



First GWOFF meeting at Temeraire



Let's DIG IT. Everyone's mucking in



Digit Jacquie thinks 'will that go there?'



The adventures of GWOFF



Steve's lettuce grown at DIG IT

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Great job! Everything is growing!



Planning and activities



DISCO Time!



Claire shaking in the plant food



More great disco dancing!

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DISCO, DISCO, DISCO!

Spring / Summer 2022

Welcome to Saffron Walden Mencap's Spring Summer 2022 Newsletter. Although, as I write this it is not blazing hot! we have had some lovely Spring days and it makes us feel good thinking about the Summer to come. And let us hope we do get some decent weather as we are going to need it for many of the events and activities your Society Trustees, Leaders and Volunteers are planning for the year ahead! It's hard to believe that the Side by Side Club celebrates it's 7th Birthday this year and it has come a long way since it first began. Steve Lee will give an update, later in this Newsletter, on how the Side by Side Club continues to grow and develop but I could not let this opportunity pass without saying we are delighted to have Steve back at the helm of the Side by Side Club after his kidney transplant.

Later on there is also a GWOFF Report from Cath Read, a Membership Secretary's Report from Pat Bailey (73 signed up Members!) and a Dig It Report from Jacquie Lucas – how can it be that this exciting allotment project has been running for almost a year! We were also very pleased to start the Digital Project lead by Karmel Stannard our IT Trainer. With tablets and money for training from Royal Mencap, Karmel is currently delivering training to members at the Side by Side Club, but will be helping other members including our new friends from GWOFF

While Covid remained a concern in the Autumn last year, we did not have a Halloween Disco and we also had to postpone our Christmas meal at the Saffron Hotel (see new date later in this Newsletter). However, 38 people did attend The Wizard of Oz on the 22nd December 2021 at Saffron Hall and everyone said what a great production and evening it was.

It was brilliant to be back at Swards End Village Hall for the Diamond Jubilee Disco on the 23rd April 2022 dancing to Jezzo! Just like old times with great music, dancing, party food and soft drinks.

On the 22nd May 2022, Carol Wilkinson organised another Open Gardens Day in Clavering raising money for Saffron Walden Mencap Society. The weather was beautiful, there was lots of visitors and it was altogether a fantastic day. This event is our biggest fundraiser and we are once again very grateful to Carol and her husband Mike and all their Volunteers as we know this involves a lot of work.

We have the Carnival taking place in the Town this Summer and SWMS will be entering a Float in the procession. No doubt Patrick Draper will tell you more about this in his Chairs Report but if you can help before or on the day, we would be very pleased to see you.

Your Saffron Walden Mencap Trustees continue to meet each quarter to ensure the smooth operation of Saffron Walden Mencap Society organising events and activities for everyone to enjoy. As you can imagine, there is a lot of work 'behind the scenes' and we are very grateful to all Trustees, Leaders and Volunteers who give their time and effort so willingly.

Jane Bailey – SWMS Secretary

Chairs message:

Since our last Newsletter a great many things have happened in spite of the need for extra care due to the continuing presence of COVID.

Our latest group, Go With Our Flow (GWOFF), has started and we have welcomed many new members to our Society as a result. We have also recruited several new members of staff who act as companions to the young people on their evening's out. Getting this club up and running is a FANTASTIC achievement and a great big thank you to Di Carter-King and Cath Read for all their hard work in setting up GWOFF.

We applied for some digital tablets from Royal Mencap and were allocated 20 tablets and associated 'techy bits'. In addition we were given £2k for training, so that the tablets can be used by our members. We have welcomed Karmel who has set up the tablets ready for them to be used. She is now training our members and has so far worked with 10 members, sometimes for several sessions. All these training sessions have been delivered through the Side-by-Side Club on Wednesday evenings.

Great news – our Dig-it project is growing! We now regularly have several of our members going every week. Huge thanks to Steve, Wendy and Jacquie.

I would like to welcome two new Side by Side volunteers, Jenny and Dave Cadge. As always we need to thank all our volunteers, staff and Trustees for helping Saffron Walden Mencap Society to continue to run all our many activities and events.

In particular I would like to thank Maxine Frazer who has recently stepped down from her position of Deputy Leader of the Side by Side Club. We are pleased that Maxine will continue as a volunteer whenever she can.

I look forward to seeing you at some of our events in the near future

Best wishes

Patrick Draper



Planning GWOFF activities



GWOFF Fundraiser Eileen

Events planned and happened so far this year

May

Julie [mother of Side by Side member Willow] – Ran **10k** to raise funds for SWMS and has so far raised an awesome £195! Thank you Julie!

June

Saturday 3rd June Chocolate and Bubbles Tombola – at Community Event on the Common. Donations of chocolate, alcohol fizz and bubble bath please.

Saturday 11th and 25th June Canal boat trips booked. Organised by Pat B.

July

Saturday 9th July Carnival Day [Patrick D]

August

Sunday 14th THE BIG BBQ DAY at Lavender Farm, Finchingfield

September

Wednesday 14th Meal at Saffron Hotel 6.30 for 7pm (postponed from Christmas!)

Saturday 17th Singing/Karaoke afternoon at the Railway Pub. More details to follow.

Sunday 18th Forest Way Walk (Loughton Station to Hatfield Forest) ending with shorter loop walk around Hatfield Forest and a picnic in the Forest. More details to follow.

October

Saturday 29th Halloween Disco at Swards End Hall 6-9pm.

December

To be confirmed Late Night Shopping. More details to follow.

To be confirmed 18th December Cake Stall in King Street 9-2pm. More details to follow.



Members Chat Room:

If you have any views, comments or ideas you would like to make regarding the Side by Side Club, Go With Our Flow, Dig-it, or our events 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.

Carers Support Group:

We very much hope that this self support group will start meeting up again soon. If you are a carer of a person who lives at home with you, and would like to get involved in helping organise a get together for an occasional or monthly meal at a pub with other carers, please contact Patrick Draper.

News from Go with Our Flow – Cath Read

We had our first meeting at Fairycroft House on Friday 22 April.

Five Companions were present, along with 6 young people and Patrick came along to say a few words. There was a real sense of occasion. We ordered pizzas which everyone loved. It was great to see everyone mixing so well.



Great lists were made of activities the young people would like to be involved in on a Friday evening, one of those being a trip to Disneyland Paris!!

On Friday 6th May, we had our first 'night out'. One group went to 'The Tem', the other to swim at Grange Paddocks, then to McDonalds. Everyone had a great time.

It has been especially heartening to hear that other young people are already keen to join us. It's great that they can become members of SWMS and may also benefit from using Side by Side (when they are 18) and attending outings and events. All but one of the young people who attended the inaugural meeting of GWOFF, attended the disco, and thoroughly enjoyed themselves!! Wonderful!



Dig-It Project – May 2022 – Jacquie Lucas

Almost a year has passed since I first visited the fantastic 'Dig It' Community allotments at Crocus Fields on June 18 th last year. At the time the plot itself needed a little TLC and I'm very proud to say that the area has been transformed, and our Mencap Community has played a large part in its recovery from a little lockdown neglect.

The club runs every Wednesday morning 10am – 1pm. We currently have three weekly volunteers, Steve and Wendy Lee and myself. We now have 7 regular gardeners, 6 of whom come on the ARC/HUB minibus with at least one staff member, only two are not Saffron Walden Mencap members and both of them are 'thinking about' joining! We employ a Dig-It horticulturalist, Bollette, who always keeps us all busy with various tasks leading up to lunch and a drink. After lunch we continue with jobs, clear up and harvest. The plot has really good produce, much of it planted from seed by the group, at present it goes back to the Hub as they have a 'shop and cook' club on a Thursday, and one member who likes to stir-fry takes some home most weeks.

While musing on the possibility of an 'allotment club' for our members I hoped that it would bring knowledge, self-esteem, friendship, good home grown produce and lots of fresh air for our participants. Dig-It has surpassed those aims, it has been wonderful to see members work independently and as a team, to see the pride when we look around every week at how things are progressing and watch friendships develop as we settle into a routine.

Huge thanks to Steve and Wendy Lee, and our most consistent member Amanda Lee. We are hoping to be a year round club with the installation of a new summerhouse, where we can keep warm and dry for cold or rainy day activities.

Please see our blogs on the Mencap website and Facebook group for photographs and updates.





News from Side by Side May 2022 by Steve Lee

From the beginning of January 2022, the club was closed throughout the month of January, due to the sudden increase in Covid-19. The club reopened to half the number of members in two groups. Taking it in turns every other week. This continued up until the end of March, when the club returned to normal running. This now gives members the opportunity to attend every week. Club Deputy Leader Maxine Frazer made the decision to resign her post in early March.

Just as Maxine left us, Steve was called into Addenbrookes for a Kidney transplant after being on the transplant list for only two and a half months. This meant suddenly we had no one to run the club for 3 weeks. Thankfully three of our volunteers were able to run the club and knew how to unlock/lockup the hall. So a massive thank you goes out to Penny and Osman Al-Ibrahim and Wendy Lee for all their work in keeping the club going.

We have recently been joined at the club by 3 new volunteers, namely husband and wife Dave and Jenny Cadge and Karmel Stannard. Karmel was employed on a temporary basis with us to teach our members how to set up and use the free tablets that our members can have if they would like one. Karmel has been showing members how to use them at the club and has found a love for the club and has therefore requested to stay on as a club volunteer. We welcome all three of them on board.

The club celebrates its 7th birthday this in May and we celebrated with members on 1st June with a joint Queen's platinum jubilee street party outside the Salvation Army Hall. A great time was had by all and lots of jellies and birthday cake were eaten.

Members are looking forward to a less restrictive summer this year with a couple of canal boat trip and visit to Finchingfield lavender farm.



Saffron Walden Mencap Committee

Membership Secretary's Report – Pat Bailey

So far we have a total of 73 Members for 2022. This includes 13 members of GWOFF and 8 new Members who are involved from across the range of SWMS.



Bailey	Jane	01799 540700	Secretary
Bailey	Patrick	As above	Membership Secretary
Capper	Jennifer		
Clark	Richard		
Cornell	Daphne		
Draper	Patrick	07974306917	Chairman
Lucas	Jacquie		DBS and Safeguarding Lead
Read	Cath		GWOFF
Sewell	Jean		
<u>Walbanke</u>	Gerrard		
Dimmock	Ben		Treasurer

Contact Us

Contact our Chairman Patrick Draper on 07974306917 for any information, help or assistance regarding Saffron Walden Mencap, or [Hello@saffrowaldenmencapsociety.co.uk](mailto>Hello@saffrowaldenmencapsociety.co.uk)

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

Website:

www.saffronwaldenmencapsociety.co.uk

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

Saffron Walden Mencap Society AGM – Wednesday 13th July 2022

Venue:- The Salvation Army Hall – Start 7.00 p.m.

Side by Side Club will take place in the normal way. Members to be present the short formal part of the AGM followed by a disco, nibbles and cake

Finally! Keep safe and well.

We look forward to getting together and seeing one another at Saffron Walden Mencap events and activities in the months to come.

