

**MAIDSTONE MENCAP
CHARITABLE TRUST LTD**

ANNUAL REPORT

2017

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: Mrs Susan Roughley Chairman
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 2017

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

After the difficult year that we had in 2016 with the roof repairs and the cuts in KCC funding, the Trustees decided to make 2017 a year of consolidation and budgeted for a loss of £5715 at year end. All the clubs had small increases in their fees and cuts in spending were made across the charity. I am pleased to say that after the charities' year of austerity that the loss was just over £4000. Even though we have been successful in securing KCC funding for the next two years, the charity will still have to operate a tight ship and keep spending to a minimum.

Fundraising events have as always been successful and the fundraising team do a phenomenal job in organising these events and rallying support; a huge thank you to them. As well as these events though, more emphasis needs to be placed on winning the more substantial grants which will enable us to not just maintain our current services but both improve and grow these. The fundraising report will show you how generous people have been with their money and time and I take this opportunity to thank them all.

A massive thank you also goes to Liane Morris as she, and her team of staff and volunteers are the core element behind the successful clubs that we run. You will see from Liane's reports how much has been achieved this year. We have already increased the number of days that youth club runs this year but still need more volunteers to help in all the clubs. Sarah Heath does an amazing job of managing the hall, its upkeep and all the behind the scenes administration which just seamlessly happens.

We hope that 2018 will result in us at least breaking even, if not making a small profit. Another solvent year will give us a good platform to expand our services. On behalf of my fellow trustees, thank you all for your continued support and we look forward to working with you all again this year.

Sue Roughley, Chair

FINANCIAL REPORT 2017

The 2017 financial analysis including Playschool's Income and Expenditure:

2017 Budget target: (£5,715.00)

2017 Income target: £120,620, Actual Income: £105,108.35
+/- versus target: (£15,511.65)

2017 Expenditure target: £126,335, Expenditure actual was £109,203.91
+/- versus target: £17,131.09

Therefore, 2017 saw a loss of £4,095.56, which was £1,619.44 less than the forecast loss of £5,715.

Income - The main area of concern has been our ongoing failure to hit fundraising targets, which has been addressed on a number of occasions. I know a lot of people put in an awful lot of time and support into raising funds for the charity and their efforts are warmly recognised and applauded. I honestly don't think there is any more that can be asked of or done by staff or volunteers to raise additional funds. As such, we need to refocus our efforts on winning more grants in 2018. It should be noted that Maidstone Mencap has been awarded a significant amount of funding from KCC for 2018, which will be documented as a grant and, I believe, help the charity hit its annual income targets. However, that doesn't mean the charity can rest on its laurels. There are plans to investigate other large grants that are available as it is the intention of the board to invest in improving the facilities of Cobtree Hall and reward staff for their ongoing hard work.

Expenditure - Spending was well below what was forecast and helped the charity to succeed in posting a smaller loss overall than had been budgeted for, despite income being less than was hoped for. A Finance Meeting was

held in February 2018 to determine the budget for 2018 through to 2020, and healthy inflation-led increases have been allowed for. Overall, the charity's expenditure is well-managed, well-accounted for and under control.

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 2017 – this was again very well supported and our grateful thanks go to Roger our Quiz master.

'Jumble Sales' April and October 2017 - 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 2017 – 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 2017 – 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 9th 2018 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.

'easyfundraising' - We receive commission and wish to encourage all members who shop online to use this scheme. 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 Just Giving and Virgin Money Giving website pages.

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 2018.

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 2018

10th March – Jumble Sale, 3pm – 5pm – Jumble to be brought to the Hall a week before only and volunteers are needed.

14th April– Apple Pie Quiz Night, 7.30 pm – Teams of 6/8, raffle prizes are needed.

12th May – Plant & Book Sale, 2.30pm – 4.30pm – Plants, books, cakes and raffle prizes needed.

9th 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.

20th October – Notcutts Collection

November – Christmas Bazaar

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

Mark Smith – 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.

From September 2017 we changed our opening days, to Monday Tuesday and Wednesday to support the use of Cobtree Hall for alternate users during the week with the intention of bringing in additional income to support the sustainability of services currently supported by Maidstone Mencap. With these changes, staff hours and children's registers had to be reflected on and appropriate changes made to ensure that we continued to support families and children, the Welfare Requirements of Ofsted, our regulatory body and 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 continue to develop our resources and 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. 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.

Playschool has a wonderful and dedicated team of staff and volunteers 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, a "thank you" never seems to be a big enough word for all that they do. Some have been with us for many years and we celebrate helper's lengthy service this year with 30 years and 20 years commitment. We continue to try and recruit more volunteers, as home, health and family commitments take priority and we have natural losses of support due to these.

I also must say a huge thankyou to our families, parents, and carers. Playschool has had some wonderful donations, from golf days, company evenings, raising funds through our sponsored event and buying raffle tickets just to highlight some of the support given to raise funds on our behalf.

We continue to have many visitors during the year; working alongside the Children's individual therapy teams, our KCC Welfare, Inclusion and Setting Improvement Partners, other support networks such as Portage, and also other Settings. Continuing to build on these relationships and working together, 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 still continues to evolve, with recommendations from other settings, the specialist teaching service as well as health professionals, 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 term, 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 can 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 running stalls making the delicious tea and cakes provided at these times and setting up the Christmas Grotto all helping making them successful and well attended days.

This autumn term we have been raising funds for a mobility chair to be able to support children in our care. The basic cost of this would be £2,500 with further funds needed for adaptations. We had a chocolate raffle prize, and coin donations to start our quest, then to end our year on a high note we received a further donation of £2,500 from Civil Service Insurance Society, who have already generously supported us throughout the year with huge donations, and which means we can now have the chair in the new year, so much sooner than we could have expected. We continue to have regular donations from Sandra Collins and her Yoga ladies from Monday nights, so a huge thankyou goes to them all.

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 at the end of the summer term, we also had a trip out to the Rare breeds Centre, 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. Thank you to Michael from the Scottish Dancers who dressed as Father Christmas to give presents to all the children, and joined in with our Christmas party buffet.

December is such a special month for the children and their families and includes our singing and signing celebration, to highlight the children and their accomplishments. This day 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. 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 all the dedicated team at Playschool.

Liane Morris – Manager Cobtree Playschool

JUNIOR GATEWAY & HOLIDAY CLUB REPORT

Juniors continue to run on Saturday morning's during term time, supporting children aged 5-11 and 11-16. We have a wonderful dedicated team of helpers, whose commitment to the children 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. Our Manager Rebecca works so hard throughout term time and summer holidays to ensure the children and young people have fun and rewarding social experiences.

During the summer, we ran our holiday club in August for 4 weeks, 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, visits from the fire brigade with their engines and the bug man came with an assortment of bugs and insects for the children to get up close to and if brave enough even have a giant moth on the end of their nose. A magic man also came and provided entertainment and magic for the afternoon.

We had a fantastic new management team who ensured 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 them all for their 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 shows 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.

Liane Morris

YOUTH CLUB

Youth club is running on two Thursday evenings a month supporting young adults from the ages of 16 -25. Susan and her support team of carers, take them out to the trampoline park, swimming, or 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 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.

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, including those from the Morrison's Foundation, and the Cobtree Trust. 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.

Liane Morris

BUILDING REPORT

The usual monthly cleaning, pest control and annual certifications for gas and fire lights/ equipment were carried out but no further funds were spent.

At present there is nothing pending for 2018 except a couple of very small odd jobs for Bear Facilities and we thank them for their continuing support and services. Our next project is the Bathroom Facilities Refurb for 2019 and we are starting to raise funds for this.

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 2017.

January - Mrs P Evans

February – Louise Brass

March – Mrs V Shirley

April – Miss I Duke

May - Mrs M Jones

June – Mrs J Lowe

July- Mrs M Springford

August - Michael Turner

September- Mrs M Ive

October - E Raikes

November – Mrs E Minall

December – Mrs A Weaver

Addendum - Report from our sister charity

INVICTA GATEWAY REPORT

It's been great to be back at the Gateway Club, after leaving about 15 years ago! Many of the organisers and helpers have been here for over 20 years; Mike, Carolyn, Marlene, Jill and Susan are still working hard and running a fantastic club. And it's been great to see many familiar happy faces among the members too enjoying our special social club where they can feel safe and welcome; they can relax and let their hair down sometimes! They can meet up with old friends, or even find a new Special Friend! They can enjoy the disco, play some games, try some crafts, and have a laugh!

Over the last year, we have provided the usual varied programme, which is guided by our own club members, through our keen Members Chair, Susan and her committee.

The disco, run by members James and Alan, is the heartbeat of our club; but there are always many alternative activities on offer - various games, pastimes, and competitions such as the ever-popular talent shows! There is also an arts and crafts table, with members of mixed abilities, all producing lovely things to display at club or take home. We also have a dedicated needlecraft team and a jigsaw puzzle group. Upstairs, the two snooker tables always have lads queuing up to cue off, for keenly contested frames. Over the winter months, many have been busy rehearsing a pantomime show and we are all looking forward to the club's FIRST EVER drama performance very soon ...! Oh yes we are!!'

In the lighter summer evenings, when the weather permits, a small but enthusiastic group play various sports and games outside in our wonderful park location!

Throughout the year we have many special nights, like the Easter bonnets parade; all lovingly made on the arts table! Every year the members raise money for Children in Need with gifts and games. We have themed fancy dress parties for Halloween and Christmas etc. usually with fish & chips or nibbles and a free shandy bar.

We also regularly welcome entertainers for special nights of live music, dance shows, musical instrument fun, or a professional DJ complete with disco light show!

Furthermore, every club night includes a coffee break, when all can buy hot drinks and choc bars at the tuck shop, or cold drinks and crisps in the cloakroom.

We have enjoyed four outings since the last AGM -

- 1 - Our Friday night Valentines Disco Party at The Civil Service Club in Maidstone was as fabulous as usual.
- 2 - June - Steam train ride from Tenterden to Bodiam Castle with Cream teas in the carriages.
- 3 - Oct - Ten pin bowling, plus a walk to our pub meal in Maidstone.
- 4 - Jan - Panto at The Marlow, Canterbury, then back to Maidstone for another pub dinner.

It is great that we can provide such a wide variety of activities, but all this is only possible with a large team of dedicated volunteers and loads of planning by Marlene and Carolyn! There are always challenges to face, but we have a great team to overcome them and a great group of members, who make all the effort so worthwhile! The Senior Gateway Club was great 15 years ago, and is still great now! Let's hope we can say the same again in 15 years' time?!

Thank you for asking me to be Leader for a second spell.

Tom Newman