

# 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; Victoria Heath; Hope Davis-McCallion



## Dates for your Diary

Weds 20th May - AGM

Mon 8th June -  
Seekers Sponsored Walk

Sun 21st June - Railway  
Outing

Sun 19th July - Kingston  
Dragon Boat Challenge

Sat 3rd October - Senior Party

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## AGM NOTICE

We are holding our AGM on Wednesday 20th May 2015, 7pm-10pm at Surbiton Library Hall, Ewell Road, Surbiton KT6 6AG. Our club leaders and members will be giving presentations about their clubs and there will be light refreshments. All welcome! For more details, call Jenny on 020 8816 7500.

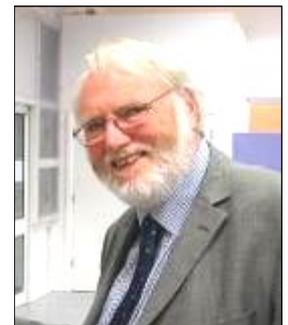
Dear Members, Families and Friends,

I am pleased to report that we are gaining new members at our clubs virtually every week. Seekers Club regularly has 50 Members attending. Both Future Friends and Xpression have steady memberships, but we have room for more members to share in the varied activities that both clubs provide. We are gearing ourselves up for a busy summer of activities: Our popular **Railway Day** will be held on Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup> June. Seekers will be having their annual summer outing whilst Xpression and Future Friends will be combining to take part in the **Kingston Dragon Boat Challenge on Sunday, 19<sup>th</sup> July**. They will be looking for sponsorship; please come and support the team at Canbury Gardens in July. Watch out for details. As always, I cannot stress enough how much we appreciate our team of magnificent volunteers. We could not run our Clubs without them.

Please note that our **AGM** will be held on **Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> May 2015**.

Formal notice will be sent out later this month. Our Club members will be giving presentations, to give you an opportunity to see what each club gets up to and to meet our Club Leaders.

We are still looking for a volunteer driver(s) and escorts to help out with Seekers on Monday evenings. If you can spare an evening or two a month and can drive a minibus, or act as an escort, please contact Jenny, our administrator, for details.



We have now received most of your **Annual Subscriptions**. If you have forgotten, it is not too late to send it to us! Many of you send a generous donation, in addition to your membership, which is much appreciated. Thank you.

Thank you all for your support, and we hope that you will be able to join us at the AGM in May and support our Dragon Boat Challenge team in July.  
**Peter Hodges, Chair, Kingston Mencap**

## Joint Carers meeting held at White Hart Hotel, Hampton Wick

A Joint Carers meeting held by Kingston Mencap, Richmond Mencap and Richmond Homes & Lifestyle Trust on 25th March was a very enjoyable evening, with 13 attendees. Current issues were discussed in an informal setting, and even a few drinks were sipped throughout the evening! We certainly believe it is worth holding future joint meetings, and next time it will be on our side of the water in the autumn.



*Peter Hodges*

# XPRESSION YOUTH PROJECT



Hello everyone!

Xpression's start to 2015 has been a busy one! We've welcomed some new young people and volunteers to our ranks as well as participating in some fresh and new activities. As always it's important to the club to continually have new people interested in what we do and to become involved. One of the most significant changes at Xpression in the past 12 months, is that we have had a number of young volunteers who are under 18 join us. Given that young people are often mentioned in the news for very negative reasons, it's fantastic that young people in our local community are interested in giving their time and energy to help run the club. We have also had a number of young members join our club in the past 12 months or so with higher needs and our volunteers have been fantastic in adapting the way they work with young people with higher needs, to ensure that everyone is included in the club and able to take part in what we do.

In February we ran a yoga session run by the wonderful Heenal Mistry, who has had a long-running connection to the club going back many years. Our young people enjoyed the session despite their initial preconceptions about yoga, and some of our young people were also surprised to learn that yoga is an integral part of professional sports careers! Thank you very much Heenal! We have also been working on a long-term art project creating our own paper-mache pinata which we are excited about. We also have a some big plans for activities in the pipeline coming up, hopefully during the spring-summer term. Unfortunately these plans are top secret so I can't say what these plans are right now - but watch this space!



**Stephen, Xpression Youth Project Leader**

# FUTURE FRIENDS



Danielle is still on maternity leave and her place is being taken by myself and Lucy Freud. Future Friends has 15 regular members, aged from 19 years to 35 years, and they enjoy a full programme of activities, still arranged by Danielle. It has been a good opportunity for me to get to know the members better; I can truly say that they are a great bunch and very good fun to be with. The Club now moves back to Canbury Gardens for the summer. See Kingston Mencap website for the latest programme.

**Peter Hodges, Chair**

*If you want to join Future Friends, visit [www.kingstonmencap.co.uk](http://www.kingstonmencap.co.uk) for details. We are always pleased to welcome new Members and Volunteers.*

# NEW TRUSTEES FOR KINGSTON MENCAP



We are very pleased to announce that we have two new Trustees: Victoria Heath (pictured left) and Hope Davis-McCallion (right). Hope is already known to us as a volunteer at Xpression and Victoria joins us with a wealth of experience, having been a Trustee at Mind. We warmly welcome them both and we know they will contribute enthusiastically to Kingston Mencap.



# SEEKERS CLUB

So the spring is upon us and we can all enjoy the warmer weather and lighter days. This is the season when the Seekers club will be doing our annual sponsored walk on the 8<sup>th</sup> June. All members and their families and/or carers are welcome to join in. Please do come along to support your club. The sponsorship money goes towards funding your summer and winter trips as well as bowling and any other special events.

Talking of special events; for our Valentine disco this year we had a special guest come to sing for us. Dale Fontaine from Echoes of Elvis was 'Elvis' and sung all our favourite numbers and more. The evening went



down a treat with people dancing the night away, either on the dance floor or in their chairs and joining in with the singing and generally enjoying themselves. As it was a special event we also had food that people could buy in if they wanted to. It was a very memorable evening with everyone having a great time.



We introduced Roz and Wendy who came to do a story book with us. They took us through the story of a ship that got lost in a storm and then found its way home again. They used all sorts of instruments, materials and items to help tell the story and the members got involved and helped to tell the story. A lot of people said they really enjoyed the evening so Roz and Wendy will be coming again in the summer to do another story.

A big thank you to Mary who came and ran a music evening on St. Patricks day. The tambourines, drums and more percussion instruments came out and Na Won played wonderfully on the piano to accompany Mary on the guitar. It was a fantastic evening and everyone had a great time.



Lastly we are still looking for another mini bus driver so if you or anyone you know would like to volunteer their time for a few hours once a month to transport some of our members to and from the



club please do get in touch with me on [leeniseekersclub@gmail.com](mailto:leeniseekersclub@gmail.com) or Peter Hodges on [peter.kingstonmencap@gmail.com](mailto:peter.kingstonmencap@gmail.com)

**Best wishes to you all,  
Leeni, Seekers Club Leader**



## DROP-IN

The Drop-In welcomed Ben Hodges to our growing team this month, he has been given a massive thumbs up by all of our members.

It's been a busy few months for us with the twice monthly Boccia sessions, run by Declan proving to be a big hit. Gabriel is always on hand to teach anyone who wants to learn how to juggle. Peter Hodges tried recently but needs more practise I'm afraid to say. Bingo is still proving to be a great success and Michelle's mum has brought in her knitting needles for anyone who would like to learn. The atmosphere every week is friendly, chilled and fun thanks to our amazing volunteers. Declan, Beth, Caroline, John and Gabriel.

**Saturday Drop-In**

**Drop-In is at Searchlight every Saturday, 11.30am to 2.30pm. Call 020 8816 7500 for more information or email [jenny@kingstonmencap.co.uk](mailto:jenny@kingstonmencap.co.uk).**

## CARERS GROUP

It has been an eventful few months since the last newsletter and we have continued to meet up with varying success at both Staywell and HFT.

### MARCH MEETING AT STAYWELL

In March we invited staff from **Balance** to the evening meeting at Staywell to give an update, to answer questions and to share information and welcomed Sam Sprigge, Operations Manager and Roger Matthew, Supported Living Manager.

The Balance community interest company took over Kingston council-run services in June 2014 (Kingston Supported Living; Woodbury; Transport; Work activities eg Stud farm; and the Café). It was a lively meeting with many questions from families. Sam

is very new in post but was honest and upfront that he did not have all the answers but would come back to me at some point! I made notes and can share if you let me know.



### FEBRUARY & APRIL MEETINGS AT HFT

At one stage I was unsure whether it was worth holding any more afternoon sessions at HFT as the February meeting was so badly attended. But the arrival of folk at the April 1st meeting made me think again as we had roughly 18 people in attendance. Was it the promise of hot cross buns or April Fool's Day?! The guest speakers were Phil Levick and Grace Abel. I invited them along to try and give an easy understanding of how the new Care Act would affect carers. It started badly with quotes from the government website, even with my knowledge I was getting confused, but on request they made it a bit clearer. The main point is that anyone can request an assessment but there is an eligibility criteria in place if a need is outlined! Kingston Carers Network (KCN) are having training as I write and will be piloting an assessment scheme on behalf of the council. I just wonder how it will work if a need is acknowledged by KCN, but then the council disagree? Phil was happy to answer individual questions and for those he did not have answers to he agreed to take



back to Kingston Council to get answers from other staff! The meeting moved on to individual comments and moans from families, eg phone not being answered at Session house; loss of Pinboard; No named care manager/review officer now; who to turn to for advice; Session house closing; no service development officer; no information and so on.

### MAY MEETING 6TH MAY

The next evening meeting at Staywell will be on 6<sup>th</sup> May at 7.30pm and I have invited along Emma Knap from the Brokerage team. I felt with all the changes taking place and different things we hear about Individual Budgets it would be helpful to hear from the brokerage team, so should be an interesting meeting. At most of the meeting with speakers I normally make notes and these can be circulated by email. Do let me know if anyone wants to suggest a speaker for future meetings or if anyone wants further information on a particular subject If you are not on email, then please give me a ring and request information to be sent by post.

**Gill Wood (020 8540 1399) [gillcwood@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:gillcwood@blueyonder.co.uk)**

# NO VOICE UNHEARD, NO RIGHT IGNORED

This is a government consultation for people with learning disabilities, autism and mental health conditions

This consultation wants your views on how to strengthen rights of people with learning disabilities, autism and mental health issues so that they can live independently. It looks at issues such as how people can:

- be supported to live independently
- be assured their views will be listened to
- challenge decisions about their care
- know that professionals are looking out for physical health needs as well as mental health needs

The closing date for public consultation is 29 May, 12.45pm, so say what you think by following this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/strengthening-rights-for-people-with-learning-disabilities>.

If you prefer, you can also attend the event advertised, right, which is being held in London. Please contact us for a booking form if you would like to attend this event on 020 88167500 or email: [jenny@kingstonmencap.co.uk](mailto:jenny@kingstonmencap.co.uk).

Hosted by the London Region of the National Forum and the National Valuing Families Forum

national forum of people with learning disabilities   National Valuing Families Forum 

## No Voice Unheard No Right Ignored

Come and Have Your Say

 13<sup>th</sup> May 2015

 9.30 – 12.30

OR

 1 – 3.30

 London Councils,  
59 ½ Southwark Street, SE1 0AL

 Refreshments Provided

 Both sessions will be the same so you only need to come to either the morning or the afternoon.

This event is for self advocates and parent/family carers. We want to know what you think about the Green Paper, 'No Voice Unheard, No Right Ignored'. The National Forum and the National Valuing Families Forum will tell the Government what you think.

## MAKE YOUR VOTE COUNT!

**A chance to meet your parliamentary candidates before you vote at Richard Challoner School, New Malden, 30<sup>th</sup> April, 7pm-10pm.**

Are you or a relative living with a disability, long term health or mental health condition? Are you a parent or carer of a child or young person with additional needs? In the run-up to the 2015 General Election and as part of the 'NAS' I'm One' campaign, help Express make sure Autism, Social & Health Care are a priority for every candidate looking to get elected. The focus of the evening will be on Autism, SEND, Carers, Social & Health Care. There will be an opportunity for you to ask questions of your prospective parliamentary candidates for Kingston & Surbiton. Ask your candidates what they will do to support you and your family. Confirmed candidates are Ed Davey (Lib Dem), Lee Godfrey (Lab) and Claire Keogh (Green). Take part and make sure your voice is heard! There will be a roaming microphone on the night or if you would prefer you can submit your question to be read by the chair for the evening, John Williams (parent, author and comedian). In addition there is an opportunity to see John's show: My Son's Not Rainman to follow after the hustings. To see reviews for John's show, go to [www.mysonsnotrainman.com](http://www.mysonsnotrainman.com). To book a place for either the Hustings and/or the after-show, follow the link: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/express-general-election-2015-hustings-tickets-16015116645>

## CARE CHARGING CONSULTATION

Back in middle of February the council notified some service users and their families of a consultation with regard to a proposed increase in care charging, which apparently had been agreed by council back in late 2014. There were a number of issues around the consultation – 3 months is normally the time scale but according to the paperwork it started in January and here we were in February only just hearing about!

The day some of the letters arrived, 11th February, was the date of the first public meeting arranged to take place at the Guildhall. Needless to say there were few people in attendance to listen to Simon Pearce and John Smyth, who outlined the thinking behind the proposed increase from 75% to 100% of disposable income. All this said the presentation was not only inaccurate, but loaded with biased questions, which we were able to point out at the time. The second meeting was only slightly better attended and again similar comments were registered as at the first meeting! The council at last realised they had made a big mistake in trying to push this increase through with no proper consultation and extended the period until May with promise of more meetings. Councillor Julie Pickering, lead for Health and Social Care, apologised on behalf of the council at the council's budget meeting and this was reported in the Surrey Comet that same week. BUT the meetings failed to happen and last week I received a press release stating the consultation had been suspended, blaming the post office for failing to deliver letters on time.

Watch this space as I am sure this is not the last we will hear about it!

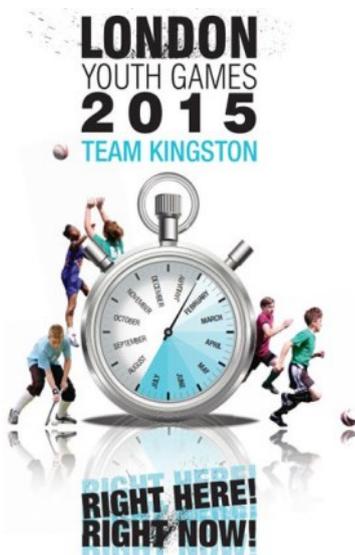
**Gill Wood**

## RAILWAY DAY SUNDAY 21ST JUNE

We are delighted to announce that the Malden & District Society of Model Engineers are hosting another Railway Day this year for us at the Thames Ditton Model Railway, Claygate Lane, Thames Ditton, KT7 0DL. It's a great day out, and this year it's on Father's Day, 21st June, 2pm-5pm. Come along with all the family for a fun filled afternoon. There will be refreshments and a raffle. Passengers of all ages may ride with a special adapted wheelchair carriage. The railway is operated entirely by unpaid volunteers. The entrance and rides are free - see you there!



## KINGSTON PARA SWIMMING TEAM



### Join Kingston's Para Swimming Team

Kingston is looking for young disabled people who can represent the borough in the Para swimming event at this year's London Youth Games. To compete you must:

- Live or go to school in the Borough of Kingston upon Thames
- Be at school and in Year 13 or under
- Be able to swim 50 metres without stopping

As a member of the team you will get to race against swimmers from other boroughs, and get a Team Kingston T-shirt and swim hat. The competition is on June 4 at Beckenham Spa (10am-2.30pm) The team will be supported by coaches from Kingston Royals Swimming Club and there will be an opportunity to train with the club before the event. For information email Thomas Urry at [thomas.urry@btinternet.com](mailto:thomas.urry@btinternet.com). You can follow Team Kingston's progress by visiting the Facebook page.

# WHAT'S ON



**Hft Returns to**

*The Hippodrome*

**Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> June**

**6:30 -11pm**

**£5 on door**

**With DJ; Tiger and Casanova**

**1 St James Rd Kingston Surrey KT1 2AH**



Contact details: Melissa Hulbert  
Tel: 0208 942 9769 email: [Melissa.Hulbert@hft.org.uk](mailto:Melissa.Hulbert@hft.org.uk)  
[www.hft.org.uk](http://www.hft.org.uk)

Company registered in England No. 734984 Registered charity No. 313069 Patron HRH The Princess Royal

**Boogie Nights**



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

Co-ordinated by The Disco Committee  
Melissa Hulbert  
Sarah Lyle

Supported by The Royal Borough of Kingston.

**Discos 2015**

10<sup>th</sup> April  
24<sup>th</sup> July  
30<sup>th</sup> Oct  
18<sup>th</sup> Dec

7.30 pm to 11.00 pm

**£5.00**  
Pay on Door (Carers go free)

For information please call 07947423083  
email [hulbertmelissa@hotmail.com](mailto:hulbertmelissa@hotmail.com)




Kingsmeadow  
Jack Goodchild Way  
422a Kingston Road  
KT1 3PB

131 bus route.  
Free Parking.  
Fully accessible.

# SINGLE MINGLE NIGHT

HFT held a Single Mingle Night on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March at the Hft Resource Centre. It was a great opportunity for people they support to meet and make new friends or even find love with people from the Borough of Richmond. The evening went really well and everyone enjoyed themselves, there were even a few telephone numbers exchanged!! Lots of people have suggested another evening where they can all get together again, a talent show was a very popular choice.



# RESPIRE IN CHESSINGTON

Marston Avenue is a one bed respite unit in Chessington. We are CQC registered and on Kingston Council Approved Provider List. We offer a one bed ground floor respite, with shower room, kitchenette, bedroom and living room. It is separated from our family home, but retains a family feel, as it is attached to the building. We offer 1:1 support in a tailored service for people with learning disabilities and older people (the space is not appropriate for individuals with a severe physical disabilities). As a smaller unit we are able to not only tailor the support, but also the rooms, to ensure your stay feels comfortable and personal. Along with the normal care provisions including personal care, we can specialise in those that want to develop independent living skills, those that are not comfortable with loud or busy environments or people that just need a few hours rather than a full block shift. We have a car and are close to public transport links, so you can continue to feel part of your own community and take part in your normal activities when with us. For more information call Francesca Hooper on 0774 864 7255 or email [Marston.ave@gmail.com](mailto:Marston.ave@gmail.com).



# MEMBERS BIRTHDAYS

Happy Birthday to all in APRIL: Sophie Thornton, Linda Goddard, Susan Foster, Emma McDonnell, Jonathon McGrady, George Bowman, Daniel Wolff, Claire Hitchcock, Katie Knowles, Nicholas Sims, Peter Shaw, Malcolm Gubby, Alexander Jubraj, Lawrence Murphy, Owen Hughes, Dexter Hutchinson, Louise Hein, John Diamond, Jack Cherrington, Kira Mompalao, Amy Fraser

Happy Birthday to all in MAY: Johanna Owston, Eleanor Davies, Natalie Furniaux, Robbie Furr, Kim Bright, Tim Coombes, Graeme Green, Margaret Rose, Steven Close, Diana Todd

Happy Birthday to all in JUNE: Marie Gold, Paul Ascot, Laura Hannan, Richard Shaftoe, James Cottrill, Carla Curtis, Joshua Peck, Greg Rata, Colin Timbrell, Jehan Din, Lindsay Seal, Duncan Graham, Maruf Ahmed, Serena Awda, Robert Brent, Martin Dawson, Susie Skinner, Pat Gilligan, Stephen Sinclair, Harry Brennan, Rebecca Alexander, Andrew Miller, Wyne Thibaut, Jack Whelan



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

# NEWS AND NOTICES



## Senior Party

Saturday 3rd October 7pm - 10pm

For over 18s

United Reformed Church,

Malden Road, New Malden KT3 6DR

Cost: £10 per person (carers £5 each)

- Dress up in blue and white
- Pizza and salad
- Our favourite band B.L.O!



## 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](mailto: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](mailto:jenny@kingstonmencap.co.uk)

## Fircroft needs RUNNERS!

British London 10K Run  
Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July  
Information and application forms available by emailing: [aine@thefircrofttrust.org](mailto:aine@thefircrofttrust.org)

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.