

The Mag



MacIntyre

Providing support...your way

macintyrethemag.org

Issue Seven Sept 2026



**This edition of The Mag is brought to
you by...**





The Mag



Welcome to The Mag

Welcome to Issue Seven of The Mag!

We've got another packed issue for you, with lots of stories, people and adventures to discover.

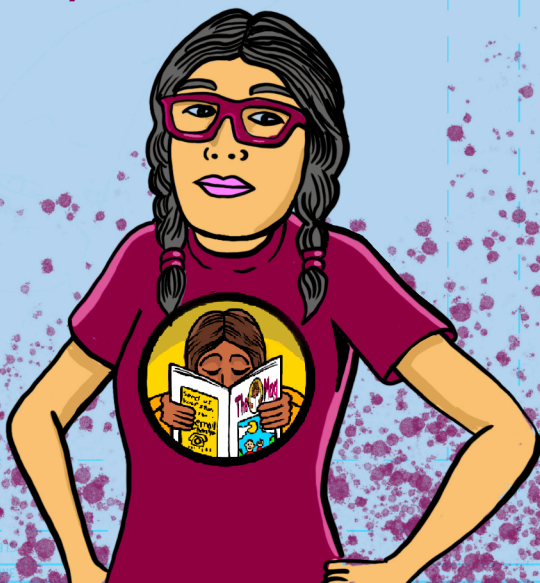
First, meet our new writer, Rachel, as she tells us all about her life and shares some of her experiences with us. We also take a look at the sad story of Richard Hanley, brought to us by our very own Oliver McGowan trainer, Jess.

Looking after our wellbeing is important too, and Rory shares how joining groups can help us feel happier, more connected and supported. Then, if you fancy a bit of sunshine, Nathan takes us on a trip to Lake Garda and tells us all about his recent holiday.

And that's not all — there's plenty more to discover inside!

Enjoy the read!

Sui-Ling



LET'S MEET OUR NEW WRITER... RACHEL



My name is Rachel, and I was born in the October of 1969 in Warwickshire. I grew up with my mum, dad and older sister. My dad designed the six-wheel racing car, and because of his work in motor racing, we moved from Warwickshire to Surrey. Dad spent a lot of time away, so Mum looked after my sister and me. We made lots of friends there, and I am still in touch with some of them today.



When Dad finished with motor racing, we moved to Hertfordshire, where my sister and I attended Hitchin Girls' School. I made lots of new friends there.

My sister later got married and had three children, making me a proud auntie. When Dad finished working at BorgWarner, Mum, Dad and I moved back to Warwickshire, while my sister remained in Hertfordshire with her family.

We later moved to Lutterworth, where we were very happy until my Dad sadly passed away on 6th January 2011. After Dad died, Mum and I made the difficult decision to move back to Hertfordshire to be closer to family. We first lived in Clifton and later moved to Meppershall.

Me and
my sister





I ♥ cats!

During this time, I started attending HFT, where I spent over 10 happy years, made many friends and enjoyed taking part in lots of activities.

When Mum moved into a nursing home, I moved to Flitwick in November 2024. I continued travelling to HFT by taxi twice a week. I still meet up with friends and family and love visiting my sister, where I spend time with her two cats.

I really enjoy living at MacIntyre in Flitwick and spending time with my housemates. I especially enjoy joining in with the monthly karaoke and disco nights.

More recently, due to the increasing costs of travelling to and attending HFT, we decided that I would move on to a new day opportunity.

I am looking forward to starting at the Learning Centre in Ampthill, making new friends and enjoying new experiences with my housemates.



Mental Health benefits of being part of a group (My cycling social)

**Being active and social with friends.
It helps reduce anxiety because it
takes my mind off things and gives
me focus.**

**Feeling free as I'm outside in nice,
rural, scenic places.**

**My recent planned ride to Lymm felt
like an adventure, as it was my
longest route yet. I enjoyed riding
down the Trans Pennine route, as I
like to go to scenic places. We had a
selection of cafés to visit. One was
the Pennine Coffee Company van,
and the other was the Lymm
Sanctuary Café, run by volunteers
from the local church.**

**I decided to stop at the coffee van
and enjoyed a coffee and cake, while
the group enjoyed an all-day
breakfast at the Sanctuary Café. I
decided to have a bowl of warm
soup.**

**Rory
talks...**

Well Being



We were also joined on the ride by Will from British Cycling, who taught us all some cycling safety tips. We also did the M check to ensure our bikes were safe before the ride.

It was an extremely muddy ride, but it was worth it as we did 14 miles at our own pace. It was challenging for the group, as it was our longest ride yet, but we all did it!

I really recommend people try or join a social group that has an activity or theme that they enjoy, as it can be a new adventure and provide some tranquillity, laughter and good times. You will definitely benefit from having a good time doing something you enjoy.





In May of this year, my family and I went to Italy for the first time, to a place called Lake Garda in Northern Italy. We flew from Birmingham to Verona and then had a short transfer to where we were staying. Everyone was extremely friendly and helpful, and the facilities were excellent.

We did lots of sightseeing, as well as eating plenty of good food and enjoying some great wine.

One of the things that really impressed me was how cheap everything was. It was also very easy to get around with a wheelchair, primarily because everywhere was so flat around the side of the lake.





I must say, the weather was changeable, as we had quite a bit of heavy rain at the start. However, it changed later to hot sunshine, which was lovely. We were able to sit outside by the hotel pool on our last full day, which was very pleasant.

I would definitely say that I was amazed by the whole experience and would like to go back at some point in the future.

I had also learned a few basic phrases in Italian before our trip, which were greatly appreciated by everyone.

In truth, I would give the whole visit 10/10 and would have no doubts whatsoever in recommending Lake Garda for a visit.

The story of Richard Hanley

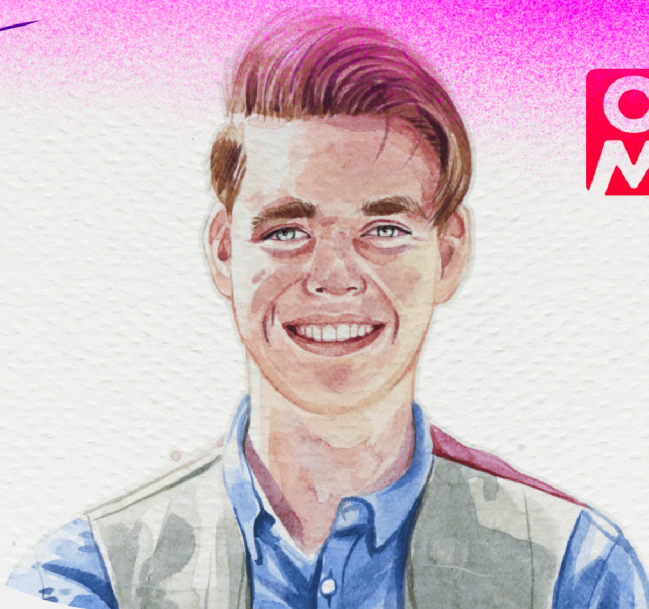
By Jess Ferguson



I have been doing the Oliver McGowan Training for three years. I got involved by attending a friendship group, and Pete put me forward for the training. It is important to me because I feel that people who work in the NHS now have a better understanding of how to work with people with learning disabilities and autism. I feel proud to work for such an amazing charity.

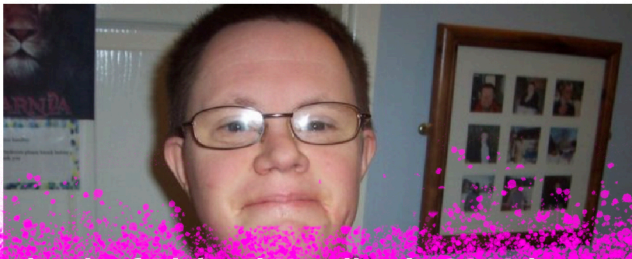
Richard Handley was a 33-year-old man from Lowestoft in Suffolk, England. He had Down syndrome and experienced lifelong digestive problems, especially chronic constipation. His family carefully managed his condition when he lived at home through diet, hydration and monitoring of his bowel movements.

As an adult, Richard moved into supported living and residential care services. During this transition, some of the detailed monitoring practices used by his family, such as tracking bowel movements and managing his diet, were reduced or discontinued. Reports later indicated that communication about his medical needs became fragmented between carers, healthcare professionals and support services. As a result, his constipation gradually worsened without adequate intervention.



**OLIVER'S
CAMPAIGN**

Richard Handley: 'Gross failures' in constipation death



LIVE BBC Local Live: Suffolk

2 hours ago

'Gross failures' in constipation death

The death of Richard Handley in 2012 became a major example in the United Kingdom of how untreated constipation can become life-threatening, particularly for people with learning disabilities. His case has since been widely cited in healthcare training and awareness campaigns to improve bowel care and medical monitoring.

In November 2012, Richard became severely unwell due to faecal impaction, a condition in which hardened stool becomes stuck in the bowel. Medical examinations later revealed extremely severe constipation:

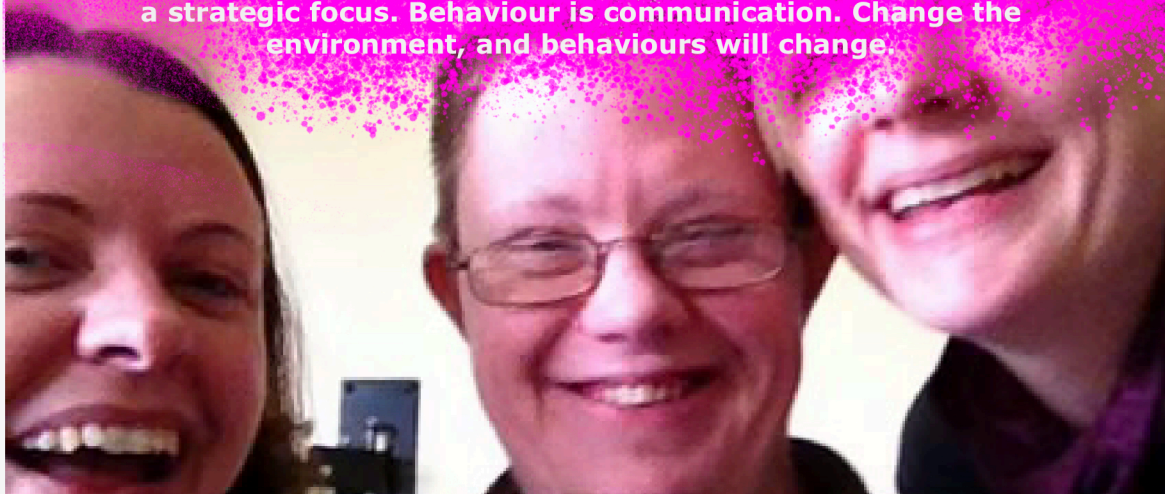
More than 10 kg of faecal matter was removed from his intestines.

His bowel was massively distended.

His abdomen was described as being the size of a full-term pregnancy.

Despite medical contact shortly before his hospital admission, the severity of his condition was not recognised in time. He later died in hospital from complications, including bowel obstruction and aspiration of stomach contents.

Empowering individuals is not just a matter of social justice; it is also a strategic focus. Behaviour is communication. Change the environment, and behaviours will change.



Volunteering at St Albans Church by Sharon

I have recently passed my food hygiene course. I volunteer at St Albans Church, where I cook every Tuesday. I really enjoy it there, and the people are lovely and friendly.

We set the tables and chairs out and then start cooking. We make a main meal and a dessert. Sometimes it gets really hot in the kitchen!

After we have served the people their food, we then have our own meal. Afterwards, we collect the dirty pots from the people, and they thank us and tell us what a lovely meal it was. We then wash the pots and put them away.

I'm loving cooking, as it's something that I've always wanted to do.





Our sponsored walk for Ashgate Hospice by Olivia



In March, we did a sponsored walk for Ashgate Hospice. We all walked one mile every day around Queens Park. In total, we walked 31 miles to raise money for cancer care.

We walked in both sunny and rainy weather and watched the flowers grow along the way. We raised £1,179.25 for Ashgate Hospice.

They came to do a cheque presentation, and we also received certificates and medals.



My name is Ruby Chambers. I study Biology, Psychology and Sociology at Kimberley Sixth Form in Bedford. I love watching films and talking to new people.

I chose to do my work experience at MacIntyre because I would love to help and talk to people, similar to the lovely people who work at MacIntyre, but as a psychologist.

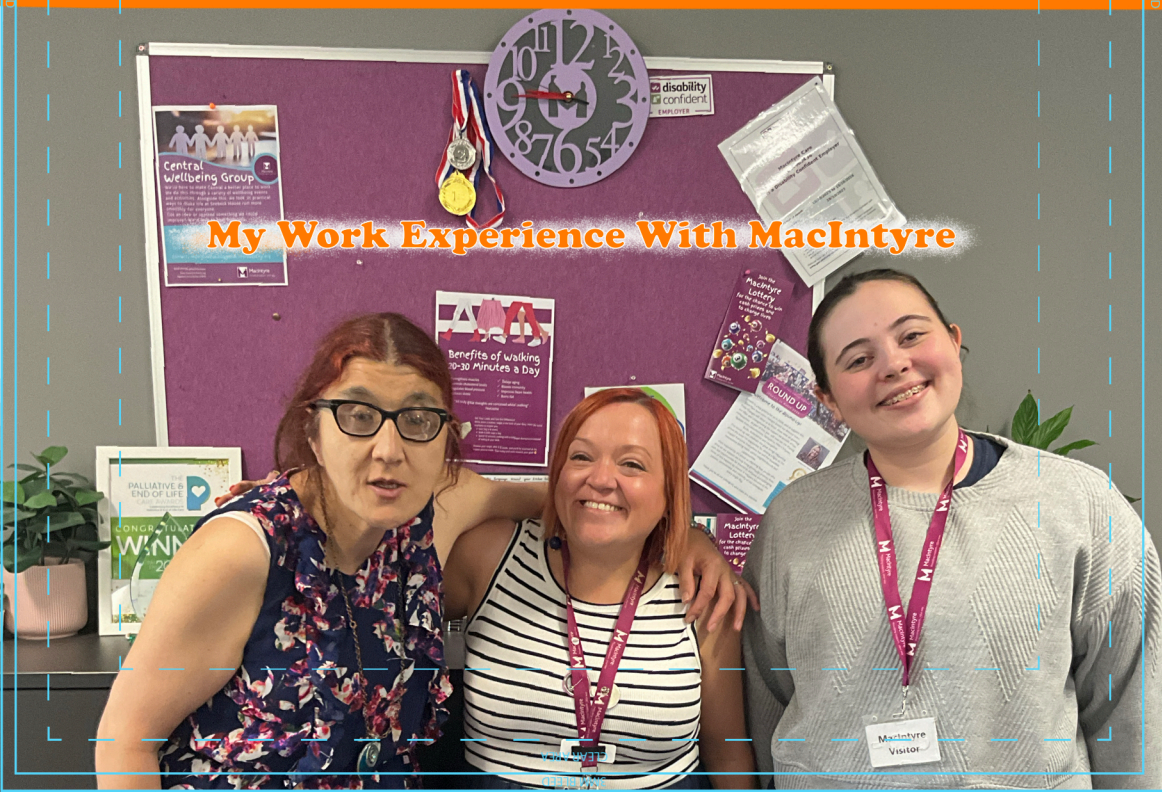
During my week with MacIntyre, I visited the Memory Café, had a conversation with an Admiral Nurse and spent time with the MacIntyre Dance Company. I spent most of my time at the MacIntyre office, where I enjoyed a delicious hot lunch from the café each day.

The highlights of my week were meeting the Best Practice Team and learning more about their role at MacIntyre, as well as learning more about dementia with Astrid.

I learnt that MacIntyre has strong family values and saw how much they care about the people they support.

The most important thing I learnt this week, which I will use throughout my life, is how important a friendly conversation can be with someone. It's not necessarily what you say to someone, but how you make them feel.

My Work Experience With MacIntyre



Working at Chesterfield Food Bank By Jemma



My Buxton Day Out By Saravina



The sun was shining, so we decided to go to Buxton. I hadn't been there before. We walked around the beautiful Pavilion Gardens and saw the baby ducks. We saw a fountain and had a look in the botanical greenhouse, where we saw some fish.

We also spotted a cast member from a play, so we managed to get a sneaky photo.

We then had a picnic in the park.



WELL BEING

My Holiday to Southampton by Leannder



On holiday, I went to Southampton in a caravan to see my dad's daughter and her family. For one day, I went to the Isle of Wight on a hovercraft. The weather was sunny.

I had a teacake and a glass of milk at the café. I got a sausage dog bag and walked along the seafront. It was a lovely day, and Rocky came too.

I had lunch at the pub and also went on the 2p machines.



The day I met baby Sophie by Charlotte

**I went with my Mum and Dad to see Emily, Toby and Auntie Jennie,
and to meet Sophie, my second cousin, for the first time.**

**I got to hold her. She is still growing and gaining weight. Emily is my
first cousin, as Auntie Jennie is my Mum's sister. Sophie is Emily and
Toby's little baby girl.**

**Sophie has very dark hair, like her Mum and Dad, and she has very
long fingers. Maybe when she is all grown up, she might become a
pianist or play the guitar.**

**We had tea and cake that my Mum had made, and we had a lovely
day.**



The Mag



JustGiving



The Mag is free for everyone at MacIntyre but if you would like to donate anything you can afford to help us cover our costs, please scan the code above. We will give you a shout out in a future issue.

The Mag team