

# Volunteer & Advocacy NEWSLETTER

Issue 3 2025

## A warm welcome to Maria



Hello, I am delighted to have joined Inclusion Gloucestershire as the new Volunteering and Advocacy Project Worker working on a part-time basis.

I have been really enjoying learning about the great work that Inclusion Gloucestershire does and the important part that our wonderful volunteers play. This newsletter is a brilliant way to share the great work and achievements of our volunteers and to showcase their contribution to the success of what we do.

### About Me

After 16+ years working as a HR professional, in October 2024 I decided I wanted a change and left my senior HR position with the aim of becoming self-employed. I have since trained to become an accredited ADHD & Advanced AuDHD Coach.

I am very excited to have the opportunity to also become a fellow volunteer for Inclusion Gloucestershire by recently completing my volunteer Neurodiverse Peer Mentor training with Unboxed. In my spare time, I am kept busy by my teenage daughter and Toy Poodle Tilly. I love to catch up with friends, see live music, and go to the theatre.

# Inclusion Gloucestershire's Trustees

*Trustees are the individuals who make decisions on behalf of the charity... trustees must act collectively...[and] have no authority to act on their own unless this has been authorised by the board as a whole (NCVO, 2025).*

Inclusion Gloucestershire's board of trustees helps to make important decisions for the charity. The board is led by disabled people, with the majority having lived experience of a disability. Other trustees have different specialist expertise. All our trustees are volunteers.

The beginning of November marked the start of Trustees Week 2025. Along with other charities, this was an opportunity for us to acknowledge and celebrate the contribution as well as thank our amazing trustees. This article is part of that acknowledgement and thanks, which is particularly important, as some of our longest serving trustees will soon be leaving us.

We hope you enjoy reading about our trustees.



**Alisha (Chair)** has been part of Inclusion Gloucestershire since 2016. Outside of volunteering Alisha enjoys spending time with her family and friends, travelling and yoga.

In June 2025, Alisha won Trustee of the Year at the Go Volunteer Glos Awards.

**Andrew (Deputy Chair and Treasurer):** has been involved with Inclusion Gloucestershire since early 2019. Outside of volunteering as a trustee Andrew enjoys a wide range of interests such as archery, climbing, walking in the countryside, table tennis, running, travel, nature and photography to name but a few!



**Amy** is passionate about preventative healthcare and is a proud LGBTQIA+ advocate, driven to help ensure everyone's voice is heard.

# Inclusion Gloucestershire's Trustees



**Denise:** has been a trustee for Inclusion Gloucestershire since 2017. Denise enjoys her time as a grandmother, spending time with her guinea pigs, and being creative whilst enjoying the outdoors.



**Ellie:** worked for Inclusion Gloucestershire from 2020- 2023, returning as a trustee in 2025. Outside of being a trustee, Ellie says: you'll likely find me on the football pitch or squash court, out on a long walk, or making music; I even have a Master's degree in it!



**Greg:** joined the board in January 2022. Greg has contributed to the Oliver McGowan training. He enjoys drawing, music, people, walks, and visiting cafes and pubs. Greg loves the original Mary Poppins film!



**Joelle:** has been a trustee since 2016. Joelle likes to complete jigsaws, watching tv, and visiting her family.



**Josh:** has been a trustee since February 2025. Outside of volunteering Josh enjoys spending time with his family, loves his music, especially anything R&B.

# Inclusion Gloucestershire's Trustees



**Rich:** has been a trustee since 2016, who has previously been Chair of Trustees. His first experience of supporting disabled people was when he was elected as a student advocacy officer at college.



**Rob:** a trustee since 2016. Outside of volunteering Rob likes to spend time with friends and volunteering with another charity.



**Rosie:** joined the board in January 2022. Rosie is a keen green woodworker and spoon carver. Her happy places always involve nature and creativity, be it in the garden, at the seaside or in the woods.



**Roger:** has been a trustee since early 2025. Roger likes to travel, watch football, walk his two dogs and spend time with his children and grandchildren.



**Sarah:** joined the board of trustees in January 2022. Sarah enjoys walking, gardening on her allotment, travelling and spending time with friends and family.



**Tammie:** has been a trustee since 2016. Outside of volunteering Tammie likes going on holiday and is looking forward to her next trip to Butlins! Tammie also enjoys her music concerts, especially if the bands are from the 1980s!

Read our full trustee bio's here:  
[inclusiongloucestershire.co.uk/about/meet-our-trustees/](http://inclusiongloucestershire.co.uk/about/meet-our-trustees/)

# An Autumnal Place to Visit in Gloucestershire



If you are looking for somewhere to see all the autumnal changes that are happening around the county Westonbirt Arboretum offers the chance to experience nature at its best as the season changes from summer to autumn and autumn to winter.



Home to over 2,500 different types of trees and shrubs from around the world and five national tree collections, Westonbirt is ideal for those who wish to escape, relax or have an adventure! Visitors can explore the canopy via their Tree Top Walkway or have a bite to eat in the Café or, for the children, try to spot the Gruffalo!



There are always events going on at the Arboretum throughout the year. Every Tuesday and Wednesday from 10am to 11:15am you can try Nordic Walking with the Nordic Nomad, a time to socialise and explore what the site has to offer. A membership to the Friend of Westonbirt Arboretum is required for this event.

There are other trails available for the family, from discovery walks to self-led sensory walks all with the expert guidance offered by the staff at the Arboretum.



In the run up to Christmas, why not visit the all new after-dark trail with brand new lights, spectacular installations, and festive fun for all the family to enjoy. The event is created by those responsible for the *Christmas at Kew* with Father Christmas on hand.



Other courses or exhibitions are always ongoing. Adult weekday entry is £13. A discounted entry is available for young people (aged 19 – 25), students and people arriving by public transport. The discounted weekday entry is £8.50. Personal Assistants are free of charge. For people receiving Universal Credit or Pension Credit entry is £1 during the week and at weekends. Other events may incur extra fees so take the time to visit their website:

[forestryengland.uk/westonbirt-the-national-arboretum](http://forestryengland.uk/westonbirt-the-national-arboretum)



The address is: Westonbirt, The National Arboretum, Tetbury, GL8 8QS.

# Events this Winter



By: Elisabeth Wall

This winter why not visit these interesting places, not just for the ambience and accessibility, but for the events being held at these venues:

**Gloucester Cathedral:** situated in the heart of Gloucester the Cathedral carries out a wide range of religious services and other cultural projects.

In the run up to Christmas why not join the Traditional Cathedral Coral Service run across three days on December 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> from 6pm. Their family carol concert is held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of December at 2:30pm, which is open to all. For both services, while booking is not required, due to space it is best to arrive early.

From the 28<sup>th</sup> of December the Cathedral is hosting their Winter Warmer Digital Festival. This, although a paid event, allows people to access 50 events (over 25 days) all of which from the comfort of home. The festival includes highlights from their festivals throughout the past, with highlights from their archives, including speakers from a wide range of background. Frank Skinner, Alice Roberts, David Olusaoga, Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen a just a few names to mention!! Tickets are now on sale: £32 for a Warmer Pass or £7 for individual passes.

Alternatively, why not join the Gardening for Wellbeing project that meets every Wednesday from 10:30am to 12pm. This was set up to help anyone whose health and wellbeing needed a boost and is a great opportunity to enhance gardening skills, and gain new friends, both at the Cathedral and at home in the wider community.

This is only a snapshot of what Gloucester Cathedral has to offer as they have a wide range of events throughout the year to suit everybody so do keep an eye on their website and social media for updates!

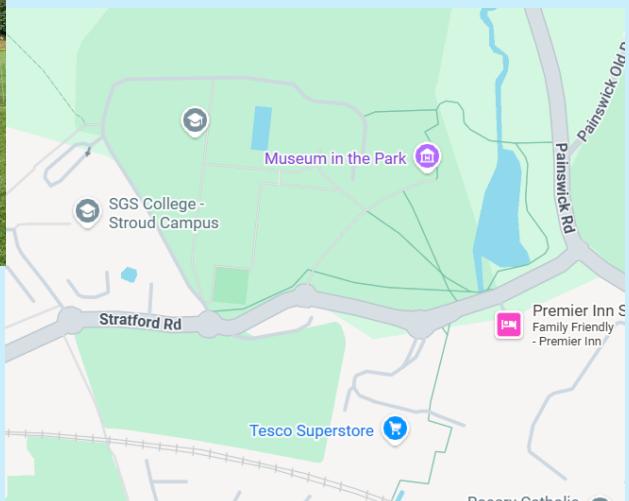
**Nature In Art Museum and Art Gallery (Twizworth, Gloucestershire, GL2 9PG).**

Nature in Art was the first museum and art gallery dedicated to fine, decorative and applied art inspired by nature.

Their collections are housed in a Georgian mansion dating from the 1700s and hosts various events throughout the year. The classes that they offer vary in style but are chargeable events. They have a wide programme of temporary exhibitions supported by their artists in residence alongside their regular artwork. It has a coffee shop that serves meals, gardens and free parking.

Nature in Art is open all year from 10am to 5pm (4pm in January and February) from Tuesday to Sunday and Bank Holidays. For entrance to both the museum and exhibitions it is £7.50 for adults, free to those with a valid National Art Pass and group discounts are offered for groups over 15 people.

# Ethan's Places To Go



*Source acknowledgement for the map: Google Maps*

One of Ethan's favourite places to visit in Gloucestershire is Stratford Park in Stroud.

Ethan enjoys walking around, watching the ducks and swans and spending time on the fun fair.

Ethan often goes to the park with his flatmate James and his support worker Malcolm.

Ethan felt a particular highlight was the playground which he felt would be enjoyable for all.

Stratford Park has plenty of car park spaces for both cars and buses.

The park is big enough for all visitors and doesn't feel busy. The only café on site is within the Leisure Centre which has step-free access.

The park is well worth a visit, especially on a sunny day!

Find out more here: [stroud.gov.uk/culture-leisure-sports-parks/parks-green-spaces/stratford-park/](http://stroud.gov.uk/culture-leisure-sports-parks/parks-green-spaces/stratford-park/)

# New Volunteering Opportunity

## MHELO Steering Group volunteer

MHELO stands for Mental Health Experience Led Opportunities. MHELO is a community of people with lived experience who strive to improve the mental health system with our shared voice.

MHELO Steering Group volunteers will join others to share their views with services like the NHS. Together, MHELO works to improve mental health support. As well as attending the Steering Group, we are looking for people to support with research, attending events and providing feedback from these to other Steering Group members.

Steering Group meetings are held every 6 weeks for 60 to 90 minutes and are normally held on a Thursday from 10am onwards. Volunteers are not required to attend every meeting but at least half of them preferably. They will also have regular, planned supervisions with the Project Co-Ordinator.

For more information, please visit the Inclusion Gloucestershire website:

[inclusiongloucestershire.co.uk/volunteer-with-us/](http://inclusiongloucestershire.co.uk/volunteer-with-us/)



# Upcoming Drama & Speak Up Event



BIGGER DREAMS ▶ BETTER LIVES ▶ BRIGHTER FUTURES

## DRAMA & SPEAK UP GROUP

### Challenges of having health needs heard and supported in retirement

Have you been affected by this? Come along and have your say...



**Where:** St Oswald's Retirement Village, Gavel Way, Gloucester, GL1 2UF

**Date:** 12<sup>th</sup> January 2026

**Time:** 1.30pm - 4:00pm

Tea and coffee provided

It is free to attend but please contact:

 [Rachael.veitch@extracare.org.uk](mailto:Rachael.veitch@extracare.org.uk)  
 01452 875000

to reserve your place.

Please book at reception by Friday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2026.

# Upcoming Drama & Speak Up Group Event

On the 12<sup>th</sup> of January 2026, in conjunction with the Drama Group and the Advocacy Team of Inclusion Gloucestershire, St Oswald's Retirement Village are hosting an Event on the Challenges of having health needs heard and supported in retirement.



Are you a retired person?

Our next Speak Up Group offers a supportive space for people who face disabling barriers and issues surrounding navigating the healthcare system as a retired person. It is an opportunity to share your experiences and hear what others have to say about topics and issues important to them.



Have you experienced any barriers to accessing health care?

Participants will also view a performance about an individual with lived experience, navigating the healthcare system, followed by a discussion on the issues and potential solutions. The performance will be repeated, allowing audience members to take the main character's role and try to change the outcomes.

For further information about the Drama & Speak Up please contact:  
[advocacy@inclusion-glos.org](mailto:advocacy@inclusion-glos.org)

Do you have an interest in sharing your story?

# Useful Contacts

## **PALs - 0800 0151 548**

The NHS Patient Advice and Liaison Service offers confidential advice, support and information on health-related matters.

## **Victim Support - 0808 281 0112**

## **POhWER - 0300 456 2370**

POhWER is the Statutory Advocacy provider for Gloucestershire. This is different to the community (or peer led) advocacy that Inclusion Gloucestershire provides.

## **CAB - 0808 189 6280**

Citizens Advice Bureau

## **CASA - 01452 317460**

Community Autism Support & Advice across Gloucestershire for all adults with Autism.

## **GL Communities - 01452 505544**

Advice & Resource Centre / Matson – Gloucester

## **GGLC - 07942383275**

Gloucestershire Gay & Lesbian Community

**Gloucestershire Service Directory** - for care, support, places and people: <https://www.yourcircle.org.uk/>

## **Gloucestershire's Drug & Alcohol Services**

01452 223 014

## **Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS)**

01452 726570 or 08082000247

## **Emergency Homelessness Assistance**

01452 396396

## **Gloucester and District Samaritans – 116 123.**

## **The Cavern (Kingfishers Treasure Seekers)**

Mental Health drop ins 6pm to 10pm every night.

# INCLUSION GLOUCESTERSHIRE

BIGGER DREAMS ▶ BETTER LIVES ▶ BRIGHTER FUTURES



## Season's greetings from the Volunteer Coordinator Paul Tyrrell

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our volunteers for their hard work and dedication this year.

I know our volunteers will continue to make a massive contribution to our work next year.

I wish you a Merry Christmas and a happy and healthy start to 2026!

## With acknowledgement and thanks to our Advocacy teams Partners:

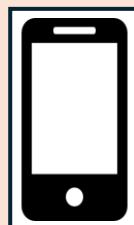
Access Social Care, Building Circles, Cheltenham Borough Homes, Gloucestershire Constabulary, Gloucestershire University, Leonard Cheshire, National Star College, Novalis Trust and Severn Wye Warm and Well.

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