



ANNOUNCEMENT – March 2021: Appointment of new CEO for Kingsley Organisation – Providing support for disabled adults to pursue their ambitions

We are pleased to announce the appointment of **Graeme Willis** as our new CEO. Graeme will succeed **Helen Dayson**, who is retiring after almost 20 years at the helm of our organisation at the end of this month. Graeme started the handover on the 1st of January 2021 and will officially take up the role on 1st April 2021, with the two of them working closely during the transition.

This appointment marks a new chapter in our organisation's history of over 30 years, during which our highly qualified team has provided unique personalised programmes for people with learning disability to develop their individual potentials and live fulfilled lives through better confidence and more social inclusion. As we prepare for a post-lockdown ways of life, we embark on an ambitious programme of evolving our services into the next decade.



Retiring CEO - Helen Dayson

During Helen's passionate and dedicated leadership, Kingsley Organisation has grown and transformed into a widely recognised service where disabled adults pursue their ambitions by valuing each person as an individual and enabling opportunities and choice. She established our effective therapeutic model of working and supported volunteering programme, by developing an appropriate physical platform in the former school buildings of Kingsley in Hampshire. This enabled us to build a 'centre of excellence' that was 'fit for purpose' - where

disabled adults could flourish through learning activities and training, enabling people to achieve their personal goals, along with counselling and emotional support. We are now providing our services in North East Hampshire, Camden and Reading.

Helen is best summed up in her own words: "I think that my main achievement is to have been a 'catalyst' which comes from a life-long passion to recognise, embrace and celebrate difference whilst acknowledging that difference and the human response is one of creating barriers and stereotypes which prevent personal development. Most importantly providing a platform for challenging societal constraints, giving individuals a voice."

Helen has recently also steered our organisation successfully through the current pandemic. We continued playing a vital role in providing ongoing personal and remote support for disabled adults and their families during lockdown, social distancing and in some cases shielding, when many other day-to-day support services were withdrawn, and respite provision suspended.

Incoming CEO – Graeme Willis

Graeme Willis comes to Kingsley having set up and managed a service within the People Directorate of Bracknell Council. Perhaps more importantly, he brings many years of experience in leading organisations in the voluntary sector, working with those with complex needs where his role has encompassed running daycentres, accommodation projects, social enterprises and outreach services. All designed to improve the lives of some of the most vulnerable in society.



On joining us, Graeme said, "I know the benefit that the Kingsley Organisations brings and am excited to play my part in its future both in terms of the delivery of its disability services and its wider role in the community. As we move on from the restrictions that Covid has placed on us, we want to provide a solid foundation so we can face any new challenge."

Our Board of Trustees, covering diverse areas of management expertise, will be working closely with Graeme to evolve the overall business plan and support him and our team in delivering our vision and vital services.

In welcoming Graeme, **Judith Leslie-Smith, our founder**, commented: “We have high aspirations to continue the success of Kingsley Organisation. We are very grateful to Helen who, for over nineteen years, has dedicated herself to the work of our Organisation. Graeme’s overall brief is one of continuity, building on the strategy, mission, vision and values that have made us a reputable private social care organisation for over 30 years. He is joining a highly professional dedicated team of individuals, and I’ve no doubt that his previous experience and leadership will make him an incredible asset to our company.”

Please join us in saying a big THANK YOU to Helen and wishing her health and happiness in her next chapter. And a warm welcome to Graeme.

If you have any questions regarding Kingsley Organisation, want to donate or support us in another way or form, please do not hesitate to contact us on +44 1420 479000 or visit the website www.kingsleyorganisation.org.uk for more information.

Kingsley Organisation, March 2021