

**MAIDSTONE MENCAP  
CHARITABLE TRUST LTD**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2016**

Cobtree Hall, Willington Street  
Maidstone ME15 8EB

**Registered Charity No 1009677 – Registered Company No 2672192**

# **MAIDSTONE MENCAP CHARITABLE TRUST LIMITED**

**Registered Charity No 1009677 - Registered Company No 2672192**

PRESIDENT: Mr Andrew Wells

VICE PRESIDENTS: Mrs Helen Grant MP  
Mr Tom Tugendhat MBE MP  
Ms Helen Whately MP

DIRECTORS: Chairman

Mrs Susan Roughley

Mr Mark Smith

Mrs Sally Collett

Mrs Lesley Rowbotham

Miss Alice Enfield

|                         |                     |                            |
|-------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Other Committee Members | Mrs Hazel Callaghan | Secretary                  |
|                         | James Burrows       | Treasurer                  |
|                         | Mrs Liane Morris    | Playschool & Clubs Manager |
|                         | Mrs Sarah Heath     | Centre Coordinator         |
|                         | Mrs Susan O'Connor  | Clubs Supervisor           |

# MAIDSTONE MENCAP CHARITABLE TRUST LTD

## ANNUAL REPORT 2016

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

2016 has been a difficult year for Maidstone Mencap (MMCT) with reduced funding and the roof expenditure being the biggest problems.

At the start of the year after a long and stressful tender procedure for 2 years funding from KCC for Holiday club, we were advised that we were not successful. This meant that a large portion of income was lost and we had to decide whether we could continue the club for certain ages. Fortunately with careful planning we were able to run the club and our thanks go to all those responsible for ensuring this happened, particularly Susan, Liane and Sarah. Thanks must also go to Marie for her great efforts in trying to secure the tender as it was through no fault on her behalf that we were unsuccessful.

The roof repairs have now been completed and have left the building looking fantastic and most importantly safe for our users. The repairs started in April but had to be put on hold in order to assess whether bats were using the roof for nesting. Lloyd Bore kindly provided their services and the necessary survey which involved checking for bat activity at different times in the day. Fortunately we had only one nesting area and this was avoided during the remainder of the repairs which involved replacing damaged or broken guttering and tiles. Also dangerous portions of stonework were removed and replaced where necessary. Our thanks go to AT Palmer who did a fantastic job and ensured that costs were well below the original budget, which greatly assisted MMCT as we were unable to obtain grants to cover all the costs meaning that our reserves took a big hit. Also thanks go to Lloyd Bore for providing their advice and ecology services at a minimum cost.

In June Marie Tomblin stepped down as Clubs Manager but fortunately we managed to persuade her to continue with the funding applications, one day a week. Thanks to Marie we have continued to receive grants and funding from a large number of providers e.g. Clothworkers, KCC, Baily Thomas, Bernard Sunley, Jewson and various others. We thank them all for their kind donations and support.

Following Marie's move, Liane became the overall Manager of Clubs, including Playschool; this has ensured there is a seamless transition between each club. Susan O'Connor has supported this change with her Supervisor role in juniors, Holiday Club and Youth club, ensuring that the clubs have had consistent leadership and planning.

It is with sadness we say goodbye to Pat Wilmshurst who has finally retired from her role as one of our Vice chairs. As you will be aware Pat has been involved with Maidstone Mencap since its start, many years ago, in various different roles with her most recent being Vice President following her run as President until 2012. We would like to thank Pat for all her hard work over the years, she has been a fantastic support, we will miss her but we wish her well in the future and in her new home.

With the building works behind us we have further challenges ahead in 2017, with changes due in other Playschool settings that are likely to impact on our service, together with the need to find other income sources to enable our services to continue in the future.

Sue Roughley, Chair

### FINANCIAL REPORT 2016

Maidstone Mencap Charitable Trust Limited is grateful as always for the generous support it has received this year by way of donations and fundraising, which has been as successful as ever.

Income was £90,377.69 with expenditure of around £119,752.15. Taking into account monies spent from the savings account towards the roof repairs, our overall net loss was £67,172.11.

Total roof expenditure came in well below the forecasted budget, due to excellent work by AT Palmers, at £61,409.85.

The total funds in the Bank at the end of 2016 were £89,159.65

James Burrows, Treasurer

## **FUND-RAISING REPORT**

We have had another busy year with our fund-raising activities and would like to thank everyone who has helped to support our events. Fund-raising is vital if we are to continue running all our services so we are really grateful to everyone who contributes their time, donates raffle prizes and other items for stalls, bakes cakes, displays posters, buys raffle tickets etc. etc. We can't manage without you and look forward to seeing you all at future fund raising events.

Last year went very well with all the usual events:

**'Apple Pie Quiz'** March 2016 – this was again well supported and our grateful thanks go to Roger our new Quiz master.

**'Jumble Sales'** April and October 2016 - We held two very successful Jumble Sales which were very well attended with long queues of people waiting to snap up some bargains. Thank you to everyone who donated jumble and helped run the stalls. It's surprising how much money can be made from unwanted items so please think of Maidstone Mencap when you next sort out your wardrobes or lofts.

**'Plant and Book Sale'** May 2016 – this was a good day. We had plants to sell and all our usual stalls such as cakes and cards. If anyone is able to donate plants/garden items for this year's event please speak to a member of the fund raising team.

**'Summer Fayre'** June 2016 – The Fayre was once again a successful event, with kind weather as always. We had lots of willing helpers to set up, run stalls and clear away so thank you to everyone for your support. It was well attended by our own members and by the local community; our grateful thanks to all those who took part in the arena events. Special thanks to Scottish Country Dancers who presented us with a generous cheque. Many thanks to CAMRA (Campaign for Real Ale) who ran the beer garden and donated nearly £1,000 for us. Thank you also to the Mayor, who opened the Fayre and to the Rotary Club who organised the parking. This is our most important event of the year and we need volunteers to plan for June 10<sup>th</sup> 2017 so please make a note in your diaries.

**'Quiz Night'** November 2016 – this was well supported and our grateful thanks go to our Quiz master Roger.

**'Notcutts Collection'** November 2016 – we were fortunate to be allowed to collect at Notcutts again this year. Thanks to all our collectors for making this a worthwhile venture.

**'Christmas Bazaar'** November 2016 – this event was very popular with a lovely Christmassy atmosphere. Thank you to Santa and his elves for coming all the way from the North Pole when they are so busy! The Christmas stalls were very successful.

**'Carol Singing in the Mall'** December 2016 – we were again invited to sing Carols in The Mall and are grateful to all who took part. We wish to acknowledge the support from the management of The Mall.

**'Christmas Concert'** December 2016 – a very enjoyable evening thanks to the Detling Singers who entertained us with traditional Christmas songs and carols.

**'easyfundraising'** - We receive commission and wish to encourage all members who shop online to use this scheme. [www.easyfundraising.org.uk/MaidstoneMencap](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/MaidstoneMencap)

**'Used Ink Cartridges'** – we continue to collect used ink cartridges for recycling. Please bring your used ink cartridges along to the hall.

Thank you to all our supporters who fundraised through our Virgin Money Giving website page.

We are fortunate to receive the continued support from The Mayor of Maidstone. We wish to thank the Mayor for his support and hope to welcome him at our events in 2017.

Throughout the year many people raise money in a number of ways whilst promoting and raising the profile of Maidstone Mencap within the local community – thank you.

Mark Smith – Fund Raising Committee

## **FUND RAISING DATES FOR 2017**

**11<sup>th</sup> March – Apple Pie Quiz Night, 7.30 pm** – Teams of 6/8, raffle prizes are needed.

**25<sup>th</sup> March – Jumble Sale, 3pm – 5pm** – Jumble to be brought to the Hall a week before only and volunteers are needed.

**13<sup>th</sup> May – Plant & Book Sale, 2.30pm – 4.30pm** – Plants, books, cakes and raffle prizes needed.

**10<sup>th</sup> June – Summer Fayre, 1pm** – helpers needed. Items needed for stalls.

**October – Jumble Sale, 3pm – 5pm** – Jumble to be brought to the Hall a week before only and volunteers are needed.

**11<sup>th</sup> November – Notcutts Collection**

**November – Christmas Bazaar**

For details of any of the above please contact the fund raising committee.

## **PLAYSCHOOL**

Cobtree Playschool has continued to be reflective in its practices to ensure we maintain our caring and nurturing ethos for the children and their families in our setting.

Children deserve the best possible start in their lives to enable them to reach their true potential and the early experiences they receive between the birth and five have a major impact on the future life chances. We have this year, continued to provide the quality and consistency of care that supports each child to make good progress. With the support from fundraising and donations from families and others we have managed to develop our resources to establish a more enabling environment, with stimulating and accessible layouts that support the children to play and explore, to be involved and motivated and to be creative and imaginative. Staff roles have developed to utilise their qualifications and strengths, supporting their role as a “key person” for the children, enabling planning strategies and targets for each unique child to be challenging and playful, supporting their individual learning and development even more effectively.

Playschool has a wonderful and dedicated team of staff, volunteers and helpers who have all worked so hard to ensure that they can fulfil the new routines and requirements within the development of their roles. It has been a privilege to work alongside them, absorbing their knowledge and kindness with the children, which continues to embed the ethos of the Playschool. Thank you never seems to be a big enough word for all that they do and with their kind help and support I can look forward to the continuing development of the Playschool for the current and the future children entrusted to our care.

Working together with families and outside support agencies to promote the learning and development of all the children, their achievements are clearly evidenced in the progress each child is making in our care. The children are happy and settled, are involved in a broad range of planned and spontaneous activities, all supporting their individual development and overall learning. The children are confident to explore and investigate the opportunities and experiences planned for them feeling safe and secure in the care we give.

I also must say a huge thankyou to our families, parents, and carers. We have had some wonderful donations to support the work that we do here at Playschool with their golf days, marathon running, company evenings just to highlight some of the support given to raise funds on our behalf of our provision.

We have had many visitors during the year and we continue to work alongside the Children’s individual therapy teams,our KCC Welfare, Inclusion and Setting Improvement Partners, and other support networks including Portage,and other Settings. Working together and sharing information, we will give the children and their parents the best possible start in life; the support and experiences we give, will enable them to reach their true

potential and provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life. With this integrated approach the children's individual needs can be met through focused planning, which will make a difference. Our waiting list of children continues to evolve; we are constantly reflecting our practices and support, to review our registers for the start of each new term to see if there is any possible way to support these families. We continue to show young children and their parents around our playschool every month. By word of mouth and reputation families have been recommended to visit and are becoming more aware of the care and support our Setting can provide. As a team we need to look at our sustainability to ensure we are able to continue to offer such a valuable service to our community for many years to come with volunteers still needed to maintain our ethos and high standards of care.

We continue to be grateful to all for the support given by the fundraising team and the hard work and commitment needed to run their planned events, to all our staff and helpers for the help in making costumes, running stalls and the delicious tea and cakes provided at these times, helping making them successful and well attended days. We are fortunate to continue to have donations from Pauline Easter for all her beautiful crafts and from Sandra Collins and her Yoga ladies on Monday nights. With all this support, we have managed to have some special days for the children, Zoo lab came in to surprise the children with the Creepy Crawlies, a lovely sensory experience for all. We also had a trip out to the Rare Breeds Centre, with the cost of the coach supported by The Happy Days charity and a summer picnic for all our families to celebrate the end of term and the children moving onto "big school."

At Christmas we were able to take the children see Santa and his reindeer at Notcutts. It is such a nice outing watching the children as they see all the wonders of the Christmas lights and the winter wonderland before coming across Santa in his Grotto. We thank the Scottish Dancers' for their continuing support Their very generous gift enabled us to have this wonderful day, plus give presents to all the children, have a Christmas party buffet and a Father Christmas visit to the hall. December is such a special month for the children and their families and includes our Nativity which is well supported by all, with Mayors, dignitaries, parents and grandparents all singing and clapping along. A huge thank you has to go to all our volunteers and staff in providing the props, practicing the songs and supporting the children throughout. A huge effort is put in the costumes and scenery so a very special thank you to Rita for all that she does.

I look forward to our new year, supporting and caring for each unique child. I know that they will all thrive under the care and opportunities given from the dedicated team at Playschool.

## **JUNIOR GATEWAY & HOLIDAY CLUB REPORT**

Juniors continue to run on Saturday mornings during term time, supporting children 5-11 and 11-16. We have a wonderful dedicated team of helpers, whose commitment to the children in our care having fun and social interactions, has proved to be a great asset to the service that we provide. It is great to hear feedback from parents, when they say it is like socialising with your friends and not just being with your carer.

In September, we welcomed our new manager, Rebecca, who has settled well into her role with the support from our team.

During the summer, we ran our Holiday Club for 4 weeks over August, providing respite for the families of over 40 children and young adults between the ages of 5-18. The children's days included opportunities for swimming, trips out to the miniature railway, Kent Life and Tyland Barn. We had visits from the fire brigade with their engines and Art of Mine when the children created some lovely pottery tiles which will be used to make a picture display for our hall.

We had a fantastic management team who ensure that the children's days were full of fun, activities, and social interactions, all supported by a large team of helpers, who provided the 1:1 care, many of whom were familiar with the children and the families from volunteering with us for our Junior Club. A huge thank you must go out to all for the commitment, time and hard work given to make our holiday club so successful. Sharing their knowledge of the children, the techniques and strategies needed to help keep them entertained happy and motivated, made the children feel safe and confident to explore all the opportunities and experiences we could provide for them. Photographs taken throughout the summer show the huge smiles reinforcing the fun they had.

This Ethos continues to be embedded in our Junior Clubs throughout the year, for which Maidstone Mencap is very proud.

## **YOUTH CLUB**

Youth Club is running on twice a month on Thursday evenings, supporting young adults from 16 -25. Susan and her support team of carers take them out to the Trampoline Park, swimming, bowling, having a meal and drink afterwards, or alternatively when in the hall, they cook together, play on the computer, dance, paint and generally have a fun social time together.

Again, a huge thank you must go to all the staff, for the time and commitment that goes to organising and planning these events. The young adults in their care are being given some wonderful experiences and opportunities within our community supported by the trusting and caring relationships that they have developed with our team. They are building on their confidence to try new things, to interact with their peers engaging and understanding that during their time with us their individual needs are being met. This all supports the foundations needed for them to make a positive contribution in the decision making and positive behaviours needed in the rules of being together in our community.

In addition to some financial support from the Disabled Commissioning Service, this year we have had some kind donations to help support the activities and resources needed to provide these opportunities for the children using our service provision, including those from the Morrison's Foundation, Albert Hunt Trust, Alchemy Foundation, Archer Trust, Golding Homes Community Chest and the Linda Hogan Community Fund. For these we say thank you. Any donations, however small, go a long way in sustaining the variety and quality of experiences we can provide.

## **INVICTA GATEWAY REPORT**

Another year has passed and here we are in 2017. A new leader has not surfaced as yet, but we live in hope...

In January 2016 we started off with curling and began to plan for the display board which is to have a spring theme with new born lambs and flowers of the season. Running into February, we had a noisy night with the musical instruments, pancake races, a fashion show, bring & buy sale, a quiz and our Valentine party at the Civil service club with a disco and buffet.

We had a hiccup in March when all the lights went out in the hall and we had to cancel on the 18th. Members were disappointed to lose their club night but it was a health and safety issue!

By popular demand we held a fancy dress party in June with fancy dress optional. Kelvin did the disco, a free shandy bar was provided and Mike bought us all sausage and chips.

The snooker is as popular as ever with more members joining up to play. There are the usual tournaments organised by Andrew who also gets endless requests for lots more sporting activities for the boys! It was agreed that a new snooker table was needed as the old ones arm was weak and possibly in danger of collapsing. A new table was purchased and Peter Ive strengthened the arm of the old one so we now have a spare. At around the same time the music centre was starting to play up so we bought a new more compact one with an additional microphone as these too are unreliable.

The art table was busier than ever with new activities like glass painting, reflection picture making. Veronica has been making large puppets, with the members help over the last few Months, with a view to holding a puppet show. We are now almost within reach of our target date. Carolyn, Veronica and I have put a storyline together and it just needs a bit of tweaking and willing members to tell the story and work the puppets. Tall order! Lesley's knitting |Sewing table is now well established with its own coterie of members.

In the Summer Months we spent most of our evenings outdoors having a good time playing games, going on nature trails and treasure hunts.

On the 5th of August we did a sponsored walk in the park and raised a good sum of money which went back in to the club for the members benefit.

Our first outing in 2016 was bowling at Bugsbys in Margate. We booked two games but some of our less able members were unable to play a second game. Something to note for the future! Bugsbys also kindly agreed to provide a two course meal for us as we couldn't access our usual venue.

Our next trip out was a visit to the Rare breeds centre in late September. It turned out to be a beautifully warm autumn day. We were served lunch and although there was a limited choice, all agreed the food was excellent. The staff were very pleasant and helpful with our members.

In December we went to see Dick Whittington at the Marlowe. The seats given to us had restricted views which spoiled the experience somewhat and we had trouble getting Gemma in to the theatre. I eventually persuaded a staff member to find a space for Gemma at ground level and she certainly enjoyed the best seat in the house. We ate at the service station near Maidstone on the way home although it was not a particularly good experience.

Marlene Ive

## **BUILDING REPORT**

### **Restoration Works to Premises in 2016**

The year was spent fundraising for much needed roof repairs and stone restoration work. Local construction company AT Palmers Ltd undertook the majority of works and now the old building looks almost as good as new.

Phase 1 of restoration ran from April to June and began with the erection of high level scaffolding to the garden end and rear of the building. Repairs were made to the stone walls requiring new dressed local rag stone to be laid in lime mortar. Damaged and eroded copings and decorative stone coining's were repaired or replaced. The leaking roof was repaired and a new ridge laid. New gutters and downpipes were fitted. Timber repairs were carried out and some external windows decorated.

Works then paused for the Summer Fayre and Summer Club. During the summer break we took the opportunity to bring in the expertise of Lloyd Bore Ecologists (in a voluntary capacity) who carried out 3 bat surveys. The surveys found only one roost of the Common Pipistrelle Bat, meaning there was no need to follow up these surveys with a Bat Licence for the premises.

Phase 2 ran from September to November and began with the erection of high level scaffolding to the rear and hip end of the property, as well as a low-level scaffold to the front. This phase saw a huge amount of restoration work to the roof including a new ridge to the main roof, a deep clean of the tiles (mostly to the main front elevation) and replacement of thousands of faulty or broken tiles (mostly needed to the main rear elevation). AT Palmers also repaired some large stones to the front and side of the building, painted windows to the hip end, cleaned all Perspex window covers, treated all wooden window frames and attached snow guards around the property. The ornate hip end roof required some work to each vertical ridge to make them safe from falling tiles. There were many areas across the roof where the previous repairs had been undertaken with the wrong materials or using poor techniques, meaning Palmers had to undo these mistakes before making the repairs. The Palmers team worked tirelessly and with very minimal disturbance to our services at the Hall.

Lloyd Bore oversaw the works in Phase 2 to ensure no other bats were found when the roof tiles were removed or replaced. As advised by Lloyd Bore, AT Palmers Ltd has created new bat roosting areas in the roof as part of the restoration work.

Lloyd Bore and AT Palmers have worked sympathetically to our budget, building and many constraints in time scale and working hours, due to the use and situation of our building. We are pleased that due to the efforts of AT Palmer Ltd and the generosity of Lloyd Bore the total project cost came in under budget at £62,236.30 including VAT.

### **Planned/ Required Works for 2017**

- Some internal decoration is required to repair and cover old damp patches. These are most noticeably in the children's cloakroom and mezzanine. Estimated Cost under £1000
- We hope to install a new wet room/ bathroom facility suitable for our Service Users at some point, depending on funds we raise specifically for this project. Estimated Cost at least £15,000.

### **Facilities**

Cobtree Hall continues to be facilitated/ serviced as below:

Weekly cleaning services – Bear Facilities Management

Maintenance as required – Bear Facilities Management

Sanitary waste disposal – Bear Facilities Management



Waste Disposal – Countrystyle Recycling  
Lift Servicing and Maintenance – Southern Counties Lift Services  
Monthly Pest Control Inspection – A1 Pest Control  
Fire Alarm and Emergency Lighting Servicing and Certification – RS Electricals  
Fire Equipment Inspection and Servicing – Fire Protection Services Ltd  
Gas Supplies Servicing and Certification – Brad Ellis  
Office & Domestic Supplies – Phoenix Stationery or Kent County Supplies  
Insurance Brokers – Arthur J Gallagher and Co

**Utilities**

Telephone and Internet – BT  
Gas – Gazprom Energy  
Electric – SSE

Sarah Heath, Centre Coordinator

**MONTHLY DRAW**

Our Monthly Draw continues to be well supported both by our current members and by those who have moved away, or for various reasons are no longer members. We are grateful to everyone for their continued support. Given below is the list of the winners for 2016.

|           |                  |
|-----------|------------------|
| January   | Mr G Tillman     |
| February  | Mrs E Hamilton   |
| March     | Mrs M Ive        |
| April     | Mrs E Endersby   |
| May       | Mrs H Tillman    |
| June      | Mrs E Minall     |
| July      | Mrs M Carrington |
| August    | Mrs D Milton     |
| September | Mrs E Hamilton   |
| October   | Mrs E Bateman    |
| November  | Mrs S Lingham    |
| December  | Mrs M Springford |