On Tuesday 13th October Merton’s Learning Disabilities Partnership Board held its third annual conference entitled ‘A Good Life’. It was all about friendship, being active and leading a healthy lifestyle. Turn to page 4 to find out more!
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Dolliffe Close open for business

The new flats at Dolliffe Close in Bond Road, Mitcham are now complete and lots of people have moved in, including some of the former residents of the Gables. David Hamilton and Natalie Kritikos explained how the move went for them and what the best things about the new Dolliffe are:

David said: “The move was tiring, we moved everything in one day. The Staff helped us so much with the move. We had professional removal people helping us as well. It took from 8 a.m. until 4p.m.”

Natalie said: “It’s very posh, each flat has got its own bathroom, kitchen, lounge, and a bedroom. This is better because we now have our own space which means there are less arguments than we had before at the Gables over the washing machine the microwave and the toilets!”

“The Gables didn’t have a supermarket nearby, but Dolliffe has ASDA right opposite. Dolliffe is bigger and I’m very happy that David lives next door to me. I’ve got my Elvis picture in the living room, we feel safer there too. The flat is nice and it’s a nice area and not so noisy.”

David added: “We want to say a big thank you to Angela, Bosa and all our staff who helped us to move and settle in.”
The conference was held at the Chaucer Centre in Morden and was attended by over 100 people including groups from day centres, family carers, people from the LD team, Merton Mencap, the CIL and Public Health.

The Conference was opened by Andy Ottaway-Searle, Head of Direct Provision, who welcomed everyone and then introduced Mike Dignam from Generate Opportunities.

Mike then spoke about a project called EasyHealth. He showed everyone the project’s website easyhealth.org.uk and explained the kinds of information which can be accessed there. EasyHealth was made so that people know where to find ‘accessible’ health information. ‘Accessible’ information is information that uses easy words with pictures.

There are over 500 leaflets on the Easyhealth website, made by many different organisations. You can print off nearly all the leaflets for yourself. The website also contains helpful videos on lots of health topics as well as a list of useful health organisations.

One of Mike’s colleagues, Serap, who is a nutritionist, then spoke about some of the projects she runs at Generate including classes in healthy eating and exercise. She described how one of her groups have been enjoying using fitness tracker wristbands and how her groups like to encourage peer support to share ideas and help people to grow in confidence.

There were then stories from people with learning disabilities about how they have achieved a good life through their lifestyle choices.

Merrill Walls spoke first and explained how she has been eating healthy options at the Thursday curry club with the Community Outreach Team.

She said that this has now helped her make better choices in her weekly shopping.

Then Marie Miller spoke about her fundraising activities with the football team AFC Wimbledon and all the friendships she’s made at the club.
Finally Teresa Ludwinski talked about her move from residential to independent living and how she has benefited from attending the healthy living groups run by Peter and Noelle, where she created a healthy eating plan and a menu plan. She told everyone how she had started going swimming and to the gym and how these changes have helped her to feel happier, a bit fitter and healthier.

The conference delegates then split into 4 workshops: Healthy Lifestyles, Good Friends Good Neighbours, Being Active and A Good Life Accessible Workshop.

The Good Friends, Good Neighbours workshop was run by Liz and Anjan and the group discussed what makes good relationships and why they’re so important to our lives.

After a healthy lunch, the conference welcomed the Baked Bean Theatre Group who performed a brilliant specially made play called ‘I Want It All’ about making friends and finding the right activities for you.

There was then some feedback from the morning workshops and a panel consisting of Anjan Ghosh (Public Health), James Holden (Merton CCG), Jonathan Brown (LD Team), Lyla Adwan-Kamara (Merton CIL), Andy Whittington (Merton Mencap) and Sierien Razak (Livewell) heard comments and answered questions from the floor.

The next Partnership Board meeting will be on December 8th at High Path Centre where the panel will meet and discuss next steps. A report will also be written about using all the feedback from the morning’s workshops and presented to the panel at the partnership board.

Throughout the conference, an artist worked on a picture which showed everything that had been said during the day. See pages 8 & 9 to see how it turned out!

Many thanks to Mike Dignam and all the contributors and organisers who helped make the conference so informative, positive and successful.
JMC Coffee Mornings

The JMC has recently enjoyed several social events including some brilliant coffee mornings. These have been a great opportunity for parents and carers to visit and for everyone to catch up with one another and get to know Zoey O’Brien and Duncan Badenoch who have recently taken on the management of the centre. Thanks to everyone who baked the delicious cakes and made the event very successful.

Thank You Marcia

The JMC said a fond farewell to Marcia Allen who retired in September. Marcia worked in the Intensive Support Service at the JMC, and had worked for Merton for 18 years. She was extremely well loved by service users and staff alike and will be sorely missed.
Over the summer there were two very successful sports days at the Harris Academy in Mitcham. Sports played included cricket, basketball, netball and running. Everyone enjoyed accessing the facilities at the Harris Academy and it was great using the big sports hall and all the equipment.

Everyone who took part would like to thank Peter, Angela and Julia for organising and supporting these events.
What makes

the theme of today

Positivity!

EasyHealth.org.uk

I've lost so much weight through healthy eating.

Question: Shouldn't this be top-down?

Answer: That would be ideal but the situation is complicated.

Theresa

I'm happier now. I'm more independent.

Independent living, autism, access to more people, friendships.

Discussing healthy eating in groups. This was good.

Stories

Marie

I did a lap of the football pitch. £12,000 raised for charity.

I like playing football with my friend Andy.

Richard

It's the people I meet.

I've made friends, I've made it special.

Marie

I used to lift weights and dance.

Richard

I go to Curry Club every Wednesday.

Marie

I've made some good friends. I have too.

Sarah

I have a PA who can drive me around. I live independently.

Pub

Swimming & Gym

I've been lucky enough to travel - also been Ski-ing.

Our Lives

Clarity of information & understanding makes the difference.

Heath & Access

TV & Internet

Home & Security

8
What makes a good life?

Access to public transport: it's a challenge!

Having choices: I have a garden now.

Keeping a balance is key & enjoyment!

Technology can help too: use of Skype.

Friendship & more positive representations in the media.

Understanding others:
- People's needs are known.
- There's time to understand others.

Hard to access certain things even locally.

Local life:
- Living 5 mins from my neighbours.
- A good morning.
- A cup of tea & chat.

Informed decisions: being given all the information.

Not feeling restricted.

Direct payments help to make me feel in control.

Depends on me:
- Finances.
High Path Community Resource Centre now has its very own allotment which is producing a variety of crops. The allotment was created from scratch by the Community Payback Team. The land used for the allotment was an overgrown area at the back of the High Path garden which was full of bushes and weeds! The Community Payback Team cleared the area during the spring and then planted various seeds adding compost to help them grow. The allotment has now produced plenty of vegetables including potatoes, cabbages and carrots, which have been used by the High Path cooking group to make delicious home made soups! There has also been a good crop of tomatoes and onions which have been used to make Spaghetti Bolognese! The fresh produce has helped to add a bit of variety and colour to High Path’s lunches. Gweneth Mayers said: “The payback team worked really hard over the last 12 months and they have turned our space into something useful. A big thank you to all the members of the team.”
On Tuesday 18th August
The AFC Wimbledon
supporters from the
Community Outreach
Team had the great honour
of being the Match
Sponsors at the
Kingsmeadow ground for
the game against
Cambridge!

David, Richard, Wayne, Marie, Danny and Warren enjoyed the real V.I.P.
treatment, including a welcome drink upon arrival and a delicious three
course meal. They also had the privilege of watching the match from the
director’s box and access to the president’s
lounge for half-time refreshments! The
group also had a full page all about
themselves in the match-day programme.

As for the match itself, The Dons took the
lead when Tom Elliott fired home in the first
half. However, hopes of home win were
dashed when almost immediately after half-
time Cambridge equalised and two minutes
later they sadly scored again to take all three
points! 😞

After the match the group had the duty of choosing the Man of the Match
and awarding him a bottle of champagne. They
chose Barry Fuller for his grit and determination,
helping to keep the team positive in going
forward and never giving up.

The group would like to thank Ivor Heller, AFC
Wimbledon’s Commercial Director for giving
them the chance to be Match Sponsors and for an
evening that the group will never forget!
ARTS THERAPIES OUTSIDE DAY

On August 18th the Merton Arts Therapies team invited all service users from JMC, High Path and All Saints to share a second outside day exploring Art, Drama, Music and Dance Movement making. The open nature of the day meant that anyone, staff and service users had the opportunity to explore the Arts spontaneously. THANK YOU to all who helped make the day a BIG success.

“I like drawing and painting outside. It was fun and happy and best my world.”
— Ben

“Music outside! Enjoyed it!”
— Peter

“It was good. I liked painting and dancing. I like seeing Natasha and Gail. A lovely day.”
— Elaine

“It was good to wear a baseball cap and brilliant to have lunch outside.”
— Tim

“For us it is a great day! We get to see a very spontaneous side of people, service users and support workers!”
— ATT

“’It was a great experience for everyone and we were all happy to be there.’
Jacqueline, support worker at All Saints.”
I really enjoyed dressing up and the performance.
Tyba

I was Jack Sparrow and it made me feel good. It was fine to paint outside and meeting my friends.
Gary

The main thing I took from the day was that the therapists created a very open environment allowing every person the opportunity to feel comfortable and to engage in something big or small.
Mariana (volunteer)

It was a very moving day, I was part of witnessing how the arts therapists worked together to create really inviting, comfortable and vibrant environment for people to relax and unwind.
Tali Rose, DMP on internship at JMC

It gives people an opportunity to discover, play, share and have fun.
ATT

‘I was Jack Sparrow and it made me feel good. It was fine to paint outside and meeting my friends.’
Gary

‘I really enjoyed dressing up and the performance.’
Tyba
We offer services and opportunities for deaf and disabled people in Merton

Advice and Advocacy Services - Peer Support Programme
Debates and Events - Volunteer Training and Opportunities
Disability Hate Crime Prevention

We support the independence and inclusion of deaf and disabled people, challenge discrimination, and enable people to achieve change locally

To find out more contact us using the details below:

020 3397 3119
07449 362 233 (SMS)
info@mertoncil.org.uk
www.mertoncil.org.uk

Funded By:

Merton CIL is a company limited by guarantee. Company Number 7645926
Registered Charity Number 1152825
We are a group of young people (aged 14–25) with disabilities in Merton (learning and physical disabilities, autistic spectrum disorder and mental health needs)

Your Shout

We are a voice for young people in Merton

We learn about life e.g. how to be independent

We take our issues to the Transition Partnership Board

We are a friendly group and we would make you feel welcome

Would you like to join us?

We meet once a month on a Wednesday From 4:30pm to 6:30pm

Refreshments provided

For more information please contact:

Robert Hill
Tel 020 8545 4527
Email robert.hill@merton.gov.uk

Jo Young
Tel 020 8274 4959
Email jo.young@merton.gov.uk
The Community Outreach groups have enjoyed some more fantastic days out over the last few months including a trip to Huxley’s Bird of Prey Centre near Horsham and Bekonscot Model Village and Railway in Beaconsfield. Huxley’s look after birds of prey and they do great work helping injured birds return to the wild.

Bekonscot is the world’s oldest model village, opening for the first time in 1929. It has a huge model railway, 1.5 acres of well kept gardens and finely detailed model buildings. Danny felt like a giant towering over all he surveyed!

If you would like to know more about trips and activities with the Community Outreach Team, talk to Andy O’Brien at High Path: 020 8274 5361.

If anyone has any comments on the newsletter, or would like to write an article or just has a question, contact:

Duncan or Nick on 020 8274 5361 or by email -
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