



Welcome

to Penderels Trust's latest newsletter!

A warm welcome to everyone reading our Autumn newsletter. I hope you have been able to enjoy the summer, despite the extended heatwave, and that this newsletter finds you well. We have lots of useful and interesting information to share with you in this edition, along with updates on the many exciting activities taking place across Penderels Trust. You'll find inspiring stories from some of the people we support, as well as news about developments and achievements from several of our local offices. We have also included important information about our services as we approach the Christmas period.

This edition also marks the launch of the 2026 Beecham Awards. You can read about the positive difference last year's awards have made to the lives of several people supported by the Trust. The Beecham Awards have been running for many years and continue to have a meaningful impact on a growing number of individuals. Later in the newsletter, you'll

find details about the application criteria and examples of how an award could be used. If you are considering applying, please take some time to read the information and note that the closing date for applications is **6th November 2026**.

We have also included information about the **Big Conversation on Care**. This is an opportunity for people who receive care and support to share their views on the issues that should be considered by the Government when looking at how services can be improved. This important work could help shape care and support services for years to come, so I would encourage anyone interested in taking part to read the article and find out how to get involved.

I hope you enjoy reading the rest of the newsletter. On behalf of everyone at Penderels Trust, I wish you a safe, happy, and enjoyable autumn.

A Dream Come True

Joe is a young man who receives a personal health budget and is supported by the Penderels Trust Coventry team. Joe’s mum, Clare, sent a message to thank us and our colleagues at NHS Coventry and Warwickshire. Her words say it all:

“Dream big. I dreamt Joe would have his own home, be cared for by beautiful kind people, live a fulfilling life and most of all, be as happy as he was at home.

We did it. Look at him, year 3 in his own home, living his best life, cared for by beautiful kind people and so, so, so happy.”



The Big Conversation on Care

Shaping the Future of Social Care

The Big Conversation on Care is a national conversation about the future of adult social care in England.

It has been launched by the Independent Commission on Adult Social Care, also known as the Casey Commission. Led by Baroness Louise Casey, the Commission is looking at how adult social care should change in the years ahead. It began by asking people one question:

“When we are old or disabled, or have a serious illness, who should support us and how?”

Why this matters

If you receive a direct payment or employ a personal assistant (PA), you have valuable experience of how social care works in everyday life. PAs, families and unpaid carers also bring their own experience of how care and support work in practice. The Commission wants to hear directly from people with experience of care and support. What you share through the Big Conversation will help inform the Commission’s recommendations to government.

More than an online conversation

The online platform is only one part of the Big Conversation. It sits alongside wider engagement with people who draw on care and support, unpaid carers, people working in social care and communities whose voices are not always heard. There is also a Public Panel on Care, a group of people from across England who will come together over several months to consider the issues in more depth and hear evidence.

What happens next?

This is the first of two rounds of major public engagement. The online platform is expected to reopen in the new year, when there will be another opportunity to contribute.

You can find out more and keep up to date at www.caseycommission.co.uk/bigconversation

An Easy Read version is also available on the Commission’s website.



All Things PA – Supporting Personal Assistants and Employers

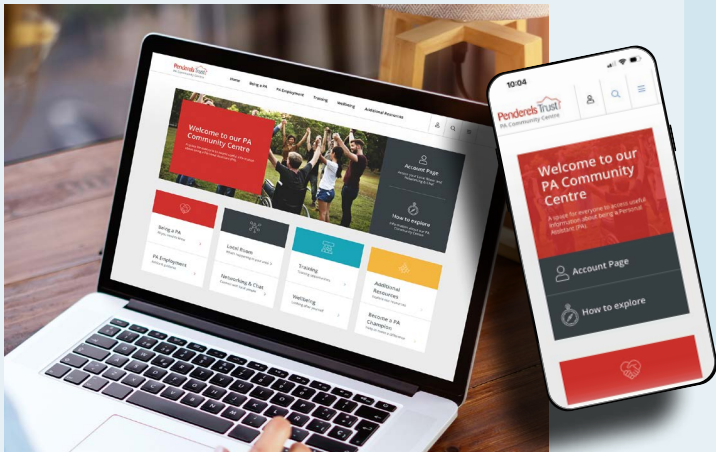
If you employ your own Personal Assistant (PA) or are thinking about it, this update is for you!

Has your PA visited our PA Community Centre yet?

We launched our PA Community Centre (PACC) back in 2022 to provide a space dedicated just for personal assistants (PAs). The website is packed with helpful resources, guidance and local support.

Please visit www.allaboutpas.org.uk to have a look.

The resources are reviewed, updated and added to regularly so there is always something new to watch or read. With over 200 active resources on there currently, including videos, factsheets, links to other websites, why not ask your PA to have a look? It’s maybe something you can do together.



Newsletter

Keep an eye out for our regular PACC newsletters, where we share new information and updates added to the site.

Follow Us on Social Media

Don’t forget to follow our two social media accounts dedicated to PA recruitment and development, where we share the latest news, updates and opportunities:

- **Facebook:** Penderels Trust – PA Recruitment and Development
www.facebook.com/PenderelsPARecruitment
- **X (formerly Twitter):** @PAs_Recruitment
https://x.com/PAs_Recruitment

Service Improvements

We have improved the job search filters on the Penderels Trust website making it quicker for potential PAs to find the right job for them. Applicants can filter job vacancies by their preferences such as transport requirements, or the specific days on which they can work. Jobs now show as ‘ending soon’ if they are within a few days of their closing date.



Anytime Free Bus Travel for Disabled Bus Pass Holders

Good news if you have a disabled bus pass.

At the moment, free travel is only available during off-peak hours. However, from 1st April 2027, the time restrictions will be removed. This means you will be able to use your disabled bus pass for free bus travel at any time of day.

If you do not currently have a disabled bus pass but think you may be eligible, you can find out more and apply online at:

www.gov.uk/apply-for-disabled-bus-pass



Beecham Family Award

We are delighted to offer the Beecham Family Award for a fifth year.

The award honours the Beecham family, whose children, Julie and Jonathan, were supported by Penderels Trust to live full and independent lives. Following Jonathan’s death, Terry and Jean Beecham established an award to help improve the lives of disabled people.

In 2018, Terry and Jean generously left a legacy to Penderels Trust in recognition of the support provided to their family. This funding created a permanent award fund, enabling us to offer grants to people who use Penderels Trust services each year.

Beecham Award Winners 2025

Once again, we were overwhelmed with the number of applications we had, with over 50 received before the deadline. This made the job of choosing only a few award winners an incredibly difficult task for our committee. There were so many deserving applications.

After much deliberation, the grants were awarded to the following amazing people:

- Mary from Warwickshire (mobility trolley)
- David from Essex (meta Ray-Ban glasses)
- Alice from Middlesbrough (annual cinema pass)
- Ben from Lincolnshire (flight with Aerobility)
- Owen from Middlesbrough (accommodation when watching powerchair football)
- Juliette from Lincolnshire (art courses)
- Daniel from Essex (powerlifting shirt)
- Barbara from Essex (trip to the pantomime)



Owen getting ready to support his powerchair football team, Teesside.



Barbara enjoying the pantomime.



Daniel in his powerlifting shirt.



Juliette showing her fabulous artwork.



David modelling his new glasses.



Alice enjoying watching Moana at the cinema for the 8th time!



Ben

Ben flying the plane!

Applying for the Beecham Family Award 2026

For information on how to apply, please read the enclosed information pack or visit www.penderelstrust.org.uk/beechem.php.

Before submitting your application, please take a few minutes to read the guidance notes carefully. We’ve made some updates this year, including increasing the maximum award amount to **£750**.

The award is open to anyone who uses Penderels Trust services, including people who have applied previously. Applications close on **6th November 2026**, and the winners will be announced at our Annual General Meeting on 25th November 2026.

If you have any questions or would like any support with your application, please email us at: beechem@penderelstrust.org.uk

Employer Updates and Reminders

We know there have been quite a few changes affecting employers since April. To help, we've pulled together a summary of some recent employment law updates and important reminders.

National Minimum and Living Wage Changes

From **1st April 2026**, the new hourly rates are:

- **£12.71** – Age 21 and over
- **£10.85** – Age 18 to 20
- **£8.00** – Under 18 and apprentices

You can find full details on the GOV.UK website, www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates

Keeping Employee Records about Annual Leave

All employers are now required to keep records relating to annual leave and holiday pay for 6 years.

The information you must record is:

- Annual leave entitlement (how many days/hours employees can have off in a year)
- Annual leave taken (number of days/hours and dates) or carried over into the following year
- Details of holiday pay
- Any payments in lieu of annual leave (where the PA has been paid instead of taking leave). This includes payments for owed holiday when a PA leaves employment.

As an employer, it is your responsibility to keep these records. We do not keep annual leave records as part of our payroll service. We have a template for recording information you can use – this is available on our website www.penderelstrust.org.uk/payrollinfo.php (go to Payroll Document Centre).

Changes to Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

- SSP is payable from the first day of sickness.
- The Lower Earnings Limit have been removed, allowing all employees, including low-paid and part-time workers, to qualify for SSP. They are paid 80% of their usual earnings or SSP, whichever is lower.

Changes to Paternity and Paternal Leave

- Paid Paternity Leave is a day one right for eligible employees, meaning it no longer requires a 26-week qualifying period.
- Unpaid parental leave is a day one right, removing the previous one-year service requirement.

Bereaved Partners Paternity Leave

A new type of leave was introduced on 6th April 2026 to support employees who lose their partner, or the mother of their child, within the first year of their child's life or adoption.

Statutory Mileage Rates Increase

Statutory mileage rates have been increased from 45p to 55p per mile for the first 10,000 miles. This is the tax-free rate – if your employer pays you less than this per mile, you can claim tax relief on the difference. This change came in during May but was backdated to 6th April to coincide with the tax year.

Unfair Dismissal Qualifying Period

On 1st July 2026 it was announced that the qualifying period for unfair dismissal would reduce. Any employee with six months service will be eligible to claim unfair dismissal, down from two years. The new qualifying period will be implemented from 1st January 2027.

Employer's Liability Insurance

If you employ a Personal Assistant (PA), you must have employer's liability insurance in place. This legal requirement helps protect both you and your employee while they are at work.

We can support you in arranging cover if you use our direct payment support service. Remember to renew your policy each year. In most areas, you can choose your insurance provider, although some local authorities may specify which one to use.

Lights, camera, action in Hartlepool!

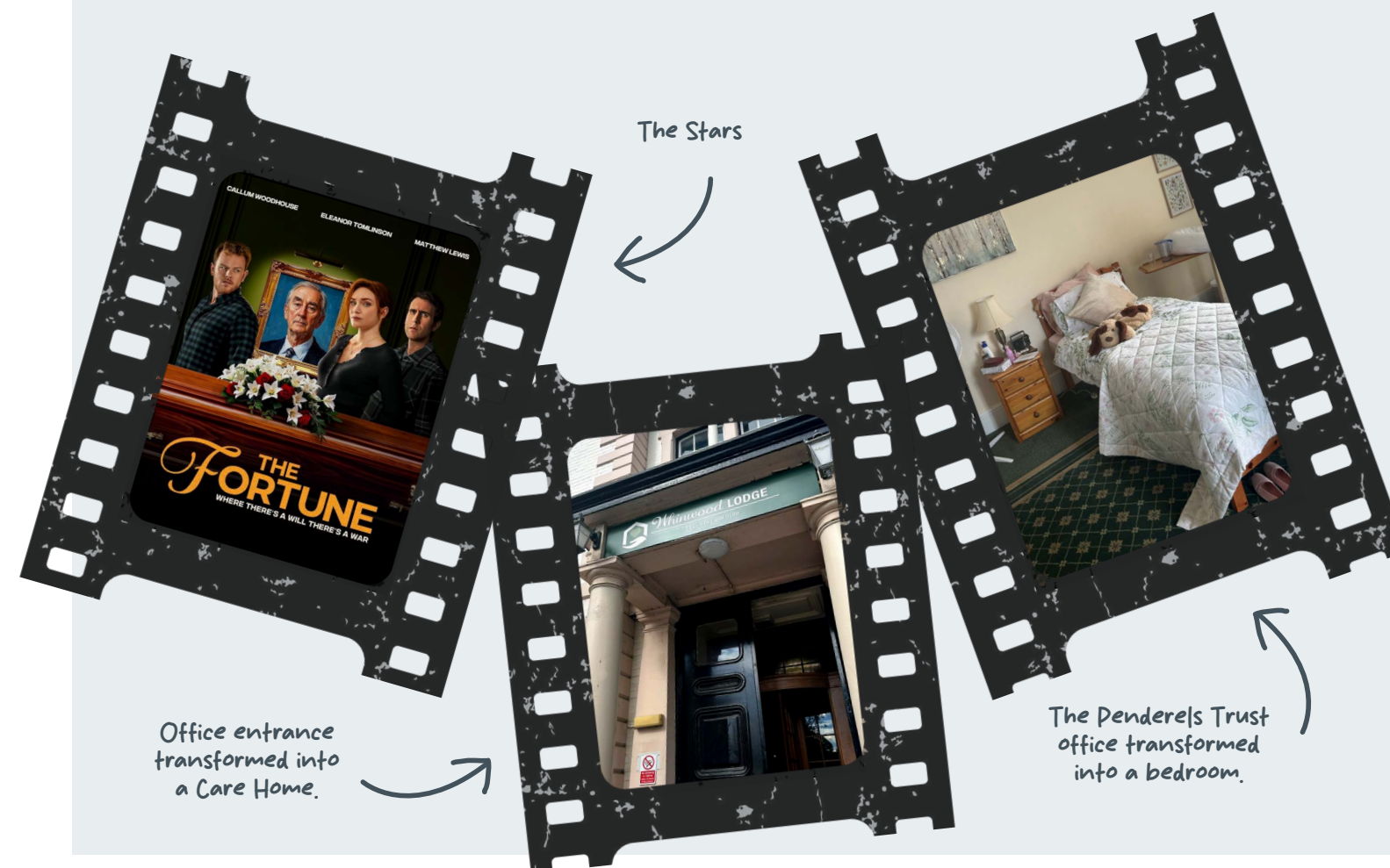
Our Hartlepool team recently found themselves at the heart of a television production when their shared office building, Greenbank, was transformed into a filming location for the new Channel 5 drama *The Fortune*.

For the production, Greenbank was turned into a care home called Whinwood Lodge, with the Penderels Trust office being used as one of the care home bedrooms featured in the show. The cast included several well-known actors, notably Elaine Thompson,

Stephen Tompkinson and Paula Wilcox, who all visited the building to film scenes.

Don't worry, it was business as usual for Penderels Trust. While their office was being used for filming, the Hartlepool team temporarily relocated to another room within the building, allowing services to continue without disruption.

The Fortune was broadcast in June this year and is still available to watch on Channel5.com.



Important Payroll Reminder for December

With some payroll runs being processed earlier than usual over the Christmas period, please check your payroll planner carefully and submit your December timesheets by the stated deadlines. This will help us ensure your PA is paid on time, as late timesheets may result in delays.

Meet Allison

Creating Connections for Amputees in the North East

Hartlepool resident Allison experienced life-changing health challenges in 2020 when viral meningitis led to sepsis, resulting in bilateral amputations below the knee and below the elbow.

The impact on her life was significant and led to her taking early retirement at the age of just 55.

However, alongside her husband and Personal Assistant, David, Allison has turned her experience into something positive by helping to build a supportive community for amputees across the North East.

Following her surgeries, Allison discovered there was very little local support available for people living with limb loss. She found a national organisation which provided valuable support, but as it was based a long way away, it was difficult to access the local peer connections she was looking for.

Determined to make a difference, Allison and David decided to create something themselves. They established AmpuTea Time, a series of peer support groups in Hartlepool, Peterlee and Billingham. Accessibility was a key consideration from the beginning, with venues chosen for their easy access by public transport and convenient parking facilities.

Using social media to spread the word, the groups quickly began to grow. Today, the Hartlepool and Peterlee sessions are well-established and continue to bring people together.



↪ Allison and David

↪ AmpuTea Time Meet Up



Since AmpuTea Time was launched, additional support has become available in the region, including an Amputee Foundation hub in Middlesbrough. While these organisations provide valuable services, AmpuTea Time focuses on something simple but powerful: creating a welcoming space where people can meet others who understand their experiences.

The groups are open not only to amputees but also to family members, friends and carers. Through its Facebook page, AmpuTea Time also signposts people to other organisations and sources of support.

Allison receives support through a managed direct payment account, administered by our Hartlepool team. She says having a direct payment has given her greater freedom and flexibility to live life on her own terms.

"It's great because there's so little to think about, just a timesheet every four weeks."

Allison feels that the flexibility of direct payments allows her to stay active and involved in the things that matter to her, without having to organise her life around scheduled care visits.

If you are an amputee, or care for someone who is, and would like to find out more about AmpuTea Time, visit their Facebook page: www.facebook.com/p/AmpuTea-Time-61559658337064/



Scan to visit