



**IDEAL  
FOR ALL**

**2020/21  
Impact Report**



# FOREWORD



**Carol Goff**

**Chair of Ideal for All Limited**

**“Despite the unknown our staff, volunteers and participants have done us proud. They have kept each other going and kept our services running at a crucial time. Thank you all for your hard work and dedication to making life better for all of us.”**

The year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 was a time of uncertainty for all of us, but also a time where our people have shown tremendous strength and coming together of communities.

We have all had to change the way we live our lives drastically and many of us have had to continue in the face of further adversity alongside overcoming the loss of our loved ones too.

This has also been a time where many people have experienced for the first-time what life is like when you are lonely, isolated, unable to access the things you want or need to everyday, and unable to socialise as you had hoped. This is just the tip of the iceberg in the challenges that disabled people, their families and carers have to overcome everyday.

So many people are now only beginning to understand this lived experience and we must harness this to raise attention back to ‘the few’ - those in our communities in need of support and often forgotten, hidden or left behind.

Covid is a chance for us to change the way we work and ensure that no one is left behind because of their health and disability moving forwards into the future. Its also a chance for us to maximise the work of our fantastic people and communities and shine a light on what we can overcome when we work together.



Welcome to Ideal for All's review of our 2020/2021 year. In a year of responding to the global pandemic, community and staff resilience shone through as we kept our doors open to ensure support was available.

With support from trustees & staff our business continuity plan was successfully implemented, we quickly made arrangements for staff to work from home, installing COVID- safe measures at our sites to support key staff to work from Ideal for All's premises.

The year was tinged with sadness for so many in our communities including our own staff and service users being impacted with COVID19 and the challenges of accessing regular social & health care services.

We felt the effects in our own charity when our dear colleague and friend Jaya Roy passed away in July 2020 after a very short battle with cancer. Over 20+ years Jaya worked closely with me keeping the finances of Ideal for All up to date and lending a hand at events and wherever support was required. She is dearly missed by all that knew her, rest in peace Jaya.

Despite the challenges Ideal for All supported thousands of individuals with welfare calls, specific and general information, advice and guidance, peer support sessions, direct payments, employment & skills opportunities, access to services including food and provisions during isolation and shielding periods.

We secured substantial additional funding to respond to the impact of COVID-19 in our communities. Funds were used to implement digital solutions, including moving peer support participation via Zoom and Teams, we took part in combatting digital exclusion, supporting individuals without the tech to participate.

In April 2020, working with our VCS partners we launched Sandwell's community offer service. Ideal for All were chosen to be the single point of referral for this invaluable service. The community offer provides services to residents via navigators who work with individuals and families to navigate the barriers they are facing to live an independent life as possible, being active citizens within their respective communities. During the lockdowns the service was a lifeline of support to residents who were isolating and shielding.

# Resilience

Our Direct Payment team continued to accept referrals, managing funds, and providing payroll and payment services to 1000's of personal assistants. During the initial months of lock down demand for support was high. We continue to deliver DP services across the Black Country, Birmingham and further afield. I am pleased to report that we retained the contract to deliver DP services to Birmingham City Council residents via a formal tender and procurement submission.

Our integrated services (health & wellbeing, community engagement & peer support, and employment & skills), pivoted service delivery quickly. Our various support groups moved on-line and during the latter part of the year we safely made face-face appointments where required.

Despite the challenges we faced we remained positive and forward facing. In July 2020 Ideal for All was awarded the prestigious Employment Related Services Association (ERSA) award – Health & Disability Provider of the year. A testimony to the hard work of our staff and volunteers .

We expect to see the effects of the pandemic well into the future and currently there is still much uncertainty. We will do all we can to respond to community needs and have commenced developing our 2021-2024 business plan, taking the learning from the past 3 years.

I feel assured that the knowledge, skills and resilience shown by our trustees, staff and volunteers will hold us in good stead to face the future demands of our services. Our aim is to be at the forefront in our local communities supporting reset and recovery in these unprecedented times.



Khatija Patel  
Chief Executive Officer of Ideal for All Limited

# Making life better

## ABOUT US

for all of us

Ideal for All is a user-led registered charity and social enterprise working to make life better for disabled, elderly and vulnerable people and their carers.

Formed in 1996 to address the barriers that disabled people face such as health needs, poverty and a lack of voice to policymakers. Local disabled people wanted to set up a fully accessible Independent Living Centre and 'joined up' co-produced services.

Based in the Black Country and Birmingham, our team deliver services across the West Midlands, neighbouring regions and other parts of the UK. We are an award winning provider of person centred services that achieve positive outcomes for people in terms of improvements in mental and physical health and wellbeing; reduced isolation; improved knowledge, skills and opportunities; employability; and increased independence.

Since we started we have supported over 35,000 people with information, guidance and access to a range of independent living activities, direct payment services, employability programmes, health and wellbeing projects, and peer support groups.

## OUR VISION

To empower and enable disabled and disadvantaged people and their families, carers, support workers and local communities, regardless of age, or background to fulfil their potential as active citizens and fully participate in society and the neighbourhoods in which they live.

## How we make lives better

Ideal for All provides meaningful experiences, and long term solutions to promote positive opportunities for all.

Our user-led approach means those involved report improvements to mental/physical health and wellbeing, reduced isolation, improved knowledge, skills and opportunity, access to suitable employment and increased independence.

We continuously review and monitor the way we work at all levels, enabling us to focus on social, environmental and economic change.



**Acting as a voice for local people  
we promote choice and control, co-production,  
innovation, inclusion and independence**





# Our COVID Response

At the beginning of 2020/2021 we were in the midst of a global pandemic and facing lockdown measures. We had to close all our front facing services and centres in line with guidance and pivot our services to an outreach, online and telephone support model. Staff either worked from home and on an outreach basis in the community or for the Direct Payment service on a rota basis from the BizHub office in Tipton.

We experienced an explosion of referrals to our Community Offer Single Point of Access from people in dire need. Initially we dealt with people who were shielding or housebound with immediate crisis needs i.e. needing help with shopping for essentials, getting meals and access to medication.

However, as lockdown progressed, we started to see other needs emerging relating to peoples financial situation, as people's jobs became at risk and deterioration in peoples mental health, as they struggled with the lack of social contact and changes to daily routines. We used our Building Connections project to deliver a range of activities to support with improving wellbeing and tackling loneliness and isolation.



We provided advice and guidance including welfare rights and benefit advice, peer support, employability skills and mental health and wellbeing support through telephone contact and the development of safe online group spaces.



In our Direct Payment service, we saw an initial drop in new referrals but at the same time an increase in demand for support from existing service users. Service users were worried and anxious about how they would cope in terms of their basic needs, how should they manage their care during the COVID crisis, what would they do if their Personal Care Assistant (PA) got sick or had to self-isolate.

The team supported disabled people through providing accessible and tailored/bespoke COVID advice and signposting; delivering additional welfare checks over and above normal contact arrangements; finding alternative care arrangements quickly for COVID related staff absences/sickness; and supporting disabled people to furlough their Personal Care Assistants (PA's) where required.

Our horticulture services provision was adversely impacted. Our primary growing season is between March and September and this was effectively wiped out in 20/21 due to COVID 19. However, the team were proactive and successful in securing COVID 19 emergency grants and from funders supporting community businesses.

Where the maintenance of our garden sites would normally be supported by volunteers and service users, particularly through the busy growing and production season, we had to rely on a small staff team to maintain the gardens. Despite this we continued to provide fresh fruit and vegetables to the local community and those in need through our bag your own scheme, producing 1.6 tonnes of produce.



# OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

## NEED

Disabled people are more likely to live in poverty & be affected by multiple barriers.

Policy makers need to speak & listen to disabled people.

## ACTIVITIES

Disability & Employment Information & Advice

Self-Directed Support Services

Sharing knowledge & evidence

Health & Wellbeing Activities

Peer support & Social Groups

## LONG TERM OUTCOMES

Improved confidence & aspiration

Stronger, active more inclusive communities

Improved local environment

Improved quality of life & more people living independently

## INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

Self reliance

Increased Independence

Positive sense of well-being

Improved skills & employment prospects

Increased access to services

## IMPACTS

Health & Wellbeing Improvements

Increased community cohesion & connectivity

Community & individual resilience

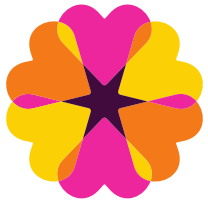
Reduced reliance on statutory services

National & local policy that addresses the needs of disabled people

Reducing loneliness and isolation

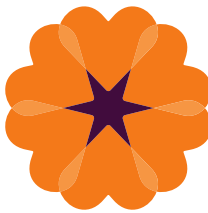


# OUR SERVICES



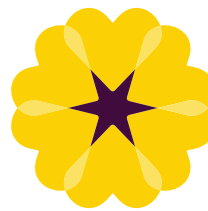
## **Direct payments (personal budgets)**

Ideal for All provides a comprehensive support service for individuals receiving direct payments from local councils and health authorities. Our specialist advisers enable clients to manage their care requirements in a way that suits them by offering information, advice and support on all aspects of employing staff, payroll, support planning and managed accounts. Our services are also available to people who are funding their own care needs.



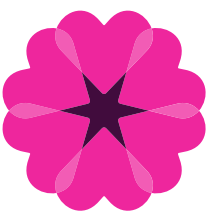
## **Peer support, social groups and events**

Our online and face to face peer support groups offer a valuable source of information, shared experiences and mutual self-help. They promote and support the independence of disabled and disadvantaged people and reduce social isolation. We also organise regular coffee mornings, accessible exercise classes, peer-led social activities and events throughout the year.



## **Health and wellbeing programmes**

We deliver a range of online and face to face wellbeing support. This includes interventions delivered from our fully accessible and award winning horticultural sites in the Black Country, which provides therapeutic gardening, food growing, healthy food programmes and creative workshops, as well as a variety of opportunities to support people into work through vocational training and volunteering opportunities. We have also develop a suite of mental health and peer support programmes.



## **Specialist Employment Support**

Through online and face to face support, we support disabled and disadvantaged people to develop their skills, confidence and optimism in order to find or move closer towards sustainable employment. Our support is tailored to each person's needs and aspirations, designed to help them overcome barriers to work including providing information and guidance to businesses and professionals relating to the employment of disabled people.



## **Information and advice**

In addition to our Community Offer Single Point of Access, we offer disabled people and carers impartial information, advice and support to make informed choices about disability matters that affect them. This includes free and confidential help with welfare rights, benefits and signposting to partner networks and statutory provision.

# OUR IMPACT 2020-2021

**2011**

**PANDEMIC RELATED  
WELFARE CALLS MADE**

**1490**

**PEOPLE SUPPORTED TO  
MANAGE THEIR OWN CARE  
THROUGH SELF-DIRECTED  
SUPPORT SERVICES**

**1080**

**NEW VOLUNTEER HOURS**

**1.6**

**TONNES OF PRODUCE  
DISTRIBUTED TO LOCAL  
COMMUNITY**

**83%**

**PEOPLE REPORTING  
INCREASED CONFIDENCE,  
SELF-ESTEEM & INDEPENDENCE**

**72%**

**PEOPLE DEMONSTRATING  
IMPROVED SKILLS &  
EMPLOYABILITY**

**65%**

**PEOPLE REPORTED IMPROVED  
MENTAL WELLBEING**

**34%**

**TRAINING &  
EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES  
across all programmes**

Despite the challenges and having to change how we supported people and delivered services, we continued to support service users to not only survive but make progress towards their goals during the pandemic.





## Ideal for All

“I should have done this a long time ago” *Roger*

“I am feeling more confident thanks to the support I received from Ideal for All and am looking forward to starting work” *Georgia*

### CASE STUDY

“The session is the highlight of my week and I’m guaranteed to have something to look forward to” *Anita*

Anita was referred for support with managing her wellbeing whilst trying to move back into employment after a long career break. As we got to know Anita she shared that due to having time out of employment to care for an elderly relative she felt “lost” and did not know what she wanted to do next. She felt that she had many skills that she could use to transfer into another area of employment but lacked the confidence to do so.

Anita was also isolated and would sometimes go days without having conversations with another person. She also shared that due to her Disability she felt that her previous career was not a feasible option and would need support to find some direction as a Visually Impaired person.

Anita enrolled on our Peer Support programme, she engaged well and was honest about how bereavement, loss and her Disability was affecting her. We talked through Anita’s strengths and identified activities and support that could help to improve her wellbeing. We discussed the skills needed to move from her previous role into a more community, person centred role and how she could further develop these to support applications for new roles.

Anita grew in confidence and was able to be more honest about how she has really been feeling, as many things were impacting on her wellbeing such as loneliness, loss, finances and employment.

To maintain the progress being made Anita joined our Feel Good Six sessions to further build confidence and wellbeing. She talked a lot about needing to work, as she felt she was struggling to cope financially on benefits. She wasn’t sure about what type of work she wanted to do, but couldn’t go back to IT as using screens too much affected her eyes and caused headaches. She was supported to apply for a job in a local library and was shortlisted for interview. She is looking forward to working again.

# BUILDING CONNECTIONS

## Tackling Loneliness and Improving Wellbeing

Ideal for All completed the delivery of a 2 year integrated loneliness and wellbeing programme funded by Community Fund that supported over 250 disabled and older people over 65 years of age. It addressed social isolation through providing access to online and face to face peer, user-led, condition management support and social networks but also enabled people to improve their health and wellbeing through access to gardening groups. The Growing Buddies strand utilised IFA's market, community and therapeutic gardens in Sandwell.

Beneficiaries had access to volunteering opportunities at the gardens and within the wider community. IFA worked in partnership with Sandwell Crossroads Care to support a small cohort of carers and people with dementia.

The groups and activities provided opportunities for much needed social connections and exercise; beneficiaries engaged with others in meaningful activities and developed knowledge and skills as well as physical exercise to support improvements to mental health and wellbeing, recovery from illness, and dementia care.

**250+**

**OLDER PEOPLE  
PARTICIPATED IN THE  
PROJECT**

**5500**

**INDIVIDUAL  
INTERVENTIONS  
DELIVERED**

**38**

**VOLUNTEERS  
SUPPORTED  
THE PROJECT**

**90%**

**OF BENFICIARIES HAD A  
DISABILITY, LONG TERM HEALTH  
CONDITION OR WELLBEING NEED**

**PRE-PANDEMIC**

**75-88%**

**REPORTED POSITIVE WELLBEING  
CHANGE**

**75%**

**REPORTED POSITIVE CHANGE IN  
RELATION TO LONELINESS**

**DURING THE PANDEMIC**

**35%**

**REPORTED POSITIVE WELLBEING  
CHANGE**



# CASE STUDY

Mrs J came to IFA asking for support with accessing food shopping during COVID. She lives alone and has some mobility difficulties as a result of surgery, and other health problems. She felt isolated and her mood was low. After we started working with her, through strengths-based conversations, Mrs J shared she also needed help collecting medication, and her home was in urgent need of repairs and adaptations to enable her to lead an independent life. Our team agreed to call Mrs J each week so she could have someone to talk to and to reduce feelings of loneliness and break the social isolation which COVID had exacerbated. Initially food parcels were accessed for her from the local food bank to support her in crisis. From here the staff and Mrs J worked together to support her to access shopping for groceries and essentials herself.

To support Mrs J's health and wellbeing she was also connected to complementary local offers including our own wellbeing services. Here Mrs J had a free veg box activity including a tomato plant to care for, some seeds to sow and some produce to try and cook. This gave Mrs J a new purpose and was a talking point to start the conversation with others, building on their passion for nature and cooking. The activity supported them to feel motivated at this difficult time and keep eating and staying as well as possible. Mrs J felt encouraged to get out in the garden and cook the fresh vegetables. It also helped keep Mrs J mind active and encouraging a positive sense of wellbeing accessing the outdoors for gentle exercise.

Other services which Mrs J connected with and navigated towards included medication orders from a pharmacy that did not charge for deliveries as she was on a low income, supporting to report faults to her social housing provider, activity packs from other local communities' groups/partners and starting to broaden community networks. Information, advice and guidance was given to address home adaptation issues as well as ongoing befriending services to continue and sustain Mrs J's journey after our support came to an end.

## *The difference the project made:*

Mrs J reported improved feelings of wellbeing and mood. She reported feeling more relaxed and feelings of anxiety and loneliness had reduced as the support progressed and social isolation was 'broken'.

"I really feel good now, which is hard to say with everything at the moment (COVID)"

"I've told my family overseas that the team must have been sent by God."



# FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2020/21

At the beginning of the year,  
as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 we had

**£818,779**

During 2020/21 we had

**INCOME**

**£1,402,196**

**EXPENDITURE**

**£1,229,612**

This leaves us with funds  
carried forward of

**£991,363**

**£192,772**

Restricted & Designated

**£798,591**

Unrestricted

These accounts are a summary of financial information for the year  
ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

The trustees ensure that adequate accounting records are kept and  
that full disclosure is provided to the auditors.

The full annual report and auditors report may be obtained by  
contacting Ideal for All.

The annual report and accounts have been filed with the Charity  
Commission and Companies House.



# THANK YOU

We celebrate the accomplishments of all the people involved in our projects. We want to show our gratitude for their ongoing involvement, generosity and contribution to the community.

**So a big THANK YOU!**

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## Acknowledgement of Funders

Birmingham City Council  
Catalyst - CAST funding  
Communities In Sync  
Co-Op Foundation  
Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council  
European Social Fund - Building Better Opportunities  
Heart of England - Building Better Opportunities  
Leicestershire County Council  
Lloyds Bank Foundation Charitable Trust  
Masonic Charitable Foundation  
MIND  
National Lottery - Building Better Opportunities  
National Lottery - Community Fund  
Nottingham City Council  
Power to Change  
Sandwell Consortium  
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council  
Sandwell & West Birmingham CCG  
Shaw Trust  
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council  
South Gloucestershire Council  
Staffordshire County Council  
Steps to Work - Building Better Opportunities  
Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council  
York City Council  
Individual Service Users  
Our fundraising volunteers



# GET INVOLVED

## Join a support group

Our peer support groups help promote and support the independence of disabled people and those living with long term conditions. We have opportunities for you, or someone you care for, to meet in a safe environment. Together we help each other to gain the confidence and skills to live as independently as possible and make life better for everyone.

## Volunteer with us

Volunteering is one of the most rewarding things you can do. Ideal for All recruits volunteers across a range of roles, which help us to improve the quality of life of hundreds of disabled, elderly and vulnerable people each year. Anyone can share their time and skills as a volunteer, regardless of their age, abilities or job status.

## Become a member or Trustee

Ideal for All is proud to be a user-led organisation with an active membership of nearly 4,000 individuals who are involved and represented in our vision, values and the way we design and deliver our services.

Membership is free and open to all. Get involved in our work and help Ideal for All be a powerful advocate for disabled people.

## Get in touch

Ideal for All,  
100 Oldbury Road, Smethwick,  
West Midlands, B66 1JE  
Tel: 0121 558 5555  
[contactifa@idealforall.co.uk](mailto:contactifa@idealforall.co.uk)

**[www.idealforall.co.uk](http://www.idealforall.co.uk)**

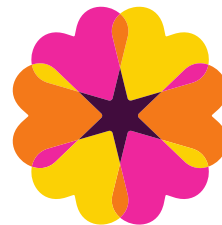
Registered charity number 1070112 and  
company limited by a guarantee number 03196518

## Social groups and activities

From coffee mornings and accessible exercise classes, gardening activities and social outings, Ideal for All offers plenty of opportunities to keep active and socialise. For young people, there's All Together Different, a user-led group that meets weekly to choose their own fun activities and trips.

## Fundraise for us

By raising funds for Ideal for All, you'll be making a difference to disabled and vulnerable people in your community. Since 1996, local people have helped us make a huge impact, and we need your help to continue. Visit our website for fundraising opportunities or to make a donation.



**IDEAL  
FOR ALL**

## Connect with us



@idealforall



@idealforall

