

KeyRing News

KEYRING NEWS IS PUBLISHED BY KEYRING MEMBERS



WINTER/SPRING 2020



EDITION 60

Visitors from Kenya



The group at the meeting, including Bob, Karyn, Sally and Lara

In September last year KeyRing was visited by a group of people from Kenya. We met the group at the DoubleTree Hilton Hotel in Westminster.

The group had been visiting the UK to learn about how social care works and we were one of the organisations they wanted to meet with. The group included people who work for the Kenyan government and people

in Children's Services. It was organised by Lumos, a human rights organisation who do some of their work in Kenya.

Karyn Kirkpatrick (KeyRing's CEO) gave a presentation on the

history of KeyRing. South London Members Lara, Bob and Sally came along to talk about what it's like to be a KeyRing Member.

Bob said "*Karyn talked about the history of KeyRing, and how we meet up and go to places together. We told them about our support, how we can phone staff if we need help, we get support with appointments, if we're in debt. We told them what it's like to be part of KeyRing. I think the meeting went very well and I wouldn't mind staying in that hotel one night!*"

Lara said "*The people were very good, I think they understood what we were talking about. They work in different jobs in health and social care and were visiting the UK to learn from different organisations.*"

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KeyRing
...We're Life Changing

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Nights out in Bexley

Members in Bexley having been getting together for meals out. They go once a month and take turns to choose where they will go.



Members in Bexleyheath before their Christmas meal

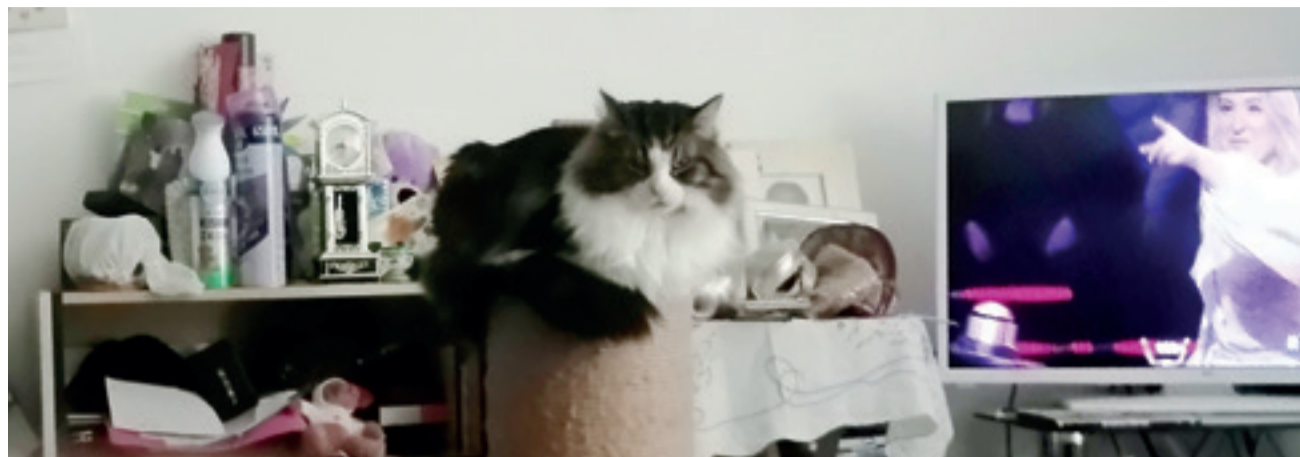
They went out together at Christmas, and they had a belated new year meal at the Kings Arms in Bexleyheath. David said "It was a good meal and everyone enjoyed the food."



At the Kings Arms



In February they went to The Star in Sidcup.



Lara's Cat Max

Lara's Cat

Lara from the Peckham network has a cat called Max.

"He's a funny cat, he's got a lot of hair. He's called Max. He's a nice fluffy cat. He eats too much, he's fussy, he keeps miaowing and he jumps on my bed and snores. He

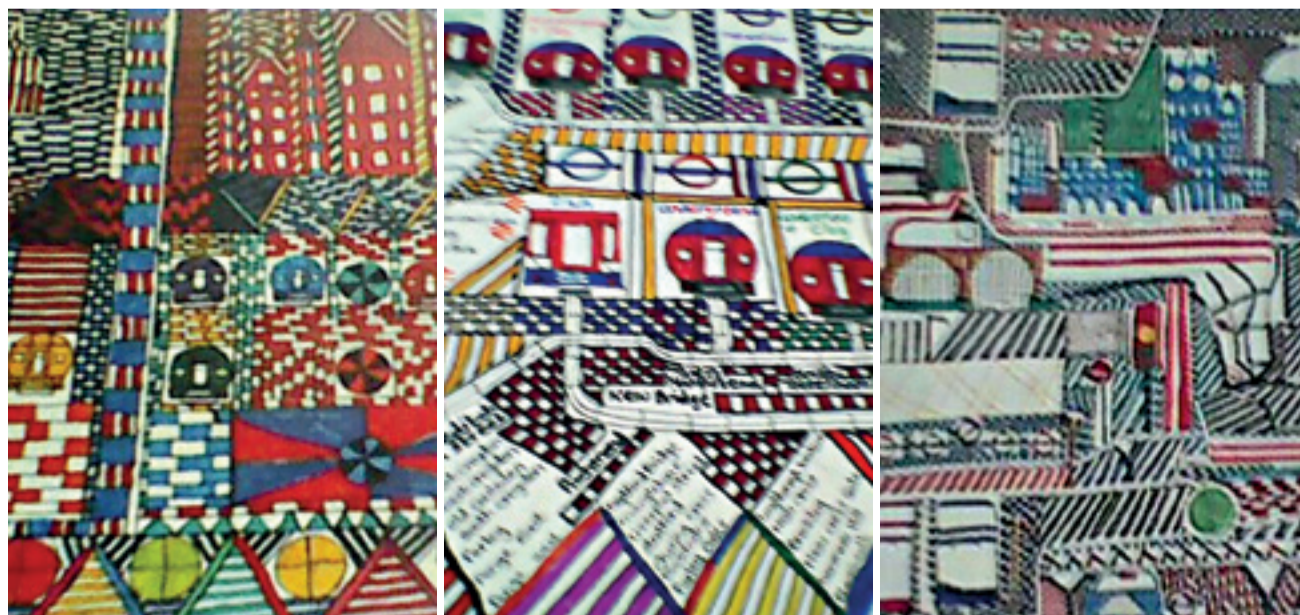
lies on my tummy when I'm lying down on the settee. My upstairs neighbour had two cats, brothers but they didn't get on. I said he could come to live with me."

Ian's Art

Ian is a Member in Lambeth.

He has been working at Action Space since 1997. ActionSpace is a visual arts organisation that supports artists with learning disabilities. Ian has displayed his pieces across London. He has also given talks explaining his

transport artwork both in London and Glasgow. Some of these places have been the Transport Museum and Southbank Centre. During the last years, he has sold several pieces, especially over the Christmas period.



Coronavirus Information

We have sent some information about Coronavirus with this newspaper.

If you feel ill and are worried about your symptoms you can also **check with 111 online** rather than phoning up. Visit the NHS website at:

www.111.nhs.uk/covid-19/

Although KeyRing Hubs are closed for now we will make sure everyone gets the support they need. Below is a message from our CEO, Karyn Kirkpatrick.

A letter from Karyn



Following government advice for the Social Care sector, we will continue to provide face-to-face support to Members where both they and workers are well.

We are keeping a close eye on what the government is saying and have made plans so that we

can continue to support people when advice changes.

Keeping people connected is important to us and we do not want people to feel alone. Our teams are supporting Members to stay connected with each other by phone, social media and/or video chat.

The safety of our Members, staff and volunteers is our main concern and we are working with everyone to keep them updated and supported.

Thanks,
Karyn Kirkpatrick, CEO KeyRing

60 This time Members from Croydon and from Bexley, Peckham and New Cross met to put the newspaper together.



Eric, Dawn, Desmond, Ida, Yemi and Tranume



David, Bob, Mark and Lara

The next edition (61) will be from the North West and Wales. Sarah will be looking for stories in May. Look out for more information about the editing meetings.

Eric's Garden Plan

Eric is a Member in Croydon. He is trying to start a community garden at Dagmar Road in South Norwood. Eric has lots of experience with gardening and has done the garden where he lives.

He has made a plan for the land. There will be two plots and a greenhouse to grow things in. It needs some work doing on it first.

“One plot will have runner beans. I've designed it with health and safety in mind – there will be raised beds so no one injures themselves with too much bending and lifting. But not too high either so people don't fall.

One bed will be accessible for wheelchairs but we don't want to



isolate people – it will be next to the other plots so people can mix together.

There are sleepers there already that we can use but we would like

to rearrange them. There are tools in the shed already. There are also water containers which is good because we can't use the hose – it's not our water.

I need to get the plans approved first. It's still in the planning process. We might need to do some fundraising to buy more tools. We need to find a toilet people will be able to use and look at insurance for all the volunteers. We currently have 6 volunteers ready to go.

We are making plans for a day in the library to look at the books on gardening then we want to get the plans drawn up on a computer.”

Erith Fire Station



On 26th February Members of the Bexley networks visited Erith Fire Station.

Everyone had a go with the fire hose and some Members asked

questions about what things were used for certain fires.

All Members got up into the fire engine and were shown around to different rooms in the fire

station. Everyone was given a book about fire safety.

While they were there there was a call out so we got to see the team in action!



Easy Recipes



Healthy Pear and Mango Crumble by Mark and Bob

What you need:

- ☐ Pears and mangoes
- ☐ Teaspoon of sugar or artificial sweetener
- ☐ Weetabix
- ☐ Butter
- ☐ A carton of custard or cream (if you like it)

What you do:

1. Preheat the oven to gas mark 5/375f/190c
2. Peel the fruit and chop into cubes and slices.
3. Simmer it in a little bit of water. Cook it until it's soft but still solid – don't let it turn into liquid.
4. Add a teaspoon of sugar (or artificial sweetener for a healthier version).
5. Break the Weetabix up in a bowl and add a bit of butter. Mix it together like breadcrumbs.
6. Grease a baking dish.
7. Put a layer of the Weetabix, then a layer of fruit. Repeat until you run out.
8. Bake in the oven until the top goes brown.

We like to have it with custard or cream.



News from the Croydon Hub

A visit from the Mayor



Sedley, Mayor Kabir, Yemi, Ida and Tranume

On the 27th September the Hub had a visit from Humayun Kabir, the Mayor of Croydon.



Dawn and the Mayor

He spoke about himself and the job he does. He spoke about the charities he supports, and how he will be in the job for one year.

He was the deputy for the previous mayor who had also visited the hub. After the year he will go back to being a Croydon councillor in Bensham Manor ward.

He wore one of his mayoral gold chains. He came with his assistant.

Dawn has seen him before. The hub thought he was really nice, a lovely man.

Christmas in Croydon



On the 13th December Croydon Members went for a Christmas lunch together. They went to the Jury's Inn.

Dawn said *"It was good, I'd like to go again this year. The*

food was nice. I had turkey. I had Christmas pudding but I don't like it, next time I'll ask for something else."

Eric said *"it was a better lunch than last time – there was more of it!"*





Mark settling in

Mark's Sleepout

Last year Mark Johnson took part in a sponsored sleepout.

"This was the 2nd time I've done it. It was for Webber Street day centre for the homeless – my friend Jo works with London City Mission who run Webber Street and she asked me if I would do it. This year I raised over £500. They don't get any funding from the government. I also asked the foodbank to donate some tinned food as well.

It was brilliant. We had three people from America come over.

Everyone put in a lot of effort. I would recommend it – more people should do it.

You have to bring your own sleeping bag and they give you three bits of cardboard. I got to meet people I've never met before.

It makes you realise what it's like to be homeless and sleep rough. But we got woken up with a breakfast which most homeless people don't get."

Visiting RAF Hendon

● BY LARA AKINFADENI AND MARK JOHNSON



Members at the museum

Lara, Susan and Mark from the Peckham network went to RAF Hendon. Tim went with them. Mark organised the trip.

"We saw the big helicopter and the big planes that the army use to transport equipment. We saw a

Spitfire and Lightning planes. The staff were really friendly. It's very good. It's history. It's free to get

in. Mark nearly bumped his head inside the plane! You can go inside the Sunderland Flying Boat. It flies and then lands on the water.

You can see the Harrier plane and the Tornado and look inside the cockpit. We also saw the Red Arrow planes.

Planes from around the world! Upstairs there is an art exhibition. There was an exhibition about marriage during the war. There was information about women flying planes during the Second World War. They also have RAF Fire Engines from the war. We also saw an air ambulance.

Definitely worth a visit!"

Christopher's Story

Christopher is a Member in Bexley. He told us about how he came to join KeyRing and about his hopes for the future.



Samantha visited me in October when I'd just graduated from university with a BA in Education Studies, but I was also getting ready to move to a new property in Sidcup. She wanted to just get some ideas of my background and where I wanted to go and where I wanted to go to next in my life

THINGS LIKE MOVING HOME CAN BE VERY STRESSFUL

I think looking back now it was all a bit daunting, nothing to do with Samantha or the questioning but it was just that stress really, of knowing when I

was going to be leaving home. Because like all of us, things like moving home can be very stressful for people.

The main goal for me of joining KeyRing was just to have help in getting a structure in my life. I know that I have some things that I do that give me purpose during the week, and that's volunteering at an organisation called Lewisham Nexus. They cater for young people and adults with learning disabilities, and they host various activities. On a Wednesday I help with literacy

and I also help with the gardening as well on a Friday.

That was some purpose I had in my life. I didn't know what else to do to fill my days though. So KeyRing has been good in the sense it's helped me find some structure in my life, you know, it's helped me become more organised.

WHAT'S BEEN GOOD ABOUT KEYRING IS THEY'RE WILLING TO HELP PEOPLE WHO STRUGGLE

Prior to graduating from university I was diagnosed with autism and that put things into perspective for me. I struggle to understand things straight away, and what's been good about KeyRing is they're willing to help people who struggle with opening post.

It's been great being able to speak to Sue and Joanne about letters and correspondence because not only do I then understand it, it takes the pressure off me as well. Then I don't feel bad that I've opened up and said '*this is what it is, would someone mind explaining this to me please?*'

I've been going to KeyRing for a while. I've been to a couple of their social events which are very good, it's a very relaxed environment. It's a nice atmosphere as well, the two nights out I've been to.

Christopher's Story continued...

It's all good fun and it's just good relaxation in a way, because you don't feel like there's pressure or anything, you can just chill, and just go with the flow really and that's what I'm really content to do.

MY NEXT STEPS...

My next steps are just to carry on being in touch with KeyRing, to keep on going to the hub when necessary and to try and go along to more social events. And I'm finding as well that there's also the confidence I'm further gaining in trying to reach out to other

organisations that could be looking for volunteers, or prospective employers that could be hiring people that are looking to work in some form of adult social care. That is what I'd like to do now, even though I've been to university and I've got a BA in Education Studies. I've got the three years experience, with Lewisham Nexus, so maybe I'd like to expand on that or get some form of work or further training really.

KEYRING IS ALWAYS GOING TO BE THERE FOR YOU

You know life is what it is sometimes, we all go through, you know, dark days and sad times, but it is knowing how to equip yourself and knowing how to have the wherewithal to just relax your mind, but always know that an organisation like KeyRing is always going to be there for you.

So that's my advice, it's that don't ever get stuck, you know if you need to talk to KeyRing about anything, or you're stuck on anything, just reach out to them and they'll be happy to help, because they're a great organisation.

Happy Birthday KeyRing!

This year KeyRing will be celebrating our 30th birthday!

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We have started to make plans for local events and a special edition of the newspaper. We are not sure whether all of the events will happen this year because of the Coronavirus. We still want to start sharing ideas and gathering stories.

We want to share some of the best KeyRing stories from the last 30 years. If you would like



to share your story talk to your support worker about how to do it. You can write it down, or you could record yourself telling your story, or you could make a video.

It doesn't have to be perfect – when we have chosen the best ones we will work with people to make them as good as possible. You can tell your story anonymously (without your name) if you want to.

For more information on what is happening in your area look out for updates from local staff and volunteers.



Easy Recipes



Cheese flan by Lara (serves 2)

What you need:

- ☐ Ready made shortcrust pastry
- ☐ 2 eggs
- ☐ Cheese – about 70 grams of cheddar
- ☐ Milk
- ☐ Salt and pepper

What you do:

1. Roll out the pastry (if not pre-rolled) to about 1 cm thick.
2. Grease a small round tin and lay the pastry in it.
3. Beat two eggs, add a bit of milk and some salt and pepper
4. Grate your cheese, or use pre-grated cheese. Mix in with the egg mix.
5. Pour the mix into the pastry. Put in the oven at about 160. Cook until the filling is firm and the pastry has gone brown.

I like to have it with a baked potato and a small salad.



News from the Trustees

The trustees met on Saturday 25th January. Shaun Webster joined the meeting by video link as there were no trains going to Kings Cross that day!

Leaders List



The trustees were pleased and proud that two Members - **David Gill** and **Chris Porter** - were Learning Disability Leaders List winners!



David Gill



Chris Porter (right)

The trustees spent part of the meeting looking at the new **Strategic Plan**. They would like to thank all the Members who took part in the Strategic Review meetings over the summer, it made a big difference to how the plan has taken shape.

We are talking about the final Strategic Plan at hub and network meetings now; you can read the plan or listen to the presentation to hear about the way forward for KeyRing.

KeyRing is busy working on two projects both of which are about helping us develop new ideas with help from other organisations.



Pilotlight have matched us with an investment company to help us develop a recruitment agency to help more Members get jobs.

Scale Accelerator is a programme which helps social enterprises and charities to take small ideas and make them big. We are working with Scale



Accelerator to make KeyRing Networks available to people wherever they live.

Updated Vision and Mission

Following a survey the trustees approved the updated Vision and Mission for KeyRing.

►► VISION

A welcoming world with communities that celebrate the skills and talents of everybody.

►► MISSION

KeyRing connects people and inspires them to build the life they want.

This was updated following a survey organised by a small working group, including Shaun Webster (trustee and Rotherham Member), and sent out to all Members, staff and volunteers. We had a good response and the working group took the feedback and developed our new snappier Vision and Mission.

Getting to know Jason

Diana Smith is a new Community Enabler in London. She has been getting to know the Members and spoke to Jason, a Member in Lambeth.



Jason is a KeyRing Member who is wrestling with a feeling many of us share: he is lonely. *'I grew up in South East London and I kinda miss it,'* he says. *'I saw some flats in Peckham and I thought they*

looked kind of cool but they're not quite finished yet.'

Seeing those flats reminded him of how much he enjoys spending time in a place he knows well, and is close to his community. Jason is thinking about how much he enjoys being near people he knows and grew up with. *'Last week Saturday I went to TGI Fridays. It was nice to be with my friends and family.'*

He says he has a friend where he lives currently, who he sees *'every now and again,'* but that he also wants to make more connections. *'I'm feeling kind of isolated at the minute,'* he says. *'I don't have a female partner which is doing my head in at the minute. I wouldn't mind having a girlfriend.'*

He is thinking about how he might change his situation. Finding some local volunteer work is one option: *'I like helping people, and I did volunteer last year.'*

Friendship is important to Jason who reports that he has, *'another friend too who lives down the road where my sister lives. I like to see my friends every now and again just to see how they are.'* He also has friends who call him, *'one of my friends invited me to the café where they live. I will go.'*

Jason is kind and easy to talk to, and it is evident that he has much to offer other people. *'I wouldn't mind making more friends,'* he says. Jason is doing what he can to battle the feeling of loneliness, and there is no doubt that he will win the fight against isolation because he is doing all he can to make new connections and build friendships around him.

The next edition and get in touch...

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The next edition will be from **North West and Wales** If you can't come to the meeting you can still tell us your stories. You can send them to Sarah at the national office, pass

them to your volunteer or worker, or ask someone who is coming to the meeting to bring them along.

That's all for this time! If you have anything you would like to see in the

paper or on our social media pages please send it to: Sarah Hatch at sarah.hatch@keyring.org.

For an audio version of the paper phone 020 3119 0960.