



NEWS BULLETIN

News from the NF Mencap Trustees

Hello to all our readers and supporters, are you all managing to stay well? What a peculiar time we have lived through for the last 5 months and we wonder what next year will bring.

A lot has been going on at New Forest Mencap during this period. Like many organisations, it has given us the opportunity to examine thoughtfully what we do and how we are doing it and how we should respond to the “new normal”. This has created the opportunity to open up the Trustee Body to new members.

At our AGM last November, Liz Rolfs announced she would be standing down at the 2020 AGM. For a number of reasons, Liz actually resigned in July and I agreed to become Acting Chair. We are grateful to Liz for developing NFM into a successful fund raising and lobbying organisation over the 5 years of her leadership. Liz was instrumental in the success of the refurbishment of the Nedderman Centre and she was most proud of the work done with Bath University on ageing parents/carers, work which made national headlines.

Ros Spearing, NFM’s Fundraising Consultant, worked closely with Liz and has also decided to stand down. We are seeking funding as we write this newsletter and are already starting to make progress but if you are interested in helping us, please do let us know.

Our Constitution states that we can have a maximum of 12 people so it is our intention to increase those numbers and to recruit Trustees who will each have an area of NFM activity they will oversee. Our Constitution also states that we can co-opt one Trustee onto the board and so we are delighted to announce that Dawn Locke has just joined us. We have interviewed 4 more people and we will be sending a full list of nominees to all our members for them to vote on at the AGM on 9 November. We hope to hold this at the Nedderman Centre or on Zoom if not.



One of the things we have done since June is to employ Bill Darley on a consultancy basis to take a forensic look at the way we operate which has been very helpful. We have learned the importance of our members who are central to the decision making in our organisation! The members elect the Board of Trustees from the membership - which is why the AGM is so important. I recently sent round an Appeal for more members. Anyone who supports our aims can be a member for £5 per annum. Please contact our administrator Virginia Darley on office@newforestmencap.org for information and a form.

Company No: 2376432

New Forest Mencap

Charity No: 1038962

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

Our Current Trustees Are:

- Pauline Pegram Acting Chair
- Warren Breach Publicity
- Valerie Bowyer Shop
- Dawn Locke Fundraising

Trustees-in-waiting:

- Hugh Crouch
- Alice Keynes

We are still seeking:

- Honorary Secretary
- Website and Social Media
- Retail
- Health and Safety

We would very much like a parent/carer to step forward and become a Trustee. Do please contact Pauline on chair@newforestmencap.org if you would like further information.

We shall be sending out our Autumn Newsletter before our AGM in November and in the meantime, we shall continue our work to help with advice, lobbying, exercise, healthy living, social media, Gateway clubs and transport. Please help us to help you.

Best wishes and Stay Safe, Pauline Pegram

“Social distancing”? - more “social” than ever at New Forest Mencap thanks to online video communications work

Our first thought at NFM when lockdown began was how to keep a real connection with, and between, those who use our services. Since May we have delivered a diverse and growing number of online activities for local people with learning disabilities. Our initial concerns that our clients might have difficulties using platforms such as Zoom was swept away with an avalanche of enthusiasm, new skills, new confidence and enjoyment shown by those who clicked into a Zoom room.



We have done this by offering regularly each week:

Chuesday Chat (online)– an opportunity to talk about two topics chosen by those attending each week. For example: “cooking failures and successes”, “the Isle of Wight” and “favourite TV programmes”;

Saturday Game (online)– all sorts, from music quizzes, to maths games, hangman and a Beetle Drive;

Saturday Singalong (online) – the high spot of our week! A guest entertainer leads us for a singalong with a theme. “Abba”, “Beach Party”, “1960s” were popular. Dressing up is encouraged!

Along with these regular activities we have also offered online workshops and fun sessions – including **three sessions from the Tree House Theatre** and a **six week online drama workshop with Atticus Arts** with “New Forest Mencap does the Titanic” currently being edited for release!

Starting in September we have an **online singing workshop** and an **online fitness workshop** and coming soon will be a **6 week online crafting workshop** and some **online yoga!** All activities have been free!

In August 2020 just over 100 online attendances took place at our various online “rooms”, more than double the figure for May 2020. During a time when isolation for those with learning disabilities was at an all time high, we have connected with new people, supported our regular clients and, above all, had a lot of fun! Contact us at Development@newforestmencap.org to join in the fun!