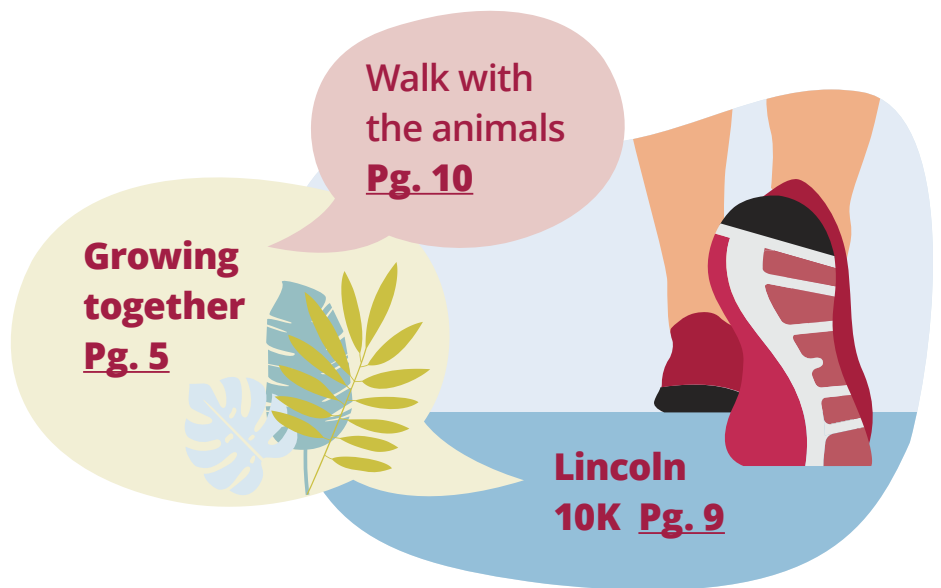


The Voice

Our quarterly newsletter for Kisimul families and professionals



Welcome from Anita Andrews, CEO

A warm welcome to the latest edition of our quarterly newsletter, The Voice.

In the previous issue I promised that we would tell you a little more about our 'new' brand values and do that we shall. To define the principles that guide us, we wanted to better understand what makes Kisimul so special from our people's perspective.

I was blown away by the response from colleagues to our call for their views. It's been a fascinating, rewarding process delving into all the positive words people associate

with this business and I believe we now have a set of core values which are truly representative of us as an organisation. Read on to discover some of the inspiring ways our colleagues and residents brought those values to life, with selfies, sculptures, and seedlings!

This year's City of Lincoln 10k took place in April and I want to say a big well done to all the runners who put their best foot forward to represent Kisimul in the race. Special congratulations go to the team from An Caladh who raised a phenomenal £1,300 for St Barnabas hospice in memory of beloved former resident, Rebecca.

It has been a busy couple of months, but I thoroughly enjoyed taking some time out to see how our schools and residences embraced this year's 'spectrum of colour' theme in celebration of Autism Acceptance Week. Teams from across the Group organised a whole host of vibrant activities and events which went down a storm with residents and colleagues alike.

See what they got up to in glorious technicolour
[Pgs. 6 – 8](#)

Values:

▼ kisimul

Be yourself

- We bring our true self to work
- We all have a voice and feel heard
- We take accountability and own our roles

▼ kisimul

Grow together

- Together we're stronger and enable meaningful lives
- We build great Partnerships and learn from each other
- Communication and collaboration is at our core

▼ kisimul

Think forward

- We're curious and proactive
- We push forward and embrace change
- We challenge ourselves and each other to be our very best

▼

Being yourself, growing together & thinking forward

Kisimul Group has always been committed to making lives better, but as the business has grown and evolved, we came to realise that it was time to properly define the values that shape everything we do.

To make sure those principles were a true representation of what it is that makes us Kisimul, we surveyed over 200 colleagues – asking them to describe our values in their own words. They identified over 1000 unique words and phrases, which we used as the basis of workshops to help us clarify how we got to where we are today and how we'll get to where we want to be tomorrow.

The same few ideas cropped up again and again, leading us to pinpoint our three core values (above).

Embodying these values is fundamental to delivering meaningful lives for our residents and learners, so it was essential that they were part of the process, too. We asked each of our services to create a unique piece of art which illustrated one of these concepts. Left, are just a few examples of what they came up with...

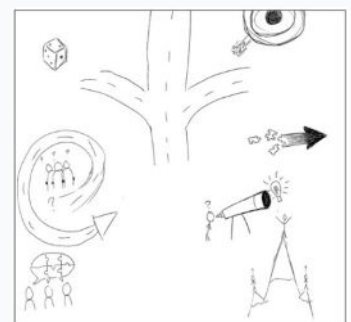
To mark the official launch of our new values, we planned a week of activities – from selfie contests to creative challenges. We loved seeing everyone's fantastic contributions, so we're sharing some of the best!



Be yourself... (Acacia Hall)



Grow together... (Calman Collaiste)



Think forward.. (Richmond Court)

Be YourSELFIE!

Our 'be yourself' value celebrates individuality and diversity, so we asked colleagues to get creative with props, costumes, and poses in an original selfie which showed off who they truly are.

Our winning BeYourSELFIE entries were...

Children's Services:

Laura Rawson, Maryanne Bentley, Katy Smith Swinderby Children's Services

Adults Services:

Jimmy Bamitale. Tigh Lenach

Support Team's:

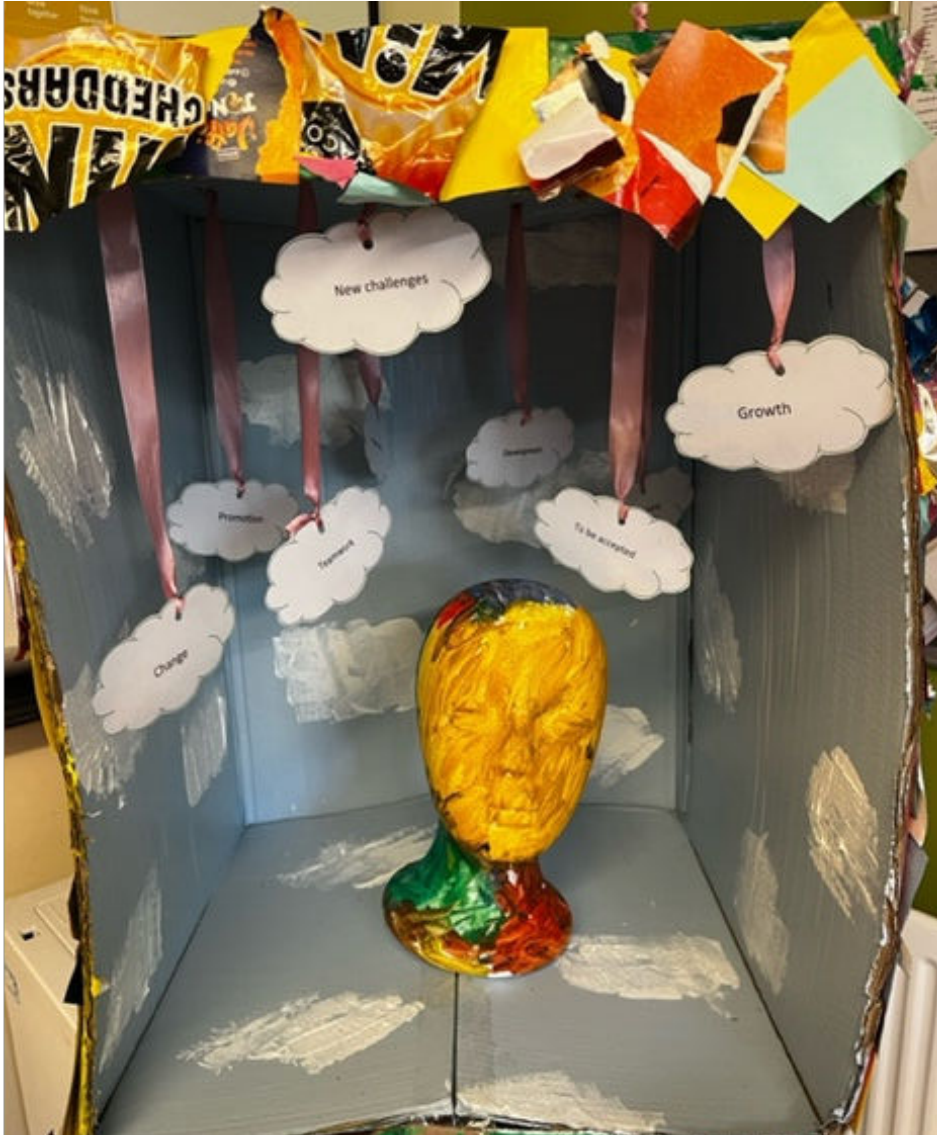
Millie Fortune, Gareth Hall, Danny Carter, Antony Delahun. Therapeutic Services





Think forward

To bring our 'think forward' value to life, we asked colleagues to create a visual representation of what the phrase means to them and how they will put it into practice. Using different techniques and materials, our colleagues rose to the challenge and delivered some impressive works of art, but the winning entry came from Suillean House.



The Suillean House team wanted to convey teamwork, acceptance, supported living, promotion, and change with its unique installation. They collected a range of rubbish to reuse as decoration for a large box, housing a model head to represent individualism. Suspended above it, a host of clouds which each feature a goal to strive for.



Getting an honourable mention as runner up is the Property Team (North). One anonymous team member unleashed their inner Banksy, creating a fantastic replica of 'the girl with a balloon' on the back of their van. Impressive!



© Banksy



Grow **together**

What better way to introduce our 'grow together' value than by encouraging our colleagues, residents, and learners to flex their green fingers and get involved in a gardening project.



Follow us on social media for regular updates on living our values



We sent each of our services packets of seeds for planting, to create a lasting reminder of our commitment to these values and to leave our positive mark on the planet.





Swinderby Art
& Autism event



£1,000

raised to help
support the families
of people with
additional needs





Kisimul in technicolour for Autism Acceptance Week



Running from 27th March to 2nd April, Autism Acceptance Week aims to promote greater understanding of what it's like for people with autism, helping to transform society into one that truly works for autistic people. This year's theme was 'spectrum of colour' and teams from across Kisimul celebrated with a whole host of fabulously colourful activities and events.

From colour runs, pizza parties, festivals, and fun days to baking, painting and messy play, we all joined in to mark this important week. Here is a round-up of some of the events that took place across the Group...

Bright and bouncy colour fun at Heckington Pavilion

To mark World Autism Awareness Day and the end of Autism Acceptance Week, Suillean House hosted its own colour picnic at Heckington Pavilion on 2nd April. Everyone was encouraged to wear brightly coloured fancy dress costumes and had the chance to get their faces painted to finish off their looks. There were sweet treats on offer at the bake sale, an ice cream van, and even a brilliant bouncy castle!

Rainbow Stars get a boost from Swinderby Art & Autism event

For its celebration of Autism Acceptance Week, Swinderby School hosted an Art & Autism event at the local village hall, raising over £1,000 for local support group Rainbow Stars - an organisation working with the families of people with additional needs.

The event was designed to help Swinderby's young people feel accepted and respected by the local community, providing members of the public with useful resources to help increase their understanding of autism, including a core Makaton sign booklet, reading lists, and autism fact sheets.

In the run up to the exhibition, they produced their own works of art which were then displayed and available to purchase on the day. Both colleagues and members of the community made generous donations, which Swinderby was able to pass on to the very worthwhile Rainbow Stars.

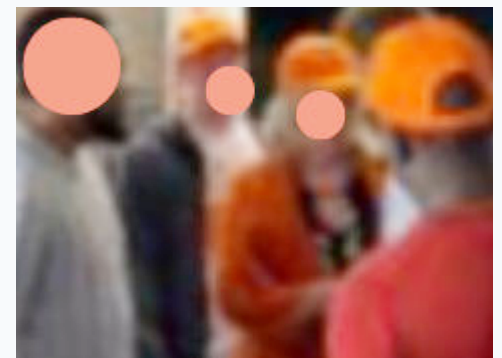
An incredible effort from all involved!

Ain't no party like a Kisimul party

Celebrating Autism Acceptance Week and World Autism Awareness Day was the perfect excuse to throw a mega Kisimul party. Everyone chipped in to prepare for their respective shindigs, with cooking and baking to be done, as well as eye-catching decorations and posters to be made to adorn each setting.

Tigh Grianan took part in the 'spectrum of colour' challenge, choosing orange as their party theme. The house was decorated with orange everything, and party goes dressed up in some superb orange outfits and hats.

Over at Salisbury House, residents invited friends from Dannsa House for lunch and a lively sing-a-long. We clearly have some karaoke stars among us!





A riot of colour at Acacia Hall

Colleagues and young people enjoyed a jam-packed week of activities at Acacia Hall. There were opportunities to make decorations, create colourful handprint canvases, tie-dye t-shirts, and channel the Bake Off with biscuit icing. Enormous fun was had at the colour run, and celebrations concluded with a fantastic 'festival of colour', which saw young people singing and dancing along to videos from Glastonbury's of old.





Colleagues lace up their running shoes for **Lincoln 10k**

Last month, Kisimul colleagues donned their trainers to take part in the City of Lincoln 10k run.

Members of the Service Development Practitioner team ran to promote the new Kisimul Wellbeing initiative, while the An Caladh team took part in memory of much-loved resident Rebecca, who sadly passed away two years ago.

They ran alongside Rebecca's mum and have so far raised a staggering £1,300 for St Barnabas Hospice.



Well done to all the runners!



Walk with the animals



While you probably already know that Kisimul's schools, college, registered care homes and supported living services provide exceptional education and care for children and adults with autism, learning disabilities and complex needs, you may not be aware that it's not just people who call Kisimul home...

Headed up by experienced Co-ordinator Nick Davey, our animal husbandry facility has been providing young people with safe access to a wealth of enriching animal centred experiences at Kisimul for over 20 years. At our smallholding, young people are encouraged to get hands on tending to our much-loved ponies, goats, sheep, and pigs. In doing so, they learn a host of transferable life skills, build confidence, and enjoy a truly unique sensory experience.

We asked Nick Davey to explain what's kept him down on the farm for the last 22 years. He had this to say,

"This is the best job in the world. I get to work with amazing young people, Kisimul's incredible team, and a menagerie of wonderful creatures. Whatever their age or stage, when coming to the yard Kisimul's young people find a safe space to engage and contribute in a genuine way. The animals do not judge and have no expectations, so although many students are cautious around them to begin with, in time their confidence grows, and the farm becomes a place where they can thrive. That's brilliant to see."

"We've got a troop of fabulous characters here who are key to helping me deliver the curriculum in a safe way which engages young people who sometimes struggle with traditional schooling. We have a pig called Clover who keeps everyone entertained, our old pro Jack the Shetland pony (he's been here so long we're going grey together), and a mischievous crew of goats who I was able to train to join the students and colleagues in yoga practice when they were kids," he said.

Nick and our teaching and therapy teams get to see first-hand the enormous benefits that Clover and the rest of the gang deliver for our young people, so we've rounded up some of the key take aways for you in our [recent blog](#).





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