



Wirral Mencap Newsletter

Volume 21, Issue 4 – June 2024
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How much do you love your newsletter?

Last time we did a survey about membership 89 people out of 100 said that getting a copy of the newsletter was important to them. That is nearly everybody. We know people like getting a copy of their newsletter.

However—like most things the cost of your newsletter has been going up. Cost of printing. Cost of postage. All going up. Now one copy of the newsletter costs £1.72. As a member you get 6 copies of the newsletter a year. That costs a total of £10.32

But what has NOT gone up is the cost of membership at Wirral Mencap. Membership is still only £5 a year. You pay £5 and get 6 copies of the newsletter but it costs £10.32 to print and send them out. That is £5.32 more than the cost of your newsletters. You can see it is not enough. Where does the extra £5.32 it costs come from?

What do you think would help? We would love to hear your ideas. What should we do? All ideas and suggestions are welcome. Please contact us with your ideas. Call 0151 666 1829 or email info@mencapwirral.org.uk. Thank you!



Raising Awareness at Arrowe Park Hospital

Great way to start off Learning Disability Week 2024! We were seen by patients and hospital staff as we set up stall at Arrowe Park hospital again. The team from the hospital Patient Experience Strategy asked us to do some surveys with staff about Hospital Passports for people with learning disabilities. They also wanted the staff to tell them what they thought about the new things the Patient Experience Strategy had introduced.

Alex came in the afternoon. Alex has recently achieved a certificate to deliver the Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training Programme to Health and Social Care professionals and is very aware of the need to improve health services for people with learning disabilities. He said, 'I really like doing the stall at the hospital. It is important to let people know about what we do. It is also important to talk about Health Passports for people with learning disabilities. The Health Passport is important because it tells Doctors and Nurses about what we have difficulty with when we go into hospital'.

It was a busy day. We met one of the hospital's new Safeguarding and Complex Care Practitioners Helen who is a qualified Learning Disabilities Nurse. Another staff member also called Helen, gave us a brand new sample of the Sensory Care Bags for adult patients with learning disabilities or autism. They will be available for anyone visiting the Emergency Department or A&E. Both great ideas for making sure people with learning disabilities get good quality care at the hospital.





Thank you to everyone who came and did a very important job at the hospital that day.



Disclaimer

This newsletter contains information about services provided by a range of organisations and individuals. Inclusion in our Newsletter is by no means an endorsement of the quality of the services provided. Wirral Mencap is acting as a distributor of

Wirral Mencap Courses from September 2024

Picture	Name	How Long	When	Other Information
	Lunch Club	Every Monday	Every Monday 12:00pm-1:30pm	This club takes places at The Bloom Building with Erin Lunch Club is a social club that meets at the Bloom Building at 12 noon on Mondays. Everyone is welcome to join us for a cuppa and a chat, a game of bingo or to find out what activities are going on.
	Lunch Club Walking Group	8 Weeks	Monday 1.30-2.15pm From 9th September to 28th October	Leigh will meet at Lunch Club at 1.30pm and the walk will finish at Wirral Mencap at 2.15pm. Please wear comfortable shoes or trainers.
	Photography Course Two	6 weeks	Monday 10am-12:00pm From 9th September to 14th October	Meet at Wirral Mencap and then we will go out to various places to take photographs. You must have completed Photography Course One to be able to book onto this course. Please bring your mobile phone with you to take photographs.
	Walk and Talk	Every Tuesday	Tuesday 10.30-12 3rd September to 29th October	The group meets at Birkenhead Park Visit or Centre Join us for our weekly Walk and Talk around Birkenhead Park. A great way to exercise and meet new people!
	Computer Skills	10-12 Weeks	Tuesday 1-3pm from 10th September	This course takes place at Wirral Mencap with Chris On this course you will develop your skills and confidence when using a computer.
	Walking Football	7 weeks	Wednesday 3-4pm 11th September to 23rd October	This course takes place at Birkenhead Youth Club with Leigh Come and join our six week course, whether you have played before or are new to the sport. We will learn skills to improve our game and we will play games against each other. We have places on our minibus from the office. Let us know if you want a place
	Cycling	Thursdays 6 weeks	Thursday 12-1pm 12th September to 17th October	This course takes place at Birkenhead Park with Wheels for All During the sessions you will be able to try different types of bikes and have fun riding around the park. Meet near the children's play ground in Birkenhead Park.

What new things have people been learning...

Here's some of our Cycling group enjoying a session with Wheels for All at Birkenhead Park. Well done to our Boccia group. Many of the group have improved their skills and understanding of the game.

Cookery Skills – here's our group during their final session with their certificates, along with Debbie and Jane. Here's a few of our Walk and Talk group enjoying a lovely stroll in Birkenhead Park.



Feeling Snap Happy?

We have some exciting news! From 15th – 21st August, we will have a Photography Exhibition set up in Future Yard in Birkenhead.

The exhibition will showcase the fantastic work of our Gateway group and guest entries. There's no need to pay for the exhibition. You can pop into Future Yard at any time to see the pictures and learn about the people that took them. Let us know if you go to see them. You could take a picture of yourself there!

On Thursday 22nd August, we are holding our Photography Night where we will celebrate the success of the exhibition.

This will be a chance for each photographer to show off their work and have some fun. We will have a silent auction and we will also be choosing our Photographer of the Year! Anyone is welcome to come along and join in the fun.

We are asking for a minimum donation of £2.50 on the door. Doors open at 6:30pm.



Feeling Social? Join Us!

Well what a busy couple of months it has been for our Social Clubs over the start of Summer! We have been up to all sorts. For starters, our Pub Night at the Scrap Yard has developed into a lovely cosy group of regulars, where Wirral Mencap Members, friends, partners, parents, and volunteers all mingle, sharing good conversation over their favourite tipples – some folk are steadily working their way through the entire cocktail menu with every visit! As well as chit-chat about things like music, pets & community events, the group have been especially useful for sharing their personal experiences and knowledge with others on how to access things like benefits, bus passes, and other activities available to those who need them – proof that socialising is great for your wellbeing! Our next events will be the 29th August and 26th September. Looking forward to seeing you all again, and to welcoming any first timers!



Lunch Club is, as always, a lovely way to start our week off every Monday from 12pm (except Bank Holidays), always calm, cheerful and with two lucky bingo winners every week – what's not to love?! We rely on your donations as bingo prizes, so if you have any old gifts that you have never used laying around, think about dropping them into our office. Nothing is too small!

Crossbow attendees have been enjoying a wide variety of events, from our crowd pleasers such as Bingo and Karaoke, to some newer events like our first Dance Class with Jade from Shadow Dance! Jade took our favourite song requests and taught us some fun dance moves to go with them. Who knew exercising would be so fun?! Now though, it's time for the whole Crossbow team to have a rest over Summer, whilst Erin works on creating a new timetable of fun, sociable activities for you all to enjoy when we come back. Crossbow Club is closed every Wednesday in August, and we will look forward to opening our doors again with a brand new timetable on the 4th September at 7pm.



Did You See Us?

Do You See Me? Well, we made sure EVERYONE could see us down at Crossbow's Neon Party for Learning Disability Week. Down at Crossbow, we love a party, and this one was no different. Folk turned out in their brightest outfits ready to dance the night away under our UV Disco lights which made everyone's clothes, our balloons, and even everyone's teeth glow in the dark!



Special thanks to the Just For Fun Ukes, who put on a spectacular show as always. What a wonderful way to support us at Wirral Mencap. Thanks also to the staff and volunteers at the Liberty Centre for making it all possible, and most of all, thank to you Wirral Mencap Members and loyal Crossbow Attendees, for raising the roof and partying hard for Learning Disability Week.

Did You See Us at Vale Park?

On Saturday 22nd June, we celebrated Learning Disability Week with our Vale Park Funday. The sun was shining, and we had a brilliant time!

We put the fun in fundraising with football-themed games including beat the goalie and football bullseye. There was also the chance to try out drumming in the fantastic workshops run by Rhythm Reaction.

And of course, we were entertained throughout the day by the wonderful Hands & Voices, Just for Fun Ukes, The Homebirds, PopVox Choir, and Slightly Foxed.

Trish came along to the funday and said, 'My mum and I had a great day!'

Thank you to all those who came along to support the day. The final total raised was an amazing £572.82!

Did you enjoy the Vale Park Funday? Send us your pictures and videos!



A Tea-rrific Day

On Tuesday 18th June, we held our annual Tea Party, at Hamilton Square. It might have been a rainy day, but we still had a good turnout. Even the mayor and the mayoress of Wirral came along to have a go on the tombola and enjoy some coffee and cake. Our Gateway group did a fantastic job of manning the stalls, taking orders and serving drinks – well done! We also had some help from our lovely volunteers, Arnie, Jill, Simon, Jimmy and Anna.



Make sure to check out the video on our Facebook page if you haven't seen it already. Liam, one of our regular volunteers, spent the day filming the Tea Party and interviewing staff, volunteers and guests. Thank you, Liam, for your hard work!

Lots of very kind people generously donated cake for the Tea Party including Hurst's Bakery, So Cakes Wirral, Jelly Bakes, and Options for Supported Living. A massive thank you to everyone who donated their cakes and bakes. A big thank you also to Alpha Taxis who very kindly donated tea and coffee for the event.

The Tea Party raised a brilliant £388.51 in total! Shall we have some more cake to celebrate?



Remembering David Walker

On the 8th July we were informed of the sad passing of David Walker after a brief admission to hospital. Our condolences go to the Walker family who have a long history with Wirral Mencap.

David's parents, George and Margaret, ran the original social club on Monday nights at Oxton Congregational Church before the Crossbow Club began. David was another of the founder members of Crossbow back in the late 60's and he will be remembered most for his keen interest in aeroplanes and ships on the river Mersey. David loved air shows and attended many around the country and enjoyed visits to Manchester Airport's viewing gallery to watch the planes take off and land. He kept up to date with ships on the Mersey, via a magazine, and knew when all the important cruise lines were in Liverpool. David was quite an independent traveller who liked to be out and about and made good use of public transport until more recently when arthritis restricted his mobility.

David was a quiet and undemanding character who would blend into the background but enjoyed being amongst friends. He joined our outings and was a regular member of the annual holiday group to Devon where he particularly liked to enter the bowls competition. We will all miss David after such a long association with the Club and the wider organisation.

David's funeral will take place on Friday 9th August at 11.30am at St Marks Church, New Ferry, then moving on to Landican at 12.30pm.



It that time of year again, where we celebrate the Gateway attendees' achievements!

This year the party was the best attended party yet! There was over 130 people in attendance, thank you to you all! We celebrated over 30 people getting their Bronze, Silver & Gold Awards both from the Group Gateway and the individual Gateway.

It is amazing to reflect on how much amazing work they have all done to achieve their levels! Trying new things, having fun, and developing their confidence.

As a team we are all incredibly proud of everyone! As quick as the last levels have finished the new levels have started and we are already working hard towards achieving and celebrating again next year. Will next year's party be even bigger?

Summer club is also now well underway, keep your eyes peeled for some exciting updates in the next newsletter!



Court of Protection - Deputyship Workshops

(Part of the SEND Preparation for Adulthood Festival)

Tuesday 8th October 2024, The Floral Pavilion, New Brighton
Workshop 1 - 10.30am - 12.30pm
Workshop 2 - 2.30pm - 4.30pm

Are you a parent, carer or person who supports someone with a learning disability. Are you thinking about a deputyship but not sure where to start?

Places are limited to those in transition. Book early to avoid disappointment. Bookings open in September 24!

This workshop is a brief introduction to the following:

- The Court of Protection
- Types of Deputyships
- How to Apply
- Help with Fees
- Appointees & Power of Attorney
- Accessing Child Trust Funds via Court of Protection.

Bookings can be made via Eventbrite or for more information please call the office:

Call: 0151 666 1829

Email: info@mencapwirral.org.uk



SEND Preparation for Adulthood Festival

Join Us!

No booking required, just turn up!

Tuesday 8th October 2024

from 10am to 7pm at the Floral Pavilion, New Brighton

A programme of talks and a marketplace of services offering support and advice for SEND young people aged 11 - 25

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In July Wirral Mencap delivered a new workshop to parent/carers.

We have had a lot of requests recently from parent/carers asking for support with Court of Protection -Deputyships. In July our information Advice & Advocacy Team delivered a new workshop to help parent/carers to understand the application process and what they needed to do.

We had a lot of people interested in this workshop which meant some people had to be put on a waiting list. Wirral Mencap will be running two extra workshops on the Court of Protection-Deputyships at the Send Preparation for Adulthood Festival at the Floral Pavilion, New Brighton, on 8th October 2024. The workshops will be limited to parent/carers of someone with a learning disability transitioning from Children's Services to Adult Services. More information and how to book your place can be found on the flyer in this newsletter.

A lot of people attended the first workshop and found it very useful. This is some of the feedback from the people who came to the workshop.

"It's such a useful and important workshop as to me and parents with children of special needs. I learnt a lot!"

"I am so glad I attended the recent course you and Tina delivered it was really delivered well at a Steady pace I could keep up with. I am going get on with my application".

Are you a business owner?

Do you know someone who is a business owner or who works for a local business? We are looking for corporate partnerships to work with on fundraising projects. Please call the office on 0151 666 1829 or send an email to info@mencapwirral.org.uk if you or someone you know could help us.



Volunteer Spotlight—Laura

Laura volunteered at the Parents with Learning Needs Event in March 2024 and was a big help welcoming visitors to the event and setting up the venue. Laura is also a volunteer on the Parents with Learning Needs Steering Group. Since Volunteering at Wirral Mencap Laura has grown in confidence delivering the report to funders. The funders were really impressed with the presentation and as a result Laura has now progressed into a paid role as a Parent with Experience Trainer. (Similar to the Learning Disability Trainers role)

Laura said “I love volunteering at Wirral Mencap it gives me a sense of purpose and belonging. Coming to Wirral Mencap has given me a sense of pride. Before I felt like a nobody but volunteering at Wirral Mencap and getting a paid role has made me feel like a somebody.



Meet Shannon...

Hi my name is Shannon! I am the new Personal Development Mentor / Support Worker at Wirral Mencap.



My job is to support our members with finding volunteer placements, help our members develop skills towards volunteer work and I am also a part of the Gateway Award Staff Team.

Outside of work I love spending time with my family, my dogs, my friends and most importantly my little baby boy. I love music, especially rock and enjoy going to concerts.

I am always happy to help, if anybody has any questions or just fancies a chat I am always happy to be a listening ear.

Taking the Plunge

On Saturday 15th June, Anna, Rebecca, Jimmy, Sarah, Phil, and Ruthie abseiled down Leasowe Lighthouse to raise money for Wirral Mencap.

The summer weather did not join us on the day, but this brave bunch went ahead with the abseil anyway and they did a fantastic job.

Jimmy had this to say: “It’s been great fun and I’d like to do it again.”

Our 6 abseilers raised a fantastic total – over £1,000 between them.

Do you want to do an abseil for us? You can sign up to the next abseil at Leasowe Lighthouse – Saturday 14th September. To sign up, come into the office, give us a call on 0151 666 1829 or drop us an email at info@mencapwirral.org.uk.



Gateway Spotlight—Emma

My name is Emma. I have completed my Bronze Gateway Award and I am now working towards my Silver.

I love socialising and meeting new people, I am part of several groups and have lots of friends. I enjoy cooking, playing games on my PS4 and singing with the Hands and Voices choir. I really enjoyed performing at Wirral Mencap’s AGM. I have done courses on Life Support, using VR headsets and IT. I particularly love being fit and active, I play basketball, do zumba and taekwondo. So far I have achieved my blue belt. I volunteer in a café once a week.



A Big Thank You To...

All those who **donated raffle prizes** for the Vale Park Funday: **Everton F.C., Tranmere Rovers F.C., Ocado, Storyhouse Chester, Ros Turton, Jelley Bakes, and Wirral Tandoori.** The raffle raised a massive **£185!**

Thank you to the following for **donating tea, coffee, and soft drinks** for our Tea Party: **Alpha Taxis, Farmfoods (Birkenhead), and The Food Warehouse.** And a big thank you also to the following for their cake donations: **Hurst's Bakery, So Cakes Wirral, Jelley Bakes, Options for Supported Living, staff, and those of you who donated.** The Tea Party raised a wonderful **£388.51.**



Thank you to **St Andrew's URC Meols** who donated **£87.50** from their church collection.

A very big thank you to **Beacon Fostering** for sponsoring our upcoming **Photography Exhibition.** See below for more details.

Thank you to **Forbes Townsend** who awarded us a grant of **£3,000** to use for our social clubs.

A big thank you to **Awards for All (National Lottery)** who awarded us a grant of **£19,182** towards our Programme Development.



And thank you to **Skelton Charity** for granting us **£2,500** to cover the redecoration costs of the Wirral Mencap building.

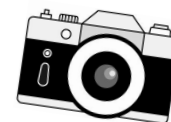
A huge thank you to **Loyd and Helen Wildridge** for raising **£120** via our Euros Sweepstake!

As always, a big thank you to everyone who has supported us recently.

If you have any fundraising ideas, then **call the office** on 0151 666 1829 and ask for Becca or drop us an **email** at info@mencapwirral.org.uk

Dates for Your Diary

Thursday 22nd August— We are celebrating the Photography Exhibition with a photography evening at Future Yard in Birkenhead. We ask for a donation of £2.50 on the door. Doors open at 6:30pm and the event starts at 7pm. Come along and support our photographers!



Saturday 14th September— Leasowe Lighthouse abseil. £40 to sign up. Visit our website or call the office for more information and sign up details.



Seaside Walk 2024

Saturday 21st September—Our annual Seaside Walk is coming back! Keep your eyes peeled for more information on our Facebook and our website. Entry to the walk costs £6 and we ask that you raise a target of £20.

Saturday 12th October— Barn Dance in St Stephen's Parish Centre in memory of David Taylor. Keep an eye on our social media. More information to follow soon.



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