

# InTouch

The voice of learning disability in South West Herts

Spring 2011

watford  
**men**cap  
60 years

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Photo  
Stuart Bendig





# With spring on the way it's a time of change for Watford Mencap

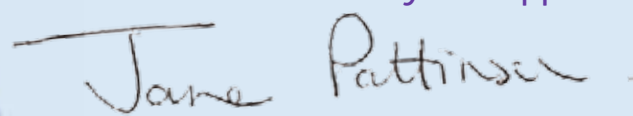
Juggling money and resources has always been part of our day to day work. However, the challenge to provide quality services and support with less money has never been so great.



With cuts to our funding we have been looking closely at making savings, whilst protecting our front line services. Our efficiency review has helped us save money and an external review recently confirmed that we are 'Value for Money'.

However, along with the current funding challenge also comes great excitement, as we begin to develop our housing and support services. We want to ensure that we can offer personalised support to local families for years to come.

Please do join our Diamond Dogs Walk or bring your family and friends along to another of our Diamond Jubilee events! We have never needed your support more.

  
Jane Pattinson



## In celebration of the life of John Holloway

More than 200 people paid their respects to former Watford Mentally Handicapped Society Chairman John Holloway at a service celebrating his life.

John died at the age of 85, following a short illness.

A well known, liked and respected man, Mr Holloway was Chairman of Watford Round Table when he was asked if he could help to raise

funds for Watford Mentally Handicapped Society (as Watford Mencap was then known).

John became Chairman of Watford Mentally Handicapped Society – a position he held for 10 years in the 1960s. During that time the 'Tablers' raised a huge amount of money to buy Table Hall which was used by people with learning disabilities.

John's widow Ann recalled: "The support was astounding and we managed to raise all the money in a year! John had a great sense of duty and felt it was really important to carry out community work."

Our thoughts are with John's family: Ann, her daughter Deborah, son Peter and grandchildren Rachel and David.



# What's happening about the cuts?

## Children's Services

Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) has awarded the Saturday Club funding which will allow up to 9 children per week to use the service from April to September 2011. Money will still be tight.

We can also bid for 'early intervention' funding for children with disabilities and HCC may fund the Afterschool Club.

If you would like Afterschool Club to continue, email Veronica on [development@watfordmencap.org.uk](mailto:development@watfordmencap.org.uk) with what it means to you, or phone 01923 713637.



**Emma Danks - pictured swimming at Merchant Taylors' School fun day - is a member of Leisure Together which may be hit by funding cuts**

## Carers' Breaks Funding

Our Carers' Breaks funding has been cut by 25%. The Carers' Breaks services include Advice and Advocacy, Leisure Together and the College Holiday Activity Scheme.

We are working hard with HCC to try to ensure that we provide the same number of breaks for carers and give best value for money.

Some events (Art Exhibition in April, Watford Grammar School for Boys' dance in May and Singalong Mamma Mia in November) help fund Leisure Together. Please support them!

## Supporting People

Our Supporting People contract, which allows us to provide supported housing for people living in the community, has been cut by 5%. We are looking at how we can still ensure people receive the best possible level of support.

## Community Support Service

We have received an 8% cut in funding for this service but are carrying on, and hope that more people will use it so that we can recoup the money lost. Please contact Angela Stuthridge on 01923 713636 if you need Community Support.

## Key Points

- Hertfordshire County Council is making cuts to some of Watford Mencap's services
- Services affected include Children's Services, Carers' Breaks (Leisure Together, Advice & Advocacy, the College Holiday Activity Scheme)
- Find out what to do if you are affected by these cuts

## What can I do if they stop my service?

You can contact the Mencap Learning Disability Helpline.

By phone on 0808 808 1111, email at [help@mencap.org.uk](mailto:help@mencap.org.uk), by textphone on 18001 0808 808 1111 or by text on 07717 989029.

Or you can call Watford Mencap's Advice and Advocacy Service on 01923 713620 and speak to Ruth or Julie.



# Walkies!

Watford Mencap will be holding a dog walk with a difference on Sunday 22 May at King George V playing fields in Bushey.

As the name Diamond Dogs Walk suggests, the theme for the event is 'bling'. So please feel free to dress up in sparkles and tinsel as there will be a prize for the best dressed dog and owner.



Sam Farrelly is pictured with her son Callum and furry friends!

If you don't have a dog, do not worry, just come along for a gentle stroll. The walk starts at 11am and will raise money for our Diamond Jubilee year. It costs £5 to enter. Please register with Rose Kreloff on 01923 713627 or email [rkreloff@watfordmencap.org.uk](mailto:rkreloff@watfordmencap.org.uk)

## Key Points

- A Diamond Dog walk will be held on Sunday 22 May at King George V playing fields in Bushey
- To tie into our Diamond Jubilee celebrations, we want you to dress up in sparkly clothing – and your dog can dress up too!

# Learning Disability Week

Every year national Mencap leads a campaign during Learning Disability Week to help raise awareness of learning disability issues.

This year's campaign – from 20 to 26 June – will focus on hate crime.

It builds on the 'Stand by Me' campaign which aims to challenge the police, the criminal justice system and the courts to end hate crime against people with a learning disability.

Watford Mencap and its corporate partner, VocaLink, will be getting behind the campaign this year to raise the issue of hate crime in the local community.

Watford Mencap would like to hear your views and experiences of hate crime. Email them to [smaling@watfordmencap.org.uk](mailto:smaling@watfordmencap.org.uk).

For more information visit [www.watfordmencap.org.uk/get\\_involved/learning\\_disability\\_week](http://www.watfordmencap.org.uk/get_involved/learning_disability_week)

## Key Points

- Learning Disability Week runs from 20 to 26 June
- It focuses on hate crime
- If you have experienced hate crime, please get in touch

# Netbuddy.org.uk

Are you caring for someone with a learning disability? Visit [www.netbuddy.org.uk](http://www.netbuddy.org.uk) for over 800 practical tips and ideas from parents, carers, teachers, therapists and people with everyday experience of learning disability. Netbuddy is an award-winning site for swapping practical tips and information on all aspects of supporting people with learning disabilities.

# VocaLink partnership

VocaLink has signed a 2-year partnership agreement with Watford Mencap.

The agreement commits both organisations to working together to further the aims of Watford Mencap.

VocaLink, the international payments provider with offices in Rickmansworth, will share social activities such as theatre trips with people with a learning disability, as well as offering skills such as marketing and finance.

Marion King, Chief Executive Officer at VocaLink, said: "We have worked with Watford Mencap for a number of years. This agreement provides us with a smarter way of working together, and shows our commitment to the fantastic work Watford Mencap do in our community."

Don Eungblut, Chair of Watford Mencap, said: "VocaLink have been very supportive in recent years and we are delighted to have signed this partnership agreement. I know our staff are looking forward to working with them on future projects."



Don Eungblut and Marion King shake hands on the partnership

## Key Points

- VocaLink has signed a 2-year partnership with Watford Mencap
- The 2 organisations will work closely together to further Watford Mencap's work

# Swimming fun at William Penn

Swimming sessions dedicated to people with a disability are now available at William Penn Leisure Centre in Rickmansworth.

The sessions are available exclusively to people with a disability and their families or carers. A disabled hoist is available for use.

If you fancy a splash around, the sessions are held every Sunday between 6.30pm and 8pm and cost £1.60 per person per session (with no cost to accompanying carer). All users must also purchase a Leisure Card at £2.45 for 6 months which allows discounted rates for other activities.

Call 01923 771050 for more information.

## Key Points

- Swimming sessions just for people with a disability, their families and carers are available at William Penn Leisure Centre in Rickmansworth
- The sessions are on Sundays between 6.30pm and 8pm

# ACS becomes Health and Community Services

Hertfordshire County Council's Adult Care Services has been renamed Health and Community Services (HCS). The change will not affect the way people get adult social services and the phone number remains 0300 123 4042. Customer Services and Libraries, Culture and Learning are all part of HCS.



# Diamond Jubilee Ball sparkles

Watford Mencap celebrated its Diamond Jubilee in style with a sparkling ball at the Watford Hilton. The ball, which was sponsored by The Financial Management Group, raised £18,000 for our Children's Centre.

Party-goers put on their ball gowns and black ties to enjoy a 3-course dinner, a casino, silent auction, clarinet quartet and dancing to a live band 'Grand Central.'

Another big attraction was the auction. Lots included tickets to the Royal Box at Twickenham, 2 luxury holidays, a 1-night stay at the Grove, a necklace donated by Jacksons the Jewellers and lunch at Coutts Bank with actor Kevin Whateley.

VocaLink in Rickmansworth sponsored the Watford Mencap film shown, which highlighted our Children's Centre. They also hosted 4 tables.

Watford Mencap Chairman Don Eungblut declared the ball a huge success. He added: "There was a wonderful atmosphere and we raised more money than expected. Many thanks to the organising committee, Chris Mellor, Colin Barnett, Sarah Bridgeworth and Kate Watts."

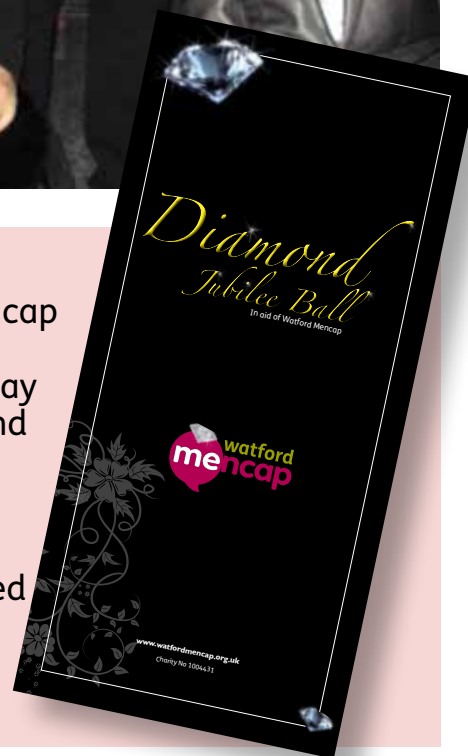
Another person who enjoyed the event was Florrie Amans who is pictured with Clive Joll and Cliff Berry. Florrie said: "It was a very special evening. I have never been anywhere like that before. I looked pretty and everyone was very friendly. I shall never forget it!"

Other sponsors and donors included The Harlequin, Total, Clydesdale Bank, Roberts Newby, Romano Travel, Osprey and Allen Janes Solicitors. Watford MP Richard Harrington also invited two lucky auction winners to tea at the House of Commons.



## Key Points

- Watford Mencap celebrated its 60th birthday with a Diamond Jubilee Ball at the Watford Hilton
- The Ball raised £18,000 for our Children's Centre



## Volunteers' Day

We'd like to thank our helpers once again by offering them a great day out at the Riverside Esporta Health Club in Northwood. As part of Volunteers' Week, Watford Mencap is inviting our volunteers to enjoy a bit of sport and/or pampering at the prestigious club on 1 June. Lunch or dinner will also be included. For more details please contact Lauren on 01923 713622 or [lmcevoy@watfordmencap.org.uk](mailto:lmcevoy@watfordmencap.org.uk)



Photo: SKM Studios

# A focus on Community Support

Martin Telfer lives in a residential home in Potters Bar and has been using Watford Mencap's Community Support service for more than 5 years. He has a learning disability and uses a wheelchair.

Every Monday, Watford Mencap staff member Alan Whittle visits Martin for 3 hours. They have formed a close friendship.

Martin said: "We enjoy ourselves very much. I look forward to seeing Alan and going out." One of his favourite things is to go to the pub, but he also likes to go out for lunch and to shop.

Community Support allows Martin independence to do the activities he enjoys, whilst also providing the relevant support for him. For the rest of the week, when Martin is not out with Alan, he attends a day centre and stays at home reading and watching TV.

Alan explained: "We always have a laugh on Monday; Martin is always smiling. We try to visit different places, but at the end of the

day, it's up to Martin what we do and where we go."

For more information about Watford Mencap's Community Support Service, please contact Angela on 01923 713636.

## Key Points

- Watford Mencap's Community Support service offers a vital lifeline to people with a learning disability
- You can book our Community Support service by phoning Angela Stuthridge on 01923 713636

## Support for Joe and his family

Joe Santhanassamy, who has a learning disability, really enjoys the services available through Watford Mencap's Community Support.

Joe has built up a good relationship with Community Support worker Jane Ashley who frequently meets with Joe to do some of the things he likes, such as playing board and card games.

Family life is important to Joe. He lives in Croxley with his mother, father, sister, brother-in-law and niece. His mother is Joe's full-time carer so, when Jane visits, she knows her son will be in safe hands and have fun. It also gives Mrs Santhanassamy the opportunity to spend time with her granddaughter and to do the shopping.

Mrs Santhanassamy said: "Joe enjoys having the one to one time and having a good chat with the support workers. If Joe's happy, I am happy."

Joe and Jane are pictured on our front cover.



telephone 01923 713620



# A new flat for Richard

A more independent life is being enjoyed by Richard Kirk, now that he has moved from Watford Mencap's Residential Home to a new flat in Bushey.

Richard is thoroughly enjoying living in his new 'pad', which he shares with another person. He is closer to work and his parents, and feels much more independent.

Although he misses everyone at Berrywood, Richard has been back to visit several times and has invited them to see his new flat.

Richard also recently passed his driving theory test, scoring 45 out of 50 in his hazard perception test. He was due to take his practical driving test at the end of March.

Watford Mencap would like to congratulate Richard on passing his theory test and wishes him the best of luck in his new flat.



## Key Points

- Congratulations to Berrywood resident Richard Kirk who has moved into his own flat
- He has also passed his driving theory test

# Summer Time Dance

Watford Grammar School for Boys is once again supporting Watford Mencap by holding a joint dance on Saturday 14 May between 7.30pm and 10.30pm.

The Soulmates will provide the musical entertainment to get everyone out of their seats and onto the dance floor. A raffle and a variety of games will take place throughout the evening, giving everyone a chance to win a prize.

If you would like a ticket or more information, please contact Lauren McEvoy on 01923 713622 or email [lmcevoy@watfordmencap.org.uk](mailto:lmcevoy@watfordmencap.org.uk).

## Key Point

- The Summer Time Dance will be held at Watford Grammar School for Boys on Saturday 14 May from 7.30pm to 10.30pm

## Footie intern takes on the New York Half Marathon

Watford Football Club intern Mark Compton ran the New York Half Marathon to raise money for Watford Mencap Children's Centre.

He took on the challenge with his mum, Michaela Scott, and his sister Becky Compton.

Several Watford footballers sponsored Mark and pledged to boost the total if he ran the race in 1 hour and 42 minutes.

Mark said: "I finished the race in 1 hour 43 minutes but am hoping the players will still donate as I was pretty darn close!"

Watford Mencap would like to congratulate Mark and his family for completing the race. Please go to [www.justgiving.com/Mark-Compton](http://www.justgiving.com/Mark-Compton) if you would like to support Mark.

## Key Points

- Watford FC intern Mark Compton ran the New York Half Marathon to raise money for Watford Mencap
- He ran with his mum and sister and completed the race in 1 hour 43 minutes

# Pancake racers scramble to the finish

Teams had a 'cracking' time as they 'scrambled' to the finish line in Watford Mencap's annual Pancake Race!

Estate agents Gibbs Gillespie were triumphant after beating last year's winners Rickmansworth School who came in 4th after dropping their pancake – butter fingers!

In 2nd place was John Lewis's team and in 3rd was the team from the Coach and Horses Pub.

Three Rivers' District Council Chairman Councillor Ron Spellen officially started the race, which attracted crowds of shoppers enjoying the sun in Rickmansworth High Street.

Sponsor Dick Morgan of the Coach and Horses Pub said: "It's good to support local charities and we have been working with Watford Mencap for the past 10 years."

## Golf day takes a new path

Calling all golfing enthusiasts! There are only two months to go until this year's charity Golf Day.

The year the event will be hosted by the Watford Observer and will be held on Friday 3 June at West Herts Golf Club in Croxley Green. Golfers can enjoy a full English breakfast, a round of golf, a rolling buffet and a prize presentation.

Entry is £270 for a team of 4. Local businesses can also sponsor a hole, advertise in the programme and donate raffle prizes to support the day. All profits will go towards supporting Watford Mencap Children's Centre.

Contact Grelle White on 01923 772092 or email [grelle.moathouse@virgin.net](mailto:grelle.moathouse@virgin.net) for more information.

## Key Points

- Watford Observer is hosting this year's Golf Day in aid of Watford Mencap
- The event will be at West Herts Golf Club in Croxley Green on Friday 3 June
- Get your entry in now!

It's also nice for local businesses to have a bit of fun and support the local community."

The race raised £835 for Watford Mencap. Onlookers gave generously and runners from Sewell & Gardner Estate Agents raised money online.

A 'flipping' big thank you to everyone who took part!



## Property development

Watford Mencap has begun work on an exciting new project to develop homes for people with a learning disability.

Our property in Whitfield Way, Mill End, Rickmansworth is being developed into supported living accommodation for 4 people. New tenants should be able to move in during September.

The project is being supported by Hertfordshire County Council. Several local businesses will also be getting on board to complete the project with corporate challenges, donations and fundraising.

If you think you can help with the project, please contact Jane Pattinson on 01923 713620.

## Key Points

- Our property in Whitfield Way, Mill End, has been developed into supported living accommodation for 4 people
- We would like to hear from you if you can help raise money for the project



## Happy Birthday, Pool Club!

Leisure Together members and volunteers celebrated Pool Club's 4th anniversary by going out to dinner and playing a few games of American pool.

The club, which started in March 2007, has always taken place at Rileys on Watford High Street.

David Rees, who has been a volunteer since the club first started, said: "Every 3 months we switch between playing American and English pool. At the end of the 3 months we have a championship play-off, where members battle it out to win a trophy. So far we have two championship winners, Paul Whenman and Barry Bullen, and it's great how much everyone has improved."

Pool Club regular James Jackson said: "I have been coming here for 4 years and last year I bought my own pool cue, as I really enjoy playing. I get to see my friends and we play doubles against each other."

Leisure Together's Bowling Club is also growing increasingly popular amongst members. It would not be possible without the help of volunteers.



**Barry Bullen and Daniel Stubbington enjoy a spot of pool**

For more information please contact Lata Rees, Senior Leisure Together Co-ordinator on 01923 713634 or [leisure@watfordmencap.org.uk](mailto:leisure@watfordmencap.org.uk)

### Key Points

- Pool Club is 4 years old
- Pool players celebrated the birthday with dinner and a few games of American pool

## Sign up now for the Watford 10k

The Watford 10k race will take place on Bank Holiday Monday 2 May in Cassiobury Park.

The event promises to be bigger and better than ever before, with Camelot signing up to be gold sponsors for the 3rd year running and Mothercare sponsoring the 1k race. Esporta Riverside Health Club and Everyone Active Watford Central are also sponsoring the event.

The race, organised in partnership with the Watford Round Table, was officially launched at Watford Football Club, with a collection around the ground raising more than £220. The money raised is for our children's centre and other local charities.



As well as the main race, we also have a 1k race for under 10's and a 3k race for under 15's. Sign up now at [www.watford10k.org.uk](http://www.watford10k.org.uk)



**Sponsors and organisers launch the Watford 10k race at Vicarage Road.**  
Picture courtesy of Malcolm Armstrong

## A Big Thank you

Barclays	Merchant Taylors' School
Stuart Bendig Photography	Mill End Sports and Social Club
Anne Bock - PB Projects	Ramiro Montesdeoca
Dean Bridges	Mothercare
Ruth Brind	Parmiter's School
Burda	Purcell School
Valerie Burdett	Radlett Prep School
Bernie Byers	David Rees
Camelot	Rickmansworth School
Cassiobury Infants' School	Rileys
Margaret Clark	Sandy Lodge Golf Club
Coach and Horses	Sewell & Gardner
Mark Compton, Becky Compton and Michaela Scott	Sigma Pharmaceuticals
Day, Smith and Hunter	SKM Studios
Druids	Smiths Detection
Esporta Riverside Health Club	Adrian Thompson
Everyone Active Watford Central	Joy Thomson
Kathy Foster	Together Communications
Freedom Communications	Steve Tolliday
Gibbs Gillespie	Total
Diane Gransby	VocaLink
Richard Harrington MP	Watford Football Club
Herts CC Targeted Sustainability Fund	Watford Grammar School for Boys
Kay Horsfield	Watford Hilton
John Lewis Partnership	Watford Observer
Krys Kelly	Watford Round Table
Ann Kirkness	John Whittle
Matthew, Arnold and Baldwin	Woodfield School
	YourCash
	Watford Mencap would like to say a special thank you to all of our volunteers.

### Special thanks

to Stuart Bendig for taking many of the photos for In Touch.

[www.stuartbendigphotography.com](http://www.stuartbendigphotography.com)  
or 01923 499232 or 07951 111874.



## Diamond Jubilee Diary of Events

**Wednesday 6 April to Thursday 28 April**

Art Exhibition in aid of Watford Mencap at The Pavilion Gallery, Chenies Manor House

**Sunday 17 April**

John Whittle and Bernie Byers run the London Marathon for Watford Mencap. Sponsor John at <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/JohnWhittle1> and Bernie at [www.justgiving.com/Bernie-Byers](http://www.justgiving.com/Bernie-Byers)

**Monday 2 May**

Watford 10k run, [www.watford10k.org.uk](http://www.watford10k.org.uk)

**Saturday 14 May**

Summer Time Dance at Watford Grammar School for Boys

**Sunday 22 May**

Diamond Dog Walk, King George V Recreation Ground, Bushey

**Wednesday 1 June**

Volunteers' Day at the Riverside Esporta, Northwood

**Friday 3 June**

Watford Observer Golf Day in aid of Watford Mencap at West Herts Golf Club

**Monday 20 June to Sunday 26 June**

Learning Disability Week 2011. Join us in campaigning against Hate Crime

**Friday 7 October**

Watford Mencap's AGM and 50s Dance

**Thursday 3 November**

Singalong Mamma Mia at the Watersmeet, Rickmansworth

For more information on any of these events visit [www.watfordmencap.org.uk](http://www.watfordmencap.org.uk) or call 01923 713622

# Talent Corner



'Dare to Dream' is the title of this fabulous artwork which was painted by 4 children with learning disabilities.

Beatrice and Thomas Wilkins, Gemma Kinchin and Chloe Spencer were commissioned to create the artwork by Jenny Campbell, Chief Executive Officer of YourCash Milton Keynes.

Jenny asked the children to paint the piece after attending an auction of children's paintings in December, staged by VocaLink to raise money for our Children's Centre.

If you know anyone who would like to commission a painting, contact Veronica Chamberlain on [development@watfordmencap.org.uk](mailto:development@watfordmencap.org.uk) or 01923 713637.

## Key Points

- Talented children with learning disabilities were commissioned by Milton Keynes company YourCash to create a painting
- This has raised money for our Children's Centre



Ask  
Ruth

**Dear Watford Mencap**

**I have just received a letter from Hertfordshire County Council saying I have to pay a lot more towards the cost of my day service. I am worried I might have to stop going as I can't afford it. Can you help?**

The Council has introduced new rules to calculate the amount they are expected to pay towards services they receive. Some people will have to pay more depending on their individual financial circumstances.

When you receive the letter it is really important to check that all the amounts shown for your income and expenses are correct. Everyone is allowed a protected amount of money. Any amount above this is called 'disposable income'. You can reduce the amount you are charged if you can show you have additional expenses to do with your disability which are more than your DLA mobility money (any expense you have that a person without a disability would not have to pay). Provide receipts if you can.

**For help please contact the Advice & Advocacy Service on 01923 713620 or email them at [advice@watfordmencap.org.uk](mailto:advice@watfordmencap.org.uk)**

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Watford Mencap Children's Centre: 01923 220816

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