

# LEARNING DISABILITY NEWS

## Christmas 2022 Edition



We would like to thank everyone who has supported us in 2022 and for making our year all the better.

The Mencap centre will be closed from 12pm on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> December and will not re-open until Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2023. So, if you need us for anything please get in touch ASAP! Or you can go to our website any time. Otherwise, let us wish you the merriest of merry Christmas' and the happiest of happy New Years!

## Highlights of 2022



**MARCH** A HAPPY day for everyone when we took possession of our new vehicle, a 7 seater Ford Galaxy car fitted with a tow bar and with bold Mencap branding! Our new acquisition meant that the Gardening & Maintenance and Makers & Bakers groups have been able to expand their reach across the Southampton area promoting their skills and the services available to the public.

**MAY** A MAGICAL day with a new twist to our annual general meeting. Our Alice in Wonderland themed event saw members, staff and volunteers really getting into the spirit of this and certainly made this an AGM to remember.



**JUNE** A day of CELEBRATIONS for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee with the rest of the UK.



**NOVEMBER** A PROUD day for the Makers & Group who participated in the Southampton ASC Conference Bake Off competition and were delighted that their signature carrot cake won first prize! Kate Concannon, Principal Social Worker at the council presented the winning trophy and was treated to more baked goodies!

**Trustees**  
Jennifer Strevens [Chair]  
Di Bernstein  
Daniel Mar-Molinero  
Heidi Oldrey  
Hilary Linssen  
Brian Strevens  
Lisa Stead

**Chief Executive Officer**  
Alexandra Iles  
**Senior Administrator**  
Hardeep Kaur  
**Administrative Assistant**  
Babs Kaur  
**Activities Manager**  
Elly Iles

**Carers in Southampton**  
**Service Manager**  
Linda Lawless

**Day Service & Club Team**  
Jane Richardson  
Pula Popat  
Marc Kibler  
Cath Wigham  
Liz Curtis  
Angie Gilbert  
DJ Gover  
Sam Pickard

And not forgetting our magnificent bunch of sessional staff and volunteers!

Website:  
[www.southamptonmencap.org](http://www.southamptonmencap.org)

You should recently have received a calendar with the dates of all our activities in 2023. Please get in touch with the office if you have not had this and would like one.



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# Good News Blog



THE MENCAP ENTERPRISE initiative started earlier this year with the Gardening & Maintenance group meeting each Tuesday followed by the Makers & Bakers group on Wednesdays. Both these groups operate from the Mencap Centre in Portswood. They were developed as part of the vision to move away from the traditional 'day service' offer so that people with learning disabilities could be engaged in real work based activities and through this gain a sense of self-worth. Through the

overall programme offering cooking based skills, gardening, maintenance, creative arts, and core business skills, learners are empowered and by our dedicated team of professional tutors, staff and volunteers.

Our vision for the enterprise programme is to open up pathways for people with learning barriers to employability opportunities, whether it be in a voluntary or a paid capacity. More importantly and at the very heart of the programme is the intention to upskill them and help boost their confidence and self-esteem. Their contributions to the society in which they live are being recognised and valued as an asset to the community.

## PLEASE SUPPORT OUR ENDEAVOURS BY



**Ordering from our bakery;** we have a range of freshly baked products, including breads, scones and loaf cakes. Cakes can also be ordered fully iced and decorated for that special occasion. The latest addition of samosas, with an eastern flavour and western twist, has been hugely popular, and along with the other goods produced offers good value for money. Get in touch with the office or order through our website.

**Do you live in or around Portswood?** Let us know as we may be able to help you with any small scale gardening or outdoor maintenance work.



**PLAYSCHEME SUCCESS 2022** has been our busiest year ever for our under-18 FairPlay schemes with capacity reached for the majority of sessions. To avoid disappointment in 2023 please book your required dates well in advance so we can continue to provide reliable high quality care schemes to families known to us while also welcoming in new referrals.



**CARERS NETWORK MEETINGS** are for anyone to attend if they provide unpaid care to a son, daughter, brother, sister or a relative with a learning disability of any age.

The first meeting held in November put the spotlight on respite. The group heard from Nick Bryant who has been leading on a review of what is available in the City and how to improve the offer. This is an issue most carers feel strongly about, particularly in making sure that they and the person they care for are able to have regular breaks from each other with the confidence in knowing that this meets their individual circumstances. Future meetings will focus on suggestions made by carers based on their lived experiences. Speakers on specific topics identified will be invited for the first part of the meeting only allowing time for carers to meet and get to know each other informally.

## NEXT MEETING – WEDNESDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY 12PM–2PM AT THE MENCAP CENTRE IN PORTSWOOD

A list of dates for 2023 will be published on our website but the date above is the first one of the New Year. These will be held between 12pm-2pm with a light lunch and some delicious home baked goodies made by our Makers & Bakers Group for you to enjoy. Please put this date in your diary and let the office know if you are able to attend.



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