

Wokingham, Bracknell & Districts Mencap

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28th August 2018

AUGUST WOKINGHAM MAILING

Dear Member,

Celebrating our 20th Anniversary

This month marks the end of our 20th Anniversary year. We look forward to another 20 years supporting carers, families, adults and children with a learning disability/autism spectrum condition.

Wokingham Borough Council Review of Services

Some carers may be aware that WBC have been reviewing some care packages in light of changes to the service at Loddon Court. A number of carers had raised concerns with us about this process and we met this week with WBC officers including the Assistant Director of Adult Social Services, Martin Sloan, to discuss these concerns. We are now working together with WBC with a view to improving the process and we have agreed that if a carer needs support in one of these review meetings then our Family Liaison Worker can support them, where possible.

Bracknell Forest Mayor's Charity of the Year

We are continuing our fundraising activities as part of the Mayor's Charity of the Year with the last Summer of Fun Day on Wednesday 29th August at South Hill Park. We would like to thank all the volunteers who gave up their time to 'man' our Secret Strings game.

Clothes Banks donations

If you would like to help raise funds for our charity you can donate your unwanted clothes to one of the clothes banks, which are located in car parks around the Bracknell Forest Borough, where it states that the proceeds go to the Mayor's Charity, as these will be donated to our charity.

Social Media

Look out for us on the Bracknell Forest Mayor's social media at **mayorbfc** on Facebook and on our Facebook page and like us and share our posts on Facebook and Twitter.

Help us raise funds as the Mayor's Charity

We are looking for brave volunteers to take part in a **sponsored skydive** for the charity or for runners and non-runners to sign up for the Bracknell half-marathon which will take place in May 2019. Or you could think of your own sponsored challenge! If you are interested or have an idea for a sponsored event please let us know at the office and we can work with you to make this happen.

Job Vacancies

We have vacancies for Playworkers at the Bracknell Smiles for Sibs group on Thursdays for 2 hrs per week at £7 per hour (16-18 year olds). For further details and a job specification please contact the office on 0300 777 8539 or email: admin@wokinghammencap.org. References and an Enhanced DBS check will be carried out on the successful candidates.

Green Token Scheme - Asda Lower Earley

Our charity has been selected to take part in the next Green Token scheme at Asda Lower Earley starting on 1st October 2018. 3 groups

are selected each quarter and the group who receive the most green tokens from our customers receive £500 and the 2 runners up each receive £200. So if you shop there, please put your green tokens in our box.

We would like to be chosen for the **green token scheme at John Lewis in Reading** and have tried a number of times without success. *If you visit the store, can you please nominate us?* You just have to fill in a card and put it in the box by the cafe.

Save your plastic milk bottle tops for us

Wokingham Borough Council is collecting plastic milk bottle tops for recycling and we are the chosen charity to receive the funding from this scheme. Can you collect your milk bottle tops for us? You can bring them to the coffee mornings/lunches and we will take them to the Council offices in Wokingham. The tops must have 2 or 4 written in the triangular recycling symbol.

NEWS AND EVENTS FOR CARERS

Carers Coffee Morning

The next meeting will be a lunch on **Tuesday 11th September** from 12.15pm to 2.00pm at **Rose Street Methodist Church, Rose Street, Wokingham**. Lesley Buckland, Commissioning Specialist for People's Services at Wokingham Borough Council will be attending our lunch this month to talk to carers about developing a new strategy for carers. Come along to find out more and meet other carers. Please see attached flyer for further details and how to book your lunch.

NEWS AND EVENTS FOR CHILDREN

Smiles for Sibs Club

The **Smiles for Sibs Club** runs weekly during term time on **Monday evenings from 4.15pm-6.00pm** at Woodley Airfield Community Centre and costs just £1 a session. The group will re-start after the summer holidays on **Monday 10th September**. There are spaces at the group for new children. Contact the office on 0300 777 8539 for further information.

Youth Club @ Addington

The **Youth Club @ Addington School** runs **every Wednesday** during term-time from **7.00pm-9.00pm**. Young people with learning disabilities between the ages of 13 (year 9) and 19 are welcome to come along for a fun filled evening. The group will re-start after the summer holidays on **Wednesday 12th September**. Each week a variety of different activities are planned, including board games, sports, movie nights, pizza making, a tuck shop and more. There is currently a weekly charge of £5 (to be invoiced in advance). Bethanie Cook is the Co-ordinator for this group and can be contacted on 07551 159073 or phone the office on 0300 777 8539.

NEWS AND EVENTS FOR ADULTS

Paul's Karaoke

Paul's Karaoke meets in the Rose Room at the Rose Street Methodist Church usually on the middle two Wednesdays of each month. The next meetings are **Wednesday 12th and Wednesday 19th September**. The group is open to anyone over the age of 16 who has a learning disability. There is a small charge of £3 per session.

@The Acorn Social Group

@The Acorn is our weekly social club for adults 16+ with learning disabilities, including those with profound and multiple learning disabilities. The club runs every Tuesday evening from 7.00pm-9.00pm at the Acorn Community Centre, Woosehill. The activities in September include:

- **Tuesday 4th September – Table Tennis and Snooker**
- **Tuesday 11th September – Playdough**
- **Tuesday 18th September – Acorn's Got Talent**
- **Tuesday 25th September – Bongos**

There is a small charge of £3 per person which includes drink, snacks and different activities every week. In light of current funding cuts, we are reviewing this weekly charge. *As we have no other funding sources for this group, regretfully we will be increasing the weekly charge to £4 per week from 1st October as a contribution towards venue and staffing costs. In addition, in line with our other social groups, we will be bringing in an invoice system from 1st January where participants will be invoiced individually for a set period of time. Participants will receive a letter explaining this in due course.*

Friday Alternative

This social group is for adults aged 16+ with Aspergers Syndrome/high functioning autism. Now that the TGIF and Friday Alternative groups have merged they meet twice a month. In September the next meetings are:

- **Wednesday 12th September – Nando’s Restaurant, 29 Market Place, Wokingham.** The table is booked for 7pm and a meal will cost between £15.00-£25.00.
- **Friday 28th September – Dinner/drinks at The Olde Leathern Bottle, Wokingham.** The table is booked for 7pm and a meal will cost between £18.00-£25.00

Ruth Hatch runs the group and can be contacted by email at autism@bracknellmencap.org, or phone/text 07929 114179. **Please note that there is an annual charge of £60 to attend Friday Alternative. This can be paid in 2 instalments. This fee helps to cover the cost of staffing the group.**

NEWS FROM OTHER GROUPS

Wokingham Borough Council Carers Strategy 2019-2022

The new Carers Strategy is currently being developed, this will help inform the council of the services they need to develop locally and how they can support carers over the next few years. As a Wokingham unpaid carer or young carer, your input is essential to make sure they provide the right services to meet your needs and they would very much like to hear from you. The link below will take carers directly to the online survey which should take no more than 4 minutes to complete! <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/WTJY8FD>
 Or if you would like the opportunity to come and talk to the council please come along to one of their Carers drop-in sessions on Thursday 6th September 2018 6.30 - 8.30pm or Friday 7th September 11-1pm or 2 -4pm at The Rose Room, The Bradbury Centre, Rose Street, RG40 1XS

Please note that carers will shortly be receiving the *National Carers Survey*, it is a statutory requirement for local authorities to send out and collect information which will be used to feed into the monitoring of the impact of the **National Carers Strategy**. This is for a different purpose from the survey above.

Carers’ Crafts

This is a drop-in craft group for carers run by carer Pat Regan. The group meets every month and does a variety of craft activities, drinks lots of tea and chats. The group runs from 10am to 12noon at Wokingham Fire Station, Easthampstead Road, Wokingham. Please note that there is no parking on site, but there is a public car park next door. If you intend to come along please bring a small sewing kit with you containing needle, thread, scissors, pencil and ruler. We do have a theme each month but also have cards available to decorate. Members are welcome to bring their own projects to finish and/or give ideas to others. No need to book a place now we have a new larger venue. The dates for future meetings are: **Thursday 13th September, Thursday 18th October, Thursday 8th November and Thursday 20th December.**

Local Offer Live 2018 (formerly CAN Day)

REACH Wokingham in partnership with Wokingham Borough Council CAN Network are hosting a Family Information and Fun Day or those in Wokingham Borough with a child or young person with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities on Saturday 22nd September from 11am to 4pm at St. Crispin’s Leisure Centre, London Rd., Wokingham, RG40 1SR.

To book a FREE ticket go to: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/local-offer-live-2018-formerly-the-can-day-tickets-47208289264>

Ambitious about Autism.

Ambitious about Autism are the national charity for children and young people with autism. They are currently running a campaign called We Need An Education, drawing attention to the problems young people with autism face accessing education in England. Earlier this year – as part of their campaign - they published a report on the alarming rise in school exclusions for young people with autism. The findings were reported on BBC Breakfast and Sky News and brought to the attention of the government’s independent school exclusions review panel. As they continue their campaign they are keen to hear from parents or carers of young people with autism about their experiences of the education system. To do this they have created a short survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/K6DBX2C> Please help Ambitious about Autism gather new evidence for their We Need An Education campaign by completing this short survey.

Autism friendly shopping hour

Morrisons is introducing an autism friendly shopping hour after trialling it in three stores. The ‘Quiet Hour’ will take place in all Morrisons stores from 9am to 10am every Saturday morning. Lights will be dimmed, music and the radio will be turned off, stores will avoid making tannoy announcements and checkout beeps and other electrical noises will be turned down. In addition they will reduce the moving of baskets and trolleys.

The UK’s mass autism-friendly shopping event is back! From Saturday 6 October at 10am, there will be a week of Autism Hours in shops across the country. Last year 5,000 retailers got involved, and this year The National Autistic Society are hoping even more will take part. Go to:

https://www.autism.org.uk/get-involved/tmi/autism-hour/customers.aspx?utm_source=The%20National%20Autistic%20Society&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=9674551_18.07.2018%20-%20July%20monthly%20newsletter%20passive&dm_i=YA3,5RCXJ,A576DX,MG9E7,1

Berkshire Fire & Rescue Consultation

Berkshire residents, workers and commuters have a chance to have their say on the future of Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service (RBFRS) during an eight-week consultation on the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority's (RBFA) **draft Corporate Plan and Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) for the years 2019 – 2023**.

The public consultation will run until **Friday, 28 September 2018 (5pm)**, during which RBFRS is encouraging anyone that lives, works or travels in Berkshire to have their say on the proposals outlined. The plan outlines how RBFRS identifies and assesses all fire and rescue related risks that could affect Royal Berkshire's communities. This includes incidents that are routinely dealt with, such as fires and vehicle accidents to incidents that occur less frequently, such as large-scale flooding. People can take part in the consultation in a number of ways: **Click here to take part in the online survey** or **Email: IRMP@rbfrs.co.uk** or **Call us on 0118 945 2888** or **Write to us at: Newsham Court, Pincents Kiln, Calcot, Reading, Berkshire, RG31 7SD**
If anyone would like a hard copy or require assistance with accessing the information in an alternative format or language, please contact us using any of the methods above.

Norwood's Increasing Independence for Adults with Learning Disabilities Programme.

The new programme is now available and offers life skills courses for all abilities that will enable learners to gain confidence and increase their independence. Courses run for 28 weeks throughout the year during term time. If you need help or have any questions, please contact the Life Long Learning team by email: lifeskillsandlearning@norwood.org.uk or telephone: 020 8809 8809 or write to: Ravenswood, Nine Mile Ride, Crowthorne, Berkshire RG45 6BQ

Wokingham Back Me Up – Emergency Service

Crossroads run a free emergency Back Me Up service for carers in the Wokingham Borough which operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, every day of the year. The Back Me Up scheme also provides cover for carers who need time off for a health-related event such as hospital, GP, dental appointments. Contingency arrangements are there for carers' peace of mind especially for emergency situations. **To register with the scheme please call Crossroads Care Wokingham on 01189 795324**. Once registered, carers will be issued with a Carers Emergency Card with contact details to be used in an emergency or unplanned event. <http://wokinghamcrossroads.org/>

Volunteers Needed at the University of Reading

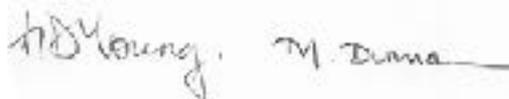
The University of Reading is carrying out a study to consult parents' ideas and views to develop an online resource giving information and peer support for parents of children with autism, as well as design music-assisted language interventions to elicit speech from non-verbal or minimally verbal children with autism. They are looking for parents who have a child diagnosed with autism and who are:

- Aged 18 or over
- Willing to attend a one-off focus group meeting at the University of Reading (or locally)
- Happy to share ideas to help design an online resource and language interventions for autism

Volunteers will be remunerated for time and travel expenses. Contact Dr Jacqueline Sin on 0118 3788122 or email: Jacqueline.sin@reading.ac.uk or Dr Fang Liu on 0118 3788122 or email: f.liu@reading.ac.uk

If you have any questions about anything in this mailing, please call the office on 0300 777 8539 or email admin@wokinghammencap.org.

Kind regards



Mary Durman and Heather Young
Joint Chief Executives
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