

**MAIDSTONE MENCAP
CHARITABLE TRUST LTD**

ANNUAL REPORT

2018

Cobtree Hall, Willington Street
Maidstone ME15 8EB

Registered Charity No 1009677 – Registered Company No 2672192

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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
Mrs Mary Rimmer
Mrs Lynn Snedden
Mr Guy Roughley

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 Youth Club Supervisor

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

This year has sadly been another difficult one for the charity as like many other charities we are simply struggling to continually raise the funds required. The Fund raising team work tirelessly and do a phenomenal job for such a small team raising significant sums of money. On behalf of the Board I take this opportunity to thank them all for their continued support. A huge thank you also goes to all those who support our events. The emphasis going forward needs to be on trying to win some bigger grants. Sadly, Marie Tomblin who wrote all our grant applications left the charity in December and has not been replaced. This work is currently being carried out by members of the board.

As always a massive thank you goes to Liane Morris, her team and the volunteers who ensure the success of all the clubs. Liane's reports show just how much has been achieved again this year. It's no surprise that KCC decided to award the grants for holiday provision to MMCT for another two years. Liane in particular works over and above what is expected of her and we are really grateful.

Behind the scenes all the administration to do with the charity and the facilities is carried out by Sarah Heath who also does an amazing job. Thank you.

Sadly we are losing one of our Trustees Alice Enfield. Alice has been actively involved with the charity for over fifteen years, starting as a club volunteer, then running juniors and holiday club and latterly as a trustee. Alice has been an inspiration to many and as she now devotes more time to family life she will be sorely missed.

It is with sadness too that our President Andrew Wells is also retiring this year. Again Andrew has been involved with the charity for many years. The Board would like to thank Andrew for all his work and continued support. We wish him well in his retirement.

We start the new financial year with a clear idea of what we have to achieve this year and plans to hopefully make this happen future! On behalf of my fellow trustees, thank you for your continued support and we look forward to working with you again this year.

Sue Roughley, Chair

FINANCIAL REPORT 2018

2018 proved to be a more difficult year financially than was originally planned and budgeted for. Despite hopes of breaking even, Maidstone Mencap ran a deficit of £24,672.11. The main area of concern is the fundraising capabilities of the charity, as the actual Fundraising figure of £86.5k was £24.2k shy of the target of £110.8k. Whilst there is an area of concern within the Expenditure budget (unforeseen additional costs for the boiler and lift caused a huge overspend on the Facility budget, this was offset by the underspending on the HR and Finance expenditure budgets; as both were comfortably within budget). Overall, the Expenditure budget overspend was just under £40, which is a fantastic achievement in terms of budgeting.

The shortfall in hitting the Fundraising target has been acknowledged by the Board, and a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis is to be conducted and used to help develop a Business Plan to help increase the charities income through Fundraising efforts.

With regards to capital investment and improvements in 2018, the charity agreed to pay Keystone D&B £31,150 to complete the Changing Rooms refurbishment. £24,920 was paid to Keystone before the close of 2018, with the remaining balance of £6,230 being paid in January 2019. Grants totalling £20,143 were received in 2018, with a further £8k expected to be received in 2019, now that the work has been completed. This means the charity will have invested £3,007 of its own savings into the project, once the outstanding grant monies are received.

With regards to the clubs, Playschool and Holiday Club ran deficits of £18.8k and £5.7k, respectively. Seniors also ran a deficit of £6k; however, as this is a separately run charity, there is little which can be done by Maidstone Mencap, except either increasing the hall rental charges to Seniors and/or Seniors making annual

one-off contributions to reduce their deficit to a more acceptable level. Both Junior Gateway and Youth Club were within budget. As such, Fundraising efforts need to be concentrated on Playschool, Holiday Club and Seniors.

To help avoid another year of missing our budgetary targets by such a large margin, the Finance Committee has reluctantly agreed to a loss of £10k in 2019; reducing the Fundraising target figure for 2019 to £100k (which is still £13.5k more than was raised in 2018; it is hoped the SWOT analysis and Business Plan will help deliver the additional funds). The Expenditure budget remains largely unchanged overall; with reductions to the HR and Finance budgets to allow for an increase to the Facilities budget (to be better prepared for unforeseen costs, as experienced in 2018).

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' April 2018 – this was again very well supported and our grateful thanks go to Roger our Quiz master.

'Jumble Sales' March and October 2018 - 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 2018 – this was a good day. We had plants to sell and all our usual stalls such as cakes, gifts and books. 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 2018 –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 of £4,800.00. 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 Maidstone Rotary Club who organised the parking. This is our most important event of the year and we need volunteers to plan for June 8th 2019 so please make a note in your diaries.

'Quiz Night' October 2018 – this was well supported and our grateful thanks go to our Quizmaster Roger.

'Notcutts Collection' October 2018 – 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' December 2018 – 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 the new Mayor, Cllr Marion Ring, to our events in 2019.

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 2019

16th March – Jumble Sale, 2.30pm - 4.00pm – Jumble to be brought to the Hall a week before only and volunteers are needed.

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

18th May – Plant & Book Sale, 2.30pm – 4.00pm – Plants, books, cakes and raffle prizes needed.

8th June – Summer Fayre, 1pm – helpers needed. Items needed for stalls.

October – Jumble Sale, 2.30pm -4.00pm – Jumble to be brought to the Hall a week before only and volunteers are needed.

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. We are expecting our Ofsted inspection this year and therefore a lot of thought and consideration has been given to ensure that we continue to support families and children and to meet the Welfare Requirements of Ofsted, our regulatory body.

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 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, 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 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. 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 would especially like to highlight the dedication and commitment of all our volunteers and helpers. 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. It really goes to show what continuing support Cobtree Playschool and Maidstone Mencap have with the service we are providing for the children and their families in our community.

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.

We introduced play and stay sessions on a Tuesday, for the children and their parents to come and share a lunch and have time to chat with each other and with our staff sharing information and concerns. This proved really

successful for our parents who formed lovely supporting relationships with each other and a more developed a more in-depth awareness of our “teaching” practices. We will continue this in the new spring term.

With the support commitment and dedication of the team we will continue to be reflective in our practices to ensure we can be the best that we can possibly be. It is with a huge thank you to 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.

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, raising funds through our sponsored event and buying raffle tickets.

We continue to have 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. 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 on 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 are able to continue to offer such a valuable service to our community for many years to come. We need to ensure that we promote awareness of our setting and charity to support registers for new children. With the new specialist nursery up and running at Five Acre Wood and the understanding that all schools will have to have a specialist attachment to support children with SEND, we will need to develop awareness that volunteers are still required to maintain our ethos and high standards of care.

We continue to be grateful to all for the support given by the fundraising team for the hard work and commitment needed to run their planned events, to all our staff and helpers for help running stalls, making the delicious tea and cakes provided at these times and setting up the Christmas Grotto. These all help to make them successful and well attended days.

We again have received a large donation from CIS insurance company to support the renewal of so many resources and the development of our garden area. Pauline Easter continues to work tirelessly at her craft fayres and donates all her proceeds to us; we continue to have regular donations from Sandra Collins and her Yoga ladies from Monday nights, so a huge thankyou goes to them all. The Eccles over 50’s saved all their pennies and donated then to us again this year and we received a lovely cheque from car enthusiasts as part of a donation from their entrance fees and again another big thank you to the Scottish dancers for their huge contribution. All this generosity and hard work that goes into raising these funds is hugely appreciated.

With all this support, we have also managed to have some special days for the children, visiting Dino Adventure Land to say goodbye to the children going onto school in the summer, a family picnic day and at Christmas the children received a visit and gift from Santa. 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, 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 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 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 have 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 a fun, rewarding social experiences.

During the summer, we ran our holiday club for 4 weeks in August, providing respite for the families of over 40 children and young adults aged 5-18. The children's days included opportunities for swimming trips out to the miniature railway, we had visits from the fire brigade with their engines and the animal man came, with the children able to get up close to an assortment of animals, bugs and insects to touch and hold. A magic man also came and provided entertainment and magic for the afternoon.

We again had a fantastic new 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 rightly proud.

Liane Morris - Clubs manager

YOUTH CLUB

Youth Club is running on two Thursday evenings a month, supporting young adults from 16 -25. Susan and her brilliant 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 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, 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 – Clubs Manager

BUILDING REPORT

The major project in this financial year was the refurbishment of the children's toilets, the alteration of the men's toilet into a wet room/change area complete with hoist facilities and the subsequent reposition of the men's toilet. After a huge fundraising effort, we were lucky enough to secure funding for this project with just over £31,000 being raised for this work. The work was carried out by Keystone D&B who did an amazing job working over the Christmas closure period. Colin and his team managed to complete the work in a shorter time period than expected enabling a thorough clean up to take place before Playschool opened again in the New Year. We would like to thank Colin and his team for all their work and support with this project.

Unfortunately, the boiler decided to break down and the hall was left with no heating in early December. These costs, along with essential Lift maintenance work which took place earlier in the year, have been a drain on the Facility funds which we aim address this year.

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 2018.

January - Mr Michael Weaver

February – Mrs Mavis Springford

March – Mr W Simons

April – Mrs L M Jones

May – Mrs A West

June – Mrs Enid Endersby

July - Mrs A P Davis

August - Mrs M Leeds

September - Marlene Ive

October - Mr J Makuch

November – Mike Craske

December – Louise Brass