

KeyRing News

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Back to work!

As Covid restrictions have started to lift some of the North Yorkshire Self Advocates have been able to go back to their jobs.

Tom is strimming again

I work for groundwork North Yorkshire on Tuesdays and Thursdays.



Tom at work

When I start work, I help to put the tools on the back of the pick up before we set off. When we arrive and before I start working, I make sure I have my steel toe capped work boots on and protective gloves.

Sometimes I wear a visor and ear defenders depending on the job I am doing. One day I could be doing the strimming and on other days, I could be weeding, mowing the lawn or clearing areas of dead plants and trees. If there is a lot of rubbish on the back of the pick up at the end of the day then we have to take that to the tip as well.

I get on really well with my work mates; two of my friends that I have made there are called Brendan and Steve.

I like the job because I don't just do one thing all of the time. Work is important to me because it gives me a sense of independence and it gets me out of the house and I feel that it is important to me to go out and do things rather than being inside all of the time. I like being part of a team. I like my flat but I like being out and about in the fresh air!

Sam's happy to be back

I go to Em People every Monday from 10am to about 3pm. The staff take my temperature when I get there and we wear masks.

I look on the white board and see what jobs I will be doing that day. I have done painting, upcycling and crafts and we do seasonal crafts for special occasions. We have made wreaths at Christmas and rabbit themed stuff for Easter.

I started the chair in the morning and I chose the colours and the design I wanted to use. I was happy with the finished chair. Em People will put a price on the chair and put it in the shop to sell afterwards.



Sam painting a chair at work

At the end of the day, we clean up everything we have used and tidy up the kitchen. It feels good to be creative.



News from Newcastle

Getting Out Again

● BY JANE BRENNAN



Jane getting out and about

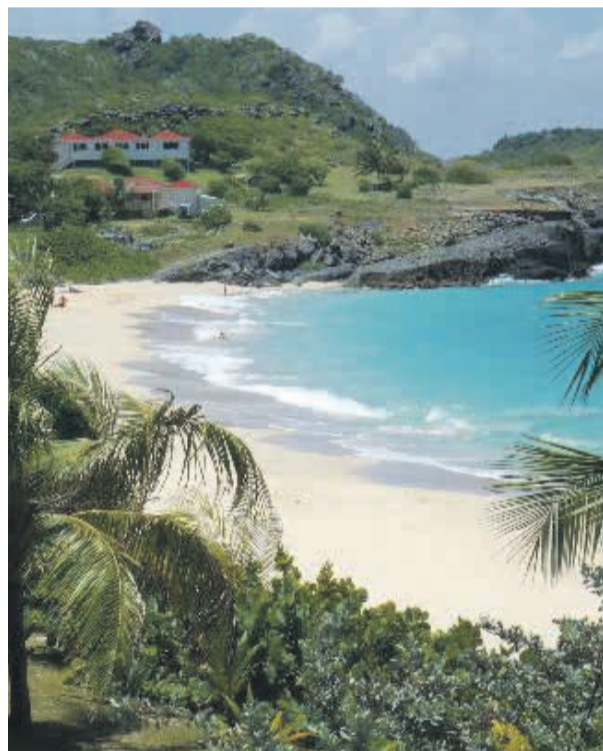
It's been really hard over lockdown. You can't do your normal things like go to charity shops, or see friendly faces, and you can't have hugs. It really affected my mental health to feel trapped in my flat.

KeyRing volunteer Clare became my angel of hope, by leaving little gifts outside my door with smiley faces. I have COPD and problems with my circulation, so I had to be extra careful.

Things are starting to look a bit better now. I've had my vaccine. I'm looking forward to meeting friends, support groups, visiting shops and getting a big hug from my KeyRing support. Thank you to KeyRing for all the help.

Minty's Performance

Minty is a very talented circus performer. In April they were offered a once in a life-time opportunity to go to St Barts in the Caribbean as part of a performance group.



The beach in St Barts

Minty hadn't even been on the bus in the previous 12 months, or outside of where they live, and so to travel so far was a very daunting prospect, but also an amazing opportunity.

After a lot of planning and testing, they went and had a terrific time. The performance went down really well and they saw turtles on the beautiful beach.

Getting Fit

● BY JOHNNY BROWN

During lockdown, I felt stressed. I couldn't see people, I couldn't go to work or college, I couldn't go swimming, or do my usual routines. I decided I would use the extra time I had to get fit and strong, lose weight, and strengthen my knees, and improve my balance, so I can walk further and be healthy. I've lost over a stone, by cutting out chocolate and fatty foods.



Johnny working out

I've been doing lots of exercise - kettle bells, exercise bike, and walking. I also do the plank - that's my favourite.

I want to do lots of walking and be as fit as I possibly can when we go to Berwick on the KeyRing holiday. I am enjoying feeling stronger.

What next for Bexley Members?

Members recently met at The Furze Wren pub Bexleyheath to talk about what they can do and want to do in the future now restrictions are easing.

Simon Evans



Simon says he is looking forward to being able to go and have a drink inside the pub and meet to have a chat to people he knows in there.

Simon went to Croydon last year to meet up with staff there. He said he would like to go back and see everyone again. Charlie made a good impression on Simon.

Simon enjoyed meeting at the hub even though sitting outside it can get cold.

Chris Brockwell



Chris missed seeing his family and has really enjoyed catching up with them.



Chris said it's nice just to be able to meet for a coffee and a chat.

He is looking forward to the KeyRing meal nights when we all meet up.

David Belsham



Out of all our Members David missed the hubs most. David is enjoying meeting all again. He does not like it when it is cold but still comes.

David loves to travel and will arrange himself to travel to Paris for a week and will go every year. He is really hoping to go again this year.

David also wants to go to KeyRing conferences as he loves to travel and book himself into a nice hotel.

Mark Cure



Mark said it's nice to be able to meet with friends and have a chat.

Mark said he would like to go bowling with other KeyRing Members like he did before as he really enjoyed this.



Mark went to the Even Stevens Christmas party

Mark said he would really like to go to New Cross again for the Even Stevens night.

Wheels for Wellbeing

The Croydon Hub has been able to go back to Wheels for Wellbeing at Croydon Arena for the first time since it's re-opened since lockdown.

We had a small group this time but are hoping to grow it again because it was quite popular before it had to close.

One of the main changes to it now is that you have to book a time slot instead of just dropping in, but that's not been much of an issue

because it means that you can chop and change bikes more freely!



Sarah's Art

During the first lockdown **Sarah** from our **Frome Network** was shielding but made sure that she used her time to make lots of pictures and put them all into her window. She also used her knitting skills to knit a scarf for her husband and also one for herself.



Congratulations David!

Congratulations to **David Gill** who is a KeyRing Member in **Rotherham**. He has been nominated for a National Diversity Award in the Positive Role Model (Disability) category.



The Diversity Awards aim to celebrate the diversity of talent in the UK and inspire and motivate others.

David is a Learning Disability and Autism Adviser for NHS England. He says: *"It is a massive honour to be nominated in the Positive Role Model Disability category of the National Diversity Awards. When I was growing up I was often told that I would not*

be able to hold down full time employment, drive a car, be in a relationship and live independently and I have proved that wrong and done all those things.

KeyRing has played a massive part in helping me get to where I am today not

only by supporting me with my independence, but also helping me gain confidence that I could hold down full time employment with my work on the area forum and national forum.

I hope my story helps inspires other Members that we can live a good life and go on to achieve good things!"



THE DIGITAL LIFELINE PROJECT



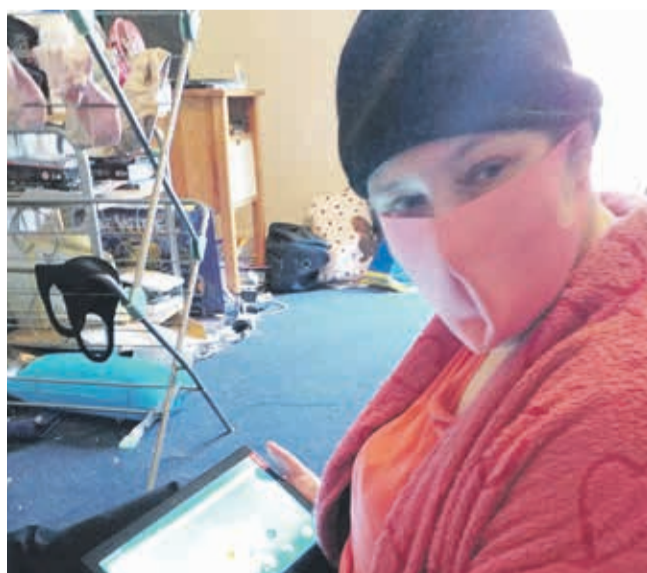
Some of our Members have been using smartphones and digital devices for a while and others have not been able to get involved.



The pandemic has made it harder for people to connect face to face so we jumped at the chance to work with some of our less digitally connected Members.



We thought about who would benefit most and applied for some devices and wifi through government funding.



Our teams worked really hard to set these up and introduce them to all that digital connectivity has to offer.



Here are some photos of Members receiving their new devices.

Art and Creativity Week

From the 14th -19th June we celebrated Art and Creativity Week by sharing some of the amazing artwork that KeyRing people have produced. Here are some of the pictures you sent in.



Art and Creativity Week

Creative writing

Some Members also shared their creativity through writing.

KeyRing

● BY SHARON P

To you these words I write,
To you these words I give.
For you have not only given
me your friendship,
Also a new life to live.
New people, new friends
and faces I see,
Wow, I thought once, this
could never be.
Feeling happy, feeling free,
makes me stronger more
and more.
For I know you are always
there, and that you have
helped me through this door.
A door of new light, a door
of sunshine you bring,
And to you I have to say,
Thank you KeyRing.

My Dad's Story

● BY ROBERT ABSOLOM

This is story based on my Dad, who got lost in the desert and got saved by a Bedouin



"Eric Baker for the Bristol & Cornwall light Infantry." Suddenly there's a lorry in front of him.
He's knocked out in a coma. Family are told time will tell if he survives.
In a dream he finds himself in the desert. A man throws a grenade. When he comes to, he finds himself, in a tent.
A man said "Hallo"
"Who are you?"
"I'm Ismail."
"You're a Bedouin"
"That's right. You had gangrene, I cut out the shrapnel and cauterised the infection with Gogol a non-

alcoholic drink. We're Muslims who don't drink.
"Hi my name's Eric Baker."
He goes into a room, he finds clothes. The man who threw the grenade goes into the tent.
He says "You threw the grenade!"
"Yes."
"Why did you save my life?"
"This is not the death I want you to have."
And he woke up in hospital...
"All right you're in Somerset Army Hospital."
After this he got married had 2 boys and lived in Bristol.

News from Grimsby



● BY SADIE MONTEITH

Kevin's New Chair

Kevin is 60. He always had a chair that propped up your feet. He said all he has ever wanted is a chair that can go all the way backwards and he can lay down and relax.

He asked if I could help him to find one, and together we looked at lots of different online shops that were reputable to find one he liked at a low price.

Kevin settled on a recliner chair he found at Argos. He ordered it to be delivered to his flat, which he was really excited about.

He was really worried about assembling and I said don't worry, we'll do it together as a team. When I arrived on delivery day, Kevin was sitting ready with his tool box and a cup of tea.

I read the instructions to him, and we did it one bit at a time. He said he was super proud



Kevin in his new chair

of himself for making his chair and that he wanted to show off his lockdown project and fancy new chair so that everyone at KeyRing could see.

He thinks it's really funny and feels like you're floating. He said he fell asleep in it for a few hours by mistake that evening before going to bed because it's so comfortable!

Paul's New Flat

Paul Butters recently moved into a new flat and is so proud of it, and is really sincerely flourishing.

I'm so proud of Paul and the progress he is making. He regularly goes food shopping and is now learning to cook and enjoying this a lot.

He is very into arts and crafts and is looking to attend more classes at Foresight Grimsby, as well as looking to volunteer there.

Paul said: *"I feel like I've settled in well. I really like my new flat. It makes me feel more independent. Lynne has been very supportive and she helped me to find my new flat.*

I really like when Lynne visits. I want to say a big thank you to Lynne because I really like it here. I have been taking



Paul in his new home

walks with Lucy and learning the bus routes, and I am going to Foresight to see if I can volunteer with Sadie.

We also practice cooking and we do lots of food shopping. Thank you very much for helping me, Lynne. Hope to see you again soon."

A Tribute to Members in the Bath Network

● BY TIM LANGHORN

On the 23rd March 2020, we went into the first national lockdown. It was a new and strange experience. The streets went very quiet and the City of Bath was empty. The hustle and bustle of shoppers and tourists no longer there. The usual noise of traffic or people chatting in the street or on their phones, gone silent.



Ronald Wilkins

For all our Members, the world around them was closing down. Social groups, activity groups, projects or meetings all had to stop. Members were experiencing an upheaval to their daily and weekly routine. Including their support from KeyRing.

For most Members in Bath, they received phone calls instead of face-to-face visits. Then eventually, when Members started to feel less worried or anxious, we started to meet outside. Only visiting

Members in their homes when absolutely necessary. As time went on, we started to meet in small groups, which really helped people feel less isolated.

Throughout this time, the Members in Bath have experienced many emotions. For some it was very scary and they were frightened to leave their home. Many experienced the feeling of loneliness or isolation, as they could no longer visit friends, family, or the usual people they would

see. However, bit by bit, all our Members started to build a new structure for their week, a new routine, new ways to communicate with people and developed new ideas to keep themselves occupied.

Slowly, some of those not so nice feelings started to go. They all know there is still a way to go before life gets back to more how it used to be. Nevertheless, they are getting there.

I wanted to pay tribute to all the Members in Bath for how they have bravely kept going through a very challenging time. Each one of our Members has shown that they have the capacity to cope with unexpected change. Each Member has shown how strong and resilient they can be, when faced with such a serious situation as a pandemic.

I want to give a big and hearty shout out to Derek, Nigel, Ruth, Katy, Rachel, Dave, Mark, Eddie, Jenny and Ron. Regardless of what the future holds in store, you are all truly amazing people.

Sadly, since Tim wrote this article Ronald Wilkins has passed away. Dawn, the Bath volunteer says *"Ronald will be greatly missed."*

Your News and Photos

Adorable Kiri Anne



Ricky and Sally are active Members of the Grimsby Network. They are a great support to other Members, always welcoming and willing to help with practical tasks.

KeyRing have supported Ricky and Sally for several years. We enjoyed celebrating their wedding in 2019.



They welcomed their beautiful daughter **Kiri Anne** to their family on Wednesday 5th May weighing 7lb 6oz.

Sally and Ricky said *"It's been hard work and is very tiring but we adore having Kiri and feel so very lucky."*

What a sky!!

Steven Holley took this photo of an amazing sky when he went to Cleethorpes for the weekend.



What are you looking forward to when restrictions lift?



Wayne says:
"Volunteering at St Oswalds

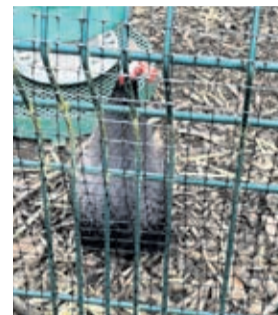
charity. I check the CDs and DVDs, if there any spaces on the shelves, I put the CDs and DVDs in the right section."



Amanda says:
"Going to a few more groups

again and trying to get out more with the kids."

Pets Corner



Pets Corner in Newcastle reopened to the public this month. **Robert Patterson**

hasn't been able to go there for over a year.



He was pleased to have an afternoon out to see the animals and have a bacon sandwich at the cafe. *"It felt nice to do something normal again"*.



News From the Trustees

The Board of Trustees met on 24th April. Part of the meeting looks back over the past financial year and assesses how we have done financially and whether we have done what we said we would do in the KeyRing Business Plan.

The Trustees were pleased that despite Covid-19 we had a good year, **“KeyRing was not just surviving, but thriving!”** We made progress with the business plan and ended the year with a small surplus that we will reinvest in research and innovation work.

■ Business plan 2021/22

The trustees approved our business plan for 2021-22. You can see a video about KeyRing’s plans at: <https://bit.ly/3cQRlqw>



■ Policies

The Trustees looked at two of our policies: Health and Safety and Information Security and Data Protection and approved them.

These policies are really important for keeping everyone in KeyRing and all our information safe.



The Board also takes time to look at themselves and how well they are doing. The Trustees looked at their skills and interests and how they can support KeyRing best.

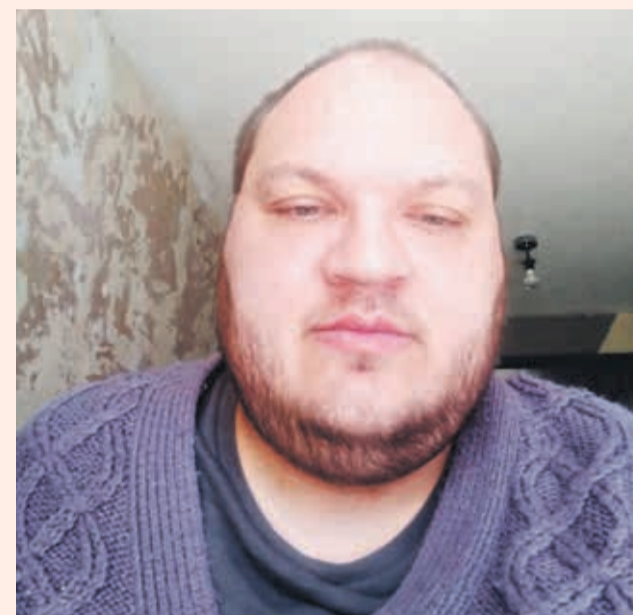
The Trustees also wanted to say how impressed they were with Blake’s story. You can read about it below.

■ Local Hero!

Oldham Member Blake Walker has been recognised for helping to save the life of a local resident.

Blake spotted the man when he was out walking his dog, and quickly realised that he had tried to hurt himself. When Blake reached him he helped get him into the recovery position.

Blake checked his breathing, looked for ID and kept talking to the man so that he didn’t lose consciousness. He called for an ambulance and stayed with him until it arrived.



Blake said *“I’m not a hero, just doing what needs to be done, you don’t bypass it you’ve got to help. It’s the principle of you have to help that person. If you’re in that situation someone will help you. It’s the nature of people.”*

His support worker Lee was nearby visiting another KeyRing Member and said that Blake *“did an amazing job”*.

Blake has received a letter from his MP Jim McMahon, who said: *“Helping others doesn’t always come naturally to some people, but you obviously care about others and I think what you did was brave and very generous.”*

Kevin's New Home

I moved house on January 11th 2021. 'Twas a cold morning. We found our way to the new house through the mist! We disembarked the taxi cab resembling two ready-brek children.

I got up to the first floor still shivering, and stood, as Clare and the great workmen (who moved me in many ways) made my house liveable within half an hour, to my profound happiness and gratitude.

I slept here for the first time on January 11th which was a great night, and woke up next morning a bit confused as I had been in my last flat for over 20 years.

My favourite instrument of the morning is the kettle, but it took me some time to find it.

Eventually I found the kettle and enjoyed a nice brew... and another one. I've always thought you should have the radio on to make a house a home, and radio 6 has rarely been off ever since. Since then, things have gone so swimmingly I feel like Johnny



Kevin in his new home

Weissmuller, and I've never looked back. The future is unwritten. Sincerely, K



Tracy at the market

Tracy's Trips

I am Tracy and live in Bristol, and I go to Wells (in Somerset) Market every Saturday to see my friends who live over there.

I take a bus to the centre of Bristol and then a bus to Wells, which takes me 1.5 hours. I have a look around the market stalls and have lunch. Sometimes another friend comes along and I am hoping that other KeyRing Members are interested in joining me as well. That would be more fun.

There is the Cathedral and Bishops Palace to see and lots of shops to go into.

The bus ride is very nice and goes through beautiful countryside. This regular trip has kept me going throughout lockdown when we are were allowed to go.

The next edition and get in touch...

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We're not sure what will happen with the next edition. We hope we will be able to get out and meet with people again soon.

We will share the information when we know what is happening.

That's all for this time! If you have anything you would like to see in

the paper or on our social media pages please send it to: Sarah Hatch at sarah.hatch@keyring.org.

For an audio version of the paper phone 020 3119 0960.