





Autumn / Winter Newsletter 2021

Chair's Message

Life has certainly been very different over the last 18 months and it looks like this may continue for a while yet. We are all now very used to doing things in slightly different ways but as you will read in this newsletter Saffron Walden Mencap is very much back up and running with both old favourites and new ones. With such a topsy turvey time this is our first newsletter for over a year but that does not mean that our year has been a quiet one.

Our new Dig It project, spearheaded by Jacqui Lucas and Steve Lee, has got off to a flying start and it is great to see members out in the open discovering new interests. Our other new project, Go with our Flow, has had a slower start due to restrictions but we have our fingers crossed for the new year.

All of our events – both old and new – are wonderfully shown on our new website thanks to Julia Dimmock and it is certainly worth looking at. Our society also has a very active Facebook page which Di Carter administers. Again, this is a great source of information about what our members have been up to.

I would like to finish by thanking you all for your continued support of Saffron Walden Mencap Society.

Patrick Draper





Autumn / Winter Newsletter 2021

Hello! and welcome to Saffron Walden Mencap's first Newsletter of 2021. Where has the time gone?!! I think we can all answer that by saying that this has been another unusual year for us all. Nevertheless, we are pleased to say once we were able to do so your Society Trustees and Leaders and Volunteers of the Side by Side Club quickly re-started meeting face to face and organising events and activities for everyone to enjoy. Steve Lee will update you more about the Side by Side Club later in this Newsletter as will Cath Read and Dianne King about Saffron Walden Mencap's new venture, Go with Our Flow.

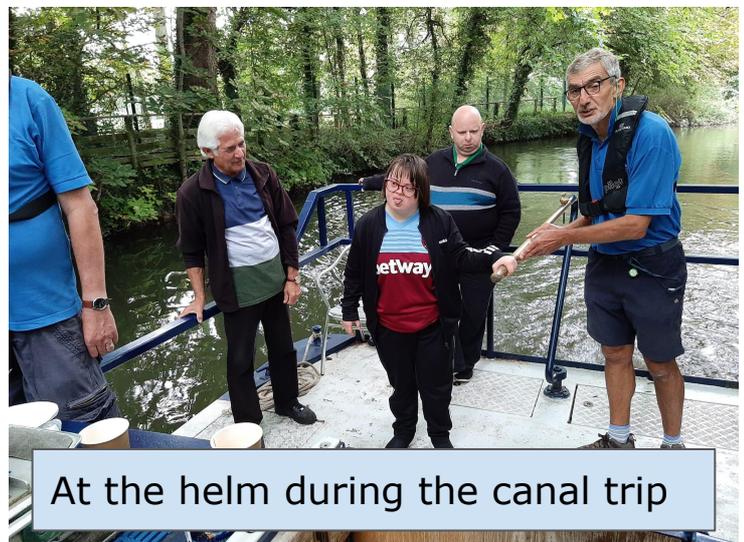
In July, Trustee Jacquie Lucas and Side by Side Club leader Steve Lee welcomed members on a Wednesday morning from 10.00 a.m. - 1.00 p.m. to the start of Saffron Walden Mencap's Allotment Group at Crocus Fields, Little Walden Road. Read more about how we have joined forces with the Town's 'Dig It' allotment project and how you can get involved further on in this Newsletter.

On Bank Holiday Monday 31st May, 2021 Carol Wilkinson organised another Open Garden Day with money raised in aid of our Society. The sun shone and lots of visitors turned out to walk around and admire not only Carol's garden but several others in the village of Clavering. Cakes and cream teas topped off a super day!

As Covid numbers continued to be a concern, we were unable to hold our Discos in the Spring and Halloween but, watch this space! - once we feel it is safe to do so, we will be booking dates for next year. We did, however have an amazing Big BBQ at Ben and Julia Dimmock's Lavender Farm on the 1st August with flower arranging and flower crown workshops and an appearance from Super Cooper! (alias John Byatt). Everyone agreed it had been a great day and who knows, we may get invited back to Julia and Ben's again next year!!



Relaxing after a great canal trip



At the helm during the canal trip



Welcome message continued

On the 11th and 25th September, Pat and Jane Bailey organised 3 Canal Boat Trips which, as in previous years, was very popular and all being well, will happen again next year.

On the 9th October 2021, Cath and Dianne organised a Jumble Sale which was a great success raising £520 along with a donation of £200!

Saffron Walden Mencap Trustees were delighted to start meeting face to face for their meetings in July and have had two meetings face to face since. In May, Tina Stratton and Bonny White stood down as Trustees as did Barbara James Gillespie in October. Also in October, we welcomed Ben Dimmock to the Committee as our new Treasurer.

December Events

- **3rd December 2021 Late Night Shopping** – we have two stalls. Wrap up! Come along, it will be good fun.
- **11th December 2021 Street Collection in Saffron Walden.**
- **Wednesday 15th December 2021 Christmas Party** – 6.00 p.m. - 9.30 p.m. at the Saffron Hotel. 2 course meal and dancing; £10.00. Letters have gone out. As we need to know who is coming and your menu choice, please contact Steve Lee at the Side by Side Club.
- **19th December 2021** – Cath and Dianne organising a Collection outside Saffron Walden Tesco's.
- **Wizard of Oz at Saffron Hall Wednesday 22nd December 2021 - 6.00 p.m. - 7.00 p.m.** Letters have gone out but please contact Pat or Jane Bailey for further information.



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 have to Steve, Maxine or Pat B at the Side by Side Club.

Comments received for this Newsletter:-

Carol has requested that hopefully another coach trip to Woburn Safari Park or similar can take place. She said that Anna had really enjoyed the first one.

Steve is already looking forward to a Canal Boat Trip in 2022. This has become a 'must do' event in the Saffron Walden Mencap Calendar.

Amanda has said she really enjoys the Allotment sessions on a Wednesday at Crocus Fields. Jaquie has commented that Amanda has 'green fingers' and is a natural in the garden.

Pat B said the Big BBQ was enjoyed by everyone who attended and looks forward to another successful event.

Insert title here:

Sadly, since our last Newsletter we learned that Members Lesley Barnard and Kathryn Page have passed away. Both ladies will be very much missed especially at our Discos where we know they loved the music and dancing.

Carers Support Group

During Covid and the need for social distancing, this group has been unable to meet. However, we very much hope that this self support group will be able to start meeting up again sometime soon.





News from Go with Our Flow

We're getting there!!

After a lengthy delay (mainly due to Covid), Cath & Dianne are confident that they will be in a position to launch the pilot of this exciting new project for 16-25 year olds in early 2022.

The scheme will provide social opportunities, initially once or twice a month, on a Friday evening. Individuals will be encouraged to choose the activities they would like to participate in and to decide whether they would like to join a small group or perhaps just enjoy the company of a Companion. Each young person will receive a monthly budget to put towards their chosen activities. They will be supported in managing the budget...an important life skill for some!!

Go With Our Flow project users will also be eligible to attend Saffron Walden Mencap Society events such as disco's, meals out, canal boat trips and theatre visits.

Cath & Dianne have been delighted by the continued support of the local community and would like to convey their heartfelt thanks to Tesco and Waitrose, Saffron Walden Golf Club and Eileen Gladman.

By Cath Read and Dianne King

Jumble Sale raises £568

Bargain hunters came out in force to sift through goodies at Saffron Walden Mencap's jumble sale on Saturday the 9th of October. Dozens of people came to see what was on offer including: clothes, unwanted bric-a-brac, books and toys. There were plenty of deals to be had.

The volunteers worked hard to make the event a success and were delighted to have raised £568 which will go towards member's social evenings and outings.



Event organisers, Cath Read and Dianne King, were thrilled to see so many supporters and would like to thank all the volunteers who made the event possible. A special thank you to Susie Diggons, Tesco's Community Champion, who donated refreshments and helped serve the customers on the day.

Photo: Dianne King and Cath Read with Susie Diggons and volunteers



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!





Dig-It Club

Dig-it club is still going! We started meeting at the Dig-it Community Allotment in July – it was very hot and we needed sunscreen, sunhats and sunglasses. Now we're in November it's woolly hats, scarves, and lots of hot drinks and biscuits.

Things we've planted and grown – peas, lettuce, beetroot, coriander, spinach, parsley, more beetroot, strawberries, artichokes, rhubarb and more beetroot! We've taken home tomatoes, cucumber, courgettes, chard, herbs, flowers, garlic and (what have I forgotten?) BEETROOT! Our Dig-it team are very green fingered, Amanda has been every week, Aimee and Willow were with us until college and sometimes Agnes has been to visit.

Other things we've done – pebble art, sorting seed packets, painting decking, weeding, making signs for the vegetables, and planning but most of all we've been together, a lovely friendly group, led by our lovely horticulturalist Emma. We get to chat and have our packed lunches, tea and biscuits together, it's a lovely, healthy, happy place to be!

As we reach the darkest and coldest months of winter, we'll meet somewhere warmer to learn about growing food and plan what we want to do next year! If you like the sound of this, we meet on Wednesdays 10am to 1pm – starting on the plot again once the weather warms up a bit - why not speak to Steve Lee, Jacquie, or Patrick Draper, and we can arrange a free taster session.





News from Side by Side

It has been another odd year for the Side by Side club. We continued to run the club over Zoom with reduced members able to attend, as some members did not have Internet access.

It was therefore a welcome relief when covid restrictions were eased in July and all members were allowed to meet up outside. Our first planned meeting on the Common had to be called off at the last minute due to light rain. We did however manage to meet up there the following week and walk to the Temeraire for a drink in the garden under the shelter of a roof.

From that Wednesday on the Temeraire garden became Side by Sides temporary home until we were able to return to the Salvation Army Hall the last week in September. The availability of food and drink at the Temeraire proved very very popular and was greatly enjoyed by the members.

We have been meeting back at the Salvation Army Hall for several weeks now with members taking it in turns to attend on alternate weeks. This is not ideal, but has to be done to avoid overcrowding in the hall for covid reasons. We are now asking all people at the hall to wear face coverings in line with the reintroduction of mask wearing on public transport and in shops. Not a move we wanted to take, but one that is so important to help keep us safe.

We have been enjoying being back at the hall playing some of the games we had not played for over a year, such as Play your cards right and making Christmas crackers.

We wish all our members a merry Christmas and a happy new year.





Saffron Walden Mencap Committee

We welcomed Ben Dimmock as a new Member of the Committee. We said goodbye and thank you to Loren Herring, who Volunteered at the Side by Side Club as part of her Duke of Edinburgh Award and hello and welcome to Jed Bailey and Finn Bushell who are currently volunteering as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award.



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		GWOF
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. 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

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

Saffron Walden Mencap Society AGM – Wednesday 8th December 2021

Venue:- The Salvation Army Hall

Time:- 8.00 p.m. - 9.00 p.m.

* The Side by Side Club will run as usual but from 7.00 p.m. - 8.00 p.m. Members can stay on and attend the AGM or leave depending on what they would like to do.

Finally! Keep safe and well. We look forward to getting together and seeing one another at Saffron Walden Mencap events and activities in the future. Have a lovely Christmas and a Happy New Year!

