

Kingston Mencap

# NEWSLETTER

January - March 2019

Charity No: 1170322

Kingston Mencap news, information about the Care Act and dates for your diary.

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# Dear Members, Families and Friends

## Wishing you all a very Happy New Year for 2019!

We had a very successful 2018 at our Searchlight Centre.

Having settled in to our new premises, we were able to provide many activities for our members, either on our own or in partnership with other organisations, such as the YMCA, Involve and Your Healthcare and other local organisations and charities. The Searchlight Community Centre has become a hub of activity, just as we had envisaged.

During the year we extended our Board of Trustees and welcomed Portia Borrett, Komal Yagnik, Judith Broome and Antoine Al Hosri. They all bring a wealth of experience with them and I am confident that they and the existing Trustees will ensure that Kingston Mencap continues to thrive. We were sad to see Mary McDonald retire as our Treasurer, after many years looking after our finances. I am pleased to say that Komal, who is an accountant, has taken over as our Treasurer.

You will see reports in this newsletter of our clubs and other activities. These would not be possible without the wonderful band of volunteers and group leaders we are very fortunate to have at Kingston Mencap. We could not run Kingston Mencap without them. We are always looking for new volunteers: if you could spare time to join us, please get in touch with myself or Michelle and we can chat about the options for volunteering.

I would particularly like to thank Michelle Kitch for all she does to look after Kingston Mencap affairs. Michelle has decided to give up leading Seekers Club: I am pleased to say that she will continue to co-run our very popular Saturday Drop-In. I know that our members will be equally pleased to see her on Saturdays.

I will be standing down as Chair and Trustee at the next AGM, but I will continue to volunteer and do my bit for Kingston Mencap. The last two years have been extremely busy for me with Kingston Mencap work and I need to get back to my retirement status and let younger Trustees take over the reins.

Please read our newsletter and keep in touch with our events and activities by looking at our website regularly. Our website will be upgraded in the first half of 2019 to make it more user friendly.

With my very best wishes,

Peter Hodges

# Away Day with the Trustees

Kingston Mencap's trustees recently met for an away day, facilitated by Christine Towers. We would like to thank all our longstanding volunteers, ex-trustees and members who spoke to Christine and gave feedback before the day. We had an exciting discussion about the future for Kingston Mencap, which we will continue at our future meetings. We will involve you in our discussions, and will start by sharing our ideas with you at the next AGM.



From left: Paul Roberts, Portia Borrett, Judith Broome, Chair: Peter Hodges, George Tong, Komal Yagnik, Ilze Hopper and Emily Dyson - Hawkes.

## Kingston Mencap Annual Subscription

You will soon be asked for your annual subscription. We are keeping the subscription at £5 per annum, and we very much appreciate that many members add 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. Please return your subscriptions promptly, to save us needing to follow up.



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## Our work to give information and support to families

In 2018, Kingston Mencap arranged some new activities to give information and support to families. This is continuing in 2019, beginning on January 22nd with a workshop about the housing and support options for people with learning disabilities. Start the new year by booking a place on this workshop as we are lucky to have a national expert, Steve Harris to provide lots of useful information.

### Workshops

Back in May last year, Kingston Mencap held a workshop for family carers on Planning for the Future and, since then, have run a number of other workshops to help families. In October there was a workshop called Decision-making for you and your family which gave invaluable information about the Mental Capacity Act, Powers of Attorney and the Court of Protection. This was followed in November with a workshop on the Care Act, run with Kingston Carers Network, which led to families realising how useful it is to know what this Act is all about. One parent said afterwards, 'We need to know what's in the Care Act then we can speak up for our sons and daughters!' We've included a few useful things about the Care Act below.

### Useful things to know about the Care Act

The Care Act is seen as the most important piece of social care legislation for over 60 years!

It relates to all people over the age of 18 and should help adults with learning disabilities and their families get the support they need. When families know what the Care Act says, and its key principles, it will help them to advocate for the support that is needed. Here are a few points that are helpful to know about:

Adult Social Care needs to focus on supporting a person's 'well-being'. The definition of 'well-being' covers most areas of someone's life including their personal dignity, whether they have somewhere suitable to live and are able to take part in work, education, training or recreation;

It also emphasises the need for support to be proactive and not just responding to crises. This fits with the aim that support should encourage a person's independence;

For the first time family carers are given rights independently from the person they care for. For example, even if your relative is not eligible for support you may well be (which may also be of benefit to your relative). (Continued on page 4)

### Useful things to know about the Care Act

Although the Care Act is an ambitious piece of legislation, it was introduced in 2015 at a time of financial cuts in social care which has meant it hasn't led to as much change as it could have. However, it's always helpful for family carers to know about their rights under the Act to give it more impact. There is a great guide to the Care Act, written by the Family Carers Support Service based in Bristol, specifically for family carers of people with learning disabilities and/or autism. It's free to read by clicking this link [How to get the right support from your local authority](https://www.hft.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Hft-Care-act_artwork_17.pdf)

([https://www.hft.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Hft-Care-act\\_artwork\\_17.pdf](https://www.hft.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Hft-Care-act_artwork_17.pdf)) or if you receive this newsletter by post you can get hold of a hard copy by phoning 0808 801 0448 or emailing [familycarerssupport@hft.org.uk](mailto:familycarerssupport@hft.org.uk)

Kingston Mencap are keen to continue to help families get more familiar with the Care Act and know how they can use it in assessments, annual reviews and at difficult times so let Christine know what information you need.

### Advice Sessions

Kingston Mencap and Kingston Carers Network (KCN) are now working together to provide a monthly session for family members caring for someone with learning disabilities. The session is at the Searchlight Centre in New Malden with an expert advisor from KCN. You can book an individual slot (approx. 45 minutes) to discuss an issue that you need help with such as a welfare benefit claim, social care assessment, funding for support services or getting the right support. Your relative does not need to live at home with you. If you're not sure if these sessions can help you, let us know what the issue is and we can advise you. The next session will be on Friday February 1st, so get in touch with Kingston Mencap if you think this might be helpful to you.

If you would prefer, you can get in touch directly with Kingston Carers Network for advice and advocacy as part of their service to all adult carers based at Tolworth. Their phone number is 020 3031 2751.

### Christine Towers

Christine works at Together Matters ([www.togethertomatters.org.uk](http://www.togethertomatters.org.uk)) and is helping Kingston Mencap to develop their support for families. Please get in touch with her if you have any ideas about what you'd like this work to cover or have any questions from this article - [christine@togethertomatters.org.uk](mailto:christine@togethertomatters.org.uk)



### Seekers Club

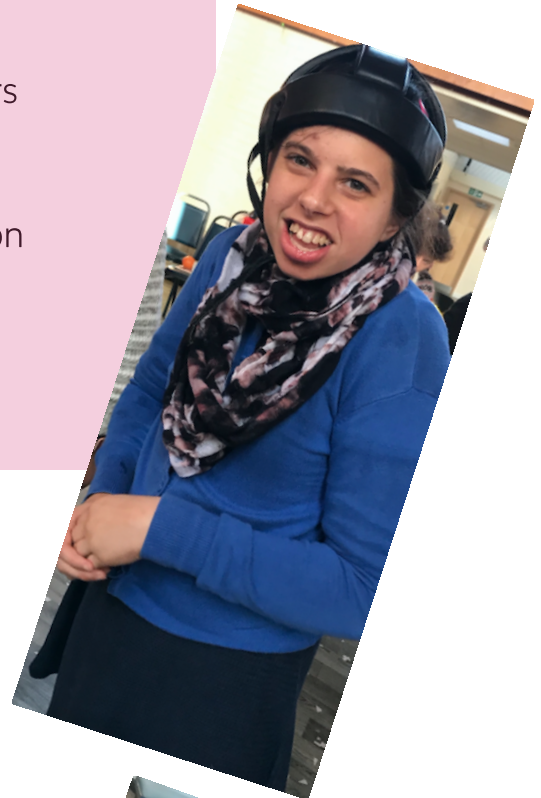
Michelle is stepping down as Club Leader this year after running Seekers for nearly 3 years. Nicola from the YMCA started running the club on January 7th. Most of the members know Nicola from the Laughs and Scarves sessions at the Saturday Drop In.

The last 3 months have been brilliant, starting with a dance class by Karl from the Movement Warriors, music from Salvo, Tel and the Ukulele Group, Edison's African Drum Workshop and a Glittering Glow Stick Party with Martel.

December was calmer as we started the month creating Christmas Garlands with the talented Christine and Jo. Seekers also had a very special visitor, Lucy, a 16 week old puppy who belongs to Angela. Jackie wanted to take her home.

We are very excited about the ABBA duo coming to perform on the 21st January.

Michelle



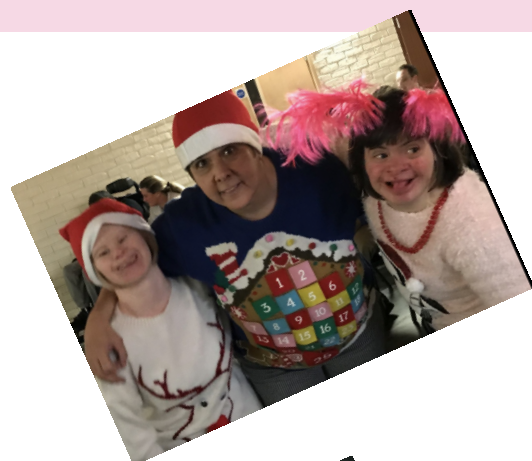
## Future Friends

Future Friends have had a busy time, with lots of different activities during the year.

Since July, when Charlotte went on maternity leave, I have been running Future Friends with the assistance of Gina, who has been a great help to me and our members. The members know me, so that has also made things easier. Charlotte has decided that, sadly, she will not be able to return because she has lots of responsibilities with her new young family. Thanks for all her amazing work and ideas. The members will miss her greatly.

We had lots great evenings in the autumn/winter period, including a BBQ, sports evening, race night, bowling, Halloween party, fireworks and bonkers bingo. We also had a very enjoyable annual Christmas dinner. There is a full spring programme for 2019 on the website and I will continue to run the club until a permanent leader is appointed.

Ben Hodges



## Saturday Drop In

Lucy has stepped down in order to pursue her career in art in which we wish her well and say thank you for all her great work. Michelle and Ben will continue to run the Saturday Drop In which has some exciting changes for 2019. Doruk, an AFC Wimbledon Coach will be running multi-sport sessions for all abilities every Saturday 12 - 1pm starting on the 5th January for 16 weeks.

There will also be the usual chance to play Boccia and Bingo, do a puzzle or some art or just sit and chat to friends. The cost remains at £1, please bring cash for refreshments or bring a packed lunch.

Ben and Michelle





# Dates For Your Diary

Saturday 12th January (these drop-in sessions will run for approx 14 weeks)

AFC Wimbledon Multi Sport for all abilities sessions with Doruk

Time: 12 midday - 1 pm (Drop In is open from 11.30 - 2.30pm)

Cost: £1

Thursday 17th January ( 6 week course )

Lifeskills with Michelle and Nicola - come along if you enjoy playing games, cooking, want to improve your social skills, health and wellbeing and to meet new friends.

Time: 2pm - 5pm

FREE

Thursday 17th January

Yoga For You with Maya (Yoga for families)

Time: 3pm - 5.30pm (Booking is essential as each family has an individual time slot, Maya will take bookings, email [michelle@kingstonmencap.org.uk](mailto:michelle@kingstonmencap.org.uk) for more information )

Cost: £2

Monday 21st January

ABBA duo performing at Seekers Club.

Time: 7pm - 9pm

Members £4 Non Seekers members £6

Tuesday 22nd January

Workshop: Housing and Support Options

With guest speaker Steve Harris

Time: 10.15 am - 1 pm

Free workshop for family carers but please book

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.



# Dates For Your Diary contd.

Thursday 28th February

New Drop In session with Orchard Hill College - learn computer skills

Time: 10 am - 12 midday

Free

This is a monthly session for anyone who would like to learn about computers or the internet and improve their skills. All levels welcome.

Friday 1st February

Advice Session with David Still from Kingston Carers Network

Phone Michelle on 07745814050 or email

michelle@kingstonmencap.org.uk to book your individual slot between 10.30 -12.30

FREE

Tuesday 30th April

PMLD Day - This is our fourth event, it's a fun day for everyone, s

Time: 10.30 am - 2.30 pm

Cost: £5 ( lunch is included in the price.)

Sunday 21st July

Dragon Boat Race

Time and details : TBC

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 if you would like to book a place.

And Finally.....



## 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)

## 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 Club. To find out more call Michelle on

0208 546 2837

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

## Trustees 2018

Chair: Peter Hodges, Treasurer: Komal Yagnik, Trustees: Ilze Hopper, George Tong, Emily Dyson - Hawkes, Paul Roberts, Portia Borrett, Tony Al Hoisri and Judith Broome

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

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