



BULLETIN

July/August 2020

Incorporating Bromley Scope

Children's Wellbeing Falconry Experience



Lots of families enjoyed our online falconry experience delivered by Joe's Bows recently. We got to meet three different birds and learnt some interesting facts via Zoom. After the session, one family had a go drawing their own birds and I think we can all agree they did a fantastic job! See inside for a quiz from one of our participants.





Hi everyone,

I hope you are all keeping safe and well.

Bulletin is here to keep you informed of what's on and what's running online.

We still have a lot of our usual updates and some great catch ups with various events that have happened virtually.

I hope you like some of the cheery photos from the virtual disco, our Step Forward programme and the Monday Afternooners. Make sure you read about our newest member of staff, Sharon Morgan, on page 20 too.

Take care and stay safe all.

Luan
luanlanham@btinternet.com



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Events and Activities

Please check our website or phone our helpline on 020 8466 0790 to find out about our latest online events.

<https://www.bromleymencap.org.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-latest-update/bromley-mencap-services-update/>

Bromley Well has various support sessions running virtually during July and August, please check the website

<https://www.bromleywell.org.uk/events/> for the details.

Bromley Well online services include Employment Support workshops, workshops for people with learning difficulties and physical disabilities, Autism support sessions as well as our monthly Facebook quiz night.



COVID-19 UPDATE



We can't thank DJ Steve 'Teabags' Catchpole enough for all the effort and hours he put into working on the podcasts. We expect many of our new types of support to continue longer term including our Facebook groups, Book Club, quizzes, virtual exercise classes, Zoom workshops and drop-ins for people uneasy about attending face-to-face groups.

We are very grateful to our funders, all of whom have been supportive during this time of uncertainty. Although most of our community fundraising activities have stopped, we are delighted to have received new funds from Direct Line, BBC Children in Need, the London Community Response Fund and the Carers Trust – all of which have been vital in helping us deliver more support and to reach new groups of disabled people and carers.



We have been touched by the positive messages and feedback we have received from people supported by our services during this time.

Despite the many challenges of COVID-19, Bromley Mencap has continued to deliver the majority of our services remotely, safely and through creative uses of technology during this period. As lockdown begins to ease, we have started to consult with families who use our community-based services so we can make plans to safely reopen our day service and training courses taking account of government guidelines.

We have learnt a lot from delivering our services and support differently during lockdown. This learning will be incorporated into our services for the future taking advantage of the benefits and new opportunities that technology brings to some disabled people.

Our podcast was a particular success story and proved to be a great, positive way for disabled people to stay connected with their friends and staff teams. The podcast also enabled us to get across the importance of social distancing and COVID-19 government health messages.

Meanwhile the impact of coronavirus on the health of people with learning disabilities cannot be overlooked. With the latest government ONS data ([more here](#)) showing that disabled people have accounted for one third of all deaths from coronavirus, Public Health England has released new updated resources on working safely in care homes. The resources include guidance on providing support to people with learning disabilities and/or Autism during the pandemic. Whilst this unique and bespoke guidance has been welcomed, it has come very late in the day after calls that the needs of people with learning disabilities were being ignored. There have been further calls for priority testing for people with learning disabilities regardless of where they live as many people with learning disabilities live in their own homes and supported living services and not just care homes. The latest guidance can be read [here](#).

Please remember we are here for you. If you need any support or just want to speak to someone, our Helpline is available five days a week – phone 020 8466 0790.



Obituaries

Theresa Allen

It was with great sadness that we heard Theresa had passed away on 14th May. Many of you will have known Theresa and her parents, who had been members of Bromley Mencap for many years. Theresa attended many of our services – Day Opportunities, Step Forward and Keep Fit and always kept us smiling. She would be the first to welcome any visitors by making them a cuppa. Theresa was also a wonderful advocate and peer supporter for people with learning disabilities and represented their views on many groups and forums over the years. Theresa had been unwell for a little while but tackled her illness with courage and positivity. Theresa was a very special lady, who touched the hearts of many, and who will be very sadly missed by us all.



Ena Crawforth

We were very sorry to hear of the sudden passing of Ena Crawforth in May. Ena had been a member and great supporter of Bromley Mencap for many years. Ena played a vital role in representing the views of carers and people with learning disabilities at many groups and forums in Bromley. More recently she was a key member of the Carers Sub-group on the Learning Disability Partnership Board and the Astley Carers Group. Over the years Ena has supported many Bromley Mencap events and fundraising activities. We will miss her beaming smile and great character. Our sympathy goes to her family including daughters Deborah and Dawn.



Access the new Bromley Safeguarding Adults Board website here – www.bromleysafeguardingadults.org



Disabled people locked out of digital streaming services

Missing out on the latest film or TV series is not just about missing out on the content. It's about being excluded from the wider conversation. Research by Scope's digital influencing programme, The Big Hack, suggests disabled people are being locked out of the video on-demand streaming revolution because of poor accessibility.

A survey of more than 3,300 disabled people reveals four in five disabled people experience accessibility issues with video on-demand services. And more than two in three disabled people feel frustrated, let down, excluded or upset by inaccessible video streaming services. More [here](#).



Family Fund – helping disabled children

Family Fund has received extra funding worth £10 million from the Department for Education to provide grants for low-income families raising disabled or seriously ill children in England this year.

This emergency funding has been provided in response to the crisis presented by the coronavirus pandemic and will help more parents and carers to look after their children. Families can apply for grants to make their lives easier while implementing social distancing measures, including computers and tablets, outdoor play equipment and sensory toys.

Families can apply for this fund directly [here](#). Please do contact the office if you require any assistance with completing the form.



BBC commits to TV diversity

The BBC has pledged a £100m budget to increasing diversity on TV over a three-year period from April 2021. The BBC has set itself a mandatory target that 20% of off-screen talent must come from under-represented groups such as disabled people.

Read more [here](#).



Mutual Carers News and Events

The past few weeks have been very busy indeed as we continue to provide specialist support to mutual carers where one of the carers is aged 55+ with a disabled son, daughter or sibling living at home.

With the postponement of our usual events, clients were treated to a delivery of a cream tea. They were absolutely delighted to receive them, and we received some lovely feedback from clients saying how much they enjoyed them.

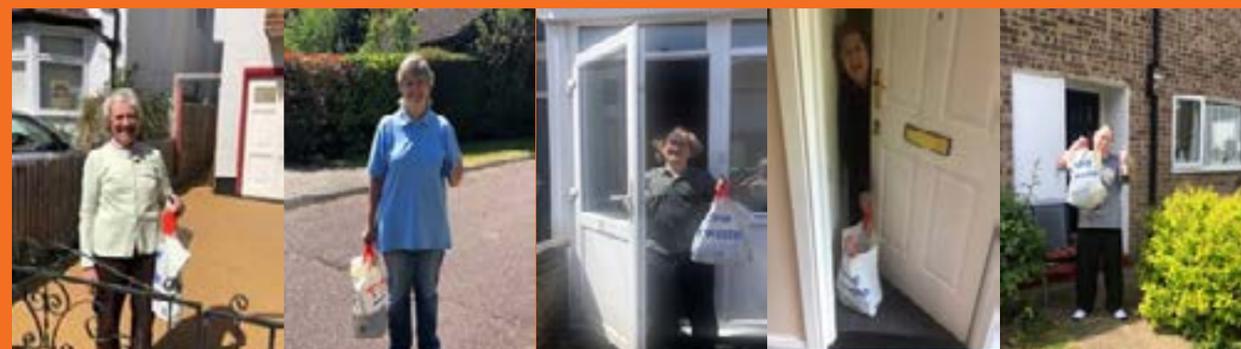
It was also lovely to see everyone looking so well and staying safe.



The clients that usually attend our learning disability cookery club were also pleased to receive a bag of ingredients to make a pizza and chocolate chip cookies. Included in the bag were easy-read recipe cards, ingredients already weighed out and a supermarket magazine full of different recipes to try.

Again, the feedback was brilliant with clients saying how much they enjoyed making the pizza and sharing it with other family members.

There are also plans to deliver another bag of ingredients to clients in the near future. Watch this space.



The Mutual Carers Support Worker, Tina Penn, is still busy providing telephone support, checking in regularly with all families along with providing emergency shopping. Tina can be contacted on 07719426680 or 020 8466 0790.

The Children's Wellbeing Service



Falconry Quiz

Freddie, one of our siblings from the Children's Wellbeing Service, has put together this quiz for everyone to test their knowledge following the recent online falconry session. If you have ideas for a quiz for our readers do send them in!

Questions

1. How many eyelids does a falcon have?
2. What time of the day do most owls hunt?
3. What do you call an eagle's feet?
4. How fast can a falcon fly?
5. One of these statements about how an owl eats its prey is false. Do you know which one is incorrect?
(a) It swallows small prey whole.
(b) It eats a small amount then stores uneaten food in its crop for later consumption.
(c) It tears larger prey into smaller pieces before being swallowed.



Answers

1. three
2. at night
3. talons
4. around 200mph
5. B is false. Unlike other birds, owls have no crop. A crop is a loose sac in the throat that serves as storage for food.

Creative Writing Corner

Take a look at some of the creative writing entries that the Bromley Well Young Carers team received from young carers for a competition they ran for Carers Week. Thank you so much to everyone who took part. We loved reading your entries.

First prize – Lockdown

Lockdown, lockdown isn't the place for me,
Need to keep fit and busy
with Joe Wicks on TV.

Lockdown, lockdown, home is the new school,
No teachers here to tell us off
If we break a rule.

Lockdown, lockdown cooking with Lorna and
Matt,
Mum doesn't have to do dinner now
And she's certainly happy with that!

Lockdown, lockdown staying safe at home,
Stick to the government guidelines,
And use email and your phones!

Lockdown, lockdown please rain stay away,
Being out in the garden
Is where we want to stay!

Lockdown, lockdown clapping at 8pm
Our NHS are amazing,
We owe so much to them.

Lockdown, lockdown, we've
got friends and family to see,
Let's hope it will soon be over,
It will go down in history!

Young carer aged 12

Second prize – Dear Little Me

Dear Little Me,
A little girl grows up,
Chubby and plump,
Her body was big but so was her heart,
She goes out into the world,
Ready to learn,
What she was given was a delight,
She comes home smiling,
But also came pain and fright,
Her façade, slowly breaking,
Her eyes of wonder,
Overshadowed by her fears,
Had let her plunder,
This lead over the years,
Laying in her room she would cry,
To know that she was stuck,
All she wanted to do was die,
But the tables turned and then came
luck,
The loneliness she once had,
Replaced by her great friends,
She was so glad,
To know that this fear had come to an
end,

She says that life is hard,
To seem perfectly fine,
But really she was scarred,
A life like hers,
She was scared to share,
To let people, see and become aware,
So Dear Little Me just know we are
there.

Young carer aged 16

Third prize – What if?

Overthink, that's what we do
but do these thoughts ever come
true?
We waste time wondering 'what if?'
But what if all the fear was just a
myth?
What if we were brave and did what
we wanted to do?
Do you think we'd ever be sad and
feeling blue?
What if we pushed our past troubles
away
and just focused on the present day
What if we looked in the mirror less
and dressed how we wanted to, not
always to 'impress'
What if we just let go of our
thoughts, set them free
Do you think we'd be exactly who we
want to be?

Young carer aged 15

We support people with physical disabilities. Due to current government guidelines, we have suspended face-to-face appointments and outreach services. However, we are still offering support services via the phone, email and online meetings.

You can also find lots of useful information on our Facebook page and can take part in our regular quizzes by joining our virtual quiz group.

You can follow our Facebook page by clicking on the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/BWPhysicalDisabilities/>

You can join our private Facebook group here:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/BWPhysicalDisabilities/?source_id=100447464959432

Monthly Workshops

We are currently holding our workshops via Zoom which gives clients the opportunity to chat and catch up as well as learn about something new.

At our recent workshops we have been discussing meditation and its benefits. We have been learning how to meditate and how it can reduce anxiety and improve our wellbeing.

Some clients who enjoy meditation have been sharing their experiences and useful tips with the group.

If you would like to find out more information about our workshops via Zoom or would like help setting Zoom up in order to join in, please contact us.

Contact Us:

If you are interested in attending one of our online workshops or would like to find out more about our service, please contact the office on 020 8466 0790 or one of our Support and Information Officers:

Sue Fuller on 07484673090 or email Sue.Fuller@bromleywell.org.uk

Chetan Raval on 07421106922 or email Chetan.Raval@bromleywell.org.uk

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BWPhysicalDisabilities/>

Alternatively you can call us in the office on 020 8466 0790.

NEWS - Physical Disabilities

Motability Scheme

The Motability Scheme is now operating again. Orders can be placed by customers who are in the final three months of their lease or have had their lease extended due to COVID-19. Please click [here](#) for more information



Dial-a-Ride

If you are a member of Dial-a-Ride, please be aware that the service is running reduced hours: from 8am-6pm Monday to Saturday (closed on Sundays and bank holidays). Social distancing measures are being followed wherever possible. Face coverings are compulsory on Dial-a-Ride but there are some exemptions. For example, if you have a physical or mental illness or impairment, or a disability that means you cannot put on, wear or remove a face covering; if putting on, wearing or removing a face covering would cause you severe distress; or if you are travelling with, or providing assistance to, someone who relies on lip reading to communicate. More information [here](#). To enquire about the type of journey you can request or make a booking, email dar.reservations@tfl.gov.uk or call 0343 222 7777.



Taxicard

Did you know you can now use your Taxicard for drivers to pick up and deliver essential supplies for you such as pre-bought items from the supermarket, pharmacy or takeaway outlets? Click [here](#) for more information.



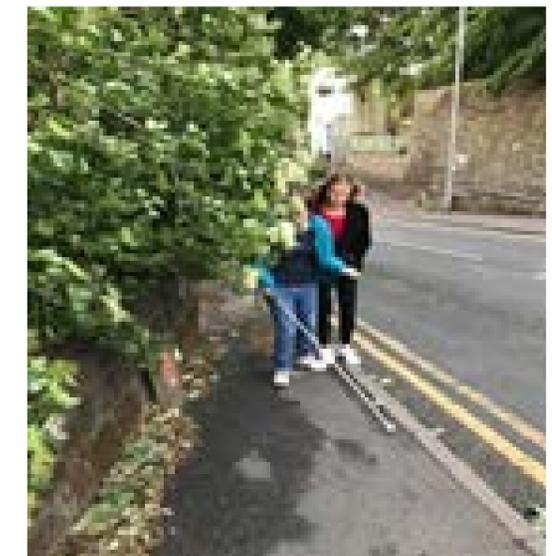
Coronavirus: 'Test and trace' access flaws

NHS England is facing the threat of legal action as campaigners have warned that the programme is not accessible to disabled people. Click [here](#) for more information



Blind campaigner asks people to remove overhanging trees

A blind woman's campaign to remove overhanging foliage from pavements has been shared thousands of times on social media. Find out more about Ella's story [here](#).



We support people who have a learning disability or learning difficulty through one-to-one appointments, assisting in meetings or contacting organisations. Our approach is to run a person-centred service giving information, guidance and support.



The Learning Disability Pathway has recently supported in such matters as benefit tribunals by phone, emotional support for people in isolation, benefit letters by post and supporting clients who have been furloughed.

Outreach

Our face-to-face outreach sessions in Cotmandene and Mottingham are currently on hold. Instead, we have created an online space on Facebook to support some clients and for people to check-in. This is a private group where only members of the group can see what you have written or posted. We are available every working day and are currently in regular contact with many clients on this platform.

If you would like to learn more, please join the group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/BWLearningDifficulties> or contact Rob for help with setting this up.



Bromley Well LD Workshop Group
Private group · 41 members

Monthly Workshops and Drop-ins

In May we ran an online workshop for Mental Health Awareness Week and this year the theme was kindness. We discussed the many kind things that we are doing for others and that others are doing for us. We talked about how important this can be – from offering to get some shopping for a vulnerable person to offering a partner a cup of tea. We finished the workshop by sharing a thank you badge on social media. Attendees were encouraged to share this with anyone who had helped them. We had a lot of thanks to give –so many people have been so kind recently!



In June we held a Healthy Eating workshop. Everyone was invited to bring their own lunch to the Zoom meeting. We shared ideas for healthy meals and realised that we had all made some very healthy lunch choices (with a few small treats!). It was so nice to see some familiar faces on Zoom and we continued the discussion on Facebook afterwards. Any resources used and links that we referenced are posted in the Facebook group.

Call, text or email Rob Morgan if you would like any more information about the Learning Disability Service on 020 8466 0790, mobile 07482 558 660 or email robert.morgan@bromleywell.org.uk

NEWS - Learning Disabilities

Easy-read coronavirus guidance

Keep safe has produced an easy-read poster helping people to understand the changes that came into force on the 4 July regarding coronavirus. You can access it [here](#).

Face Masks Exemptions

If you are travelling on public transport and/or entering shops, you are required to wear a face mask. However, there are some exemptions. For example, those with a learning disability, people who have breathing difficulties, and anyone who is required to lip read.

You can cut out and show one of these cards from the Bromley Autism Partnership (see page 15) or you can show the image on your phone.

Face covering exemption card for people who have a disability or health problem



If you cannot wear a face mask because of a disability or health problem, please cut out one of the cards below to show.



www.bromley.gov.uk/localoffer

“My learning disability is a bit of me, but it doesn’t define me”



Shaun Webster has written a book which tells of his life with a learning disability: from suffering abuse from his father to living independently and earning an MBE for charity work. Read the full story [here](#).

Bromley Well Quiz Night

Bromley Well clients are eligible for a monthly quiz. They are held on the last Thursday of the month from 6.30pm through our Bromley Well Quiz Group. Join us [here](#) for some tricky questions plus a laugh and a chat.



Supporting People with Autism

We support people aged 16 and over who have an Autism diagnosis, or believe they have Autism and are seeking a diagnosis, through one-to-one appointments, assisting in meetings or contacting organisations. Our approach is to run a person-centred service giving information, guidance and support. We have recently supported people with benefit checks, socialising and housing matters, as well as supporting clients who have been furloughed and speaking with their employers to ensure that they are ready to return to work.

Outreach

Due to the Coronavirus we have suspended our outreach sessions. However, we are still available via phone, email, WhatsApp, Facebook or Zoom. Please get in touch for more information.

Monthly Workshops and Drop-in Sessions

We are currently running workshops via Zoom in association with CASPA on the last Tuesday of every month and they have been well attended.

In May we discussed our mental health. It was our longest session to date as so many of the group were enjoying the chat. We covered a lot of topics and everyone needed a bit of time to recover! In June we spoke about relationships. We discussed what characterises a good or bad relationship and shared the feelings within ourselves which can build or hinder relationships. Thank you so much to everyone who has attended, particularly those who shared such emotive thoughts with the group.

We are also running a TV and Film Club via Zoom on alternate Wednesdays. We

Bromley Well

can share our favourite films or what we have recently been watching. It is a lighter session and a great way to get some good recommendations and to let the group know why your choices are important to you.

Call, text or email Rob Morgan if you would like any more information about the Autism Service on 020 8466 0790, mobile 07482 558 660 or email robert.morgan@bromleywell.org.uk

IN THE NEWS

Autism and the coronavirus pandemic



The coronavirus pandemic is altering Autism research in unprecedented ways. It also has had a huge impact on the diagnosis and treatment of the condition. This article from Spectrum summarises the coverage within the Autism community. More [here](#).

Brain responses to social stimuli may vary by sex in Autism

Girls with Autism may find social interaction more rewarding than boys with Autism do, according to a new study focused on the brain's reward system. Previous studies have found that the brain's reward system does not react strongly to social stimuli in people with Autism in general, suggesting that they find social interaction less rewarding than non-Autistic people do. But much of that work has focussed on boys: for example, according to a 2018 review, 90 percent of the study participants were boys or men across 13 studies. Read more [here](#).

Face covering exemption card for people who have a disability or health problem

BROMLEY
AUTISM
PARTNERSHIP
...because Autism matters

If you cannot wear a face mask because of a disability or health problem, please cut out one of the cards below to show.

Scissors icon

 I have a learning disability. So I am exempt from wearing a face covering. Thank you.	 I am autistic. So I am exempt from wearing a face covering. Thank you.
 I have a disability. So I am exempt from wearing a face covering. Thank you.	 I have a health condition. So I am exempt from wearing a face covering. Thank you.
 We use lip reading. So we are exempt from wearing a face covering. Thank you.	 I have breathing problems. So I am exempt from wearing a face covering. Thank you.

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THE LONDON BOROUGH

www.bromley.gov.uk/localoffer

A product of the Strategy, Performance and Corporate Transformation Division - June 2020 (V1.0)

Monday Afternooners

All of our planned outings have been put on hold due to COVID-19. However, our members and helpers have been keeping in touch via WhatsApp instead. There has been lots to chat about and pictures to share how we have all been keeping busy during lockdown.

We have enjoyed a number of virtual tours visiting the zoo, Alton Towers, Buckingham Palace and The Shard and Matt Yule, our Adult Services Manager, hosted a quiz via WhatsApp too.

In June, Sue organised afternoon tea for all of our members to enjoy at home and these were delivered with the help of Kim and Louise – here are some of the photos:



Virtual Disco!

Following on from the 10 radio podcasts which had been produced and delivered by our DJ Steve Catchpole during lockdown, a virtual disco was arranged for the evening of Friday 19th June.

Over 45 members of Bromley Mencap took part, with much merriment, dancing and laughing. An attempt was made by Steve and his sister Ann (also a good friend to Bromley Mencap) to judge the best dancer, but the task proved far too difficult as there were so many.

For those wishing to keep in contact with each other, Steve is happy to take song requests and shout-outs on his hospital radio show. To do this, text him a message on 07801 097201.



To listen to the show, download the free TuneIn Radio app and search for Hospital Radio Maidstone or listen direct from the website at www.hrm.org.uk.

The Step Forward team have been busy during lockdown ensuring that everyone is safe and well. We have been sending out workshop packs every week and catching up with everyone over the phone.

We continue to keep in touch with employers and have been asking employers, family and friends if they could help with any unwanted IT items. A laptop and an iPad have been donated and we had tremendous luck with Bromley Mencap's friend John Kendrick, who supplied us with two digital cameras. These have been passed onto Claire, Natalie and Rachel (pictured) who have already been putting them to good use.

As restrictions are slowly lifted, some of our candidates will be returning to work soon. Marlon (pictured) is set to return to Chopstix, the restaurant where he works, in mid-July. However, through our negotiations with Chopstix, if people are not yet ready to return, they can wait until they feel safe to do so without any fear of losing their job. Thank you especially to Jon Lake, managing director at Chopstix, for being so understanding. Well done to everybody for remaining so positive and we hope we will see everyone soon.

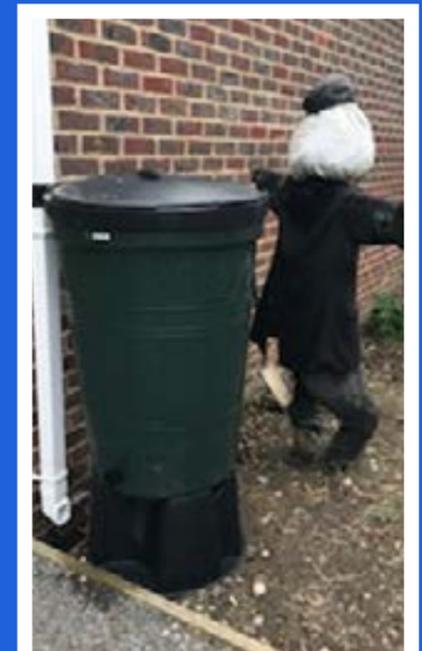
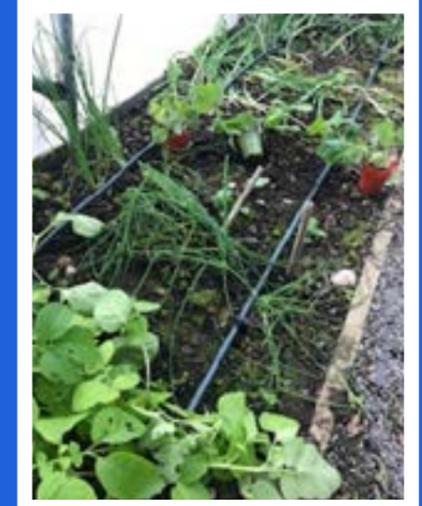


A big thank you to the Shanghai Tuscan Lodge for funding an irrigation system for the horticulture project at the Lodge. Their generous donation will enable us to keep all the plants well watered when students are not able to be there and will hopefully yield us a good harvest in due course.

Thanks also to City Irrigation in Keston who provided advice and guidance on the design of the irrigation system, and also arranged a generous discount on the items required, to enable us to install a great system in the raised flower beds and the polytunnel. We were also able to install two new water butts, which filled up very quickly in the heavy rain. Finally, we wanted to say thanks to some wonderful volunteers, who spent two days at the Lodge installing the water irrigation system while socially distancing. The water system is on timers, so we don't have to worry about all the plants getting enough water and we know our students will be delighted when they return to see the benefits of the system.

If you happen to be taking a stroll through Norman Park, please stop by and look at the garden through the fence. It is easy to see the benefits of the irrigation system already as the garden is full of colour and looking lovely.

Thank you to everyone who made this possible.



Introducing...

Sharon Morgan, New Education, Training and Employment Advisor

Hello, I am Sharon and I am the new Education, Training and Employment Advisor working alongside Ian delivering the Step Forward programme. I joined Bromley Mencap in March, two weeks before lockdown.

My role includes running workshops and supporting our clients into employment and voluntary work. Whilst working from home, we have created weekly mailing packs, hosted virtual workshops and, importantly, contacted clients on a weekly basis to check they are safe and well.

Previous to my appointment, I worked as a retail personnel manager and although I thoroughly enjoyed my role, I decided that it was the right time to change career and was thrilled to secure the position with Bromley Mencap.

In my spare time I volunteer as a Level 1 swimming coach for Sharks Disability Swimming Club. My role not only involves taking lessons twice a week but also supporting with galas, including the National Partnership Swimming Competition (hosted by Royal Mencap and Special Olympics GB). I have also taken the team to the Special Olympics National Summer Games.



Community Fundraising

EMERGENCY COVID-19 APPEAL

Due to the cancellation of most fundraising events and funding for some of our activities, we have set up a Bromley Mencap Emergency Coronavirus Appeal to raise vital funds so we can continue our vital work and we thank you so much for all generosity so far.

You can donate to our Emergency COVID-19 Appeal here virginmoneygiving.com/fund/BromleyMencap_COVID-19_Appeal

Shop online and raise money for us at the same time



Click [here](#) to sign up to easyfundraising and shop online. Retailers include Amazon, eBay, Argos, M&S, Tesco, Debenhams, Next and Boden, among thousands of others. Every time you shop a small donation will be made on any purchase at no extra cost to you.

You can also donate your used inkjet cartridges via www.recycle4charity.co.uk and raise money for us at the same time.

Did you know you can also support our fundraising efforts by donating used stamps, coins, bank notes, keys, locks and more, as well as various collectables to Stamps n All. More information [here](#).



Don't forget you can keep updated on what is going on at Bromley Mencap by following us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Copy deadline for September/October 2020 is 1st September

Editor: Luan Lanham, email: luanlanham@btinternet.com

Publisher: Bromley Mencap, Rutland House, 44 Masons Hill
Bromley Kent BR2 9JG TEL: 020 8466 0790

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