

Merton CIL joins the Aviva community fund to raise money to reduce loneliness for Deaf and Disabled people in Merton.

Merton Centre for Independent Living (Merton CIL) hopes to raise over £1,000 to continue their Craftivism and Chat project that aims to reduce isolation and loneliness in local Deaf and Disabled people over the next two years.

The amount raised through Aviva's crowdfunding platform will be used to run a member-led group for Deaf and Disabled people and the wider community. There will be arts and crafts workshops delivered by Disabled and local artists as well as an exhibition of engaging Disability art to spark important conversations in Merton.

Craftivism and Chat will also host important discussions/consultations where people speak up and get involved in local decision making, so that Deaf and Disabled voices are heard. Volunteer opportunities open to all in Merton should help to build confidence and skills. There will also be promotional work across the borough to try and engage with Merton's 'hidden' citizens.

'100% of attendees at Craftivism and Chat over the past year have rated the group good or great. Our work to reduce loneliness in Deaf and Disabled people and get them involved in making change happen on a local level is vital and benefits the wider community in Merton. The money that we are hoping to raise will enable us to continue our important work supporting Deaf and Disabled people to live independent lives.' Charlotte Wilson, Communications and Office Manager at Merton CIL

Loneliness is as damaging to our health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.¹ Merton CIL believes that Craftivism and Chat will have a positive and lasting effect on the local community in Merton. It will help people create greater social connections and increase independent living skills. Deaf and Disabled people will also feel included in the community as their voices will be heard. Isolation, loneliness and depression are huge concerns for Disabled people in Merton – There are estimated to be around 25,000 Disabled people and 8,000 lonely people in Merton.²

So, let's work together and raise money to reduce loneliness in Merton! Please share our campaign with your friends, family and work colleagues - <https://www.avivacommunityfund.co.uk/craftivismandchat>

ENDS

¹ Campaign to End Loneliness

² Tackling Loneliness in Merton -

<https://democracy.merton.gov.uk/documents/s19456/8b%20Loneliness%20Final%20Draft%20Report.pdf>

About Merton Centre for Independent Living (Merton CIL): Merton CIL is an organisation run and controlled by Deaf and Disabled People, delivering supportive services for Deaf and Disabled People within The London Borough of Merton - www.mertoncil.org.uk

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Image: Craftivism and Chat group Morris and Liberty fabric banner making workshop with local art group Made in Merton

