

1Voice Newsletter

“A world where the voice of every child and adult, however they communicate, is listened to and heard”



We are delighted to announce that Beth Moulam has been appointed as the very first 1Voice Patron. Beth tells us about herself and her involvement with 1Voice.

“1 Voice has played a huge part in my life. As an electronic AAC user from the age of 4 I attended my first event at the age of 7.

Over the following years it was my highlight of each year. I looked forward to spending time with friends like me. I’m the product of mainstream primary and secondary schools. I transferred to a residential specialist school at the age of 13.

Subsequently I went onto university, graduating in 2021 after extending my course, to graduate with a first in Social Policy.

This was no small feat when my Mum was told when I was 12 I would be unlikely to get any qualifications. In September 2022 I returned to the University to York to commence a MRes in Social Policy. Throughout my undergraduate degree I played boccia. At first this was for fun, until I made it to England. Then, I went onto be selected to the Great Britain World Class Programme and in 2021 I represented GB at the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics (due to Covid). This was both a huge honour and a dream come true.

I’m delighted to have been invited to become a Patron of 1 Voice. Twenty-one years after my first network day I returned as a role model to the national weekend. It was like ‘coming home’. I thoroughly enjoyed supporting young communicators and their families. I believe that each of us can fulfil our own communication potential and I look forward to supporting 1 Voice in the future in their amazing work.

NEWS FROM
COMMUNICATION
MATTERS

NATIONAL WEEKEND
AWAY

ROLE MODELS &
MUCH MORE



Christmas party on Sunday 4 December 2 to 4pm

1Voice are looking to generate / regenerate interest in our local branch network and hope the Christmas party could be an opportunity to meet others in your region.

Register via email to events@1voice.info or call **07943 618525** or get in touch for more information. Please do let us know if you are coming to help with our planning.

1Voice works with local volunteers to set up local branches.

Branches choose activities, themes, dates and times to suit the needs of their members as well as accessing national events. Pop-ups are infrequent local activities/events. The Covid pandemic has meant that no local branch events have taken place for a few years. We would like to offer our support, once again, to those individuals, families and volunteers who are interested in getting together. If there are several people from a particular geographical area who are interested in getting together, we can put you in touch with each other.

1Voice Annual General Meeting (AGM)

28th November - 7PM

Our 2022 AGM takes place on Monday 28 November at 7.30pm on Zoom. It is an opportunity for you to find out more about what we have been up to over the past year.

If you would like to attend, please contact Jo at 1voice-admin@1voice.info.

AAC Awareness Month

October

International AAC Awareness Month was celebrated around the world in October, the goal being to raise awareness of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) and to inform the public about the many different ways in which people communicate using communication devices. The theme this year was "show your voice". Take a look for the #AACaware22 hashtag to see what was shared, including our own posts.

Also, we have shared updated updates on our YouTube channel with new interviews from some of our role models:

<https://youtube.com/user/1voicemovies>

National Weekend Away

1Voice Summer Festival



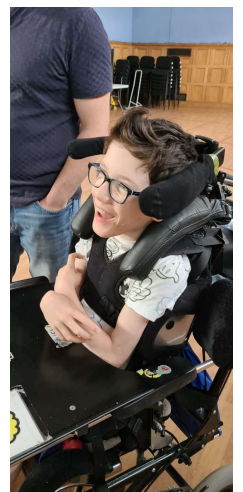
After not being able to hold face-to-face events for two years, it was incredible to finally be able to get together and celebrate again during the 1Voice Summer Festival at Treloars School in July. Intense heat, 10-hour traffic jams and stomach upsets weren't going to stop us and we were delighted to welcome AAC users and their families for a jam-packed weekend.



The Friday night welcome session, carefully planned by trustee Frances Sugden and Role Model Kate Caryer, brought families together in smaller groups to explore key locations and get a flavour of the activities to come. Accessible music-making, a photo-booth and Q&A's with Kate gave us the chance to get to know each other and the site, while having lots of laughs and catching up with old friends.

Saturday got off to a high-energy start with an inspirational and entertaining show by All Star Circus skills. His great combination of clowning, juggling and wisdom about how to deal with mistakes or failures put us all in a great frame of mind for the sessions to come. Following this we were delighted to welcome back Beth Moulam whose keynote presentation boosted the feel-good levels yet higher.

1Voice are hugely grateful to former Trustee Helen Hewson for the powerful sessions she organised over the weekend. Realising that a significant number of members were reaching adulthood, Helen designed two workshops focusing on the skills and considerations these young people would need to develop; directing PAs, considering managing a budget, choosing a college, making life plans. Feedback from members suggests that both young people and their families found this extremely valuable. 1Voice hope to develop further activities and opportunities in this area with Helen, so do get in touch if this is something you are keen to be part of.



National Weekend Away

-continued

Our photobooth rocketed off to outer space, relaxed on the beach enjoying the waves, climbed the Eiffel tower to take in the views and went down under to the shipwreck on Fraser Island, Australia.

We made lots of new friends, meeting other AAC users, volunteers and role models, as we hung out with Spiderman, raced with Mario and then Thor even lent us his hammer.

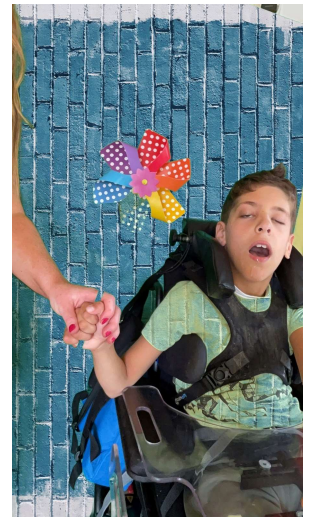
We were models; fashion directors, designers and artists creating our costumes and props, as well as artistic directors ensuring everything was in the right place and finally photographers, using a wireless switch to take our own photos. Then we even went to the developers and watched the layers of ink build up on the photos as they were printed.

And the highlight of the weekend? The Saturday night disco by DJ Oli. We were massively grateful to DJ Oli and his crew for persevering through an epic traffic jam to safely arrive with his most-excellent trailer of tech! As well as the brilliant tunes, this year saw an enormous light rig, impressive visual projections and smoke bubbles.

A key focus of the weekend was a re-launch of the 1Voice Role Model programme. With a number of members having completed their role model training relatively recently, and the return of some experienced and established Role Models to the weekend, they were able to meet together to discuss their plans and priorities for carrying this forward.

The final session on Sunday allowed the joyful return of the Shelley Makin joke competition. There were, as always, some absolute groaners! It was such fun to gather in the hall, share hilarious and dreadful jokes and celebrate the inspiration, connection, support and creativity the 2022 Summer Festival brought.

Massive thanks go to the amazing volunteers for making the weekend possible. After a weekend of supporting, enabling, and running around - they still had the energy to show some impressive moves on the dance floor! Also a huge thank you to the National Lottery, The Bruce Wake Foundation and the Mouth and Foot Painting Association, who funded the weekends activities. Their support allowed such a wide range of inspiring activities and sessions to be organised.



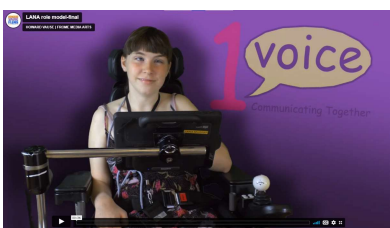
The 1Voice Role Model Project

Presented at the CM Conference by Dominic Carroll - Trustee

This year I attended and represented 1Voice in the conference's "personal perspectives" stream, presenting on the 1Voice role model project, and updating the wider AAC community about the project's progress so far. This session involved videos kindly supplied by 1Voice trustee and role model Gregor Gilmour, speaking in detail about the background of the project and what it means to him to be a role model. The session was chaired by 1Voice member and long-time role model Toby Hewson.

A role-model approach is at the heart of 1Voice's work: creating a community of AAC users and those who support them so we can learn from and inspire each other. It is incredibly hard work to learn to use alternative communication and AAC users may well not easily meet others who communicate and interact like them. 1Voice role models volunteer to support other AAC users by raising awareness of AAC, helping to highlight potentially fun, fulfilling futures and opportunities for AAC users, and encouraging and inspiring others who are developing their communication skills

The current project was initially funded in 2017, by private donor funding, as well as funding and support from Communication Matters. In 2019, 1Voice role models attended training provided by Verity Elliot from Creativity in Practice and I was lucky enough to attend Verity's talk at the conference this year, about delivering role model training, and to view some of the resources she uses to put together training - so interesting to hear as a counterpart to the work I have started doing with the role models at the national residential weekend.



As with many charities and small organisations, the 1Voice role model project has been adversely affected by COVID-19, particularly with many of our role models shielding during the pandemic, and work on the role model project slowed during 2020 and 2021. However, despite this, some of our role models met at the National Residential weekend this year and shared their views about being role models with filmmaker Howard Vause, who was documenting the weekend for us. We were able to share a sneak preview of the resulting videos with delegates at Communication Matters, and we hope to have the polished and updated versions available for you all to view on the 1Voice Youtube very soon. <https://www.youtube.com/user/1voicemovies>

Finally, we shared some of the next steps for the role model project - offering more training to role models, and supporting role models to develop a mentoring toolkit they can use in practice, with a view to hosting regional face-to-face role model events in 2023.

Find out more about the 1Voice role model project here: <https://www.1voice.info/role-models>, or contact us at: 1voice-admin@1voice.info

Help Us Shape 1Voice

- Join Us as a Trustee

We currently have four trustee vacancies and are looking for new people to join our team. Our current team is made up of AAC users, parents of AAC users and speech and language therapists. We are particularly keen to attract an AAC user and a parent. We would also be keen to attract individuals with an interest in social media. Above all, the key quality we are looking for is enthusiasm to support those with communication difficulties.

Anyone over 18 can be a Trustee. 1Voice trustees work together to make sure AAC users and their families are at the heart of everything we do.

Our key activities throughout the year are:

- Planning and organising the annual residential weekend
- Running the role model programme
- Organising online events
- Keeping in touch with members via the website, newsletter and facebook page
- Contributing to key external events such as the Communication Matters Conference



What Is Being a Trustee Like by Alison Douthwaite

I remember feeling worried myself not very long ago about what might be involved. I had been to a couple of residential weekends with my daughter and was so happy to find something so tailored to AAC users. When I saw 1Voice needed a trustee, I wanted to help because I felt the charity was so unique and so valuable, but I didn't really know if I would be able to do it, or whether it would be stressful to take on the commitment. It has actually been fun, rewarding and totally manageable. The group is welcoming, supportive and really open to new ideas and opportunities. The monthly meetings are scheduled at the end of each meeting so you know well in advance, and are well-organised and relaxed. As there is a big team and most of them have been with 1Voice for a long time, there is lots of experience to draw on and lots of support as you settle into being a Trustee.

What Commitment Is It?

- monthly online meeting on a weekday evening (roughly 1 hour)
- get a DBS check (paid for and administrated by 1Voice)
- complete a short online safeguarding training (paid for by 1Voice)
- stay in touch between meetings via our online messaging app

If you're interested in joining us, or if you know somebody who you think would make a great trustee, drop us a line at 1voice-admin@1voice.info or message us on facebook.

Good To Know

It can be tricky to find accessible activities, but one of great strengths of 1Voice is the fabulous pool of knowledge we have across our families. With that in mind, our newsletter section called 'Good To Know' is where AAC users, parents, carers and professionals can share information on their best and favourite finds.

Please send your ideas, tips & tricks, and links to info@1Voice.info

Good To Know... Eye Gaze games

Free and accessible web games are available at: <https://www.eyegazegames.com/carousel>

These games are designed to be playable with just your eyes, using your eye gaze camera and its mouse control software.

Good To Know... Communication Matters AAC Information Day

The next Communication Matters AAC Information Day is taking place on **Wednesday 23 November** in Glasgow. Their Information Days are an opportunity to see the latest product demonstrations by Commercial Members. They are among the UK's leading suppliers of communication aids, equipment, software and symbol systems. There are five presentation sessions on the day, where you can get up-to-date information on the range of AAC products available in the UK. During the exhibition period you have the opportunity to get hands-on and try out the equipment for yourself.

To book a place, visit: <https://www.communicationmatters.org.uk/diary/information-days/>



Meet the Mentors

Let's kick off the season together—please come to the ATtherapy offices to learn more about our award-winning ATmentor team!

December 9, 2022 | 130-430pm
ATtherapy, Chamber Business Centre,
Chapel Road, Oldham, OL8 4QQ

Please email info@ATtherapy.co.uk to book a place

Christmas refreshments available (please let us know if you have any dietary requirements)

Good To Know... AT Therapy Event

There is an opportunity to find out more about the ATtherapy mentors on **Friday 9 December** in Oldham.



1Voice at the Communication Matters Conference 2022

by Dominic Carroll

“The Communication Matters International AAC Conference is the UK's leading annual AAC event, with a diverse programme of plenaries, presentations, posters and an exhibition held over two and a half days.” - **Communication Matters**

This September I attended my first Communication Matters conference, hosted at Leeds University. Many of you will already know Communication Matters - a UK-wide organisation that supports people with little or no clear speech, particularly those who use communication aids. CM is part of the International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (ISAAC), and the conference welcomes delegates from around the UK and internationally - people who use AAC, their families and PAs, and professionals working in the field of AAC and communication. Some of you will have attended the annual CM conference, either as delegates, or to give sessions, discussing personal perspectives, current research evidence, and best practice. Despite some unexpected technical difficulties, the 1Voice role model talk seemed well received, with some thoughtful comments and questions from the delegates. The broader conference was fascinating, busy, and not a little noisy and overwhelming at times - with a few hundred people, multiple talks, and a lot of information to absorb. Giving a broad overview of the conference would warrant a much lengthier article, but my personal highlights included:

- Katherine Broomfield presenting “Softly non-spoken: soft robotics as non-verbal communication aids”
- Janice Murray, discussing recent research into “Perspectives of young people who use AAC and their family members on their literacy learning”
- 1Voice role-model and CM trustee Helen Hewson, speaking on “Becoming a Trustee of Communication Matters as an AAC User”.
- Jordan Brearly, Marcus Friday, and Josh Mars from the Barnsley AT hub presenting a session “Gaming – How To Enable Access For Fun, Friendship & Communication.”)
- Compelling keynote talks from Richard Cave from the MND Association, and Beth Moulam - Boccia Paralympian who described how the core skills she developed as an AAC user informed her Paralympian career.

I was particularly taken by how welcoming everybody was to wide-eyed, nervous, first-timers like me, and I would like to thank the team at CM for making my first conference such a rewarding few days & I look forward to returning to the CM conference in September 2023.

1Voice (Registered charity 1141886), Lymm Business Centre, Davies Way, Lymm WA13 0QW
Telephone: 07943 618 525 Email: info@1voice.info Website: www.1voice.info