



# Impact Report

## 2021-22

Surrey  
Choices  
Every Life, Every Chance

Moving towards inclusion



# Welcome to our Impact Report for **2021-22**

This is the first Impact Report published by Surrey Choices. With the people we support, their families and our many partner organisations, we have been on a journey towards inclusion, and we wanted to share the impact it is having, and what we are learning.



The Changing Days programme is about developing more inclusive models of support, focused on the things that matter to people. Learning new skills and gaining in confidence, working, looking after your health and wellbeing, and having friends and being part of communities. We are driven by our values and believe that inclusion is for everyone, including those with more complex needs.



Over the past year we have started to see the impact of our new approach and we are honoured to have walked alongside those who have tried new things and learned new skills, made new connections, or made the changes in their lives that really mattered to them.

Our partners, the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi) have been tasked with evaluating our progress. The learning from the evaluation will inform the way forward.

The Changing Days programme has shown us that we are all part of an interdependent ecosystem. This means that we can achieve more when we work together, not only encouraging individuals to work towards their personal goals, but also working with community organisations and employers to create inclusive places and opportunities. That is what it takes to enable people to live better lives.

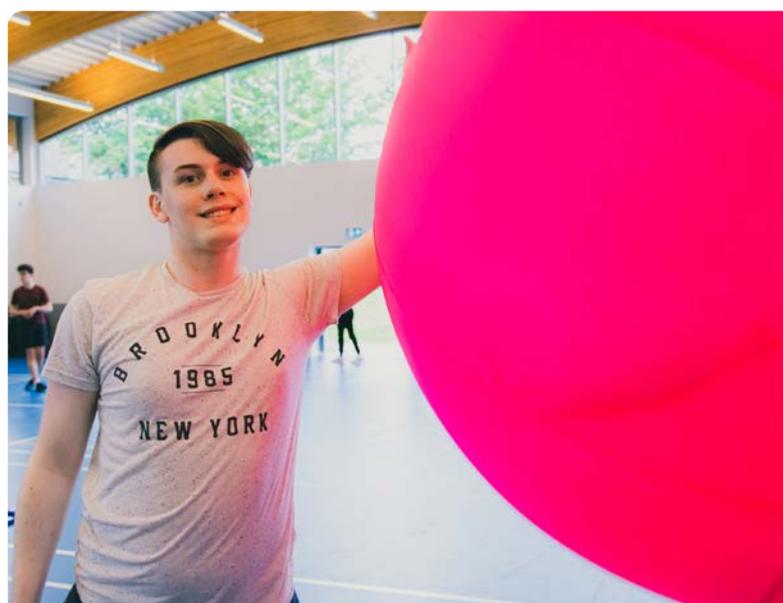
We have continued to make progress in working together with the people we support and our colleagues to co-produce solutions to the challenges we face. Having a voice and making a contribution is important to everyone.

We operate in a tough financial climate which is felt across the social care sector. Surrey Choices is charged with delivering significant efficiencies to ensure the sustainability of our organisation and to contribute toward sound stewardship of public finances. This means being more efficient in the way we use our buildings, the way we operate our transport, and making sure that individuals have just the right level of support, not too much, not too little. We know that when we get that right, opportunities for independence, choice and control are also created.

Throughout the Changing Days programme we have asked a lot of our colleagues. They have been courageous in their commitment to inclusion and to providing new opportunities. They kept people safe during the pandemic without ever losing sight of the vision for Changing Days. I am thrilled that Surrey Choices has been able to recognise them by becoming a Real Living Wage employer for 2022-23.

I hope you enjoy reading our Impact Report. If you have any questions or feedback, please do get in touch.

**Mette Le Jakobsen** | Managing Director



# Impact Highlights



**1,385**

People supported by Surrey Choices to live the lives they choose



**£9.90+**

Real Living Wage Employer for 2022-23



**642**

People supported in paid and volunteering roles



Awarded in January 2022



**3**

National Awards Won

**6**

People shortlisted as Award Finalists

**KICKSTART**  
SCHEME

**9**

Paid work placements for young people facing barriers to employment.

**2**

Jobs offered



**18%**

of Employee Survey respondents self-identify as having a disability



**20**

Internal promotions



**83%**

Respondents rated their experience of Surrey Choices as Good or Very Good

**40%**

of people supported by Surrey Choices, their families and Carers responded to our User Engagement Survey.

**85%**

of people are extremely likely or likely to recommend Surrey Choices to their friends or family

# Our Vision for Change



Over the past year, despite the challenges that all social care providers have faced, our Changing Days Programme has been gaining momentum with our teams implementing more inclusive models of support.

In collaboration with the people we support, their families and Carers, and our colleagues, we have agreed the things that matter to people. It is these outcomes that are being used to measure our success.

“

**“Our mission is to deliver innovative, sustainable services that enable choice and positive outcomes for the people we support, provided by skilled, engaged, and inspired colleagues.”**

”

 <p><b>People we support</b></p>	 <p><b>People who work for Surrey Choices</b></p>	 <p><b>Families and Carers</b></p>	 <p><b>Surrey Choices as one organisation</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Have friendships with people who like doing the same things</b></li> <li> <b>Have accessible places to go where they are welcome</b></li> <li> <b>Have active roles in their local communities</b></li> <li> <b>Learn new skills and develop throughout their lives</b></li> <li> <b>Have paid jobs or volunteering, and a balance of work and leisure</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Feel confident to support people to try things and take risks safely</b></li> <li> <b>Are skilled and knowledgeable and have the right tools to do their jobs</b></li> <li> <b>Use their personal strengths and collaborate with others to make things happen</b></li> <li> <b>Are empowered to innovate, take risks and learn through practice</b></li> <li> <b>Know how to listen and help people make decisions and create change in their lives</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Are collaborators in care and support</b></li> <li> <b>Are confident their family member is safe</b></li> <li> <b>Trust Surrey Choices</b></li> <li> <b>Have time for their own lives, work and friends</b></li> <li> <b>Have the information they need</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <b>Enables those we support to progress in their own chosen goals</b></li> <li> <b>Builds and maintains positive partnerships</b></li> <li> <b>Is a visible role model in the sector</b></li> </ul>

# Improving our Community Hubs

Over the past twelve months we have made progress towards our Changing Days property strategy. We are shifting away from a reliance on segregated support and looking for buildings where people's independence and connections within communities can be maximised and maintained.

We closed six smaller, less specialised buildings that could not deliver on our strategy and relocated the community hub within Redhill. We are fully committed to our property principles, so have only relocated services once a suitable alternative has been identified and people's Person Centred Plans assured.

## 24%

Our target is to reduce our property square meterage by 50% over three years. To date we have seen a 24% reduction.

“

**“I have always wanted to be a gardener and I just think it is nice to help people who cannot manage their gardens.”**

**Nick, supported by Surrey Choices**

”



## Property Strategy Principles



**Surrey Choices in a town**



**Better accommodation and support**



**Community based**



**Accessible**



**Ability to access specialised provision when required**



**Ready access to local facilities and transport**



**Flexible premises and value for money**



**Resources and Space for frontline and corporate teams**



**Future proofed**

## Right location, right facilities

The Longmead Community Hub in Redhill opened last July. It demonstrates the quality of building and the type of facilities to which we aspire.



Located close to the town centre, this community hub has enabled new partnerships:

- > Colleagues and people we support collaborated with the Cromwell Community Group to host **350+** residents at their Summer Fun Day.
- > As part of the Cromwell Helping Hands initiative, the gardening group has cleared a communal space and several vulnerable resident's gardens.
- > We launched a 'knit and natter' session that is open-to-all.

# Contributing to Communities

We were delighted when colleagues chose Surrey Disabled People's Partnership (SDPP) as our Charity of the Year. The organisation empowers people with disabilities to have the same rights, opportunities, choices, and control over their own lives to achieve independence. These are outcomes that are completely in line with our vision for Changing Days.



We publicised their services across our communities of interest and raised a total of **£2,352.94** for the work of SDPP. We were proud that a group of individuals supported by Surrey Choices decided to use their swimming sessions to undertake a sponsored swim that raised **£900**.

Progress towards Changing Days Outcomes

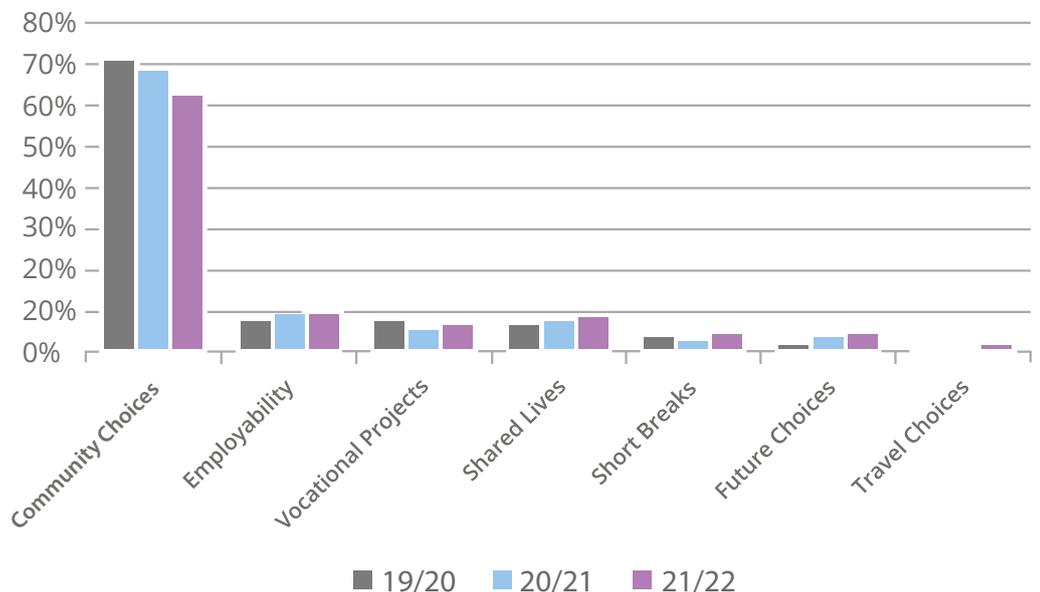
**75%** have friendships with people who like doing the same things

**61%** have learnt new skills

**45%** have an active role in their community

## Revenue Analysis

Our revenue profile has begun to track with our strategic direction. As we move toward more inclusive models of care, a growing proportion of our revenue is coming from our Supported Employment Service and innovative new projects that enable greater independence and inclusion for people with disabilities and autism.



# Working Through Covid-19

Despite the challenges presented by Covid, Surrey Choices maintained contact with the people we support and their families throughout the pandemic. A programme of welfare calls and door step visits during multiple lockdowns made a significant difference to the sense of wellbeing for all those we supported.

While restrictions eased across the UK, we were required by the Department of Health and Social Care to take a cautious approach.

Our residential short breaks service, Shared Lives and employment services continued to operate throughout the pandemic, while our community hubs tentatively re-opened in June 2021.

Some of the people we support were very anxious after self-isolating and required significant reassurance, which colleagues willingly provided.

At all times our greatest priority was the safety of everyone and mitigating the risk of transmission.



“

**“During COVID staff were very helpful and we went out for walks.”**

**Michael**

”

By August 2021, 179 people, who previously had no access to the internet had been supported to get on-line through our Digitisers' programme.

We continue to hear amazing stories of how this enabled friends and families to stay in touch, thereby reducing social isolation. Participation in our virtual activity sessions also gave people the opportunity to try new things. Many have continued to enjoy these new found interests beyond their virtual experience. Our Digital Choices sessions peaked in March 2021.



“

**“The on-line sessions were a life saver for my son during Covid, as they allowed him to keep in contact with his friends”**

**A family Carer**

”

# 10,757

attendances at virtual sessions since the pandemic started

# Experts by Experience

## Having a Voice

We have continued to put our co-production approaches into practice with our Speaking Up and Positive Choices groups leading the way.



“

**“During my interview to get the seal of approval from the people on the Experts by Experience Panel was really special. After all they are the people who are the most important!”**

**Lauren - Area Operations Manager**

”

## More power and control over recruitment

Inclusion of people supported by Surrey Choices on interview panels has brought a new perspective, more informed employment decisions, and a greater voice for the people we support.



“

**“We get to meet the person and find out more about them. It gives us the chance to have our say about which people would make good staff and represent us well.”**

**Carinder – Expert by Experience Panel member**

”

## Sharing lived experience

Co-production resulted in nine training videos being created and used in communications and induction training across the organisation.

## Reporting to the board

Our Positive Choices Co-Ordinator reports directly to the Surrey Choices Board to allow the people we support to have a voice and contribute to the direction of Surrey Choices.



## Being involved in projects

Surrey Choices has an Experts by Experience Working Group where colleagues oversee the programme and are accountable for ensuring people are involved in different projects.

## Choosing colleagues to be rewarded for hard work

Speaking Up Groups judge compliments for colleagues to choose those which show those who are going above and beyond their roles. They also score nominations for the Colleague Awards against a set of criteria to choose the winners for the Awards.

## Being Heard

As well as amplifying the voice of people with lived experience in the design and delivery of our services, individuals were enabled to take part in a range of external consultations.

The Redhill Office Project participated in a Healthwatch England campaign to improve accessible information provided by health and care organisations.

The Quality Communications Group reviewed a series of Easy Read documents and made recommendations for improvements to layout and content to make them easier to understand.



Members of the Growth Team who had been volunteering in the Surrey Hills took part in the Norbury Park Vision public engagement.

Greater representation increases diversity of opinion, helps reduce unconscious discrimination, and empowers those we work with.

# Community Choices

Community Choices supports people within their local community and our community hubs to live the lives they choose.

Every Person Centred Plan has been reviewed. As a result individuals now have more opportunities to be active citizens within their local communities. Inclusion is for everyone no matter where they start.

## Elizabeth's Story: Increasing independence



Elizabeth has thrived from being able to do more in the community. She has learned to organise her week, manage her money and travel independently.

The range of life skills that Elizabeth has learnt will continue to help her through life.

# 534

People supported in Community Choices

## New ways of working



### Health and Wellbeing

Our health and wellbeing sessions have proved to be extremely popular. By making greater use of community venues, such as gyms, swimming pools and libraries, people have become more engaged in the areas where they live. Many have talked about increased levels of fitness, improved health, and a greater sense of wellbeing.



### Independent Living and Life skills

Online cookery sessions have returned to being in-person. Individuals have become:

- > more knowledgeable about healthy food options
- > better able to select recipes and shop for ingredients
- > more confident to make purchases and manage their money



### Friends, Relationships and Community

Friendships have been formed with people who like doing the same things. An exciting observation is that as people see their friends taking part in something new, they too have wanted to explore those opportunities for themselves.



### Employment, Volunteering and Vocational

Community Choices have been supporting people to learn skills to help them on their employment journeys such as volunteering at a local food bank.

“

**“Surrey Choices is doing a good job by improving people’s lives especially mine”  
Someone supported by Community Choices**

”

# 40%

of all activities take place in a community setting

# Shared Lives

Shared Lives is a national scheme managed in Surrey and surrounding areas by Surrey Choices. Shared Lives offers a personalised service planned around the needs and interests of a person, by providing them with short or long-term support. Shared Lives Carers welcome young people and adults (16+) in need of support into their home, family and community life.



## Robert's Story: Living with Shared Lives Carers

Robert enjoyed his time so much during a short stay that he asked if the Shared Lives placement could become long-term.

Robert has learned to cook and clean independently, experienced new places, and even travelled abroad with his Carers.



Our Shared Lives team was recognised with a special national award at the Annual Shared Lives Plus Awards. They won the Lifeline Award for Resilient Service for their incredible support to Shared Lives Carers during the pandemic.

Two of our registered Carers also won the Outstanding Shared Lives Carer of the Year Award.

“

**“I feel very supported as a Shared Lives Carer. There is always someone to talk to, which is very important.”**

**A Carer**

”

“

**“It's important to me that I feel safe and secure. I have that with my Shared Lives family.”**

”

# 53

people were supported in long term living arrangements by our Shared Lives team.

# 1290

nights of short breaks provided by the Shared Lives Team

# Supporting Carers and Providing Short Breaks

## Supporting Carers

Short breaks benefit disabled adults by providing new interests, relationships and activities, giving family members a break from caring responsibilities.

# 1,382

Residential Short Break Nights



### Patsy's Story: Improving her mental health



Patsy is a regular guest at Short Breaks Banstead. She asked for help with managing her anxiety. She wanted to learn coping techniques to self-regulate her behaviour in challenging situations. She has taken up sewing, which helps to keep her mind engaged and more able to manage her anxiety.

Patsy now feels much more calm, safe, and secure.

## Residential Breaks

Short Breaks Banstead has been focusing on the development of a sustainable service that offers a broader range of activities, including more independent life skills, recreational pursuits, and leisure outings.

### Weekend and evening short breaks

Flexi-Choices was developed in response to the pandemic when families desperately needed a break.

This service, supporting people with profound and complex learning disabilities, was so popular with family Carers that it has since been commissioned by Surrey County Council.



We are looking forward to expanding the service over the coming year to support more people in more locations.

“

**“My son loves going to the Saturday hub at Flexi-Choices. He starts talking about it on Wednesdays! Those 7 hours at the weekend are really useful, as I can plan something further afield without having to rush back to pick him up.”**

”

Each month, Flexi-Choices provides an average of

# 408

hours of weekend support, supporting 69 families throughout the year

# Employment and Volunteering

Our award-winning employment support service, EmployAbility, helps to find work placements, volunteer opportunities and paid work for disabled and autistic people.

## Andrew's Story: Gaining full time employment

Andrew has worked as bank staff in the Porter's Department of St Peter's Hospital for the last 12 years. His goal has always been to have a permanent job there. Supported by his Employment Support Specialist, he applied a third time. Having worked hard to prepare for the interview, he was finally successful.

Being employed gives Andrew job security and additional benefits.



## Supporting Employers to provide inclusive workplaces



“

**“I would say to other employers who are looking to be more inclusive and diverse that it's easier than you think.”**

**Sara, Operations Manager at Stripey Stork Baby Bank**

”

## Supported Employment

More paid jobs than last year were secured. However, employers were more reluctant to take on people for work experience, so placements have yet to recover to pre-pandemic numbers.

- > **817** adults and young people supported on their work journeys
- > **121** paid jobs were started
- > **642** volunteering or work experience placements started
- > **609** different employers worked with
- > **521** people supported to stay in work through our 'Keep in Touch' support

## Employment Works for Autism

Our Employment Works for Autism (EW4A) pilot project supported Autistic and neurodiverse job seekers who found it difficult to achieve their employment goals. The range of interventions offered by the project proved to be highly effective.

- > **91%** of participants completed the programme and were still engaged in work focussed activities
- > **75%** completed work experience for a minimum of 12 weeks.
- > **21.7%** of Autistic people are in employment nationally

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# 50%

of participants returned to paid work within one year

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# Vocational Projects

## Improving independence, confidence and skills

Our Vocational Projects are designed to help improve people's confidence, independence and skills for study, employment or volunteering.

As the country emerged from lockdown, we began looking to partner with more community organisations. Partnership working makes our Vocational teams more visible and integrated within the community.

“

**“When you see people's faces and they get a paid job or volunteering, it's amazing. And it's all worth it!”**  
Karen, Employment Support Specialist

”

“

**“Surrey Choices has been a great help in helping me with my cover letter and CV and prepping me for potential interviews!”**

”

“

**“It's good fun. I've met some great people, especially the public as well.”**  
Luke, a member of the Growth Team

”

## Surrey Hills Conservation Volunteers

Funded by a Farming in Protected Landscapes grant, one of our Growth Teams undertook important conservation work.

Our partnership with the Surrey Hills Society increased the visibility of our team in public spaces, giving the group opportunities to talk to passers-by about what they were doing.

3

paid part-time jobs gained for members of the Growth Team



## Marianne's Community Café

A new hospitality project initiated at Marianne's Community Café in Staines has enabled people to work in a supported commercial café environment. Barista skills are in demand, so learning these skills in a less pressurised, yet public space, has been beneficial for the people we support.

Each month an average of

60

people are supported in Vocational Projects



“

**“Our son really enjoys working with the Growth Team and we are happy as he is out in the open air, doing useful work and getting some exercise at the same time.”**

A family Carer

”

# Supporting Young People and their families

Surrey Choices helps young people with an Education Health Care Plan to transition from school or college and take positive steps toward employment.

## Future Choices and Supported Internship

Our Future Choices, Supported Internship and Schools Partnerships programmes were adversely affected by the pandemic. Many employers were reluctant to take young people on work experience given the perceived risks and social distancing measures required around Covid but this didn't stop the EmployAbility Team supporting people to achieve great outcomes.



“

**“Work experience gives students choice and opportunities to develop skills”**  
Partnership Principal,  
Linden Bridge School

”



## Personalised, Resilience and Engagement Programme (PREP)

PREP was a new programme that launched in 2021. It is for young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities, who are struggling to engage with education or training. Providing one to one support, it is specifically tailored to the needs of each individual.

In the first year 60% of participants have already re-engaged with an educational pathway or taken up a vocational option.

## Travel Choices

Our Independent Travel Training programme, Travel Choices, was relaunched in September 2021 when Covid rules became less restrictive and families felt less anxious about travel on public transport.

Working closely with Surrey County Council, schools, colleges, and families, the Travel Choices team set about identifying young people aged 11+ who qualified for the programme.

25

people supported to travel independently

100% of students who have undertaken travel training to date have been awarded completion certificates.

During lockdown an on-line course was delivered for schools. Two of the students who attended have since started on the independent travel training programme. Our aspiration is that more young people will be able to travel to and from school independently using greener forms of public transport. This will reduce the number of car journeys and lower carbon emissions.

As part of the UN Climate Change Conference the Travel Choices Co-ordinator was interviewed live from the COP26 Regional Roadshow about Travel Choices.

100%

Would recommend to Friends and Family

# Supporting our Colleagues

We value all our colleagues and want to make Surrey Choices a great place to work. We do all we can to develop a motivated and engaged workforce. Throughout the pandemic all of our our teams worked incredibly hard to support people who use our services.

## Equality of Opportunity

As a Disability Confident Leader and Employer, we are committed to recruiting, retaining, and developing disabled people in our workforce. In our annual Employment Survey, 18.6% of respondents self-identified as having a disability.



Through the government's Kickstart scheme:

- > **9** meaningful paid work placements for young people on Universal Credit were created
- > **2** Kickstarters were subsequently recruited to our IT and Community Choices teams

**70%**

proud to work for Surrey Choices

## Award-winning services

Surrey Choices was awarded The Employer of People with a Disability Award at The National Learning Disabilities and Autism Awards 2021.

We were also finalists in several other categories including best Positive Behaviour Support Team.



## Recognition and Retention Payments

We were pleased to welcome sixty-five new starters to Surrey Choices despite recruitment challenges in the care sector.

In recognition of the extraordinary commitment of colleagues during the Pandemic, two Covid bonus payments were made. A Team Building Fund was also established and was much appreciated by colleagues.

**20**

Internal promotions

**65**

New starters

**£9.90+**

Real Living Wage Employer for 2022-23

## Professional Development and Learning Opportunities

We are fully committed to developing our people and offered more than 1,000 training sessions with over 11,000 completed hours of training during 2021-22.

## 2022 Annual Employee Survey

7 out of every 10 colleagues took part in the annual engagement survey conducted by an independent research company.

- > **84%** know the skills they need to be successful in Surrey Choices
- > **82%** have received the training they need to perform their job
- > **82%** agree that their work gives them a personal sense of achievement

## Compliments

All compliments received are carefully considered by our Positive Choices Advocacy group or Job Club members who decide on a monthly winner.

**290**

Compliments received

# Celebrating Success

## Colleague Awards

Due to Covid our colleague award ceremony was cancelled. Instead, boxes of afternoon tea were delivered to the deserving winners. We are immensely proud of all of them and their colleagues for the difference they make.

### Bright Ideas Award

Nikki Rutter, Nexus Activity Centre, for always being a fountain of bright ideas! From her Zoom Christmas Jumper Event with over 70 customers and colleagues attending, to organising a Zoom Birthday Party for a person who sees Surrey Choices as her family. Nikki's creativity massively improves the lives of people we support and she perseveres to enable people to try new things. The innovation and creativity she has used within the staff team has built their confidence and improved efficiency, boosting staff morale hugely. She is truly a bright ideas expert!



### Working in Partnership Award

Patrick Allen, Farnham Community Group, for being incredibly proactive in supporting people throughout the pandemic by coming up with different ideas for support in the community. He has developed a great working relationship with the Spire Café which has massively benefited the social life and mental health of people. He has been actively seeking out partnerships with pubs, museums and galleries in the Farnham area and has certainly promoted Surrey Choices within the community as we have received enquiries thanks to his engagement. His experience has also served as an inspiration. He has been involved in supporting his colleagues and empowering them to reach out to community links.



### Dream Team Award

Positive Behaviour Support Leads, for making a huge difference to the lives of the people we support and showing many colleagues the benefits of helping people's behaviour. The shared outcome they are working towards is enabling as many people as possible to have their best life at Surrey Choices by creating support plans which focus on teams working with people they support to stay in a calm state for longer. Regular network meetings have enabled all levels of trained staff to share their experiences and knowledge, so that customers can learn skills to have their needs met in a positive way.

### Giving 100% Award

Clare Birkett, Fernleigh Activity Centre, for her dedication to improving the way the people we support attend Speaking Up Groups during the pandemic. She has gone out of her way to support colleagues in updating their knowledge and understanding of the new rota system. In addition to this, she always makes herself available to both colleagues and the people we support if they ever need help. In short her colleagues cannot say enough good things about her.



### My Hero Award

Donna Rennison, East EmployAbility, for providing a customer with excellent support when looking for jobs, taking into account their health conditions and making sure that it was close to home. She found a work opportunity for them at a Doggy Day Care which is perfect for them. She supported the person to have an app downloaded to their phone so that if they fainted when out on a dog walk, they could tell someone their exact location in order for them to be found safely. Donna also made sure that she was prepared and had a written protocol of what people should do when the customer faints. This reduced the person's anxieties massively and made sure that every member of staff at the workplace knew what to do.





For further information or to be referred to any Surrey Choices service please contact us by phone, text or email.

## Contact us

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