

AUTUMN/WINTER NEWSLETTER 2024



CHAIR'S WELCOME

Our newsletter is back in a new format! We are keen to tell you about all the events and activities that our various groups have been involved with over the last few months. It's well worth a read! I really enjoyed The Big Barbecue and this year we were really lucky with the weather. If you missed this extravaganza, keep an eye out for next year's date. Speaking of dates, remember to look at the end of this newsletter for dates of our upcoming events. If you would like anything to go into our next newsletter please let one of our trustees know - contact details on the back page of this newsletter.



Welcome to Saffron Walden Mencap Society's (SWMS) Autumn/Winter Newsletter - our first since 2022. As I write this, I am thinking about Sunday 18th August when we held the Big BBQ at the Lavender Fields Finchingfield and what a wonderful day it was. Ben and Julia Dimmock were our hosts, but all trustees and volunteers worked together to make it a special day for everyone, and the weather was perfect! The Big BBQ was one of many events we have enjoyed since our last newsletter which has included discos, a Valentine's meal, five canal boat trips, a theatre trip and a trip to the pantomime. Watch this space - we have more planned! These events take place alongside our weekly Side by Side Club, Growability, our allotment group and Go with Our Flow so we hope there is something for everyone. You will read more about these groups later on in this newsletter. This summer has also seen the revival of the 'We are Carers' group and its organiser Julie will tell you more about that later. As you can imagine, these events and activities involve a lot of organising and fundraising to make them happen, so we are grateful to our trustees, club leaders, volunteers and of course our many fundraisers for all that they contribute to SWMS. Last but by no means least thanks to all of you, our wonderful members, who never fail to show enormous enthusiasm for all the events, making everything so enjoyable and worthwhile

Jane Bailey - Secretary

Membership Secretary's Report - Pat Bailey

Currently Saffron Walden Mencap has 102 members plus four life members. Mike and Carol Wilkinson were elected as life members at the recent AGM on Wednesday 24th July 2024 and we thank them very much for the incredible amount they have raised for us in the past. Membership is at an all time high and continues to grow with approximately 62 members directly accessing all the resources SWMS has to offer. Total membership includes 22 members associated with Go With Our Flow (GWOF) - leaders, companions and members - thanks to Cath for collecting subscriptions and forms. The recently reformed 'We are Carers' group brought in 12 new Members. Over the years membership subscriptions have raised thousands of pounds for SWMS for which we are very grateful.



CLUBS AND EVENTS NEWS!



SIDE BY SIDE CLUB

We all welcomed Holly Howard (inset right!) to the Side By Side club in May as deputy leader and she has since been leading and has already brought in new ideas and activities which the members are now enjoying.

Everyone continues to enjoy the activities which the club continues to provide including Bingo, music quizzes, 'Play Your Cards Right', games night and much more!



GO WITH OUR FLOW



The summer programme of activities has been wonderful. We were fortunate to have been awarded funding from the National Lottery Community Fund and Saffron Walden Mencap Society being selected as one of the recipients of Thriplow Daffodil Weekend proceeds. The young people have been involved in various activities including punting, a shopping trip, crazy golf, a visit to Banham Zoo, fish and chip night and a pub evening. More recently the grand finale of our summer season was a trip to Frinton made possible by the generosity of Saffron Walden Golf Club.

GROWABILITY

We started off the season with a new name which we thought was very fitting for our club and our group helped to design our new logo. We meet every Wednesday at 10am at the Dig-It community allotment.

Recently we celebrated our third birthday - with a truly wonderful cake made by our trustee Jo. There are 11 of us in our group plus our leader Lisa, and at the moment we are harvesting a huge variety of lovely food to take home if we want to! We love visitors so please ask Jacquie or Steve if you would like to visit the club.



We ARE Carers!

This is our newest group set up by our trustee Julie. It is aimed at parents & carers to get together socially in a relaxed environment and to have the opportunity to talk to others who live similar lives to themselves. We are fundraising on Go Fund Me to help with running costs (via the Donate button on our website)

THE BIG FEAST BBQ!

The sun shone for our annual barbeque this year at Finchingfield Camping and Lavender Farm.

In wonderful surroundings we all enjoyed a tasty barbeque manned by our trustee Ben who did an amazing job in keeping us fed.



DISCOS & PANTO!

There is always a great turnout for our discos - with our own resident DJ Monkey Wind (!) 'on the decks'. We hold three discos every year, and these are a real team effort to make fun and free evenings for our members. Then our yearly trip to Panto! In December a group of 61 people went to see the Pantomime at Saffron Hall - we are happy to report that Cinderella did go to the ball!



QUIZ NIGHT FUNDRAISER

Our trustee Jo and family very kindly offered to organise a fundraising quiz night in July. Eleven teams took part which turned out to be a thoroughly enjoyable evening held in Newport Village Hall. Great fun
A special mention must go to Jo's brother who was an excellent quizmaster. An amazing £1445.79 was raised for Saffron Walden Mencap thanks to Jo and her family.

CANAL TRIPS

Our wonderful trips on the River Stort continued this year with 5 CANALABILTY boats on three dates in June and July. Although we had rain on a few of the days it didn't dampen our spirits and we still thoroughly enjoyed ourselves - steering the boats and working the locks!



VOLUNTEERS WEEK

During Volunteers Week in June 24 volunteers - including fundraisers, event organisers, drivers, trustees and club helpers were invited to a buffet lunch at the Nucleus in Great Chesterford. We were delighted to be joined by our president, Daphne Cornell, who has done so much for our charity. As Patrick Draper said in his speech - "without our volunteers Saffron Walden Mencap Society would not be able to offer so many fun events and clubs for our members - THANK YOU ALL!"



YOUR SAFFRON WALDEN MENCAP TRUSTEES

Since our last Newsletter Jennifer Capper has stood down as a trustee. We are most grateful to Jennifer for all the help and support she has given to SWMS over many years. Thanks also to Go With our Flow Project Lead Cath Reed for her help and support as she has also recently stood down as a trustee. We have however welcomed to the board of trustees Julie Petchey, Jo Arundell and Steve Lee.

If you have any views, comments or ideas you would like to make regarding SWMS, our clubs, activities or events we would be delighted to hear from you. Please see contact details below for Patrick Draper (Chairman) and Jane Bailey (Secretary). Alternatively, mention any comments you have to Steve Lee or Patrick Bailey at the Side by Side Club. You can also contact our administrator Jacquie Lucas.

Bailey	Jane	01799 540700	Secretary
Bailey	Patrick		Membership Secretary
Draper	Patrick	07974306917	Chairman
Clark	Richard		Trustee
Cornell	Daphne		President and Life-Long Member
Dimmock	Ben		Treasurer
Lucas	Jacquie	07973552262	Administrator and Trustee for Safeguarding
Lee	Steve		Trustee & Club Leader
Sewell	Jean		Life Long Member
Dimmock	Ben		Treasurer
Walbanke	Gerard		Trustee
Arundell	Jo		Trustee



5th October - Jumble Sale
United Reformed Church Saffron Walden - 10.00 am start

11th October - Orchestra rehearsal at Saffron Hall

26th October - Halloween Disco
Sewards End Village Hall 6.00 pm - 9.00pm.

6th December 2024 Late Night Shopping - Tombola!

11th December -Christmas Meal
Sewards End End Village Hall 6:30pm

22nd December Pantomime - Jack and the Beanstalk
Saffron Hall - 2.30pm start.

February 15th 2025 - Valentine's Disco
Sewards End Village Hall 6.00 pm - 9.00pm.



Don't forget to log in to the website or follow us on Facebook & Instagram!
www.saffronwaldenmencapsociety.co.uk
<https://www.facebook.com/SaffronWaldenMencapSociety>
 instagram @saffronwaldenmencap



Finally! Keep safe and well.
We look forward to getting together and seeing one another at Saffron Walden Mencap events and activities in the months to come.