

# Summer Newsletter 2022



Flashmob in Ramsgate

## Jubilee Celebrations!



Swale Jubilee Drumming

## Introducing your Members Committee

The members committee are here to speak up on behalf of all members by sharing both the challenges and successes we have. If you have any issues, talk to your committee member or Fiona Wonford.



**Pat B - Thanet Housing**



**Ellie B- Herne Bay Day Resource**



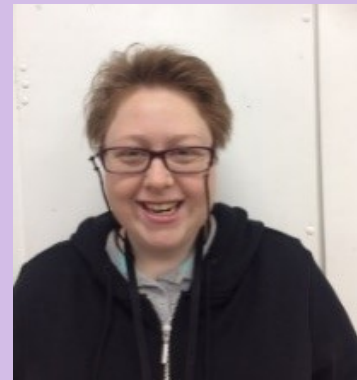
**Neil E - Thanet Day Resource & Community**



**Laurie J— Swale Housing & Community**



**Paul P - Herne Bay Housing & Community**



**Natash R—Margate Day Resource**



**Stephen S— Deal Housing**



**Natalie S— Ramsgate Day Resource**



**Ian S—Swale Day Resource**



**Amy W— Thanet Day Resource & Community**

**We would like to thank all the Staff, Managers and CEO for supporting us to make changes, overcome challenges, celebrate successes, have our voices heard and feel valued.**





In June, we welcomed Ellie B as the newest member of the committee. Ellie is representing Herne Bay Day Resource and said 'Since joining East Kent Mencap, I have made lots of new friends and I feel more confident'. She is really looking forward to being a part of the committee and speaking up on behalf of members in Herne Bay.



Some tenants have been having problems accessing their money from banks and paying for things like holidays. We wrote to the Housing Manager to ask if we can support them to speak to the banks, to help them to understand the issues people with learning disabilities are facing and find a solution. We are meeting with the Housing Manager to discuss next steps.



A member who is a wheelchair user, raised an issue with access to a Fire exit at one of our Day Services, we wrote to both Senior Management and Service Managers and they immediately worked to resolve the issue – WELL DONE!



In June, we held our first virtual meeting via the Spitfire system. We had committee members from Swale Day Resource, Herne Bay Day Resource, Deal Housing, Thanet Housing and CEO, Jason Gerlack who attended to meet candidates who applied to join the committee as the Herne Bay Day Resource Representative. IT WAS A HUGE SUCCESS.



We took great pride in nominating amazing staff members for the Kent Care Awards – GOOD LUCK to everyone! You're all winners to us.



The Committee supported Kent County Council by sending questions which could be used to support with Day Service Contracts – they told us 'We have incorporated many of the questions you raised into either the service specification or the tender application for the new contract tender.'

## What else has our Members Committee been doing?

**Alcove are the company who made the app members use on their KARA Carephones. They told us:**

- \* EKM are number one for supporting Alcove getting things done.
- \* EKM have used over 10,000 minutes of group calling since they were launched – more than any other provider.
- \* They invited members to test the new version so they can get it right before they start using them for all their customers.
- \* They would like regular feedback sessions with EKM staff and members to talk about problems they have using the carephones and ideas members have to make them better or easier to use.
- \* They are working on some of the ideas members have shared with them and will be in contact soon to ask members to test new carephones.



## Vacancy for voluntary position as Board Director

Following the retirement of Mandy Rackley and Keith Smith, we now have at least one vacancy for a Board Director. This is a voluntary role. We are looking for someone to join the Board and help shape the future at an exciting time of development and growth for the charity. The ideal candidate will have experience of the business sector, including an understanding of financial management and, ideally, some experience of the learning disability and autism sector as well as the enthusiasm to drive the charity forward. The Board ensures that EKM complies with the Charities Act 2011 and works positively as part of a team, understanding the importance of seeking guidance and support when required. The Board meets on the third Thursday of every month from 18:30, usually virtually but from time to time at our Head Office in Ramsgate. For a full description, more details or to apply for this role please email: [fiona.wonford@eastkentmencap.co.uk](mailto:fiona.wonford@eastkentmencap.co.uk)

## Vote for us at Tesco

Calling all Ramsgate shoppers... we need your vote! The Tesco Community Grants Scheme have welcomed our proposed project for our bowling club for young people with a learning disability and their families where they can have fun and make new friends in a friendly and welcoming environment. You can vote in stores to help us receive a grant and help make this happen.

Voting continues until the 30th September 2022.



## From Our CEO Jason Gerlack



Welcome to the Summer edition of the Members Newsletter! We're looking back on a busy period working with community partners to celebrate both the Platinum Jubilee and Learning Disability Week in June. Partnerships bring so much to the charity, not only sharing their skills and expertise but also breaking down barriers. Partners tell us how much they also benefit from working with our members.

Do get in touch if you or your organisation would like to explore opportunities or joint working.

Congratulations to all the members who took part in our Spring Forward Challenge and helped raised an impressive £2,300 for fitness and well being activities. Members are now busy deciding on which activities they will spend it. Our Members views are so important to our development planning and I am very grateful to the Members Committee for representing everyone who uses our services. Their report shows the value of their contributions, so please do speak to them or Fiona Wonford if you have something to share.

Our charity is also led by our Board of Directors and we recently said a reluctant farewell to two Directors. Mandy Rackley and Keith Smith have been with the charity for a combined total of over 35 years and felt it was time for some fresh faces. We are incredibly grateful to both of them for their invaluable contribution which has seen the charity grow from its original base in Cliftonville to services across East Kent. We're now recruiting for new Directors – see opposite.

We continue to rely on donations and grants for much of our work and appreciate those who support us, including everyone who donated to our Spring Forward Appeal, remembers us in their will, sends donations in memory of a loved or gives us their time and skills. Thank you for your kindness and generosity towards people with a learning disability.

To vote you just have to buy an item of any value from Tesco collect a token at the check out and pop it in our box. Thanks for all the support, let's win this!

You can VOTE at the following local Tesco stores:

Ramsgate Manston Superstore

Hereson Road Ramsgate Express

Ramsgate High St Express





# Platinum Jubilee Celebrations

There was jubilation at East Kent Mencap this June as members joined the country in celebrations to mark Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee.

From parties and performances to a flashmob and exhibitions, members and staff collaborated with local artists to create, make and rejoice.

Here's a snapshot of how we celebrated. To see more, watch out for our Jubilee film here: <https://www.youtube.com/Eastkentmencap>



In Margate, the windows of the GOLD project at 215 Northdown Road have been transformed with a Jubilee themed collage, created by the Well Project and using portrait photographs taken by Jason Evans.



In Herne Bay, the group worked with Moonbeam Theatre Company on a multimedia Jubilee performance. They also enjoyed an afternoon tea with cakes donated by their local Herne Bay Coop.





Shoppers in Ramsgate town centre were treated to a surprise Flashmob, with members from Thanet Day Resource performing alongside Drag Performers from Margate Pride to, of course, a track by Queen. Margate Pride worked with the group to create the choreography, providing much enjoyment. Afterwards, everyone sat down to a well earned Jubilee feast!



Swale have been creating illustrations celebrating their individuality with local artist Richard Jefferies. The group is developing a book featuring the illustrations to inspire young people with a learning disability to achieve their aspirations. They also hosted a stall at the Sheerness Town Council Jubilee Celebrations, with a drumming workshop, to demonstrate to the community their growing confidence from the project.



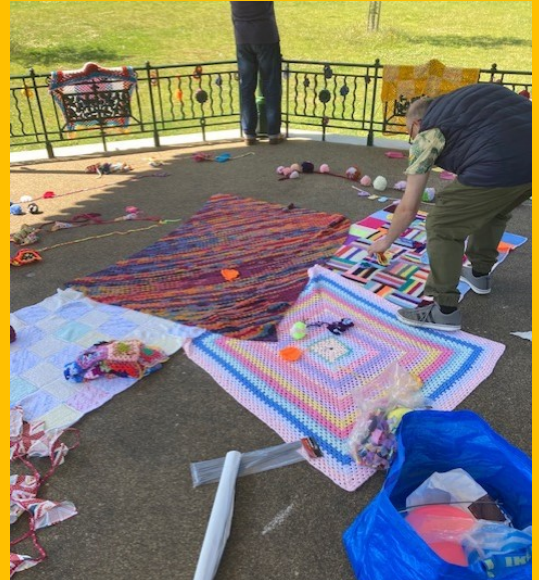
Funded by the Arts Council's Let's Create Jubilee Fund coordinated by Kent Community Foundation.





# Learning Disability Week 2022

Learning Disability Week took place from 20 to 26th June with the theme of reconnecting and the gorgeous weather was a chance for our members to enjoy meeting their friends and getting out into their local community.



## Yarnbomb

Ellington Park Bandstand in Ramsgate was given a colourful makeover for LD week. The GOLD group created beautiful craftwork to promote equality for people with a learning disability and celebrate their achievements. Using materials from the EKM Scrapstore, members knitted, crocheted and sewed fabulous decorations and spent the morning putting them up. Members from the Day Resource joined them to add their pompoms and bunting and everyone concluded with a picnic in the sunshine. We are grateful to the Trustees of the Friends of Ellington Park for supporting our yarnbomb, especially the Chair, Kirsty Peterkin.





## Festival Fun



Our Swale group had a great time at the Festability Festival in Quex Park. They enjoyed live music, a silent disco karaoke, and even a tour of a fire engine, in the company of friends and peers.



## Goal!

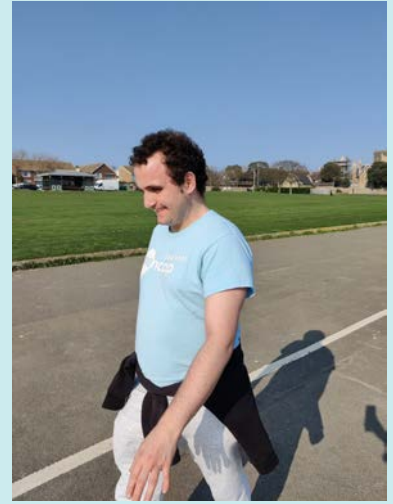
Herne Bay organized a football game between members, carers and staff in their local park. They played a brilliant match which ended 4:3 to the members. Medals and trophies were awarded to the brilliant players, including Dayle, seen here celebrating his team's victory!





# Spring Forward Success!

We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who donated to our Members' Spring Forward campaign. You raised over £2,300 to support additional fitness and well-being activities for people with a learning disability in East Kent to enjoy. The participants were awarded a certificate of thanks for their fantastic achievements. Members enjoyed it so much they have suggested it can become an annual event. Learn more about the challenges they undertook below.



Shorne (above left) sometimes finds it difficult to go outside, but this didn't deter him from taking up walking as his challenge.

Natasha (above centre) took on a painting by numbers challenge, and created a beautiful still life painting.

David (above right) who enjoys an active lifestyle, walked and cycled.

Neil (below left) walked his dog Suzie every morning.

Amy and Pierre (below centre) learned to sign lyrics to new songs every week. In the image they're signing 'Sweet Caroline'.

Natalie (below right) chose swimming, visiting her local swimming pool three times a week.





## Easy Read Group Recognition

Our Easy Read Group were nominated for two awards by Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust this year. In the spring they were awarded Group of the Year by the Trust's Patient and Carers Partnership team.



This Summer they were finalists as Participation Partner of the Year at the Trust staff awards. The group have been creating easy read materials for the Trust for over 8 years producing materials to help patients with a learning disability or sensory impairment to understand the services that are being provided. The group is part of EKM's Valuing People Now delivery group and the Kent Learning Disability Partnership Board.

## Floral memorial

When Ingrid's boyfriend John Parslow sadly died a few years ago she understandably found it quite hard to process what had happened and knowing she wouldn't be able to see John again. Staff supported Ingrid to display photos of John in her room and when she moved to Clarence they asked



Ingrid if she would like to plant something to remember John by, as the house has a lovely large garden. Ingrid chose this rose bush as pink is her favourite colour and roses are part of her name. Ingrid's memorial rose bush is doing incredibly well, as pictured here, with this year's flowers coming into full bloom! Ingrid can see this from her window and she often sits in the garden thinking of John and the good times they had.



# Thank you!

We are so grateful to our wonderful supporters who made donations over the last three months! Anyone can donate on our website and fund greater resources and opportunities for people with a learning disability in East Kent. Particular thanks to:

Mrs P Ellis, Mr G M Miller, B G Nancolla, and Mrs S M Northam, in memory of the late Mrs Christina Fig; Councillor Trevor Shonk; Augie Lebon, Sue Baron, Sheerness Town Council, Sylvia Cotton, and everyone who supported our Spring Forward Challenge (see previous pages for an update).

## Quick quiz —have some fun in the sun with our summer teasers:

1. Axel Blake won which of these TV series in 2022?

A) The Voice B) Britain's Got Talent C) Love Island

2. Which TV comedy duo first sang Bring Me Sunshine?

A) French and Saunders B) Morecambe and Wise C) The Two Ronnies

3. Which of these is the title of the hit that singer Adele had in 2021?

A) Easy Love B) Easy On Me C) Easy Rider

4. What is the name of Dennis the Menace's dog?

A) Fido B) Gnasher C) Scooby

5. Elena Rybakina won the ladies' singles title at Wimbledon this year. Which country does she come from?

A) Croatia B) Kazakhstan C) Germany

6. Traditionally what is the main ingredient of sangria?

A) Cider B) Wine C) Gin



Answers: 1B; 2B; 3B; 4B; 5B; 6B



Find out what activities we offer by searching East Kent Mencap on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.



Registered charity number: **1188118**

If you or someone you care for has a learning disability and needs support, please do get in touch. We are here to help.

Call: **01843 808 964**

[info@eastkentmencap.co.uk](mailto:info@eastkentmencap.co.uk)

[www.eastkentmencap.co.uk](http://www.eastkentmencap.co.uk)