

**MAIDSTONE MENCAP
CHARITABLE TRUST LTD**

ANNUAL REPORT

2019

Cobtree Hall, Willington Street
Maidstone ME15 8EB

Registered Charity No 1009677 – Registered Company No 2672192

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PRESIDENT: Mrs Helen Grant MP

VICE PRESIDENTS: 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 Tina Adams Centre Coordinator

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Following the retirement of Andrew Wells last year, I am pleased to welcome Helen Grant as our new President. Helen is always at our events and is a great supporter of the charity. We are delighted to have Helen on board as part of our team.

Looking back over the last twelve months, I am pleased that I do not have to tell a tale of doom and gloom as it has been for the last few years. As a result of seriously pulling in our belts and only spending where necessary, combined with some tremendous efforts from our fundraising and grants team the charity has turned the corner at long last so this report will be one of thank you's for a change!

On behalf of the Trustees a massive thanks must be given to Liane Morris who is the overall manager of all our clubs. Under Liane's guidance the club managers, staff and volunteers provide an amazing service right across the charity. Liane is superb at all the administration involved from a regulatory perspective too and keeps the charity on the straight and narrow. Her experience is second to none, her reports are a testament to just how much she does and we are very privileged to have her heading up the MMCT team.

This year saw Tina Adams take over the centre coordinator role in addition to her deputyship at playschool and her role at juniors. Like Liane, Tina is an incredibly hard worker. I take this opportunity to extend my thanks to both Tina for her diligence and passion but also to Tina's family who have provided many services free of charge on the building front. Tina has some big projects coming up in 2020 and hope everyone will continue to give her any support she requires.

Teresa O'Brian joined the team last year too and is responsible for writing for grants. Teresa has already sourced income for some of our planned building projects as well as applying for some of the bigger grants such as "Children In Need", which we have never been in a position to do before. Fingers crossed some of these will come to fruition.

Susan O'Connor and her husband Paul who have run Youth club since its start both stepped down at Christmas as they are now approved foster parents and no longer able to give the time. A huge thank you must be given to them both for their hard work over the last few years and we wish them well in the future. We welcome Florence as the new youth club manager who will work alongside Beccie the Juniors Manager. Beccie already does a fabulous job with juniors so should be a great support to Florence at Youth club.

Our clubs would not survive without the volunteers. Their support is phenomenal and we are grateful for all the hours they put in. We are always looking for new volunteers so please spread the word.

Our fundraising team work tirelessly and have achieved some amazing results over the last twelve months despite severe hindrances such as the weather. The Trustees are very grateful for all their hard work as without their continued support the charity would not be able to function. Special thanks in particular must go to Suzanne Constant, Lesley Rowbotham and Mark Smith.

Last but not least on behalf of the Trustees I would like to say a huge thank you to James Burrows and Hazel Callaghan. Despite living thousands of miles away, James maintains all the accounts and is an excellent Treasurer whilst Hazel provides a magnificent service as secretary to the board of Trustees.

The new financial year brings more challenges, most notably some of the building maintenance work and the new sensory room. We hope to continue with our fundraising to cover these costs and aim to at least break even again in twelve months' time. I am looking forward to working with all involved at MMCT and hope we see another successful year.

Sue Roughley, Chair

FINANCIAL REPORT 2019

TOTAL OPENING BALANCE 2019	£68,357.64
ANNUAL INCOME	£123,952.16
ANNUAL EXPENDITURE	(£115,518.29)
MENCAP RING-FENCED +/-	£2,630.00
COBTREE PS RING-FENCED +/-	£2,900.00
ANNUAL INCREASE	£13,963.87
TOTAL CLOSING BALANCE 2019	£82,321.51
Operational Balance	£18,851.51
Mencap Ring-Fenced Balance	£10,570.00
Cobtree PS Ring-Fenced Balance	£2,900.00
Six-months Reserve Balance	£50,000.00

2019

Income: A surplus of £11,952.16
£123,952.16 versus a target of £112,000.00

Expenditure: An underspend of £6,476.71
(£115,518.29) versus a budget of (£121,995.00)

Income was £8,433.87 greater than expenditure and against a targeted budget loss of £9,995; we ran a budget surplus of £18,428.87. This is a fantastic achievement and is a result of all the hard work put in by everybody, whatever their role within the charity.

We started the New Year with our newly refurbished Changing Places rooms, which was as a result of excellent fundraising in 2018. In early 2019, the Fire Regulation report gave us all a setback; however, I want to thank everyone for their ongoing hard work in ensuring we meet the necessary Fire Regulations. We managed to absorb the additional Fire Safety costs within our Facilities budget and, as a result of the fire report findings, are now looking forward to a new Sensory Room (as we work hard to hit our £12k fundraising target).

Overall, 2019 had the usual unforeseen hiccups but we were able to comfortably absorb them; delivering our best year financially in at least six years (all of which posted losses), and increasing our overall savings. This reflects the hard work put in by everyone to manage our expenditure more carefully and increase our income through fundraising donations, events and grants. We have a great team in place to help deliver a fantastic 2020 for the children and young adults who rely on Maidstone Mencap.

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' 2019 – this was again very well supported and our grateful thanks go to Roger our Quiz master.

'Jumble Sales' March and October 2019 - 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 2019 – 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 2019 – Attendance was down at The Fayre due to the appalling weather. We had lots of willing helpers to set up, run stalls and clear away so thank you to everyone for your support. 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 provided a generous donation. 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 13th 2020 so please make a note in your diaries.

'Waitrose Charity Football Match' June 2019 – We are grateful to all at Waitrose who organised a Charity football match and raised over £4,000 for us.

'Quiz Night' October 2019 – this was well supported and our grateful thanks go to our Quiz master Roger.

'Notcutts Collection' October 2019 – 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 2019 – 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

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 2020.

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 2020

14th March – Jumble Sale, 3pm – 5pm – 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.

23rd May – Plant & Book Sale, 2.30pm – 4.30pm – Plants, books, cakes and raffle prizes needed.

13th 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.

October – 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 had our Ofsted inspection this year; we received an overall “GOOD” with OUTSTANDING practices noted throughout the report with the children’s personal development behaviour and welfare especially acknowledged.

We will continue to give a lot of thought and consideration to our best practices to ensure that we support families and children, meeting and reflecting on 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 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 support from additional funding from the KCC (SENIF- special educational needs inclusion funds). With this funding we were able to recruit a new member to our team, so that the one to one care is consistent for a small group of children with more complex needs and support for children’s key staff to have time for the personalised planning and the adaptations needed within the learning environment to meet our target outcomes.

With the additional 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. This has included a lovely playhouse in the garden, (from a donation from CSIS, parents support putting in the base and a team from the Gas Company constructing), resources to support communication strategies such as switch adapted toys, talking buttons, story sacks and resources to support physical development and sensory input for our sensory circuits for the children such as a body roller and spinner. How lucky we are to have so much generous support with donations and time.

Staff roles have developed with training specific to meet the needs of the children; this has included Makaton to update signing techniques, intensive interactions, ASD and Down syndrome. With developing and refreshing knowledge, working with specialist teaching and therapy services the strengths of the provision we are able to provide is there for all to see. 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 for 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. Credit has to be given to our Staff for their dedication, time, planning and commitment in making this all happen. 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.

We will continue to offer play and stay sessions on a Tuesday, during spring/summer for the children and their parents to come and share a lunch and have time to chat with each other and have time with our staff to share information and concerns. This proved really successful previously for our parents who formed lovely supporting relationships with each and a more developed a more in-depth awareness of our “teaching” practices. We have many visitors during the year; 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 makes a positive 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 continually look at our sustainability and marketing of our service 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, particularly with the specialist nursery up and running at Five acre Wood and understanding that all schools will have to have a specialist attachment to support children with SEND.

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 their help running stalls making the delicious tea and cakes provided at these times and setting up the Christmas Grotto all helping to make them successful and well attended days.

We have been very fortunate to have received a large donation from CIS insurance company and also donations from Aylesford business Hub, previous families, current families and their sponsored walks or climbs. These have contributed in supporting 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 thank you goes to them all. The Eccles over 50's saves all their pennies and donated then to us again this year, 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 managed to have some special days for the children, we went to visit Dino adventure land to say goodbye to the children going on to school in the summer with a family picnic day, and at Christmas the children received a visit and gift from Santa. Thank you to Reinhard who dressed as Father Christmas to give presents to all the children and joined in with our Christmas party buffet.

Also a special thankyou to Joyce and Mike who come to in to help pack away on a Wednesday, make us a cup of tea and to Mike for all the odd jobs that he does in mending things.

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 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, about how much their child enjoys coming and to see the children having such a good time they do not want to go home.

Our new Manager Rebecca works so hard throughout term time to ensure the children and young people have fun rewarding social experiences. Our waiting list is ever increasing from word of mouth and from attending our summer holiday club. It is testament to all the team, staff and volunteers who dedicate their time, share their enthusiasm and fun to ensure that all the children and young people in our care enjoy their social interactions.

During the summer, we ran our holiday club for 4 weeks over August, providing respite for the families of over 50 children and young adults between the ages of 5-18. This is a large increase on previous years, lots of new children attending with several days where we supported more than our planned 20 limit.

The Children's days included opportunities for swimming trips, out to the miniature railway and in the park, 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 management team, with many familiar faces either from previous years, or the management of our Juniors and Playschool. Working together and reflecting each day to ensure that the children's days were full of fun, activities, and social interactions. We were 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 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, these books are available for all to see and share, with many of the children liking to go through them and see themselves whenever they attend. This Ethos continues to be embedded in our Junior clubs throughout the year, for which Maidstone Mencap is very proud.

Liane Morris - Clubs manager

YOUTH CLUB

Youth club is running on two Thursday evenings a month supporting young adults from the ages of 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 and 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 in 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 and 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.

Sadly we will be losing Susan from Youth club at the end of the year, a huge thankyou to her Paul and Sam for making youth club what it is today, all the hard work, planning , time and commitment has been so valuable and leaves a big hole to fill.

Youth club will continue in the New Year with Florence as our new manager, with support from Beccie our Junior Club manager. Both young ladies have been supporting Maidstone Mencap and our Families for several years and bring that personal knowledge and understanding with them. I know that Susan has already shared her skills with them, to support them in having the best possible start. I know they and the whole team for youth club are a great asset to MMCT.

In addition to major financial support from the Disabled Commissioning Service in being able to run these three clubs, this year we have also 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

I joined Maidstone Mencap as office staff from April and would like to say thank you to everyone who have supported me within this role.

We had a visit from the fire safety officer in April raising some issues that need to be resolved and essential works to carry out. Things brought to our attention were;

- 5 Year electrical test needed to be done - carried out by Complete Wiring Solutions.
- Fire Risk Assessment of the building - carried out by CS Services

As a result the fire refuge point upstairs was deemed not suitable, meaning wheelchair users and people with limited mobility are no longer able to use the upstairs hall.

These assessments also highlighted the following;

- Minor electrical works to be completed to pass the 5- year check and the fuse boards need to be updated as they do not comply with all new regulations. Minor works were completed by Complete Wiring Solutions.
- Certificate received to pass 5- year check. Further funds to be raised to update fuse boards.
- Fire risk assessment - highlighted the fire alarm system needed updating to a L2 OR L4 system
- Hooks and brackets to be removed from doors.
- Sensory room needed a slow closer added (purchased from Screwfix - Mike one of our volunteers fitted to door.)
- Bin needed to be padlocked to fence (chain and padlock purchased from Screwfix).
- Many of our outside lights were not working raising a health and safety issue for our users - new LED lights have now been fitted around the building work completed by Complete Wiring Solutions.

Planned works for 2020

- February half term - Fuse boards will be replaced to comply with current regulations
- Easter holidays - Prism Alarms will be upgrading the Fire Alarm system
- Fundraising is continuing to be able to move the sensory room to the ground floor so it can be accessed by all hall users.
- Quotations are being sort for the front parking area to repair where it has sunk.
- A spring clear out day is to be arranged to empty cellar, paint fences and seal wooden panels on the front of the building hopefully with the help of the volunteers from the gas service provider.

Thank you again for all your support and I look forward to getting the 2020 works completed, maintaining the hall and any new exciting projects for the future.

Centre Coordinator - Tina Adams

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 2019.

January - Mrs H Thorndycroft
February – Mrs M E A Jones
March – Mrs A P Davis
April – Mr R Springford
May – Mrs M Ive
June – Mrs H Thorndycroft
July – Mr J Makuch
August - Mrs H Thorndycroft
September – Barbara Day
October - Sharon White
November – Kath Avison
December – Graham Tillman