

# Opportunities Without Limits News

Cambridgeshire

Edition 3



## Bikes For Ukraine

OWL Bikes joined up with South Cambridgeshire District Council and Camtrust to give free second-hand quality bikes – with a helmet and lock – to guests from Ukraine who have arrived in South Cambridgeshire under the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

We issued a plea for help for good quality second-hand bikes and were so grateful to everyone who donated to us.

The bikes underwent essential maintenance checks and are in the process of being handed over to families through the scheme. The families were delighted with their new bikes and incredibly appreciative of the support as they start to settle into South Cambridgeshire. One host family member got in touch to say:

**“Thank you on behalf of the Ukranian family we are hosting; the bicycle has made a little girl very happy. The bicycle is in beautiful condition and she is very pleased with it.”**

To find out more about the scheme:

[www.papworthtrust.org.uk/news-and-blogs/owl-bikes-needs-your-help/](http://www.papworthtrust.org.uk/news-and-blogs/owl-bikes-needs-your-help/)



/papworthtrust



www.papworthtrust.org.uk



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On Wednesday 15 June 2022, Mencap held a reception in Westminster with the All Party Parliamentary Group for Learning Disabilities. One of our Opportunities Without Limits Saxongate customers Neil attended. We spoke to Neil to find out more:

## What's your role in VoiceAbility?

I hold consultations with vulnerable students in schools and colleges aged 14 – 25 and listen to what issues they are facing. I then report back to the Learning Disability Partnership board and give them feedback.

## Why did you go to Parliament?

I went to the House of Commons to speak to Mark Harper MP about the struggles disabled people faced during the pandemic. A lot of people felt lonely and confused as the rules weren't clear and there wasn't easy reads available straight away.

## What changes would you like to see?

I would like to see more vulnerable people get vaccinated. It's important to get protected against Covid so more information around the vaccination may encourage this. Also I would like fuel prices to go down!

## How did you feel about your trip to Parliament?

It was a long, but enjoyable day.

## Did you do anything else whilst in London?

We saw Big Ben and I got a photo in front of it.

## What's next?

Carry on doing what I'm doing with VoiceAbility and now as things are going back to normal after the pandemic we can hopefully start seeing more people face to face again. I'm also looking forward to my first holiday in 3 years to Menorca!



## Customer art group

Opportunities Without Limits Cambridge art group explored the National Gallery via its online tours! After the tour they attempted to replicate one of the paintings themselves!



## A trip to Wembley

20 customers from our Opportunities Without Limits South Cambridgeshire service took a trip to London recently to visit Wembley Stadium. The customers had a fantastic day touring the dressing room, physio room, the Royal box and even got a go at participating in interviews as if they were in the Premier League.

Andrew loved it, quoting **"I give it 10/10 it was perfectly organised and the best place to visit for me. My dreams came true."**

A big thank you to Royston Golf Club. This trip would not have been possible without the golf charity day they hosted back in September.





## Keeping cool in the heatwave at Opportunities Without Limits South Cambridgeshire



Recently customers enjoyed a musical picnic by the pond! They were wildlife watching and even discovered some endangered crested newts!



Cally was extremely happy with her omelette which she made from scratch!



During the heatwave customers made homemade foot soaks to keep cool.



## Project group at Opportunities Without Limits South Cambridgeshire



Our project group has been very busy making a wooden compost area in the garden. The group is now making a bottle greenhouse.





## Phil Packer Event

In July, we were delighted to host an "Audience with Phil Packer" event at our Cambridge Centre. Phil Packer came to talk to us about his life, his endeavours and his charity – the British Inspiration Trust. We also had the opportunity to ask questions and were grateful to our customers who had prepared some questions in advance. It was a really great event. Papworth Trust will be taking part in The BRIT Challenge 2023 and if you would like to join us on this, please contact:

[jo.revitt@papworthtrust.org.uk](mailto:jo.revitt@papworthtrust.org.uk)  
[www.thebritchallenge.org.uk](http://www.thebritchallenge.org.uk)



# Virtual Pilot



Throughout the pandemic period, all of our Opportunities Without Limits services delivered virtual sessions to all of its customers. These proved to be very successful and customers enjoyed attending activity and social sessions online using Zoom.

As the pandemic lockdowns came to an end and our building services reopened, we reviewed the feedback that we had received about these virtual sessions and noticed some key trends. Customers had told us how they really enjoyed the sessions and it had helped them with previous challenges involving logistics such as transport and their morning and afternoon arrangements. We also recognised some other benefits to delivering a virtual-based service including the ability to join the service from anywhere and customers could join whether they were at home or on holiday.

Recognising that the Trust would benefit from exploring this model further, we were given the opportunity to deliver a pilot project for 9 months, delivering our online sessions in a variety of ways. The aim of the pilot project was to explore a range of software packages to deliver virtual sessions on to ensure we're delivering a good level of accessibility and session content. We would then be able to explore how the variety of session content attracted a broad range of customers and their families to our sessions.

This month sees our 9-month pilot project come to an end and we've gained some really key pieces of feedback and information. Our report will soon be going to our Executive Team with our recommendations on the next steps for the role of digital within our services.

As the project comes to an end Elliot Bateman, our Online Activities Facilitator, was able to answer some questions for us, about his time delivering online sessions to our customers:

## **How have you found the past 9 months?**

I found it fun! It's been great getting to know the customers who have joined online and what they want to get from our sessions.

## **What have customers got from online sessions, from your perspective?**

The customers who have joined in with online sessions have appeared less pressured in what they are doing. They've really seemed to relax in their own homes, on their own equipment without the pressures of getting out of the house in the morning, social pressures and having some of their anxieties challenged.

## **How easy has it been to engage customers online, compared to in a building?**

The first challenge was figuring out the IT and the equipment, once we overcame those initial challenges customers have really engaged in what we've been doing. They have thrived on having session topics set up for what they want to achieve and how they want to achieve it.

# Supporting disabled people to be seen for who they are.



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