

Kingston Mencap

# NEWSLETTER

August - November 2019

Charity No: 1170322

## What's Inside

Hello from the  
new co -Chairs

Information



Club News

Dates for your Diary



# Hello from the co-Chairs

Dear Members, Families and Friends,

Thanks for picking up the Summer newsletter!

Our names are Emily and Tony. We are the Kingston Mencap co-Chairs. We would like to say a few words before you get stuck into the newsletter.

First, we want to say thank you. Thanks to all our members, volunteers and staff for their hard work and patience during the behind the scenes changes happening at Mencap. We are very grateful for this. Many of you have gone above and beyond what we could hope for from our volunteers, we are very lucky. Secondly, we really want to hear your feedback and ideas. We will do this by having new ideas boxes at clubs and events. This is a chance for members to tell us what they think. This is also a chance for members to have a say in what the future of Kingston Mencap will look like.

Last, we want to say a big thank you to everyone who has taken part in the exciting events that have taken place in the last few weeks. In particular, a very special thanks to all the organisers for bringing it all together.

We hope you enjoy the summer and look forward to seeing you at the Searchlight!

Emily and Tony



Emily drumming at the dragon Boat Race and Tony at Seekers Club



## Kingston Mencap Annual Subscription

Thank you to those of you who have subscribed either by cheque, BACS, Direct Debit or cash. We very much appreciate that many members have added to their subscription by way of a donation, to which we can add Gift Aid (eg £20 becomes £25). Subscriptions and donations are a vital part of our income for the support of our work in providing workshops for families, our clubs and activities.

If you would like to subscribe and haven't yet already please email

Michelle@kingstonmencap.org.uk or call on 0208 546 2837

To celebrate learning disability awareness week on June 17th we launched the Round The World Challenge to encourage people to take up exercise or to do more. To read what is's all about click on the link and if you would like to take part please contact

Michelle@kingstonmencap.org.uk

<https://www.mencap.org.uk/about-us/our-projects/mencap-sport/round-world-challenge>

# Workshop Disability Related Expenses Workshop

Disability Related Expenses update – often shortened to DRE July 2019

At the end of May I invited John Smyth (Finance), Jonathan Brown and Leticia Okwabi (Community Learning Disability Team – CLDT for short) to a Kingston Mencap meeting at Searchlight to discuss issues members have raised around claiming disability related expenses. There was a good turn out and family members had many individual queries but a lot of the questions related to activities and carers expenses, previously included in the Individual Budget payment. It was a productive meeting with families airing their concerns and both John and Jonathan seemed to listen and understand. Although it is more often those without families or friends that are being let down over their individual support, when there is no one who really cares to speak up for them and fight their corner!

This year RBK included a DRE printed sheet when sending out the Annual Financial form which gave details about how to make a claim for Disability Related Expenditure.

Families of people with a learning disability play a vital role supporting adult social care services and in return family carers expect honesty, respect, consistency, reliability and trust. Families want to be involved in decision making and this includes where to go for help with issues around claiming a DRE and being able to challenge unfair decisions. I have heard many times from members how frustrated they feel that their family member is not now being able to claim for activities or expenses incurred by a paid carer which then falls onto the family, especially when going on holiday. Others tell me information provided by finance is often contradicted by social services although John Smyth told us a lot of work is discussed with social workers before a DRE is agreed or not!

It seems to me if these expenses were still allowed in the budget, because a lot of people with a learning disability cannot do or go anywhere without a carers support, a lot of work would be saved all round – after all it's all coming out of the same pot!

John and Jonathan have kindly agreed to come back during the autumn, after consultation with their seniors, to update us especially around holiday support expenses.

Gill Wood – family carer ([gillcwood@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:gillcwood@blueyonder.co.uk))



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# Support Networks Workshop

In May we had a lively and thought-provoking workshop for family carers, run by Keyring, on developing support networks for people with learning disabilities. Keyring ([www.keyring.org](http://www.keyring.org)) are the national leaders in developing support networks and the CEO, Karyn Kirkpatrick, talked about the work they do and her ideas for developing family led networks. Families looked at what was positive about Kingston as a community to live in and it was good to see how many good things there are! The idea of support networks is to connect people living in different flats and houses so they can share some support, build a network of friends and make the best use of community opportunities. One of the ideas Karyn was interested in exploring at the workshop was whether people might be interested in using some of their Direct Payment to buy support that worked in this way. This is not an unfamiliar way of doing things- a few years ago Kingston Council was encouraging support providers to work more closely so that they built up friendship networks between people. If anyone who came to the workshop, or anyone who couldn't make it, is interested in finding out more please get in touch with Christine. Also, a follow up to the workshop run by David Abbey, from My Safe Home, is going to be arranged at some time in Autumn. This will be an opportunity to meet a parent from another London borough whose son is buying a shared ownership property with a HOLD (Home Ownership for People with Long-term Disability) mortgage. Some families were keen to hear from a parent with the experience of using the scheme. Please get in touch with Christine- [christine.towers@outlook.com](mailto:christine.towers@outlook.com) if you would like to come along to this or find out more.

Christine Towers



## David Still -KCN Advice Sessions KCN

David Still, from Kingston Carers Network, is at Kingston Mencap's Searchlight Centre again this month to provide one to one advice sessions for family carers. He has been advising on issues such as welfare benefits (including PIP assessments), changes to your relative's care and support, charges for care services, carers' employment rights and deputyship.

The appointments are for family carers who have a relative with learning disabilities and are Kingston residents. The next session will be on Friday August 30th 10.30 - 12.30. Please email [Michelle@kingstonmencap.org.uk](mailto:Michelle@kingstonmencap.org.uk) or call 0208 546 2837 to make an appointment.

If you receive this newsletter by post and would like to look at the links included on the internet Kingston Mencap have monthly drop-in sessions where members can use computers with support. Please call Michelle on 0208 546 2837 to arrange.



# Cambridge House is NEW in the borough, providing Advocacy to Adults with Learning Disabilities in Kingston!

This is a free independent and confidential service for people living in Kingston with learning disabilities, or Mental Health issues, we can help access social care services to address issues relating to social and NHS care.

## WHAT WE DO

An advocate supports people to be as fully involved as possible in decisions which affect their lives. They work with people to ensure their views, wishes and feelings are communicated and heard, speaking on their behalf where necessary.

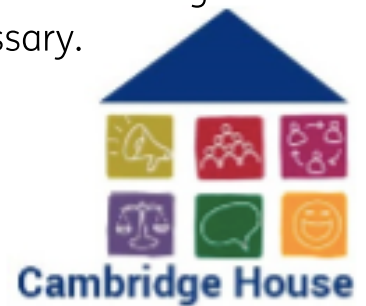
## WE WILL NOT

- Make choices for you
- Give legal advice or mediate disputes in families
- Provide befriending or support work
- Provide emergency support

Self-referrals are welcome. Referrals can also be made by family and friends and social care, health care or medical professionals.

The Advocacy service works on a range of issues, not limited to:

- Support to access benefit entitlements
- Young people (18+) in transition to adult services
- Parental issues for Adults with Learning Disabilities
- People with a learning disability or mental health condition who live with elderly carers
- People with a learning disability or mental health condition who have issues or concerns about the service they receive
- Attendance at best interest meetings
- Any issues presented by moving home or a tenancy
- Access to community facilities and activities
- Addressing issues or concerns about the service they receive
- Work or education
- Support in building relationships
- Housing related issues, including where to live
- Accessing healthcare
- Involvement in a circle of support
- Advocacy and liaison with support providers
- Help in establishing social contacts and activities
- Support with hate crime
- Support to access legal advice if required



**Contact Max Puzy on  
0207 358 7007 or Email:  
imca@ch1889.org  
website: [www.ch1889.org](http://www.ch1889.org)**

## A word from Maita Jenns a learning disability nurse

Maita Jenns is the learning disability community nurse at Your Healthcare.

Maita will support anyone with a learning disability with all aspects of their medical care and treatment, including hospital admissions, outpatient appointments and mental capacity assessments.

The learning disability team provide liaison at Kingston Hospital to arrange reasonable adjustments for people with a learning disability while they are in hospital, which can make a difference and may lead to a speedier discharge.

Carers and families are urged to realise the importance of hospital passports as these documents help hospital staff to know how they should care for the individual's particular needs.

Your Healthcare is in the early stages of producing a key-ring for all people with a learning disability who live independently in the borough. The key-ring will contain the contact number of Your Healthcare with instructions to ring and request a copy of the patient's hospital passport in the case of an emergency hospital admission.

If carers, support workers or family members need support to complete a comprehensive hospital passport, they can send a referral to Your Healthcare who will help them with this.

This is where we are based

Your Healthcare CIC Hollyfield House, 22 Hollyfield Road, Surbiton, Surrey KT5 9AL

t: 0208 339 8005 e: [Maita.Jenns@yourhealthcare.org](mailto:Maita.Jenns@yourhealthcare.org) w: [www.yourhealthcare.org](http://www.yourhealthcare.org)

## A word from Gina one of Kingston Mencap's brilliant volunteers

After volunteering with Kingston Mencap for 8 years I was asked to write about why I did it. I honestly can't think of any other reason than how much fun it is. I love hearing about everyone's week when they come to Future Friends and after a long, probably stressful day at work, listening to everyone's stories and having everyone together makes the day's issues disappear. All of the fab members of Future Friends never fail to make me laugh and however bad the day's been, it's always made better (especially when its talent show night). What a lovely bunch!



## Could 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 Club.

To find out more call Michelle on 0208 546 2837

Email: [michelle@kingstonmencap.org.uk](mailto:michelle@kingstonmencap.org.uk)

# Seekers Club Trip to Apulstock

This year Seekers Club went to the Apulstock Music Festival, near Bognor Regis, on Saturday, 20th July for their annual summer outing. The festival is specifically for people with learning disabilities and autism. We arrived by coach and the organisers were there to greet us. We entered the arena where soloist Michael Fry was in full song. We were given chairs to sit on and we settled down to listen to the music. We moved outside to make room for the energetic Zumba Class. Many Seeker's members joined in, to get ready for dancing to the bands that followed. The FOCs, St John's Wood Affair, Iron Tyger and The Hawkmen were all excellent entertainment. In between we had the Suzanne Hill dancers entertaining us, again with our members joining in the fun. We were issued with blow-up guitars and saxophones early on to add to the atmosphere by 'playing' along with the bands. The weather turned out to be just right, the atmosphere was great, the food and refreshments were really good and there were raffles and things to buy to add to the enjoyment. The community hall had excellent toilet facilities, including a fully equipped Changing Places toilet. We all thoroughly enjoyed the outing and will certainly consider going again next year.



Seeker's Sponsored Walk has raised £589.70 so far. Thank you to those who walked and those who donated. The money raised is spent on Seeker's Club activities and the yearly outing.





# Club News and an update on club leaders

## Saturday Drop In Club



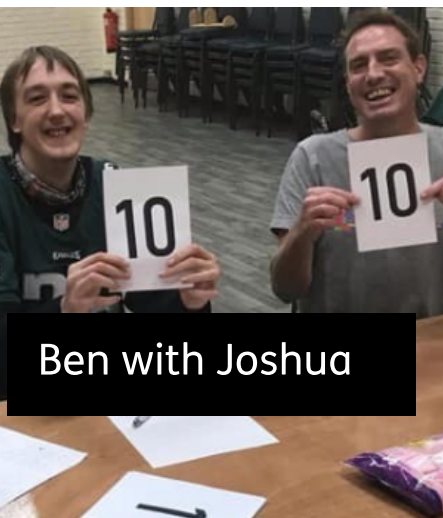
Martel joined Ben and Michelle at the Saturday Drop-In in April and is going to be making sure that we all keep healthy and active. Doruk from AFC Wimbledon will be back in September but until then there will be something sporty and fun to take part in every week as well as the usual activities

Time: 11.30 - 2.30. Cost £2

## Future Friends

Future Friends is being run by Ben on the first and third Thursday of every month. Recently they have had a brilliant Beach Party Night where everyone made Mocktails, played beach games and danced. The activities are different every week so please see the website for what's on and where as it might not always be at the Searchlight Centre.

Time: 7.30 - 9.30pm Cost: From £4



## Thursday Drop-In

Nicola has been running the Thursday Drop-In with the help of Sean and Reece from Orchard Hill College. The group have been making a film about Cyber Security. Next term Orchard Hill are back with an Arts and Crafts Project.

Over the summer Nicola has been keeping everyone busy and cool with seated exercises, smoothie making and Musical Bingo.

Time: 2.00pm - 5.00pm Cost: £3





# Dates For Your Diary

Friday 30th August

Advice session with David Still from Kingston Carers Network

Time: 10.30 - 12.45 (appointments are at 10.30, 11.15 and 12.00)

Email [michelle@kingstonmencap.org.uk](mailto:michelle@kingstonmencap.org.uk) or call 0208 546 2837 to book an appointment

Tuesday 3rd September

PMLD Day - This is a fun packed day for people with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities, their friends, family carers and support workers

Time: 10.30 am - 2.30pm Cost: £5 ( lunch is included in the price.)

Wednesday 9th October

'NEW' Singing Session - a new activity for anyone that wants to sing in a choir for fun.

Time: 12 midday - 2 pm. Cost £1

Saturday 26th October

Kingston Mencap Party night with DJ Tom and Andy

Theme: Sizzling Salsa

Time: 7 - 11pm

Tuesday 19th November

Communication Event with Healthwatch - a chance to find out what activities and services are available in Kingston for people with learning disabilities, their families and support staff

Time: 10.30am - 2.30 pm

Saturday 30th November

Christmas Fair with a performance by Rock Choir

Time: 11am - 2pm

All events are at The Searchlight Centre, Kingston Rd, New Malden KT3 3RX.

Please contact Michelle on 0208 547 2837 or

[michelle@kingstonmencap.org.uk](mailto:michelle@kingstonmencap.org.uk) if you would like to book a place.

# And Finally..... The Dragon Boat Race

Thank you to both the Rotary Club of Kingston and the Rotary Club of New Malden for their kind donations which make it possible for Kingston Mencap members and their families to take part in this amazing event. This year, because of their generosity we were able to offer transport to and from the boat race (often a barrier which prevents people coming) and also lunch for everyone who took part and volunteered on the day. This meant that the majority of our rowers this year were young people and adults with learning disabilities. The photos show how succesful the day was.



## Hire The Searchlight Community Centre

The Searchlight Community Centre is the perfect space to celebrate a special occasion. Please contact Michelle to make a booking or for more information.

Call Michelle on 0208 546 2837 or  
email [michelle@kingstonmencap.org.uk](mailto:michelle@kingstonmencap.org.uk)

## Trustees 2019

Co-Chairs: Emily Dyson-Hawkes and Antoine Al Hosri, Treasurer: Komal Yagnik,  
Trustees: George Tong, Paul Roberts, Portia Borrett, and Judith Broome

Visit us at [www.kingstonmencap.org.uk](http://www.kingstonmencap.org.uk)