



For their 2015 pantomime, our Thanet drama group performed their own rendition of *The Wizard of Oz* to members of the public, including the Deputy Mayor of Ramsgate, Cllr Sarah Larkins.

The group, who attend our Thanet-based resource centre, had been preparing *The Magic of the Yellow Brick Road* all year long. The show took place at The Centre in Birchington, & with the support of the local community, raised almost £700.

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We provide opportunities for adults & children with a learning disability in East Kent, enabling them to achieve the things they want out of life. We believe that everyone should be valued & treated equally, & have their voices heard.

For more information or to sign up to an e-version of this newsletter, contact info@eastkentmencap.co.uk, or phone 01843-224482.

Designed & edited by Siobhan Rose O’Gorman

A WORD FROM THE CEO



Much has happened since the last newsletter with Christmas, as usual, generating many activities & events. The Thanet pantomime, The Magic of the Yellow Brick Road, proved to be a great success, as did Swale’s Oh Mama!. Carol singing, fashion shows & many Christmas parties got everyone into the festive spirit.

Our new lottery funded GOLD project was recently launched in Thanet & has already provided assistance to people who receive little or no statutory support.

Finally, the Kent Valuing People Partnership was able to showcase the outstanding work of the District Partnerships. Our film, Changing Kent Communities, was screened in East Kent on 1st February at the Marlowe Theatre & was very well received.

Jason Gerlack, Chief Executive Officer

THANET DRAMA GROUP FOLLOW THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD



The story followed Dorothy, whom during a tornado was blown from her home in Quex Park to a strange Dreamland. To return home, she followed the yellow brick road to the Green City, where she met the Wizard of Ozzy (Osbourne).

As well as the Deputy Mayor of Ramsgate, the show was watched by local councillors Keith Coleman-Cooke, Derek Crow-Brown, Janet Falcon, Lesley Anne Game & Carol Partington.

Senior Support Worker, Tom, said: *“I’m so proud of our members, who put on an amazing version of The Wizard of Oz after months of practice; they almost brought a tear to my eye.*

“Special thanks to KM Treasure Chest, Historic Dockyard Chatham, Buggy’s Bowling, Hornby Hobbies & Nurse Plus for their raffle donations.”



Photos by Leanne Downs - www.leannedowns.com

DONATIONS HELP RAMSGATE RESOURCE CENTRE DECK THE HALLS



In November, our Ramsgate resource centre made an appeal for Christmas decorations. Last year was East Kent Mencap’s first Christmas at the centre, which is based at Foresters Hall, & members wanted to celebrate by having a festive gathering with mulled wine & mince pies. This would not have been the same without the donations we received in response to the appeal.

Many thanks to all who responded, including Westwood Cross, who donated a fully decorated Christmas tree. These decorations contributed to over £2000 worth of donations over the Christmas period, which will make a real difference the lives of people with a learning disability.

SWALE TAKES A CHANCE ON ABBA-THEMED PANTOMIME

For their 2015 pantomime, our Swale drama group performed a *Mama Mia!* inspired production, featuring songs such as 'Gimme! Gimme! Gimme!', 'I Have a Dream' & 'Money, Money, Money'.

Oh Mama! took place at the Oasis Academy in Sheerness & was watched by many, including Swale's Deputy Mayor, Cllr Lesley Ingham. The group rehearsed for the show at our Swale-based resource centre, where they also designed props, including an eight foot backdrop.

To make the show their own, the group incorporated songs such as Beyonce's 'Crazy In Love', Taylor Swift's 'Shake it Off' & a BSL version of 'Let it Go' from Disney's *Frozen*.

Support Worker, Caz, said: "The group were very excited to showcase their work, especially the props, some of which had to be painted in the car park because they were so large."

"Thank you to everyone who made *Oh Mama!* happen, including the staff, members, choreographer Michelle Irwin & of course Oasis Academy," commented Swale Community Manager, Jaime. "Special thanks to KM Treasure Chest & Diggerland for their raffle donations."



SANTA VISITS YOUTH CLUB

At our last youth club before the holidays, children told Santa Claus their Christmas wish.

"Children with a learning disability can find it difficult to take part in festive activities, such as meeting Santa in his grotto," commented Children & Youth Manager, Ange. "The club night provided the group with the opportunity to do this in an environment that was comfortable for them."

Leeroy Fairhurst, who is a supporter of East Kent Mencap & dressed up as Santa Claus for the youth club, said: "It was my pleasure to dress up as I felt I'd really made the children's Christmas."

Our youth clubs take place monthly & provide children with a learning disability the opportunity to meet new people & try new things.

This particular club night was the last to be funded by Kent Community Foundation, which has made a real difference to children's lives. Our youth clubs will continue in 2016.



CAROLLERS SPREAD SOME FESTIVE CHEER AT WESTWOOD CROSS



To get shoppers into the spirit of things, Blend singing group joined our members at Westwood Cross to sing some Christmas carols.

Many stopped to watch the group, who were supported by Cllr Janet Falcon. Some passers-by, including a Chief Inspector from the East Division of the Special Constabulary, even sang along.

Many thanks to Blend, Cllr Janet Falcon & of course the general public, who together helped us raise over £200

towards our Thanet resource services.

Land Securities manages Westwood Cross shopping centre, which supports East Kent Mencap as part of Land Securities charity partnership with Royal Mencap.

KM

COLOUR RUN

5K



You can raise funds for any charity of your choice. Simply book your place online or via this form and we will send you a sponsorship form. Any sponsorship raised will be split 30/70 between the KM Charity Team (children's road safety) and the cause of your choice.

entry **£15.00**

Includes t-shirt, medal, glasses & colour powder

BOOK ONLINE TO SAVE £3
enter code CR16

U16's just £10.00

Where will we be running?

The run will take place at the Betteshanger Country Park, nr Deal. Gates open at 8am. The run will begin at 10.30am. Refreshments will be available all day. Bring the family along, it is a great spectator activity!

on the day...

If you are unable to do the run but would like to shower your friends in colours you can purchase colour bags

Or why not become a **COLOUR BANDIT** where for £10, you will be in the middle of the action in the colour zone.

* Colour powder and glasses included.

Will the colour wash off skin/out of hair?

Yes! The easiest way to get it off is while it is still dry. After that, soap and water, with a little rinse and repeat action will do the trick!

What if it gets in our eyes?

We recommend you wear sunglasses as this will reduce the chances of this happening. However, don't fear, the colour is non-toxic. A simple rinse with water will take care of it.

Can we inhale it?

It's a lot like breathing in dust, extensive exposure is not recommended. However no harm will come to you if you do.

COLOUR RUN BOOKING FORM

I will be raising sponsorship which I would like to split 30/70 between

The KM Charity Team and

Adults Children No. of t-shirts S M L XL XXL

Title Forename

Surname

Address

Postcode

Phone number

Email

Signed

BY SIGNING I ACCEPT THAT I AM TAKING PART IN THIS EVENT AT MY OWN RISK AND THAT THE KM CHARITY TEAM AND EVENT SUPPORTERS HAVE NO LIABILITY IN THE EVENT OF ACCIDENT OR INJURY

Please make cheques payable to KM Charity Walk and return to KM Charity Team, Gazette House, 5-8 Estuary View Business Park, Boorman Way, Whitstable, CT28 5EJ



RAISE FUNDS FOR YOUR FAVOURITE CHARITY!

Great event for all the family to join in and fundraise together!

SUNDAY 12TH JUNE 2016.
Run commences at 10.30am.
Betteshanger Country Park, Near Deal

Supported by



GARDNER | CROFT LLP
solicitors

SOCIAL WORK LECTURER PROVIDES PEER SUPPORT AT GATEWAY CLUB



A social work lecturer from Canterbury Christchurch University will now be providing peer support to members at the Gateway Club on Monday evenings.

Tim Odell offered himself to East Kent Mencap after the SPET team visited his social work students with members Paul, Alex & David, who all expressed an interest in drop-in sessions.

SPET Manager, Suzanne, said: *"We're very grateful that Tim has offered his services as we used to have a volunteer who provided peer support to members & it was a really positive experience for them."*

LOTTERY-FUNDED PROJECT LAUNCHES IN THANET



We are pleased to announce that we have secured our first grant of £407,531 from the Big Lottery Fund for our new project: Getting On with Learning Disabilities (GOLD). This is a four year project set up to enable people with a learning disability who live in Thanet to remain independent, become less dependent on welfare services & achieve greater control.

GOLD operates across the whole of Thanet, targeting people who do not receive statutory funding or are moving out of the welfare system. It offers two drop-in sessions a week: Thanet Thinkers in Margate & Getting On Group in

Ramsgate, which provide opportunities for people with a learning disability to share information with their peers.

In addition to drop-in sessions, the project offers one-to-one confidential support for those who either receive less than five hours support a week, live independently with no support or live with unpaid carers & receive no other support. These sessions will signpost people to information & services relating to benefits, housing, debt & budgeting, work, volunteering & training, leisure activities, community engagement & campaigning.

GOLD builds on the success of the work of our Supporting People Enablement Team (SPET) team. This was established in December 2012 to provide one-to-one support to East Kent Mencap tenants to enable them to become more independent & access a greater number of services in the community. SPET has demonstrated that providing specialist, one-to-one support to people with a learning disability can have a significant impact on their level of independence. It has challenged assumptions about people's aspirations & forced through organisational change.

"With this project, we hope to prevent people falling through the net," commented GOLD Project Worker, Helen. *"GOLD will provide them with the support they deserve but do not necessarily qualify for."*

Joanne, who attended the first Getting On Group, said: *"After discussing volunteering opportunities with the GOLD team, I feel I've taken the first steps towards paid work & getting on with my life."*



For more information, visit www.eastkentmencap.co.uk/gold



MARLOWE THEATRE SCREENS DPG FILM



In February, more than 100 people attended Canterbury's Marlowe Theatre for the screening of our latest film: *Changing Kent Communities*.

The film, funded by the National Lottery through the Big Lottery Fund, showcases the work of the District Partnership Groups (DPGs) in supporting people with a learning disability in Kent.

In the film, Holly, Paul & Alex discuss how the DPGs have supported them to become more independent & engage with their local community. They worked closely with the film's producer, Anton French of Campaign Films, with the aim of creating a piece of work that would inspire others.

At the screening, Holly, Paul & Alex were given the star treatment. The contributors arrived with 'celebrity' guests David Beckham, Madonna & Johnny Depp, & were awarded with a certificate from the Lord Mayor of Canterbury, Cllr Sally Waters.

"I feel proud to be able to show people what I have achieved with the support of the DPGs," commented East Kent Mencap tenant, Paul.

Film producer, Anton, said: "Making this film helped me to understand many of the difficulties people with a learning disability experience. I hope that *Changing Kent Communities* will help to raise awareness of these difficulties & change the inequalities within our society."

"Many thanks to the Big Lottery Fund for supporting this important project, to Anton for making it happen & to the Marlowe Theatre for providing a platform to showcase it," commented Kent DPG Co-ordinator, Sue Bates. "We hope to work with the venue again in future."

To watch *Changing Kent Communities*, visit our YouTube channel



The DPGs hold quarterly meetings across East Kent. At these meetings, people with a learning disability, their carers & families can talk about the things that are important to them. For more information, visit www.kentldpb.org.uk.



DPG MEETINGS

ASHFORD

Friday 4th March
10am to 12:30pm
Centre Piece Church,
Church Street,
Ashford

CANTERBURY

Wednesday 2nd March
10:30am to 1pm
Sturry Social Centre,
15 Mill Road,
Sturry

DOVER

Thursday 3rd March
10:30am to 1pm
Deal Welfare Club,
Cowdray Square,
Deal

SHEPWAY

Thursday 10th March
10:45am to 12:30pm
Phase II,
Marsh Academy,
Romney Marsh

SWALE

Wednesday 25th May
10am to 12pm
To be confirmed

THANET

Tuesday 1st March
10am to 12:30pm
Cliftonville Community Centre,
St Paul's Road,
Margate

Contact us by

Going to:

Thanet Thinkers
Tuesdays 1-3pm
Cartons Café
Margate

Getting On Group
Thursdays 1-3pm
Foresters Hall
Meeting St. Ramsgate



FREE TO JOIN, JUST TURN UP!
MEET THE TEAM & SET UP A 1-1 CHAT

Meet The Team



Suzanne Derham
Delivery Manager

074 1273 1919
suzanne.derham@eastkentmencap.co.uk



Helen Scott-Cooper
Project Worker

074 1272 0863
helen.scott-cooper@eastkentmencap.co.uk



Victoria Bailey
Project Worker

074 1273 8716
victoria.bailey@eastkentmencap.co.uk



Funded by the National Lottery through the Big Lottery Fund.

www.eastkentmencap.co.uk/gold

East Kent
mencap



Getting On with Learning Disabilities

Free information & signposting that's easy to understand.

East Kent
mencap

East Kent Mencap supports people with learning disabilities in East Kent to live full and valued lives with the same choices and opportunities as everyone else.



Funded by the National Lottery through the Big Lottery Fund.

Who is GOLD for?



People with a learning disability in Thanet who:

- Live independently.
- Have less than 5 hours of support a week.
- Live with unpaid carers, and receive no other support.

A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY

Our team will support you to achieve your goals, so you can get on with living the life you want!

Get on with GOLD & become a member:

- You will...
- ...be kept up to date with events & projects.
 - ...be part of a network of people who have had the same experiences as you.
 - ...be able to vote for what we do in future.
 - ...be an active member of your community!

What can we do for you?

GOLD can help you with information about:

- Work
- Volunteering
- Training
- Budgeting & Benefits
- Housing options
- Making friends & meeting people
- Hobbies and interests
- Community
- Understanding post
- Campaigning - have your say!



Confidential 1-1 chat

To help you make decisions about the things important to you
To discuss goals and how to reach them



Turn over to see where to go & who you can talk to.



You are eligible for GOLD membership if you:

- Have a learning disability
- Want to volunteer with us
- Are a local organisation

GOLD: Free information & signposting that's easy to understand.

DRAMA CLUB JOINS BLEND SINGING GROUP ON STAGE



In November, members of our drama club joined a local singing group on stage to perform a concert for members of the public.

Triple Threat performed alongside Blend on Sunday 22nd November at The Centre in Birchington, where the Mayor of Ramsgate, Cllr Trevor Shonk, was among the audience. Numbers included *The Sound of Music's* 'Do Re Mi', *Mama Mia's* 'I Have a Dream' & *Les Miserables'* 'Do You Hear the People Sing'.

The event was successful in showcasing the work of the drama club & raising funds for our services, with the sale of raffle tickets alone reaching £150.

"Members of Triple Threat are really proud of their work, & being able to showcase it with an established singing group such as Blend means so much to them," commented Senior Support Worker, Maria. *"Many thanks to Katharine & Richard from Blend for inviting us to perform with them."*

BBC CHILDREN IN NEED FUNDS HOLIDAY CLUBS



BBC Children In Need recently funded us to run two youth clubs during the school holidays, giving young people with a learning disability the opportunity to take part in community activities.

To run the clubs, we received £9579 from the charity. The first took place during the October half term holiday & was based at The Foreland School in Broadstairs. Activities included bowling, pottery painting & trampolining. The second club took place recently, during the February half term holiday.

Children & Youth Manager, Ange, said: *"The funding from BBC Children In Need has made a real difference to these young people's lives. Many parents tell us that their child doesn't do anything else during the school holidays, so clubs such as these are particularly meaningful."*

"Many thanks to BBC Children In Need, The Foreland School, Buggy's Bowling, Pick n Paint a

Pot, Aire Trampolining & Thanet Community Transport."



MORGAN'S FASHION SHOW RAISES FUNDS FOR EAST KENT MENCAP



In December, Morgan's Dance Hall in Margate hosted a fashion show to support local businesses & raise funds for East Kent Mencap.

Margate Fashion Show, which took place on Monday 7th December, featured local businesses Little M Clothing & Accessories, The Secret Wardrobe, Tojo Clothing, Margate Make Lounge, Seaside Sirens, The Gallery Boutique & De Bou. The businesses set up stalls at the venue before showcasing their clothing & accessories on the catwalk.

Owner of Morgan's Dance Hall, Allyson Jones, said: *"I opened Morgan's to share my passion for dance with others. It's important to me that my business is inclusive of everyone, which is why I chose to use the fashion show to raise funds for East Kent Mencap."*

"It was great to be part of this local event," commented Fundraising & Communications Assistant, Siobhan. *"Morgan's has supported us before & Margate Fashion Show provided us with the opportunity to network with other local businesses. Many thanks to Allyson for*

choosing to raise funds for us."

For corporate support opportunities, contact our fundraising team at funds@eastkentmencap.co.uk, or phone 01843-224482

LINDA SMITH - VOLUNTEERING FOR EAST KENT MENCAP



Linda has been volunteering with our Supporting People Enablement Team (SPET) since October 2014, supporting tenants to engage with their local community.

"I retired early to help take care of my parents. They both passed away within six months of each other, so I needed something to occupy my time with. My sister, who works for East Kent Mencap, suggested I join as a volunteer & work on a one-to-one basis with some of the members. That's when I met Joyce, a tenant in one of the charity's independent living properties.

I didn't have much experience of working with people with a learning disability but was aware of the work that East Kent Mencap does through living in Thanet. I find my knowledge of the local area helps me to suggest activities to Joyce when we go out in the community.

We've recently joined an art class in Margate as Joyce is very creative. Being able to support her to take part in activities such as this is very satisfying as it makes me feel I'm making a positive contribution to her life. Joyce is so appreciative of my support, as I am for the opportunity to support her; I feel as if I've made a good friend.

The work that East Kent Mencap & its SPET team do is inspiring, but the charity is always in need of more volunteer support. Without someone like me to help, Joyce wouldn't be able to take part in these community activities as she does not receive enough funding for this type of support."

For volunteer opportunities, contact our fundraising team at funds@eastkentmencap.co.uk, or phone 01843-224482

MEMBERS HELP TRAIN DOCTORS & NURSES AT CANTERBURY UNIVERSITY



According to Royal Mencap, people with a learning disability experience poorer healthcare than the general population because the majority of healthcare professionals have not been trained in how to treat them.

To change this, the SPET team work with Cathy Bernal, a Senior Lecturer in Learning Disability at Canterbury Christchurch University. Together, they help to educate healthcare students about the needs of patients with a learning disability, who often find it difficult to communicate their symptoms & understand diagnoses.

Recently, East Kent Mencap members Paul, Edward, Joyce, Pat, & Ann-Marie visited student doctors & nurses at the university's training ward, where they acted as patients.

Pat said: *"Visiting the ward was really helpful as I was able to tell the students about my experiences."*

"The SPET team approached us some years ago now, wanting to help train student nurses in how to treat patients with a learning disability," commented Cathy. "Since then, members of East Kent Mencap have helped us train not only student nurses, but also student doctors, social work students & mental health nursing students. Their input is always enthusiastic & confident, & every group they have helped to train has evaluated their contribution very positively."

OUR HOUSING SERVICES

We own a number of properties in East Kent, where we provide supported & independent living services to people with a learning disability. Our tenants are supported to live within the community & become as independent as possible. In addition, most Thanet tenancies qualify for nine hours of *Supporting People* support from our SPET team.

We have Supporting Independence Services (SIS) & SIS Plus contracts with Kent County Council, & met all five Care Quality Commission standards in our last inspection.

For housing vacancies, contact lynda.salisbury@eastkentmencap.co.uk, or phone 01843-224482



Would you like to tell your
Life Story

But don't know where to begin?

Kent & Medway
Learning Disability
Community of Practice



Come along to a Life Story Workshop to find out...



How to tell your life story

How to publish and share your life story



How to tell your story safely

What questions to ask someone
about their life story



We will also look at how other people
with learning disabilities have told their
stories.

**At Canterbury Christchurch
University, Broadstairs**



Tuesday 22nd March



10am to 4pm

Lunch will be provided



**Support workers, family or carers
welcome!**

If you would like to come, please let Amy at East Kent Mencap know.
You can email her at Amy.Johnson@eastkentmencap.co.uk



East Kent Hospitals University **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust

Invitation

to participate in a trial of tap2tag devices at East Kent Hospitals University NHS Trust.

26th February 2016

11am to 1pm

at

The Knowledge Management Centre
CHSS, Second Floor, George Allen Wing, Cornwallis building
University of Kent, Canterbury

If you would like to attend this meeting please register your interest with Jean Irving.
Please include your name and email address and (if different) the name, date of birth and NHS
number of the person who will be wearing the wristband.

Jean Irving
jirving2@nhs.net
01227 864382



During 2015 EKHUFT has undertaken an action research project supported by Foundation of Nursing Studies & General Nursing Council Trust into My Healthcare Passport with people with learning disabilities. Through this work EKHUFT became aware of Tap2tag.

Tap2Tag is a simple device, which anyone can use. This is typically in the form of a rubber wristband which contains a near field communication (NFC) chip. The user of the device uploads information that they would want to share in an emergency to a secure website. In case of need the chip can be 'tapped' with an NFC enabled phone or through a website to allow the data to be accessed by the person responding in the emergency. It can also be set up to send messages to friends and carers so that they know that the wearer is in difficulty.



EVENTS



KM COLOUR RUN

Sunday 12th June

10:30am

Betteshanger Country Park,
A258,
Deal,
CT14 0BF

£10 to £15 entry

TRANSITION EVENT

Friday 17th June

1:30 to 5:30pm

Turner Contemporary,
Rendezvous,
Margate,
CT9 1HG

FREE entry



VARIETY SHOW

Thursday 23rd June

1 to 3pm

The Centre,
Alpha Road,
Birchington,
CT7 9EG

£3.50 entry



To book a place, call 01843-224482

APPEALS

Sewing machines & fabric for our Margate resource centre, which runs a craft session. With the sewing machines & fabric, staff & members plan to make & sell handcrafted decorations to raise funds for our services.

Candles for a craft session ran by our Ramsgate resource centre. Staff & members plan to melt down the candles to make new ones, which they will sell to raise fund for East Kent Mencap.

Games for our Margate resource centre, which runs a gaming session. Games of interest include Uno, Dominoes, Connect Four, Boggle & Battleship.

Raffle prizes for our upcoming events. According to the Charities Aid Foundation, 58% of us admit to having not kept or used a Christmas present in the past. Are you one of these people? Re-gift your unwanted presents by donating them to East Kent Mencap.

To make a donation, call 01843-224482

IN MEMORIAM

East Kent Mencap would like to thank the family of Joan Farrow for the generous donation of £140 in memoriam of her passing in 2015. As requested by the family, the contribution will support our resource services in Thanet.

In memoriam donations make a difference & leave a lasting legacy. If you would like to make a donation in memory of a loved one, please call 01843-224482.

SOCIAL CLUBS

MONDAYS



GATEWAY CLUB

6:45 to 8:45pm

132 Northdown Road,
Margate,
CT9 2RB
£3 entry

TUESDAYS



THANET THINKERS

1 to 3pm

Cartons Café,
The Centre,
Margate,
CT9 1LG

FREE entry

WEDNESDAYS



BOWLING CLUB

5 to 7pm

Bugsy's Bowling,
Ethelbert Crescent,
Margate,
CT9 2DY

£3.20 entry

THURSDAYS



DRAMA CLUB

4 to 6pm

132 Northdown Road,
Margate,
CT9 2RB
£3 entry

To book a place, call 01843-224482



East Kent Providing opportunities for adults & children with a learning disability in East Kent

Registered charity number: 220798

