

KINGSTON MENCAP Newsletter

The Voice of Learning Disability



Trustee Committee 2016 Chair: Peter Hodges **Treasurer:** Mary McDonald **General Trustees:** John Phillips; George Tong; Ilze Hopper; Paul Roberts; Victoria Heath; Hope Davis-McCallion; Emily Dyson



Dates for your Diary

17th June - Railway Day

22nd June - Charity Concert at the Rose Theatre

17th July - Dragon Boat Race

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Dear Members, Families and Friends of Kingston Mencap,

A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR!

2016 has come round so quickly, and we have a variety of activities lined up already. We are very excited about our charity concert in June at the Rose Theatre in Kingston. **Instant Sunshine** will be performing for us and we hope that you will support this event by coming along with your family and friends to enjoy a very entertaining and amusing night out. Watch out for more details of how to book seats. Our annual Railway afternoon is set for Fathers' Day and, once again, we will be entering a crew in the Kingston Dragon Boat event in July. Add that to all our other outings, we have a busy year ahead!

Just before Christmas we had to close our **Xpression** youth club which was a very sad, but necessary, event. (See separate item). On a happier note, we took over the running of **Putty Potters** during the year, and I am pleased to report that this is going well. In 2016, we are almost certain to be starting a club called **Spectrum**, for autistic adults. We are just finalising the fine details of how the club will be run by Leeni Szalay. You will see separate reports of our other clubs, **Seekers**, **Drop In** and **Future Friends**, all of which are thriving and providing our Members a wide variety of activities.

I am very pleased to see that your annual subscriptions are coming in thick and fast!! As most of them come to me before being processed, I am able to see how generous many of you have been by adding an additional contribution. Those extra amounts makes a big difference to Kingston Mencap. As I have said many times, we are a small independent charity and rely on whatever we can raise for income. If you have not got round to paying your annual subscription, please send it in as soon as possible. Be assured it will be well spent for our Members' benefit!



Our Clubs are always looking for new members and new volunteers. If you would like to volunteer please contact Jenny. If you would like to join a club, just look on our website for club details and just come along! We will be very pleased to see you.

Thank you all for your continued support. It is very much appreciated by the Trustees, Club Leaders and our army of volunteers. Have a good 2016!

Peter Hodges, Chair, Kingston Mencap

If you would like to receive a paper version of this newsletter, then please let Admin Assistant Jenny Pitt know by calling 020 8816 7500 or send an email to jenny@kingstonmencap.co.uk

FUTURE FRIENDS



Future Friends have enjoyed a good year, finishing up with a Christmas dinner, with 25 members having a meal at the Fountain. I have been running FFs while Danielle was away on maternity leave, and very enjoyable it has been too! However, Danielle has decided that she is unable to return, as she would not be able to fit in running the club with looking after Hadley, her lovely daughter. We are very sad that Danielle will not be returning, as she and Chris, her husband, have a fantastic relationship with the FFs members. We are now looking for a new FFs group leader, and hope that we will be able to appoint someone in the near future. Meanwhile, I will continue to run FFs and we will continue to enjoy ourselves as before! The members are such fun, I will really miss them when I hand over to a new leader. **Peter Hodges**



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

SATURDAY DROP-IN

Firstly, Happy New Year to all our members and volunteers. We hope that 2016 will be as much fun as 2015. The Drop In has continued to be a popular venue where members can meet up with friends, have a coffee, cake and enjoy the music.

There is usually Abba or Grease playing in the background but Una loves to put on her Catherine Jenkins CD which makes the vibe a bit more mellow. The hugely popular Boccia, organised by Declan is still on every other week as are the equally



popular Bingo sessions run by 'Bingo Ben'. Members have enjoyed making biscuits and cookies as well as the craft sessions that happen most weeks. Most of all everyone just loves chatting and catching up with the weeks events. In December The Drop In hosted it's annual Christmas party. As usual everyone had lots of fun, food and party games. The raffle is always the highlight of this event with a record number of prizes being won this year.



We also had some great news from our lovely volunteer Caroline, she is having a baby, due in Spring. Everyone is very excited and we all wish her well and look forward to meeting our newest member! Lastly, a huge thank you to our amazing volunteers, Declan, Beth, Caroline, John and Gabriel.

Michelle, Ben and Lucy

Drop-In is at Searchlight every Saturday, 11.30am to 2.30pm. Call 020 8816 7500 for more information or send an email to jenny@kingstonmencap.co.uk.

SEEKERS CLUB

Hello and a happy new year to everyone. I hope you all had a good Christmas and enjoyed the festivities of the season. We ended Seekers for the Christmas break with a panto trip at the Leatherhead theatre. We saw Dick Whittington and at the end of the show there was an extra special event where the cast came out to meet us all. It was a wonderful evening that everyone enjoyed.



The week before that we had the fantastic Blo band playing for us again at our Christmas party. Santa



came to visit and handed out the presents to the members and had a chat with those who wanted to say Hi, Merry Christmas! December also saw one of our long standing members leave to go on an adventure to Spain. Ted will be missed by everyone with his joking around and loud domino playing!

We wish him all the very best in his teaching job and look forward to the day when he will visit us again. October bought us another fantastic music evening with Mary and the members enjoyed line dancing with June and Shirley. Then we had our usual Halloween craft night

where people made decorations and November began with our Halloween party where DJ Tiger came to play his sounds for us. People danced the night away and had a ball.

We also had the Morris dancers come to perform for us again and taught us some more moves. A great night! Bowling was less successful this time round as the lanes kept breaking down, but luckily Raynes Park are hosing again in January and have promised that everything will be working again this time! The end of the month we met a new petting dog called Buzz who came on the same night that



Colin and Nina hosted a keep fit night where we burned a few calories and enjoyed the exercise. 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 or Peter Hodges on peter.kingstonmencap@gmail.com

That's it folks until the next time.
**Best wishes to you all,
Leeni, Seekers Club Leader**



CARERS GROUP

We hold the Carers' Group meetings on the first Wednesday of each month. We want carers to have the opportunity to meet up with other carers, to share information and experiences and to discuss relevant issues or any worries or concerns. If you want more information please contact: Gill Wood 0208540 1399 or 0775 936 3747 [or](mailto:jenny@kingstonmencap.co.uk) email jenny@kingstonmencap.co.uk

3rd February – at Hft 1.30pm **Stephen Taylor** head of adult social care

2nd March - at Sessions House 7.30pm

Further dates and speakers to be notified in due course

XPRESSION CLOSURE

Many of you will have heard that the Trustees, after much discussion, decided that we had no alternative but to close Xpression. This was not a pleasant decision, but we had to face the fact that we could no longer justify subsidising Xpression, as we have been doing for a number of years, to the extent of well over £3,000 per year. In recent months there have been more volunteers attending club nights than members. We have made attempts to recruit new members, but these have not proved fruitful.

Stephen Cheung, the group leader, organised an excellent variety of activities which were delivered by a talented group of loyal volunteers. It is a shame that more young members of Kingston Mencap did not taken advantage of what was on offer. Sadly, Xpression held its final annual awards ceremony just before Christmas. It was good to see a number of old faces present to see the end of an era. We are very grateful to Stephen and his volunteers for keeping the club going for so long, despite the lack of members. I am sure they are missing Xpression. We are heartened by the fact that the few members who did attend also attend other youth clubs during the week, and so they are not completely at a loss.

HFT NEWS

Hft have lots of exciting plans for 2016. We will be developing our timetable of activities to include new sessions such as boxing and designing and making a new sensory garden. Our aim is to facilitate some of our activities at other community venues so that we might reach more people with learning disabilities in the local community and neighbouring boroughs. We are very keen to hear about what young people want and will be having an open day in the spring. We have had great feedback about our evening



events. At the Resource Centre last year many people attended our Elvis evening, Curry Nights, Barbeques and Single Mingle event. These evenings are always a fantastic way of opening up our building to many new faces. We want more fun social evenings like this in 2016 and appreciate all of your ideas for new themes. Especially if you know any musicians that might want to come and play for us?!

Another success has been our Club Night at Kingston Hippodrome. We have been lucky enough to be able to take over this amazing venue 3 times a year and hope to do the same in March September and December of 2016. Many people have had the opportunity to DJ and we will continue to offer this experience. Volunteers are such a valuable asset for group activities and our volunteer bank is growing. We will be on the lookout for more volunteers and especially those people with specific skills that we can match to the activities people want us to provide. If you want more information about activities and events, if you have ideas for anything new you would like Hft to offer or you are interested in volunteering for Hft, please contact Melissa.Hulbert@hft.org.uk or Tel: 020 8942 9769.

WHO TO TALK TO IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN...

Here is some guidance on what to do if you have a concern 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/carer representatives on this group are Mary McDonald (mary.mcdonald@blueyonder.co.uk), Heather Notermans (heathernot@hotmail.com) and Gill Wood (gillcwood@blueyonder.co.uk)

They can also be contacted through the Kingston Mencap admin phone number, 020 8816 7500 (office hours Monday and Tuesday, 9.30am-2.30pm; monitored answerphone at other times).

CAN YOU SPONSOR OUR DRAGON BOAT?

Last year was our first Dragon Boat Race, with volunteers and members taking part to raise funds for Kingston Mencap. The day was a huge success and many spectators came along to see what it was all about and many are keen to return this year on **Sunday 17th July**, with a sense of the occasion and what it takes to make a success of the event and the fundraising efforts. We just about managed to break even and while that hardly qualifies as a success in fundraising terms it has given us as trustees, volunteers and members a far better understanding of what it takes to go on to establish the dragon boat race as a regular part of Kingston Mencap's fundraising and activities each year.

This is where we need help - the fee for each boat is £400 and we need sponsors to help fund this so that we can concentrate solely on raising funds.

Can you or your business help? Do you know someone who would like the promotional opportunity to support us? Not only would we feature the sponsor's name and logo on our T-shirts, they would receive a great deal of publicity via our newsletter, twitter and facebook. If you would like more information, please get in touch by emailing our admin assistant at jenny@kingstonmencap.co.uk.



LD PARTNERSHIP BOARD UPDATE

Back in September, the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board asked the LD Parliament and Kingston Mencap to organise a day where people could have their say about important things in their lives. So, people with learning disabilities, their carers and staff members came along to Kingsmeadow on a very cold morning in November. We talked about 'Getting good Support', 'Information', and 'Being Part of the Community'. However, the most popular item on the agenda by far, was sharing 'hopes and dreams' as residents in Kingston. We got lots of information from people about what is important to them, and everyone had a chance to have a say. People said they enjoyed the event and would like more events like this. A total of eight carers came, which is the highest number of carers at an event like this. The LD Parliament and Kingston's Mencap put together all of the feedback from the day and presented in at the December Partnership Board.

The Partnership Board will create an Action Plan based on the feedback received at the Have Your Say Day, and this will be presented at the next Partnership Board Dates (see below). The deadline for returning the information questionnaire has now passed and we are now looking at all the responses received. We sent this out to over 400 people in October's Pinboard and have asked providers to support people to fill them in. A report showing the findings will be published in time for Easter.



Thank you to all those who took the time to complete the questionnaire and we will be announcing the winner of the prize draw in February's edition of Pinboard, so good luck!

Partnership Board – Open Meeting (everyone Welcome) at Kingsmeadow, New Malden between 10am and 12pm



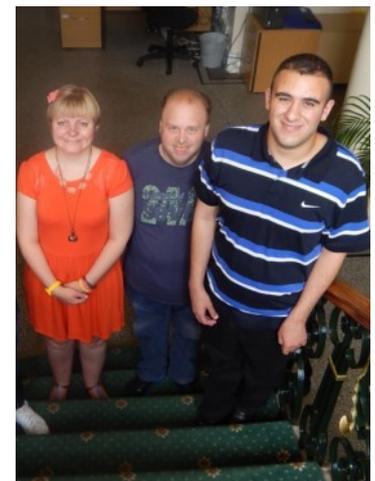
- 14th March
- 14th June
- 12th September
- 13th December



LD PARLIAMENT UPDATE

My name is Mario Christodoulou, I am a peer advocate for the Kingston Learning Disability Parliament. At the Parliament we work to support people with disabilities. We offer support with Health, Transport, Employment. We also work in conjunction with the police in regards to Hate & Mate Crime. This has been set up for people with disabilities who have been involved in incidents. We ensure all our information is in easy read format. My projects are transport and health, I attend meetings with Transport For London and Transport Liaison meetings in the Guildhall, and I feedback information that people with learning disabilities have with public transport and also hear what improvements will take place.

If you would like to get in touch with us we are based at: Sessions House 17 Ewell Road, Surbiton KT6 6AF. Our telephone number is: 020 8547 6540.



Also I was nominated by Grace Over, for an Impact Award. I was nominated for my hard work and commitment to participation and my passion for making sure that children and young people have a voice and influence in the services and support they receive.

WHAT'S ON

Kingston Mencap Charity Concert

Wednesday 22nd June, 7.30pm

Rose Theatre, Kingston

Save the date for our fabulous Charity Concert!

Come along for a wonderful evening's entertainment - and support Kingston Mencap. too Variouly described as the cutting edge of comic song or the evening wear window at Moss Bros, Instant Sunshine is three dinner-jacketed men of a certain age, singing their own original humorous songs, gently mocking the British way of life.

Watch this space for more details soon!



Featuring Dr Peter Christie, Special Needs Paediatric Consultant, who many members will remember!

 **healthwatch**
Kingston Upon Thames

Do you have a Learning Disability?
Want to improve Health and Social Care Services?



Learning Disability Project Group
Join our Team!



Projects

- Improve Annual health checks for people with a learning disability
- Visit GP surgeries, Hospitals and Care Homes to check they are giving a good service.

To get involved please call Sophie on 020 8974 6629
Or email sophie.bird@healthwatchkingstonuponthames.org.uk

Join us for a great afternoon on Father's Day!

Railway Outing

Sunday 19th June 2016

Thames Ditton Model Railway
Claygate Lane, Thames Ditton, KT7 0DL

Free entry and free train rides
plus
home made tea and cakes!

Wheelchairs can be taken on some trains.

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, John Goddard

Happy Birthday to all in FEBRUARY: Peter Privett, Michael Bassett, Georgina Wooderson, 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, Phillip 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.....



NEWS AND NOTICES

Thanks Ted

Our fantastic Seekers volunteer Ted Wightwick completed the Three Mole Hills challenge charity run recently. He raised £180 for Kingston Mencap. What a wonderful gesture, It's much appreciated.



As many of you might know, Ted has moved to Seville in Spain. Good luck Ted!



Our thanks go to the Mayor who officially opened our Christmas Fayre in November. He gave a speech, recognising all the hard work of our volunteers and wished us best of luck with our event. Here he is pictured with his wife and Peter Hodges, our chair.

WANT 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. To find out more contact: Jenny on 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

Christmas Choir Performance

What a wonderful show the Singing it Back ladies choir put on for us back in December. They sang traditional songs, jazz numbers and even an African tune. We had refreshments afterwards and raised over £60 for Kingston Mencap.



For choir details, go to www.singingitback.co.uk

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.