

InTouch

The voice of learning disability in South West Herts

Spring 2012



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Welcome to the Spring issue

At the beginning of the year, Ofsted rated our Children's Services as Outstanding. An example of the comments was: "Children's individual needs are recognised and met to a very high standard." Congratulations to Ro Linton, Manager, Sarah Fishwick, Deputy Manager, and all those staff and volunteers who have worked so hard to give the children and young people the best possible service.

We also celebrate partnerships in this issue. As a community charity, we pride ourselves on the number of links we have with local people and organisations. These links help us make our services special for local people with a learning disability and their families. We would like to thank partners such as Watford Grammar School for Boys, VocaLink, Camelot, Watford Round Table and all our wonderful volunteers for adding value in so many ways.

Lastly we remember some people whom we have known for a long time and who sadly are no longer with us. Watford Mencap has served local people for more

than 60 years and we are grateful for everyone's loyalty. We are facing funding cuts, so please think about how else you can help Watford Mencap continue its work. You can contact me on director@watfordmencap.org.uk or phone 01923 713620 to offer your support.

Best wishes,



Jane Pattinson



Jane Pattinson

Councillors support Children's Centre

Every Herts County Councillor has an annual locality budget of £10,000 to spend on worthwhile projects that promote social, economic or environmental well-being in their community.

This year 8 County Councillors, including Audrey Oaten, Derek Scudder, Ian Brandon, Paul Goggins, Barbara Lamb, Mark Watkin, Nigel Bell and Caroline Clapper, have given a total of £4,470 in recognition of the support that children living in their community get from attending our AfterSchool Club.

Mr Brandon said: "I know what wonderful work you do so it is my pleasure to support the AfterSchool Club."

Another County Councillor, Steve O'Brien donated £620 for a sand pit which is accessible to all youngsters including those with physical disabilities.



County Councillor for Tudor and Meriden, Audrey Oaten, is pictured with members of the AfterSchool Club



Watford Mencap is outstanding

Watford Mencap Children’s Centre is celebrating after Ofsted awarded their work an ‘outstanding’ rating.

The centre in North Watford provides out of school activities for 150 children and young people with a learning disability.

The report stated: “Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding. Children thrive in this extremely well-managed setting... Children’s beaming smiles are evidence of real enjoyment while taking part in everyday activities.”

Watford Mencap Director Jane Pattinson said: “Congratulations to Manager Ro Linton and the team at the Children’s Centre. Watford Mencap is committed to quality in all we do. This accolade for our Children’s Centre comes on top of our recent third-time Investors in People accreditation. We have also had excellent outcomes from the latest Care Quality Commission reviews of our Community Support service, and our Berrywood and Thorpedale residential homes.”



Photo: Richard Owen

A good read at Watford Mencap’s AfterSchool Club

Key Point

- Our Children’s Centre has been given an outstanding rating by Ofsted

Pet chickens a hit at Thorpedale

Thorpedale residents are extremely happy with their newest arrivals; 3 pet chickens named Beryl, Sally and Henrietta!

When residents started showing interest in looking after a pet, the staff at Thorpedale thought it would provide a great opportunity for everyone to work as a team and gain new skills.

The chickens are proving a big hit with residents. Janet, who collects the eggs which are used to bake cakes and make breakfast, said: “I like the chickens very much because they are friendly.”

Thorpedale Manager Kay Rabbetts described the chickens as “very educational and entertaining.” She added: “It is an on-going project which improves the residents’ skills as well as providing lots of pleasure.”

Staff have been extremely supportive of the residents and have even bought some wellies to enable them to care for the chickens in the rain.

Residents are hoping to get an incubator in the near future, so they can hatch some eggs.

The henhouse and run were purchased thanks to fundraising by our corporate partner, VocaLink.

Janet Speed is pictured on our front cover. She enjoys spending time with Thorpedale’s pet chickens.

Key Point

- Thorpedale residents are having fun taking care of three pet chickens

Tough Guy Challenge for Paul Clarke

A Camelot manager has raised £2,066 for Watford Mencap by taking part in one of the most extreme challenges in the UK.

Paul Clarke, 30, took part in the Tough Guy Challenge in January. He said: "Seeing what Watford Mencap does really touched me - you can see how much difference they make to the children and their families. When I was deciding to tackle the Tough Guy Challenge, there was no other charity I was going to do it for."

He described the conditions of the challenge: "It was minus 1°C. All the obstacles we could see were frozen. The hardest part was when you had to submerge yourself fully. It's a brain freeze. You come out really disoriented. We also had to go into tunnels with electrodes hanging down, which give an almighty shock and throw your body back."

"With 45 minutes to go, I started cramping up. The stewards and St John Ambulance people are egging you on and, at the back of my mind, I was thinking I'm doing it for a good cause. My target was to do it in less than 3 hours, and the clock said 2 hours 58 at the finish!"

Camelot Head of Corporate Responsibility Julian Price said: "Paul's achievement in completing the Tough Guy Challenge has been immense, and it is great to see the money raised going to Watford Mencap, which I have seen at work first-hand."

The money Paul has raised will support Watford Mencap's Afterschool Club.



Paul Clarke (right) and his brother attack one of the 'rivers of mud' in the Tough Guy Challenge

Key Points

- Paul Clarke raised more than £2,000 for Watford Mencap's AfterSchool Club by taking part in the Tough Guy Challenge
- Barry Bray is running the London Marathon for Watford Mencap



Marathon man Barry Bray

Meet Barry Bray who is running the London Marathon for Watford Mencap in memory of his father-in-law, Ron Hutton.

Ron will be remembered as a tireless fundraiser for Watford Mencap.

Barry, 53, is married to Ros, twin sister of Monica Hutton who lives in Watford Mencap's residential home, Hillside, in Pinner Road.

"I wanted to raise money for Watford Mencap, as I know the money will get to the end user, and what I do will have a real impact," said Barry. "We really appreciate what Watford Mencap has done for Monica over the past 38 years, and I wanted to give something back."

To support Barry in his fundraising for the 2012 London Marathon please visit <http://www.justgiving.com/Barry-Bray>

Website to improve access to adult social care

Hertfordshire County Council is redesigning the way that people access care services and is using the latest technology to put you in charge of your own support.

The council has been working behind the scenes to transform services and make it easier for residents to get the help and support they need.

Hertfordshire County Council would like to reassure you that any services you, or someone you care for, currently receive will be unaffected by these changes. The staff who work with you should remain the same and their contact details will not change.

In the next few months, Hertfordshire County Council will start rolling out their 'electronic marketplace' - a website which

will allow you to buy health and social care support and equipment from all kinds of organisations in just one place.

Later this year, you will be able to log on and use your own money or funding you get from Hertfordshire County Council to purchase adult social care services, such as day care and home care, in the same way that people do their online food shopping.

For more information please call the Hertfordshire County Council customer service centre on 0300 123 4042.

Key Point

- Herts County Council is launching a website to help people buy health and social care support and equipment

Anyone for tee?

Over 40 of Watford Mencap's Learning and Leisure members returned for another year to practice their golfing skills at Top Golf in Bushey.

A big thank you to Viv Culverhouse from Top Golf for organising the evening and to all the volunteers who came along to help.

Layla Rynn, Learning & Leisure Co-Ordinator, said: "Each year the members look forward to this particular outing; it is an opportunity to socialise and helps promote independence."



Chris Murphy, Dean Scott and Richard Kirk take time off from playing golf

Is there some support that you need?

Watford Mencap offers services for people with a learning disability and their families. Our services include advice and advocacy, services for children and young people, leisure and learning activities for adults, residential homes, supported housing and community support, some of which you may be familiar with.

If you need support or would like to find out more about the different ways Watford Mencap can help you and your family please call us on 01923 713620 or look at our website www.watfordmencap.org.uk.

Are you looking for something different to do?

Watford Mencap's Learning & Leisure Service offers activities, social events and courses for adults with a learning disability. You can see some stories about what people have been doing in this edition of In Touch.

If you would like to use our Learning and Leisure Services contact Lata Rees on leisure@watfordmencap.org.uk; phone 01923 713634 or 07901 914154.

Read on to find out about some of the latest courses and activities available to people with a learning disability and their carers.

PMLD Group

Watford Mencap's Learning and Leisure team are piloting a group for people with profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD) and their carers.

The aim of the group is to provide an opportunity for members and carers to meet, socialise and support people in similar situations.

The group meets at The Old Town Hall in Rickmansworth which is easy to get in to and also has a community toilet. There are currently 5 regular members and their carers who attend the group every other Friday morning.

People with PMLD are often excluded from mainstream activities because of their disability. This group gives them the opportunity to socialise, do crafts, make music, sing and go out for walks. It also enables members to meet other people in similar situations, make friends and gain confidence to go along to other learning and leisure activities.

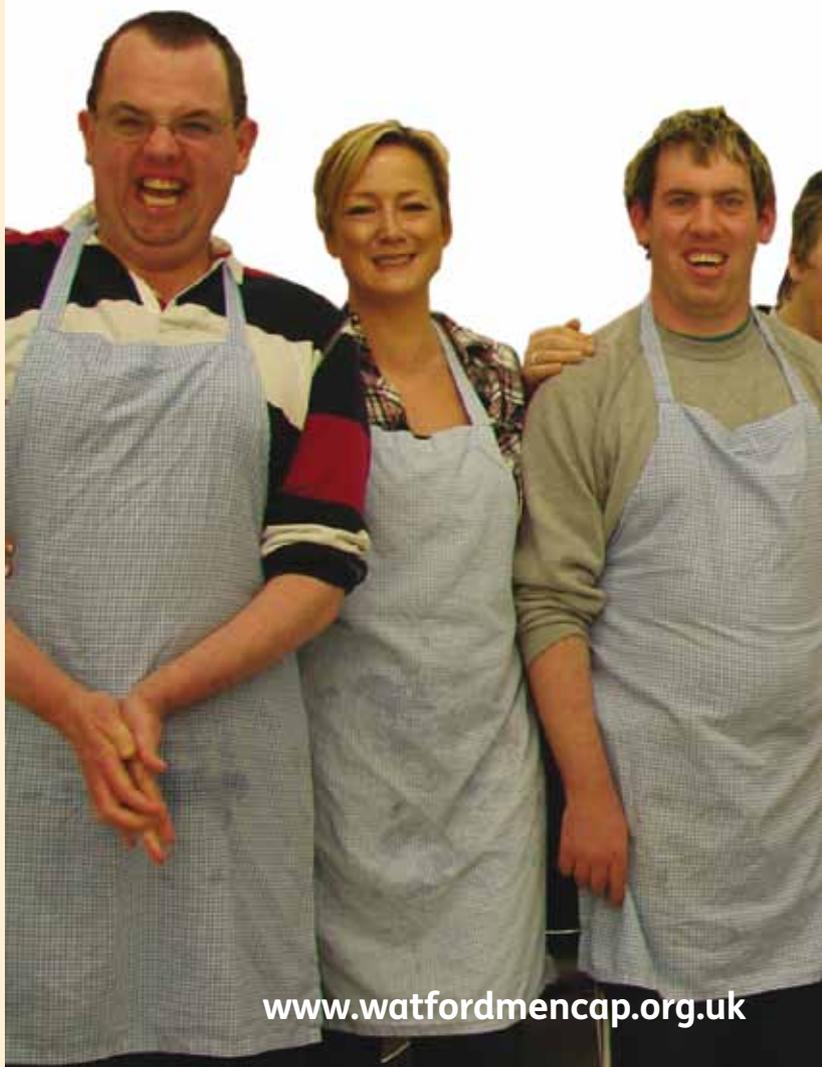
Often carers are so busy caring that they do not have the time to research all health care opportunities and support. The group supports them to do this.

The carers are supporting and empowering each other to have better access to the health care and social support that their loved ones so desperately need.

Cooking and making friends

Watford Mencap's Learning and Leisure department is celebrating the success of 2 courses they piloted earlier this year.

The 'Making Friends' course and the cookery course were organised in order to encourage people with learning disabilities to learn new life skills.



The Making Friends course, which ran for 5 weeks, saw 12 people with learning disabilities come together with a professional tutor to learn the skills needed to form healthy and safe friendships. The course covered topics such as:

- How to be a good friend
- Learning to be assertive and say no
- Knowing who to trust
- What to do about bullying
- Learning to differentiate between good and bad people
- Social Networking

On the final evening of the course the group went out for a meal as a group of friends.

The cooking course ran for 10 weeks at West Herts College and enabled 8 people with learning disabilities to learn about food preparation and healthy eating.

Each week the students were given a recipe sheet and prepared a dish, with support from volunteers. They made pizza, chicken curry, scones, cakes, pancakes, cheese straws and soup.

Whilst making the dishes, students learnt skills such as chopping and slicing

ingredients, weighing out ingredients, hygiene and using the oven and hob safely.

All students completed the course successfully and were awarded with a certificate. They also invited family and carers to a buffet so they could sample some of the dishes.

Key Points

- Watford Mencap's Learning and Leisure department offers a wide range of courses and activities for people with learning disabilities
- These courses have included cookery classes, making friends classes, and a group for people with profound and multiple learning disabilities and their carers
- Those taking part in these courses come away with some great skills which can be used to enhance their everyday lives... as well as making some new friends

Some of the participants of the cookery course



Ricky Pancake Race

Congratulations to the Sales Team at Sewell & Gardner Estate Agents who won this year's Ricky Pancake Race through the town centre.

Three Rivers District Council Chairman Councillor Chris Whately-Smith officially started the race which saw last year's winners, estate agents Gibbs Gillespie slip to third place behind chartered accountants Cox Costello & Horne.

'The Mencap Pancakes' - a team of young people with learning disabilities - also ran extremely well, just missing out on a spot in the final to a strong Baker Tilly team.

Sponsor Dick Morgan of the Coach and Horses in Rickmansworth, who also entered a team, was an excellent host, providing the runners with pancakes, pans, prizes and food for all who took part.

More than £900 was raised in support of Watford Mencap.



Stuart Cowie – a member of The Mencap Pancakes - joins in the Ricky Pancake Race

Key Points

- Local businesses and residents gave their wholehearted support to Watford Mencap at the Ricky Pancake Race
- They raced through the streets and helped raise more than £900
- The winners were the Sales Team from Sewell & Gardner

Thorpedale is tops

Residents at our Thorpedale home in Chorleywood receive safe and personalised care and are supported to understand issues and make choices about their lives.

This positive judgement was made during a Care Quality Commission Review of the home in November 2011.

The Care Quality Commission's role is to check whether care homes are meeting government standards and the overall judgement was that Thorpedale is meeting all the essential standards of quality and safety.

During the inspection, the Care Quality Commission inspectors discovered that residents were 'very happy living in the home.'

"One person said they loved it at Thorpedale and had lots of things they enjoyed doing every day. They said they enjoyed cooking the food they grew in the garden and they showed us how they collected eggs from their hens for breakfast," said the inspectors' report.

The report continues: "During our visit people were able to tell us about not only how they spend their days, but about their aims and plans for future activities.

We saw how the staff at the home supported people to consider what they wanted and helped them to make individual plans for their care because we saw all the planning recorded in people's care plans."

The overall judgement was that Thorpedale residents receive safe and personalised care which is centred on them as individuals and which meets their health and social needs in the way they want.

Key Points

- Thorpedale in Chorleywood is meeting all the essential standards of quality and safety
- A Care Quality Commission inspection was very positive about the standard of care, support, understanding and safety at the home

Obituaries



Photo: Richard Owen

David Plum, enjoying the annual Bushey fun fair with his parents



Photo: Richard Owen

Reg Lansdowne is pictured with one of his regular Community Support workers, Mike Rawlins



Jenny Cardy with her great-nephew Freddy

We are very sad to announce the deaths of the following people who were associated with Watford Mencap.

Madge Lutterloch

Madge Lutterloch died recently at the age of 102. She was very active on Watford Mencap's committees and fundraised with her friend Betty Sorrell by carrying out house collections and tin rattling. Mrs Sorrell writes: "Madge was a very cheerful and lively lady."

David Plum

David was 18 and lived in Bushey, attending Meadow Wood and Meldreth Manor Schools. Children's Services Manager Ro Linton writes: "David Plum was a bright light amongst the children and young people who attend the playschemes and youth clubs. The first thing everyone mentions about David is his smile and wicked sense of humour. Everyone who worked with him was touched by his involvement in life, and he will be deeply missed."

Reg Lansdowne

Reg Lansdowne has died at the age of 79. Reg, who lived in Furze Field Court in Potters Bar, was a sociable man with lots of friends. He was a keen Arsenal supporter and his local church was also important to him. Reg was also a member of Cell Barnes Trust. He was a creative man and his skills included art, embroidery, pottery, Meccano, and building train sets.

Jennifer Cardy

Jennifer Cardy, who lived at our Hillside residential home, has died at the age of 61.

Claire Carter, Deputy Manager at Hillside, writes: "Jenny was a great character and much loved by all of us. Jenny was a very lively lady with a great sense of humour and loved to tease staff, family and friends alike. She had a wonderful family who were very good to us all at Hillside. We had some wonderful holidays and outings with Jenny."

Our thoughts are with all those who have lost someone. We would like to thank those relatives who requested donations to Watford Mencap in memory of their loved ones. The money will be put to good use, supporting people with a learning disability to live the life they choose.

Change a life with your donation

Help Watford Mencap support 500 adults and children with learning disabilities and their families by making a donation.

£10.50 could provide an hour's support to reassure carers over the phone.

£43 could pay for a child to attend a session at the AfterSchool Club.

£100 could pay for a young adult with a learning disability to attend a holiday scheme for 3 days.

Please fill in this form and send to:

Watford Mencap, The Old Town Hall, 105 High Street, Rickmansworth, Herts. WD3 1AN.

Or call 01923 713622 www.watfordmencap.org.uk

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Post Code: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

I enclose a cheque for £ _____
made payable to Watford Mencap

I would like to make a donation of £ _____
by credit card

Card number: _____

Start date: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Security number: _____ Issue number: _____

We promise to protect your privacy and will not share your details with other organisations. All information you give us is managed in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). We would like to keep you informed about our work, however should you wish not to receive such information please tick here.

Special thanks

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

www.stuartbendigphotography.com
or 01923 499232 or 07951 111874

A Big thank you

Aldenham School
Sally Ashley-Cound
Barclays

Stuart Bendig
Camelot

Donations in memory
of the late Jennifer
Cardy

Paul Clarke

The Coach and Horses
Cox Costello and Horne
Day Smith and Hunter

Donations in memory
of the late Mrs Ruth Ella
Karin Edwards

Gibbs Gillespie

Dr Ann Goddard

Donations in memory
of the late Donald
Gransby

Richard Harrington MP

Herts County Council
Locality Budgets
Councillors:

Ian Brandon

Nigel Bell

Caroline Clapper

Paul Goggins

Barbara Lamb

Audrey Oaten

Steve O'Brien

Derek Scudder

Mark Watkins

Hertsmere Borough
Council's Health
Inequality Fund

Herts County Council
Short Breaks for
Disabled Children
Capital Grant

John Lewis Watford

Ed Johnson and
Colleagues for
'Chopcember'

Kenwood Electronics
LoCO2 Energy

Donations in memory
of the late Madge
Lutterloch

Marijo Hair and Beauty
Les Mead

Mencap Pancakes
Team:

Stuart Cowie

Adrian O'Brien

Daniel Stubbington

Annette Timms

Mill End Sports and
Social Club

Office Angels

Richard Owen

Park Inn Watford

Poundland

Radlett Wives

David Rees

Rickmansworth School

Cllr Lindsey Scudder,
Chairman of Watford
Borough Council

Sewell and Gardner

St Peter's Church,
Mill End

Strathspey School of
Dance

Three Rivers Youth
Council Grant

VocaLink

Waitrose

Rickmansworth

Watford Borough
Council's Annual Fund

Watford Grammar
School for Boys

Watford Grammar
School for Girls

Cllr Chris Whateley-
Smith, Chairman of
Three Rivers DC

Fran White

York House School

Meet the record breakers

A group of members from Watford Mencap's Learning and Leisure programme became record breakers on a great day out at Wembley Stadium.

They were part of an 83,761 crowd at a Saracens versus Harlequins rugby match to set a world record attendance for a club rugby game.

The group were the guests of Watford Borough Councillor Keith Crout who bid for the tickets in an auction at Watford Council's Chairman's Quiz last Autumn.

He said: "As Watford Mencap was one of the Chairman's charities this year I thought it would be a good opportunity for some of the people who use their services to enjoy an opportunity that doesn't come along very often. It made my day to see just how much they enjoyed themselves."

Keith became involved with Watford Mencap during his year as Watford Council Chairman and now is our volunteer press officer.

The group also enjoyed displays by the British Wheelchair Rugby team, the Rock Choir, and a performance by the band McFly.



Back row left to right, Councillor Keith Crout, Eddie Marsh, Ed Johnson, Stuart Henson, Steven Benstead. Front row, Jack Larholt, Andrew Pargeter, Andrew Osgood and Russell Lowe

Key Points

- Members of Watford Mencap's Learning and Leisure group became record breakers at a rugby match at Wembley Stadium
- The record was for the biggest crowd at a club rugby game
- The outing was thanks to Councillor Keith Crout who bid for the tickets (donated by Saracens) at an auction

Corporate team building with Watford Mencap

Watford Mencap's links with VocaLink continue to grow from strength to strength.

VocaLink, the international payments partner, generously provided the promotional literature which is being used by Watford Mencap to encourage businesses to get involved in fundraising initiatives.

The literature focuses on exclusive corporate packages that support Watford Mencap's projects, such as gardening at one of our residential homes.

Or perhaps a business wants to donate £1,000 to commission bespoke artwork painted by youngsters at our Children's Centre.

VocaLink, which has offices in Rickmansworth, was the first business to commission paintings, and YourCash is also proudly displaying a work of art at its office in Milton Keynes.

For more information on corporate team building with Watford Mencap please contact Funding Manager Veronica Chamberlain on 01923 713622.

Key Point

- Watford Mencap is offering unique and fun team-building packages to local businesses

Talent Corner

Good luck to all of our supporters who are taking part in the Watford 10k on 7 May.

Berrywood residents David Burchell and Colin Loose are joining Support Worker Chris Tyson in training for the run.

David, Colin and Chris would love it if staff, family and friends could sponsor them. Chris has set up a JustGivingPage so if you would like to make a donation please visit: <http://www.justgiving.com/ChristopherTyson0>

Also in training is a group of mums from Rickmansworth who call themselves the WD40s (a reflection of their ages as well as some stiff joints!).

The mums, who met at Rickmansworth Park JMI School when their sons were younger, are Lynn Green – a Watford Mencap trustee and Head of Volunteering at the RNIB, Sylvette Wood – a project accountant at Watford General Hospital, Pippa Kennedy – a marketing executive, Julie Black – a teacher at Rickmansworth JMI School and Nihara Murugapillai – a nursery owner.

Please encourage the WD40s by making a donation on their just giving page at: <http://www.justgiving.com/Lynn-C-Green>

The Watford 10k is organised by Watford Round Table which splits funds raised between local good causes and Watford Mencap. The Gold Sponsor is Camelot.

For more information about the Watford 10k, please visit: <http://www.watford10k.org.uk>



Pictured left to right are Colin Loose, Chris Tyson and David Burchell



Ask Rebecca

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself: My name is Rebecca Perfect and I have taken over from Ruth Murray in the Advice department at Watford

Mencap. Ruth has a new management role at Watford Mencap.

I have already met lots of people requiring advice and support, and some people may recognise me from when I used to work at Watford and Three Rivers Community Learning Disability Team.

If you need any advice on applying for benefits, money problems, housing choices, future planning, speaking up in groups, or you would like to talk confidentially about any issues you may be having, please get in touch.

You can talk to Rebecca or Sandra on 01923 713620.

In Touch is published by: Watford Mencap, The Old Town Hall, Rickmansworth, Herts WD3 1AN, Tel: 01923 713620 Fax: 01923 773976 reception@watfordmencap.org.uk

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