



KeyRing News

SPRING 2026

Eamon has been with KeyRing for about a year and a half. He likes watching movies and getting out and about.

EAMON'S STORY

By Eamon

When I joined KeyRing I only had a manual wheelchair. I didn't get out much because it was hard to use, so I'd become quite isolated.

KeyRing helped me deal with the Jobcentre and sort out my PIP which meant I could get a new wheelchair.



Eamon at home

Now I go out every day. I'm really happy with it. My favourite place to go is Planet Organic in Muswell Hill. I like the drinks there. I also go to Sainsbury's every day. I've been able to go to the Wave Café at the Muswell Hill hub by myself and I will be going back there regularly.

Before KeyRing the support workers I had were not very consistent. Sometimes I'd go a long time without seeing them at all. Now I see my support workers every week and I know when I will see them. This means I can get on with planning my life!

When I didn't have consistent support my finances got in a mess. I was behind with my rent and my Universal Credit got stopped. I wasn't opening my letters or looking after my health. Clair helped me sort out my arrears and get my Universal Credit back.

KeyRing worked with the social prescriber at my doctors to get me funding for new flooring and have it installed. That was a real team effort. Now I really like my home. I know all my neighbours. It's a really nice community.

I want to say thank you to KeyRing. I'm really really happy with my support.

MICHELLE



At the salon



At art class

Warrington Member Michelle has been very busy! As well as going to an art class to improve her painting skills she has been going to the Creating Adventures group where she was given a Member of the Month award.

Her support worker Abby helped her find somewhere new to get her nails done, as she had previously been paying £60.



Michelle with her certificate

**"I really enjoyed getting my pedicure done and felt really relaxed."
- Michelle**

CHRISTMAS IN BRISTOL

By the Bristol Team

We celebrated Christmas with a trip to Za Za Bazaar, organised by one of our Members, Lee.

After the success of last year's meal, Lee felt more confident about organising the meal again this year and booked the table without any help from staff.

It was a great chance for our new Members and staff to meet the old gang! We had lots of good food, plenty of chatter and even a few terrible Christmas cracker jokes!

It was also a chance for us to celebrate Peter's 70th birthday, we sang Happy Birthday and gave him cards!

Lee is already thinking about next year's meal and is aiming even higher, he wants to get 100 of us together! What a celebration that will be!



CHRISTMAS IN BRISTOL

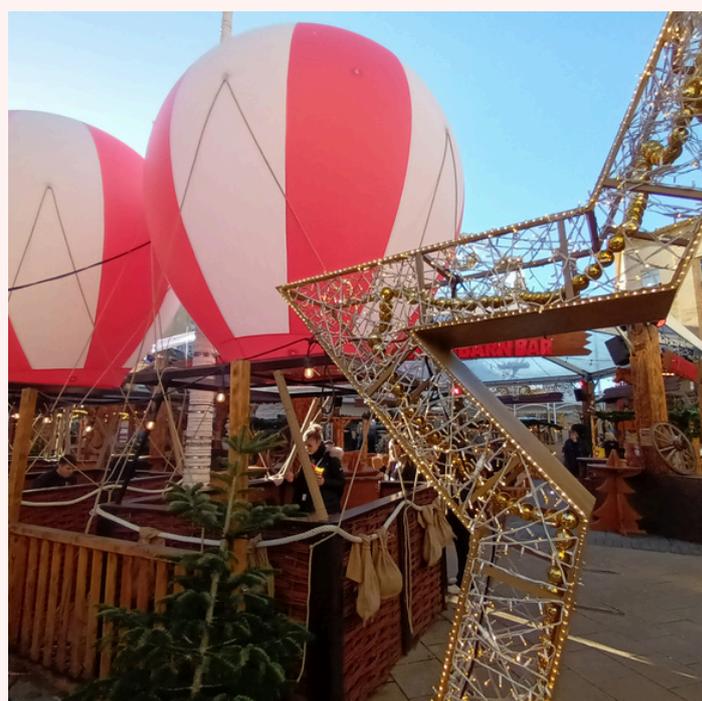
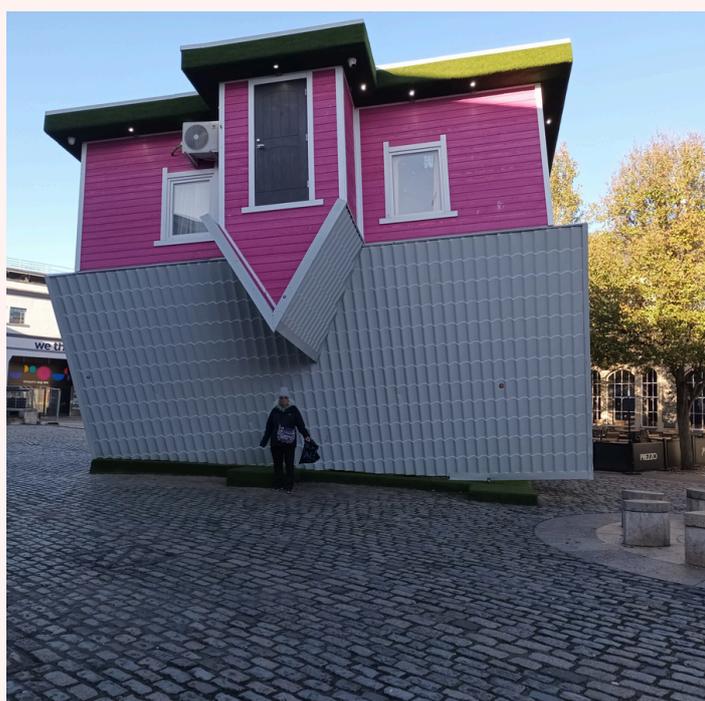


"I really enjoyed the meal and I feel very confident about booking the next Christmas meal by myself. I want even more people to come this year!"

- Lee

CHRISTMAS IN BRISTOL

Bristol and Staple Hill networks did a joint trip to Bristol Christmas market in November. Some Members had a stroll around St Nicholas' Market, then they all walked over to the German Christmas market, followed by a coffee in Boswells.



MY LIFE IN KEYRING

By Robert Absalom

Where do I start in 26 years? I used to go to a centre for people with learning disabilities called Snowdon Road. The support worker there spoke about KeyRing. It was a network then, that helped people with learning disabilities live independently. After a while I said yes, I'm interested and the rest is history!



Robert celebrating

I had to wait for a flat to come up. After a while I found out I was moving to Henbury in Bristol. I had a lot of meetings and saw the Housing Officer. They asked what I would do if I lived next door to an elderly person. I said I would check up on them. After that, they rang me to say I was accepted in KeyRing.

The day I moved in was Thursday 4th November 1999. I felt like a child, nervous and excited. They had more money and at Christmas we used to go to London for an AGM and disco. I met Carl who was the founder of KeyRing, he was a nice man. I can remember saying to the CLV (Community Living Volunteer) when we were told about the disco. I said you will have to drag me kicking and screaming! Sue said, you will be the first on the bus!

One of the volunteers went to another network and we had two vouchers to pay for the drinks. I said to Sue that I would buy her a drink as a thank you for the support she had given me and when I saw her, I bought her a drink.

ART IN BRISTOL

By Tracy Scrivener



I've been running the art group in Bristol for almost three years now.

We do anything arty that people want to do, anything from animal pictures to Christmas and birthday cards. We made Halloween pictures this week.

Everyone enjoys the group, and I like getting ideas from people about what they're interested in, and I try and help them.

Next time, we are making some candles for Christmas. I have to find the materials to make the things we are doing.

ART IN BRISTOL



I'd like to start doing some jewellery making next.

I'd really like more people to come along, it's really fun, makes them less stressed and stops them being lonely.

I get enjoyment being with people and listening to them and helping them to make their ideas into a piece of artwork. Running this group keeps me going, stops me stressing out, I can't imagine not doing it.

We run every fortnight on a Tuesday from 1pm - 3pm at Lincoln Gardens, in the lounge and I want more local people to join.

If you are interested you can contact Beccy Light, Community Support Worker on 07825 275 404

ART IN DARLINGTON

By Jane Hammond

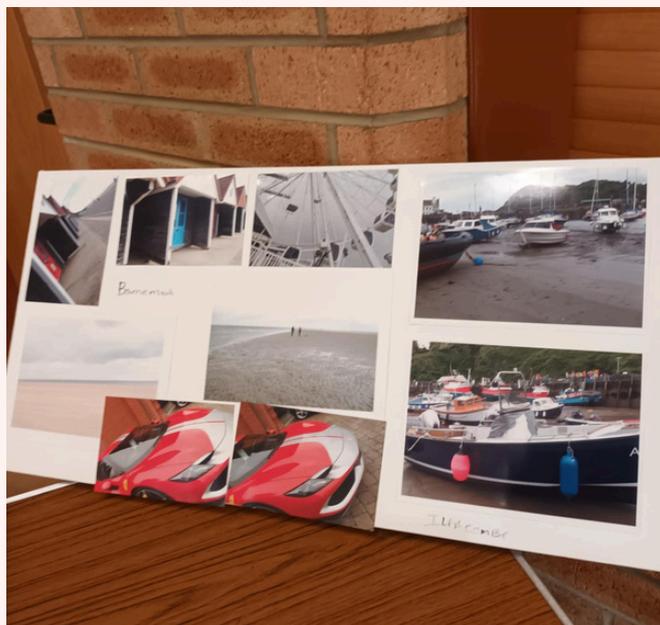


Members at Darlington have been working on individual art projects at the hub on a Wednesday.

The project is completely sustainable.

The canvases have been donated from various charities. The charity Cancer Research have donated quite a lot of canvases. The local charity The Kings Church have also donated canvases.

ART IN DARLINGTON



These canvases were originally all mass-produced and have been re-primed and repurposed by our Members here at Darlington. All these canvases were destined for landfill. As with any good art project, they have been transformed into something new and beautiful.

They will be exhibited at the beginning of September 2026 until the end of October 2026. This exhibition will be held at the Hopetown Museum, which is an extremely popular visitors centre in Darlington.

"Being a part of the exhibition and the art project and making something from rubbish basically, makes me feel very proud of myself and my achievement and to be a part of KeyRing."

"I am very proud of what I have achieved with my artwork. I am a member of Stage dance community. After the exhibition next September, I am donating my canvas to Stage."

"I have loved working on my artwork, and it has made me very proud of myself and what I have achieved."

MAKING BLANKETS FOR THE DOGS TRUST

By Michelle Bruce

These are the blankets us Darlington sewing girls help make for the Darlington Dogs Trust. Each dog gets one of these and goes home with their hand made blanket to their new home. Donna Gurney is our sewing lady. We are Michelle, Carol and Hannah.



YOUR POETRY



Tropical Paradise

The bird of green and yellow down,
Sings his sweet song from amidst the palm tree's immense leaves,
The notes of which betray his presence,
For human eyes he is hard to view,
As his plumage blends into the tree's foliage,
The bunches of bananas concealing him further.
On the next tree the orange of sweet clementines,
Brightens still the green cover,
Way below, the darkness of the shade is beautified,
By the dazzling bright colours of tropical orchids,
Together providing the sights and sounds of a tropical paradise!

The European Brown Bear

Lumbering gracefully through the forest undergrowth,
A large dark form scratches the mighty oak tree,
With a deep growl he continues his foraging,
A mighty beast of Europe's ancient forest!
Amazing, but sad to think,
That once he roamed through England's now tamed garden,
So when next you ramble through our meadows pastures and coppiced
woods,
Remember that when this ancient land was virgin forest,
He wandered this ground too,
Until, like the wolf and lynx,
Human selfishness and greed,
Destroyed his home and cruelly drove him from our land,
Gone like the ancient wildwood itself-
The mighty European brown bear!



Dave Pearce, 2021

YOUR POETRY



Mindfulness Poem

By Rona

Mindfulness is all around so let's quiet our hearts and close our eyes and then relax, let our minds wander off to a peaceful and quiet place, but as you see half your mind will wander off to a quiet place,

Then the other half of your mind will fall asleep as we breathe in and out, You can sit on a chair or lie on the floor or maybe your bed and quiet your heart then close your eyes, now let's breathe in and out and let our minds drift off as it could help with depression or Anxiety,

My mind drifts off to the beach and I can hear the sounds all around and the calm ripples of the waves,

Praying to God is like mindfulness each and every day.

LARA'S THEATRE TRIP

By Lara Akinfadeni

I went to see a musical about Michael Jackson called MJ the Musical. It had his big hits, like Thriller. It was very nice. It's a good musical. I really enjoyed it. I would go again. It was at the Prince Edward Theatre in the West End. I took a taxi there and the bus back. I want to see Wicked next.



Lara at the theatre

VOLUNTEERING IN WARRINGTON

By Mark D

Since my support has started with KeyRing, my confidence has grown which has meant that I can pursue activities that I may not have thought about previously.

My first activity was at Disability Awareness Day (DAD) in Warrington where I live. I volunteered with the group that I attend weekly which is Directions For Men. I was present on the stall where members of the public can come and talk to us about the support that Directions for Men can provide.



Mark (standing in the middle)

I felt positive about the role that I played in making the day a success for Directions For Men, so much so, I have since been to the Living Well Hub in Warrington to attend a volunteer open day.

I have made an application to be a volunteer at the Hub welcoming members of the public when they arrive at the Hub and offering drinks and refreshments.

That's all for this time!

This is the first time we have done the KeyRing News in this way. You can get in touch to tell us what you think about it. You can also send us your stories or pictures for the next edition.



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