

James' Story: PA Support

Meet James

- James is 20 years old and has a mild learning disability.
- He receives a Direct Payment from Surrey County Council to employ a personal assistant (PA) to support him getting out into the community, to build independent living skills and to meet new people.
- His ambition is to work in a computer/media type environment so his Direct Payment also included funding for a Photoshop distance learning course.



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Recruiting a PA

- James found a suitable PA, but was concerned that the PA's other job might prevent him from working part-time with James as well.
- James contacted SILC and we checked the PA's legal situation for him and confirmed that he could work with James. We also helped James to set up employer's insurance, a contract for the PA and payroll arrangements.



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Tailored learning

- James started his Photoshop course, but quickly realised that it was too advanced for his needs. However, his new PA had professional photographic experience and was happy to teach James photography as part of his support.
- With the agreement of Surrey County Council, James used the course funding to buy a camera instead. This meant he could put what he was learning from his PA into action.



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Putting new skills to good use

- James has since contacted with a local college, which is having a new building being constructed. He agreed with the construction company to write and update an online blog on the various stages of the build with photos and text about each stage of construction.
- So, with the right support, James has made contacts with new people, has created a blog/website and learnt new camera and digital media skills. Most crucially, he has taken the first steps to achieving his ambitions.



With the right support, James has met new people, learned skills that will help him achieve his ambition.