



OUR Newsletter

By and for members of enabled



News Highlights

- Disability Employment gap
- Social care charges: People living with disabilities hit by steep increases in care costs
- TV has “utterly failed” people living with disabilities



Celebrating achievements

- Even greater accessibility at Strawberry Field
- Caitlin Versfeld- My journey through Strawberry Field
- Helen and Stephen Birchall winners of the enabled quiz
- Ben Fuller organ recital to celebrate and share hope



Time for Reflection

Only 50% of people with disabilities are in work compared to 80% of people without disabilities.



Department
for Work &
Pensions

The Work and Pensions Select Committee has released a report on the disability employment gap.



The report confirmed that people with disabilities still face unacceptable barriers to finding, staying in, and progressing in work than those without disabilities.

The select committee made the following recommendations to address the disability employment gaps;



- Government should set ambitious targets of getting an additional 1.2 million people with disabilities into work by 2027.
- Make it mandatory for employers to report on the proportion of their workforce who are people living with disabilities.
- Address the disability pay gap and make targets for closing this gap.
- Employers must have access to support and guidance on reasonable adjustments and those who do not comply should be publicly named and held accountable.



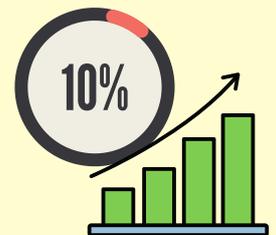
"The current Work and Health Programme is **not** working for many people with disabilities; accessibility and application to Work schemes is bureaucratic, cumbersome and a time-consuming process"

Social care charges: People living with disabilities hit by steep increases in care costs.

According to BBC research on how much those living in the community had to pay towards their care, disabled and vulnerable adults in England are being hit by a steep rise in care costs.



The report shows that the costs of bills paid by disabled and vulnerable adults towards their care have risen by 10% over the last two years.



The rise is particularly high for those with Learning Disabilities, who often need greater levels of support.



Jackie O'Sullivan from Mencap said that the charges meant "the least well off in society are having to make up the shortfall in funding that should come from the Government".



The Association of the Directors of Adult Social Care (ADASS) director blames the government funding cuts for these rises.



The Department for Health and Social Care said that it would bring forward proposals to reform adult social care later this year.



13%

**increase in care charges for people
with learning disabilities.**

TV has “utterly failed” people living with disabilities

Screen writer, Jack Thorne, (pictured right) has accused the TV industry of “utterly and totally” failing people living with disabilities.



Jack Thorne, who has won five BAFTA’s, in a keynote speech at the Edinburgh TV festival said that “Disability is the forgotten diversity, the one that everyone leaves out of speeches”



He went on to say “Gender, race, sexuality, all are rightly discussed at length. Disability gets relegated out. In conversations about representation, in action plans and new era planning, disability is confined to a corner, it remains an afterthought.”



He took particular issue with non-disabled actors being cast in disabled roles. “Actors have taken roles that they shouldn’t have”



Thorne highlighted the talented people with a disability working in the TV industry, including Cherylee Houston who plays Izzy Armstrong in Coronation Street. He called for people with a disability to be offered more high profile roles.



Disability is the forgotten diversity, the one that everyone leaves out of speeches”

Even greater accessibility at Strawberry Field

The Salvation Army Strawberry Field leads the way in being accessible to all, with full wheelchair access, tours for the visually impaired and features to support those with hearing impairment and other disabilities, as well as a Changing Places toilet facility.

Strawberry Field is aiming to be the UK's Number one attraction for accessibility, thanks to a series of upgraded and innovative features.

Strawberry Field is home to an interactive visitor exhibition, café, shop and gardens.

Through research and focus groups, the team have upgraded elements of the visitor experience to ensure that everyone is welcome.

Inclusivity is at the forefront of the vision and the upgraded features are now in place, making visiting even easier for wheelchair users and those with visual, hearing and other disabilities.

The newly introduced spectacular tour for the visually impaired has had a tremendously enthusiastic response.



Even greater accessibility at Strawberry Field



Matthew Hughes-Paton, who attended one of the focus groups says: "I visited Strawberry Field along with three other visually impaired people to give feedback on the audio described tour around the visitor exhibition - we all absolutely loved it...

... not only was the tour informative and interesting, but it was great to visit somewhere that really took our needs into account and catered for our varying visual impairments. The tour was fully accessible with tactile elements and lots to listen to."

"I can't recommend Strawberry Field enough. It is such a warm and welcoming place"

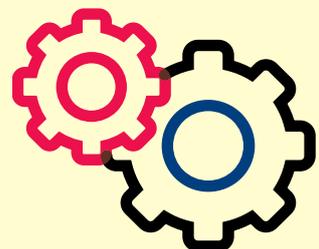
To help support visitors with hearing impairment, all video content now has added captions. Much of the innovative technology has been provided by Imagineear, a world leading developer of multimedia content.



Strawberry Field is one of the first UK attractions to offer Changing Places facilities. Changing Places toilets provide more space and equipment than conventional wheelchair-accessible WCs, to meet the needs of people of all ages who need help to deal with their intimate hygiene.



Responsible tourism is at the very heart of Strawberry Field. Profits from the visitor experience go towards funding Steps at Strawberry Field, a series of programmes aimed at supporting people with learning disabilities into work.



Caitlin Versfeld

My Journey through Strawberry Field



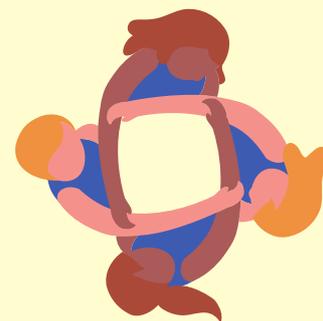
I started on the Steps to Work program at Strawberry Field by chance really, but it turned out to be the best decision I have made.

I was volunteering at first, but my confidence was really low. When I was in the café every week my confidence started to grow. I started to talk to people I knew and people I didn't know too. This made me feel a bit more confident each time.

Whilst I was there, I would hear about Steps to Work from the trainees who were on the course. It sounded positive and it seemed to have a positive effect on their wellbeing and emotions, so that encouraged me to apply for the course.



While I was on the course I learnt how to work as a member of a team in a lot of different activities and to listen to other people's opinions. When I was younger, I could never take feedback, it felt more like criticism, but I don't mind now because I know it's only for my benefit and it helps me develop. I learnt this on the course.



They also taught us to speak in front of a crowd of people, which is something that I would never have done before. They helped us with job application forms and with travel training in groups, where we learnt how to use the app, 'moovit', which I now use if I have to get the bus.



Caitlin Versfeld My Journey through Strawberry Field

Within ten months I had also conquered my fear of dogs and to me this is huge because I was petrified of them until we got a puppy during the third lockdown which helped me built a mental resilience for dogs, and this makes me feel proud of myself.

During lockdown, we also had the chance to take part in a job club, where we learnt how to boost our employability and how to act and show professionalism in the workplace.

My confidence has improved a lot. I'm now on a six-month contract at the Reader project at Calderstones Park around the corner from Strawberry Field. I have learnt how to get the bus there and back from home. This has made me become more independent on public transport. I have also improved in giving directions to people. My speech is much better because I'm more confident in talking to people. People have noticed a massive difference from when they first met me until now. I used to be really shy, now I'm much clearer with my words and they can't stop me from talking!



Caitlin (left) with her family.

Helen and Stephen Birchall winners of enabled quiz



We are members of Sunderland Millfield Corps. I first got involved in our final divisional meeting of enabled in September 2018. My husband Stephen was unable to attend at the time so he followed me along to our first enabled meeting and Christmas meal in December 2018. We both felt that enabled was a good fellowship to be part of, since then we have been active members and enjoying every part of the fellowship.

We absolutely love being members of enabled. It makes us feel like we belong to something. We feel a sense of security and being a part of a wonderful group of friends who all understand what it's like to be "different".

Due to Covid-19, we have been unable to meet as a group at Cheltenham for the enabled summer school of arts. However, with very special and talented people as well as social media we have been privileged to take part in numerous events online. Although we have never met the majority of people in person, we have made the most wonderful friends by joining in the online activities.

During the summer school event in July 2021, we were asked to lead a "This is us" session. We were both honoured to be asked to share our life stories with others. This was out of our comfort zone, we would never get the opportunity to do this elsewhere and we will do anything for enabled. Feedback from friends and comments afterwards were very supportive and encouraging.

Helen and Stephen Birchall winners of enabled quiz



Major Barbara Davies handing over the trophy to Stephen and Helen.

One other event during the summer school that we took part in was a quiz hosted by Reuben Dykes on zoom. It was on various topics including general knowledge. Neither of us are very good at quizzes but we gave it a go. "WE WON"!!! We had never won anything in our lives before. This was a huge shock but a great achievement.

We eventually received our first ever trophy presented to us at our Corps in Sunderland Millfield by our good friend and a long term SAFE and enabled member Major Barbara Davies. We both felt so proud and give thanks to our God and all the enabled friends and members.



Behold, how good and pleasant it is
when brothers dwell in unity!
It is like the precious oil on the head,
running down on the beard of Aaron,
running down on the collar of his robes!
It is like the dew of Hermon,
which falls on the mountains of Zion!
For there the Lord has commanded the blessing,
life forevermore." Psalm 133

Ben Fuller organ recital to celebrate and share hope

Saturday 11th September 2021 found a good crowd gathered at St. Paul's church, Woodhouse Eaves, for an organ recital by enabled member Ben Fuller.



Ben, who plays entirely "by ear", played a wide selection of music to celebrate the hope that we have shared for the last two years of pandemic, and the joy of being able to meet together in this way at last.

Beethoven's "Ode to Joy" and "Sunny Side of the Street" caught the mood for the hope that we continue to share for the future of our planet, optimistic that "He's got the Whole World in His Hands". "Lily the Pink" and her medicinal compound represented the Covid vaccine in a musical rainbow recognising our NHS, as the bringers of hope.

Our individual hopes and dreams were acknowledged in the eclectic musical mix and the programme notes and illustrations quoting the poet Emily Dickinson who turned Hope from an abstract to a physical form. Personifying hope as a soft, warm 'thing with feathers - that perches in the soul'. Hope one of the three gifts that we have been given along with Faith and Love. The concert ended with 'Hopeful Praise', 'Lord of all Hopefulness' 'Lord of the Dance' and 'When the Saints go Marching in'.

£400 was raised to be divided between the enabled fellowship-The Salvation Army and St. Paul's church.

Time for Reflection: The Nativity

"So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them"
Luke Chapter 2, verses 4 - 7 New International version.

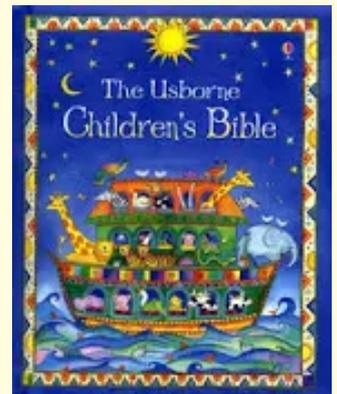
A highlight at Christmas for many people is the nativity. In our Sunday School teaching days when Coralie and I were responsible for Climbers (3 - 7 years olds) on one Sunday in December we always had a nativity.

We would read the story of the nativity from the Children's Bible and then the children would act out the nativity and sing Away in the Manger at the end.

We would encourage the children to come dressed up as someone who is part of the nativity. They could be anyone. If we had three Mary's and four Joseph's we could cope with that. One year one of the children came as Herod, now that was a surprise!

It was a truly magical time which rushed past. Those children will be in their 20's now. It could well be that some now have children of their own. Perhaps as they watch their children take part in the nativity they remember taking part themselves.

- I wonder how those children reflected on our celebration of the nativity?
- Was it just simply a good fun time with the opportunity to listen to and act out the nativity and then do some craft activities?



Time for Reflection: The Nativity

Today, many children have drifted away from the church. So, as they celebrate Christmas do they remember the nativity and think about the true meaning of Christmas?



Was the nativity a key element in their formative years of finding and coming to faith? Are some of them Sunday School teachers? I wonder how they celebrate the nativity today?

Whatever the answers are to these questions what was clear was that we had an opportunity each year to show the children the true meaning of Christmas and we grasped that opportunity with both hands.

I like to think that some of those children look back fondly on our celebration of the nativity and the joy experienced. That in the busyness of their lives, that at Christmas, they can reflect on the true meaning of Christmas.

You never know they or their parents might still have their nativity craft scenes somewhere.

Merry
Christmas
and
a Happy New
Year!





GET INVOLVED!

The opportunity to talk with someone and laugh with them can cheer us up and lighten our day.

Unfortunately, many people living with disabilities do not often have this opportunity. So, to address loneliness and isolation amongst people living with a disability and their family carers, we have developed enabled "Keeping in touch".

This will provide an opportunity for members to connect with each other or volunteers on the telephone, at a time that has been mutually agreed with them.

You can sign up either as a volunteer or a member. We are taking every measures possible to ensure that everyone is kept safe through "Keeping in Touch" and your information will be kept confidential.

Anyone can join "Keeping in Touch".



enabled Prayer Network

The enabled prayer network roll is a prayer group who share prayers and encouragement every week. If you are interested, please get in touch with Chris Stringer or Paska Moore.

"Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing"
1 Thessalonians 5:11

To find out more about "Keeping in touch" or prayer network contact us by using the contact details on this newsletter.



enabled (formerly Salvation Army Fellowship of Endeavour -SAFE) is a member led group which provides spiritual and social fellowship for people living with a disability and their family carers.

enabled members engage in inclusive activities which are led and facilitated by the members themselves. It is all about fellowship and inspiring one another. **Membership is free and open to everyone.**

Covid-19 What's happening?

The government has introduced new changes to the covid guidelines due to the new omicron variant. Although many have been vaccinated, we need to be careful and cautious as coronavirus has remained a serious health risk to everyone. Follow the government guidance in your area and stay cautious to help protect yourself and others.

- Wash your hands
- Wear a face covering (if you can)
- Keep your distance
- Limit the number of people you meet
- Meet outdoors when possible
- Ensure that you have plenty of ventilation

Contact us



Your comments and feedback is very important, so please talk to us. We also love to hear your stories and receive articles about what you do in your corps and community to promote inclusion of people living with a disability and encourage others especially during this difficult time.

We look forward to hearing from you!



LETTER

Chris Stringer

The Salvation Army
101 Newington Causeway
London, SE1 6BN



EMAIL

enabled@salvationarmy.org.uk



PHONE

020 7601 7026



MOBILE

078 897 55067- Chris Stringer

073 41084197- Paska Moore



FACEBOOK

Salvation Army Fellowship of Endeavour



Founder: William Booth

General: Brian Peddle

Territorial Commander: Commissioner Anthony Cotterill



The Salvation Army United Kingdom and Ireland Territory. The Salvation Army is a Christian church and a registered charity. The charity number in England, Wales and Northern Ireland is 214779, in Scotland SC009359 and in the Republic of Ireland CHY6399.