

## Autumn Newsletter 2020

Welcome to Saffron Walden Mencap's Autumn 2020 Newsletter – our first one this year. We hope you have kept safe and well during the lockdown and managed to keep in contact with friends, family and carers. I don't think any of us had much idea how to use Zoom before the lockdown, but it's surprising how quickly you learn when you have to! This year has been one like no other and we all know why! As with so many Clubs and Organisations across the country, we have had to stop all our activities and the Side by Side Club and this has been a big disappointment to all our Members and those people on the Committee who had so much planned. As we write this Newsletter, the signs are still unclear as to when we can get up and running again, but you can rest assured that as soon as when we can, we will let you know.



### Your Committee

We have still managed to meet! - albeit via Zoom – in May, twice in June, once in July and in August. These meetings have been very useful and a decision was made during one of our meetings, to send a card to each and every Saffron Walden Mencap Member. The feedback we had from some of our Members was that they were very pleased to hear from us and it was good to keep in touch.

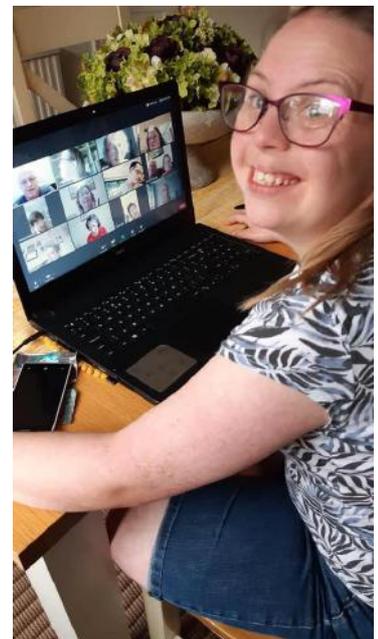
### Side By Side Zoom!

Also, via Zoom and coordinated by Steve Lee, a number of Side by Side Club members have met up remotely for a chat and to play games see Steve's Side by Side report. Everyone is welcome to take part and if you contact Steve on 07742989418, he will email you the link.

### New Website coming soon

A small sub committee has been meeting to produce a website where you can find out about everything to do with Saffron Walden Mencap. There is still some work to be done but it is progressing well and you can find us on

[www.saffronwaldenmencapsociety.co.uk](http://www.saffronwaldenmencapsociety.co.uk) We are very grateful to Julia Dimmock who has worked really hard with us all to produce what will be, a very professional website.



**Events we had planned for 2020 that unfortunately didn't happen included:-**

- 80's Mania in March at Harlow Playhouse.
- Disco in May Swards End Village Hall.
- Clavering Open Gardens in May
- Cake Stall in June
- Canal Boat trips June and July
- Saffron Walden Carnival in July
- Summer Disco and BBQ in August
- Carers Support Group



**We will let you know as soon as we can when we can safely start up the Side by Side Club and any other Autumn activities.**

**However these are the events that we are pleased to say did take place:-**

- 26th October 2019 Halloween Disco
- 18th November 2019 Mencap AGM
- 29th November 2019 Late Night Shopping
- 11th December 2019 The Christmas Party
- 19th December 2019 Tesco Christmas Collection
- 18th January 2020 Saffron Walden Town Hall Pantomime



**New Feature from last time!      Members Chat Room**

If you have any views, comments or ideas you would like to make regarding the Side by Side Club or Saffron Walden Mencap as a whole, we would be delighted to hear from you. Please see phone numbers for Patrick Draper (Chairman) and Jane Bailey (Secretary) at the end of this Newsletter. Alternatively mention any comments you may have to Steve, Maxine or Pat B at the Side by Side Club once we resume.

Can we add Anna's request to Beryl's that she would really like another coach trip (like the one we had before) and if possible to go to Woburn.

The bonus was that they could all see the amazing animals and wildlife all around them coming to the coach and didn't have to walk from one cage to another where the animals may or may not come out to enjoy it all. It was a fab day.



### **News from Go with Our Flow**

Go with Our Flow, Saffron Walden Mencap's new venture, which it was hoped would begin this summer, was also unable to get started. New Committee Member, Cath Read who is leading the Group has written a piece to let us know where things stand at the moment:-

Saffron Walden Mencap's exciting new project Go With Our Flow, was due to commence it's six month pilot, earlier this year. A new date has yet to be set but rest assured, as soon as it is safe for us to do so, we will release details of the start date

The scheme, which will be open to young people age **16-25**, will provide social opportunities, initially once or twice a month, on a Friday evening. Individuals will be invited to choose the activities they want to participate in, for example, bowling, seeing a film at the cinema, going to a pub or restaurant for a meal or just going for a walk. These will be supported by experienced 'Companions'. The activities may involve individuals or small groups. During the pilot period, Go With Our Flow users and Companions will meet for two 'socials' to get to know each other, and to discuss important subjects, such as 'Who wants to go out with who?' and 'Where can you get the best pizza from?!'

Go With Our Flow has already received some wonderful support from individuals and local organisations including Saffron Walden Golf Club, Saffron Walden Round Table, Saffron Walden Rotary Club. A wonderful Bingo Night was also arranged by the inspirational Sarah Christou. Huge thanks to everyone who has supported this incredibly special and much needed project.

Thanks also to the brilliantly creative Clare Webber of Market Graphics for her wonderful logo designs

**By Cath Read and Dianne King**



While Father Christmas is still on his holidays, socially distancing of course, now is an excellent time to start thinking about ..... Christmas cards.

We want to send cards to all the people and organisations who support us throughout the year to thank them for their help.

With so many talented members we thought it would be a great idea if each of you can create a picture that could be selected and printed on our Christmas cards. You can use paints, crayons, pencils in fact anything that will help you make a "Christmassy" picture.

Don't worry if you think you cannot draw or paint because it's the overall effect that matters.

Three pictures will be selected, and each member's name will be included on the cards printed from their winning entry.

Your picture needs to be on size A5 paper which is half the size of this sheet.

Croucher Needham Ltd, Market House, 10 Market Walk, Saffron Walden (near the Nationwide Building Society) has kindly allowed entries to be put through their letter-box.

**It is important to write your name clearly on the back of your entry and put it in an envelope addressed to Side by Side.**

If you prefer your entry can be posted to:

Gerard Walbanke  
14 Guelphs Lane  
Thaxted  
Essex  
CM6 2PT

All entries to be received no later than

**29th September 2020.**

Good Luck!





## News from Side by Side

We hope you like our new logo for the Side by Side Club

A lot has happened since Side by Side club members were last together at the Abbey Lane Hall, on 11th March. We suspended the club about a week before Boris Johnson announced the lockdown and we all stopped doing what we normally did.

The club has been closed at the Abbey Lane hall ever since then. We do plan to re-open the club there as soon as possible, however we will not re-open until we are sure it is safe enough to open. We may need to introduce measures to ensure members and volunteers are safe there once it is safe to open up the doors again, such as smaller groups to allow for social distancing, etc.

Despite the lockdown a number of members, members family members/carers and volunteers have been meeting each Wednesday evening on the internet via the Zoom app. It was felt at a Saffron Walden Mencap meeting on 1st June that although a limited number of our members had internet access from home, that it was worth holding the Side by Side club over the internet to keep in touch with as many members as possible. The first session of what we then called Side by Side by Zoom took place on Wednesday 10th June. We were joined by 5 members for this first session as well as some committee members and volunteers. We spent this first session chatting and catching up on what one another had been doing during the weeks since lockdown started. It was great to see one another again and chat with someone outside of your own household, as for many this was the first contact with other people for several weeks.

The Side by Side by Zoom has been running each Wednesday from 7pm until 9pm every since and member numbers attending has slightly increased. We would welcome any other Saffron Walden Mencap members to join us, however we know access to Zoom is a problem for many. This is why you may have received an email and internet questionnaire in the post. We are hoping that one we have received them by return post, we will be able to better understand who would like to join in on Zoom and what help they may need to get onto Zoom. Since the 10th June our weekly session activities have included Quizzes, Play Your Cards Right, Truth or Lie, TV advertisements, and more. We plan to continue holding Side by Side by Zoom until the club can return to Abbey Lane Hall once again.

If you have any queries about Side by Side then please contact Steve Lee on: 07596 023307 **By Steve Lee.**

## **Picnic Wednesday 26th August 7pm - 9pm**

Our first face to face Side by Side meeting with social distancing, since we last held a social evening back in March of this year.

We plan to hold a bring your own picnic activity on Saffron Walden Common on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> August from 7pm until 9pm. This will of course be subject to suitable weather on the day. And social distancing will have to be strictly adhered to at all times. Therefore we will need to have plenty of carers and volunteers available to help ensure we keep to any rules put in place.

We need to know in advance who intends to come along and join us on the Common for the evening. And also the names of any volunteers or carers who will be willing to help us there. Please contact Steve if you have not already confirmed your attendance.

We would love to see as many members as possible and understand you may still have concerns about meeting up with other people, but rest assured we will be taking as many precautions' as possible and we encourage the wearing of face masks when not eating food or drinking. So please bring along your facemask on the evening. And be prepared for a briefing on keeping one another safe when you arrive.



## Saffron Walden Mencap Committee

We welcomed Cath Read as a new Member of the Committee.



**Hi Cath!!!**

|                 |          |              |                  |
|-----------------|----------|--------------|------------------|
| Bailey          | Jane     | 01799 540700 | Secretary        |
| Bailey          | Patrick  | 01799 540700 | Membership Sec   |
| Capper          | Jennifer |              |                  |
| Clark           | Richard  |              |                  |
| Cornell         | Daphne   |              |                  |
| Draper          | Patrick  | 07974306917  | Chairman         |
| James-Gillespie | Barbara  |              |                  |
| Lucas           | Jacquie  |              | DBS checks       |
| Read            | Cath     |              | Go With Our Flow |
| Sewell          | Jean     |              |                  |
| Stratton        | Tina     |              |                  |
| White           | Bonny    |              | Treasurer        |
| Walbanke        | Gerrard  |              |                  |
| White           | Bonnie   |              | Treasurer        |

### Contact Us

Contact our Chairman Patrick Draper on 07974306917 for any information, help or assistance regarding Saffron Walden Mencap.

Alternatively, you can also contact Jane Bailey on 01799 540700

**Don't forget to log in to the website or follow us on Facebook!!**

[www.saffronwaldenmencapsociety.co.uk](http://www.saffronwaldenmencapsociety.co.uk)

<https://www.facebook.com/SaffronWaldenMencapSociety>

**Finally!** stay safe and well. We look forward to seeing everyone as soon as it is safe to do so and we will be in touch to let you know when this can safely happen.

