

Winchester Go LD

Winchester Go LD is a charity that support adults with learning disabilities. Based in Winchester, they assist members by providing advocacy, information and weekly activities using a person-centred approach. The organisation supports 108 active members, including those living semi-independently, those in supported accommodation and those living with family. The organisation has four staff members, 41 volunteers including 20 sixth form student volunteers. The regular weekly activities, designed to develop life skills and to promote positive physical and mental wellbeing include a weekly afternoon tea, arts and crafts, Makaton sign language, tai chi and fitness, and 'funky lunch' – a social lunch group.

Due to Covid-19, the organisation moved all

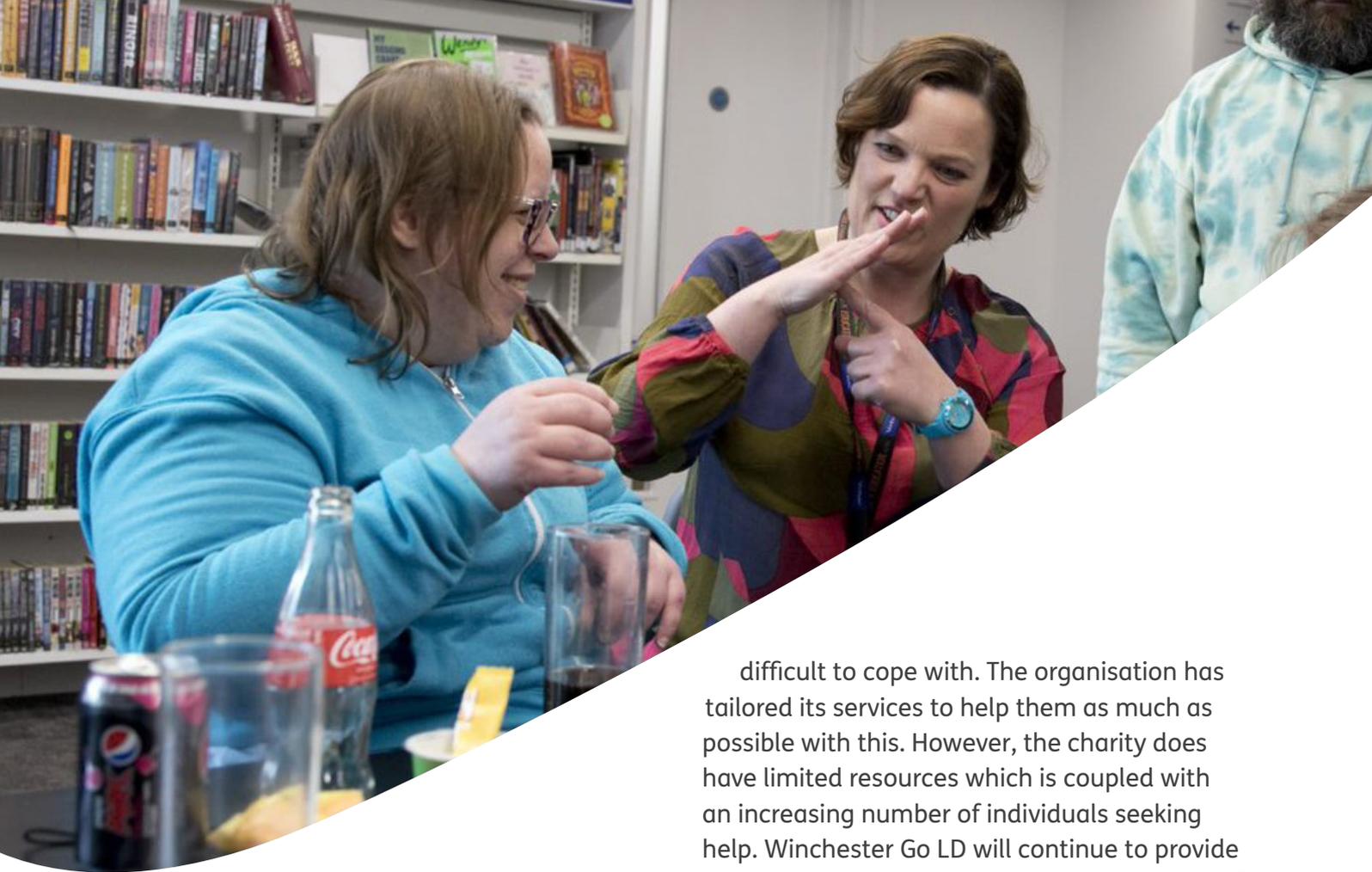
activities online in March 2020. One-to-one support calls with members took place from the start of lockdown.

A new 'walk and talk' service was launched during the pandemic, where a volunteer or staff member meets up with a member and go for an hour's walk and has a chat. This provided an opportunity for fresh air and exercise, as well as important social engagement and a safe space to discuss the changing situation and share concerns.

Current activities are delivered through a combination of Zoom an in-person sessions and the organisation plans to keep up this hybrid approach. Some members have preferred online sessions, which they find less overwhelming than in-person interactions. The organisation also wants to keep up members' digital skills, now they have been developed and strengthened.

Since March 2020, there has seen a significant increase in membership applications –membership has grown by over 25% since the beginning of the pandemic.





difficult to cope with. The organisation has tailored its services to help them as much as possible with this. However, the charity does have limited resources which is coupled with an increasing number of individuals seeking help. Winchester Go LD will continue to provide support as much as possible, recognising that if current trends continue there needs to be a more sustainable way to fill the gaps which exist across statutory provision.

Find out more about Winchester Go LD:
<https://winchestergold.org.uk/>

The organisation attributes this to an increased demand for the services they offer, the increased number of weekly activities available as well as growing funding and recruitment challenges in adult social care provision.

Winchester Go LD doesn't receive any statutory funding, and are purely funded via grants, donations and event fundraising activities. The organisation was successful developing online fundraising events, such as quizzes and wine tasting. However, identifying funding, particularly applying for bids and grants, is time-consuming with no guarantee of success.

The pandemic has been a challenging time for everyone. Winchester Go LD's members are vulnerable, they also find change particularly



This case study was written by Pam Mercer at Action Hampshire on behalf of Hampshire CVS Network

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