



7 The Hive, Northfleet, Kent, DA11 9DE
Tel: 01474 536501/536202. Fax: 01474 536202

Email: admin@kasbah.org.uk

**AUGUST
2010**

News

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KASBAH's AGM

KASBAH's AGM was held in the lovely surroundings of The Old Rectory in Northfleet on Wednesday, 7th July 2010. It was wonderful to see so many members present, in addition to key stakeholders Tristan Hodson, (our Monitoring Officer from Supporting People), and our Auditor Patrick Reynolds.

The formal proceedings ran smoothly with the adoption of last year's minutes, accounts, annual report all being unanimously agreed. There was one change to the board of Directors as Dorothy Higgins stepped down. KASBAH would like to thank Dorothy for her support and contribution over the last two years.



The current Board of Directors is: Betty Hague-Smith (Chair), Ann Everett (Vice Chair), Graham Steele (Treasurer), Richard Chapman (Trustee) and Mandy Webb (Trustee). Mandy joined the KASBAH Board in December 2010 and was formally elected at the AGM. Following the AGM a new Trustee was co-opted - KASBAH has great pleasure in welcoming Christine Taylor who recently left a Commissioning role within Medway Council. Her skills and knowledge will be an asset to the Board.

After official business, we received two interesting talks. Mike Bishop, Sports Development Officer for KCC gave a presentation on the 2012 Paralympics and general information on sports opportunities for the

disabled throughout Kent. If you have any questions in this area Mike is happy for members to e-mail him with any queries at: mike.bishop@kent.gov.uk.



Finally we received an overview of the direct payment scheme from Vanessa Platten, the local officer from the Learning Disabilities Team. Both talks were well received and many questions were answered, although general questions about the direct payment scheme were harder to answer as it differs according to each individual's specific circumstances.

This year's AGM received fantastic feedback from the attendees, with positive comments from members even during the event. KASBAH plans to hold next year's event in July in the Maidstone area at 3pm as this seems to be agreeable to the majority of the members. If you would like to feedback on next year's AGM time, venue and possible speakers please contact Julie or Sophie in the KASBAH Office. Thank you to all of the KASBAH members who attended this year's AGM and got actively involved.



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Also In This Issue:

Special Centre Page
Pull-Out Supplement

A WORD FROM EMMA ...

Dear KASBAH Members

It is great to see so many members now contributing to the newsletter and getting involved with KASBAH events. This is a direction on which we are focussing this year - finding out what you the members want and whether we are meeting your needs. To do this we need your feedback, so call in (01474 536501 or 536202), write, e-mail (admin@kasbah.org.uk) or please take the time to have a chat if a KASBAH member gives you a call to find out your views.

I would like to say a big thank you to EVERYONE involved in ANY way in running and supporting the many fundraising and other KASBAH events which have taken place this summer; you can read all about them inside this issue.

Have a great Summer and remember we are here to support you when you need us!

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best Wishes

Emma Carver

(KASBAH Chief Officer)



Would You Like To Attend A Workshop On Direct Payments?

KASBAH has been asked to facilitate a workshop on Direct Payments on behalf of our members and their families. We will ask a representative of Kent & Medway Direct Payment teams to attend. We plan to hold this workshop in the Autumn with date/venue to be confirmed (depending on numbers).

Please contact Julie or Sophie in the KASBAH office on 01474 536501 or email admin@kasbah.org.uk to register your interest. We would also like to know what particular topics and/or questions you would like covered in the workshop.

We Like To Stay In Touch With You:

Please let us know at once if:

- Your address has changed.
- Your e-mail address has changed.
- Your telephone or mobile number has changed.
- You wish us to use a different name or title for you.
- You wish to change how you will receive future correspondence from us.



Please print your details as clearly as possible so that we do not misread them - it's frustrating for you and for us if we try to e-mail an address that doesn't exist due to a spelling error!

What's Happening In KASBAH?

Hattie Webb House

It's been a very busy couple of months here at Hattie Webb House. Hattie came to visit us for a day, and we all spent time being arty! Hattie brought two canvases and paints with her, and we all took turns in adding our artistic talents to the canvases. The results can be seen at HWH, and maybe one day they might be worth something!

Mayling and James are now doing voluntary work; well done to you

both on your appointments!

We are very pleased to welcome our new day service user Sarah and our new volunteer Rachel; we're very pleased to have you on board!

In June we went to the Eurotunnel HQ in Folkestone for the tin shaker with couple of the Seabrooke House guys. We raised around £77, so well done to Amy, Abigail and Rosie!

Maria and Ross both have new wheelchairs, which they're both really pleased with. Maria's is a

whizzy motorised model, so look out for her zooming around Rochester with Ross in pursuit with his fancy red wheels.

James enjoyed the Status Quo concert at Rochester Castle with Geoff, and all the guys came together to attend the Quiz Night in Gravesend. It was great to see them all working together as a team.

Finally, we are waving goodbye to Rhys & Mayling, who are moving onto pastures new. Good luck to you both in your lovely new flat; we'll be round for a cuppa soon!

Seabrooke House

On the 17th July 2010, we held our very first summer fete here at Seabrooke House. There were lots of things happening. We served up delicious burgers and sausages in a bun and sold tinned drinks. We had a cake stall, a bric-a-brac stall, sold strawberries & cream, and held tombola, hook a duck and a throw a wellie competitions. We even had some live music!

Thankfully the weather was just right, and everyone enjoyed chatting whilst having a cold drink and munching on a burger, or a bowl of strawberries and cream. The tombola was a huge success, and many of the prizes had gone to good homes within only two hours!

The wellie throwing competition brought out the com-

petitive side in both young and old alike, but there was only one winner, Ash Kugathasan; - he has one mighty left arm swing!

The day finally came to an end, with guests departing with their hands full, and then it was time to clear up and count the money that had been raised.

We all couldn't quite believe it when Becky told us that we had managed to raise £454!

So we would like to thank everyone who came and supported us, and also all the people who took time out to help us to make the day such great fun as it was!

Written by:

Rebecca Martin & Graham McDermott
(Seabrooke House Day Service Users)

AGM Feedback

Thank you to all the attendees who have given us such speedy feedback about the KASBAH AGM on 7th July.

We asked you to rate the elements of the AGM on the right as 'Excellent', 'Good', 'Fair', 'Poor'. To date, your responses have been overwhelmingly positive; all categories except 'parking' were rated 'Good' by between 66% and 83% of those responding, and 'Excellent' by between 5% and 20%. There were very few 'Fair' and hardly any 'Poor' responses - only for 'Ease Of Finding Venue' (1 person) and 'Parking' (2

people), which produced a much more diverse response than the other categories.

72% of those attending had been to one or more previous KASBAH AGMs, and 28% were first-timers. Regarding your preferences for next year's AGM, an overwhelming majority of responses were in favour of next year's AGM being held in the afternoon on a mid-week day (specifically a Tuesday or Wednesday).

We don't want to get complacent, so keep your comments coming in!

CATEGORIES:

PRESENTATION OF BUSINESS
TRUSTEES' ACCESSIBILITY
STAFF ACCESSIBILITY
IMAGE OF TRUSTEES
IMAGE OF STAFF
WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBILITY
WHEELCHAIR FRIENDLY
ATMOSPHERE
EASE OF FINDING VENUE
PARKING
DAY OF MEETING
TIME OF YEAR FOR MEETING
TIME OF DAY FOR MEETING
START TIME
FINISH TIME
REFRESHMENTS

From Our Advisor



Christine Cunningham, KASBAH Advisor, 7 The Hive, Northfleet, Kent, DA11 9DE
Email: ccunningham@kasbah.org.uk or Telephone: 01474 536501

The Equality Act 2010

On 8th April the Equality Bill received Royal Assent and became the Equality Act 2010. It is not yet in force and does not apply to Northern Ireland.

The Equality Act 2010 replaces and also makes changes to the existing anti-discrimination laws with a single Act. It simplifies the law, removing inconsistencies and making it easier for people to understand and comply with. It provides a framework for simpler, smarter and more streamlined processes. It also strengthens the law in important ways to help tackle the discrimination and inequalities which still exist in our society.

WHAT THE EQUALITY ACT 2010 DOES:

The Equality Act makes equality law simpler and stronger.

SIMPLER LAW:

Less complex and unwieldy law, by:

- Replacing nine major pieces of legislation and around 100 other instruments with a single Act.
- Harmonised definitions and exceptions so there are common approaches, where appropriate.

Clear and consistent protection, by:

- Levelling up protection for people discriminated against because they are perceived to have, or are associated with someone who has, a protected characteristic, so providing new protection for people like carers;
- Clearer protection for breastfeeding mothers;
- Levelling up protection from discrimination in private members' clubs;
- Extending the scope to use positive action.

Giving people better access to their rights, by:

- Simpler, clearer law and guidance so that employers and service providers are clear what they need to do to comply;
- Giving employment tribunals powers to make recommendations in more cases, to help employers improve their practices and their compliance;
- Protecting people from dual discrimination - direct discrimination because of a combination of two protected characteristics.

STRONGER LAW:

Better, more inclusive public services which help people achieve their potential, by:

- A new duty on strategic public bodies to consider reducing socio-economic inequalities;
- A new integrated Equality Duty on public bodies;
- Using public procurement to improve equality.

Fairer services for older people, by:

- Banning age discrimination in service and public functions.

More transparency, by:

- A power to require gender pay and employment equality publishing by public bodies;
- Encouraging businesses to publish their gender pay gap, with a power to require this if insufficient progress is made voluntarily;
- Stopping employers using pay secrecy clauses to prevent employees discussing their own pay.

More rights for disabled people, by:

- A new right for disabled people who live in leased homes to have reasonable adjustments made to communal areas like entrances and hallways, provided they meet the cost;
- Requiring schools to provide auxiliary aids and services for disabled pupils, for example special equipment and large-print books, where reasonable;
- Preventing employers asking job applicants questions about disability or health before making a job offer, except in specified circumstances;
- Increasing the number of wheelchair-accessible taxis.

Most elements of the Act will come into force on 1st October 2010, but Combined discrimination, Public sector equality duties, Socio-economic duties, and Age discrimination by service providers are due in April 2012. Compulsory gender pay reporting, if implemented, will not be implemented before 2013.

For further information - www.equalities.gov.uk

From Our Carers' Advisor



Gill Reynolds, KASBAH Carers' Advisor, 7 The Hive, Northfleet, Kent, DA11 9DE
Email: greynolds@kasbah.org.uk or Telephone: 01474 536501

Travel Tips

If you are thinking of traveling abroad here are a few handy tips to remember to ensure that you are fully prepared and organised for any eventuality.

- If you are going to pack any medication or continence equipment/supplies into the bags that get checked in, always split them across two cases. If you are then unfortunate to have a bag "lost" in transit you won't find yourself without your essential supplies and won't spend the first few days of your holiday trying to find alternative supplies from the local healthcare providers.
- Carry with you a comprehensive written list of your medications, strength and dosage as it is the quickest way to inform a medical professional all the information they may need to know in a hurry.
- Take a copy of your most recent written correspondence from your Consultant as this will give an instant overview on your current health status.
- Always take out adequate medical insurance and ensure that you have declared any existing medical conditions otherwise your Insurance could become invalid should you make a claim. It is important to read the small print and the terms and conditions as many Insurance companies have included some new and interesting clauses regarding the consumption of alcohol and accidents. There are a number of Travel Insurance providers that offer comprehensive Insurance for pre existing medical conditions.

Flying and Hydrocephalus

It is completely safe to fly if you/your child has a shunt as long as he/she had his/her shunt or [Endoscopic Third Ventriculostomy](#) (ETV) operation at least 6 weeks earlier, and is well.

With regards to Travel Insurance, some companies insist on 6 months since surgery; some ask for a letter from the neurosurgeon.

You should always tell the insurers that you/your child has a shunt. If you are travelling on a package deal, do not assume that you will be covered by their basic insurance if the shunt or ETV malfunctions while you are away.

In Europe, the [EHI card](#) is not sufficient cover and you need added insurance.

The ASBAH **Helpline** can help with details of Insurance companies that other families have found useful and reasonably priced.



It is always useful to have a copy of a "well scan" with you. If you ask in plenty of time, your neurosurgical unit may be able to put your scan on a CD-ROM; there is usually a charge [about £5-25] but later scans are often added free of charge.

If the person with a shunt or ETV becomes ill when away from home, the information on the disc will be very useful.



And don't forget your Shunt Passport available in 8 languages.

You can order this from ASBAH by contacting its **Helpline number - 0845 450 7755**

KASBAH would like to encourage all members to use both telephone lines at KASBAH. If the main line (01474 536501) is engaged, please do try the second line - 01474 536202.

Advisors' Days And Times

CHRISTINE:
Monday 9-4.30
Tuesday 9-4.30
Friday 9-4.30

GILL:
Monday 10-3
Wednesday 10-3
Thursday 10-3

The Family Carer Support Service Holiday Information Guide 2010 is now available!

This invaluable guide includes sections on "before you book" (about national watchdog & registration organisations), other holiday guides, tour operators, places to stay, special interest holidays, insurance, benefits and other financial help.
For a FREE copy of this 36 page guide send an A4 self addressed envelope with 81p worth of stamps to FCSS, Hft, 5-6 Book Office Park, Emersons Green, Bristol BS16 7FL.
(Send £1.11 in stamps for 2-3 copies, £1.59 for 4 copies, and for more than 4 copies contact Hft).

This Guide can also be viewed and downloaded at:

www.hft.org.uk/Family_Carer_Support

News And Items Of Interest

Short Breaks for Disabled Children



A new service for disabled children and young people with special needs (funded through the Aiming High Short Break Transformation Programme) begins in the summer holidays with whole family activity days. A programme of activity is also being put together for the October Half term, which will include activity days that can be attended by children and young people unaccompanied by their parents or carers.

The service is being introduced across the county after successful pilots in Maidstone and Dartford areas. It's aimed at children and young people who receive little or no specialist service through the Disabled Children's Service but have difficulty accessing mainstream activities due to their disability or special need.

This service is specifically targeted and is aimed at children and young people who are:

In receipt of DLA on the following levels:

- Higher Care and Higher Mobility
- Higher Care and Lower Mobility
- Higher Care only
- Higher Mobility only
- Middle Care only
- Middle Care and Higher Mobility
- Middle Care and Lower Mobility

And are:

- Not receiving any service (this includes Direct Payments)
- Not receiving 100 hours of service per annum.

The service is administered through the following management agents, which families should contact directly:

- **Voluntary Action Maidstone** (Covering Maidstone) (01622 677 337)
- **Parents Consortium** (Dartford / Gravesham / Swanley) (01322 668501)
- **Barnardos** (Tonbridge and Malling / Tunbridge Wells / Sevenoaks) (01892 528835)
- **CASE Kent** (Ashford / Shepway / Dover / Canterbury / Swale / Thanet) (01843 588780 / mob 07786 618237)

Free Family Tickets Via KASBAH

Monkey BIZZ
www.monkey-bizz.co.uk

Children's Activity Centre



KASBAH has secured 60 free tickets to Monkey Bizz children's activities centre in Rochester for younger KASBAH members.

Each family can request up to four tickets for their children, siblings and/or friends; tickets will be allocated on a first come, first served basis so be quick.

Call Julie or e-mail your details to admin@kasbah.org.uk



PDSA - For Pets In Need Of Vets



Did you know that your pet may be eligible for free treatment at a local PDSA PetAid hospital or practice?

PDSA is the UK's leading veterinary charity providing veterinary services to sick and injured animals as well as promoting responsible pet ownership.

PDSA Vet Care services are available to pet owners who receive either Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit, and live within a defined catchment area around each PDSA PetAid hospital or practice.

All popular domestic pets are treated, dogs, cats and those described as 'small furries'.

To qualify, pet owners need to:

- Live within the defined catchment area of a PDSA PetAid hospital or practice service.
- Be receiving Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit.

Please note that only Council Tax Benefit can be accepted. Other reductions in Council Tax eg. single person discount, 2nd adult rebate and council tax exemption do not qualify.

If you visit the website www.pdsa.org.uk you can find out more information about the pet care services, check if you are eligible and find out what help is available in your area.

Or you can ring 0845 854 194 for an informal chat.

Government Spending Consultation

(Information and appeal based on a recent communication from 'Contact A Family')

On Friday 10 July, the new government launched a website <http://spendingchallenge.hm-treasury.gov.uk/> to let the public have their say about public spending under its spending review. Government will be looking at the responses over the summer, so that it can publish its decisions in October. The discussions and decisions it takes over the summer will determine how public money will be spent for the next four years!

This is taking place at a time when it can be hard for parents to engage with things. However it is vitally important that as many families with disabled children as possible speak up. This is a critical time, and the decisions taken now will affect families with disabled children for the next few years. There is a real opportunity to make your views heard about the importance of investing in and protecting services for disabled children and their families.

The more people that speak up the better. Other groups are mobilizing their supporters too, so it is critical that you take part. Please pass this message on to as many families as you can, so that they can go onto the website and hopefully encourage friends and relatives to do the same.

The following issues will be raised by Contact a Family amongst other organizations:

- The importance of investing in services to support disabled children and their parents.
- The importance of easing the financial pressures on families by making the right benefits available and also taking steps to help parents take up jobs if appropriate (affordable childcare, flexible working etc).
- The importance of investing in parent participation so that families can drive the development of services locally.



Please click the link <http://spendingchallenge.hm-treasury.gov.uk/> and have your say. The amount of time available to influence outcomes is very

limited. Please make the most of it.

For more information get in touch with:

Contact a Family, 209-211 City Road, London EC1V 1JN.

Tel: 020 7608 8704, www.cafamily.org.uk

*** Blue Badge Holders Beware! ***

Anyone who has a Blue Badge should be aware of the *Rights and Responsibilities* document updated in April 2010, especially with summer holidays looming. Blue Badge holders are **not** automatically given free parking in car parks. Some car parks charge blue badge holders the same fee as other drivers. *'It is up to the car park owner to decide whether badge holders can park free'*.

Also, if you have visits to London hospitals, again check their parking restrictions and charges, which can be very expensive. A document is available to print from the link below or booklets are available from the Department for Transport: www.dft.gov.uk/adobepdf/259428/281009/bluebadgescheme.pdf

New Government Scraps Free Swimming Scheme!

The Government's free swimming scheme for children and the elderly is to be scrapped as part of cost-saving measures ahead of the London 2012 Olympics.

The scheme for the under-16s and over-60s was launched by the Labour Government in 2008 as a London Olympic legacy initiative.



However Hugh Robertson, the sports and Olympic minister, said that the scheme was now considered too expensive to continue and has been axed as part of £73 million savings made by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

Specialist Advice From Thanet CAB

Thanet Citizens Advice Bureau has recently appointed a specialist worker who provides benefits advice to disabled people and their careers. She is very experienced in dealing with Disability Living Allowance and Carers Allowance applications and can also provide advice across a broad range of other major benefits such as Council Tax and Housing Benefit.

Her services could be very helpful for parents of disabled students who might need help and support in filling in DLA application forms etc.

If you are interested in finding out more please let me know. The service is free and confidential. Our workers are trained to the highest standards and are CRB checked. Our advice is monitored for quality and is impartial and independent. We are committed to the promotion of equality.

Contact: Ian Driver, District Manager, Thanet District Citizens Advice Bureau

The Old Town Hall, Market Street, Margate CT9 1EU Tel 01843229696. Mobile 07970320686

EAST KENT CARERS' CONSORTIUM SEEKS TRUSTEES

The three East Kent Independent Carers Support Organisations below have formed a Consortium to ensure equitable services to promote, support and empower Carers of All Ages across East Kent.

To develop further this exciting new initiative and meet future challenges, we are seeking dedicated people with energy and commitment to join our Boards of Trustees. We need strategic thinkers, particularly in the areas of fundraising, tendering, legal and finance; with a positive, common sense, 'can do' attitude and flexible approach, to become part of our progressive teams.

Applicants would be required to become a Trustee of one of the organisations and following appointment and induction, may also become its representative to the Consortium, which meets 4 times per year, with additional sub-committee meetings as necessary. Training in the Roles and Responsibilities of Trustees will be given and expenses reimbursed.

For further information please contact:

Chris Lovelock, CEO Swale and Canterbury Carers Support
01795 583440 www.swalecarers.org.uk

Sue Ross, CEO Carers Support Ashford & Shepway
01233 664393 www.carers-ashford.org.uk

Tricia Cole, CEO Carers Support Dover District & Thanet
01304 364637 www.carers-doverdistrictandthanet.org

Free Exercise Classes For Beginners

Thursday Evenings
19 August for four weeks
7-8pm or 8-9pm
Medway Park Gillingham

For more information contact
getactive@medway.gov.uk or call
01634 338761

2011 'Kidz' Dates:

Kidz in the Middle
10th March
Ricoh Arena, Coventry

Kidz South
Thursday, 9th June
Rivermead Leisure Complex, Reading

Kidz Up North
Thursday, 24th Nov
Reebok Stadium,
Bolton

Fundraising News

KASBAH Quiz Night

KASBAH members, trainees, staff and committee members all attended our Quiz Night on 3rd July at The Ascot Arms in Gravesend. Six teams pitted their wits against each other, with rounds on sport, music, film TV, food and general knowledge amongst others.

The Vuvuzelas were the team to beat from last year, but were beaten into second place by The Jam Tarts. There was also a tombola with some great prizes, and in all we raised £120. Well done to everyone involved!

Sally Cochran

Glaxo Smith Kline



Our grateful thanks to the Glaxo Smith Kline Community Matters Scheme, from which we received £237.50 after being nominated as one of their 3 charities for the month of May 2010. This scheme works in similar way to the Waitrose scheme, with GSK staff given tokens to "vote" for their chosen charity.

Tin Shaker Day At Eurotunnel plc



Another year and another tin collection at Folkestone's EuroTunnel PLC. KASBAH is lucky enough to be one of Eurotunnel's nominated charities and is granted permission to tin shake (minus the shake) once a year over a three day period. This took place from Thursday 1st – Saturday 3rd July.

A big thank you to Natalie McCluskey, Abigail Ryan, and Amy Copping, Rachel Bowman, Shirley, Ron and Alice Tiller, Sally Cochran and Christine Cunningham, who managed to raise a creditable £169.51 (+ some euros)! Well done everyone; thanks again for your support which is highly appreciated!

We are always looking for volunteers for the Folkestone tin shaker, so if you have some time to spare next year (if we are granted the collection dates again), please keep us in mind – a reminder will go into our newsletter.

Sophie Millis

Gravesham's 'BIG DAY OUT'

KASBAH had a stall at this event on 24th July. We ran tombola, and lucky dips for the children. The latter proved to be very popular and all the 100 prizes went fairly soon. Unfortunately many of the other stalls also ran tombolas and by late afternoon we realised we might need to change tactics if we didn't want to take all our prizes back! So we put all the winning tickets in a bucket and promoted a "prize every time"; needless to say we sold out! We took £80 on the day and I would like to say a big thank you to Rosie Penfold and Natalie McCluskey who helped on the stall all afternoon and to Sophie for helping to set up and assist on the stall.

Julie Appleby

'House Of Colour' Colour Analysis Day at Chilston Park Hotel

We had an amazing day on Monday 19th July with four very special KASBAH members and Carers who experienced the Colour Analysis Day with the House of Colour. We chose the beautiful setting of Chilston Park Hotel in Lenham, Maidstone, a unique Grade 1 listed manor house set in 22 acres of rural parkland and lake.



L-R: Pam, Jane Lowther, Marlene, Emma & Jayne

We were greeted by Jane Lowther our Colour Consultant and settled into the Green Room with a cup of coffee to find out what our day would entail. Jane explained how specific colours work in harmony with our individual eye, skin and hair tones and how different colours can have an effect on how we look and feel. Knowing and wearing your correct colours will automatically make you look healthier, younger and fresher and will of course give you more confidence. It was then off to the mirror to see how this actually worked!

Jane began by covering the shoulders with a neutral scarf to create a base and then worked her way through a palette of coloured scarves which were draped over the shoulders to see how they affected skin tone of the individual. She then identified whether you had either blue or yellow tones in your skin, and working through specific groups of colours, Jane was able to see which colours "drained" you and which colours actually "enhanced" your natural skin tones. It was amazing to see how different shades of a colour, for example blue, could have



such a dramatic difference on how you looked. A pale blue may enhance you and make you look healthy and glowing whilst a darker shade may have the opposite effect.

Through a series of colour palettes Jane was able to work out what colour 'season' you were, Winter, Summer, Autumn or Spring. Then came the "Wow Colours", your best colours that literally give you the wow affect!!

So who was what season?

Marlene and Emma were Winter Jewels and Pam and Jayne were Summer Sweet Peas.

And the comments! There were a lot of "oohs and arghs" as we looked at how the different colours affected how we looked, as well as "oh my goodness I can't believe I look so healthy and young" "I just love myself in that colour!" "I need to go shopping!" and "I can't believe that wearing the right colour can make my eyes look so blue".

We all agreed that it was truly amazing to see how a colour can have such a dramatic affect on how you look – so from now on there is no more wearing the wrong colour!!

To finish the day off all our ladies were presented



with a Bluewater Shopping Centre gift voucher to enable them to purchase a new item of clothing in one of 'their' colours, to get them started on their new adventure into colour!!

KASBAH would like to express its sincere thanks to Jane Lowther and The House of Colour for kindly supporting and part funding this event and making it such an enjoyable day.

HOW DO YOU GET YOUR KASBAH NEWS?

- ◆ If you would like to receive KASBAH NEWS by e-mail in future, or . . .
- ◆ If you previously opted to receive it by e-mail but have not been doing so . . .
... Then please let us know. Ideally, please e-mail your request, so that we have the correct e-mail details.
- ◆ If you have changed your e-mail address don't forget to send us the new one.
- ◆ If an address bounces back when we send our mailings, we will try to contact you by other means.
- ◆ Please try to keep us up to date - and let us know if you wish to change the means of delivery.

SPORTS IN KENT

Sitting Volleyball



Sitting Volleyball is a version of Volleyball that has been adapted to allow anyone to participate including those with a disability. To play at an International level there are certain classification requirements that need to be met in terms of disabilities. It has enjoyed full Paralympic status since 1980, with a Great Britain Team previously competing at the highest level until 1991. The Great Britain programme has been re-established since the announcement of the 2012 London Olympics.

After a successful weekend at the Pre World Championship International Tournament at Kent University, the GB Sitting Volleyball squads went to the World Championships in Oklahoma, where 35 teams from 20 countries competed not only for the World Championship, but also the chance to secure a place at the London 2012 Paralympics, with the top three teams going through.

Great Britain made its first ever appearance at the Worlds, with the men's team looking to build on their European Championships performance last year and the women participating in their first major international tournament as preparations intensify in the run up to 2012.

For the women the week was a success, with personal targets exceeded and a B Division bronze medal, whilst the men's team built on a slow start to take three wins, and is looking forward to playing in front of a home crowd in the 2012 Paralympics.

Eurotunnel Kent International Para-cycling Championships



Kent Sport, Leisure and Olympics Service has attracted the first P1 status Road Race event in the UK. The event will run over the weekend of September 4th and 5th at Fowlmead Country Park near Dover.

This is a high class event which should attract high level teams from around the world.

It builds on past successes, Kent having hosted a number of national and international Para-cycling events in recent years.

The Handcycle races are part of the European Handbike Circuit. As part of the event a National Disability Time Trial Championship will also take place.

See: http://www.kentsport.org/kent_international_para_cycling_championships.cfm

KENT JUNIOR GAINS THREE GOLD MEDALS



Kelsie Gibson of Maidstone Invicta Rowing Club and Maidstone Girls Grammar School won two gold medals at the Varese International Regatta in Italy on 1st and 2nd May, and a

further gold at the World Cup Regatta in Bled, Slovenia on 29th May representing Great Britain in the adaptive LTA Coxed Four.

Kelsie joined Maidstone Invicta through a club-school link with Maidstone Girls Grammar School and very quickly made an impact. She was selected aged only 16 and is managing to balance training with revising for her AS levels. After only 12 months of rowing this was her international debut. She is joined in the crew by Ryan Chamberlain, James Roe and Naomi Riches, with cox Rhiannon Jones. These results now put London 2012 as a real prospect.



ADAPTIVE ROWING is rowing for persons with a disability and is about removing barriers to participation in the sport for anyone who has a physical, sensory or learning impairment.

The first disabled rowing club was affiliated to British Rowing in 1998 and there are now a number of clubs that offer, or are dedicated to, disabled rowing. Advances in the equipment available for rowers with a disability and the ever-increasing number of accessible rowing venues, has meant that rowing is truly becoming a sport for all.

See: <http://www.kentsport.org/RowingClubs.cfm>

SPORTS FOR DISABLED PEOPLE:

For information about all types of Sport for Disabled People throughout Kent, view the Sports Development Website at:

www.kentsport.org/

Or contact KCC's Sports Development Officer:

Mike Bishop: Tel No: 01732 525389
Email: mike.bishop@kent.gov.uk

My Story

"You can turn your life around if you have determination and a positive frame of mind".

This inspirational article sent in by one of our Service Users tells how it's possible to make life changing decisions that can improve your lifestyle dramatically.

Hi; I am a 40 year old woman named P. I have Spina Bifida, Hydrocephalus, Lymphoedema, Diabetes and an Incisional Hernia. I consider myself a carefree, ebullient person who now has a wonderful life living with my dad and carer. It has been a struggle to get to this point, but a struggle that's worth telling you about.

Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus did not prevent me from having a wonderful childhood. My mobility was limited but I was able to walk a little and when old enough started taking driving lessons. I was as encouraged to be as independent as possible and got married in my early twenties.

We lived in a flat, and whilst having a home of my own was great, the environment wasn't encouraging. Many of the families living in the block were dysfunctional and not ideal neighbours. I was not happy and my health had begun to deteriorate. This led to a feeling of isolation and depression; I needed to move keep my sanity. Eventually, after a long stay in hospital with continued ill health, I was rehoused to a ground floor flat adapted for wheelchair use.

At first I was much happier but unfortunately my health continued to deteriorate and my lack of mobility meant that I had to spend nearly all of my time at home. I soon began to realise that actually the environment and the neighbours were not so different to what I had experienced before and once again I felt isolated and depressed. My marriage was strained and I knew it was not working but I did not feel I had the power or ability to change things.

My health took another turn for the worse when my lung collapsed and this meant that I had to have another lengthy stay in hospital. Eventually when I was discharged I faced some major problems. I had no one to care for me properly and I had lost all confidence to be on my own in the flat at any time of the day or night. This resulted in one or other of my parents continually staying with me. Also the flat was now totally unsuitable for my needs. The corridors were too narrow for my wheelchair as I had put on weight and needed a wider one, so getting in and out of the flat was a real challenge. I hate to think what I would have done in the event of any emergency! Despite this the housing association did not deem my case a priority.

Due to my lack of mobility and unhealthy diet my weight increased to 27 stones. I could no longer get about within the flat and was confined to one room. I felt too embarrassed to be seen outside, even if I could have got out. Things became worse when the school kids who played football on the green outside the room I 'occupied' realised that I was just on the other side of the glass window, so they would shout abuse at me and taunt me with many nasty sayings as well as kick their ball at the window. This would frighten me, so most of the time I kept my curtains closed, not seeing outside life. I felt a prisoner in my own home. It was obvious that things needed to change.

My mum and dad were concerned and they felt that the only solution to the problem would be for me to move in with them. Things were discussed and it was decided that I

would make the move when fate struck a terrible blow and my mum had a debilitating stroke. It was a terrible shock for me as I had always been so close to my mum, but now it meant that my dad was trying to care for both of us in different properties. I don't know how he managed it, but somehow he did.

With the idea of a move now out of the question I tried to relieve some of my boredom. I got myself a computer and trained myself how to use it. I joined some of the forums where you can talk to people and eventually by communicating with others and hearing some of their stories I began to see that there was life on the other side and that I could be part of it. I met one person in particular, a caring young man who gave me hope and encouragement. Over time I developed a trusting relationship with him and knew I wanted to meet him with a view to him becoming my full time carer. It took a while but a meeting was arranged and immediately we met I knew that he was the right person to take care of me. We became great friends and I learnt what it was to feel happy again. Within a few months I invited him to become my 'live in' carer.

He says "It was the best thing that happened. There was a lot for P's parents to be worrying about, particularly with her mum so ill. It was important for someone to be there for her at that difficult time and to relieve her dad from some of the caring duties".

Sadly mum died a year later and this plunged me into deep sorrow. I started to reflect and really think about my life. I seemed to have an epiphany. Whilst my carer had brought some happiness there were still shadows lurking and I knew I needed to find the strength to make changes. One of the first things I did was to file for divorce. This took courage but once it was done I felt emotionally free. Changing my name back to my maiden name made me feel so much better and stronger. This gave me the determination to will myself to lose weight. I completely stopped comfort eating and immediately started to lose lots of weight. This woke something up inside me and I knew that now I was determined to change my surroundings, which was another main key to my real happiness.

My dad was adjusting to life without mum but he continued to worry about me. He still liked the idea of our original plan for me to move in with him. The housing association could still not give any guarantee that a suitable property would ever be found and by this time I had been waiting 10 years! So my dad began a project to adapt his home to accommodate my needs doing all that he could himself. He did bare essentials so I could move but more needed to be done to make the house completely suitable.

I made the decision to give up the tenancy of my flat and move into what had been my home when I was young. There was something very comforting in that as I have many happy memories of all of my family together under that roof.

(Continued on page 12)

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(My Story - Continued from page 11)

Ironically, where there had been no help from the housing association or the local council for all those years, there was now an abundance of help from Social Services and the Occupational Therapist. My OT was a saint and arranged for a grant for works to be carried out to the shower room and for a shower chair to be provided. She was also able to help me obtain a new powered wheelchair, which has once again given me back some mobility and independence. There is such a remarkable difference to how I am being treated now, in comparison to when I was in the flat.

The best news I can share with you is that under the watchful eye of my dad and carer I am now on a strict diet. When I moved in with my dad in October 2008 I weighed 22st.3lb. Since then I have lost over 7 stones and am now down to 14st.9lb. I cannot describe how proud and good that makes me feel. This has meant that my health has improved, and whilst I still have a way to go and I appreciate that I will always have a level of disability, I am such a different person mentally as I no longer have so many of the worries that I did before.

My life suddenly feels more important, not just to me but to others as well. I believe that if you can find the strength from within to make the changes that can improve your life, then what is there stopping you? I think that my story speaks volumes. There *is* 'light at the end of the tunnel' no matter how long or how deep it is. You've just got to keep positive and eventually things can change.

I would like to thank my dear dad for all the support that he has given me over the years. Special thanks also go to my carer, to my KASBAH Advisor, my Occupational Therapist and not forgetting my GP who has always supported me on an official and personal level.

'P'