

**MAIDSTONE MENCAP
CHARITABLE TRUST LTD**

ANNUAL REPORT

2024

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: Mrs Helen Grant MP

VICE PRESIDENTS: Vacant

DIRECTORS: Mrs Susan Roughley Chairman

Mr Mark Smith

Mrs Mary Rimmer

Mr Guy Roughley

Mrs Amanda Masters

Other Committee Members Mrs Lynn Snedden Secretary

Mr James Burrows Treasurer

Mrs Liane Morris Playschool & Clubs Manager

Mrs Tina Adams Centre Coordinator

Mrs Sarah Maybourne Grants Manager

Mrs Rebecca Fox Social Coordinator

MAIDSTONE MENCAP CHARITABLE TRUST LTD

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

CHAIR'S REPORT:

Charities are being hit nationally by the general reduction in money available for grants and additional funding. Maidstone Mencap is no different. We are increasingly finding decisions are taking longer to be made for the allocation of funds and we are in a bigger pool competing for smaller pots of money. Despite these challenges we have had a relatively successful year and I am proud of the fact that we continue to provide a much-needed service to our children and young adults.

Liane and her amazing team of staff and volunteers, despite staff shortages, have provided a high level of support to all our users. Unfortunately, we continue to have waiting lists for all our clubs and playschool and in an attempt to address this, playschool was extended by a day for a few months earlier in the year allowing some children to have 1:1 support before starting school. Like most employers of support service workers, we struggle to recruit and are not able to extend our services at the current time.

In an attempt to raise our profile in the community, gain some corporate funding and recruit more volunteers we recruited a part-time Marketing and Community officer at the end of the year. As a result, our volunteer numbers have certainly increased in the last few months and hopefully we will secure some more funding too. We come to the end of our National Lottery grant this year so will be actively looking at ways to replace this loss in funds.

I want to finish on a positive by stating I am immensely proud of the services we provide and the positive impact the charity makes on so many children, young adults and their families and carers. I cannot thank Liane our manager, her staff and all the volunteers for their hard work which makes the charity the success it is. I take this opportunity to thank my fellow trustees for their support and look forward to working with everyone concerned this year. I am sure with such a great team we can face the challenges head on and continue to provide a great service.

Sue Roughley April 2025.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

FINANCIAL REVIEW 2024

Opening balance, 1st January 2024: £195,554.67
Closing balance, 31st December 2022: £161,203.38
Balance decreased by: £34,351.29

This was a combination of:
expenditure exceeding income: -£9,144.34
and a decrease in the ring-fenced funds: -
£25,206.95

INCOME

We finished with an income shortfall of £42,826.96; however, this was due to a £44.9k shortfall in our Restricted Funds target (we brought in £112,968.05 versus a target of £157,864.46). We exceeded the Clubs target by £1.6k, and the Fundraising target by £492.26

EXPENDITURE

We underspent on expenditure by £27,408.74, mainly due to not spending £19.8k of Restricted Funds. Budget spending across all the divisions totalled £85,929.65 versus a budget of £93,500.00.

Whilst we overspent on Finance, that was mainly because Calcutt Matthews forgot to bill us for their services in 2023, so we ended up paying for two years in 2024. My only area of concern is with the Administration spending, as we spent £9.3k against a budget of £8k. We spent £2.3k on printing charges from both PEAC and Citibusiness; however, the charity is moving to a sole supplier and expects to halve costs in 2025.

Overall, we finished the year with a combined Income shortfall of £42.9k and Expenditure underspend of £27.4k, which meant we brought in £15.4k less than we spent (or spent £15.4k more than we brought in, depending on how you want to look at it). The total target income (Fundraising + Restricted Grants) was £182.6k and the total brought in was £138.1k, which was 76% versus target.

RESTRICTED FUNDS

Overall restricted funds totalled £84,431.71

Heritage Fund	£36,415.31
NL5Y	£0.00
DCS: Holiday	(£0.00)
DCS: Juniors	£3,088.59
DCS: Youth Club	£4,739.04
DAF	£10,399.21
SENIF	£2,987.84
Community Fund	£4,987.69
Garden	£21,814.03
	£84,431.71

2025 is the 5th and final year that the charity will receive monies from the National Lottery, which will see the charity receive £44,784 in 2025 (and a total of £215,882 over the five-year period). My concern for 2026 is that we will need to make up the £40k a year that was previously funded by the National Lottery. I have made my concerns known to the board, and targeted the charity with bringing in more monies via Grants.

James Burrows
Honorary Treasurer

FUND-RAISING REPORT:

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 cake, 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.

'Quiz Night' March 2024 – this was well supported and our grateful thanks go to our Quiz master for preparing the questions. This event raised approximately £600.

'Jumble Sale' June 2024 – this event was popular and well attended. We were fortunate to receive a good amount of donated clothing, toys and bric a bac raising over £200.

'Quiz Night' November 2024 – this evening was again well supported and our grateful thanks go to our Quiz master. This event raised around £570.

Thank you to all our supporters who fundraised through our Just Giving website pages.

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 – Trustee

GROUPS REPORT:

Cobtree Playschool for Special Children Annual report from January - December 2024

Cobtree Playschool continued to support many families, and their children entrusted into our care. With register planning children joined us throughout the year, are sessions continued to be full, we again opened on a Thursday, from Jan- July to support those on our waiting list, this is enabled the children to settle and get to know us and be ready for the transition to playschool from the September. We had changes to our playschool team welcoming back Sheryl in a role as a key person, losing our deputy manager Tina for pastures new in December and Liz sadly was unable to return in September having supported the team behind the scenes for many years.

I would like to give a huge thank you to the whole team, staff and volunteers, who all support each other and work so hard in ensuring that all the children are so well cared for, giving the much-needed time, dedication and planning to ensure we meet their individual needs.

Cath has stepped into the deputy manager role, with Sue and Jaime continuing to provide the much-valued roles in supporting their key groups.

We have recruited an experienced, qualified new key person, Farren, and Edward who will be working alongside as he develops his understanding of an early year's role, both who will join us in January 2025, but have had a couple of weeks in December to help settle in.

We continue to face difficulties in recruitment for the much-valued roles of volunteers to be able to increase numbers whilst still being able to offer our continuing standards of care and early education.

We, our children and families recognise and truly appreciate the help with have from our small team of committed volunteers, those that have supported us for over 10 years to those that support for a few months; their loyalty and continuing support makes a true difference to our provision and care and recognised best practices.

It continues to be a privilege to work alongside them, recognising their kindness care and support to the children and their families, which continues to embed the ethos of the Playschool., As each year, a thank you never seems to be a big enough word for all that they do.

We are continually aware of the need for the sustainability of our provision for those within the community, especially with knowledge of the impending changes of the SEND offer of support, not just from our local authority but nationwide. Although it is good to see recommendations increasing from the children's therapy support network and word of mouth, we need to continue to be proactive in maintaining the funding for the sustainability of our service and all the valuable support and care we are able to give to the children.

We supported many of our families with their educational and health care plans, completing with them the paperwork and evidence profiles needed to ensure that the children leaving our care in the summer would have the right support in place at their new schools. The local council continues to be overwhelmed with the need for specialist school placements and we, from September, have again supported children who have deferred their school entry, from not being allocated an appropriate school place for a term or for the whole school year.

We managed to say goodbye to those leaving for school and to celebrate the end of another school year, with a picnic for everyone in the garden. It is lovely to celebrate with the parents the children's achievements, to look through their unique photographed progress journey to show how well they have done and the steps they have made towards the early learning goals.

We invited parents into to share a session alongside their child in December, to share progress being made in their first term and to have opportunities to speak and spend time with the key person and team in their individual key groups, before sending off for the Christmas break.

Juniors

With a continuing thank you to the KCC disabled commissioning service and the grant award from their short break Local Offer we are able to run our club provision for the next two years (April 2024 to March 2026)

Due to the continuing demand of places, we have kept to running our junior club, with three age groups, running alternate Saturdays to be able to support as many families as is possible although we have an evolving waiting list, we are able to offer up to 36 children, sessions with us.

We have children joining our Saturdays from their experiences at Playschool or Summer club, a testament to the care, commitment, hard work, enthusiasm from our staffing support, that families have developed their trust in the caring relationships that have been formed, and the consistency of support we can continue to provide for them. Having the consistency and knowledge from our team of staff across clubs, has meant the family's request for places at juniors is forever increasing.

We have an evolving turn round from lovely groups of young helpers, coming from local schools in their sixth form of studies or completing Duke of Edinburgh awards for example. They are providing the one-to-one social interactions with the children. The children in our care are excited to come each session knowing or requesting their helpers by name "wanting to be with their friend" which embed the ethos of the offer of our Junior clubs.

A huge thank you to the dedication and commitment to all of those in our Junior Club team. It is lovely to see the potential future of Maidstone Mencap in the commitment they all bring.

Youth Club

With thank you to the KCC disabled commissioning service and the grant award from their short break Local Offer we are able to run our club provision for the next two year (April 2024 – March 2026)

The team have all worked with such tireless enthusiasm throughout this year to ensure that Youth club continues to offer a provision to those on our registers.

With the sessions being hall based, they included music, singing, dancing, craft activities and games - the young adults have had such fun. We prepare a supper together, encouraging the young people to make a pizza, a toasted sandwich, make choices of what they would like on their jacket potato for example. We encourage their independent skills to help with clearing away washing up They have especially loved the dancing and singing at the end of each session, you can see the confidence and friendships formed with their peers and with our staff, making the sessions a joyfully energetic social experience for all.

Again, a huge thank you must go to everyone at Youth, 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 building on the trusting caring and fun 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.

Holiday Club

With thanks to the KCC disabled commissioning service and the grant award from their short break Local Offer we are able to run our club provision summer 2024 and summer 2025

During the Summer, we did run our holiday club for 4 weeks over August., providing respite for the families of almost 90 children and young adults between the ages of 5-18.

Activities are hall based, we are able to utilise both floors of the hall, the sensory room and garden, with each day divided to have a planned activity in the afternoon We themed each week including very messy fun, and visits from tessellation dance proving to be a very memorable day for everyone.

We have a fantastic team, with many familiar and new faces from previous years supporting the staffing needed again, these included the day-to-day management from our Junior club and Playschool managers, which provided the consistently knowledge and understanding of those entrusted to our care. They all worked so well together reflecting each day to ensure that the children's days were full of fun, activities, and social interactions,

We were 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 or having worked in during the previous summer. 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, and the relationships formed.

This Ethos continues to be embedded in our Junior and Youth clubs throughout the year, for which Maidstone Mencap continues to be immensely proud.

We are able to run our club provisions from the major financial support from the short break grants applied for from KCC Disabled Commissioning Service, which support us to be able to offer much reduced fees for the 1:1 care and support provided, for this we say another thank you, as it goes a long way in sustaining the variety and quality of experiences we provided.

Another thank you must go Peggy Heron and the William Brake foundation for their huge donation again this year, which contributes significantly to the activities and resources we are able to provide for our Clubs.

Liane
Manager

BUILDING REPORT: Maidstone Mencap AGM Building Report for works 2024

I have joined Maidstone Mencap 16.01.2025, therefore I can give you more detailed summary of this time.

Works Completed in 2024

1. Fire Safety & Emergency Lighting Upgrade

- Following the fire safety check, it was identified that an emergency lighting upgrade was necessary.
- The quotes provided by Tina were outdated, so new quotes were requested.
- **Contractor:** Oakleaf Electrical
- **Quote:** £4,139 (Excl. VAT), which includes PAT testing.
- **Scheduled Work Dates:** 14th April – 17th April 2024.

2. Garden Maintenance

- The garden has been tidied up, with the broken marquee taken down and the metal recycled, resulting in a small revenue of £6.
- Other garden waste has been disposed of at the local recycling centre free of charge.

3. Wall Repairs in Garden

- Two locations on the building wall were identified as needing repairs due to crumbling mortar, which posed a safety hazard.
- This issue was preventing children from safely using the garden.
- The repairs have been completed, and the scaffolding is scheduled to be taken down soon.
- **Contractor:** Mailling Masonry
- **Cost:** £1,920.

4. Additional Wall Repair by Main Entrance

- An additional repair on the wall near the main entrance is necessary.
- **Estimated Cost:** £100, with work expected to be completed during the half-term break.

5. Storage Room Paint Issue

- During a walkaround, I noticed some peeling and crumbling paint in the storage room.
- The issue is being monitored as it may be due to the age of the paint. Liane has been made aware of this.

Planned Works for 2025:

1. Garden Overhaul:

- Continue with the garden project to make it fully accessible and enjoyable to all.

2. Building Decoration:

- Ongoing decoration and maintenance throughout the building.

Kornelia Couchouron, Office and Facility Coordinator

MONTHLY DRAW:

2024	January	62	Ron Mason
2024	February	80	Mr Edward Raikes
2024	March	18	Mrs A Weaver
2024	April	50	Lee Taggart
2024	May	2	Mrs L Jiles
2024	June	61	Mr J Makuch
2024	July	50	Lee Taggart
2024	August	68	Mike Craske
2024	September	61	Mr J Makuch
2024	October	25	Sharon White
2024	November	96	Mrs Elsbet Minall
2024	December	45	Mrs S Lingham