



One Place East  
Where disability matters

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25



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# Terms and Finances



## Terms

We use the term 'Disabled people' to refer to people living with impairments. This includes people living with physical, sensory or cognitive impairments, mental distress and long-term health conditions.

The term is aligned with the Social Model of Disability and recognises that individuals with diverse impairments share common barriers arising from the physical environment and societal attitudes.

We respect that not all those included within our definition would describe themselves as having a disability.



## Income and Expenditure

**Total income: £496,055**

**Total expenditure: £507,985**

If you would like to receive a full copy of our 2024-25 accounts please contact the One Place East office.



## London Living Wage

One Place East are proud to be pay all our staff the London living wage as a minimum.

# Welcome



**Michelle Crouch**  
**Chair**



**Margaret Summers**  
**Chief Officer**

Welcome from Our Chair and Chief Officer

We are delighted to present this year's Annual Report. Over the past year, One Place East has provided a diverse array of training, creative, and social opportunities that empower those who use our services to learn, grow, and connect. From peer-led initiatives to formal training, and from creative expression to social engagement, our emphasis has been on an environment where individuals can thrive. The stories and accomplishments showcased in this report exemplify the strength of our community and the commitment of our dedicated team.

As we look forward to the coming year, we are delighted to be celebrating the 30th anniversary of One Place East (previously known as Redbridge Concern for Mental Health).

# About One Place East




Each image captures our values in action – inclusion, accessibility, empowerment, flexibility, and integrity – showing how we work alongside people to create positive change and enabling us to fulfill our mission to enable Disabled people and those with health conditions in Redbridge and across East London to lead healthier and happier lives.




# Supporting the Wider Community

Service Areas	Headlines
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>One Place East News</b></li> <li>• <b>Digital and Online Presence</b></li> <li>• <b>DBS Checking Service</b></li> <li>• <b>Foodbank Vouchers</b></li> <li>• <b>Hotdesking</b></li> <li>• <b>Partnership Working</b></li> </ul>	<div data-bbox="726 474 858 591"> </div> <p>1407 newsletters were delivered in print, digital format or talking format</p> <div data-bbox="721 636 863 725"> </div> <p>Through working in partnership we improve access to services</p> <div data-bbox="735 763 847 902"> </div> <p>We support the wider voluntary and community sector wherever we can</p>



**Spring**

World Autism Awareness Day Podcast



We are committed to accessible, inclusive and engaging communication that reaches everyone



**Summer**

One Place East joins Tik Tok



We continue to extend our reach delivering services in partnership with other organisations




**Autumn**

We join Sycamore Trust for Autism Awareness Training



**Winter**

We launch our new accessible website



We offer the warmest welcomes for all offering help for people in need to access food and support

# One Place East News

## One Place East Monthly Newsletter

In 2024–25, we distributed an impressive 1,407 newsletters every month – a total of 16,884 throughout the year. Our newsletters, sent via both post and email, keep our community informed and connected.

Want to stay updated? Sign up here:

[oneplaceeast.org/sign-up](https://oneplaceeast.org/sign-up)



## One Place East Talking News

Each month, we also produce an audio version of our newsletter and share it across multiple platforms, including Spotify, YouTube, Apple Music, Amazon Music, and our own website.

This initiative ensures accessibility and wider reach, and we're proud to see our subscriber base continuing to grow.

## One Place East News - Video Broadcasts

In 2024–25, the One Place East News Team produced six informative news videos, each designed to keep our community updated and engaged. We even had some guest presenters stand in for our regular newsreader.

To ensure accessibility for all, every video was also made available with British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation.

These videos can be viewed on our YouTube and Facebook channels **@oneplaceeast**, helping us reach a wider audience and promote inclusion across digital platforms.



# Digital Presence



## ONE PLACE IN CONVERSATIONS PODCAST

We recorded six One Place in Conversations Podcasts during this financial year, they were based on the following topics:



**EPISODE 14:  
WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY**

**2ND APRIL 2024**



**EPISODE 15:  
WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY**

**10 OCTOBER 2024**



**EPISODE 16:  
BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

**30 OCTOBER 2024**



**EPISODE 17:  
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF DISABLED PEOPLE**

**3 DECEMBER 2024**



**EPISODE 18:  
TIME TO TALK DAY**

**6 FEBRUARY 2025**



**EPISODE 19:  
WOMENS HISTORY MONTH**

**31 MARCH 2025**



**Listen now**

**@oneplaceeast**

## Social Media Platforms

In 2024–25, One Place East strengthened its digital presence and achieved significant growth across all social media platforms. We expanded our reach by launching on TikTok, opening new opportunities to engage with a wider and more diverse audience.



**725 Followers**



**542 Followers**



**294 Followers**



**1748 Followers**



**60 Followers**

You can follow any of our social media platforms @oneplaceeast to stay updated on the work that we do.

# Community Support and Partnership

One Place East's community support and partnership model is rooted in working collaboratively with local groups to create inclusive opportunities, build confidence, and strengthen community wellbeing. By sharing resources, skills, and space, we help partners deliver activities that enrich the lives of disabled people and the wider community.



## Proper Blokes

We are proud to work with Proper Blokes Club to deliver a weekly men's walking group that promotes wellbeing, connection, and safe peer support.



## Laughable Comedy Night

We work with Laughable to promote their monthly comedy night and collaborate on an introductory comedy course that supports participants to develop material and perform on stage.



## Hot Desking

We have offered hot-desking arrangements for other local charities at our offices in Ilford Chambers for competitive rates



**127** DBS Checks

**23** Organisations

## DBS Checks

As a registered body for the Disclosure and Barring Service, we have provided local voluntary organisations with support and information about DBS checks and processed.



## Promotion

We offer free promotional space in our newsletter for community groups and services, including partners like Vision Outdoor Arts, Healthwatch, helping them reach wider audiences.



# Outreach, Participation and Representation

Throughout 2024–25, One Place East expanded its disability outreach to engage the local community and strengthen connections across Redbridge.

Weekly pop-ups at Redbridge Central Library, alongside monthly sessions at Hainault, Wanstead, and Fullwell Cross Libraries, provided accessible community spaces for people to learn about the organisation, explore volunteering opportunities, and connect with support services.

The community has been regularly represented across local networks and forums with the representatives from the organisation attending the local Faith Forum and community events – such as Mental Health Awareness event at the Redbridge Institute.

Our Policy and Liaison Officer represented One Place East at key local and regional forums and workshops, ensuring the voices and experiences of Disabled people inform health, social care, and community service planning.

Community members have actively contributed to forums and consultations, influencing TfL, Redbridge Council, and NHS planning, and setting priorities on advocacy, benefits, and hate crime to ensure services are more accessible and responsive to Disabled people.

Finally, the community has joined in to celebrate community activities and events such as the Colours of Redbridge Fashion Show and the Summer Parade.





# Health and Wellbeing

Service Areas	Headlines
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>One Place Creative</b></li> <li>• <b>Befriending Services</b></li> <li>• <b>Wellbeing Workshops</b></li> <li>• <b>Social Events</b></li> <li>• <b>Game Inn</b></li> <li>• <b>Technical Assistance Project</b></li> <li>• <b>Reminiscence Group</b></li> <li>• <b>Recovery Focused</b></li> <li>• <b>Workshops</b></li> </ul>	<div data-bbox="703 510 863 622" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="922 499 1453 696">Game Inn is launched – a social group for people to come together and yes, play games!</p> <div data-bbox="683 696 898 837" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="922 723 1477 815">One Place East goes camping for the first time</p> <div data-bbox="730 860 834 1021" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="922 880 1528 1021">Our creative services continue to grow, with further craft sales and writing workshops</p>



Expo Sale – Ilford Exchange a chance to sell handmade crafts

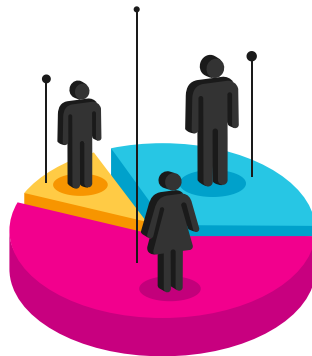
We all party at the Disability Festival

We join Colours of Redbridge fashion show

We join with the Progress Project at Dagenham & Redbridge Football Club.



We organise social activities that are fun and bring people together .



We develop our services to reach underrepresented groups e.g. men and younger people



We seek to improve and innovate in all that we do

# One Place Creative



Building on the success of our Create to Market project launched in 2023, we secured funding for Create to Market 2.0 to develop participant designs into professionally made products and launch an online shop to generate income for One Place East.



From the workshop to the market. Products included:

"I wish the workshops were longer", "I loved the facilitator", "I find the workshops relaxing", "The tutor was friendly and made the session fun", "I like making things to sell at the market", "I learnt decoupage techniques", "Using napkins to make art was fun"

**32**

**Creative Workshops**

**797**

**Attendances**

**300+**

**Customers**



In April, we launched a 10-week Creative Writing and Journalism programme for Deaf and Disabled participants, boosting communication skills, well-being, and awareness of creative industry career pathways



"Learnt how to turn questions into poetry." "Learnt how to write poetry." "Enjoyed all the sessions" "Learnt how to think and structure my writing" "My aim is to write a book." "I took away knowledge and opened up and talked about my mental health and experiences." "That nothing is wrong and we can all draw from our lived experiences." "I have learnt that it is possible to write about my life story." "It was wonderful and should do more." "How to tackle writing one step at a time." "Writing was relaxing and calming." "Thinking positive."

# Mental Health Befriending

Mental health befriending provides regular social contact, practical guidance and emotional support to reduce isolation and help people manage daily challenges.

K, 59, was very isolated and only agreed to weekly phone calls. After being matched with a befriender, he slowly started meeting in person, going for short walks, and trying a local group. He now goes every week, helps run activities, and meets friends outside the group. K is happier and more confident, having come out of his shell with steady support.



**1190** one-to-one interactions,  
offering support



S, a 22-year-old referred by the Mental Health Team, was extremely isolated due to paranoid schizophrenia and initially spoke only with close family. After being matched with a befriender of a similar age, she slowly gained confidence through short café visits that gradually extended over time.

S began holding full conversations, built a strong rapport with her befriender, and, with further referrals, started attending local activities such as badminton and walking groups. At review, she was far more communicative and said she enjoyed the visits. Her mother reported that befriending had made a major difference to S's confidence and independence.

In her final review, L described befriending as “essential” and said she did not know how she would have managed without it. Her resilience, kindness and commitment to others left a lasting impression, and it was a privilege to support her.



# Befriending

Our Community Befriending Service supports Redbridge residents who may be experiencing loneliness, isolation, or reduced social connection. We offer occasional practical help such as shopping, attending appointments, or completing short local errands.



Support is flexible, with both in-person and telephone befriending tailored to individual needs. A brief assessment helps us match people with a befriender who shares their interests. The service is open to self-referrals.

*The Befriending Service has proved to be a service that brings joy and friendship at a time when situations are overwhelming. Dementia hits hard, the situation, the people, not just the person diagnosed but their family and friends. You witness the person they were previously become a shadow of themselves. Mum went from initially sharing polite conversation with someone she didn't know, to sharing time, memories and fun with a person who started as a stranger but became more, a friend. You see the change that spending time socially with someone who's invested in her brings - the smiles, the laughter, happiness. Dementia is hard on everyone but the befrienders bring some of the joy back, a glimpse of the person they once were, if only for a while.*

*My regular walking helps in keeping my blood sugar levels in check. My interaction (with TL) helps counter my sense of loneliness by engaging in conversation about gardening skills and issues like current affairs. I feel privileged to be able to call TL a friend who watches out for my wellbeing and is attentive to my vision impairment and dietary needs." (MG)*

*"I'm just very happy that people can help me go shopping on a Wednesday. Without volunteers I would be totally housebound. Please do consider volunteering if you have any time, it is truly invaluable and means more than you know! (JP)*

# Volunteers



Volunteers are essential to a Deaf and Disabled Persons Organisation like One Place East, bringing lived experience, empathy and community connection that greatly strengthens our ability to support local residents.

This year's annual report highlights the vital contributions of our befriending volunteers in particular, while also recognising the many others who give their time throughout the year like board members, event and festival

helpers, the newsletter crew and outreach volunteers supporting pop-ups in libraries. Events such as Volunteers Week enable us to thank our amazing volunteers for the work they do throughout the year.

*"I had felt for a long time the importance to give back and befriending seemed ideal. It gives me a sense of purpose and is very rewarding. The elderly ladies I volunteer for have lots of stories to share and we have lots of fun talking, playing games and popping out for coffees. There are a lot of lonely people and having someone visit or call can brighten their day and make a massive difference to their lives in feeling connected and improve their wellbeing. It's so worthwhile and I get so much from it." (JV)*

*Being a befriender really makes me feel happy because I feel so privileged that my clients let me into their lives and we enjoy each other's stories and company. Not only is it a pleasure, but I always look forward to the day I do my befriending. I am especially looking forward to accompanying one of my clients for lunch at the local Toby Carvery to celebrate Befriending Week, it will make his day! (KH)*

*I have been volunteering for OPE for 2+ years but before that for Redbridge Voluntary care for 30+ years.*

*I have found many benefits from volunteering. It's a bit of a cliché but helping someone else in turn makes one feel good and in many ways it's mutually rewarding.*

# Social Events

At One Place East, we take fun seriously and we like to think we do it better than most, all while not taking ourselves too seriously of course! Most months, there's a chance to meet new people, reconnect with your best pals, and enjoy something a little different. Many events are powered by the energy and time of our amazing volunteers as well as staff showing that fun is best when shared. Here are some of our highlights from the past year:



Night out at the cinema



Backstage at West End Musical 'Kiss me Kate'



Celebrating birthdays together



Enjoying art and nature - at the same time!



One Place East go Camping

Hanging out and enjoying the campfire together on our first ever holiday away! This took a lot of organising but it was an amazing chance for everyone to get to know each other better and enjoy some time away in the countryside, toasting marshmallows,



Disability Festival in the Park

One Place East yet again played a supporting role within the Festival Steering Group to help make the day another fantastic success. The festival is many people's favourite day of the year and as it continues to grow we do all we can to support.

# One Place Game Inn

One Place Game Inn is a welcoming, social gaming group designed and led by Disabled People. Participants can enjoy games in a safe, inclusive environment alongside fun wellbeing activities.

**99**

**Gaming Group Hours**

**76**

**Unique Individual accessed groups**

**34**

**Game Inn Sessions**

**2**

**Offsite Visits to CEX Games Shop & Gravity Max**

## Case Study: S – Engagement and Volunteering



S, a 30-year-old autistic man with mild learning disabilities, has been attending One Place East for six months. He works part-time at a supermarket and enjoys volunteering at One Place East, initially joining through our Game Inn group.

Over time, S has gained confidence to participate in other groups and workshops, including creative activities, the outreach team, Experts by Experience training, Talent Network workshops, counselling skills, and the ongoing Amplify filmmaking workshop.

He enjoys helping with office tasks, has made new friends, and describes having a “very nice life.” S is eager to learn, take on further training, and progress toward more appropriate work, with the goal of moving into a paid sessional support role at One Place East in the future.



# Weekly Trauma Recovery Group

One Place East offers both short-term, skills-focused support and longer-term peer and therapeutic models to help individuals address trauma and build resilience.



## One Person's Story...

*"I'm very grateful to be part of the Wednesday Recovery Focus support group. The weekly sessions are incredible as they consolidate and strengthen prior knowledge in terms of content, but the sessions are also well facilitated by Sue and Maria. They have been an outstanding source of knowledge, experience and guidance. I look forward to more sessions in the future."*

**44**

**Trauma  
Recovery  
Focused Groups**

*"This group, the sessions, both Sue and Maria's input and impact has been remarkable. After completing 2 years of therapy, it was the combination of the recovery from trauma course and the Wednesday group sessions which have enabled me to engage with parts of my own experiences, my locked traumas and so much more. The impact of these sessions is huge and have incrementally helped me progress in my relationship with my kids, my husband and myself. This is by far the most groundbreaking course I have attended; and I have spent 3 years attending courses on related content."*

**38**

**Unique  
Individuals  
accessed support**

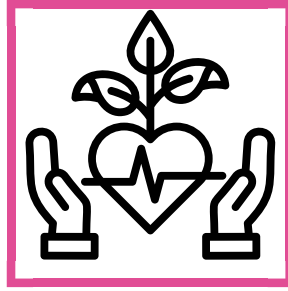
*"I signed up to the Recovery from Trauma Integration Day thinking that this will be a good recap and reflection and will support us in taking the next steps. I was blown away by the content and also how well the session was pitched to meet our needs. This information was vital and arrived at such a crucial point following the recovery from trauma course. I feel very equipped and empowered to take further steps and equally important is the impact of everyone else's stories. Listening to each other through similar and varied journeys is such an important part of healing."  
SS Feb 2025*

**900+**

**Attendances**

# Wellbeing Workshops and Events

Our Wellbeing Workshops cover a range of topics, and are often created in response to community requests and demand.



**30**  
Workshops

**1247**  
Attendances



Clearing your space is a workshop dedicated to supporting people to explore what lies behind the tendency to hoard, the impact on mental health and why some of us find it so hard to declutter. Feedback from participants often comment about how the issue is looked at with kindness and compassion.



Calming the Mind and the Body is our hugely popular monthly online session offering participants the chance to learn more about the physiology of stress and its impact on the body. This is followed by the opportunity to engage in some practical exercises that help reduce feelings of anxiety and help create peace within the mind and body.



Recovery from Trauma offers a 6 week interactive course introducing insights from neurosciences to explore how stress and trauma affect our health and offers practical tools for emotional and nervous-system regulation using Somatic Experiencing techniques. We welcome both professionals and interested community members to work together alongside one another. Participant feedback indicates that individuals welcome the opportunities to develop skills to help recognise and manage signs, symptoms and triggers.

TEA & TALK



Our tea and talk events provide accessible spaces for Deaf and disabled people to connect, share experiences, and support each other's mental wellbeing, often aligning with national awareness and celebration weeks.

# Reminiscence Group



A welcoming space where people come together to share life stories, remember meaningful moments, and connect through common experiences. The group encourages gentle conversation, laughter, and reflection, helping build confidence, friendship, and a sense of belonging.. Together group members remember the past, present and think about the future together



## Getting Out and Making Friends:

Many group members have forged new connections and deepened their friendships. The group aims to keep embracing new members, engage in conversations, and organise outings. Over the past year, activities included visits to the pub, park, and cinema.



## Topics Discussed Included:

Holidays - Books - Comedies - Pets Music - Christmas - Favourite character - Politics - What we did during the millennium - Mental Health - Toys - Old pictures - Favourite food and drink - Sports - Films - Poetry - Religion.



# Technical Assistance Project

Over the past year, the Tech Assistance Project has continued to make a meaningful contribution to reducing digital exclusion for Disabled people across Redbridge and East London more widely.

**119**

**People engaged through outreach**



**75**

**People provided with one-to-one support**



**27**

**Outreach sessions delivered**



**2**

**Digital drop in/ hack parties**





Through regular outreach activity, the team engaged individuals in community settings, offering practical information, digital guidance, and signposting to accessible tools and services. Alongside this broader engagement, the project provided individual assessments to understand people's digital needs and offered personalised one-to-one support to help them build confidence and develop essential digital skills.

The support delivered ranged from helping people set up or use their devices, to introducing accessibility features, navigating online platforms, and accessing vital public and social services. In addition to individual support, the project organised structured digital learning opportunities, enabling participants to learn in a group environment, share experiences, and make progress with the help of peers and staff. Follow-up sessions were also offered where needed to ensure people had continuity of assistance.



# Making a Difference

Service Areas	Headlines
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Self-advocacy networks</b></li> <li>• <b>Advocacy services</b></li> <li>• <b>Activism</b></li> <li>• <b>Research</b></li> <li>• <b>Representation and participation</b></li> </ul>	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div style="margin-left: 20px;"> <p>We launched One Place East for Change</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-top: 20px;"> <div style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; margin-right: 10px;">270+</div> <div style="margin-left: 20px;"> <p>Attendees for our anti-hate crime awareness sessions in schools</p> </div> </div> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center; margin-top: 20px;">  <div style="margin-left: 20px;"> <p>We joined forces with statutory and voluntary sector colleagues to ensuring Disabled people were part of local decision making</p> </div> </div>

**General Election**

**Hustings**

**Learning BITES**

**Spring**

**Summer**

**Autumn**

**Winter**

We support National Learning Disability Week with a social media campaign

We hosted a General Election Q&A with constituency candidates

Our Peer leaders deliver training for social care professionals

We marked the International Day of Persons with Disabilities with a special podcast

We create opportunities for our community to be part of local decision making

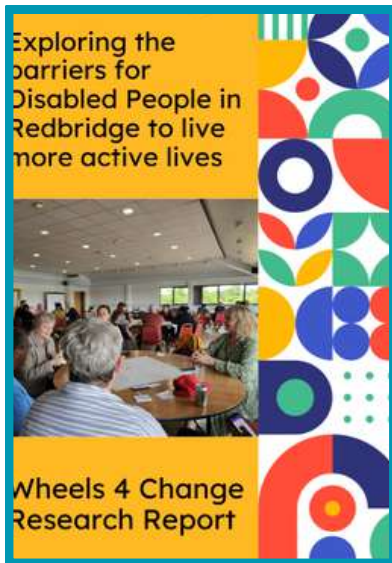
We celebrate the differences as well as the things we have in common

We make a difference for individuals as well as the community

# Research and Consultation



Research within a DDPO encompasses community-led participatory research, including surveys, mystery shopper evaluations, and service quality checks. It also involves engaging the Disabled community on issues from policy and transport to housing, digital accessibility, and service delivery, and hosting or collaborating with academic researchers on projects that benefit the community.



The Wheels 4 Change project was established to identify and explore the specific barriers that prevent Disabled people in Redbridge from living more active lives. The research employed a community-led methodology, training local community researchers to conduct a survey (92 respondents), perform mystery shopping visits, and engage with sports providers on issues of cost, accessibility, and staff training. The ultimate intention is for the network to advocate for greater inclusion and facilitate co-designed programs and stronger cross-sector collaboration to improve local provision.



One Place East hosted a research project commissioned by the London Boroughs of Newham and Redbridge and carried out by the London School of Economics (LSE). This research explored how ethnicity and cultural background influence the experiences of people accessing social care services in both boroughs.



We are a key partner for Redbridge Council leading consultation across a diverse range of critical policy areas the e.g. Housing Strategy, Homelessness Strategy, and Budget. This collaboration ensures that council strategies are directly informed by community need. One Place East played a leading role helping to ensure the Redbridge Disability Festival reflected community requests We have supported NHS and Voluntary Sector colleagues with similar policy and service requests on many topics.



We also consult our community members when we also need to find out more about our own services e.g. website design

# One Place Sight Support Group

Our Sight Support Network brings together blind and partially sighted members to share lived experience, strengthen peer connections, and shape more inclusive services across our organisation.

Over the year, the network has played an active role in identifying access barriers and co-producing solutions with staff and partners.



Across the two years, the variety of guest speakers demonstrates the wide scope of information, guidance and support offered to members. Representatives from local councils, transport services, healthcare providers and community organisations shared updates on accessibility, community resources, welfare support, and local initiatives, ensuring that members could engage directly with the services that impact their daily lives.

Colleagues from One Place East also contributed by discussing areas such as sporting access and digital engagement, helping strengthen inclusion and communication within the community. One of the key highlights of the programme was the session delivered by the Sustainable Travel Team, which was opened to all OPE members and offered valuable insights into accessible and environmentally conscious travel options.



# One Place Voice

Our Learning Disability Network provides an accessible, supportive forum where people with learning disabilities can speak up, influence decision-making, and lead work that reflects their priorities. The group meets regularly to explore new ideas, build confidence, and ensure that our projects remain genuinely user-led

## Improved Accessibility of Transport Services

Service user involvement influenced updates to the TfL Go App and enhancements to TfL's Disability Equality Training.



## Influencing London-wide Campaign Priorities

Participation in People First London Network led to three priority areas being set: Advocacy, Benefits & Money, and Hate Crime.



## Improved Accessibility of LBR Website

Feedback directly contributed to the redesign of the Redbridge Council website to make it more accessible.



## Shaping NHS Communication and Services

Service users reviewed and influenced updates to NHS Primary Care and Council Services Communication Guides. And the 10 year Health Plan for England



## Accessible Information Standard (AIS) Improvements

Co-production work led to new easy-read feedback forms, business cards and workshop materials to improve patient



## What people have to say about One Place Voice:

*Guest speakers coming along to meetings*

*We all have a voice within the meetings*

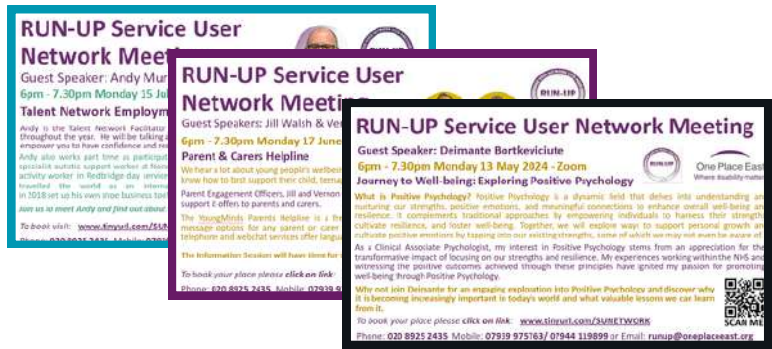
*Opportunities to train, do consultation, involved in important things, Opportunities to get paid involvement, volunteering roles*

*We make changes*

*Chance to get our voice heard*

*Chance to get involved with different projects*

*Good experience*



# RUN-UP Service User Network Meetings

Our Mental Health Network offers a safe, user-led space for members to discuss challenges, promote wellbeing, and contribute directly to improving mental-health-related services and advocacy. This year, the network has helped shape our mental health initiatives and highlighted key issues affecting local disabled people.



Jill Walsh and Vernon Samuels from YoungMinds delivered an informative session on the organisation's Parents Helpline, outlining the support available to parents and carers of children and young people experiencing poor mental health. The discussion highlighted the growing pressures families face and the importance of accessible, early-support services.



Andy Murphy presented an overview of the Talent Network, with additional details provided elsewhere in the report. His session focused on innovative, non-traditional employment pathways and the ways in which flexible, person-centred support can help individuals with lived experience of mental health difficulties engage with meaningful work.



Deeba Khan from Community Action shared insights into the relationship between nutrition and mental health, emphasising how poor mental health can make healthy eating more challenging. The session explored practical strategies for improving access to nutritious food and supporting healthier daily habits.



Deimantė Bortkevičiūtė led an engaging session on the principles of Positive Psychology, encouraging participants to explore strengths-based approaches to wellbeing, resilience-building techniques, and small daily practices that can support a more positive mindset.

# Advocacy

Traditional models of advocacy ensures that Disabled people have someone independent to stand alongside them, helping them understand their rights, express their views, and navigate complex systems such as health, social care, and benefits. Advocates provide clear information, challenge unfair decisions, and support individuals to make informed choices. This approach empowers people to have their voices heard, reduces barriers to accessing essential services, and helps prevent individuals from being overlooked or excluded.



## Case Study: Ruby

Ruby is a 65-year-old woman with a learning disability and lived experience of mental ill health. She lives at home with her elderly parents, who also have long-term health conditions. Ruby sought advocacy support from One Place East after struggling to contact her GP following a recent hospital discharge. She needed a medication review and follow-up appointment to support her recovery.

The advocate helped Ruby secure the medical appointments she needed, enabling her to understand her medication and receive essential blood monitoring – an issue that had previously caused her to faint and led to her hospital admission.

During this support, Ruby also disclosed serious financial difficulties and letters she did not understand. The advocate helped her address these letters, identify the cause of the financial problems, and take steps to resolve them.

With advocacy support, Ruby's health, wellbeing, and financial stability have all improved, leading to a safer and significantly better quality of life.

This case highlights the vital role advocacy plays in safeguarding rights and improving lives. By offering independent, person-centered support, our advocates ensure that individuals like Ruby are not left behind in complex systems. Beyond resolving immediate health concerns, advocacy often uncovers hidden issues such as financial hardship that can significantly impact wellbeing.



# One Place East for Change

One Place East for Change (OPEC) is our dedicated group that drives change both within the organisation and across the wider community, particularly on issues such as access to services for Disabled people. Through campaigning, community involvement, and collaboration with other organisations, the group ensures that disabled voices are heard and influence policy, strategy, and local service delivery



From April to December, One Place East for Change met monthly, providing a consistent space for Disabled people to discuss local issues, share experiences, and influence change. The group welcomed the Alliance for Inclusive Education (ALLFIE) for a dedicated session exploring the role of Deaf and Disabled People's Organisations (DDPOs) and strengthening understanding of the Social Model of Disability. This model highlights that disability is created by societal barriers rather than an individual's impairments, helping members gain confidence in identifying and challenging the obstacles they face in everyday life.

As part of our General Election activity, the group organised a hustings event where local parliamentary candidates took part in a lively and informative Q&A session with Disabled community members. This provided a rare opportunity for Disabled residents to question candidates directly about policies affecting their lives, from social care and benefits to housing, transport, and accessibility.

Through these engagements, it became clear that the group was fulfilling two distinct but equally important functions: campaigning for change and providing structured feedback to the Board on issues impacting local Disabled people. In January, the decision was made to separate these into two focused groups - one dedicated to campaigning and community action, and one dedicated to advising and informing the organisation's leadership - to ensure each area receives the attention, capacity, and strategic focus it deserves.



# Personal Growth

Service Areas	Headlines
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Talent Network</b></li> <li>• <b>Peer Support - Experts by Experience</b></li> <li>• <b>Training and Development</b></li> <li>• <b>Volunteering</b></li> </ul>	 <p>Talent Network grows from strength to strength offering non-traditional employment support</p>  <p>Create to Market offers opportunities for community to sell their work</p>  <p>Our Peer Leaders develop the skills to deliver training within the borough.</p>



**Spring**

Our Community Journalism Course launches



**Summer**

Chordless Choir performs at the Disability Festival



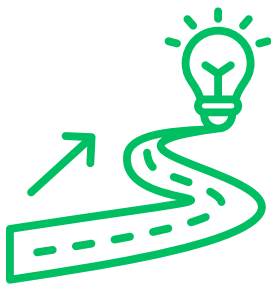
**Autumn**

Laughable is back with their Comedy Workshop.



**Winter**

Amplify our film-making course is launched



We create pathways within our organisation enabling community to access services, volunteer, become a peer leader and paid staff member



We create opportunities for people to try new things and do things outside their comfort zone



We access individuals and leaders in their field to help us offer the most exciting and creative programme

# Talent Network

The Talent Network provided a flexible, person-centred employment support offer designed to help individuals with lived experience of mental health challenges move closer to meaningful work, volunteering, or training opportunities.



## Case Study: R.C.

R.C, 63, was referred to One Place East in early 2024 after a benefits review. Having been out of work since 2019 due to caring responsibilities, he was experiencing high anxiety, low confidence, and isolation.

Initially, he felt overwhelmed and rarely left his home. By his third session, he began opening up about his interests - especially gardening - which became an important confidence-building tool. As he continued attending, he grew more relaxed and engaged, interacting with others, joining workshops, and feeling a sense of belonging in the supportive, non-judgmental environment.

R.C. shared: "If it wasn't for One Place East, I don't know where I would be. My anxiety goes from 4 to 2 when I'm at OPE. I really enjoy coming here and look forward to it. It gives me a focus, gives me a purpose to get up."

R.C. has since completed EBE and leadership training, joined a gardening group, and is now exploring volunteering or part-time work. He reports feeling in a far better place than six months earlier.

**21**

**Workshops  
Delivered**

**57**

**Unique Service  
Users Engaged**

**110**

**Direct Support  
Hours Delivered**



## Sessions Include:

Careers Advice, Digital Skills training, 'Is Self-Employment Right for Me?' sessions, CV-building and Interview Skills workshops, and a six-week Laughable Comedy course. These group sessions are complemented by one-to-one advice and motivational coaching to help individuals progress with confidence.

# Peer Leadership



## Experts by Experience

One Place East continued to grow its co-production work through the DisAbility: An Experts by Experience programme. The programme is delivered with freelance trainer Mike Phillips, who brings both professional skills and his own lived experience of disability, HIV, and mental health.

**270+**

**students attend anti-hate training at Primary Schools**

The programme gives disabled people a stronger voice by bringing their real-life experiences into training for professionals. This helps improve understanding, inclusion, and confidence across Redbridge's health and social care services.

**12**

**teaching staff attend sessions**

Participants took part in a range of training sessions, including: assertiveness, interpersonal communication, influencing skills, making the most of meetings, and chairing meetings. As a result of this training, they went on to deliver a series of workshops for social care professionals across both the voluntary and statutory sectors. These workshops covered topics such as the social model of disability, See Me, Hear Me, Get to Know Me, mental health as a lived experience, and Let's Work Together.



**Training Stars**  
include us

## Training Stars

Training Stars had another successful year as our peer-led programme for people with learning disabilities. The team delivered impactful Disability and Hate Crime Awareness sessions across Redbridge, using lived experience to educate, challenge prejudice, and promote inclusion. As a trusted peer leadership model, Training Stars continues to provide authentic, accessible training in schools and community settings.



Watch this space – both programmes will keep delivering in the year ahead.

# Training and Development



As a pan-disability organisation, One Place East brings together people with many different disabilities, creating something special that we celebrate and are proud of. This diversity gives members greater opportunities to learn from each other, try new experiences, and develop skills and confidence through both social events and a wide range of training opportunities.



Over the year, One Place East delivered a variety of creative and development opportunities. The Creative Writing and Journalism Project helped Deaf and Disabled participants build confidence in storytelling, digital communication, and citizen journalism. The Laughable Comedy course culminated in attendees performing at monthly stand-up nights, combining performance skills with self-expression.



Amplify, our filmmaking course run with YouPress, gave participants hands-on experience in sharing their own stories on film, developing both technical and creative skills while amplifying their voices.



In addition to creative programmes, we delivered formal training including Mental Health First Aid and Mental Health Awareness, supporting both participants within the organisation and in the wider community.



Social opportunities over the year have included camping trips, festivals, pantomimes, cinema and theatre visits, meals out, quiz nights, bingo, and Chordless Choir reunions, among others, providing fun, inclusive ways for members to connect and enjoy new experiences together.

# Thank you to our funders

We would like to thank all of our funders for their generous support in 2024-2025



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MAYOR OF LONDON







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Where disability matters

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