

Transport
Page 4—6

Digital Skills
Page 7—10

Staff & Volunteering
Page 11—12

Compaid's Kent Karrier Service Expands

"We are delighted to announce that we have been successful in our bid for a 4-year contract transport awarded by Kent County Council (KCC).

"This will enable us to deliver our accessible Kent Karrier Service across the county. We retain our current areas of Maidstone, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells, Ashford and Swale and will create 2 new teams of drivers and passenger assistants (PA's) in Canterbury and Dover.

"With a total of 9 buses, drivers and passenger assistants on Kent Karrier we will increase our home to school transport and shopper services.

"We have now launched this exciting new contract and deliver a high-quality service to our clients. I wish to thank everyone who is currently working on the Kent Karrier Service and all those involved in burning the midnight oil to produce a winning submission!"

- Steve Sherry, Chief Executive



Get to Know: Fiona Condron, Chair of Trustees

In this issue of The Voice, we would like to introduce you to **Fiona Condron**, Chair of Compaid's Board of Trustees.



Fiona's career started with Deloitte in Leeds, Cape Town and London where she worked with a wide range of public and international corporates. Since 2004, she has specialised in the Not for Profit Sector.

Fiona has worked with many UK brand name charities including Barnardos, Sue Ryder, Help for Heroes, Addaction, Arthritis Research and Amnesty International.

Here's a fun Q&A we held with Fiona:

Q: What hobby or activity do you enjoy doing most in your free time? Tell us one interesting fact about this activity?

Fiona: Most activities in recent years involve watching our boys play sport (*football, table tennis, basket ball*) but we all share a passion for skiing (*I would forgo a summer holiday if I had to to ensure I could ski*).



An interesting fact about this activity is that I often suffer from altitude sickness on the first day of being in resort as Val Thorens is the highest resort in the French Alps.

Q: If you could take only 3 things to a deserted island, what would they be?

Fiona: A radio, a bag of Percy Pigs and a life jacket!

Q: What dish could you eat forever and never get tired of?

Fiona: My husband's homemade Shepherd's Pie.

Q: If you were to write a book about your life, what would the title be?

Fiona: Overcoming Failure— Persistence and Resilience

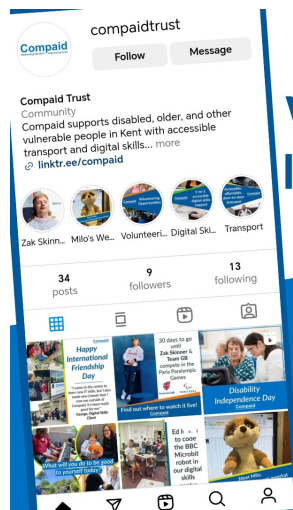
Q: What is something on your bucket list that you are yet to accomplish?

Fiona: Hiring a campervan and touring the Highlands of Scotland!



Thank you Fiona for these great answers!

Look out for who will be next answering our Q&A in our next edition!



We are on Instagram!



Follow us today

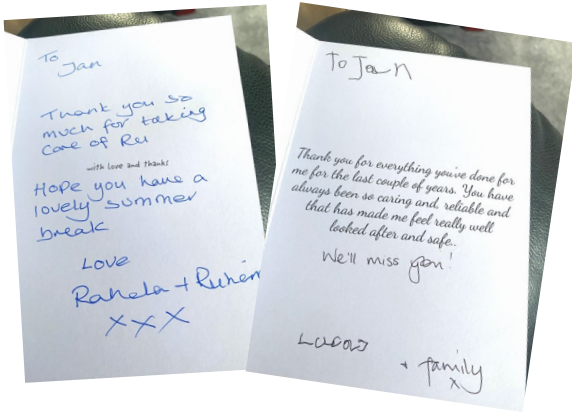
Did you know Compaid is now on Instagram?

Check out and follow our Instagram profile by searching **@compaidtrust** to stay updated on our services, events, and community engagement!

We can't wait to see you there!

Transport News

End of School Bus Farewells



The end of the school year means our Special Education Needs (SEN) school buses take a break for the holidays. However, delivery of our accessible transport continues through out the summer.

Here are some thoughtful cards from our student passengers, expressing their appreciation for our drivers' support throughout the year.

What Our Passengers Say...

"Compaid's minibus helped me get to the hairdressers today. It enables me to get to places that I wouldn't be able to when my family and friends aren't available to help me."

Kristian, passenger in Maidstone

"Our driver Jan is always kind and helpful. We would be lost without her. Thursday is always so nice because we get to go out shopping."

Quinn, passenger in Sevenoaks

Compaid's KCC funded Kent Karrier Service comes to Dover & Canterbury!

We are pleased to announce that we are now delivering Kent Karrier accessible transport in Dover & Canterbury.

Kent Karrier is a membership-based transport scheme funded by Kent County Council, providing door-to-door journeys around Dover & Canterbury. Our friendly drivers will help passengers with mobility needs on and off the buses, and if required, they will also assist carrying your shopping on and off the vehicle and to your front door. All our buses are wheelchair and mobility scooter accessible.

This service is accessible to residents of Canterbury and Dover who meet one of the following criteria: they live over 500 meters from public transport stops, have a disability that prevents them from using other public transport options, or are 85 years of age or older.

To apply for a Kent Karrier membership, please visit www.kent.gov.uk/kentkarrier. For bookings, please call our Transport team on **01892 832447**.



Two accessible buses will be available **5 days a week between 10am and 1pm**. The fare for the journey, whether single or return, is **£5**.

We are so happy to announce that our Kent Karrier accessible transport is now available in Dover & Canterbury!



Could we help you get out & about?

In the last 3 months, our Transport team has delivered **1964 journeys** on our Out & About minibuses!

We can help you too!

Book your journey to 7 days in advance by calling us on **01892 832447** between 9am – 4pm, Monday to Friday!

For more information, visit:

www.compaid.org.uk/accessible-transport

Volunteer with our Transport Team

Do you have a few hours to spare each week?

We would love to hear from you!

We are looking for people to join our friendly Transport team as volunteer drivers, supporting passengers from their homes as they go on day drips, attend medical appointments, day centres, and grocery stores.

For more details, call Judith Williams at **01892 351055** or email **judithwilliams@compaid.org.uk**



Digital Skills News

Outreach Digital Skills Updates

Our Outreach work is continuing to expand. Thanks to successful and generous funding, we have the opportunity to go out and about to deliver digital skills training in the community beyond our centre where there is need.

The latest project is at **Hospice in the Weald**. For 6 weeks, we have been working with their 'Living Well' team, who run many different activities and support groups, to deliver digital skills sessions for outpatients and their family members.



Sara, our Outreach IT trainer, has been helping a range of people across the borough to learn to use their devices. The training includes everything from the very basics of turning it on, to help with organising personal photos, using WhatsApp to communicate with loved ones, and online banking! It is all done in a very relaxed and

informal environment (*and always with cake and biscuits!!*)

One Outreach client, commented:

“It’s been such a relief learning to use my tablet and second-hand smart phone with Sara. She is so very patient with me. We covered emailing, shopping online, and filling out the form to reorder my prescriptions online. I also finally know how to use Zoom too!”

“I was so pleased to have this opportunity and several friends have said they would love the opportunity also. I struggled to recover from the isolation of lockdown and wished I was computer literate to make it easier, but I am very grateful for these lessons now.

“Thank you !”

Sara has also been continuing to support residents of **West Kent Housing Association in Sevenoaks**.



Clients receive hourly 1:1 sessions where they are supported with digital skills training that can assist their employability. Some clients have had little exposure to technology in their lives and want to cover the basics, while others want help finding employment by

brushing up their CV and interview skills.

Our trainers and resources accommodate every client's needs and requirements for learning comfortably and confidently, so that, no matter their level of ability or experience, they can get the support they require.

Clients have been very grateful for the support and found it has improved their more confidence to use their devices and navigate the internet.

Our Next Project

The next 6 week project will be with **Royal British Legion Industries (RBLI) in Aylesford**. Our Outreach team will be helping a range of residents in the village to access digital skills and employability support. We are looking forward to working with RBLI and being able to assist another group of clients to build their confidence and skills.



The projects delivered by our Outreach team highlights the continual need for digital skills training to cope in today's digital world. Both digital and physical accessibility is essential to ensure online access for all.

Paul's Story: The Impact of Accessible Learning Opportunities

In our digital skills centre, we have countless stories of lives transformed by the support environment, inspiring trainers, and the opportunities for learning and forming friendships with others. This is one such story.



Meet **Paul**, a man in his 50s who comes to Compaid and has learned to read and write, skills which he never had the opportunity to gain when he was younger. Living with both a learning and physical disability, Paul has spent most of his time at home, not socialising with anyone outside his family, and watching TV all day for entertainment.

His sister-in-law says:

“It is difficult to overstate the positive effect that Compaid has had on Paul’s life – in his confidence, his happiness, his living life in general.”

Eighteen months ago, encouraged by his brother and sister-in-law, Paul began searching for new activities to enrich his daily life. He discovered exactly what he needed at Compaid’s Paddock Wood digital skills centre with support from our friendly trainers.

Socially, Paul has grown since joining Compaid, enjoying conversations with trainers and other clients. In terms of personal development, Paul has focused on learning to read and write for the first time. He now keeps a blog, explores digital painting, becomes more active by participating in SEN tennis with other clients, moves around the centre independently, traces his family tree, and notably, learns programming.

Each week, Paul participates in sessions based on the 'Hour of Code' website, completing simple coding tasks that require reading and basic numeracy skills. This challenge has spurred him to learn more and apply his skills creatively, resulting in a wonderful robotic device for our digital skills training centre. Using a BBC micro, Paul built a small robot that beeps at intervals to remind people to follow the 20-20-20 rule: every 20 minutes of computer use, look away for 20 seconds at something at least 20 feet away.

Paul said:

“My activities at Compaid have given me a great sense of achievement. I feel that I am now spending my time meaningfully.”

We are here to support you!

Are you or someone you care about looking to feel more confident using a phone, tablet, or laptop?

Would you like to learn how to bank, shop, or book medical appointments online with ease?

Our digital skills training is designed just for you!

We offer personalised, one-to-one sessions, supporting learners to help you build the skills you need for a more independent life.

In our sessions, you'll discover how to:

- Safely navigate the internet to find trustworthy information and local services
 - Enhance literacy, maths, and cognitive skills
 - Explore online courses in art, programming, history, and more
 - Bank, shop, and communicate online with confidence
- and much more!

If this opportunity could help you or someone you know, contact our Digital Skills Centre Co-Ordinator, **Jonathan**, on **01892 351060**

Staff & Volunteering News

A returning, familiar face

The friendly faces of our staff and volunteer digital skills trainers contribute significantly to our clients' motivation and enjoyment as they learn or relearn skills. There is no shortage of excited chatter and laughter in our centre, thanks to the welcoming atmosphere, and with the return of a well-loved former driver, we are sure that it will only grow.



Martyn Eastwood was a charming character in our transport team, and as he joins our digital skills trainers, we are sure his signature personable attitude will continue to brighten our clients' day even more.

"Hi! My name is Martyn Eastwood, and earlier this year, I retired from Compaid after 9 years of minibuss driving.

"I had so much fun meeting all kinds of people that I have decided to stay in touch with as many as I can, by now volunteering at our day centre in Paddock Wood on a Thursday.

"The main reason for volunteering was that I had not realised that small deeds from me can make such a difference to someone who faces all sorts of challenges in their daily lives. I hope to bring some good humour and understanding in my new role.

"If you think you would like to give volunteering a go - please get in touch with Judith."

We are Recruiting!

Do you want to make a difference in your local community?

Have you been looking for a new challenge?

We have several volunteer positions available in our digital skills and transport teams!

At Compaid, you can see first hand the positive difference you make in the community and in the lives of our clients.



As a **volunteer digital skills trainer**, you can support learners as they understand how to use their digital devices, safely navigate banking and shopping online, or exploring new creative projects whilst enjoying the friendship of others.

As a **volunteer driver** you will be assisting residents across the boroughs of Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge, Maidstone, and Sevenoaks to attend vital medical appointments, shop in local supermarkets, and attend local events. In addition, you could be taking groups on outings to local attractions.



You can be part of that impact!

For more information on any of these positions or volunteering opportunities, contact our HR Manager, **Judith Williams**, by email at judithwilliams@compaid.org.uk or by phone at **01892 351055**

And visit our website:

www.compaid.org.uk/get-involved/working-with-us/

Fundraising News

We would like to thank the following trusts and foundations whose ongoing support enables us to extend our services to those who need it most:

- **The Ironbridge Trust**
- **Marsh Charitable Trust**
- **Baily Thomas Charitable Trust**
- **SMB Trust**
- **UK Shared Prosperity Fund**
- **Sir Edward Lewis Foundation**
- **Gatwick Foundation**

Lots of great visits recently...

We have been delighted to invite several partnership organisations & trusts to visit our digital skills centre at Eastlands in Paddock Wood recently.

It was great to welcome Eliot, Joy, and Funmi from **The Motability Foundation** to our centre.

It was a pleasure to share how our Out & About transport service positively transforms the lives of our passengers, and to emphasise the essential role this service plays in our community.



It was great to meet Heather Crombie from **Marsh Charitable Trust** as she visited our digital skills training centre recently.

This great trust has been supporting Compaid for over 33 years, enabling us to deliver much-needed services to those most in need across Kent: <https://www.compaid.org.uk/news/marsh-charitable-trust-visit/>



We have also welcomed our friends from **Disablement Association of Barking & Dagenham (DABD)** to talk all things transport and digital skills training, we visited the inspiring people at **Elevate Creates**, and we had the pleasure of inviting **Sam Lawrence-Rose from Digital Kent** to our Paddock Wood training centre.

All of these wonderful meetings with the people and organisations in our community pose exciting opportunities to come and we look forward to what the future brings.

TWODS production – Joseph & The Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat



Tunbridge Wells Operatic and Dramatic Society (TWODS) has had a long association with Compaid, and we were grateful when they once again provided us with complimentary tickets for their production of Joseph last month.

The tickets were eagerly snapped up and we were thrilled that everyone had a great evening.

One client commented:

“It was amazing, so colourful and I loved singing along! I had a brilliant night”

Charity Sponsored Walk

This year organisers Tonbridge Lions changed the date from March to July, to hopefully avoid bad weather conditions which had previously forced the event to be cancelled due to flooding. The Lions Club were saddened that, due to a lack of interest this year from previous participants, they made the difficult decision to cancel the Charity Walk.



Our Fundraising Manager, Diane had previously participated in this event and set up a Just Giving Page to raise funds for essential equipment for our training centre. She chose to proceed with the walk on her own.



A huge thank you to everyone who supported this sponsored walk! So far, you have helped us raise **£625** to benefit our digital skills learners.

If you missed the chance to donate, you can still do so here: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/compaid-walk>

2024 Paris Paralympic Games



The 2024 Paralympic Games are being held in Paris, France from **Wednesday 28th August until Sunday 8th September**.

We are looking forward to cheering on our Ambassador, **Zak Skinner**, and Team GB as they compete in the 2024 Paris Paralympics.

This year, broadcast of the full Paralympic Games, from the first moment of the opening ceremony to the last sparks of fireworks at the

closing, will be streamed live on **Channel 4, More4, Channel 4 Streaming, and on the Channel 4 Sport's YouTube channel.**

Channel 4 have reported that *"Paris 2024 is set to be Channel 4's most accessible Games to date"* with all broadcasting including subtitles, live sports streaming will have closed captioning, and live sport on More4 and Channel 4 Streaming on weekday afternoons will include BSL live sign language.

Zak Skinner, will be competing for Team GB in the **T-13 Final of the Men's 100m on Sunday 1st September at 6:47pm** and in the **T-13 Final of the Men's Long Jump on Saturday 7th September at 10am.**

We are already cheering him on all the way!

Barratt Developments Plc donate 20 laptops to Compaid's digital skills centre

We want to thank **Barratt Developments Plc** for their generous donation of 20 laptops!

These laptops will support our clients through our digital skills training centre and out in the community, as they learn crucial computer and digital skills with our trainers that will support their inclusion, confidence, and independence.

David Thomas, Chief Executive of Barratt Developments Plc, said:



"We are delighted to donate 20 of our refurbished laptops to Compaid.

"The charity does amazing work supporting vulnerable people overcome the barriers of social, digital and economic exclusion, and these new laptops will help them deliver that support."

How you can support Compaid

In common with many other Charities, we are dependent on raising funds from a variety of sources to maintain and expand our services. We rely heavily on the generosity of individuals, trusts, and companies for financial support. Donations not only assist in funding existing programs but also in expanding services to reach more individuals in need.

As mentioned in our previous newsletter, to maintain our current support to the vulnerable people we support we will need to raise **£325,000** this year, and even more to be able to fund our planned future developments. We are extremely grateful to all the Trusts, Foundations, local businesses, organisations, and individuals who currently support Compaid.

In this competitive funding market, we are always keen to hear from businesses or individuals who may feel they could sponsor or support us in some way, and every contribution, big or small, helps us greatly.

£50 could help fund a specialist trainer for half a day, supporting people with complex needs to use technology effectively.

£100 could provide a full day of computer training for a small group of young people, improving their job prospects and ability to stay connected.

£500 could support the costs of running of one of Compaid's buses for a week, aiding vulnerable passengers to attend essential medical appointments, buying groceries or social activities.

£5,000 could significantly contribute towards an annual license for specialised communication software, helping those with severe disabilities to communicate and interact with their community and networks.

If you, or anyone you know, would like further information about how to support Compaid please contact **Diane Bradley**, Fundraising Manager by email at **dianebradley@compaid.org.uk**

or call **01892 351054** for an informal chat.

Would you like to know more about Compaid, and the services we provide?

Scan the QR code below to visit our website or find us on social media to find out more.



How to get started to become an easyfundraiser for Compaid

3 simple steps are all it takes to support Compaid & help us have the chance to receive a £500 donation:

1. Click here to add easyfundraising.org.uk/donation-reminder/ to your web browser:
2. Select Compaid as your chosen charity
3. Click 'Give a free donation' when notified by easyfundraising while shopping online!



Support us through TW Lotto

TW Lotto is an exciting weekly lottery that raises money for good causes in Tunbridge Wells. All good causes supported by the lottery will benefit Tunbridge Wells and its residents.



For just £1 per draw, you can be in the draw for a chance to win a **£25,000** jack pot every week. At the same time, 60p of your £1 ticket will be donated to Compaid, helping us bring important digital skills training to people in Tunbridge Wells and beyond!

Visit <https://www.twlotto.co.uk/support/compaid> or scan the QR code today.



We wish you good luck!

...and through Unity Lottery



Unity Lottery is another quick, easy, and fun way to support Compaid while playing for a chance to win incredible prizes.

For just £1, in your first year your support would enable an isolated disabled person to attend our digital skills training centre, with their journey to and from home provided by our team of dedicated drivers.

Our Transport is a vital lifeline to hundreds of disabled and older people in Kent, providing journeys to the shops, day centres, medical appointments, or visit family and friends.

Visit <https://www.unitylottery.co.uk/causes/compaid/> to play and support our accessible transport service!

Thank you for your support!

Compaid

Removing barriers *Improving lives*

Chief Executive

Steve Sherry

01892 833664

stevesherry@compaid.org.uk

Finance

Srikanth Bodduluri: Manager

01892 351051

srikanth@compaid.org.uk

Accessible Transport

Andy Allen: Manager

01892 832447

transport@compaid.org.uk

Head of Services

Amanda Sheer: Manager

01892 351053

amandasheer@compaid.org.uk

Fundraising

Diane Bradley: Manager

01892 351054

dianebradley@compaid.org.uk

Digital Skills Training Centre

Jonathan Sargent: Co-ordinator

01892 833606

jonathansargent@compaid.org.uk

Human Resources

Judith Williams: Manager

01892 351055

judith.williams@compaid.org.uk

General Enquiries

01892 834539

enquiries@compaid.org.uk

www.compaid.org.uk