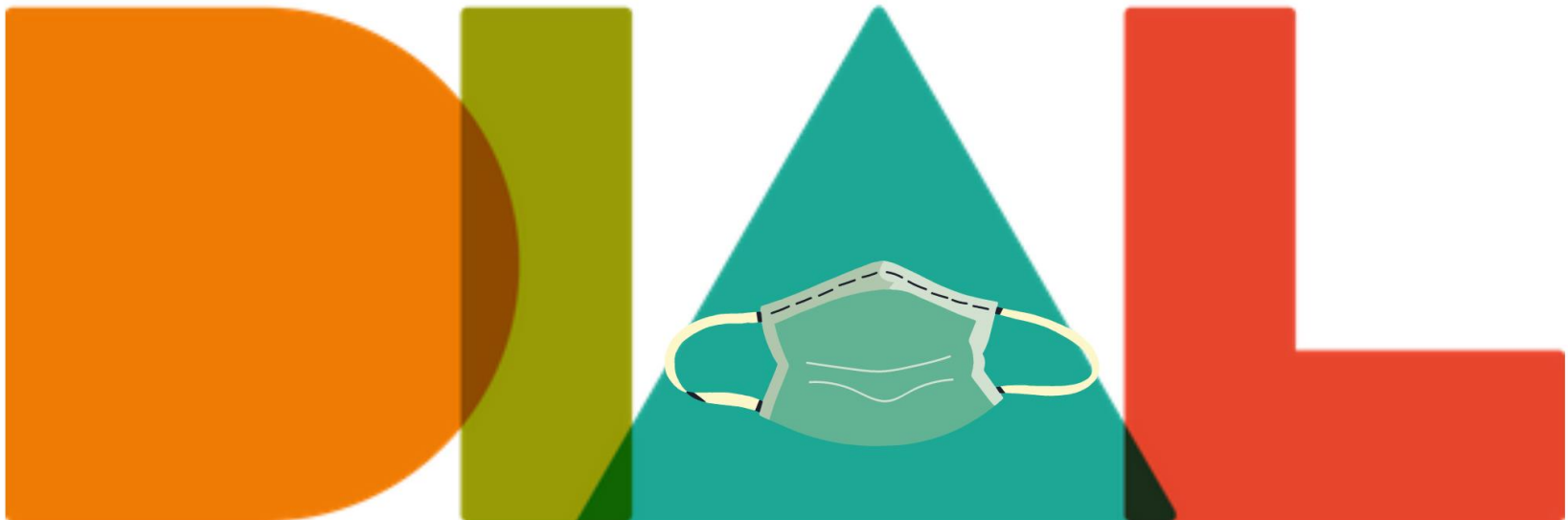




Passionate  
about  
possibilities.





# Annual Report 2020



# About DIAL



## Our aims

-  To improve access to information, advice and guidance so disabled people, their families and carers have increased understanding and are better informed to make choices
-  To reduce social isolation of disabled people, their families and carers
-  To increase access to opportunities for disabled people, their families and carers to achieve their potential
-  To increase the opportunities for disabled people, their families and carers to have healthy lifestyles

**Our vision is for**  
a world that is truly  
inclusive

**Our mission is**  
to support and empower  
disabled people, their  
families and carers to  
address poverty and social  
exclusion and improve their  
health and wellbeing

# Message from Sharon Brown, Chief Executive Officer



## Welcome to our 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Report

Welcome to a year unlike any other! Not only did we experience a global pandemic and all it brought but we also managed to celebrate our 35<sup>th</sup> birthday, in style and with positivity for a new kind of future.

Our achievements have been many this year. We have launched new services in the midst of very challenging times including three online groups, Men Utd, Better Together and Happy Café and also recruited new staff using virtual interviews for the first time ever!

We have seen new investment from new grant funders to support our response to challenges of Covid-19 including The Big Lottery, SYCF Covid-19 Response Fund, People's Neighbourhood Trust and The DPO Covid-19 Emergency Response as well as continued investment from our local area councils and commissioners.

We reacted quickly to maintain the delivery of our existing services by equipping staff to work from home and communicate with our clients via telephone and online. We provided support for our delivery teams through WhatsApp, Zoom meetings and safe and well checks.

Our volunteers have made a huge contribution, changing roles to offer weekly befriending calls, supporting online groups and delivering wellbeing and winter warmth packs in their local communities.

All our staff, volunteers and trustees have stepped up, met this year's challenges with zest, compassion and humour and learnt so many new skills which will prove invaluable going forward.

A big thankyou to everyone and here's to a better, brighter and safer year.



# Message from Glen Gascoigne, Chair



It is with a sense of real pride that I welcome you to our annual report this year.

Our staff, volunteers and trustees have been amazing, responding to the challenges this year has brought, whilst dealing with their own personal situations, learning new ways of working but always with 100% commitment and positivity.

We are grateful for the continued support of our funders and have welcomed new investment to help us respond to the needs of our clients during this unprecedented pandemic.

We were also able to celebrated our 35<sup>th</sup> birthday, providing online celebrations for volunteers and staff and highlighting our achievements with stakeholders and partners.

I am sure we will continue next year in just the same way – providing support to the people we are dedicated to serve.

Well done everyone!







## Board of Trustees

Glen Gascoigne (Chair)  
Father Stephen Race  
(Vice Chair)  
Anne Tilley (Treasurer)  
Gill Carr  
Ian Turner  
Simon Ramshaw






# Our services






## Choices

-  Information
-  Advocacy
-  Benefits advice
-  Social welfare advice





## Connections

-  Befriending
-  Men Utd
-  Happy Café
-  Good Neighbours
-  Better Together

## Chances

-  Volunteering
-  Sharing and learning
-  Peer Support

## Changes

-  Healthy group activities e.g walking group
-  Health awareness
-  Winter warmth packs
-  Wellbeing packs

# 2020 at a glance



## January

- 📅 Dave joins our Warm Connections Team as Social Inclusion Worker providing support to socially isolated residents.
- 📅 We launch our Connecting Good Neighbours Scheme, linking local residents with vulnerable neighbours

## March

- 📅 Our staff switch to homeworking, offering services by telephone and online, in response to the global pandemic
- 📅 Central Area Council continue to invest in our advice provision with a grant from their Wellbeing Fund

## April

- 📅 Staff commence providing safe and well checks with clients providing practical and emotional support.
- 📅 South Yorkshire Community Foundation Response Fund are first to support our pandemic response with a grant to support our advice line.

## May

- 📅 Our volunteers undertake online befriending training to enable them to support people experiencing social isolation and commence providing weekly befriending calls

## June

- 📅 To celebrate Volunteer Week we deliver afternoon teas to all of our lovely volunteers.
- 📅 The National Lottery award a grant to support our Covid-19 response and extend our advice line provision.
- 📅 We deliver wellbeing packs to local residents, who in turn recycle their packs and share with their neighbours.

# 2020 at a glance



## July

- 📅 Staff commence providing public health advice to clients to ensure that they understand the government guidance on face masks, social bubbles, track and trace and testing.

## August

- 📅 Three new staff join our team, Chantelle, our new Volunteer Coordinator, Jeff, our Community Development Worker and Sue, our Cold Homes, Social Inclusion Worker.
- 📅 Postcode Neighbourhood Trust award a grant to consult with local people about their ongoing needs.

## September

- 📅 We launch our new online group, Men Utd.

## October

- 📅 We celebrate our 35th birthday and deliver birthday cake to 35 clients nominated by our staff.
- 📅 We hold our first Volunteer Reunion online to celebrate volunteer contribution over the last 35 years.
- 📅 We launch our new Warm Home Mondays advice line.

## November

- 📅 The DPO Covid-19 Emergency Response Fund award a grant for an online peer support group – Better Together.
- 📅 Royston Ward Alliance invest in our capacity to deliver advice in the coming year

## December

- 📅 We deliver 150 Winter Warmth Packs to local residents experiencing cold homes.
- 📅 Dearne and Penistone Area Council continue to invest in our advice provision for 2021

# A focus on

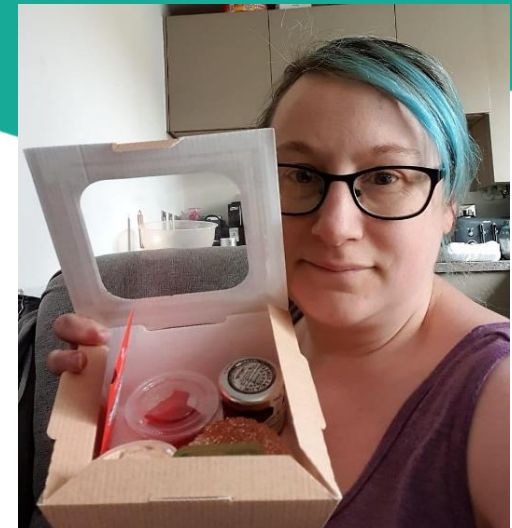


**88% of North Area Council residents said their emotional wellbeing had improved through our befriending service, safe and well checks and Happy Café.**

Our Warm Connections Team continued to support socially isolated residents by chatting to them on the telephone and on Zoom. We moved the Happy Café online and enjoyed mental health awareness sessions, tips on healthy eating during lockdown and virtual exercise classes.

**100% of people said that they felt more connected to their own community**

*"It's good to know I've someone supportive to talk to regularly and I can ask anything"*





# A focus on



**150 winter warmth packs have been delivered to local residents**

Our Warm Connections Team supported people who were living in cold homes and/or struggling to pay their gas/electricity bills by:

- home energy assessments
- energy awareness advice
- energy switching support
- winter warmth packs

**85% of people said they were less worried about their energy bills and felt their mental wellbeing had improved as a result**

*“Now I know what to look for when I go online, I feel more confident I can switch suppliers all by myself.”*



# A focus on - Volunteers



**Our volunteers contributed 525 hours of support online, by telephone and in the community through the delivery of wellbeing and winter warmth packs.**

We celebrated Volunteers Week this year with online afternoon teas and to mark our 35th birthday we held a Zoom Volunteer Reunion including a quiz and prizes. We also set up a WhatsApp group to keep volunteers connected with each other and provided mindfulness tips and online training.

**The value of volunteer work is estimated at £7192.**

*“Volunteering during the pandemic has been very different but very rewarding. I have felt more connected to my community”*

Sue, Barnsley



# A focus on - Men Utd

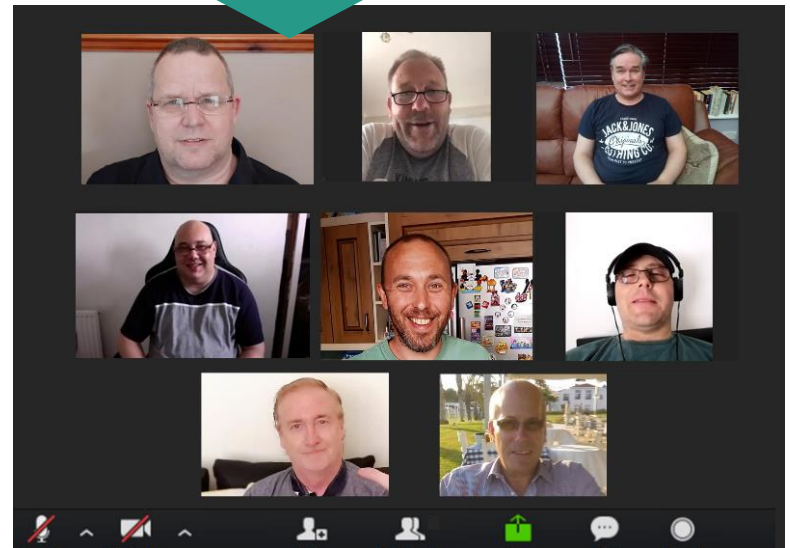


**15 local men joined our new online peer support group – Men Utd.**

Our new online group is a safe space for men to come together and share their experiences of mental health and support each other. The group is peer led and whilst addressing serious challenges there are lots of laughs and light relief.

**100% of participants said they felt more socially connected and their mental wellbeing had improved**

*“It feels like when we meet on a Friday, the sun has come out for a while”*



# A focus on - Advice Line



**84% of local disabled people said they now had a better understanding of their rights and entitlements**

Due to the increased demand for advice as the pandemic impacted on people we extended our advice line opening hours. We introduced pre-booked telephone appointments for completing forms as well carrying out safe and week checks for our existing clients. We added public health advice to our provision, supporting people to understand government restrictions.

**89% of local disabled people reported a reduction in their anxiety and worries**

*"He was so understanding and did everything in his power to make sure I was comfortable with what was happening. I really am grateful and will most certainly recommend DIAL to others!"*

Bridie-Marie, Barnsley



# Making a difference

## - what our service users say



*"The extra calls I have received have been a godsend and I feel like someone out there cares"*

Julie

**90%** of people said that they felt less isolated after speaking to our team

**95%** of people said they felt they understood the pandemic restrictions better



# Making a difference - what our service users say



*"If I hadn't been supported by ICAS, I don't think I would have gone through with it all"*

ICAS Client

*"Just a small token of appreciation for a marvellous organisation"*

Online donation comment



**95%** of clients rated the ICAS service as a positive experience in relation to resolving their complaint

# A huge thanks to all our funders





Passionate  
about  
possibilities.

And a special thank you to everyone who has supported DIAL with a personal donation over the past year.

Along with our very best wishes to each and everyone for a safe and well 2021



McLintocks Building, Summer Lane, Barnsley S70 2NZ

T: 01226 240273 E: [first.contact@dialbarnsley.org.uk](mailto:first.contact@dialbarnsley.org.uk)

[www.dialbarnsley.org.uk](http://www.dialbarnsley.org.uk)



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