



## News from Liz Chairperson

Liz Rolfs

COVID 19 - a good title for a Hollywood disaster movie, except very few people would have believed the story-line! Who needs wars and nuclear weapons when this can happen so easily? Initially there was a fair amount of complacency in the UK - "no worse than seasonal flu/can't plan for every eventuality/what about the financial markets/ don't frighten the horses ..."

Well as I write this, we are 2-3 weeks away from the peak spread of the virus and in lockdown apart from essential food shopping and local exercise. At our last Trustee management meeting on 2 March I had no idea that a few short weeks later I would have to close the Nedderman Centre to our clubs and hirers and, of course, our Mencap shop in New Milton. Both these premises are also our main revenue for ongoing costs. We have some restricted grants that we can use to keep one member of staff on half time to answer your calls and hopefully arrange some interactive online activities.

These are unprecedented times which no-one expected or asked for. So what are we going to do about it and when can we return to 'normal' whatever the new normal will be.

### New Forest Mencap Team

#### Trustees

Chairperson: Liz Rolfs  
Pauline Pegram  
Valerie Bowyer  
Warren Breach

#### Accounts

Lisa Yeates

#### Development Officer

Jackie Lillywhite

#### Club Leaders

Pauline French  
Christine Eyles

#### Gateway Awards

Elaine Evans

#### Literacy & Numeracy

Pauline Pegram

#### Office Administrator

Virginia Darley

### Issue Content

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Well, we are all fortunate to live in the age of new technology which means we can still stay in touch. We plan to get exercise and some learning and fun up on our website and to use social media. We are really having to work hard to become tech savvy. If there is anyone out there who knows how to create a good interactive online presence and can volunteer their time to do this, we would be very happy to hear from you.



Your Trustees are still fundraising and meeting via WhatsApp or Zoom or Skype!



We were doing so well up until the beginning of March. See Jackie Lillywhite's reports (pages 4 - 7). We had refurbished the Nedderman Centre and painted the outside thanks to a wonderful volunteer initiative by Ceuta (Pharmaceuticals) Group organised by Mollie Mold's son David. Now even the access ramp has been made more user friendly (see below). We are so grateful to those who helped with the refurbishment of the Nedderman Centre which has enabled the building to be used by more than one event at a time: New Forest District Council, Clothworkers Foundation, Baily Thomas Foundation, Gerald Micklem Charitable Trust, The Screwfix Foundation, Jules Thorne Charitable Trust, Rank Foundation, Bernard Sunley Foundation and Sway Welfare Group.



*NF Mencap's President, Councillor Allan Glass, opening the refurbished Nedderman Centre*



*Painting the outside of the Nedderman Centre*



*The widened ramp*

I would like to personally thank our funders, the Gerald Micklem Trust, Garfield Weston, the Burry Trust, Lloyds Foundation, the Henry Smith Charity, the Lottery Community Fund and Sport England who continue to have faith in what we are doing and who gave us significant grants for the development of activities for people with a learning disability and support for parents; these grants for the most part will need to have their time frame extended. As I write this, Sport England have just given us a grant for exercise and yoga lessons on a weekly basis.

I give our thanks too to the group leaders who have had to be put on hold and the volunteers who I hope will return once this is all over.

We have a plan which was realised following research we commissioned from Bath University to help ageing carers and their loved ones (see page 7); plans to run activities in Ringwood as requested by some carers; and a regular disco on Sundays following a successful first event. Lots of fun and help ... these are all on hold at the moment, but they will be BACK as soon as the lockdown brakes are off or at least eased. When will that be? Who knows but months rather than weeks away, I suspect.



Our February 1st Quiz Night at Bashley Village Hall

We had a wonderful quiz turn out in Bashley on 1 Feb where we raised £1,700 and 145 supporters had a fun evening.

Now enjoy reading about our plans and what we have been doing in this bumper Spring/Summer newsletter. And a BIG thankyou to our wonderful NHS staff and the carers in residential homes putting their lives at risk for all of us. And think of the elderly parents, some of whom have taken their equally ageing loved one back to live with them whilst all this is going on. I do hope they are getting the right support.

So all is not lost. We are still working hard in isolation. We are fortunate to have a new office administrator Virginia Darley (See page 11). Enjoy the sun when it's out, STAY SAFE and be sensible it will not last forever... if you need any help or advice please call us at the office 01425 621893.



*Thank you to our wonderful NHS!*

Company No: 2376432

Charity No: 1038962

**New Forest Mencap**

Nedderman Centre , Marryat Road, New Milton, BH25 5NY



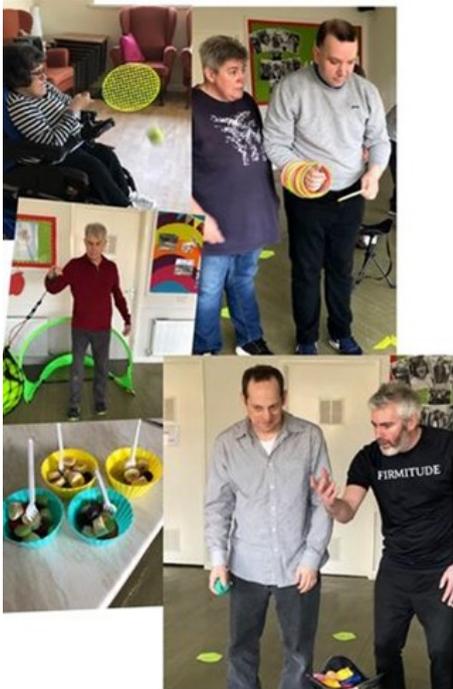
Jackie Lillywhite

### NEWS FROM JACKIE, DEVELOPMENT OFFICER,

At the end of last year Jackie completed her “MSC in Psychology and Learning Disability” from Portsmouth University and she was awarded a Merit for all her hard work. Congratulations Jackie!

Jackie has been continuing her work with the NF Parent Carer Support Group, liaising with organisations to bring fitness, yoga and discos to Mencap and sharing the research gathered from parents and carers about how to find fixes and solutions.

NF Mencap has received funding from Lloyds Bank for an exciting new project for families of someone with a learning disability aged 40+ and Jackie is coordinating that project. See below for her news:



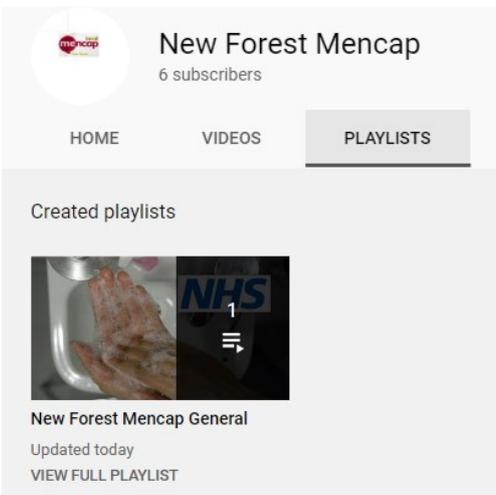
### NEW YEAR, NEW YOU!!

In January 2020, New Forest Mencap began offering weekly fitness sessions on a Monday morning. These sessions have proved extremely popular to the point that BC (before Coronavirus) we were just about to split the session into two different time slots! Vincent from Firmitude [www.facebook.com/FIRMITUDE/](http://www.facebook.com/FIRMITUDE/) provides an hour long (to be fair, usually it’s longer!) session of multi games which give participants an opportunity to practice balance, hand-eye co-ordination, concentration and a whole hour of moving around (everyone has to replace balls/quoints/bean bags for the next person). Support workers join in and everyone gets a fit and fun start to the week.

### OUR VERY OWN NEW FOREST MENCAP YOUTUBE CHANNEL!

We now have a New Forest Mencap YouTube Channel. We will put videos from our Trustees and from those who provide our activities but we would love to add yours too! Say Hello or show us what activities or tips and tricks you have for using your time during the current situation. Your videos will be uploaded as private content so please get in touch if you would like an email to explain how to do this. To find our public playlists, please put this link into your browser: -

[www.youtube.com/channel/UCJ4VpDI1AIFDqfiGf3idg2w](http://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJ4VpDI1AIFDqfiGf3idg2w)



## NEW FOREST PARENT CARER SUPPORT GROUP

This group continues to meet on a monthly basis (usually the first Tuesday of each month) and provides information and support for parents and carers. We mix up the content of the meetings from month to month between information sessions on topics relevant to providing support and care for someone with a learning disability and open support sessions with no fixed agenda. In February we heard from Jennie Monro who talked to us about her experience of providing a Managed Living Environment for her daughter with a learning disability. Jennie shared her journey to the current situation for her daughter now, where her daughter receives all the support and care that she needs but where Jennie, as her parent, does not have to be constantly involved to maintain the support. New Forest Mencap has set up a Whatsapp group for those interested in Jennie's model to continue chatting and if you would like to join this group, please let Jackie know .

In March we invited the Positive Path Foundation [www.positivepathfoundation.org/#about](http://www.positivepathfoundation.org/#about) to talk to us about their project in Hampshire and Dorset which provides social, friendship and relationship opportunities for people with learning disabilities and autism. This meeting extended into a very interesting discussion about some of the lesser known or understood aspects of autism and an opportunity for those present to give and receive support around this.

When the restrictions are lifted, we hope to have an open support meeting at Hangar Farm Arts where we will decide on the next topics that parents and carers would like to hear about, the most favoured options probably being housing, Direct Payments, an update from the HCC Transformation Manager or a representative from the RCN to talk about LD nursing.

If you would like to be on our mailing list to receive information about dates and topics, please email me at [development@newforestmencap.org](mailto:development@newforestmencap.org)

### Local Sports Event to tie in with the 2020 Virgin Money London Marathon Day

Royal Mencap have been chosen as the charity of the year for 2020. New Forest Mencap successfully applied to the Royal Mencap Society for a grant to host an inclusive sporting event on the same day. It was to be the 26 April 2020 but will now be held on the 4 October. The local event will bring people with and without learning disabilities together to enjoy a day of sport at a local venue. It will be a day of sportsmanship with a local mainstream partner to celebrate inclusivity in sport and to see what amazing things can happen when your team is truly inclusive.



**Watch out for more information!**

## You Said, We did .....

Since the Autumn, Jackie, our Development Officer, has been meeting up and talking with as many people with learning disabilities as possible to let them know about their local Mencap and to ask them what they would like their local Mencap to know or what activities or services they would like their local Mencap to provide. One popular request was a disco, so, in March 2020 we began the first of a planned series of monthly discos (before Coronavirus). You also told Jackie that the weekends were sometimes a bit boring, so, we decided to hold our discos on a Sunday afternoon.

Our first disco was provided by [www.maxdiscos.co.uk](http://www.maxdiscos.co.uk) and 34 people enjoyed two hours of dancing, meeting friends old and new and generally having a good time. The tuck shop was manned by one of our Gateway Awards participants who was able to have a real experience of handling money and numeracy in action.

This was a great success and we look forward to holding our next Sunday afternoon disco as soon as we can. If you support someone with a learning disability and you did not receive information about the disco before, please email me on [development@newforestmencap.org](mailto:development@newforestmencap.org) to ensure that you hear about the next date.



*First Disco!*

## New Forest Mencap Fixes and Solutions Meeting

This was planned to take place on 20 March 2020 and will be rescheduled as soon as possible. Following on from the launch of the research commissioned by New Forest Mencap and undertaken by the University of Bath, New Forest Mencap were keen to develop the ideas and themes which arose out of this but to focus on the solutions and fixes that parents and carers want or can suggest to alleviate the issues identified in the research. Potentially the ideas from parents and carers would promote independence for their sons and daughters, reduce the caring responsibilities for parents who are becoming older, and would lead to a reduction in the anxieties felt by parents about the future for their sons and daughters as they get older. New Forest Mencap will take the feedback from this meeting directly to HCC and will also share it with commissioners as this will be feedback from people who are experts by experience and we want those who commission and deliver services to know what changes are needed in order to improve this situation.



## **New Forest Mencap - Planning for the Future when you Support Someone with a Learning Disability who is Aged 40+, supported by the Lloyds Foundation**

New Forest Mencap is pleased to announce that it has received funding from the Lloyds Bank Foundation to pilot a programme which will identify, reach, connect with, support and signpost families in the New Forest District Council area who care for and support someone with a learning disability who is aged 40+ and lives in the family home, to understand the barriers in respect of future independent living and to support small steps for parents/carers and people with learning disability towards overcoming these. NFM is able to provide ongoing support for 9 – 12 months for these families and will work with them in depth to support them to look at all aspects of the future for their son or daughter and to support them to make plans towards promoting independence for their sons and daughters, reducing their caring responsibilities as they becoming older, and ensuring that the desired future for their sons and daughters can happen. This support has not yet been fully promoted (due to Coronavirus) but if you are reading this and are interested in receiving this support from New Forest Mencap please email me at [development@newforestmencap.org](mailto:development@newforestmencap.org) for further information.



### **FUNDING FROM THE HENRY SMITH CHARITY**

New Forest Mencap continues to provide support to parents and carers of people with learning disabilities throughout the New Forest area as funded under a grant from the Henry Smith Charity. Feedback from our parents and carers about the support they receive or the issues they face is offered by New Forest Mencap as a “critical friend” at the wide variety of opportunities where we are able to engage with commissioners, local authorities and service providers. Opportunities such as Co-Production meetings, LIGs or specific meetings with local authority learning disability adult social care leaders and teams. It also enables us to be a participant in new ventures such as the Hampshire-wide Second Transition Working Group being held by Hampshire County Council to look at creating a pathway for adults with LD and their families when they choose to move from living at home to more independent living and where participants can contribute their knowledge and experiences and a best practice pathway will be developed.



### **YOGA FOR PEOPLE WHO USE WHEELCHAIRS (AND SEATED YOGA)**



In February 2020 New Forest Mencap began offering weekly sessions of yoga for people who use wheelchairs (and seated yoga). Five people began enjoying the weekly classes, providing a focussed time with gentle exercises to improve strength and breathing. Here is a picture of our Yogi ready to start a class. We will continue this opportunity in due course.

## English and Maths Group by Pauline Pegram



Pauline

The people in the English and Maths group asked me to tell you how hard they have been working and what they have been doing. The focus has been on adding money and we have had a “café” in the group.

- Jenny said that she needed to give change and, after working hard in class, showed us her new skills by selling the snacks at the disco.
- Rupert now has the confidence to speak to us more and has used the calculator to add up bills.
- Phillip can now check his own receipts using the calculator on his phone and Person B is moving onto new accommodation and more independent living.
- Becky has used a calculator to add up sums and money and can read short sentences.
- Stuart recently joined the group and has proved he can do more than he admits... great dancing at the disco too!



Jenny using her calculator



Rupert learning to confidently communicate with us



### In the pipeline ....football coaching

As soon as we are able to begin activities again we are looking to hold a weekly football training session on a Monday afternoon (probably 2 o'clock) at the Nedderman Centre. All will be welcome and the sessions will be delivered by a qualified coach experienced in working with people with learning disabilities.

### In the pipeline ..... Ringwood

We have heard that people with learning disabilities who live in Ringwood are not able to access many activities at the weekend. New Forest Mencap would like to hear from you (or your parent/ carer) if you live in Ringwood so that we can work together to change this. Please contact Jackie at [development@newforestmencap.org](mailto:development@newforestmencap.org).

## **A looming crisis for older family carers of people with a learning disability**

People with learning disabilities are now living longer and often outlive their parents and these parents are understandably anxious about what happens to their children when they are no longer around. Seeing elderly people in New Milton we did not recognise, either shopping or in a cafe with their son or daughter also of an advancing age, made us wonder how many of these families there may be out there and how we might reach out to them and tell them about our activities.

Initial enquiries with local authority and health services did not get us far. So we thought we would fundraise to employ someone to find out who is still lives at home, how old they are, how old the parents are and what sort of services or information they might require.

Our fundraiser dug up the statistic that the New Forest has the highest ratio of people over the age of 65 in the whole of the country, and this of course includes people with a learning disability. *Awards for All* gave us some money and we approached a Professor (Rachel Forrester-Jones from Bath University) to do the research for us thinking that a university would have greater chance of accessing data. But this still proved tricky because of data protection reasons, but after advertising in the Advertiser and Times, in the end we got 21 people together, 5 families of which we hadn't met before.

Southern Health Authority are still are in the process of getting a database together from GP surgeries. But even so this will not tell us how many people of advancing age and with a learning disability are still living at home with their elderly parents. So we must keep digging.

*"The age problem is a looming crisis for these reasons"*

Take a person of 50 years still living with parents aged 80 or over. What sort of life do they have? Do they socialise with people their own age or do they follow the pattern and rhythm of life set down by their much older parents? One actual example is of a man of over 60 living with his widower father in his 90s. They get 2 hours of support a day, practical support (changing, washing etc.) but we can't get the son to come to Gateway Club of an evening because the father can't organise it.

Furthermore we can never know when an elderly parent might die. In the event it would be a crisis on many levels. Dealing with the trauma, possibly having to wait until someone came round to deal with it and then of course the bereavement issues as well as moving to emergency accommodation. We think it would be better if plans were already in place rather than waiting for a crisis to happen and we know that crises are more expensive than planned contingencies. So we are working on getting these issues addressed by the local authorities, urging them to at least start putting plans in place before they are needed.

Coming back to the present however, we are also aware of the anxiety parents feel. It's the anxiety of not knowing where your child may end up and whether the surroundings and level of care are ones which with they and their child will be happy.

## Here are some of the things parents said

- *“I expect I will have a massive stroke or heart attack and I would like to kick start something now...I don't want to drop down dead & they lose their home. They would be much better off going into care now so they can get used to the routine...”*
- *“I hope [my loved one] goes before me. We have organised their funeral...I was ill earlier this year and so I am anxious. Funeral and service is all planned.”*
- *“As I get older...there is nothing I can do –I do my best. All I want is to see [them] well treated. My aims are modest. I just want them to be safe, healthy and happy.*



*Photo Above: Professor Rachel Forrester-Jones launching the research at Careys Manor with Baroness Judith Jolly presiding and panel from Down's Syndrome Association, Royal Mencap, Southern Health Authority and Hampshire County Council*

## Could you help New Forest Mencap?

Our expanding organisation would welcome your participation. We are actively looking for **volunteers and paid workers to run our Gateway (leisure) clubs** and we are always looking for Trustees to guide our work, especially someone with accounting expertise.

## LOTS OF LINKS

[SSI Child Disability Starter Kit \(for children under age 18\)](#)

[Parenting with Disabilities: A Guide to Home Modifications](#)

[10 Types of Service Dogs and What They Do](#)

[Life-changing companions: How to afford a service dog](#)

[Building a Wheelchair Ramp: What you should know before tackling the project](#)

[Don't Let Disabilities Get in the Way of Getting the Job](#)

[The Ultimate Guide to Finding and Renting Housing With Disabilities](#)

[Transportation and Travel for People with Disabilities](#)

## NEW ADMINISTRATOR

My name is Virginia Darley and I joined New Forest Mencap as administrator at the beginning of March. I have worked in Child Care Development for 30 years and most recently have been running a charity working with disabled and disadvantaged children and young people in Romania. I am thrilled to be in this role and look forward to working with our Chairperson, Liz Rolfs, the Trustees and all involved at NF Mencap. Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can help you: [office@newforestmencap.org](mailto:office@newforestmencap.org)



## VOLUNTEERING How might I benefit?

The current lockdown that we are experiencing during the Coronavirus Pandemic is giving us time to reflect and consider what is important. Volunteering is thought of as an altruistic activity, designed to benefit a group or an organisation. Perhaps less recognised is that volunteering is also a fantastic way of developing a skill, gaining life experience and generally meeting new people.

When the restrictions are lifted and we are allowed to move about again, New Forest Mencap has some exciting and innovative activities planned. With the new award from Sports England, the ongoing research from the Lloyds Bank Foundation and our normal weekly activities, NF Mencap is busy and growing rapidly!

We are looking for volunteers for our Gateway Clubs, our Charity Shop in New Milton and we are especially looking for new Trustees. We are particularly looking for those with skills in Finance, Digital Communication and general business skills.

As a trustee, you will be asked to attend monthly committee meetings, which last approximately 2 to 3 hours. Depending on whether you decide to take on additional duties, you may also be required to carry them out between meetings. For more information on becoming a charity trustee, and to ensure it's the right decision for you, we recommend visiting: [www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-trustee-whats-involved](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-trustee-whats-involved)



# Brockenhurst Gateway

Serving South West Hampshire & East Dorset

## NEWS FROM BROCKENHURST GATEWAY CLUB



*The Conga at our  
Music and Games Evening*



*Our Christmas Party!*



*Brockenhurst Valentine's Dinner*

**PLENTY TO LOOK  
FORWARD TO!**



## Brockenhurst Gateway

Serving South West Hampshire & East Dorset



**Brockenhurst Gateway**

**25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner**

On

~~Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2020~~

At Brockenhurst village hall, Highwood Rd, Brockenhurst

6.45 for 7.00pm start

Five course dinner with fizz on arrival

**Speakers:** Sarah Newman,

Director of Russell Cotes Museum

And

Richard Cartridge,

Radio Solent presenter and our resident auctioneer

**£35 per person – Smart dress**

Speakers - Auction – Spirit raffle – Light entertainment

**Email [pafrench@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:pafrench@yahoo.co.uk)**

**NOT TO BE BEATEN!  
SATURDAY 31 OCTOBER 2020**  
We are delighted to tell you  
that although we have had to  
postpone this event due to the  
Coronavirus Pandemic, we've  
booked it for the end of Octo-  
ber! We hope to see you  
there!

Company No: 2376432

Charity No: 1038962

**New Forest Mencap**

Nedderman Centre , Marryat Road, New Milton, BH25 5NY

## GATEWAY AWARD SCHEME

As soon as restrictions are lifted, we will be able to continue with our Gateway Award Scheme and we would love to hear from you if you are interested in getting involved. Have a look below to see what sort of ideas and activities might interest you!

### Hobbies

These include arts and crafts, collections and recreations. The Gold award requires participants to carry out a project on one of their hobbies.

### Fitness

Participants choose new fitness activities from a list. The number of activities changes depending on the level of the award which the participant is taking.

### Volunteering

Participants can choose a volunteering activity to benefit their community. The Gold award requires participants to choose a volunteering activity within a voluntary organisation or shop.

### Lifestyle

There are a number of lifestyle topics to learn about including healthy eating, first aid, money, independence and health. The number of topics required increases at Silver and Gold levels.

### Gateway Challenge

Participants identify a challenge and undertake an activity or project to address it. This can be a personal, group or adventurer challenge. Depending on the level of the award it can link to another group or club.



Jenny and Steve with a Star Wars Storm Trooper

### NEW MILTON GATEWAY CLUB

We took our members to Paulton's Park for the annual Lion's Club Day. We received an allocation of tickets and were able to take members from both Brockenhurst and New Milton Clubs. We hired a minibus and some of our members made their own way there. A lovely day for 20 of us!

So there you are, lots of good things were happening and are going to happen again. We probably won't be back until the schools return in September at the earliest. (That all depends on how successful Lockdown has been and how many people have been tested for antibodies and herd immunisation). It is wonderful the support New Forest Mencap has had and continues to have from our donors and funders. We continue to evolve even in these dark times. We have a good team at NF Mencap which we will hopefully build on in the future. We are always looking for volunteers and Trustees with wide business experience, we particularly need someone to take over as a hands on Treasurer. Most of all we are here to help and can be contacted on 01425 621893. We WILL be back - STAY SAFE.