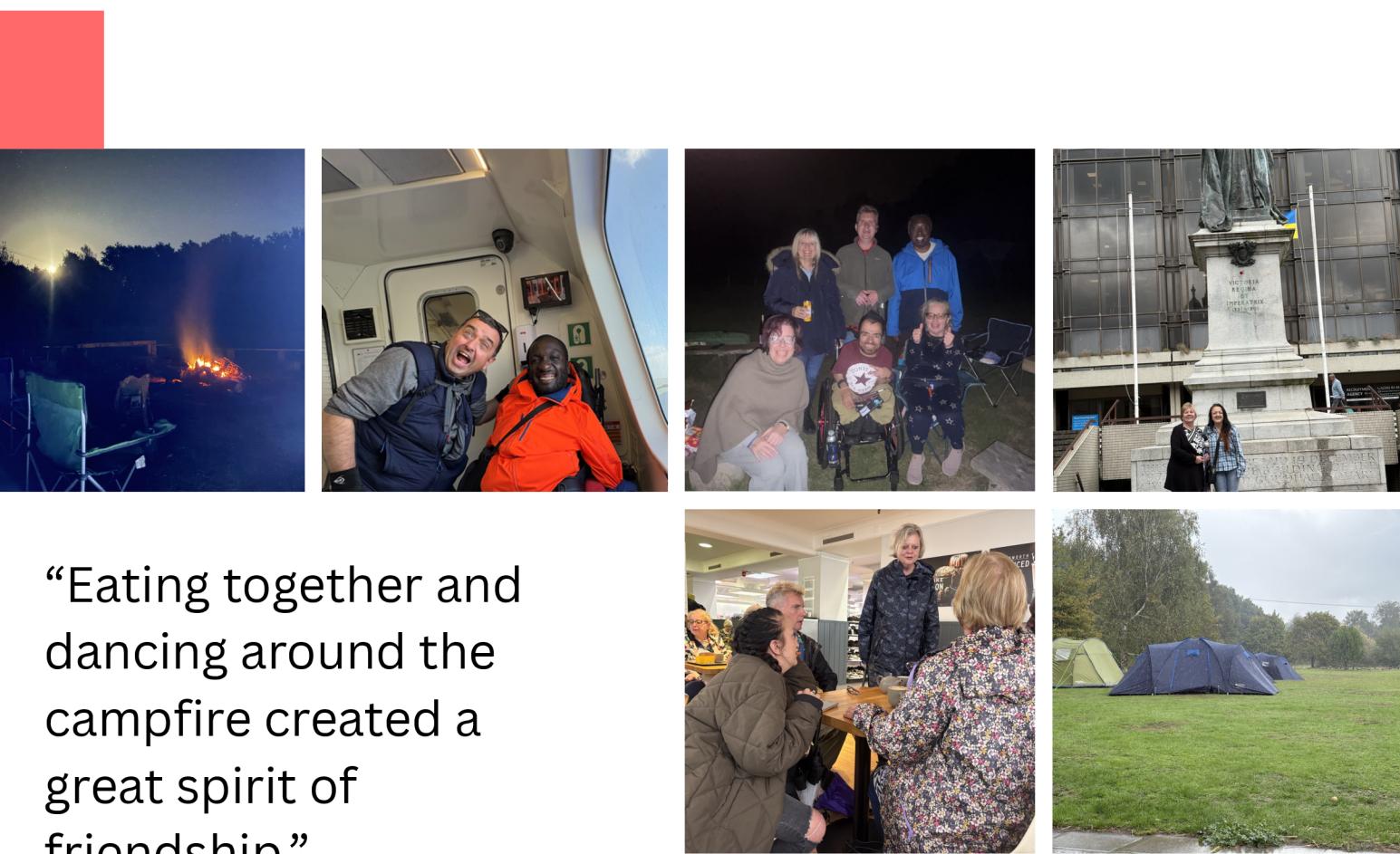


ONE PLACE EAST GOES WILD !



“Eating together and dancing around the campfire created a great spirit of friendship.”

Thanks to our funders:



About One Place East

One Place East is a Disabled People's User-Led Organisation (DPULO), also known as a Deaf and Disabled People's Organisation (DDPO). This means it is run by and for disabled people, with a majority of its board, leadership, and staff identifying as disabled themselves. As a DDPO, One Place East champions the social model of disability, advocating for equality, inclusion, and the removal of barriers that prevent disabled people from fully participating in society.

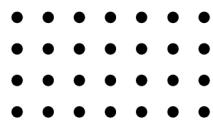
The organisation provides a range of services—including advocacy, peer support, community engagement, and accessible activities—that empower disabled individuals to lead independent and fulfilling lives. Its user-led structure ensures that lived experience drives decision-making, service design, and campaigning efforts, making it a trusted voice for disabled people in East London and beyond.

When it came to camping the decisions about where to go and what to do were made together. We had some requirements like making sure there was access to a disabled toilet and shower, the option to camp or sleep inside and we needed somewhere within a couple of hours of London.

We all paid a contribution towards the holiday, however the true cost of trip would have excluded us from making this possible as the cost would have been too high without the generous support of our sponsors.



Overview



The Sandy Acres camping trip was a resounding success, offering a unique opportunity for service users, staff, and volunteers to connect, relax, and grow together. Despite the cooler September weather, the group embraced the experience with enthusiasm and warmth, creating lasting memories and strengthening community bonds.

The trip was organised for 18 people to attend, however 3 people made the decision not to attend in the immediate week or two before the holiday. This was due to health and personal reasons. Two wheelchair users joined us for the holiday.

Main Topics



ACTIVITIES



FEEDBACK



IMPACT





Feedback

Planning for the trip was something everyone was involved with. Everyone had a say about where and what they wanted to do. For some stepping away from routine and into nature was important. Many participants spoke about challenging themselves in some way. Everyone spoke about the enjoyment they had spending time with friends and the opportunity the trip provided to connect more deeply with each other. relationships, and experience joy in a safe, supportive environment.

Main Topics



CONNECTION

The trip created a powerful sense of belonging and togetherness. Shared meals, campfire songs, and group outings helped break down barriers and build friendships.

Many Disabled people can feel socially isolated and have few opportunities to spend time with friends. The trip offered a rare chance to feel part of a vibrant, caring community.

‘I thoroughly enjoyed myself and the camaraderie was out of this world.’ - Kate

‘It was beautiful to be in an environment where we could all connect, share stories, laugh together and build on our relationships.’ - Jodie

Main Topics ctd



INCLUSION

The funding we received enabled us to ensure that every aspect of accessibility and inclusion was considered for the trip. This started with planning which took account of personal preferences as well as need. We used funds to ensure the wheelchair users who attended could take part in the same way as everyone else e.g. hiring a minibus, off the ground camping beds and accessible day trip options. We welcomed carers' where this was needed and when cost could present a barrier we made sure we offered ways to reduce this e.g. subsidised outings and provision of breakfast and evening meal for all.

‘The tent setup was fantastic. Thank you to everyone who created a proper bed space and made it so comfortable for me.’ - Isaac Harvey MBE

‘Having homecooked food was really nice.’- Claudette

CHALLENGE

Participants embraced new experiences and pushed personal boundaries, whether it was sleeping outdoors, eating marshmallows cooked on a fire for the first time, or simply having a day out, when battling with poor mobility and pain.

Such challenges build resilience and confidence—key outcomes not only for funders focused on empowerment and skill development, but also for government and health bodies aiming to reduce health inequalities, promote independent living, and support the wellbeing of Disabled people through preventative, community-based approaches.

Main Topics ctd



CONNECTION



INCLUSION



CHALLENGE



JOY

CHALLENGE

‘I liked the camping holiday because it was a new challenge to sleep out in a tent in Hampshire in September.’ - Ben

‘I really, enjoyed it. I wasn’t sure I would be able to do it but the group really encouraged me to feel I could.’ - Claudette

‘As someone who wouldn’t usually describe themselves as “outdoorsy,” it’s funny to me how something I thought I’d not enjoy at all ended up being something I genuinely looked forward to and loved.’ - Jodie

JOY

The trip was filled with laughter, creativity, and celebration. These joyful moments are essential for mental health and emotional wellbeing.

‘I enjoyed the camping trip. ‘ -Saif

‘It was great to spend time with everyone from OPE ‘ - Cynthia

‘Having a bonfire is lovely, we did lots of singing and playing and music and laughing together.’ - Kweku

‘Camping was great! I loved it’ - Andy

We picked up sticks and we sat near the fire and sing. We have Marsh Mallows on sticks. - Christine



Impact

Impact Summary

The Sandy Acres trip delivered meaningful outcomes for Disabled participants, staff, and volunteers alike. It fostered:

- Improved confidence and independence through new challenges and unfamiliar environments
- Strengthened relationships across roles, promoting trust and mutual respect
- Enhanced emotional wellbeing through shared joy, connection, and time in nature
- Inclusive participation with everyone contributing and co-funding the experience
- Authentic representation of Disabled people as active, empowered community members

These outcomes align with broader strategic priorities in health and social care:

The **NHS Long Term Plan** emphasises personalised care, social prescribing, and community-based support to improve health outcomes and reduce pressure on clinical services. Activities like camping directly support these goals by promoting mental wellbeing, physical activity, and social connection outside of clinical settings.

The **Adult Social Care Reform White Paper** (People at the Heart of Care) calls for greater choice, control, and independence for disabled people. This trip exemplifies those principles, offering a user-led experience where disabled participants shape and share responsibility for their own support.

By investing in inclusive, user-led activities like this, funders and commissioners contribute not only to individual empowerment but also to systemic goals around prevention, equity, and sustainable support.

What next ?

Final Messages & Next Steps

The Sandy Acres camping trip demonstrated the power of inclusive, user-led experiences to help develop confidence, connection, and wellbeing.

Participants challenged themselves, supported one another, and built lasting relationships—reflecting the core values of One Place East as a Deaf and Disabled People's Organisation.

This model of shared responsibility and co-production aligns with the priorities of funders, commissioners, and government bodies seeking to reduce health inequalities, promote independent living, and invest in preventative, community-based support.

What's Next

Planning for 2026: Earlier in the year, with improved accessibility and transport options

Participant-led review: Gathering feedback to shape future trips

Funding outreach: Engaging new partners to sustain and grow inclusive activities

Impact reporting: Sharing outcomes with stakeholders and aligning with NHS and social care priorities

We welcome continued collaboration with funders and commissioners who share our commitment to equity, empowerment, and lived experience.

Thanks to our funders:



Thanks also to

Girlguiding Hampshire East Sandy Acres Campsite Management Committee.

It was incredible to have so much space to ourselves to enjoy.