

Welcome..... to the November edition of Learning Disability News. We have been very busy since our last newsletter – the Mencap Centre extension is now complete with new facilities which have given us more scope to develop our services. The Mencap team have settled in well and have been joined by new Information, Advice & Support staff. In addition, we have recruited a whole new staff team for our new service, Carers in Southampton which is based in Meon House. So if you are in Portswood and haven't yet met the new teams or had a chance to look round our new building, please do call in and say hello.

Alex Ules - Chief Executive Officer



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Adult Social Care Consultation

Southampton City Council has just ended the consultation on the way some of its directly provided services, commissioned respite and day care services are delivered.

Consultation affected the following services:

- The re-provision of respite care services for adults with a learning disability, currently provided at Kentish Road
- Redesign and re-provision of all the council's in-house day services for those with a learning or physical disability or mental health conditions. This affects a number of services, including those run by the council and independently.
- The closure of Woodside Lodge Residential Home

The Council has said the purpose of this consultation is to ensure that services fit in with the way that people want to live their lives and which continue to support them and their families. This was open to everyone and started on the 24 July 2014 with a series of meetings to discuss the proposals and for people to give their views held at different venues across the city including the Mencap Centre, at which over 50 carers of people with a learning disability attended.

The final Public Consultation Meeting was held on Wednesday 22 October bringing the Consultation to a close on 23rd October. A report will be available on the Council website on 1st December. This will be followed by a Scrutiny Panel meeting on 4th December at 5.30 pm and the final Cabinet meeting will be on 9th December at 4.30 pm; both will be held in the Council Chambers at the Civic Centre. Members of the public are able to attend and those wishing to speak should arrive shortly before the meetings starts and to let the clerk know.

The Daisy Cake Company

Artisan cake makers The Daisy Cake Company, has chosen Southampton Mencap as its adopted charity.

To mark the event, students from Own2Feet made a special trip to its tearooms in Bell Street, Romsey in order to deliver two of our finest collecting tins. The invitation was made by The Daisy Cake Company's Lauren Williams

Christmas Holiday Activities

Southampton Mencap is organising the Fairplay Junior & Teen Schemes for the Christmas holidays.

Fairplay **Junior** sessions will be held on Monday 22nd and Tuesday 23rd December and Fairplay **Teen** will run on Friday 2nd January at the Mencap Centre.

Sessions each day cost **£10.50** and run from **9.30am – 4.30pm**.

For more information **please email:**

activities@southamptonmencap.co.uk or **call the office on 023 8058 4088**

Please note that the schemes are subject to staff availability and only members with a learning disability and additional needs are eligible to attend.

Free flu vaccination for carers

As a carer you are entitled to a free flu vaccination. Contact your GP surgery now to book.

Southampton Mencap Office

The Mencap Centre will be **closed** from Christmas Day until Friday 2nd January.

If you need more information about the closure of our services over the holidays please e-mail: **activities@southamptonmencap.co.uk**

Launch of Carers in Southampton Service

New service aims to help more than 36,000 carers in Southampton



The Carers' In Southampton is a vital new service launched on 1st September 2014. The service aims to help these unsung heroes, 48% of who spend more than 20 hours a week looking after a family member, a friend, or a neighbor without pay, and to identify the many more who currently do not use services within the city. Many carers suffer financially as a result with three million reducing their working hours and 30 per cent seeing a drop of £20K or more in their annual earnings. Caring is often not a choice and problems can go unrecognised with the majority of carers struggling silently and do not know that help is available to them.

Vitalise found that carers often find themselves torn between their need for a break and their sense of duty towards their loved ones, This certainty takes its toll- people providing high levels of care are twice as likely to become permanently sick or disabled than the general population, with 625,000 people suffering mental and physical ill health as a direct consequence of the demands of caring.

Carers in Southampton aims to empower this silent army by providing them with a place where they can get information, guidance, support and training, so they can continue in their caring role while having a much better quality of life. Carers can choose to use the dedicated hotline: 02380 582 387, visit the relaxed Resource Centre at Meon House in Portswood or check out the interactive website and social media.

The three year project funded by Southampton City Council through Southampton Mencap seeks to give carers more choice and independence by developing a network of existing services and agencies to bring the City together for central, strong support for carers. Brian Strevens, Southampton Mencap Trustee and Executive Chair of Carers in Southampton, said: "This organisation will not only give guidance and thought but will start to mobilise the Silent Army of carers to press for changes in social and health care."

Drop in to the Resource Centre to find out more:

Meon House, Rear of 189 Portswood Road, Southampton, SO17 2NF

Telephone: **02380 582 387**

Visit the website: carersinsouthampton.co.uk

Email: enquiries@carersinsouthampton.co.uk



Carers' Lunch Club

At Southampton Mencap we continue to welcome family carers to our popular monthly Carers' Network Lunch Club held at the Mencap Centre in Portswood. The lunches aim to provide opportunities for socialisation and relaxation and meeting others in similar circumstances on a regular basis, as well as providing relevant information from a range of guest speakers. Meetings are between 12 p.m. and 2 p.m. unless otherwise stated, and dates will always be posted on the website in advance. Each meeting offers Family Carers:

- A chance to meet other family carers
- The opportunity to join in discussions with a range of speakers, on issues concerning them and their caring responsibilities
- Practical and emotional support

For carers with difficulties getting to the Mencap Centre we may be able to organise transport for carers who do not have use of a car and would find it difficult to travel on public transport, or where specific circumstances can be considered on a discretionary basis.

Upcoming dates:

Monday 17th November – The Dementia Friends session will be a 45-60 minute informal and interactive session highlighting some of the key messages about dementia and things you can do to make a difference to those affected by dementia in the community. You will have the opportunity to become a Dementia Friend, joining the 499,390 people across the countries that are already making steps in their communities. Being a Dementia Friend does not involve any volunteering or commitment only the desire to understand and help people living with dementia through small actions and by encouraging more people to become Dementia Friends.

Monday 15th December – Festive Lunch & Celebrations Telephone **023 8058 4088** or e mail admin@southamptonmencap.co.uk

New 'Independent Support' Service Launched

Independent Support is a Government funded programme (until March 2016) to provide additional support to young people and parents during the implementation of the SEND reforms. The Council for Disabled Children have commissioned Southampton Mencap to provide the Southampton Information Advice and Support (IAS) Service in Southampton.

The Southampton IAS Service (formerly known as Parent Partnership) now have a friendly team of Independent Supporters who can provide specific help and support to children/young people and their parents with Education Health and Care (EHC) Plans.

Their main tasks include:

- Helping parents/carers and young people to understand the local referral process and local offer
- Provide support to parents/carers and young people if they are transferring a Statement of SEN or Learning Difficulty Assessment to an EHC Plan
- Provide support to parents/carers and young people if they are requesting an EHC Plan
- Provide parents/carers and young people with information to help them understand personal budgets

To contact the IAS Service call- 023 8055 7607 or email ias@southamptonmencap.co.uk

Carers' Rights Day

Southampton Parent Carer Information/ Health and Wellbeing Event –

Friday 28th November 2014

Mencap Centre Portswood 11 am – 2 pm

If you are a parent carer of a young person with special education needs or disabilities come along to our interactive session to find out about local services and hear from speakers about the support available in Southampton. Staff from Southampton Mencap will also be there to let parents know about the new Information, Advice & Support Service and the leisure activities available through the organisation. As part of the session we will also treat you to some short pampering treatments and will then serve you with a light lunch and cakes provided by the Tasty Options Baking Company. Places are filling up fast, so to book yours please call 023 8058 4088 or e mail admin@southamptonmencap.co.uk

Parents Hub Southampton

For parents involved with children's services

Choices Advocacy listens and supports people with learning disabilities to have their say.

Choices will be offering a drop in service for parents involved with children's services.

You can have a 1 to 1 talk with an advocate, who can help you:

- Understand what is happening and why.
- With forms and letters you might not understand.
- Make a complaint if you need to.
- Find a solicitor.
- Get in touch with others for support

There are sessions at:

Pickles Coppice Surestart 65 Windermere Ave, SO16 9QX Tel: 023 8087 8387	Central Surestart 60-68 Clovelly Rd, SO14 0AU Tel: 023 8033 1635	Weston Surestart Centre 60 Foxcott Close, SO19 9JQ Tel: 023 8043 7866
Wednesday 22 October 9-11am Wednesday 12 November 9-11am Wednesday 3 December 9-11am	Tuesday 4 November 3-5pm Tuesday 25 November 3-5pm	Monday 27 October 2-4pm Monday 17 November 2-4pm Monday 8 December 2-4pm



Athletics sessions for children with disabilities

Level 2 England athletics coach will deliver an inclusive recreational athletics club for children with a range of impairments. Sessions will focus on track work, throwing and jumping where possible. Free refreshments will be provided at the end of each session for participants and parents. For more information, please call 03000 200 135 (option 2) or send an e-mail to markmatthews@activenation.org.uk

Under 8's FREE swimming

The Quays Swimming & Diving Complex and Bitterne Leisure Centre offer **FREE swimming for all children under the age of 8. This offer is available seven days a week.**

Walking football for people over 50 Every Monday / 11am-12noon / £3

These relaxed sessions at Southampton Outdoor sports Centre to refresh on technique, progress into skills and finish with a small sided game, with plenty of opportunities for water breaks and short rest periods. For more details, please call 03000 200 135 (option 2) or **send an email to Daniellewarnef@activenation.org.uk**

Communities challenged to be inclusive and accessible

The Minister for Disabled People, Mark Harper, has launched a six-month Accessible Britain Challenge to encourage local communities to become more accessible and inclusive for disabled people.

The aim of the challenge is for individuals and organisations to engage and work with the 12.2 million people who are disabled to remove the barriers that can stop them from playing a full and active part in their communities. This follows the Government's disability strategy "Fulfilling Potential – Making it Happen", which was published in July 2013.

At the end of the challenge communities that are making a real difference will be recognised through new awards that are now being developed.

Awards will be given under the following broad categories:

- Improved mobility
- Innovative use of buildings, places and spaces
- Safer neighbourhoods
- Inclusive social activities

Further information is also available from Brian Keating on 0113 251 9828 or at fulfilling.potential@dwp.gsi.gov.uk



Hate Crime Advocate

0113 293 5100 | 18001 0113 293 5100 (Text relay) | james@stophateuk.org | www.stophateuk.org

This is a helpline dedicated to supporting victims of Learning Disability Hate Crime, facilitating increased reporting of incidents, providing independent information, advice and support to victims, families and professionals. The helpline is open 24 hours a day.

The Repair Café

If you have something that needs repairing such as a chair leg that has come loose, a toaster that no longer works or a woollen jumper with moth holes? Toss it? No way! Repair it at the Repair Café.

Repair Cafés are free meeting places and they're all about repairing things (together). You'll find tools and materials to help you make any repairs you need. On clothes, furniture, electrical appliances, bicycles, crockery, appliances, toys, etc. You will also find repair specialists such as electricians, seamstresses, carpenters and bicycle mechanics.

Visitors bring their broken items from home. Together with the specialists they start making their repairs in the Repair Café. It's an ongoing learning process. Knowing how to make repairs is a skill quickly lost. This is essential to kindle people's enthusiasm for a sustainable society.

If you have nothing to repair, you can enjoy a cup of tea or coffee. Or you can lend a hand with someone else's repair job. You can also get inspired at the reading table – by leafing through books on repairs and DIY.

Repair Café Southampton. Freemantle United Reformed Church hall, 257 Shirley Road, Southampton
<http://repaircafe.org/locations/repair-cafe-southampton>

Want to improve your IT skills?

If you're keen to get better at using a computer and the internet, why not go along to one of the FREE IT clubs in the city.

- Millbrook IT Club (drop-in)
- The Link, Windrush Road, Tuesdays, 12.30 – 3.30pm
- Weston IT Club (drop-in)
- Weston Library, Chamberlayne Leisure Centre car park, Thursdays, 12.30 – 3.30pm
- Tea and Tech Cub (drop-in)
- Townhill Park Community Centre, Meggeson Avenue, Tuesday (term-time only), 10.30am – 12.30pm (starts 30 September)
- Bitterne IT club (coming soon!)
- Bitterne Library, Tuesdays, 10am – 12noon (term-time only), drop-in

Carers in Southampton has organised the following training for carers:

Care Act 2014

Monday 24th November 2014

Registration 9.30 am

Seminar 10 am – 12 pm

Venue: Mencap Centre in Portswood

The training will be delivered by Lisa Armstrong, Senior Lecturer at Portsmouth University with the aim of helping carers understand the changes to practice which will be introduced by the Care Act in April 2015.

Carers in Southampton strongly welcomes the landmark new rights for carers in the Care Act 2014 which should make it easier for carers to get an assessment and receive advice and support. For the first time carers will also have a clear right in law to services.

To book a place or for more information contact Carers in Southampton on 023 8058 2387 or e mail enquiries@carersinsouthampton.co.uk

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