

The Voice

Welcome to our first quarterly newsletter for families and professionals of the people we support.



Message from CEO Anita Andrews

Since joining Kisimul as Chief Executive Officer on the 1st October 2021, I have been taking the time with my new Senior Leadership Team, to review our organisation to inform and shape our plans. As part of that review process, I have been particularly blown away by the courage, compassion, and dedication of the Kisimul staff and I know that with such a great team we will achieve great things!

I am excited by the many plans we are putting in place to help us innovate how our services are delivered and

take our person-centred offering to the next level.

Our brand new 'Meaningful Life' model is critical to these plans. Our staff will work closely with residents, learners, and relatives to establish what a meaningful life would look like for them. Led by our highly skilled in-house therapy team, we will improve how we support our learners and residents to access education, learning, and engage in meaningful activities. You will find more details about the Meaningful Life model within this newsletter.

Another crucial element of our plans is a refreshed Quality Strategy designed to make the wonderful services we provide even better and create meaningful lives for the people we support and educate. The Quality Strategy is built around seven key pillars:

- Person-centered and therapeutically informed support, care, and education
- Culture of Learning
- Continuous quality improvement
- Safeguarding

We aim to keep you informed of events and achievements at Kisimul and share knowledge and expert advice.

- Skilled and engaged colleagues
- Engagement with the people we support and building trusted partnerships with families and the wider circle of support.
- Strong governance and assurance

I am keen to strengthen communication and relationships with our families, the local authorities, health boards, charities, and local groups. We will be keeping you informed of developments and plans as they unfold, and this quarterly newsletter is just one of the channels we will use to keep you updated.

I hope you enjoy our first newsletter!

Kisimul's therapy team

A therapeutically informed approach is Kisimul's golden thread, enabling meaningful lives for individuals accessing our services. It is a multi-disciplinary collaboration between therapeutic, education, and residential professionals to support and enhance the physical, mental, emotional, and social wellbeing of the individuals we support.

The young people and adults we support will often experience challenges with communication, interaction, and emotional and sensory regulation, which can restrict their ability to interact with their environment and participate in everyday activities that could enrich their lives.

The approach taken by the therapy team is to work with the individual, their family, and wider support network to establish an individual's

areas of strength, challenges, motivations, and goals. The interventions recommended will be personalised to the individual and could include specialised individual or group therapy. Working closely with education and residential colleagues ensures that therapeutic approaches are embedded consistently within a person's daily life.

Kisimul's therapy team consists of speech and language therapy, educational psychology, music therapy, occupational therapy, and behavioural support. Each of these teams provides specialist guidance to support individuals to access education and learning across all settings and engage in meaningful activities.

The therapy team at Kisimul also includes a group of service development practitioners. The

service development practitioners work closely with education and residential staff to support their development through training, and ongoing coaching and mentoring.

This team provides dynamic and responsive support to staff teams to assist them in translating their training into practice.

To date, the team has mainly been based in Kisimul's Children's Services, however, moving forwards, the therapy team's remit will broaden to build on and enhance the level of support available within our Adult Services.

In future newsletters, we look forward to delving further into individual therapies and illustrating the incredible outcomes a therapeutic approach can achieve.

Shortlisted for Great British Care Awards

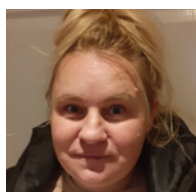
Great British
Care Awards

We are excited to announce that three Kisimul staff have been shortlisted in the Great British Care Awards:

Our finalists will find out if they are regional winners at the gala events held throughout Autumn 2022.



Lucy Whiting,
senior registered manager, Acacia Hall - The Care Home Registered Manager Award, East Midlands



Gemma Kelly,
residential support worker, Thorpe Lane - Putting People First Award, East Midlands



Adam Wilkins,
area manager, Adult Care South - Front Line Leader Award, South East

Congratulations and good luck to Lucy, Gemma, and Adam!



The Meaningful Life Model

Many of you will have already received our letter about the new and exciting Meaningful Life model that we are introducing at Kisimul.

The Meaningful Life model entails our colleagues working closely with the people we support and their families, to agree and describe what a meaningful life and fulfilling future could look like for them.

Every young person will have an individualised plan with bespoke goals that span home and school life to encourage maintenance and generalisation of skills.

Our Meaningful Life model aims to ensure that every interaction between the people we support, our colleagues and the environment is therapeutic.

Recent research shows that emotional regulation can be supported through trusted interactions with colleagues, rather than rewards and consequences.

To that end, our new model ensures continuity of support across care and education, which means stronger relationships between colleagues and young people, and improved, measurable outcomes for those we support.

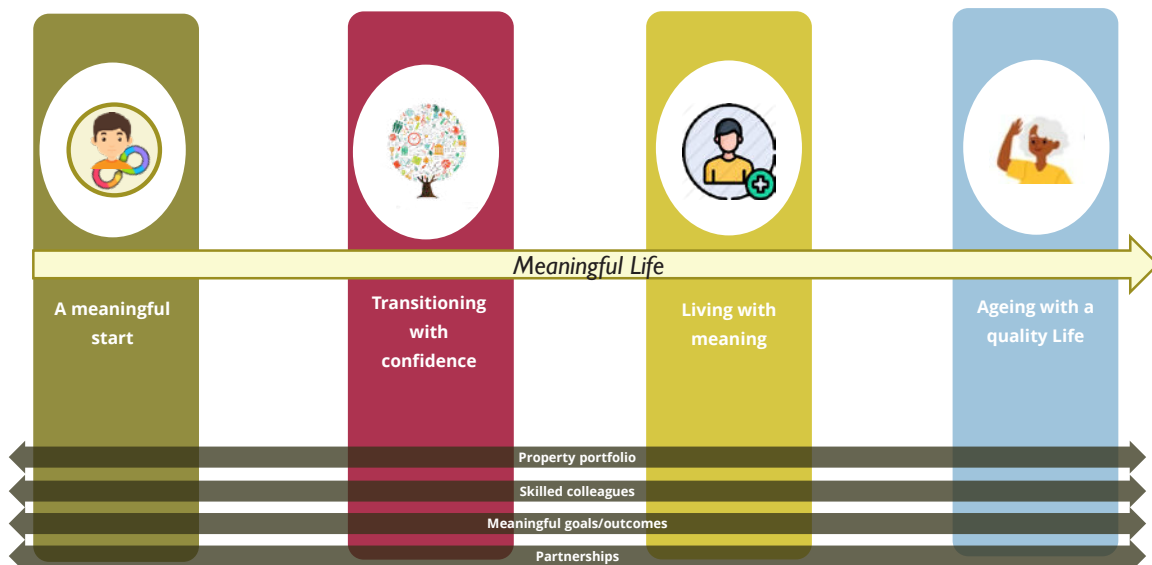
Once we have communicated and engaged with all those involved, we will start the roll out of the Meaningful Life model in our Children’s Services, followed by implementation across all Kisimul’s services.

You will hear our residential support workers being called Life Practitioners and our teaching assistants being called Learning Practitioners. We have changed the names of these roles to reflect the vital work these colleagues carry out. We have also invested in new pay scales and developmental competencies to encourage colleagues to develop their skills and careers within our Kisimul family.

There will be further updates over the coming months, and we plan to run a webinar to explain the Meaningful Life model in more detail and allow you to ask any questions you may have. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please email: meaningful.life@kisimul.co.uk and we will ensure the most appropriate person responds to your query.

Kisimul “Life” Model

Kisimul blueprint bringing our service propositions together into a cohesive narrative for all stakeholders, enabling the development of our products and services in line with our Meaningful Life ethos



Success story

Charlie, Acacia Hall

[You can read Charlie's full case study here](#)

Charlie is an outgoing, larger-than-life young man who struggled to manage his anxiety and behaviour despite his family's best efforts. Before coming to Kisimul's Acacia Hall, Charlie's relationship with family members had suffered; he had been excluded from the classroom and was leading a somewhat isolated life at a full-time respite facility.

The process to re-integrate Charlie back into education started the day after he moved into Acacia Hall. With space and time given for Charlie to process his new surroundings and lots of verbal

reassurance from staff, he began to join his class. Charlie now attends full-time education during term times and has engaged well with classwork and being in a small class group.

Charlie's mum and dad commented, "Charlie's whole secondary school experience was poor, and we were convinced that a placement at Acacia Hall would fail. Oh, my word, were we wrong and so delighted to have been proved wrong! Our son is going to school every day and doing school work – and not just the bits he wants to do! "

Charlie has even formed some mutual friendships with peers in his living area, his mum and dad added, "eight months from joining Acacia Hall, and there is such a change in him. He is a confident young man who has made friends, one young man especially.

He's completely off one of his medications, has lost over 2.5 stone, and most importantly, his relationship with his sisters and us has improved. All this in such a short time. We cannot praise and thank the Kisimul staff enough for everything they do for ourselves and Charlie."

New

supported living service

now open

The Adult's Services team is now ready to welcome their first residents to St Mary's supported living (registered as An Darach Care Surrey). St Mary's is situated in the lovely suburban neighbourhood of Surbiton in the Royal Borough of Kingston, very close to the river Thames.

The beautiful and spacious ten-bedroomed home can accommodate up to six people.

[You can download our St Mary's Supported Living brochure here](#)



Sam Maouhoub, manager

'I am so excited about opening this brand new service, which brings the opportunity of positively impacting the lives of the new tenants, achieving positive, person centred outcomes, and helping people to reach their full potential.'

Adult's Services relatives survey

Earlier this year we sent a survey to relatives of adults we support in our services. Here is a snapshot of some of the fantastic results we've seen.

100%

said our colleagues are helpful, caring and courteous when they see you in person or talk to you on the phone

6% INCREASE SINCE 2021

100%

feel confident to raise anything that arises directly with the management team at the home

8% INCREASE SINCE LAST YEAR

96%

said their relative is respected as an adult when making lifestyle choices

10% INCREASE SINCE 2021

89%

would recommend the support the home provides to others

NO COMPARABLE DATA FROM 2021

88%

said their relative is supported effectively by staff and management

10% INCREASE SINCE LAST YEAR

87%

said colleagues are adequately trained and experienced to meet their relative's needs

2% INCREASE SINCE LAST YEAR

Overall, the comments and scores were very positive and an improvement on 2021 results across the board. Areas with some room for improvement are recruitment, retention, and communication. Since conducting the survey in April 2022, the recruitment process is continually improving to increase contact with candidates, simplify the process, remove roadblocks, and improve the candidate and hiring manager experience.

We are currently working on a project with local co-production specialists, Everyone, to help build on the Kisimul Group's existing good practice and develop co-production methods as a key way to influence both practice and policy going forward, for the benefit of people who use our services and their families. We will also be working with relatives to formulate an engagement strategy and will continue to update you on new initiatives and progress made.

We are currently collating and reviewing the results from the relatives satisfaction survey for Children's Services and look forward to sharing results with you soon.





Good to know...

the difference between supported and residential living

At Kisimul, we believe that ensuring your loved one has the right package of support and a suitable home environment in which to live is of utmost importance.

Both supported living and residential care cater to a wide range of needs and ensure an individual can lead an enjoyable and meaningful life, but it is not always immediately evident which bracket a particular living arrangement falls under.

In this article, we've highlighted the key differences.

Residential Care

Residential care tends to be more suited to adults living with complex conditions who require 24/7 specialist support to manage their daily needs. Both accommodation and care are provided by a single organisation, and each person has their own private bedroom with access to shared communal areas. This allows residents to have alone time and independence in their rooms, but also the opportunity to enjoy spending time with others.

This kind of care is commissioned and funded by a Local Authority or health board and regulated by the CQC in England.

Some families may prefer this 'all-inclusive' arrangement where care and accommodation are provided by one organisation and, other than personal expenditure, the weekly fee covers most costs.

Don't forget, though that if the resident is receiving state benefits or has their own private income/savings over a certain threshold, they are likely to be asked by the local authority to contribute.

The primary disadvantage here is that residents have little security of tenure and are subject to notice periods which could see them being asked to move out if the home is closed or sold, or if the service can no longer meet that individual's needs.

Supported Living

Supported living is designed to allow people to live as independently as possible, whilst offering that extra physical and emotional support to help them lead fulfilling lives in their own homes.

One of the main differences from residential care is that in a supported living service the care is provided by one organisation and

the accommodation by another, the landlord. People in supported living have their own tenancy agreement, which may involve full or part furnishing and require contributions to the maintenance of the property. The resident is responsible for their own bills and cost of living expenses, such as food, leisure activities, and travel fares just like anyone else. To afford this, the person may be entitled to a wide range of benefits such as Universal Credit, Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), and Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

One of the key benefits of supported living is the level of flexibility it affords. Individuals also have the security of their tenancy in line with their tenancy agreement, so if the support provider changes it doesn't affect where they live. The downside for some families can be the responsibility of administration and managing budgets, although most support providers and landlords will assist individuals with this.

Whichever model of living you opt for it must suit the needs of your loved one and your family. Perhaps most importantly, though it should allow your loved one to remain healthy, happy, and able to access the things that are important to them.



Positive Transitions

It was great to be part of the transition process this year, overseeing the move of five young people we have supported and helped to develop in our Children's Service into the next phase of their adult life in our supported living service.

We are establishing an improved transitions process, and there is still much to do, but our feedback during this month's final transition reviews has been fantastic.

The process consisted of pre-transition meetings between representatives from the young person's current home, the education team, therapy team, and advocates of the young person to plan a smooth transition.

The input of the therapy team was crucial to ensuring the Adult's Services team was ready to support each individual seamlessly. Personalised communication strategies and social stories were prepared before transition, and staff

undertook specific training such as trauma-informed training, emotion coaching, and dysphagia support.

Visits to the young people in their children's homes and education settings and taster visits to their new adult homes were carefully planned, supported, and facilitated by teams from both homes.

Vital information about the young person's interaction with staff and other residents, health, eating, family, preferred interests and activities, behaviours of concern, and learning goals/outcomes were shared with the right staff in Adult's Services. This ensured the Adult's Services team could provide immediately effective and personalised support.

A great example of this was the school and home staff at Acacia uploaded videos of how to use Makaton to read a particular story in a very specific way for one young person.

Following the move, a one- and two-month transition review took place to review progress and support. We have extended the review period for one young man for another two months to ensure we keep reviewing and working on the best support for him and the team.

Seeing how well our young people have managed their transitions has been fantastic. The communication and support between the children's and adult homes teams have been outstanding. Everyone has been focused and committed to ensuring we get the right support, strategies, and environment for each young person.

I loved hearing how one young man helped to organise a trip to the seaside for fish and chips for everyone in his new home, an outing that went down well with everyone!

Well done and thank you to everybody involved.

Steve Bromley,
partnerships director

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