

# Information for family and friends



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## WELCOME FROM OUR CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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We have been offering support to people with learning disabilities and /or enduring mental health needs for the past 36 years. During that time, the people we support and those close to them have taught us much about what is important to them in the support they need.

We have built that into the work we do, creating a broad range of services, all of which are committed to providing support to people that will enable them to be healthy and happy, and for them to have choice and control over their lives.

We continue to listen and to learn from what people and their families are telling us, working hard to ensure we hear the views of those who find it difficult to be heard.

Although the types of service we provide differ, it is important to us that all are based on our values, all start with building a relationship with the individual and working together to ensure they achieve the things that are important to them. Within our services, support is available from a few hours a week to 24 hours a day, seven days a week, depending on people's needs.

We have created this brochure to give families and people who may choose to join us an insight into our

values, describing what they mean to us, and how our services might work for them.

We very much hope that this will help you to understand what to expect if you choose Milestones. We will work in close partnership with each individual and the people important to them from the very beginning of our journey together. No one service will be exactly the same as another, but working together, all will reflect the values outlined here.



**Hilary Crowhurst**  
Chief Executive

## OUR VALUES

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Talking about social care can be dry and boring and filled with jargon. Phrases such as “person-centred”, “outcome-focused” and “values-led support” are often used.

For us, what those phrases mean is much simpler; everyone wants to live in a place they can call home. Everyone wants to be surrounded by the people and the things that they love. Everyone wants those around them to be looking out for them. Everyone wants to do the things that are important to them.



At Milestones Trust, our four values shape everything we do, and we have strived to make sure these are easy to understand:

### 1. WE START WITH THE INDIVIDUAL

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### 2. WE BRING PEOPLE CLOSE

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### 3. WE TAKE OUR CREATIVITY TO WORK

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### 4. WE ARE COURAGEOUS IN OUR APPROACH

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# SECTION 1



You can't build a support service around a label. But you can build a support service around a person if you understand their particular care needs, wants, and ambitions. And while that's our starting point, everyone changes. So, we're never comfortable and never complacent. Instead, we adapt how we do things to reflect the person's changing circumstances and desires as they go through life.

## **BUILDING THE RIGHT SUPPORT**

Starting with the person means that throughout a person's journey with the Trust - from our initial assessment to agreeing what support someone has on a day-to-day basis - we will be led by the person we are supporting.

The person or authority that is commissioning the support, be that the person we are supporting via the use of direct payments, the local authority or the health authority, will be clear with us about what areas of a person's life we should support. This will be different for everyone, but may include support to manage a tenancy, support with managing household tasks, support with personal care, emotional support and support to access the community.

We will agree what outcomes people expect to achieve from their support, what they want it to look like and when they want it. Support will be given according to their own routines and preferences.

Support in any area of the person's life will be focused on empowering them and working towards increased independence. We will use a range of approaches. In our mental health services this includes following the Recovery Pathway.

### **Mental Health Recovery Pathway**

Our Mental Health Recovery Pathway offers opportunities for transformation in people's lives, for adults of all ages who are experiencing on-going mental health conditions.

All our services aim to achieve the support people want, to prevent relapse and promote good health, reduce time spent in hospital, and to promote skills and self-awareness in order for a person to live a fulfilling life. There is a focus on positive relationships, strengths and wellbeing.

The ultimate goal for most people is to have security of accommodation and stable mental health, so the focus is on developing skills to support this, as people move through services towards being as independent as they can be.

## Involving family and friends

Where people want their families and friends to be involved in their planning and support, we will work in partnership to support people to achieve the best outcomes.

We will be led by the person and respect their decisions. Some people may want families involved in all areas of their lives, whilst others may only want them involved in some areas of their life or for us not to communicate with their families and friends at all.

## Decision-making

If the person we are supporting has been assessed as not having the capacity to make decisions about their care and support, all decision-making will be made within the framework of the Mental Capacity Act, to ensure that any decisions are made in the person's best interest.

We will work in partnership with other people that are involved in the person's life, and strive to involve the person fully in the decision-making process. Information about the Mental Capacity Act and The Court of Protection, the body which oversees the use of this act, can be found here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/making-decisions-for-someone-else/mental-capacity-act/>



## FACING AND OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

### Positive Behavioural Support (PBS)

**Everyone can get angry or upset, but when this happens for people we support, they can sometimes express themselves in ways which are distressing for others.**

Positive Behavioural Support (PBS) is a way of helping people to express themselves more effectively, and supporting people when they do become angry or upset.

The PBS team at Milestones Trust deliver training in the principles of PBS to teams from all types of services across the Trust. We also work closely with individuals and their teams to ensure that everyone who needs a PBS plan has one developed. These are then reviewed and training updates are provided to all staff involved annually.

Ensuring that people we support, and those who are important in their lives, are fully involved in PBS planning and review is very important to the PBS team, and we welcome any queries regarding this, so please don't hesitate to get in contact on **0117 970 9388**.

### JASON'S STORY

Jason needed to renew his motorcycle licence. The team had been trained in Positive Behavioural Support and they used these skills to help navigate Jason's anxiety about getting his motorbike to the test centre. Read the full story at:

[milestonetrust.org.uk/our-stories/motoring-on/](https://milestonetrust.org.uk/our-stories/motoring-on/)



## STOMP

### Milestones Trust have signed the 'STOMP' Pledge for Social Care – Stopping the Over-Medication of People with a Learning Disability, Autism or Both.

This is important because people with a learning disability, autism or both are more likely than other people to be given psychotropic medicines. These medicines are right for some people and can help people stay safe and well. However, sometimes there are other ways of helping people so they need less medicine or none at all.

STOMP commits us to:

- Actively promoting alternatives to medication, such as active support, intensive interaction, or Positive Behavioural Support
- Ensuring the people we support, and their circle of support, are included in decisions about their care, including their medication
- Ensuring all staff have an understanding of psychotropic medication, including its main uses and side effects
- Encouraging staff to speak up if they have a concern that a person we support may be over-medicated
- Maintaining accurate records about the health, wellbeing and behaviour of the people we support
- Supporting people to have regular reviews of their medication
- Monitoring the use of psychotropic medication
- Working with people with a learning disability, autism or both, their families, health professionals, commissioners and others to stop over-medication. This includes working closely with prescribers.

#### CLARK'S STORY

Clark had always been offered medication to help him overcome his fear of dental and medical visits. His Home Manager explained STOMP to him and asked him if he would consider having dental visits and chiropody without this medication. He gave this subject a lot of thought and decided he was willing to try. Read the full story at:

[milestonetrust.org.uk/our-stories/reducing-my-medication/](https://milestonetrust.org.uk/our-stories/reducing-my-medication/)



## Housing

### Having the right support in life is crucial to wellbeing, but equally so is having the right environment.

We support people to find the right place to live, whether this is in one of our registered nursing or residential homes, in their own homes, or in our accommodation, which ranges from one-bedroom apartments to shared houses.

We recognise the importance of choosing where you want to live, and with whom (if anyone), and support people to find an environment that's right for them.

We work in partnership with housing providers including housing associations, local authorities and private landlords, and work closely with Brighter Places Housing Association to provide professional tenancy management for our tenants.

When it's needed, we can support people to explore adapting their home so they can remain there as long as possible.



#### TIM'S STORY

Tim's biggest passion is football. During lockdown, he played it more and more in the garden of his flat, and mud became a problem. Tim's team came up with the solution and worked with him to adapt his garden with artificial grass. Read the full story at:

[milestonetrust.org.uk/our-stories/perfect-pitch/](https://milestonetrust.org.uk/our-stories/perfect-pitch/)





## Volunteer support

Milestones have welcomed and involved volunteers to support our work since 2014. They are an important part of the Trust, and make a valuable contribution towards helping the people we support achieve their goals.

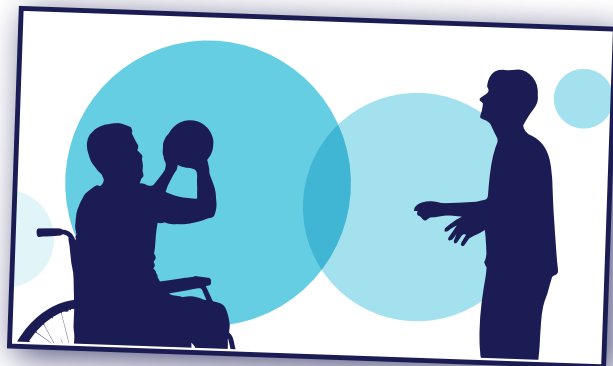
Regular volunteers bring skills, enthusiasm and experience to support people to access the community, try new hobbies and enjoy activities in their homes. Volunteer roles are very varied and have included swimming buddy, cycling assistant, art studio assistant, Zumba buddy, chess playing buddy, telephone befrienders and pen pals.

We also welcome team volunteers from external companies and organisations, who help us with large, practical tasks such as painting, decorating and gardening, helping make our homes even more welcoming places to live.

If individuals would like volunteer support, there is a volunteer team ready to support with requests. The volunteer team recruit and induct volunteers, co-ordinating induction processes such as DBS and reference checks, and ensuring all volunteers attend safeguarding training. They seek feedback from people we support and staff to help improve the volunteer programme.

You can contact the volunteer team by emailing **[volunteering@milestonetrust.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@milestonetrust.org.uk)**

We are so grateful to all of our current and past volunteers for their incredible support and dedication to improving the lives of the people we support.



## FINANCIAL FREEDOM

Worrying about a family member or friend's money management is a normal part of life, especially when someone is moving out of home for the first time or taking steps to becoming more independent. Understandably this worry is even greater when your family member or friend is considered vulnerable, and at greater risk of financial abuse due to a disability or health condition.

### Support for managing money

Where someone is deemed to have the mental capacity to manage their own financial affairs, then Milestones can signpost them to professional advice and guidance, and help them plan their day-to-day budgeting and expenditure. We can also help explain bills or difficult letters and, when needed, we can be the person's voice to ensure their concerns with their finances are heard.

Where someone can't manage these matters with minimal support, it may be that they need an Appointee or Deputy to manage their finances for them. Even where someone has the ability to manage their money right now, you may want to consider supporting them to plan for the future by putting a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) in place. Or it may be that you, or someone else close to the person, will want to take on this role to act in the best interests of the person you care about.

More information on taking on these roles can be found via the links below:

**[www.gov.uk/become-appointee-for-someone-claiming-benefits](https://www.gov.uk/become-appointee-for-someone-claiming-benefits)**

**[www.gov.uk/become-deputy](https://www.gov.uk/become-deputy)**

**[www.gov.uk/power-of-attorney](https://www.gov.uk/power-of-attorney)**

It may also be that you and the person you care about want to use a money management service from a third-party company, who act as an Appointee or Deputy for the person in exchange for a monthly fee. There are a number of companies that offer this service. We would encourage you to consider all of the options available, and discuss these options with all the important people in the person's support circle, so you can be certain that this is the right path and in the person's best interests.

However, it may be that the local authority/council will be best placed to take on this role – this process will start with a social worker assessing the person's capacity, and you can look into that here:

**[www.gov.uk/apply-needs-assessment-social-services](http://www.gov.uk/apply-needs-assessment-social-services)**

General information on benefits can be found here:

**[www.gov.uk/browse/benefits/disability](http://www.gov.uk/browse/benefits/disability)**

**[www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/sick-or-disabled-people-and-carers/](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/sick-or-disabled-people-and-carers/)**



## STAFF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

**We provide a full and comprehensive induction for all new staff, and ongoing learning and development opportunities for all staff.**

This includes specialised training dependent on the particular needs of the people being supported. For example, when a ceiling hoist was fitted in a home due to a person we support's declining mobility, all staff at the service were given training in how to operate the hoist. When another person we support started using a communication aid, a staff member attended training alongside him to learn how to use it (*see Jake's Story, page 19*).



Our staff are encouraged to develop their careers with us, and are given opportunities to gain nationally-recognised qualifications.



## SECTION 2



What we do is impossible without building good relationships between people, their families, carers, teams, and important others. That takes time and patience, but it also takes understanding and respect - the building blocks of trust. Understanding leads to trust, which leads to the right support to bring about positive change - change that can make a person's life easier, better, simpler, more comfortable, more enjoyable or more independent.

## BUILDING AND SUSTAINING RELATIONSHIPS

Bringing people close means that relationships are absolutely central to what we do. Whether this is through supporting people to build links with their communities, or the support we give to ensure crucial bonds with families and friends remain strong, every staff member understands the importance of helping people build and sustain meaningful relationships.

For most of us, building and sustaining relationships can, at times, be hard. It can take bravery and creativity to develop new links or to repair broken ones. But it all starts with the person, and what is best for them.

Where there are existing relationships, we help people nurture them; where people may become isolated, we build bridges; and we will be as brave and as creative as we need to be to make sure everyone is a part of our shared social world.

### GLYN AND GRAHAM'S STORY

Glyn began volunteering with us in July 2012, becoming a regular companion for Graham. They have been friends ever since. Read the full story at:

[milestonetrust.org.uk/our-stories/a-remarkable-friendship/](https://milestonetrust.org.uk/our-stories/a-remarkable-friendship/)



### Bringing partners close

We also believe in forging partnerships with like-minded organisations for the benefit of the people we support. This includes housing partners, such as Brighter Places, LiveWest and Bristol City Council, our work with local charity SARI (Stand Against Racism & Inequality), and partnerships in other areas.

For example, in May 2022 we joined forces with Square Food Foundation, Brandon Trust and NHS Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group to deliver an innovative new food and cookery course that aims to improve the diet and health of people with disabilities. See page 23 for more about food.

## SECTION 3



Given what we do, limited resources have always been a challenge. But creativity hasn't. It's amazing how even a little lateral thinking and ingenuity can dramatically improve the lives of those we work with. Put another way, the more creative we are, the richer and more meaningful life becomes – for all of us. So, we encourage everyone to think outside the box, whatever their role, whatever the issue. As Einstein said, “creativity is contagious, pass it on.”

## ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

At the Trust, we aim to empower and engage the people we support in every aspect of their lives. One of the ways we do this is through investing in technology that can support people to be more independent, or that can make their lives easier and more fun.

### What is assistive technology?

Assistive technology (AT) is any product or service that helps people to work around the challenges they face. This ranges from a simple device that enables a person who has arthritis to easily turn a key in their

door, to robots that enable staff to provide support remotely. We are passionate about showing people that technology is something to be embraced, not feared.

### JAKE'S STORY

Inspired by watching Lost Voice Guy, a stand-up comedian who used a communication aid in his routines on Britain's Got Talent, Jake applied for a communication aid, which made a huge difference to his life. Read the full story at:

[milestonetrust.org.uk/our-stories/finding-my-voice/](https://milestonetrust.org.uk/our-stories/finding-my-voice/)



### Forward thinking

Our AT group is made up of staff from across the Trust. They meet regularly to review new AT and discuss how it could be used in our services. The group promote the best new products and services to everyone within the Trust, and

explore technological solutions to challenges faced by people we support. They engage in partnerships with organisations developing innovative technology, to try to understand how this technology can add value to people's everyday lives.

## THE MUSIC TRAIN

For people who like live music, we have The Music Train. This is co-ordinated by volunteer Liz Gray, with the support of the Trust.

The Music Train was set up in 2013 to provide live music events in the afternoon for those unable to attend evening events and concerts. The first events took place at Avon Valley Railway and have since taken place at several other venues across South Gloucestershire.

Its purpose is to run inclusive live music events for the whole community, giving people an opportunity to listen to, and join in with, a host of talented musicians. Past events have included outdoor concerts, as well as shows streamed live online.

Sessions are free to attend, with funding coming from a range of sources. Liz and the Trust continue working to secure funding for future events.

For more information and a list of events see:

**[facebook.com/themusictrainbristol](https://facebook.com/themusictrainbristol)**



## SHORT BREAKS

We have services that offer short breaks for people with learning disabilities. The breaks give people a chance to spend time and build relationships with their peers and have fun, as well as to work on independence and to develop skills. For families they are an opportunity to have a break from their caring responsibilities and to recharge. Guests may come for regular weekend or mid-week breaks, or occasionally for a longer break when this might be needed due to an emergency.

## DAY OPPORTUNITIES

Our *Stepping Forward* services provide day time opportunities for adults with a learning disability. Stepping Forward Bristol is based at the Park Centre in Knowle, and Stepping Forward South Gloucestershire is based at The Batch, a community centre in Cadbury Heath.

Both services have been supporting adults with a wide range of needs in the community for over 10 years. People are supported to plan and enjoy community activities as well as specialist activities at the bases, either alone or as part of a group. The services offer social connections as well as providing empowering and enabling settings within which people's confidence and competences can thrive.

Where needed, our staff can provide support in people's homes to get ready for the day, before supporting

them to travel to one of our bases or out to community-based activities.

We work closely with the families of the people we support, and the team have an important role in signposting for additional help, facilitating reviews and implementing plans for people as their needs change. The provision of this support provides added value – e.g. enabling family members to work during the week.

### GARY'S STORY

At Stepping Forward, Gary was supported to eat healthily and take regular exercise, which resulted in him losing weight and improving both his happiness and wellbeing. Read the full story at:

**[milestonetrust.org.uk/our-stories/a-happier-healthier-life/](https://milestonetrust.org.uk/our-stories/a-happier-healthier-life/)**



## EXPRESSIONS

Expressions is a year-long programme of creative arts events that culminates in a spectacular exhibition, which is open to the public. The programme encompasses all forms of art, including film, ceramics, textiles, photography, performance and spoken word.

### Involvement at all stages

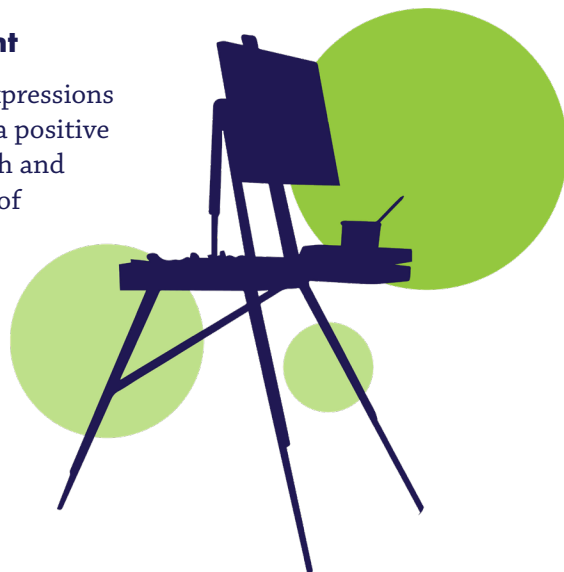
People we support are involved in every aspect of Expressions, from creating the art to organising the show. We also work with professional artists and local creative arts organisations to give them the opportunity to experience new art mediums and learn alongside experts in their field.

### Expressing what matters

Collaboration, openness and creative thinking are at the heart of Expressions. People working together in this way can produce ambitious art projects about the issues that matter to them – whether that's their struggle with mental health issues or their desire to be seen as more than their disability. The art that they make through Expressions gives them an identity that goes beyond the labels that are given to them.

### A sense of achievement

Those who participate in Expressions learn new skills, which has a positive effect on their mental health and wellbeing. They get a sense of achievement, identity and pride from overseeing their project from beginning to end, which in turn could give them the confidence to achieve other goals and milestones in their lives.



## FOOD

For almost a decade, we've been on a mission to improve the food culture in our care homes. We believe that food is so much more than just breakfast, lunch and dinner. For us, food is about wellbeing, nutrition, socialising, skills development and, of course, enjoyment – for the people we support and our staff.

### Working in partnership

We aim to provide food that is tasty, nutritious and ethical. That's why we've worked in partnership with organisations such as Square Food Foundation, All About Food and the Soil Association to improve food standards in our homes.

### Good Food Charter

Our Good Food Charter outlines what people we support should expect from us in terms of food and nutrition. It commits us to freshly preparing each main meal, offering seasonal menus and purchasing ethically sourced meat, fish and eggs. We will also provide food that meets people's dietary and cultural needs.

### Making a difference

We've seen first-hand how introducing a healthy, balanced diet can transform the lives of people we support. This includes the achievement and pride that comes from growing, harvesting and cooking vegetables, and in some cases has enabled people to dramatically reduce their medication.

### GLEN'S STORY

Glen's Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) got worse following bereavement and a relationship breakdown. But changes he's made to his diet and exercise regime, with the help of his support worker, have made a huge difference to his life. Read the full story at:

[milestonetrust.org.uk/our-stories/1844/](https://milestonetrust.org.uk/our-stories/1844/)





## WARMLEY WHEELERS

Warmley Wheelers is a project run by the Trust that gives people with health conditions and supported needs the chance to experience the joy of cycling. We offer specialist equipment and a safe, friendly environment to support people who would normally find it difficult to ride a bike.

### Bikes to suit every need

We have a range of specially adapted bicycles for people with disabilities or additional needs – these include battery-assisted bikes, bikes with platforms for wheelchairs, recumbent bikes and a variety of trikes. Our tandem bikes mean that carers can be part of the ride too. You can ride the bikes on the Bristol to Bath railway path or in a safe area in Warmley Forest Park.

*“There aren’t enough safe cycling areas for people with disabilities and special needs. Warmley Wheelers is brilliant because it provides that.”*

**Lucy, mother of person we support**

### A great location

We’re based just off the Bristol to Bath railway path, right next to the Warmley Waiting Room Café, so you can enjoy a cup of tea or coffee before or after your ride.

### Book a session

Sessions can be booked by calling **07587 034 366** or emailing **warmleywheelers@milestonetrust.org.uk**

### CARMELA’S STORY

Carmela’s visit to Warmley Wheelers enabled her to try out a range of adapted bicycles and work out which was the best type for her. Read the full story at:

**[milestonetrust.org.uk/our-stories/safe-place-to-cycle/](https://www.milestonetrust.org.uk/our-stories/safe-place-to-cycle/)**



**Taking our creativity to work!** Clockwise from top: The Music Train, an Expressions arts group session, a food course delivered in partnership with Square Food Foundation, Warmley Wheelers

## SECTION 4



Where others see obstacles, we see opportunities. For us there is no blueprint, no magic formula, no one-size-fits-all. Just a willingness to embrace the challenge head-on, try new things, and work for change. It's not about ripping up the rule book, it's rewriting it to make our services fit the person. That means drawing on our expertise, courage and resolve to encourage and support anyone who needs our specialist help.

## INCLUSION AND INVOLVEMENT

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Here at the Trust, we believe that the people we support should have choice, their voices heard and be able to shape their own lives.

### Gathering feedback

We continually gather opinions and feedback from people, it's part of the way that we support people in their day-to-day lives. Understanding how they are feeling and giving them options and choices is part of our person-centred approach.

Service staff, people we support and friends and family are supported to gather and give feedback on their experiences through a range of means, including quality audits, feedback gathered by service staff, team meetings and key worker meetings.

We welcome all feedback at any time.

### HOW WE CHECK OUR WORK

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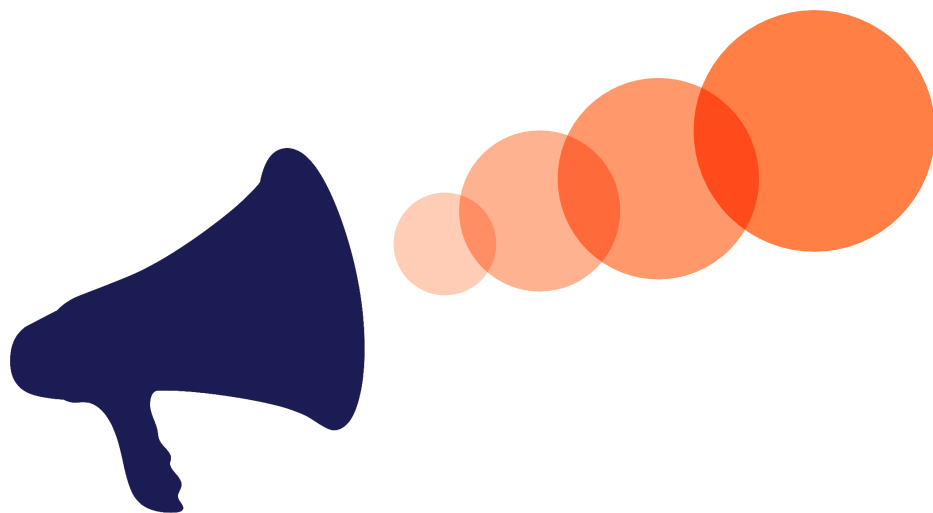
We're determined to live our values and maintain high standards of support in our services. That's why we regularly review our work and try to make improvements.

We have a team of auditors who regularly visit Trust services throughout the year. Our auditors look at lots of aspects of each service, including compliance with regulations and best practice. They talk with people we support, staff and visiting family and professionals. They read through paperwork and make observations. They then write a report which identifies positive observations and practices, as well as giving recommendations and actions to the team when there are improvements to be made.

The auditors are part of the Quality Team, which helps services to maintain and improve the support they offer to your loved one.



## COMMENTING ON OUR CARE



As well as welcoming regular feedback from families and friends in-person at services, we also understand that sometimes you might feel the need to comment or raise a concern above service level, and for this to be looked into impartially from the service or team.

In these cases, if you do not feel it is appropriate to speak to any member of the management team, including the service's Senior Operational Manager or the Director of Operations, whose contact details can be provided to you by the service or through our reception on **0117 970 9300**, then you can put your comment, complaint or concern in writing to:

**The CEO  
Milestones Trust  
Unit 10 Eclipse Office Park  
High Street, Staple Hill  
BS16 5EL**

Or by email, for the attention of the CEO to **[info@milestonetrust.org.uk](mailto:info@milestonetrust.org.uk)**

## Reporting abuse

If you think you have witnessed any form of abuse or neglect at any of our services then you should contact the local authority's Safeguarding Adults Team, who will investigate your concern.

For services in **Bath and North East Somerset (BaNES)**, call **0300 247 0201** and select option **3**.

For services in **Bristol**, call **0117 922 2700**.

For services in **North Somerset**, call **01275 888 801**.

For services in **South Gloucestershire**, call **01454 868 007**.

To report a safeguarding concern outside office hours, for all four local authorities, call **01454 615 165**.

If you have serious concerns for a person we support's safety, or believe a crime has been committed at a Milestones service, then you should report this to the police.



Where individuals or services are registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC), the body responsible for regulating registered care settings, further advice and guidance can be sought, and comments and concerns raised by contacting them on **03000 616 161**, or by emailing **[enquiries@cqc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@cqc.org.uk)**

For more information on the CQC and the ways they can support you, visit: **[www.cqc.org.uk/contact-us](http://www.cqc.org.uk/contact-us)**

## Giving praise

Equally, if you think an individual, service or team has provided exceptional care and support to your family member or friend, or another person we support, we'd love to hear from you so we can acknowledge this.

Please send any examples of us exceeding your expectations to **[marketing@milestonetrust.org.uk](mailto:marketing@milestonetrust.org.uk)**, so we can celebrate these achievements in One Trust, our internal magazine, or by nominating them for one of our 'Extra Mile' awards.

If you would like to share our good work more widely, please consider nominating us for a Care and Support West Award by visiting **[www.careandsupportwest.com](http://www.careandsupportwest.com)**





All information contained in this brochure was correct at the time of printing. However, a fully updated version can be found online here:



[www.milestonetrust.org.uk/family-and-friends-brochure/](http://www.milestonetrust.org.uk/family-and-friends-brochure/)

## CONTACT US

**T** 0117 970 9300

**E** [info@milestonetrust.org.uk](mailto:info@milestonetrust.org.uk)

**Unit 10**

**Eclipse Office Park**

**High Street**

**Staple Hill**

**Bristol**

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Search for 'Milestones Trust'.