

KINGSTON MENCAP Newsletter

The Voice of Learning Disability



Trustee Committee 2015 Chair: Peter Hodges **Treasurer:** Mary McDonald **General Trustees:** John Phillips; George Tong; Ilze Hopper; Paul Roberts

Newsletter changes

You will notice that your newsletter is smaller. This is so we can save money on printing costs and where we can, we include links for further information.

Our members with learning disability and those not on email now receive a two-page bulletin with club news and notices.

Dear Members, Families and Friends,

Kingston Mencap is up and running for a great 2015. All of our Clubs have full programmes of exciting activities in the spring and, as I have said before, we are extremely fortunate to have such dedicated Club Leaders and Volunteers to run our clubs.

Kingston Mencap relies on members' subscriptions. **Subscriptions were due on 1st January.** Thank you to those of you whom have already paid, some with very generous additional donations. However, the subscriptions alone do not pay for the running of our clubs, and we work hard to find other avenues of income to try and break even during the year. This has become increasingly difficult and we will be looking to raising funds through sponsored events during 2015. Please support our members when we announce the activities we will be embarking upon.

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We have launched our **FRIENDS of KINGSTON MENCAP** initiative. This is aimed at people who are friends, relatives, neighbours who would like to support Kingston Mencap by becoming a 'Friend'. Forms were sent out with the subscription reminders. Please ask around to encourage people to become a Friend of Kingston Mencap and support us through a small annual donation.



Thank you all for your continued support.

Peter Hodges, Chair, Kingston Mencap

You can follow us on Facebook & Twitter

You can now follow Kingston Mencap on Facebook and Twitter for all our up-to-the-minute news! We're 'tweeting' regularly with updates.



WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN KINGSTON MENCAP?

If this is the first time you have seen the newsletter and/or would like to receive a copy, let us know so we can send you details on how to join - just £5 per year. We want to reach as many people as possible by email to save time and money and to make sure news gets to you quicker and easier, but we can also send copies by post. To find out more contact: Jenny 0208 816 7500 or send an email to jenny@kingstonmencap.co.uk.

Can you spare a few hours a week as a volunteer?

We are always on the lookout for volunteers for our clubs, particularly drivers and escorts for Seekers. To find out more send an email to jenny@kingstonmencap.co.uk

XPRESSION YOUTH PROJECT



We enjoyed a very busy and fun end to 2014. In October we celebrated our 10th year as a young club. We also ran a joint archery session with the Chessington Bowmen during the November half-term. The session went extremely well and a number of our young people had an opportunity to unleash their inner Robin Hood / Hawkeye (of Marvel fame) / Katniss Everdeen (The Hunger Games)! The Chessington Bowmen work with a number of budding Team GB archers and this was a fantastic opportunity for our young people to experience professional archery, so a big thank goes to the Chessington Bowmen for their help to organise and run this session!

In other news we also performed a pantomime version of the Disney hit “Frozen” in December to which parents and families were invited to attend. Given how successful the original version was, and that we only had a handful of weeks to rehearse and prepare, our young people and volunteers were up against a lot of pressure to do the Disney classic justice.

Needless to say the show was a success and our young people were incredible (this is an understatement, but it would genuinely take a long time to include all the superlatives in this article...) and the audience were treated to renditions of many “Frozen” songs including TWO (yes, two!) versions of “Let It Go”. Our skilled and imaginative young performers also managed to inject some extra humour and audience participation to the proceedings with their portrayal of the villainous Prince Hans (“I’m not a gold-digger!”; “Oh yes you are!”).

In the meantime, we have another full fun-filled year for our young people and look forward to – the full programme is available on the Kingston Mencap website, but just to give you a taster of what to expect, we will be having some special guest tutors at the club to run some activities for us this coming term; we will be making our own piñata; and enjoying a trip to the golfing range. Let’s make 2015 our best year yet!

Stephen, Xpression Youth Project Leader



FUTURE FRIENDS

Future Friends

Future Friends is still as popular as ever. The Halloween Party in October last year went well with party games and a few of the members dressing up. The eagerly awaited birth of Danielle's baby was the main topic of conversation with guesses on the sex and weight taking priority. The fact that Danielle went into labour on the evening of Future Friends with Chris rushing back home to take her to hospital added to the excitement!

Everyone seemed to enjoy The Christmas Dinner at the Fountain Pub and they especially liked their Christmas Presents that were bought by Danielle who also brought baby Hadley to introduce to everyone, which was lovely.

Lucy & Danielle, Club Leaders

If you want to join Future Friends, visit www.kingstonmencap.co.uk for details. We are always pleased to welcome new Members and Volunteers.



SEEKERS CLUB



The Seekers club enjoyed some new activities and special evenings with different visitors throughout 2014. We had a couple of music evenings with Mary and Rosalyn. Each has her own style, Mary playing instruments with people, and Rosalyn singing both for and with the group and the members loved them both! We will be welcoming Mary back on the 19th March for another wonderful music evening.

In November we also met Alfie the dog. Alfie belongs to Sally who is the daughter of one of our long-standing volunteers, Shirley. Alfie is registered as a 'pets as therapy' dog. (This is a voluntary organisation that has dogs & cats that visit hospitals, residential homes, hospices and clubs).

Alfie was in the lobby area where people could visit and stroke him whilst in the hall we had a keep fit class run by our volunteer Ted and member Colin.



At the end of the month we had an exciting visit from Kingston Morris dancers. They came and did a few display dances and then the members joined in and learnt how to Morris dance. It was a great evening and fun was had by all.

The pantomime in December at the Yvone Arnauld theatre went down a treat. We had 40 members and 18 volun-

teers and carers see Snow White and all enjoyed the show. Oh yes we did!

There are lots of great activities coming up in the next few months, not forgetting the fabulous Dale Fontaine of Echoes of Elvis who will be performing as Elvis at our Valentines Disco on Monday 16th February. Every Seekers member is encouraged to bring a friend, carer or family member along (great entertainment at just £3 per person!). Just let Pat, Peter or myself know who is coming in advance.

Lastly, we urgently need more minibus drivers and escorts. If you feel you could spare a few hours for one or tow Monday evenings a month, please get in touch with me by sending an email to leeniseekersclub@gmail.com or Peter Hodges on peter.kingstonmencap@gmail.com

Best wishes to you all,

Leeni, Seekers Club Leader



DROP-IN

Saturday Drop-in continues to thrive, with around 30 members and carers attending each week. Many members bring their lunch and enjoy a social gathering, others are more energetic and play games from a wide choice of Boccia, skittles, pool, table-tennis, Connect Four, badminton and more! There are also creative activities and board games as an alternative. The Christmas party went really well, thanks to Michelle (pictured, right) and her mum for the delicious catering. We have fantastic volunteers, Caroline, Declan and Beth, to look after our members and support our club leaders, Michelle and Lucy. John Diamond should also get a mention for his expert tea and coffee making!

Drop-In is at Searchlight every Saturday, 11.30am to 2.30pm. No need to book up! You will get a very warm welcome. Call 020 8816 7500 for more information or email jenny@kingstonmencap.co.uk.

Saturday Drop-In



CARERS GROUP

Members and family members have continued to meet up each month at Staywell (Age Concern) in the evening and on alternative months at Hft in the afternoon. The daytime meetings have proved popular so we will continue in 2015 to give everyone the opportunity to share experiences, information and news. I have heard that some members do not use email and don't get a reminder each month, so please do make a note of the dates in your diary now, so you don't miss out! I hope you will join us when you can or suggest speakers for future meetings.



February 4th	HFT 1.30pm	Sandie Barker (SOS) Sport in Kingston
March 4th	Staywell 7.30pm	Andrea Biggs (Balance) New support service
April 1st	HFT 1.30pm	(speaker to be confirmed)
May 6th	Staywell 7.30pm	Emma Knap from RBK Brokerage team



At the September meeting we welcomed David Still from Kingston Carers Network (KCN) who provided an insight of his work at KCN. David is a solicitor and explained how he can help carers with all sorts of issues, providing lots of information and especially welcome how to receive the KCN newsletter. At the October meeting we invited back Denise Lovemore, head of RBK care managers team, but unfortunately she was unable to attend (Denise is now on long term sick leave so we wish her a speedy recovery). At the November meeting we invited Charles Titcombe and Joanna Arnold from Reside Housing. They gave an update but one of the most important points they confirmed is that if there are any problems or issues at any of the various houses they run is to ask staff to always report to Joanna by email so she can log the complaint. joanna.arnold@residehousing.com

At these meetings I normally make notes and these are circulated by email, but if anyone wants further information on a particular subject and who does not use email, then please give me a ring and I will send you a copy in the post.

Gill Wood (020 8540 1399) gillcwood@blueyonder.co.uk

HEAR MY VOICE

2015 is election year and Royal Mencap is campaigning for members to have their vote at the elections in May. The campaign is called **HEAR MY VOICE**.

The first thing you need to do is to check that you are on the **electoral roll**.

If you are on the electoral roll, you are entitled to vote and do not need to do anything.

If you are not on the electoral roll, you will not be able to vote. You will need to register with Kingston Council to get on the electoral roll. Ask someone to help you do this.

If you are a carer, please check to see if the person you care for is on the electoral roll. If necessary, go to the Kingston Council website to see how to register. http://www.kingston.gov.uk/info/200263/voting_in_elections/625/register_to_vote/4oll.

We will be campaigning in Kingston to encourage you to vote at the general election in May. Watch out for **HEAR MY VOICE** updates. Go to <https://www.mencap.org.uk/hearmyvoice> for more details from Royal Mencap.

LEARNING DISABILITY PARLIAMENT UPDATE

Parliament has been really busy with the Peer Advocates leading the different projects with the Project Workers. We have been working on things which are important in people's lives, and speaking up for people who want to make things better. All the Peer Advocates and Project Workers meet every month to share updates on projects such as employment, health, transport, keeping safe and raising awareness about Learning Disabilities. Parliament also goes out into the community for 'event meetings'. We talk to people about Parliament work and discuss topics such as 'choice' and 'friendships'. We are launching our Parliament newsletter in January, so look out for it!

HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

What to do if you have a concern or a complaint about your Support Provider (or the Support Provider of the person you are representing):

- Contact the Provider directly. Speak to the Senior Support Worker or Manager. Each Provider should have their own information about how to make a complaint or give feedback and compliments
- If you feel that your issue is not resolved, speak to a Care Manager in the Community Learning Disability Team (0208 547 6558). They should be able to talk to the Provider on your behalf and help to address your concern. They will also raise this with the Team Leader who can record your issue as a Serious Concern is appropriate or advise you if Safeguarding Procedures need to be followed.
- If the issue is still not resolved and you think your concern affects more than one person, you can ask for it to be raised at the Learning Disability Quality and Commissioning Action Group. The family/carers representatives on this group are Gill Wood (gillcwood@blueyonder.co.uk), Heather Notermans (heathernot@hotmail.com) and Mary McDonald (mary.mcdonald@blueyonder.co.uk). They can also be contacted through the Kingston Mencap admin phone number, 020 8816 7500.

RBK SERVICES PLD TRANSFER TO BALANCE

RBK provider services transferred to Balance on 1st July 2014. The transfer followed a long process of engagement with service users, families/carers and staff and scrutiny under the council's procurement regulations. The staff reps will be responsible for bringing forward feedback suggestions for development, what's working well and what can be improved. Through other feedback Balance has decided to conduct an annual survey with all service users as a way to gather feedback and make suggestions for service improvements.

Balance have also set up a suggestions email box which is for everyone to use including service users, parents and carers, emails received will be taken to the management team and will always receive a response. The transfer has involved large changes to administration, paperwork, procedures, and all the functions previously undertaken by the council, but with good will from the company and staff teams all is progressing well. Developments are already underway in work activities; a new community café has been opened at the King Charles Centre Hollyfield Road. The café has been made over and now provides home made soups, home made cakes and sandwiches which the service users are supported to prepare and serve to an expanding number of customers, the café will shortly open in the evenings to provide students at evening classes with refreshments. The sandwich business which now operates from Newent House kitchen has expanded its supplies to Guildhall, Sessions House and the King Charles Café and offering a buffet service.

Balance is holding an event at the café to market the opportunities available to people with learning disabilities. Balance are looking at the further development of Stud Nursery, services users and staff have done great work this year clearing more ground for cultivation. The Camellia House greenhouse has been renovated by HRP and is near completion, Balance are very excited regarding the potential for development. Staff recruitment across all the services areas has had high priority and the recruitment of casual bank staff that will be available and reduce the need for agency cover. To date we have recruited 10 new staff across the services. Balance has developed an Apprenticeship scheme with our first apprentice started at Woodbury last week. The apprenticeships programme will be overseen by external bodies including the Learning and Skills Council who set standards and undertake assessments. The scheme will be implemented across all of Balance.

The Supported Living service continues to develop, it has grouped services into local patches to improve efficiency and reduce travelling time between visits, each senior has an area to supervise and support the areas are Kingston, New Malden, Surbiton, Chessington and Tolworth.

MUSIC THERAPY SESSIONS AT HOOK CENTRE

There is a Music Therapy Service running at the Hook Centre in Chessington which began in February 2014 with the Richmond Music Trust, in partnership with the Kingston Music Service. The Hook Centre is a welcoming community centre with a café, library and a well-equipped Music Therapy room upstairs. Music Therapy can be helpful for anyone who is experiencing any difficulties such as anxiety, depression, challenging behaviours or who might be finding it hard to communicate with others. Sessions offer a private space to feel empowered, where each individual is encouraged to express themselves and is offered emotional support by the therapist. Individuals will have a chance to explore making music using a range of instruments including drums, many percussion instruments, guitars, the piano as well as their singing voice. No previous musical experience will be necessary as the Richmond Music Trust's therapists are trained to enable everyone to make their own music, using the instruments of their choice.

Sessions can either be 1:1 with the therapist or in small groups of 4-6 people. There are also opportunities for one-off workshops including drumming circles and vocal groups. The Richmond Music Trust is offering some free assessment sessions so please get in touch with Andreas Rosenboom (Head of Richmond Music Trust) on 020 8744 8097 or andreasr@richmondmusictrust.org.uk



WHAT'S ON



SUNDAY LUNCH CLUB

Come and join us at a local pub once a month
on Sundays at 12.30

At The Watchman, New Malden With Melissa

For further info call Melissa Hulbert

Tel: 0208 9429769 Mobile: 07947423083



Boogie Nights
are discos for
adults with
Learning
Disabilities
(over 18 years).

Co-ordinated by
the Disco
Committee,
Melissa and Sarah

Supported by The
Royal Borough of
Kingston.



Valentines Disco

Friday
13th
February

7.30 pm
to
11.00 pm

£5.00
Pay on Door
(Carers go free)

For information
please call
07947423083
hulbertmelissa
@hotmail.com
Find our group
On Facebook



Kingsmeadow
Jack Goodchild Way
422a Kingston Road
KT1 3PB



131 bus route.
Free Parking.
Fully accessible.

MEMBERS BIRTHDAYS

Happy Birthday to all in JANUARY: Katy Rowland, Jack Spencer, Edward Maule, Karl Gibbins, Jamie Duncan, Lee Hope, Adam Burkeman, Sophie Harrison, Sally Piercy, Richard Broome, Emile Bezodis.

Happy Birthday to all in FEBRUARY: Peter Privett, Michael Bassett, Robert Johnston, Ben Rogerson, Claire Smith, Angus Hall, Andrew Morgan, Andrew Brownrigg, Roger Varoujian, Sadick Muyingo, Rory McCall, Natasha Hopper, Sarah Page, William Lawrence, Eona Fraser, Mitchell Gray, Helen Lay, Rodney Asling.

Happy Birthday to all in MARCH: Bruce Read, Laurie Robson, Phillp Hitchen, Natalie Francis, Una McCormack, Cherelle Govier, Sam Holness, Gillian Hacker, Julia Kelly, Claire Sheridan, Louise Monks, Richard Laslett, Lee Chung, Alan Booth, Nicky Watkins, Roger Taylor, Michael Birch.



NB. Sorry if we have missed your birthday but please do tell us so we can put things right.....

MEMBERS NEWS AND NOTICES

Doris Seymour

Many of you will have known **Doris Seymour** who lived in Ripon Gardens, Hook. We heard from her niece Carol that Doris passed away on 7th December. Doris had been a member for many years and she will be missed. Our thoughts are with her family.
Peter Hodges

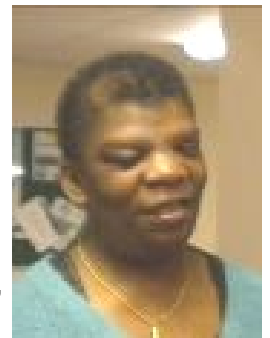
Tony Page

10.01.1929 to 11.11.14

I was so very sorry to hear of the sudden death of Tony Page after a short illness in Kingston Hospital. Tony was such a lovely man, a real character, the life and soul of many Flag days in Kingston. Tony was the organiser for several years, and even after he stood down, was still willing to shake a can and spent the whole day at Bentalls, never missing a potential donation! On behalf of Kingston Mencap members our sincere condolences go to his wife Connie and daughter Sarah. He will be missed by many. *Gill Wood*

Warami Tuoyo

We were saddened to learn of Warami's death in December. She was a popular member of Seekers Club. Many of our members, volunteers and carers attended her funeral, along with her wonderful family. It was a memorable service and a fitting goodbye to our friend, Warami. *Peter Hodges*



Big thank you to the ladies choir

Our very warmest thanks to the Singing it Back Ladies Choir who put on a special performance for us in December with a Christmas Concert. We would also like to thank Vaani Wadman from Sugar Plum Bakes (www.sugarplumbakes.com) who donated half her takings from her cakes and bakes stall. It was a very successful event and the ladies choir were wonderful, performing all our favourite songs. Looking forward to another concert very soon!

Disclaimer:- as far as possible we make sure that articles and information are correct, but do point out that the information and views expressed by individuals or other organisations do not necessarily represent those held by Kingston Mencap. The Editor cannot accept responsibility for any goods or services mentioned in or enclosed in the newsletter.