



Richmond



Richmond Mencap

newsletter

December 2022

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We wish you a happy festive season

From everybody at Richmond Mencap!

Richmond Mencap AGM Summary - 29th October



It was wonderful to see such a good turnout at our AGM, which took place on 29 October at RHACC. We enjoyed a wonderful performance by The Chirpy Cheeps, having a chat over some delicious food and celebrating with various other festivities.

Denise Carr, the current Chair of Richmond Mencap, announced that she is stepping down from the role and Teresa Jones has been appointed to succeed her. Richmond Mencap wants to say a big thank you to Denise for all her hard work and championship of the charity over the years and a warm welcome to Teresa - we look forward to working with you in the coming months!



Young People - Summer Fun

It was brilliant to be back at the Crossway Centre base for Summer Fun this year. The young people made the most out of every inch of Marble Hill Adventure Playground, taking turns on the rope swings of all sizes, the zipwires and the tricycles. Luckily the large, leafy trees of Marble Hill Park (and its café!) provided plenty of shade during the hot days of the heatwave and the highlight of the group’s day was often ice cream after lunch. One day staff were banished to another table at the cafe as the young people chose to all sit together and play Uno, ahead of their ice cream!



Designing puzzles, building marble runs, making tie dye t-shirts and painting elephants back at the Crossway Centre made for a relaxing change to all the high energy activity at the playgrounds in Marble Hill Park. It was great to see the young people socialising with old friends and making new ones and having another fun summer.



HOP

The adults were excited to launch back into trips, including old favourites such as Mini Golf, Bowling, Riverside Walk and Pub Lunch, Boat Trip and Hounslow Urban farm. Three members of the group going around the Volcano Island Mini Golf course together drew their round with high scores, which is a new Richmond Mencap record! The group were very happy to feed the sheep and goats at the farm and were very brave handling lizards, snakes and insects during the Animal Encounter Hour and we almost escaped the torrential downpour on our way back...!



The new Flip Out Centre in Hounslow provided an action-packed day, as our members dived into the inflatable park, laser tag and bumper cars. The group had a fantastic night at The Cabbage Patch, chatting with friends and enjoying a delicious dinner.

Games of UNO, frisbee, tie dye t-shirts, painted elephants, learning new skills at tech club



You are invited to join us for the...



CHRISTMAS PARTY!

FRIDAY 30TH DECEMBER

**@ CLARENDON HALL, YORK HOUSE
TWICKENHAM TW1 3NH**

5.30PM - 8.30PM

Live DJ!

dancing!

fun and games!!



**CONNECT TO TECH
DROP IN SESSIONS**

Thursdays, 10:30AM-12:30PM @ Richmond Mencap Space

play with + learn how to use our new tablets and tech

email office@richmondmencap.org.uk if you are interested





MEET SARAH – STAR OF ‘THE A WORD’, ‘RALPH & KATIE’ AND A MENCAP MYTH BUSTER



"After that lovely wedding in The A Word, I wanted to know what married life would be like for Ralph and Katie," said Sarah about the premise of her new series.

Katie has Down's syndrome, but she would remind you that she is a woman and a baker first. She is quietly confident about who she is and a good friend. Katie has a way of encouraging others to believe in their own uniqueness.

"It is not all easy for Ralph and Katie but there is always love and honesty at the centre. We are all different, which is a liberating thought. And really importantly this story has joy.

"It is a privilege to play a lead actor. I do enjoy it and I want to do more film work. For me it is all about the character.

"I love acting because I love to live more than one life. I want the world to know that we're all just people; some people worry too much about getting it wrong when talking to us."

Watch the first series of [Ralph & Katie](#) now on BBC iPlayer



Carers Corner

Mencap Petition: Call on the government to do more to ease the Cost of Living crisis



Mencap believes that **the government must step up support for the 1.5 million people with a learning disability living in the UK.**

The cost of living crisis is tough for everyone, but it can be even harder for people with a learning disability, many of whom are on low incomes, rely on disability benefits, and who need support to be able to budget and navigate complex information from energy suppliers.

Mencap are working with UK partners including Shelter, Mind, Save The Children, Parkinsons UK and Action for Children. They all believe that the government must rethink the support people on the lowest incomes need to cope with the cost of living crisis by increasing Universal Credit and strengthening the benefits system.

<https://secure.mencap.org.uk/en-gb/call-government-do-more-ease-cost-living-crisis>

Richmond Council's Cost of Living HUB



Richmond Council has recently launched a Richmond Cost of Living Hub which includes information and support available on a range of topics including household bills, family and child care, food and healthcare costs.

Website: https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/cost_of_living_hub

The Richmond and Hillcroft Adult College (RHACC) Carers Hub



The Richmond and Hillcroft Adult College (RHACC) Carers Hub provides a range of affordable and accessible activities and services for carers. Membership of the carers hub is free and entitles you to a range of benefits including one free leisure/wellbeing course per term from a list of courses including Ceramics for Wellbeing, Movement and Meditation with Alexander techniques, and Walk and Discover West London.

You can either register in person at RHACC (Richmond) or Hillcroft (Surbiton) or complete a registration online.

<https://www.rhacc.ac.uk/carers-hub>

Richmond Winter Warmth Home Service: Wandsworth and Richmond Assessment Points (WRAP)



Thinking Works is an award winning not-for-profit company helping to tackle fuel poverty and create a sustainable and more energy efficient future. It has been commissioned by Richmond Council to support residents to reduce their bills, apply for grants to support them and to ensure that their appliances are as safe and as efficient as possible. **The director of WRAP, and manager of the scheme in Richmond, is Giles Read giles@thinkingworks.co.uk.** The service is open to all residents, including families with children, with some groups such as those 65+ and children and people with disabilities prioritised.

There are 2 services available:

1. Crisis Support - by phone

- Fuel vouchers - for those with a prepay meter
- Emergency heating repairs (homeowners only)
- Referrals for insulation and heating grants (via Sustainable Warmth and Warmer Homes 3 - subject to available funding)
- Support applying to the Household Support Fund (where available)

2. Standard Support - by home visit

- FREE carbon monoxide detector (CO alarm)*
- FREE LED bulb x2
- FREE radiator reflector panels for 3 radiators on external walls*
- Specialist advice on lowering heating bills whilst keeping warm
- Advice on energy and water bill tariff discounts including the 50% Water Help discount and Warm Home Discount (where available)
- Assessments for grants for insulation and heating works**
- Referrals for FREE smoke alarm
- Professionals can make a referral (with the client's consent) or residents can self-refer.

Discounted Social Broadband Tariffs for those on Benefits

8 companies including BT and Virgin are offering lower rates, which are not time limited offers, for customers who are in receipt of some benefits. In addition, Talk-Talk is offering 6 months free no line broadband for 6 months to Job Seekers. Those rates are not generally advertised on their website so Martin Lewis has collated the information on the [Money Saving Expert website](https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/compare-broadband-deals/broadband-social-tariffs/), with click through links to access the tariffs. On average savings of at least £125 per annum are likely. Discounted 'social tariffs' for those on certain benefits.

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/compare-broadband-deals/broadband-social-tariffs/>

The Scope Disability Energy Support Service

SCOPE = Equality for disabled people

The Scope Disability Energy Support Service helpline offers free energy and water advice to disabled people, helping them to manage their utility needs. The service is open to any disabled person or households where one or more disabled person lives (England and Wales). The support includes:

- Managing water and energy debt
- Accessing benefits, grants and trusts
- Free fuel vouchers (conditions apply)
- Support registering with the Priority Services Register

The service is provided via email or by telephone.

Phone: 0808 801 0828

Email: Disability.EnergySupport@scope.org.uk

Website: www.scope.org.uk/disability-energy-support

The Discretionary Energy Rebate Scheme

The Discretionary Energy Rebate Scheme follows on from the government mandatory £150 council tax energy rebate scheme launched in March 2022. It has been designed by LBRUT to meet the additional needs of local people by providing those who are eligible with £150 toward their energy costs.

Four groups are eligible. Two are known to the council and have already been notified. The second two groups are not known to the council, but may be eligible. They are:

- **Properties in council tax band A-D** where residents do not pay the council tax (e.g. the council tax is included in the rent) but they do have responsibility for paying energy bills
- **Properties in Council tax band E-H** where the residents do not pay council tax, but are in receipt of benefits and have responsibility for paying the energy bills

Both of these groups need to apply to the council to receive the payment. **The scheme closes to applications on 31 October.**

https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/council_tax/energy_rebate_payments/discretionary_energy_rebate_scheme

Learning Disability Today: Thomas the Tank Engine introduces first ever autistic character



©Photograph: Michael Bowles/Mattel

Nine-year-old Elliot Garcia, who is autistic, will voice the first ever autistic character in the Thomas the Tank Engine series: Thomas & Friends: All Engines Go.

Bruno is a brake car with a bright red exterior. He has two sets of ladders which he can flap up and down to tell you if he is upset or excited, and a lantern to indicate his emotional state.

Bruno also has ear defenders which he can use if he is in an environment which is too loud. He rolls in reverse at the end of the train which gives him a unique perspective of the world.

Bruno the brake car can be seen on 'Thomas & Friends: All Engines Go!' on Channel 5 Milkshake! on Wednesdays at 7.00am.

Do you have any ideas, comments, suggestions or complaints about Richmond Mencap?

We are happy to hear from you and love to have a chat so let us know what you think of us.

Call: **020 8744 1923** or Email: office@richmondmenicap.org.uk

Or write here:

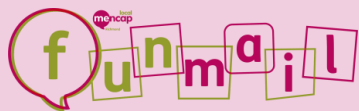
And either pop it through our letter box or send it to Richmond Mencap, 342 Richmond Road, East Twickenham, TW1 2DU

Email Newsletters

Have you subscribed to our regular email newsletters?



In Carers Corner you can find out about new services, articles, workshops and more coming up in Richmond.



In Funmail, you can find out what's coming up, watch funny videos and play a variety of games and puzzles.

Send us an email at office@richmondmenicap.org.uk and we will sign you up.