

# Spring Newsletter 2025



Cooking and Baking



Valentines Disco



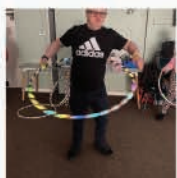
Circus Skills



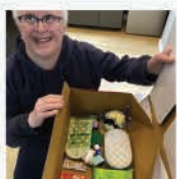
# Hello from our CEO Jason Gerlack



It is my pleasure to introduce this edition of the East Kent Mencap newsletter.



This issue covers a snapshot of the wonderful experiences and work within our community which we hope you enjoy reading.



We recently celebrated the retirement of some long-standing Members' Committee representatives and welcomed those who had been newly elected to the board.



There is a section to follow but I want to offer my personal thanks for your hard work, determination, commitment, and enormous achievements.



You have and will continue to make a real difference by helping us and national partners develop and improve services.



Your knowledge, guidance, and encouragement have supported East Kent Mencap and its partners make many positive changes.

Thank you on behalf of everyone.

Best wishes  
Jason

# Members Committee News



We had a celebration of our members' committee in April as we welcomed in a change of faces.

Thank you to our past members: Natalie Stevens, Natasha Rudkin, Amy Whitaker, Patrica Brownsell and Paul Pinder.

Thank you to our retained members: David Benson, Steven Sewell and Ian Swindell

And a welcome to our new members: Lucy Rutland, Patricia, Paul, Chris Dawson, Susan Abels and Ryan Brown.



# News



The members' committee started in 2018 with one person and quickly expanded through elections in Thanet to a group of 13. As we became more active in East Kent Mencap and the community, interest from others grew. Initially, the five members were from our day resource, but we reached out to other services to find more representatives.



Over the past eight years, the committee has helped the NHS with easy-read documents, acted as covert patients to assess accessibility, and advocated for peers facing issues like bank closures, ensuring their voices are heard.



We were even invited to a Bank of England conference to discuss making banking easier for people with learning disabilities, like using face prints or fingerprints instead of PINs.



To show our gratitude, we held a celebration for the committee to recognise their hard work. Jason shared, "One of the things that sticks out is when the committee stood Karen and me down from the committee.". Fiona, the facilitator, added that it's been an honour to watch the committee and their peers gain confidence and feel part of something meaningful.



# News



Circus Skills was a huge success, run by 'This Bean Spins' over 6 weeks, thanks to a grant from Social Enterprise Kent.

Our members learnt to juggle, balance, and embrace their creativity all whilst gaining confidence in a supportive environment.

A huge thank you to Bean for being such a credit and bringing her talents to the hubs



Herne Bay Hub members enjoy their weekly visits to Herons Gym.

Lesley enjoys the rowing machine the most and says "I like going to the gym and going on the bikes. I feel fitter from when we first started going, it's getting easier".

The gym helps to promote an active lifestyle and healthy living.

We would like to thank Herons Leisure Centre for always being so welcoming to our members and employees!

# News

Working in partnership with

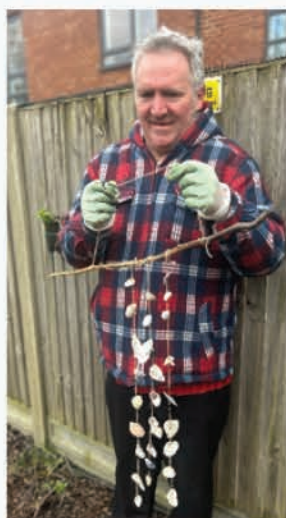


Our project with SGN is truly underway, so far we have reached 337 vulnerable households through workshops, drop-ins and third-party events.

We are training our employees in Carbon Monoxide awareness to help keep the people we support safe.

If you would like free energy safety advice, to learn more about Carbon Monoxide, the Priority Service Register, Locking Cooker Valves or to learn some energy saving tips please contact:

[Rebecca.walker@eastkentmencap.co.uk](mailto:Rebecca.walker@eastkentmencap.co.uk)



Simon attends our up-cycling workshops at The Limes Community Centre and said “I will definitely come back again, I’ve done planting before and I enjoyed making the planters. I love the chickens they have there, especially Snowy!”

Upcycling & Gardening Workshops – FREE Taster Sessions in Ashford available!

Email [Louise.mcalpine@eastkentmencap.co.uk](mailto:Louise.mcalpine@eastkentmencap.co.uk) or [Kelly.forrest@eastkentmencap.co.uk](mailto:Kelly.forrest@eastkentmencap.co.uk) for more information.



# News



We have had two visits from the Kent Fire Service. In February, they paid a visit to the Herne Bay Hub where members got the chance to sit in the fire truck! Tina said "I was really excited to see the fire truck and to see inside"



We then saw them turn up at Ramsgate in May for a fire safety session, where we heard about important fire safety tips straight from the experts.

It brought people together, allowed us to learn from each other, and built connections between local services and our members.

Feedback was:

"It was lovely to see the fire engine close up"

"I saw the masks the firefighters wear and put the oxygen pack on - it was really heavy"



Dennis from our Swale Community support tried his hand at baking. With the help of his support worker Beth, he made apple crumble, which he will now be able to cook when he has friends over. He plans to try out more recipes soon.



Swale Hub also hold cooking sessions each Tuesday and Wednesday, with the aim being to help members build independence and develop essential life skills.

Support worker Becky says "it is important they enjoy the process of cooking and working together as a team"



# News



A huge thank you to The Isle of Thanet Sunrise Rotary, who raised an incredible £1000 for us during their Big Knit Event in March.

Our Fundraising Manager, Sherrill, attended both the event and the cheque presentation and felt it was a privilege to be part of such a wonderful event.

Thanks to the generosity of everyone who took part, we can deliver joy to people with a learning disability who use East Kent Mencap's Hubs, Housing, and Community services.



Our Scrapstore continues to go from strength to strength, with our visitors showing us the wonderful creations they have made with goods from the store.

Every donation of materials means it is saved from landfill and helps to raise funds to support people with a learning disability.



Carol recently enjoyed a trip Prison Island Maidstone for a round of adventure golf with her support worker.

Carol shared that she had a great time and would like to go again with her friends.

The outing was a fantastic opportunity for her to build confidence and independence.



# News



Our Margate and Complex Needs Hub were joined by the former Mayor and Mayoress of Margate, Jack Packman and Karen Brinkman in March. Thanks to their generous donation of £500, we were able to upgrade our kitchenette, with new cupboards and workspace installed.

We have created additional space that will allow us to better support our members and meet their needs.



Our members also loved meeting them and enjoyed talking to them about the bowling they had planned for the afternoon. They shared what they love about being part of East Kent Mencap!

“I love it here, it’s so fun”

“It’s nice here, very friendly”



Some of our GOLD members took part in a 12 week GROWTH well-being coaching programme. The focus was not just on well-being but on empowering people and transforming lives. Participants said they feel like they have changed in a way that they can manage their emotions better.



# Follow us on Social Media

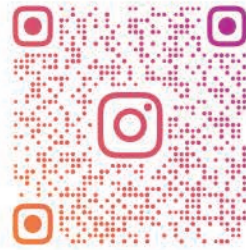


Instagram

@eastkentmencap  
@scrapstore.ekm



EASTKENTMENCAP



SCRAPSTORE.EKM

Scan me



facebook.com/eastkentmencap  
facebook.com/scrapstore.ekm



East Kent Mencap



Scrapstore

Scan me



# Spring Photo Gallery



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



01843 808 964



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



East Kent Mencap Foresters Hall Meeting Street Ramsgate Kent CT11 9RT

Registered charity number: 1188118 Company number: 12263702



# Spring Photo Gallery



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



01843 808 964



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



East Kent Mencap Foresters Hall Meeting Street Ramsgate Kent CT11 9RT

Registered charity number: 1188118 Company number: 12263702