of their past (p10-11), to developing partnerships that give the people we support a better future (p19), **You First** showcases the best of CIC.

And whilst having been here for almost six months and feeling very much a part of life at CIC, compared to the staff who recently celebrated their 20th year of working for our charity (p9), I remain, in comparison, very much the new guy!

Until next time,
Best wishes,

Neil Matthewman

Neil Matthewman
Chief Executive - CIC Group



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cic
— group —
putting individuals first



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You First is a free magazine published four times a year.

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Our cover stars:
Phillip Worn and Phillip Brand, service users from the Rievaulx Centre in Billingham, with senior support worker (back row) Andrew Hood.

The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of CIC.



Planet Friendly

You First is printed on paper that is manufactured from sustainable forests and is elemental chlorine free. Please recycle after reading.

News



Congratulations to staff at Charlotte Grange Care Home in Hartlepool who have been named as 'Carers of the Year' by The Co-operative Funeralcare. Presenting the award to staff, Mark Evans from The Co-operative praised the team as 'unsung heroes of the caring profession'.

Well done to the Inspirit Domiciliary Care team in Lancashire who have been successful in their bid to continue providing Short-Term Intensive Support across the region. The team will work in partnership with rapid response nurses and palliative care teams, to deliver a fast response support service to people in crisis situations.

Jane Worsley, CIC's Director of Operations, has been appointed as CIC's deputy CEO.



CIC are delighted to announce the opening of three new services: Allwork Terrace and Cheshire Avenue in Gateshead and Bendbow Rise in Leicester.

CIC is pleased to announce that it has appointed Catherine Murray-Howard as Director of Business Development and Partnerships.

Catherine joins CIC Group from mental health charity Making Space, where she held the position of Director of Development. Catherine will take lead responsibility for CIC Group's overall business development strategy, overseeing the charity's Business Development and Communications and Marketing teams. She will also play a key role in helping CIC develop its partnerships with other academic, campaigning and advisory bodies within the social care sector.



CIC's Training team have been commended for developing a Dementia Awareness training programme for relatives and friends of people with the condition.

Karen Hutchinson, Home Manager at St Stephen's Care Home in Sandbach, said: "Dealing with the effects of dementia can be very difficult for relatives and friends and so it is fantastic that CIC's training team are addressing this by providing support especially for them. The feedback we've received on the sessions so far has been fantastic, with many people acknowledging the team's enthusiasm, knowledge and sensitivity."



CIC is proud to announce that it has achieved Silver Investors in People (IIP) status in England, adding to our previous success of achieving the same standard in Scotland.

Investors in People is the UK's leading people management standard and is used by businesses to independently review how they value, develop and train their staff.

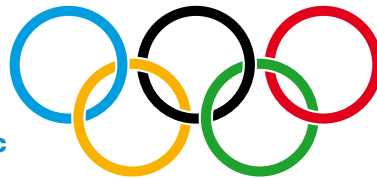
Lynnette Cowburn, CIC's Learning and Leadership and Development Manager, explains: "At the end of November, an assessment team from IIP interviewed CIC colleagues from across England, who work at every level of our organisation. Every participant was asked the same set of questions which thoroughly gauged their opinions of CIC."

She continues, "CIC were successful in achieving 117 of the 196 outcomes that make up the Investors framework, which is a fabulous achievement given this was our first application in England."

Grace Marguerie, CIC's Director of Human Resources Management, adds, "The Investors in People framework gives us a great platform to identify areas where we can further develop our charity and enhance the services we provide to the people we support."

"CIC's Executive Team will be meeting in early 2012 to review our IIP report and develop a plan of action to respond to its feedback. On behalf of the Executive Team, I'd like to thank everyone who has contributed to this great success."

Congratulations to Iain McDonald, from Station Court in Duns, who has been chosen from thousands of hopefuls to carry the Olympic Torch when it arrives in Scotland this Summer! The You First team will be following Iain on his exciting journey, so keep a look out for his amazing story.

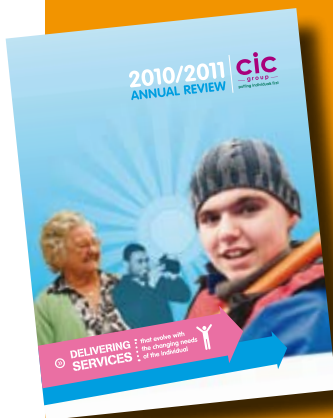


The CIC Group 2011 Annual Review is out now!

Showcasing a full and exciting 12 months within our charity, our Annual Review demonstrates the many ways in which, as an organisation, we continue to deliver improvements, integration and inclusion, at all levels of our charity.

As well as including an overview of CIC's financial position, you can read more about the launch of new services and programmes, fantastic survey results and the plethora of awards we've received.

To download your copy visit:
www.c-i-c.co.uk



A Quality appointment for Sue

Sue McLean has been appointed as CIC's Director of Quality and Standards, moving from her previous role as CIC's Director of Senior Care. In her new role, Sue will lead CIC's Quality Department, who support the delivery of excellent standards within our services.



Community

Many happy returns to James Milne from Mansefield House in Kirkcudbright who celebrated his 60th birthday with a huge party attended by all his family and friends.



DIY enthusiastic, Lee Stephenson, pictured lending a hand to paint the sensory room at his home in Dean View Villas, South Shields.

Residents and staff from Glenwood care home in Widnes took part in a sponsored 'Memory Walk' in support of the Alzheimer's Society.



James Smith and William Coyle from Holmbrye Road in Glasgow enjoyed some winter sun in Lanzarote.



Clare Cains from Viewfield in County Durham pictured giving her birthday speech at her surprise 40th birthday party!



Margaret Brack from Gunnergate Lane in Middlesbrough (centre) enjoyed the funfair during her overnight shopping trip to Leeds with support team Janet Trimble (left) and Diane McClintock (right).

The team at Rosebeck Cottage in Durham organised a celebration in memory of Diane Joyce, who lived at Rosebeck Cottage for many years before she sadly passed away in 2011. All guests wore pink and purple – Diane's favourite colours.





Residents at Munches Park care home in Dalbeattie were treated to a musical afternoon by pupils from Dalbeattie High School.

CIC's North East region took part in Operation Christmas Child, filling a total of 26 boxes with gifts for children who would otherwise not have received any presents at Christmas.



Jennifer McMurray and Quintin Mair from Mansefield House in Kirkcudbright, enjoyed a weekend horse riding break with the Riding for the Disabled Association.



Staff and service users from Cumbria region enjoyed a Body Shop party.

A big thanks to Barclays Bank who joined residents at Winsford Grange Care Home, Cheshire, for a fundraising bingo night. The team matched all monies raised pound for pound, resulting in a whopping £1740!



Staff and service users from Floating Support in Leicester at their Christmas party.

Josephine McDonagh (centre) from Glenwood in Widnes, enjoyed her first ever plane journey travelling to Ireland to visit her sister, with her support team, Jade Hennon (left) and Jennifer Forshaw (right).



Photograph supplied courtesy of the Shields Gazette

Little Mix fans Kim Watts and Lawrence Wright (centre) from Dean View Villas in South Shields were delighted to be the first people in the queue for tickets to watch their favourite X Factor stars perform on their homecoming tour!



When 83 year-old Margaret Buckley from Dalbeattie in Dumfries suffered a heart attack and was admitted to intensive care, she and her family feared the worst. When news arrived that corrective heart-surgery wouldn't be possible because of Margaret's already poor health and that she would now require permanent full-time residential care, they believed their fears had been realised.

But fast forward 12 months, and in what Margaret's husband describes as an "unbelievable" turn-around, this strong and determined lady has given family, friends and carers cause for celebration after becoming well-enough to return back home! Here, **You First** talks to Margaret, her husband Frank, and the team at CIC residential care home, Munches Park, who all worked together to help bring about this amazing achievement...

"When Margaret joined Munches Park in April 2011 she had spent four months in hospital trying to recuperate; yet she was still so weak and frail, struggling to take even a few steps without help," explains Home Manager, Carole McMurdo.

"But straight away, I saw Margaret's determination to get well and I made a promise to her and her husband that the team here at Munches Park would do everything we could to help improve her mobility and get some independence back."

Working closely with Margaret, her husband and a team of professionals from both inside and outside of the home, staff devised a specialised care plan that would aid Margaret's rehabilitation and recovery.

First Steps

Soon Margaret's health began to improve and she found herself needing less care and support from staff: "Within only a few weeks, and much to mine and my husband's amazement, I was starting to walk further and further distances, often on my own, a clear sign that I was getting better," says Margaret.

"As her health improved, the team supported Margaret to try to build-upon and enjoy her independence," adds her

husband Frank. "They encouraged us to go on short day trips to local beauty spots and this really raised Margaret's spirits and helped aid her recovery."



With the support of the team, Margaret's progression continued; so much so that she was soon able to spend two nights at home, sampling Frank's new found cooking skills! "It was fantastic to have my wife home for even just a few nights; in all our years of marriage we've rarely spent a night apart, so I had missed her terribly."

By September 2011, Margaret's health had improved so much that she and Frank were even able to enjoy a night at a local hotel with their close family and friends, celebrating their Diamond wedding anniversary!

Only a few weeks later Margaret's astounding journey was complete when doctors deemed her well enough to leave Munches Park and return to living permanently in her own home.

Homeward Bound

"In all my 22 years of working in the care sector, I have never known a resident to return home after being admitted permanently into residential care. But Margaret was determined to get well right from the start and it has happened," says Carole.

And whilst Carole credits Margaret and her wonderfully supportive family with helping

her reach this goal, Margaret's husband Frank believes he knows where recognition is also due. He says, "I don't know where we'd be without the support of all the wonderful staff at Munches Park. None of this change would ever have come about without their professionalism, dedication, care, and encouragement. We are both so immensely grateful and could never say thank you enough."

Two decades of Putting

Individuals First...

At CIC, we have a 24-year heritage of delivering excellent care and support in the community, and we are lucky to have many of the people who were part of our charity's earliest days still working for us today.



Every year we recognise the achievements of people who enter their 20th year of working for CIC by hosting a long service celebration, which this year was hosted by our new Chief Executive, Neil Matthewman, and our Chair of Trustees, Simon Attwell.

Fourteen staff who joined CIC in 1991 and are still working for our charity today, were invited to our head office in Widnes for an informal presentation and party.

Introducing the event, Simon said, "Our staff are CIC's greatest asset so it with great pride that I have this opportunity to say thank you to you all today. In this room we have so many different professional skills; from support workers to chefs, managers to housekeepers, yet what you all have in common is the incredible dedication you have shown for two decades."

Neil added, "You have been part of CIC for so many years because you have wanted to make a difference to the

people we support and you undoubtedly have. On behalf of the Executive Team and everyone at CIC, I'd like to thank you for your hard work and commitment to our charity."

After Neil and Simon personally presented the group with special gifts marking their long service, **You First** caught up with some of the recipients.

Mandy McDonald and Sara Gordon both started their careers working as staff nurses at one of CIC's first services, Gordon House in Liverpool. They believe that being part of CIC has given them a rewarding career and enabled them to make a difference.

Mandy, who now works within CIC's Learning and Development Team, said: "The values of CIC have always been robust; from when I first joined CIC in 1991 through to now, we have always 'put individuals first'. Because of these values, we have grown into the large and successful charity we are today. I feel

very proud to have played my own part in CIC's success."

Gordon House manager Sara added, "Time flies and it really doesn't feel like I have been here for 20 years, but it has been an incredibly rewarding two decades. There is nothing more fulfilling than improving a person's quality of life and I have been able to do so by working for CIC."

With well over 64,000 days of work for our charity between them, our 1991 recruits truly deserve our thanks.



20 Years of Service...

| Name | Service |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Avril Haycock | Winsford Grange |
| Christine McKeown | Bankfield |
| David Kelly | Birwood |
| Derek Fowler | Ivyhurst |
| James Bennett | Elizabeth Road |
| Joyce Burke | Glenwood |
| Julie Nolan | Eccleston Court |
| June Dunne | Marpell House |
| Karen Sanders | CIC Central Office |
| Lisa Little | Boxgrove |
| Mandy Macdonald | CIC Central Office |
| Sara Taylor | Gordon House |
| Stella Brown | Green Heys |
| Susan Pritchard | Boxgrove |



Looking back.

All of us talk about our past. It's a way of reminding ourselves of the happy and the sad times in our lives, of connecting with people through conversation and sharing our experiences. But for people with dementia, reminiscence can bring stimulation, happiness and peace of mind. **You First** meets three CIC Senior Care homes who use the past to help their residents enjoy a happier present.

"Dementia affects a person's memory and causes great confusion," explains Julie Lindsay, Deputy Manager of Pemberton Fold. "Because of this many people with the condition feel immense frustration at not being able to properly recall or interpret things, and this inevitably leads to them feeling like they are losing their sense of identity."

Yet remarkably, often people who have even advanced dementia and very poor short-term memory, still have strong recollections of their past, and this is where reminiscence sessions can play an important role in the care and support delivered to them. Julie explains, "By talking to people about their lives and using familiar items from the past as prompts, we can engage with people, stimulate their long-term memories and lift their mood."

This in turn all helps to overcome their feelings of confusion and frustration, giving them a sense of peace and bringing back their sense of identity.

She continues, "As well as being of remarkable benefit to our residents, reminiscence is also a fantastic way for

staff to really get to know the people they support, their personality and their history, and to use this information to deliver excellent care."

Thinking outside of the box

One innovative way that Pemberton Fold delivers reminiscence is through helping residents to make their own 'memory boxes' - wooden Perspex fronted presentation cases filled with mementos of their life. Julie explains, "Everyone keeps items that are sentimentally precious to themselves - photographs, letters and keepsakes from happy and even sad times. We help our residents to create their own memory boxes filled with items that they have collected throughout their lifetime."

Many residents use their memory boxes to display things that remind them of key moments in their life, like photographs of their children when they were younger, war medals or even ration books. "We can use these items to start conversations that spark memories - 'Is this your son as a baby in this photograph?' or 'What sort of food could you get with your ration book'," Julie says.

This helps to build a remarkable bond between residents and the people who support them. "Residents love working with staff to create the memory boxes and having staff take such an active interest in their lives. But more than this, our staff genuinely enjoy developing a more intimate understanding of the person they are caring for, hearing the fascinating stories that make the person who they are and building closer relationships with them."

A collection of memories

Such has been the incredible success of reminiscence at the home that staff, along with families of residents, have helped to build a dedicated reminiscence area filled with a vast array of familiar objects from the past. "We've been given all sorts of amazing items like old cameras, black and white photographs of the local area, and even packaging from produce like Sunlight Soap," says Julie.

For family members, visiting a loved one who is in a state of confusion can be a distressing experience but by having these objects from the past, they are given a talking point and a way to

A guide to Reminiscence for people with dementia....

By Sue Lord, Home Manager -
The Dell, Manchester.

"There are many things that can be used for reminiscence sessions. Memories are brought back to us in a number of ways: through our sense of smell, with familiar objects, using music and videos; books and pictures; and also through everyday conversation.

When delivering reminiscence sessions for people with dementia it is important to keep things simple by not providing too much information at one time. Just using one visual aid works better than using several items, reducing confusion for the individual or group involved. Also, encouraging loved ones to take part can help, as familiar faces encourage participation and can also help provide information.

Making sure people feel included and listened to is integral to a productive reminiscence session. Not only does this boost their sense of self-esteem, you may also find that you learn some fascinating things yourself!"

engage their loved one. "Relatives say that they enjoy sitting with their mum or dad in this area, looking through the objects together and chatting about the memories they bring," adds Julie.

Bringing a smile

It's not just objects and conversation that can stimulate memories, reminiscence can also be delivered through activity. Julie explains: "For instance, many of our residents take part in a music group where they sing along with songs that will have been familiar to them all their lives. It is amazing to see how some people with very late-stage dementia, who cannot maintain a conversation, can still sing along word-for-word with a song like Jerusalem, with wide smiles."

Seeing this effect on residents is what spurs Julie, the activity coordinators and staff team at Pemberton to always find new ways to further develop their reminiscence programme. "Our memories form our sense of identity," Julie concludes, "and there is nothing more rewarding than being able to support people with dementia to find this; to see beyond their condition and to give them the comfort they deserve."

Memory bank



Last year a team of employees from Barclays Bank's IT Team took part in a volunteering challenge at St Stephen's Care Home in Cheshire. They decided to try their hand at something a little more creative when they designed and built a 1950's style room for residents...

"We thought long and hard about what we could do to make our mark on St Stephen's and came up with the idea of creating a reminiscence room for residents to relax in with family and friends," explains Barclays IT Manager and Project Team Leader, Leanne Dow. "So, armed with rolls of vintage-style wallpapers, antique furniture, a sewing machine and lots of lovely fabrics, we set about transforming an ordinary sitting room into a step back in time!"

The result of the team's hard work is truly amazing, delighting residents and staff alike: "The Barclays team have done a terrific job and everyone at St Stephen's is so thrilled with it," says Deputy Home Manager, Cindy Southhall. "Residents now use the new room to sit with family and friends, listening to the radio or just having a cup of tea. As well as being a real talking point, all the old fashioned memorabilia is really comforting to residents, stirring fond memories of years gone by."



Day in the Life of...

After graduating from the University of Liverpool with a degree in psychology, 24 year-old Deborah Kidd didn't need any help in deciding what career path she wanted to follow; with a keen passion for helping people, and a personal commitment to challenging the barriers faced by many people with support needs, Deborah knew that social work was her vocation.

Now Deborah is getting the practical work experience she needs for her dream job by taking part in CIC's volunteer programme - Experience. Deborah volunteers three days a week at CIC's Vocational Support day service, helping people with learning difficulties, autism and mental health concerns find meaningful employment and training.

Here, **You First** catches up with Deborah who shares with us her diary of a typical day as a volunteer with CIC...



15th February 2012

9am

Arrive at the office and switch on the computer (and the kettle!) My role includes everything from helping out with the day-to-day running of the office, to delivering support to our service users, and so my first task of the day is always to check my emails and make sure I get any important dates or jobs in the diary.

9.15am

Keeping service users' files up to date with all the relevant paperwork is one of my main jobs; this part of my placement has taught me a lot about the administrative side of running a large case load - something I'm sure will help prepare me for life as a busy social worker!

10.00am

I'm heading out with Vocational Support Facilitator, Paul Caslin, as he needs to do a one-to-one review with a support worker. This means that another person has to go along to support our service user. This is where I step in! I love this aspect of my role as I get to meet the people we support and see first-hand how happy they are in their places of work.

10.30am

Today I meet Jordan, who is working for Liverpool City Council's environmentally-friendly recycling service, Bulky Bobs. When we arrive Jordan is happily singing along to the radio whilst he and his co-worker sort out the day's deliveries.





11.00am

With Paul off having his meeting, Jordan and I get chance to have a chat about his hobbies; it's clear he loves music and I start thinking about where else we could look to find a placement for him. I know that in the past we have supported people to work at local radio stations - with one service user even getting their own radio show! Jordan seems delighted at this suggestion and I make a note to start researching this when I get

back to the office. One of the most important aspects of the service we offer is encouraging people to find work that is not only personally satisfying but also allows them to achieve their full potential.

12.30pm

Lunch time! After a quick bite to eat and a catch up with some colleagues, I spend a few minutes checking the UCAS website. I've just submitted my application for a place at the University of Greenwich to study for my Masters in Social Work and have everything crossed that I will get in. As well as giving me the practical experience I needed to be able to apply, Vocational Support has also given me a great reference, which I hope will boost my chances of a place.

1.00pm

It's Thursday afternoon which means Jobs Club. This is a programme I run to help service users improve their CV's, look for paid employment and apply for jobs. Today I have three of my regular job club attendees in and we get down to work; one of them, Liz, has been doing fantastically well at her placement at Boots, but her dream job is to get paid work at her favourite clothes shop - Primark! Liz and I work on her CV and then I give her a hand to register for jobs on the store's website.



2.30pm

After a successful afternoon, I use my last hour to contact employers to enquire about placements for our service users. VSS are lucky to have a great relationship with some fantastic employers such as Mc Donald's, Costa Coffee and Barnardos. I think it's really important for such well-known companies to demonstrate their commitment to equal opportunities and promoting inclusive practices when it comes to recruiting staff; hopefully this will encourage more companies to do the same.



3.30pm

It's the end of a busy but productive day and as always, I've loved it. When I started working for CIC I was pretty sure that I wanted to be a social worker and this placement has only made me even more certain of that!

Spotlight on A



Across the UK there are approximately 500,000 people who are diagnosed as having an autism spectrum disorder. Yet for many people, autism remains a condition of which they have little understanding. Here, CIC's Autism Lead and North East Service Manager, Stuart Dryden, gives us an overview of what autism is and CIC's approach to supporting people with the condition.

What is autism?

"Autism is a lifelong developmental disability which affects a person's communication skills and how they understand and relate to the world around them. It is a spectrum condition, which means that whilst people with an Autism Spectrum Disorder share certain difficulties, the degree to which someone is affected by the condition varies from person to person.

There are three main areas in which people who have autism are affected, known as the 'Triad of Impairments'.

These difficulties are:

- **Language and Communication – Processing and retaining verbal information and understanding body language and gestures.**
- **Social and Emotional – Making friendships, working cooperatively and managing unstructured parts of the day.**
- **Flexibility of thought (imagination) – Coping with changes in routine or unfamiliar situations, understanding other people's thoughts and feelings.**

Many people with autism are able to lead independent lives with minimal assistance, whilst others with more acute needs can require intensive support.

CIC's autism services

At CIC, we support almost 200 people with needs across the autism spectrum, including many children. We support people with autism conditions to live independently in their own homes, to access their communities and to take part in day services and supported employment.

We recognise that everybody with autism is an individual and therefore needs to be supported in a person-centred way. This means that we work in partnership with the person, their family and a range of health care professionals to develop

a comprehensive understanding of their needs and tailor our approach accordingly to meet them.

We have had great success supporting people who have autism to achieve the things that are important to them, such as spending time with their family, learning new skills, going on holiday and gaining employment.

A Specialist Understanding

One way that CIC seeks to deliver innovative and excellent autism services is by working in partnership with universities and advisory bodies such



Strothers Road resident Patsy Mahoney (left) with Support Worker, Amy Crawford

utism

as the National Autistic Society. Three of CIC's services have been awarded Autism Accreditation by the National Autistic Society: supported living services Strothers Road in Gateshead and Redlands Lane in Fareham, as well as our Vocational Support service in Liverpool.

Their achievements represent the excellent support they provide to people on the autism spectrum. To achieve these standards they demonstrated to autism experts that they truly understand what autism is and how it affects people, and that their service properly meets the needs of people with the condition, enabling them to grow in skills and independence.

The future

Research and best practice around autism support is constantly evolving and CIC use this understanding to continually develop our services. Across our charity, we have considerable expertise in supporting people with autism and have consolidated this by developing a new autism strategy for our services in 2012.

CIC's autism strategy will respond to the key principles that underpin the government strategies for autism in England and Scotland; enhance training and development of staff working within our autism services; and see us work with external consultants and our own Autism Champions to develop CIC's own internal accreditation standards.

We are very excited to be launching such a progressive autism strategy. We know that there is an incredible amount of good work that goes on in CIC, helping people with autism spectrum conditions to achieve happier and more fulfilled lives, and we look forward to advancing this further in 2012."

Our accreditation success...

At the end of 2011, two of CIC's services achieved received reaccreditation from the National Autistic Society – Merseyside based supported employment service Vocational Support and supported living home, Strothers Road in Gateshead.

Howard Rice manages CIC Vocational Support, which in January 2008 became the first supported employment service in the UK to achieve Autism Accreditation. He tells us: "Gaining accreditation demonstrates that we are committed to a programme of continuous improvement and quality service delivery. But more so, it has helped us to improve the quality of the service we provide to many of our clients, not just to people on the autistic spectrum."

Howard adds: "Through gaining and maintaining accreditation status, we have realised the importance of planning for transition, providing continuity and consistency, and how to implement positive behavioural strategies for people with autism."

Strothers Road supports four people, including two people with needs on the autism spectrum. Home manager, Mairi Turner, explains the benefits their accreditation has brought: "Achieving accreditation has helped to reinforce the existing good practice in our home and makes a great statement about the standards we deliver. I am hugely proud of my team for all of their hard work and commitment in achieving this success."



Vocational Support manager Howard Rice and Matthew Evans, who has autism and is supported to work at Next



The Strothers Road team proudly show off their Accreditation certificate

Follow Our

Great North East Care Awards Elizabeth Stavers - Care Home Coordinator Award

Elizabeth manages two services that support four people with learning disabilities and complex needs in Gateshead. She received recognition for 'delivering consistently high standards of care to people living in residential care services'.

Two years ago, the people Elizabeth supports lived at home with their families. The time had come for them to live more independently, but naturally everyone involved was nervous as to what the future held.

As team leader it was Elizabeth's job was to understand the needs of her service users, recruit and build the teams that would support them and work with their families to ensure they remained involved and felt reassured. Today, Elspeth (58), Michael (36), Tim (57) and Paul (48) are happy and settled and their families can't praise Elizabeth and her team enough.

It is clear that Elizabeth leads by example and rolls her sleeves up with her team. "It is important that we all work together and value each others abilities and strengths. I am proud of my team and make sure they know it. Remaining open and approachable to everyone is also key," adds Elizabeth. "Families need to know we are committed to their loved ones and that we will talk to them about what is happening and that they can also talk to us if they need to."



Great North East Care Awards Cheviot Gardens - Putting People First Award

This award is given to individuals who demonstrate an innovative approach to empowering people to have more control over the care and support they receive.

The team at Cheviot Gardens in Gateshead support Chris, who has learning difficulties, and together they have helped him to make astounding progress.

"It's like being part of one big happy family," says Lyndsay Drew, joint manager at Cheviot Gardens, and part of a team of 10 staff, "and at the heart of our family is Chris."

Twenty-two year old Chris requires round-the-clock support. Because of early behaviour difficulties Chris had experienced exclusion in the community. "He was missing out on activities he loved, such as swimming," explains Lyndsay.

"As a team we worked with Chris helping him to settle down and integrate better. Now he not only goes swimming, but he has been on two holidays and every week goes to visit his family for Sunday lunch. Chris is now a happy and content young man."



Stars...

In **You First** 29 we reported on our outstanding achievements in winning and being shortlisted for a raft of social and health care awards. Since then, our talented and committed staff have gone on to win a further four awards! **You First** caught up with our winners to congratulate them and ask them to share with you the secrets of their success...

Great North East Care Awards Peter Murray - The Care Home Nutrition and Hydration Award

Peter is Head Chef at CIC's St Johns Nursing Home, Darlington. He was nominated for the award having helped the home, which supports 24 people with dementia and enduring mental health issues, achieve a 5 Star Food Safety Rating for six consecutive years and has also developed a menu for residents based upon the latest research in dementia catering.

"Nutrition is essential for keeping people healthier for longer, so I want to ensure that each resident has a balanced and varied menu and actually eats food they really enjoy," says Peter.

To do this, Peter talks to all 24 residents and their families, and creates dishes that they would have cooked at home. He has also researched ways to better cater for people with dementia and implemented techniques which help with coordination when eating and improved ambiance.

Peter says, "At St John's I am encouraged to take a person centred approach and come up with ways to make meal times a pleasant and enjoyable experience for each person we support."

Peter adds, "I love my job and feel I make a positive difference here."



National Care Awards Sarah Loftus - Special Needs Manager Award

Sarah manages Mount Road, a Sunderland service that supports six people with learning difficulties and mental health problems to lead full and happy lives in their community. She was nominated by Michelle Elstob, CIC service manager. She said: "Sarah ensures every individual is supported in a person-centred way."

When Donna (35) expressed her wish for a home of her own, Sarah worked hard with her and her family and multi disciplinary team to enable Donna to move into her own tenancy and gain independence. She went from receiving 24 hour live-in support to eventually reducing her support package to six hours a week.

"Donna was determined to live on her own and her confidence grew with every personal milestone she reached," explains Sarah. "It was not only a great achievement for Donna but it was also a triumph for us all. Helping people lead fuller lives is very satisfying and I am lucky to share that experience with all my dedicated staff team at Mount Road."



Reviews – Your chance to win the latest album releases.



Ramin – Ramin. Released March 5th on Sony Music

Ramin is one of the biggest stars of the West End having played the lead in both *The Phantom Of The Opera* and its sequel, *Love Never Dies*, and he is now ready to make his mark in the world of popular music with his debut album release.



The self-titled release steps beyond the world of musical theatre, taking influence from some of Ramin's favourite artists and songwriters. Produced by Tom Nichols, a producer who has worked on hit records with the likes of Celine Dion and Sugababes, it includes two newly-imagined versions of "Till I Hear You Sing" (from *Love Never Dies*) and "Music Of The Night" (from *Phantom*) alongside covers of Bryan Adams' "Everything I Do" and Muse's "Guiding Light". These, combined with brand new songs penned by Ryan Tedder (creator of Leona Lewis' megahit "Bleeding Love") and Broadway composer Duncan Sheik, as well as 4 songs co-written by Ramin himself, come together to create a fresh and diverse springboard for a truly exciting new voice.

Competition

To win one of three copies of the album, just answer this simple question:

Which West End musical has Ramin famously performed in?

- A Hair
- B The Phantom of the Opera
- C Spamalot

Rodrigo y Gabriela - Area 52. Out now.

They've sold 1.2 million records, soundtracked a *Pirates of the Caribbean* movie and even performed for President Obama, yet to many the name Rodrigo y Gabriela remains unfamiliar. This is set to change when the acclaimed Mexican acoustic duo release their new, highly anticipated album 'Area 52'. The pair, who are renowned for their spellbinding acoustic guitar playing, have teamed up with a thirteen-piece Cuban orchestra known as C.U.B.A for this latest eclectic release.

Alan Howells, CIC Training and Development Manager, reviewed the album for *You First*: "After years of developing their talent in Europe as well as their native Mexico, Rodrigo y Gabriela have created in Area 52 a masterpiece of various musical styles: a brilliant and eclectic fusion of Latin, salsa and Cuban music, jazz, rock, heavy rock, and even a sitar being used to add to the potent mix.

Area 52 is one of those albums that makes a positive impact the first time you hear it. At times it did remind me of some of the earlier vibe of Santana, which is not a bad thing at all, but definitely gives it a contemporary feel. I think this album will break Rodrigo y Gabriela into the mainstream."

Competition

To win one of three copies of Area 52, just answer the following question:

Which famous blockbuster did Rodrigo y Gabriela record a soundtrack for?

- A Avatar
- B Jurassic Park
- C Pirates of the Caribbean

Great Expectations, BBC One (12). Out now on DVD.

**Review by Hannah Mickleburgh
CIC volunteer work experience student.**

The BBC's adaption of *Great Expectations* follows Dickens' classic story to the word: the poor boy off the moors who is suddenly declared to have a very rich benefactor. Dickens' tale charts the life of Pip (Douglas Booth) from young lad to young man and his falling in love with a girl he once had to entertain (Vanessa Kirby).

Directed by Brian Kirk (*The Tudors*, *My Boy Jack*), the actors will be familiar to many having appeared in other period dramas. However, they acted excellently and you can see why they are so often given these familiar roles.

One thing is for certain though, *Great Expectations* is not a 'normal' period drama. The all-star cast

(featuring Gillian Anderson as the estranged Miss Havisham) portrayed these complicated characters with the ease and grace deserved of a literary master like Dickens, appearing completely comfortable in this world of mud, silk and Yorkshire accents.



Email your answers to
john.hughes@c-i-c.co.uk
or send your answers to
our address on page 3.
Deadline for entries is
27th April 2012.

Perfect Partnerships

At CIC we believe that collaborative and partnership working with like-minded organisations can be key to delivering personalised, flexible and innovative services to the people we support. One service really putting this principle into practice is 14 Norfolk Road, in Cumbria, which has recently been enjoying newly formed partnerships with both the University of Cumbria and independent advocacy organisation, People First.

You First caught up with Norfolk Road Manager, Martin Holmes, to find out more...

“Remaining attuned and responsive to the changing needs of the people we support is vital to providing person-centred care and support, and for me, partnerships are a key way of achieving this,” explains Martin.

With this in mind, Martin approached the University of Cumbria’s Occupational Therapy (OT) department, proposing a partnership that that he felt would not only benefit the people at Norfolk Road, but would also provide a great learning opportunity for the Uni’s OT students.

After meeting with Geogina Callister, the Senior Lecturer at the School of Rehabilitation and Public Health, Martin was delighted when she agreed to endorse an 8-week placement for two final year OT students.

Making plans

“My proposal was for the students to work closely with two service users, David and Roger, who both have learning difficulties. We really wanted to improve on our communication with David, who has sensory impairment, and we also felt that Roger’s independence could really be improved with education around everyday life skills.”

Working with this brief, the students supported David to create a sensory communication-board, including different scents and smells, giving David more

choice and control. “The communication-board is a great initiative,” says Martin. “It attributes different scents and smells to different activities, giving staff at the service a better understanding of David’s likes and dislikes. This means we can make sure he is doing more of the things he enjoys, which is what our support should be all about.”

“With Roger, the students worked with him and his key worker Clarke, to help create a plan which would increase his confidence in the kitchen, doing everyday tasks such as washing dishes or making a cup of tea; again, this has been a huge success,” adds Martin.

Martin has now been invited to co-present a workshop at the University, discussing the mutual benefits of such placements for both people supported and students. The service is also looking forward to welcoming two new students later on in the year.

Passport to progress

The theme of improved communication was also the catalyst for another partnership enjoyed by the team at Norfolk Road, with Lorna Smith, a Specialist Advocacy Worker, from Cumbria People First’s ‘Voices of the Voiceless’ Project.

“The aim of the project is to work alongside people who can’t communicate verbally, focusing on areas such as social activities, accessibility and service developments,” explains Lorna. “Ultimately our goal is to offer non-verbal service users access to tools which mean they can better communicate their feelings and wishes, and ultimately lead better lives.”

Communication Passports use written words, photographs and video to document how a person communicates and help staff to understand how to better communicate with them. “The communication passports have been a great addition to the support plans we create for our service users, enabling us to ensure that people are supported in a personalised and unique way,” explains Martin.

Give it a try

So what is Martin’s advice for CIC’s managers looking to bring partnerships to their services?

“In care, as in life, there are always new things to learn,” says Martin. “By seeking out and being receptive to innovation from a number of sources, we have been able to greatly improve the lives of the people we support. I’d say to anyone who has an idea for a partnership to try and make this link. We’ve found that the partnerships we have developed have been very well received and actually mutually beneficial.”

Roger is supported in the kitchen by support workers Kayley McGowan and Gary Foley



Carol Graham, David’s Key Worker, shows colleague, Peter Cork, David’s sensory communication board



Carol Graham spending time with David



Delivering Dignity



Six years after its initial launch in 2006, the Department of Health's Dignity in Care Campaign continues to go from strength to strength.

The campaign, which aims to put dignity and respect at the heart of all care services, has now attracted over 23,000 Dignity Champions - individual ambassadors who have each pledged their support for ensuring that people who need care receive the respect and compassion they deserve.

Indeed, across CIC many of our own staff have taken up the challenge of becoming a Dignity Champion and are rallying together to promote this important cause. Brenda Cawton, Manager at The Whinnies in Gateshead, home to three adults with learning difficulties, says: "CIC is built upon the vision of an inclusive society, in which every person is treated with dignity and respect; so it comes as no surprise to me that so many of our staff feel so passionately about supporting the Dignity in Care campaign."

Brenda herself is now chair of CIC's North East Dignity Forum. The group, which includes 22 Dignity Champions from across the region, meet on a bi-monthly basis to share good practice

and devise new and innovative ways to promote dignity across the organisation.

One such innovative approach can be seen in CIC's North West region, where Dignity Champions there have developed DAVE (Dignity and Values Events) a specialised package of dignity training events for staff. Service Manager, Leanne Cretney, who played a pivotal role in developing the training says, "DAVE was devised with the goal of educating staff, reinforcing best practice and ensuring that everyone in CIC understands the importance of safeguarding the dignity of each and every person we support."

She continues, "We have received overwhelmingly positive feedback from the staff who have taken part so far,

suggesting that this training is making a difference and having a positive impact on the lives of the people we support."

Pat Cunningham, Office Manager at CIC's Liverpool Office, recently attended the DAVE training. She says: "Even though I am not directly involved in delivering care services, I was encouraged to attend the training event by the Dignity Champions in my office. They believe, as do I, that it is vital for everyone in our charity to understand the basics of excellent care."

She concludes: "The training definitely opened my eyes as to what the word 'dignity' really means and the importance of treating people as you would want to be treated."

February 1st was Dignity Action Day and our services across England and Scotland marked this important date with a series of events that allowed our staff and the people we support to explore dignity and what it means to them. Here are some of the highlights...

North East England

People supported by CIC across the North East, Leeds and Leicester held a community event in Stockton-On-Tees using their creative talents to explain why everyone deserves dignity and respect. Activities included drama, arts and crafts, as well as information sessions for the public.

Carlingwark House

Carlingwark House Care Home in Dumfries held a pyjamas and coffee morning. As staff and residents sipped their coffees, they joined in a discussion on the topic of "What Does Dignity Mean To You?"

St Patrick's & Winsford Grange

St Patrick's Senior Care home in Widnes held activities ranging from reminiscence sessions hosted by a local World War II expert, to

decorating the home's 'Dignity Tree' with handwritten messages about what dignity means. Winsford Grange residents braved the bad weather to release 10 white balloons, one for each point of the Dignity Challenge (see right).

Liverpool

Liverpool region marked Dignity Action Day with a celebration inviting people supported by CIC to explain their experiences of receiving support and what dignity means to them, through writing, drawing, recording and talking. A book of these thought provoking exchanges will be produced as a permanent record of the day.

Portsmouth

Our Portsmouth team hit Wickham town centre armed with leaflets and trays of

biscuits, inviting members of their local community to pop into their local office for a Dignity Coffee Morning. Within half an hour, their office was full, with local neighbours keen to find out more about CIC and Dignity Action Day. The Portsmouth team made a dignity tree out of paper and invited guests to write on it what dignity means to them, with responses including: "Treat me how I treat you", "Let me be me" and "Include me, don't exclude me."

Caroline Bairstow, CIC Assistant Director, says: "Being treated with dignity is a right that all of us are entitled to, yet too often people with care and support needs are not afforded the respect they deserve. At CIC, we believe that we should live in an inclusive society where everyone is valued and because of this, we wholeheartedly support the aims of the Dignity in Care Campaign."



The Dignity Challenge

The challenge sets out what high quality services, that respect people's dignity, should do:

- Have zero tolerance for all forms of abuse.
- Support people with the same respect you would want for yourself or a member of your family.
- Treat each person as an individual by offering a personalised service.
- Enable people to maintain their maximum level of independence, choice and control.
- Listen & support people to express their needs & wants.
- Respect people's right to privacy.
- Ensure people feel able to complain without fear of retribution.
- Engage with family members and carers as care partners.
- Assist people to maintain confidence and positive self-esteem.
- Act to alleviate people's loneliness and isolation.



SING voice their feedback!

In November 14 people supported by CIC from across England and Scotland came together to take part in an exciting two day social inclusion event that saw them have their say and influence the running of our charity.



The team are members of CIC's national social inclusion group, SING, and they were taking part in an EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) assessment of CIC.

The EFQM assessment is used by top businesses across Europe as a way to continuously improve the services they deliver, and as an organisation that puts the people we support at the heart of all we do, we wanted them be part of this important review.

CIC's Head of Audit, Darren Goorwappa, led the assessment and explains, "It has always been a key value of CIC that our service users can influence the running of the organisation. This year, it was decided that the best and most innovative way of achieving this was to have the people we support perform an EFQM Excellence Assessment of CIC."

He continues, "The EFQM Excellence Model provides a thorough audit of the strengths of an organisation. It allowed the people we support to assess all aspects of CIC – from its leaders, to its impact on the community and the environment, and in doing so gave us a

fuller understanding of what they think we are doing well and where we can improve."

High Standards

Darren and the SING group worked alongside an independent assessor to ensure that their feedback followed the rigorous EFQM standards. Great efforts were also made to make the event accessible.

Darren explains, "Through using accessible language and imagery we ensured that everybody could participate. But to really bring things to life, we employed the services of an amateur dramatics group to role-play situations for the group, making the concepts accessible and understood."

At the end of the two days, 40 areas for improvement were identified, 45 strengths and many insights.

Importantly, the SING members enjoyed the event and said that it was a valuable exercise. Darren says, "Feedback sheets from participants showed how successful the assessment was. When you read comments like "It felt good to make CIC better" and "I'm glad I came, I listened and was listened to", you know that people feel like they have been part of something worthwhile."

Taking Action

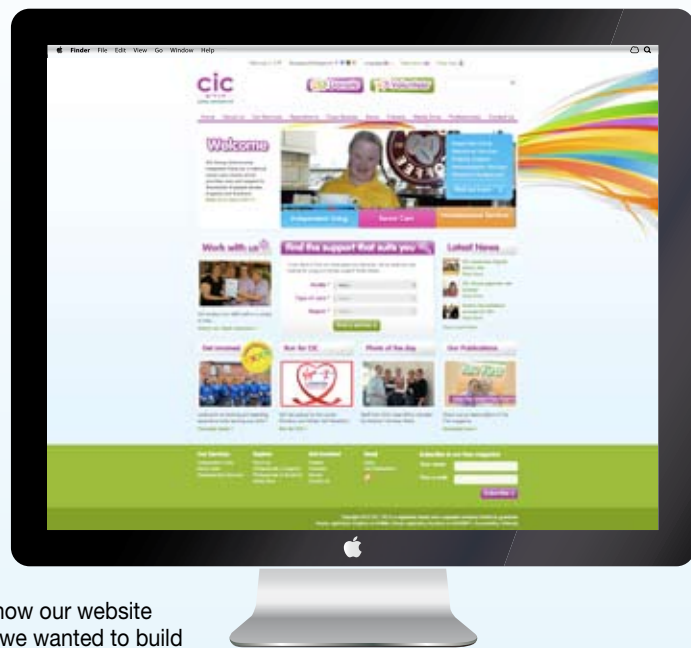
A full report from the session will be delivered by SING to CIC's Executive Team for review, and they will use this to further improve CIC's services. Jane Worsley, CIC's Director of Operations and Deputy CEO, explains, "We will be meeting soon to consider all of the feedback that SING has given us and see how we can best respond to it.

She adds, "Listening and responding to the people we support is invaluable and something that has always been important to CIC. Having our national social inclusion group take part in the EFQM assessment is a new and innovative way of achieving this."

CIC online...

The web is the gateway to the world. If you have a question or need some advice, chances are you'll look online to find the answer. Which is why at CIC, we wanted our website to be our online shop front – to tell people about our charity and what makes it so special and to give anybody the opportunity to find out how they can be part of our community.

At the start of this year, CIC launched a brand new website to achieve this ambition. CIC's Communications and Marketing team tell us more...



“Twelve months ago we started planning for the new website with the aim of giving CIC the best possible online platform”, explains John Hughes, CIC's Senior Marketing and Communications Officer. “This meant creating a site that was user friendly and easy to access; that allowed people to find out about CIC and get a sense of life in our charity; and made it easy for people to get in touch with us – whether they want to find out about the support we offer, apply to work with CIC or to volunteer with us.”

He continues, “To achieve this, we knew that we needed to plan our site in a way that offered the best possible user experience to visitors. We chose to work alongside a website agency that has a specialist understanding of making user-friendly websites and working with large complex charities like CIC and began an intensive process of research and planning with them.”

This process saw the marketing team undertake focus groups with CIC's staff, the people we support and their friends and relatives, to find out about how they use the web and what they thought our website should offer. The team also intensively looked at the many services CIC provide and planned how to present them in the most intuitive and informative way.

Danielle Chan, CIC's Communications and Marketing Officer explains, “When we started the project we didn't want to make

any assumptions about how our website should look, but instead we wanted to build it around the needs, interests and abilities of people who will use it. The feedback we received from the CIC community was really the foundation of the website development and has enabled us to produce such an easy to use site.”

Over the course of the year, the team worked intensively on the project – developing blueprints for the site and planning its technical functions, overseeing its design

and developing content for hundreds of pages. This January, their work came to fruition and the site was ready to launch.

Danielle says, “It is an incredible feeling to see a site develop from being a set of blueprints on a piece of paper into a fully functioning, live website. There has been a lot of hard work put into making the site and we are so grateful to everyone who contributed to this project.”

John adds, “Since launch, the site has been a great success. We've had fantastic feedback from users, have seen record traffic to the site and have had lots more people get in touch to find out about how they can join CIC. We are very proud of the site but this is just the beginning to us; we are now looking forward to taking it further and introducing lots of new features over the months and years ahead.”

Our new site includes:

- Specially developed enquiry forms to offer enhanced customer service to people enquiring about CIC.
- A specially built support finder that allows people to find out exactly what support CIC can offer them in their region.
- Lots of great case studies showcasing the successes of the people we support and our staff.
- A dedicated professional's zone, with information tailored to social care professionals.
- A media area filled with CIC's award winning publications – including back issues of **You First**.
- Dedicated careers and volunteering sections, allowing people to find out more and apply for our work opportunities.
- Enhanced accessibility features including a 'read aloud' tool and translated pages.

www.c-i-c.co.uk



“

Every event helps the CPBF provide more support to care workers in need.”

Fiona Phillips, CPBF Patron.



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