## **ESCC logo**

## **People Bank members’ stories**

We spoke to two members of the People Bank, to learn more about what members get involved with and hear about their experiences.

### **Saskia’s story: “It’s nice to be involved with a service that is truly inclusive.”**

Saskia\*, in her 50s, is self-employed and signed up to The People Bank because “it sounded interesting and inclusive”.

Saskia explained: “It’s nice to be involved with a service that is truly inclusive which is something that is so rare unfortunately.”

As a member of the People Bank, Saskia has completed many consultations, is part of the Autism Partnership Board and has participated in the Equality Diversity and Engagement Group, among others.

Saskia said: “I’m a great believer in making positive contributions and I felt I could contribute and make a difference. I like to ensure that those whose voices are not often heard, can still be part of the consultation processes.

“With the People Bank I can help influence and develop services in a positive way.”

The People Bank welcomes diversity and people from all walks of life and experience. Saskia notes that this is key: “It’s good to have your thinking challenged by meeting other people. You won’t solve problems as easily if you all think the same way.”

Saskia believes the People Bank is a great way to give your views and be listened to. She said: “This is your chance to have your voice heard, to have your say, make a difference and be part of an incredible team.”

*\*Not her real name.*

**Jacqui’s story: “I’ve learned a lot about what goes on in Adult Social Care.”**

Jacqui, 75, from St Leonards has been a member of the People Bank for ten years.

During her retirement, Jacqui is keen to stay involved in the local community and give back where she can. As well as volunteering for local charities, she signed up to get involved with the People Bank.

Jacqui said: “The variety of involvement is good with the People Bank and I’ve been able to choose what I get involved with. You can do as much or as little as you want and everyone’s very friendly. There are no rights or wrongs.

“From interviewing in care receivers’ homes and care homes, to giving feedback on posters and website navigation, I’ve learned a lot about what goes on in Adult Social Care.”

Aside from contributing to and learning more about services, Jacqui has found other benefits from being a member. She said: “It’s a great opportunity to meet different people and understand their views. It’s also great for keeping your brain alert.”

Jacqui recommends that to join the People Bank: “You need to feel confident to challenge people if necessary. Observation and listening skills are a must, and over time you develop these abilities and build your confidence.”