

InTouch

The voice of learning disability in South West Herts

Summer 2011



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Photo
sussexsport
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Stand by Me

The abuse at Winterbourne View Hospital was deeply shocking. People with a learning disability should be treated with the same dignity and respect as anyone else in our society.

This year during Learning Disability Week, we asked local police services to make stopping disability hate crime a priority.

Watford Mencap believes that:

- people with a learning disability should be free from the fear of hate crime
- all parts of the criminal justice system, including the police and courts, should work with people with a learning disability to stop hate crime

Please sign our 'Stand by Me' petition at www.watfordmencap.org.uk/get_involved/learning_disability_week/ to show your support for our campaign. With your help we can fight to make sure people with a learning disability and their families are safe from hate crime.

Best wishes,



Jane Pattinson

Jane Pattinson

Art exhibition is off the wall!

An exhibition of art work by professional artists raised £1,237 for Watford Mencap.

The exhibition, called 'Off the Wall', was sponsored by international payments provider VocaLink.

The works of art were donated by 25 local artists to support Leisure Together, our project for adults with a learning disability. The wide range of works included felt and dichroic glass jewellery, paintings, sculpture and ceramics.

Watford Mencap's Funding Manager Veronica Chamberlain thanked Elizabeth Macleod-Matthews, owner of Chenies Manor, for hosting the exhibition; artists Joy Thomson, Krys Kelly, Kathy Foster and Kay Horsfield for their organising efforts; and VocaLink for their sponsorship.

Bryan Sharkey, VocaLink Assurance Director who leads VocaLink's Communities Programme, said: "VocaLink recognises the importance of supporting young people in our local communities."



Photo: Stuart Bendig

Artist Joy Thomson is pictured with the Snowdrops painting which was purchased by Lynn Green

Key Points

- An exhibition of art work by local artists raised £1,237 for Watford Mencap
- Thank you to sponsor VocaLink, the 25 artists and those who bought the art work

Top marks for Berrywood

The Care Quality Commission recently inspected Watford Mencap's Berrywood home in Rickmansworth and said we were meeting all the essential standards reviewed. Here are some of their comments:

On independence and things to do:

'People said living at Berrywood has helped them to become more independent and confident. They told us about the employment, volunteer and educational opportunities they are involved with and the community activities and social events they take part in.'

On feeling good:

'One person said "I have lived in different homes before and I have loved this house because they have helped me to be more independent and gain confidence and self esteem".'

On good food:

'People who are able to represent their views said that the food is fantastic and the people living at Berrywood are involved in cooking their meals.'

'One person told us they had been invited to dinner on several occasions which their relative has been involved in cooking.'

On feeling safe:

'The service has a positive ethos that promotes people's rights and makes staff aware of their responsibility to protect people from harm.'

'People describe this as an excellent, well managed service.'



Berrywood resident Sandra Bell enjoys a spot of cooking

If you would like to know more about living at Berrywood contact Russell Lincoln on 01923 713625 or email rlincoln@watfordmencap.org.uk

Key Point

- The Care Quality Commission gave our Berrywood home a very good report

We want your views

Watford Mencap wants to make In Touch the best it can possibly be and would like to hear your feedback. What do you like about In Touch? What do you not like? What would you like to see more of? Please email your opinions to Lmcevoy@watfordmencap.org.uk or leave them on our Facebook page www.facebook.co.uk/watfordmencap Alternatively you can send us your feedback to The Old Town Hall, 105 High Street, Rickmansworth, WD3 1AN.

E-newsletter coming soon

Watford Mencap is in the process of developing an e-newsletter. This will be a more regular update of Watford Mencap's news, sent directly to your email address. If you would like to receive the e-newsletter, please email Lmcevoy@watfordmencap.org.uk



Watford Mencap in pictures

Top left
Hillside throws a party to celebrate the Royal wedding

Top right
Leisure Together enjoy a meal served by West Herts College students

Centre
Thorpedale residents bake cakes to raise money for Learning Disability Week

Right
'Talk to the Animals' bring a selection of friends to meet the Afterschool Club



MPs quizzed by Watford Mencap

People with learning disabilities and their families were given the opportunity to quiz their local MPs about issues that are affecting them.

David Gauke, MP for South West Hertfordshire, and Richard Harrington, MP for Watford, were also questioned by volunteers and Watford Mencap staff.

Among the concerns was how financial cutbacks have been affecting people with learning disabilities and both MPs said they will follow up on some of the issues raised.

Jane Pattinson, Director of Watford Mencap, said: "David, Richard and Watford Mencap agreed that this had been really beneficial and have now arranged to come back every 6 months and talk to everyone about their concerns."



Pictured left to right: MPs David Gauke and Richard Harrington

Key Points

- Local MPs answered questions from people with learning disabilities, their families, carers and Watford Mencap representatives
- The MPs have agreed to look into issues and meet again in 6 months

A new flat for Barry and David

Watford Mencap helped 2 adults with learning disabilities move into their own flat for a more independent style of living 6 months ago. In Touch checked in with Barry Bullen and David Evans to see how they are getting on.

Having lived in Berrywood for 3 years, Barry Bullen decided he was ready to move into his own flat. He now enjoys his new location which is nearer to his work and his sister. Barry has been working at Watford General Hospital for 28 years and catches the bus there each morning.

Barry chooses the level of support he needs and enjoys his new independence. He now cooks all his own meals and explained that cooking every night has greatly improved his cooking skills.



Photo: Stuart Bendig



Photo: Stuart Bendig

Barry & David cooking and washing up

David Evans lived in The Kestrels, an NHS in-patient unit, for 4½ years before Watford Mencap helped him to move. At The Kestrels, David was supplied with meals and spent little time outside his accommodation.

He remembers his first meeting with Watford Mencap staff and hearing the good news that he was going to live in his own flat. At first it felt strange to be in new accommodation, but David has now settled in well. He enjoys talking to Barry, going out to get his morning paper and listening to his radio. He is also a big football fan. David now does his own cleaning, washing and cooking and has adjusted well to his new found independence.

Key Point

- Barry Bullen and David Evans talk to us about their new independent lives

Stand up for the rights of people with learning disabilities



Janet Scholes enjoyed the Cheslyn Gardens tea party during Learning Disability Week

Photo: Stuart Bendig

Learning Disability Week is upon us again and this year Mencap has launched a 3 year campaign against hate crime towards people with a learning disability.

Stand By Me will challenge the police, the criminal justice system and the courts to end hate crime against people with a learning disability.

With the recent shocking report by the TV programme Panorama about the abuse of a group of adults with a learning disability in a care home in Bristol, there has never been a better time to stand up and say that learning disability hate crime is not acceptable.

Disability hate crime blights lives. It leaves people with a disability afraid to leave their homes. For too long people have ignored abuse and tolerated negative stereotypes. Unless we work together, disability hate crime will continue.

If you believe everyone should be able to live a normal life without fear of attack, please support the Stand By Me campaign. You can sign the petition at www.watfordmencap.org.uk/get_involved/learning_disability_week/ As we went to press over 500 local people had signed the petition.

What's happening locally?

Watford, Three Rivers and Hertsmere have a team of dedicated hate crime officers. On Tuesday 7 June, Watford Mencap representatives met with PC Nobby Jutla and PC Richard Staff to tell them about the campaign. Both expressed their full support and explained that they are there to help anyone that has been a victim of hate crime.

How to report a disability hate crime

If you believe you have been targeted because of your disability, it is essential you report it. You must mention in your report that you believe the crime is because of your disability otherwise it will not be recorded as a hate crime. Don't forget, the police are there to help you.

Stand by people with a learning disability

If you witness a hate crime towards someone with a learning disability you must report it. It is essential we stand by those with a learning disability and show them this kind of behaviour is not acceptable. If you think something isn't right, report it.

Case Study

"Our daughter has a learning disability. The school said we should let her go out on her own, so we did. She went round the corner to play with a friend.

We know she's got special needs, but she doesn't look different. She just stares at people and they don't like it.

There was a group of kids teasing her and she didn't know where to turn. They went in a circle round her and she was scared. She ran through a gap and into the road.

When she was run over, a man who saw it said she went so high up she looked like a rag doll. She had a split pelvis and was in a wheelchair for a month.

We told the police that it was a group of kids teasing her, but they didn't want to know. I saw the boys and pointed them out to the police, but they weren't interested.

I am glad Watford Mencap is campaigning about this because something needs to change."

Key Points

- Mencap has launched a 3 year campaign against hate crime towards people with a learning disability
- Stand By Me will challenge the police, the criminal justice system and the courts to end hate crime against people with a learning disability
- Watford Mencap staff, volunteers and members fully support this campaign

Turn over to the next page for more about Learning Disability Week fundraising

telephone 01923 713620

Watford Mencap welcomes volunteers

James Tetlow has been volunteering in the Watford Mencap Head Office for 4 months. Every Thursday afternoon he helps the internal services department with a range of jobs including mail outs, taking photos of items for eBay and laminating.

James said: "I have 3 volunteer roles and I love them all. Volunteering at Watford Mencap has developed my confidence and made me confident meeting new people. I love it, it's fun."

Watford Mencap greatly appreciates all the hard work and help its volunteers provide. To say thank you, a special volunteers' day was organised on 1 June during National Volunteer Week.

Esporta's Riverside Health and Racquets Club, in Northwood, hosted the event and invited all of Watford Mencap's volunteers to enjoy the club's facilities, free of charge.

James, who attended the day, said: "The volunteers' day was absolutely great. I got a certificate, went for a swim and enjoyed meeting everyone."

If you are interested in volunteering with Watford Mencap please see our current opportunities at http://www.watfordmencap.org.uk/get_involved/volunteering/



Key Points

- Watford Mencap really appreciates the work that our volunteers do
- James Tetlow talks about his work at Watford Mencap Head Office
- As a thank you, all volunteers were invited to a day at the Esporta Riverside Health & Racquets Club in Northwood

Learning Disability Week fundraising activity

During Learning Disability Week staff, volunteers and members of Watford Mencap came up with a range of ways to raise money for the charity:

- Community Support organised a strawberry cream tea party at Cheslyn Gardens and managed to raise £280
- Thorpedale hosted a cake stall and tombola in Chorleywood raising a fantastic £265

- Berrywood swam 60 lengths of William Penn Centre pool to celebrate 60 years of Watford Mencap and are in the process of collecting sponsorship
- Hand in Hand ran 60 laps at Watford Grammar School for Boys
- £145 was raised through street collections

Congratulations

Congratulations to Richard Kirk who has now passed both his driving theory and practical driving test.

You can now donate to Watford Mencap via text.

Text WMEN11 £2/£5/£10 to 70070 to donate now. eg WMEN11 £5

www.watfordmencap.org.uk

Not one, but two golf days for Watford Mencap



Watford Mencap has been lucky enough to be chosen as the benefitting charity of 2 fantastic golf days.

The Watford Observer Golf Day, which takes place annually at West Herts Golf Club, saw 17 local teams swing into action and enjoy a day of golf in aid of Watford Mencap. The sun was shining and players managed to raise an amazing £4,000 through entry fees, games and a raffle. Big thanks are due to Don Bailey and Grelle White for organising the event and to Mayor Dorothy Thornhill for presenting the prizes.

The NatWest Golf Day was a roaring success with 25 teams competing at Sandy Lodge Golf Club in Northwood. Guests were treated to a breakfast and sit down dinner, and enjoyed a raffle and silent auction to raise funds.

Golfers battled for a range of auction prizes including 3 tickets to a Chelsea game and an exclusive lunch at Coutts Bank. Many thanks to Steve Ronan for organising the day, which raised £3,000 for Watford Mencap.



Congratulations to the winning team at the Sandy Lodge NatWest Golf Day

telephone 01923 713620

Annual General Meeting

This year's AGM will be on 7 October at the Watersmeet in Rickmansworth. It will feature a 1950s dance to celebrate the founding of Watford Mencap. Save the date! All welcome.

E learning centre

Watford Mencap has launched the first centre in Hertfordshire for support staff to learn about personalisation of services. You can come in to our Rickmansworth office and use the resources, or learn online. Contact Kathryn White on 01923 713620 or personalisation@watfordmencap.org.uk

New office share

Watford Mencap has agreed to let a room to Rickmansworth Waterways Trust. This will bring in much-needed revenue so welcome, RWT!

Activity area and meeting room for hire

Do you need a venue for a meeting, training etc? Rent our bright spacious room with kitchen facilities. Contact Rose Krelloff on 01923 713620 for details.

Common induction standards

Watford Mencap staff working as Personal Assistants have taken the first specific training in this area. Their trainer pronounced herself very impressed with the standard of our staff.

Long serving member of staff

Congratulations to Kay Rabbetts at Thorpedale who is our longest-serving member of staff - 16 years!

Are you suffering covert cuts?

Some people have told us they are having their charges increased for services. They are also being asked to move to a different area - for example out of a home where they are happy - possibly to save money. Has this happened to you? Contact Ruth Murray on 01923 713620 if you are worried about this or any other issue.



Council chairman chooses Watford Mencap

Watford Borough Council's new Chairman, Councillor Lindsey Scudder, pictured, has chosen Watford Mencap as one of her Chairman's Charities.

Cllr Scudder explained that she had chosen 'independence' as her theme and wanted to promote a charity which helps people with a learning disability to be more independent.

Don Eungblut, Watford Mencap's Chair, said: "We are delighted with this recognition of our work during our Diamond Jubilee year."

Key Point

- Thank you to Watford Borough Council's new Chairman, Councillor Lindsey Scudder, who has chosen Watford Mencap as one of her Chairman's Charities

Watford 10k - a running success

The 14th annual Watford 10k race has now been and gone, and it proved to be one of the most successful years ever.

Over 1,400 runners joined together in Cassiobury Park to compete in the 1k, 3k and 10k events.

Camelot signed up as gold sponsor for the 3rd year running, with the Mothercare Group Foundation sponsoring the 1k race, and Esporta and Everyone Active as bronze sponsors.

The Watford 10k is not just a chance to have fun, but also a way to raise much needed funds for Watford Mencap and other local charities. Over £3,000 of sponsorship was raised by the runners with prizes being awarded to those who raised the most in each race. The total raised from the event was over £11,000 - beating last year's amount.

The Watford 10k is organised by the Watford Round Table. After buying Watford Mencap their first building in 1962, the Watford Round Table has continued to support the charity and the Watford 10k would not be in existence without their support and hard work.



Photo: Sussex Sport Photography

On our front cover is one of the young members of AfterSchool Club running in the 1k race

Watford Mencap Chair Don Eungblut awards the trophy to 10k winner Nick Shasha

Key Points

- The 14th annual Watford 10k race was the most successful ever
- Over 1,400 runners took part in Cassiobury Park and raised more than £11,000
- Thanks to sponsors Camelot, the Mothercare Group Foundation, Esporta and Everyone Active

A Big Thank you

Aldenham School	Mr and Mrs Martin
Don Bailey	Liz Morgan
Baily Thomas Charitable Trust	Kathryn Nicholson
Baker Tilly	Parmiter's School
Martin Black	Dr Patel
Veronica Briggs	Terry and Gary Philips
Mrs E Brown	Philippa Ramsey
Valerie Burdett	Malcolm and Pam Robertson
E.Cohen	Stephen Ronan
Amy Crawford	Jeffery Rose
Day, Smith & Hunter	Mrs Rosenthal
James Dean	Sainsbury's Dome Roundabout
Kevin and Roslyn Durrant	Sandy Lodge Golf Club
Trevor and Katherine East	Shaz Setoudeh
Esporta Riverside Health and Racquets Club	Lucille Sher
Jacqui Field	Lynn Stringer
Garfield Weston Foundation	The Soulmates
Laura Greenfield	The Sylvia Adams Charitable Trust
Liz Gluckman	Tesco Charity Trust
Half Way House	VocaLink
Linda Hall	Watford Grammar School for Boys
Lois and Russell Hargreaves	Watford Observer
Harlequin Centre	Watford Round Table
Hertfordshire Girls Partnership League	West Herts Golf Club
Ruth Hilton	Grelle White
John Lewis	Helen Wright
Bhvana Jones	YourCash
Peter and Rachel Kirsch	
Laurel and David Korn	A big thank you to everyone involved in this year's Watford 10k and to all the runners who raised sponsorship.
Laurence Lewis	
Little Fox Market	
Load of Hay	
Elizabeth Macleod-Matthews	

Sandy Lodge Golf Club

Well done Sandy Lodge Golf Club who raised an outstanding £17,268. We are hoping to buy two adapted vehicles with this money and should be taking delivery of one shortly.



Diamond Jubilee Diary of Events

Thursday 15 September

Reminiscence coffee morning, The Old Town Hall, 10am-12pm. Contact Monica Griffin 01923 223133 email monica@griffinuk.net or Alf Loose 01923 720529 alfloose@talktalk.net

Friday 7 October

Watford Mencap's AGM and 1950s Dance.

Thursday 3 November

Sing along to the Mamma Mia film at the Watersmeet! Tickets £10, available from the Watersmeet Box office.

For more information on any of these events visit www.watfordmencap.org.uk or call 01923 713622.



Photo: Richard Owen

Aileen Gasper and Kath Crucefix enjoyed catching up at Watford Mencap's April coffee morning

Special thanks

to Stuart Bendig for taking many of the photos for In Touch.
www.stuartbendigphotography.com
or 01923 499232 or 07951 111874.

Talent Corner



A group of Leisure Together members showcased their talents at the Diamond Jubilee Summer Time Dance.

As you can see from our photograph, the group dressed up and took to the dance floor to perform a Grease medley, which they have been learning in their Monday Fitness sessions.

The Summer Time Dance, which was organised with the help of Watford Grammar School for Boys, raised over £900 for Watford Mencap's Leisure Together Group.

A big thank you to The Soulmates band, who played a huge variety of numbers and got everyone onto the floor.

Key Points

- Leisure Together members performed a medley of dances to Grease at a Summer Time Dance
- The dance was organised with help from Watford Grammar School for Boys and raised more than £900 for Leisure Together



Ask
Ruth

Dear Watford Mencap

My parents currently look after my benefits but I would like to look after my own money. I live in supported housing but staff think I should leave things as they are. What can I do?

This can be a very difficult subject for everyone as people are often worried about things going wrong. Work has been done to look at what is the best way to support people with learning disabilities with their money called 'My Money Matters' available from ARC UK. It looks mainly at the best way for paid staff to support you, so I would suggest you ask your staff to look at it.

With regard to your parents, I would suggest talking to them to tell them how you feel. Hopefully they will support you to take control of your money and our Advice & Advocacy service can help you to do this. If talking doesn't work there are ways of taking control yourself, but this could obviously cause difficulties if your family is against it.

If you would like more help please contact the **Advice & Advocacy Service** on **01923 713620** or email **advice@watfordmencap.org.uk**

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