

2026 Autumn Highlights

Welcome!

Transformation is often built on small, meaningful steps. At Guideposts, we see this every day as people build confidence, develop new skills, form meaningful connections and discover a renewed sense of purpose.

This edition highlights the many ways that change can create new possibilities. Over recent months, we've introduced our new brand and continued developing plans for our Outdoor Wellbeing Hub. While these are exciting milestones for our charity, they're ultimately about creating more opportunities for the people we support and strengthening the communities around them.

In here, you'll read stories of progress, resilience and achievement. From celebrating creative talents to exciting developments at our Outdoor Wellbeing Hub, each story shows the difference that support, opportunity and belonging can make.

None of this would be possible without the commitment and generosity of supporters like you. Thank you for helping us create opportunities for the people we support to live, grow and belong.

Kathryn Courtenay-Evans, CEO

Together we take small but steady steps towards building confidence, purpose and belonging.

Inside:

Latest News & Updates	2
Where Belonging Grows	3
My Guideposts: Ricki	4
Age Without Limits	5
Supporter News	6
Pathways to Opportunities	7

Guideposts Trust

LIVING.
GROWING.
BELONGING.

Latest news

More than a new look

Over the past year, we've taken time to reflect on how we describe our work and the difference it makes in people's lives. While our services remain as important as ever, we wanted our identity to more clearly reflect the outcomes we help people achieve: greater confidence, stronger connections, new opportunities and a sense of belonging.

At the heart of our refreshed brand is the new Guideposts Star. More than a logo, it represents the values that guide our work, with symbols of guidance, growth, people, progress and community. Together, these elements reflect the journeys we support every day and the positive changes people make, one step at a time.

Our new strapline - Living, Growing, Belonging - captures what Guideposts has been helping people achieve for more than 50 years. Whether supporting someone living with mental health challenges, a learning disability, dementia, or caring responsibilities, our role is to walk alongside people at their own pace as they build confidence, purpose and connection.

Guideposts Trust
LIVING. GROWING. BELONGING.

"While our look has evolved, our mission remains unchanged: helping people live well, grow in confidence and feel a genuine sense of belonging in their communities."
Board of Trustees



Open Studio

Art groups provide a supportive space where the people we support can develop new skills, express their creativity and build confidence. But art is about more than the finished piece. It helps people connect, improve wellbeing and feel part of a community.

This year, artists from our services proudly exhibited their work at events including Site Festival in Stroud and Oxfordshire Artweeks, and very soon at the Painswick Rococo Garden gaining recognition, pride and a real sense of achievement. Their talent reminds us that creativity can transform lives and we're incredibly proud of everyone who has shared their creativity and inspired others through their work.

To continue providing these opportunities, our art groups need support with art materials, creative resources, music sessions and workshops. If you would like to help, please donate at **guideposts.org.uk /art-at-guideposts**

WHERE BELONGING GROWS



As announced in our spring edition, we've launched a major refurbishment project to transform our Outdoor Wellbeing Hub into a more accessible, and inspiring space.

Thanks to the generosity of local individuals, businesses and supporters, work has now begun.

We're delighted that the new polytunnel is now in place, marking an important milestone in the redevelopment. We are reimagining the space to be more welcoming, accessible and inclusive, enabling us to support even more people through nature-based activities, learning opportunities and social connection.

The improvements are already being noticed by the people who use the Hub. Tony, one of gardeners tells us, "I like working there with my friends. I've seen the new polytunnel and I like the doors, the way they open and let the light in. I also like the new floor, it makes it easy for people to walk."

Our vision is to create an accessible community space where people can learn new skills, improve their wellbeing and feel a sense of belonging. While exciting progress has already been made, we still need support to bring this vision to life and help more people benefit.

"The development will ensure the Hub can continue transforming lives for years to come"

Kathryn Courtenay Evans - CEO

Want to help us grow?

£100 would help stock our new polytunnel with plants and produce – or even just £10 for some compost. Every donation helps.

Opening doors through partnership

We're delighted to announce the re-opening of our Ware shop in partnership with FatMod Records.



The shop is more than just a place to buy records. It's a space where music, creativity and community come together, creating opportunities for some of the people we support to build confidence, develop skills and gain valuable work experience.

Alongside a fantastic selection of records, visitors can discover artwork created by talented Guideposts artists, featured on bags and a range of unique products. By showcasing their work to the wider community, we're helping artists gain recognition, grow in confidence and celebrate their achievements.

Every Guideposts purchase helps support our services and create more opportunities for people to live, grow and belong. If you live nearby, do visit us at 3 Cross Street, Ware, SG12 7AH.



My Guideposts:
Meet Ricki

Hello, my name is Ricky and I'm in my 50s. I've lived with bipolar disorder for many years, and there have been times when life has felt overwhelming. Guideposts has given me a place where I feel understood, valued and connected, helping me rebuild my confidence and a renewed purpose.

Looking back, there were long periods when I became increasingly isolated. My confidence was low, my self-worth was almost non-existent, and I found myself withdrawing from friends, family and the world around me. I struggled to talk about how I was feeling and often kept things hidden, even when I was at my lowest.

When first came to Guideposts in my late 30s during one of those difficult periods to help manage my mental health. I knew I wasn't coping, but I didn't really know what to do about it.

"What I found at Guideposts was more than support. I found people who listened, understood and accepted me without judgement."

For the first time in a long time, I felt I wasn't facing everything on my own. I didn't have to explain myself or pretend everything was okay. I was welcomed, listened to and encouraged to take things one step at a time.

One of the things that has made the biggest difference to me is being part of the groups and activities. They give me structure, purpose and something positive to focus on. More importantly, they provide opportunities to meet people, build friendships and feel part of something.

When you're struggling with your mental health, it's easy to believe that no one understands what you're going through.

At Guideposts, I've met people who do and, I've always felt accepted here.

Over the years, my involvement with Guideposts has come and gone as my circumstances have changed. There was a time when my support ended and I thought I was doing well enough on my own. But a couple of years later, my mental health deteriorated again. I found myself in a very dark place and couldn't find the support I needed elsewhere.

The one place I knew I could turn to was Guideposts. I knew I would be welcomed back and that people would understand. That meant more than I can put into words.

I've also had the opportunity to get involved in practical projects around the Hub. Taking part in refurbishment work gave me a sense of achievement and reminded me that I still had skills and something valuable to contribute. It helped rebuild my confidence and self-belief. I've learned that helping others can be just as beneficial as receiving help yourself.

Today, I manage much better than I once did. Life feels more meaningful. I have better coping strategies. Knowing that there's always a place where I'm valued and supported gives me strength when things become difficult.

If it wasn't for Guideposts, the staff, volunteers and everyone here, I don't believe I would have been able to turn my destructive thoughts into constructive pursuits that make me feel valued the way I do.

Age without limits



In June, Guideposts hosted our first Age Without Limits event, bringing together service users and unpaid carers for an afternoon filled with music, dancing and friendship.

The event was a wonderful celebration of "Age Without Limits Day", a national campaign that challenges ageism and encourages people to rethink what it means to grow older.

Events like these are more than just celebrations. They create opportunities for connection, wellbeing and social inclusion, helping people feel valued, supported and part of a community. For many older people, and particularly for unpaid carers, opportunities to take a break, connect with others and enjoy meaningful activities can be invaluable.

"The afternoon was a beautiful blend of ages and experiences, proving that when people connect, age becomes background noise to the real music of togetherness."

Helen, Carers Support worker



Across the UK, millions of unpaid carers dedicate their time and energy to supporting loved ones, often putting their own needs last.

This event heped raise awareness and highlight the importance of ensuring carers have access to support, respite and opportunities to enjoy life alongside those they care for.

Age doesn't define our potential. Every stage of life brings opportunities to connect, contribute and celebrate. Together, we can create communities where both older people and unpaid carers feel valued, supported and included.

Want to help people belong?

A donation of £50 helps an older person and their carer take part in social activities and feel part of their community

Stronger Together

This event was a wonderful celebration of community, bringing together local businesses, partners, performers, volunteers, service users and supporters.

We are incredibly grateful to Good Vibrations Watford and our talented service user Clarina for providing fantastic entertainment; Myers Clark Chartered Accountants, the Rotary Club of Watford, Ray, one of the carers we support, and Croxley Park for their generous support in making the event possible. We were also delighted to welcome Watford Mayor Peter Taylor. Special thanks go to our Support Worker, Helen, whose dedication helped bring the event to life.

Together, everyone created an atmosphere of joy, connection and belonging that made the day truly memorable.



Supporter news

Tons of support

Community support comes in many forms, and every contribution helps us make a lasting difference.

From Rotary Clubs supporting our groups and events across local communities, to small grants from the Co-op's Local Community Fund helping provide activities, trips and unique opportunities for the people we support, each gift helps create confidence, connection and belonging.

Sometimes that support is practical too. We're incredibly grateful to Smiths Bletchington for donating tonnes of gravel this summer for our Outdoor Wellbeing Hub redevelopment. Such generosity is helping make the site safer, more accessible and more welcoming for everyone who uses it.

Whether measured in pounds, hours or even tonnes, every contribution makes a real difference.

"I see every day how community support helps people build confidence, connect with others and achieve things they never thought possible."

Tim - Day Services Manager

How can you help us do more for our service users?

- **Introduce Guideposts to your community**
- **Nominate us for Charity of the Year**
- **Share this newsletter**

Join our first online Quiz

We're excited to launch our first online quiz night, kicking things off with a Halloween theme!

Expect fun questions, friendly competition and the chance to win a prize, all from the comfort of your own home.

Whether you're taking part on your own or with friends and family, it's a great way to connect, have fun and support Guideposts.

If it's a hit, we'd love to make these quizzes a regular fixture, with a new theme each time.

Book your place today:
guideposts.org.uk/quiz



Celebrating creativity all year round

Our much-loved annual calendar is back!
Now in its fourth year, our annual calendar showcases original artwork created by people taking part in Guideposts' art groups. Every page celebrates talent, achievement and the power of creativity to transform lives.

Order your copy and support Guideposts while enjoying a year of beautiful artwork.

Pathways to opportunities

At Guideposts, we're creating more opportunities for people to learn, gain qualifications, develop independence and achieve their goals.

Over the past year, our Gloucestershire team has been leading the development of ASDAN-accredited learning pathways, helping turn this vision into reality.

From creative arts, wellbeing and independent living programmes to horticultural skills and employability training, the Academy is designed to help people discover their strengths, gain recognised achievements and build confidence for the future.

Alongside this, the team has developed new partnerships, identified additional learning spaces and explored innovative ways to embed learning opportunities within our existing services.

What makes the Academy different is its flexibility. Every person's journey is unique, so we're creating pathways that enable people to learn at a pace that suits them and reflects their interests, ambitions and goals.

While there is still more work to do, we're delighted to announce that our first Food Skills, Gardening Skills and Life Skills courses have now begun. This marks an exciting milestone for the Guideposts Academy, with participants already developing new skills, building confidence and working towards recognised achievements.

We look forward to sharing their progress, and creating even more opportunities for people to learn, grow and achieve as the Guideposts Academy continues to develop.



"I am really enjoying the course. I love being able to take a recipe home each week, and it's helping me become more confident in the kitchen."

Vicky

For years to come

For more than 50 years, Guideposts has been helping people build meaningful connections and take positive steps forward in life.

Every day, we see the difference that support, opportunity and belonging can make. We also know that the need for these opportunities will continue for generations to come. Gifts in Wills help ensure that future generations can access the support, community connections and opportunities they need to thrive.

If Guideposts has a special place in your heart, please consider leaving a gift in your Will. Even leaving just 1% of your estate to Guideposts allows 99% to remain with those closest to you.



Together, we can help more people live, grow and belong for years to come.

Your support changes lives

Thanks to you, Guideposts fills the space where real life happens, from crisis to coping to thriving, helping people find their way back into life, not just back into services.



Thank you for helping others live, grow and belong.

If you'd like to support us further – making a collection, regular donations or even passing on a special gift, please do get in touch!

guideposts.org.uk/get-involved

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