

## BALANCE CONVERTS FROM A CIC TO A CHARITY

As part of our continued effort to support more people to live as independently as possible, Balance CIC has converted to Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO).

The change to charitable status means that Balance can raise funds through fundraising and apply for more charitable funding, this will support us to reach out to more people. We are excited about this transition to take the organisation further beyond its spin out foundations and develop the business to support more people, to live the life they want, whilst ensuring the sustainability of our operations.



## BALANCE UPDATES

At the end of July, Balance said sad goodbyes to our founder and CEO Andrea Biggs (pictured above at her leaving lunch).

After leading learning disability, mental health and autism services in a 'spin out' from Kingston Council into a new social enterprise, Balance, in 2013, Andrea continued to expand further exciting opportunities for disabled people. Andrea decided the time was right for a new challenge and has joined Essex Cares Ltd.

Balance have now recruited a new CEO so watch this space for further updates!

## Supported Living

Many people have felt isolated during the recent lockdowns so the Supported Living Service at Balance have been organising regular walking groups, so people can get out and about, exercise and make new friends.

The walking group have chosen a variety of places to go including Kew Gardens, Hampton Court Palace Food Festival and Kingston Cinema.

**"It's a great way to do some exercise and make friends" "I'm pleased I walked the whole way!"**



Walking group from Supported Living visiting Kew Gardens

## Health Team

The Health Team at Balance offers support to individuals who are struggling to get into work or to maintain their job due to mental health related activities.

We work in partnership with the iCope service in Kingston offering integrated employment support and promoting the link between being in work and achieving improved health outcomes. Since the pandemic we have adjusted our service to offer a blended approach of telephone, video, and face to face support.

Here's what one of our clients said about us:

"I was very depressed and nervous when I started using Balance but within five minutes of talking to Sylvia, I felt so calm and less stressed about it all.

Sylvia has given me motivation as well as support from finding jobs to going through interview questions with me; I don't think I would be employed without her"

To be eligible for our support, **you must be registered with a GP in Kingston.**

**You can be referred:**

- Via your GP
- Kingston iCope Service ([www.icope.nhs.uk/kingston/what-we-offer/employment-support/](http://www.icope.nhs.uk/kingston/what-we-offer/employment-support/))
- Via the clinician supporting your mental health.



## COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

This is Steven out in Home Park on our new companion bike with volunteer Antony.

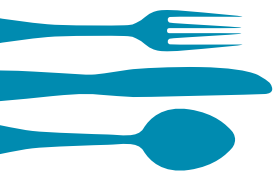
Our **Go Cycle** project has been financed by the 'Tackling Inequalities' Fund from Versus Arthritis and Sports England to encourage disabled into cycling. We have been able to purchase a specialist bike alongside four two-wheeled cycles and people at Stud have been enjoying getting out and about in our beautiful surroundings.

**Steven says:**

"It's a nice way to see the park. It's really good and it builds up the muscles in my legs"







## COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES continued...



### Balance Community Café at St Matthews Church, Surbiton

This is a partnership between Balance and St Matthews to provide a welcoming space for local people, especially those who have experienced loneliness and isolation over the previous year.

The Café provides a supportive placement for people to develop skills in catering and customer service. We have a team of three people preparing and serving tasty homemade food including soup, panini & cake.

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balance  
community  
café

@



St Matthew's  
SURBITON

The Café is currently open on Wednesdays. Balance and St Matthews think it's a great project and we are looking to expand to more opening days.

### Balance Staff Spotlight



**Onyekwere Ogueri**

**SENIOR SERVICE MANAGER**

**Independent Living Services**

Onye is Balance's Senior Service Manager for our Independent Living Services, overseeing the teams running our residential and supported living care for people with learning disabilities. Onye is married with two children.

• **How long have you worked for Balance?**  
5 years

• **Why did you choose social care as a career?**  
I joined Social care as change in career. I was in customer service before and did not like it. My then girlfriend was working in a Mental health service and told me about the changes she had made to peoples lives. I decided to give it a try and got a job supporting people with learning disabilities and I haven't looked back since!

• **What do you think you have contributed to the services Balance offer to disabled and vulnerable people?**

I think I have brought a stable and engaging environment for both our service users and staff. I believe I have been able to support clients to give them a choice in what they want and how they are being supported.

• **What do you like to do for fun?**

I like watching football & motor sports. My dream is to attend a grand prix!! I also like travelling to other countries.



# Woodbury Residential Home

The residents at Woodbury managed to grab the last sunny day of September to head up to Stud Nursery for a BBQ with friends, new and old!



## HOW YOU CAN HELP

There are many ways you can help Balance, from online shopping to volunteering at one of our sites. If you are interested in seeing all the ways you can help, please visit our website [www.balancesupport.org.uk](http://www.balancesupport.org.uk) and click on the tab 'How you can help Balance'.

## Wishlist

We have a wish list of items which will help our Community Activities department; if you are able to contribute, please contact us! Please visit our website for a full list. [www.balancesupport.org.uk/wishlist/](http://www.balancesupport.org.uk/wishlist/)

- Bistro style table and chairs for the Balance Community Café
- Paving / patio slabs
- Bark landscaping chippings
- Timber
- Lawn sand
- Landscaping fabric



Follow Balance on social media or visit our website for further information on our services

Balance @BalanceCIO balancecio

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

Balance CIO Registered Charity Number 1190859

