



### **A message from Chris Ingram, CEO**

Dear friend of Style Acre,

I am sure you will all notice that this is a very different edition of Style Acre *Stories*, but I am sure you are getting used to things not being normal. We are all having to adapt to different ways of living and there is a great deal of anxiety for people to have to cope with. Every one of us faces different challenges at the moment and not being able to share time with friends and family is really tough.

It has been tough for the people we support to have such huge changes to their routines, but as you will see from the photos, whilst people have not been able to get out and do the usual range of visits and activities there has been a lot going on. At the time of the Covid-19 outbreak we were piloting a new internal digital platform 'Workplace' for making internal communication easier, we speeded up the roll out of this during April and this has been a brilliant way for staff to share pictures and videos of the people we support in a safe way. It is pictures from this that we will be sharing with you in this edition of Style Acre *Stories*.

Our staff have been brilliant and have risen to all the challenges we have faced so far. There have been major changes in how the admin team at Howbery Park have been working, the service provided by our day opportunity hubs is unrecognisable and often done via Zoom, we have had to close our tea room, shop and stop all our work placements. Staff in both supported living services and day opportunities have had to adapt and get used to different ways of working to keep themselves and the people we support safe. It has been a challenge to keep on top of the ever changing Government guidance, a challenge to source adequate supplies of PPE and a challenge to ensure communication is clear and timely. A huge thank you from me to each and every one who has done such a wonderful job during this time.

We also know it has been difficult for parents and relatives of the people we support, but we have been truly grateful for the generosity, patience and appreciation you have shown over the last couple of months. You have supported our fundraising appeals and My Marathon, My Way event, and I know staff have loved seeing your kind words. We understand that it has been difficult not being able to visit and have your relatives home and it is difficult for me to write and let you know that this will continue until Government guidance changes. The advice published on 11<sup>th</sup> May is very clear that 'households' should not mix, visits to houses/gardens shouldn't happen and that meetings in public places can only be 'one on one'. We have a duty of care to the people we support, our staff and their families to keep them safe and we do not believe it is in anyone's best interest right now to change what we have been doing so far. We will continue to ensure families remain connected via the phone and video calls and we will continue to keep you updated with what is happening. I hope you can understand why we need to take this stance but if you want to discuss please let me know.

I wish you all the very best, keep safe and keep well

Handwritten signature of Chris Ingram

# Fundraising & Events News

## Easter Appeal Success



Thank you so much for helping to raise £4000 from our Easter Covid-19 Appeal! We have been blown away by everyone's kindness. The money raised will help us support everyone at this current time. It's vitally important to help supplement our lost income from cancelled events and community fundraising. One of the

things this money will help with is the cost of running our temporary T2U meals-on-wheels service. T2 have been busy preparing and delivering meals to our supported living houses to help keep everyone safe and healthy. To read more, go to <https://styleacre.org.uk/easter-covid-19-appeal/>

We also made a thank you video with people we support! Take a look here: <https://styleacre.org.uk/a-thank-you-from-style-acre/>

## Online Events

Due to coronavirus, all our events are currently cancelled or postponed. We'll let you know when things change but in the meantime we've moved online! Follow us on Facebook or Twitter to keep up-to-date.

## My Marathon | My Way



Join people we support, people we employ and our fundraisers taking on the My Marathon | My Way challenge! Lockdown's not going to get us down – keeping active and undertaking daily exercise has been proven to help mental health. That's why we've been nominating our colleagues to take part in this fantastic challenge. And people we support are taking part too – we have houses clocking up the miles together by cycling, walking and/or running either as part of their daily exercise or at home. The best thing is you can take on the challenge however you like, in the time that you need. One of our Assistant Managers is cycling 524 miles, a fundraiser is running 262 miles and one of our Support Workers has decided to rack up the miles on an office chair! Others are being a bit less wacky and doing the 26.2 miles through their daily dog walks or jog. So far, together, we have raised £6500 in the first two weeks!

## Ambassador Grace Takes on Lockdown Marathon over 9 days – Raises £1050



Not one to let something like lockdown stop her from fundraising, Grace decided to beat the lockdown blues by running a marathon over 9 days in April! She ran 5k for 9 days as part of her daily exercise and raised £1050 through sponsorship and a matched fundraising grant. Well done Grace! (And thank you for inspiring the My Marathon | My Way challenge.)

It's not too late to join in with My Marathon | My Way: email [community@styleacre.org.uk](mailto:community@styleacre.org.uk) to sign up. Go on, take on the challenge! If you're on Facebook, you can start fundraising straight away through this link: <https://www.facebook.com/fund/StyleAcre/> Otherwise we'll send you helpful tips. Do get in touch.

## Day Opportunities during Coronavirus

Our Turnstyle, T2 & SABRe buildings may be 'shut', however, this has not meant that we have stopped our support, we have just become more creative in how it is being delivered! In each of our day services and in Thame outreach, staff are providing some very important support to those who are most vulnerable and isolated. This support is helping people cope in these very strange times. Staff have been extremely adaptable, positive and flexible, working within supported living houses, helping to provide additional support. These extra staff have helped keep creative and fun activities going even in the current circumstances.

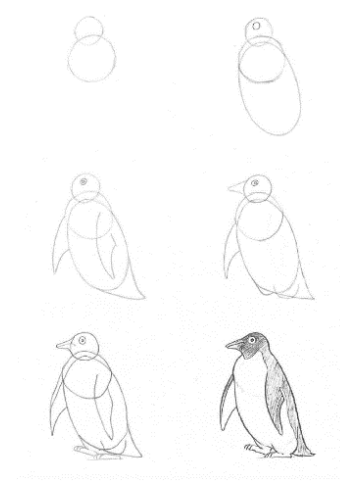
Services are posting out boredom-busting activity packs, sharing resources and activity ideas online, have set up Facebook groups and are calling and face-timing people we support and their families. We have also been introduced to the world of Zoom! This has allowed us to set up online chats and groups for people we support. We have created a weekly timetable at SABRe and T2 – karaoke, quizzes, scavenger hunts, games and discussion sessions. This has given people some structure to the week, alongside some much needed time with friends.



Zoom chat



T2 activity sheets



Turnstyle penguin drawing masterclass

Lisa summed up her experience of Zoom chatting: "I thoroughly enjoyed it...since having these meetings on Zoom my carer noticed my mood lifted.....it has (helped) seeing your face and everyone else's".

There are some wonderful new Makaton signing videos available, alongside some key social stories & communication resources to help people navigate through this new way of living. We've also launched our Turnstyle shopping service for any of the houses who need help getting shopping & cleaning supplies, alongside PPE deliveries. T2 have been making countless meals for our new T22U meals service. This is a selection of tasty, home-cooked meals prepared in the T2 kitchen for our supported living houses and some individuals in day opportunities. In fact we have delivered around 1,000 meals so far, delivering twice weekly to 16 houses/individuals in total. The vast amounts being cooked are amazing! Huge thanks to all the staff teams for their hard work and dedication over the past few challenging weeks, showing how team work is done!





## Activities round up

People have found lots of ways to help stay happy, healthy & entertained at home. From online workouts with fitness guru Joe Wicks to bingo, film nights and tea parties in the garden, people are busy. Not forgetting the weekly clap for carers, or the VE Day 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary which was widely celebrated. Here are some examples of what's going on!



Creating unique T-shirt designs



Jewellery making at Chestnuts



People have made lovely rainbows



Family Skype chat



Singing & strumming at Wantage



Geraint's indoor planting



My Marathon | My Way  
Kate & Dan clock up miles



Dressed up ready for special garden tea party. Nicole & Christina



VE Day! Garden decorations