

downsyndrome OK

Help for people with Down's Syndrome, parents, carers and professionals in southeastern England

Affiliated to the Down's Syndrome Association

www.downsyndromeOK.org.uk

news

Number 36

April 2015

Dear Parents and Friends,

dsOK trustees are looking forward to welcoming members to our annual Family Day on Saturday 9 May 2015. Members, families and friends are invited for this day of activities to meet trustees, share ideas and experiences with other members and help to suggest plans for dsOK events for the next year or two. The drama and dance activities are planned for the enjoyment of all ages so please bring your families to share the fun. The programme is enclosed. We ask that you please book, sending your cheque for £7 per family for lunch beforehand.

Dementia is perhaps one of the most difficult illnesses to cope with in our ageing population. As members of the Down's Syndrome Association we are aware of many studies now taking place across the country. Participation by people with Down's syndrome of all abilities could well lead to real progress in assisting a cure for the general population for this tragic disease.

Shirley Quemby, Editor

dsOK ANNUAL PICNIC

Join other members and friends for the dsOK annual picnic. Again, we have been invited by the Malden & District Society of Model Engineers Ltd. to share their Charity afternoon on **Sunday 21 June**. Free model train rides will be available from 2 pm which last year were greatly enjoyed by both older and younger members. The picnic field has tables (access over a stepped foot bridge but it has a pushchair park on the approach) but families arriving before 2 pm must be careful not to interrupt the work of staff and volunteers preparing the trains and railways. Tea and cake may be purchased during the afternoon. For directions to Willowbank, Claygate Lane, Thames Ditton, KT7 0LE visit www.maldensme.co.uk or, for more information, tel. or email a dsOK trustee.

DOWN'S HEART GROUP

This long established national charity announces its conference to be held at Combe House Hotel, Holford, Bridgwater, Somerset TA5 1RZ on **Saturday 16th May 2015** with activities from Friday evening to Sunday for those who can stay. Speakers will be of particular help to families who have a member with Down's syndrome and a heart condition. Meeting other families during the dinner, disco and family activities will be of additional benefit to all who attend. For more details visit www.dhg.org.uk or email info@dhg.org.uk or tel. 0844 288 4800 for information or a booking form

TRANSITION WORKSHOP 25 APRIL

There will be another one day conference on Transition into Adulthood at DSA, Teddington, on **Saturday 25 April** 10 am - 3 pm. Contact DSA for details and booking. Visit www.downsyndrome.org.uk/Transition for the programme.

DOWN TO EARTH AT TEDDINGTON

A group of people with Down's syndrome has met at The Langdon Down Centre at Teddington over a number of years. Not only is it a social gathering but members give assistance to DSA staff and have created a video about adults with Down's syndrome. Amy Deakin, an Information Officer, has contacted dsOK to tell us that more members would be welcome for the Down2Earth group. For more information, or to try out a meeting, drop an email to: Amy.Deakin@downsyndrome.org.uk or tel. her on 0333 1212 300. Meetings take place monthly.

ANDREW - THE DANCER

This remarkable photograph of Andrew Self (see DSA Journal No. 129) was sent specially to dsOK and we are delighted to share it with our readers.



BIRKBECK COLLEGE RESEARCH

Researchers at Birkbeck College invite people with Down's syndrome to help with important research which they believe could lead to the development of treatments for Alzheimer's disease. They are investigating how thinking abilities (such as memory and attention) differ among people with Down's syndrome - and possible genetic or biological reasons - and why some people with Down's syndrome develop memory problems as they get older. Participants will take part in an assessment, lasting 2 - 3 hours with breaks as needed, held somewhere convenient, involving various tests, like games, some on a touchscreen computer tablet. A relative or carer will be asked to be present. dsOK hope many of our adult members and those aged 16 and over will support this research with their time and interest. For more information tel. 020 7679 9314 or 020 7679 9376, email: downsyndrome@ucl.ac.uk or visit: www.ucl.ac.uk/londowns/participate

EMAILING THE NEWSLETTER

Some members have now expressed willingness to receive our newsletter by email and forty were sent electronically in November. To change your option, please email info@downsyndromeOK.org.uk with the subject 'Newsletter' and giving your name and membership number or postcode.

CAPITAL TO COAST

This well-organised annual cycle ride is often mentioned in dsOK news. Both helpers and cyclists are invited to support this event, taking place this year on Sunday 28 June. There is a choice of longer and shorter rides, all arriving at Brighton, as well as marshalling and other needs from starts to finish. This ride is far less crowded than the BHF London to Brighton. Its founder, Norwood Ravenswood, plus the Down's Syndrome Association, are beneficiaries. For more than 200 years, Norwood, as a charitable institution, has provided education and accommodation for Jewish children. Its support now includes families and adults. Visit www.norwood.org.uk where their latest magazine may be read and downloaded. The man on the cover is 30 year old Nick Iivil who has Down's syndrome and has completed on a tandem some remarkable fundraising rides from Capital to Coast to cycling in several continents, each a major feat. www.capitalto coast.org.uk

DEFEAT DEMENTIA IN DOWN'S SYNDROME

Cambridge University research has been reported in dsOK news, particularly requesting more people with Down's syndrome who are older than 40 to offer to help with this important work.

Newsletters, to dsOK, from Cambridge, report progress as their studies continue. Their Christmas edition told of how changes in components of the eyes could give indications relevant to the basic desire to Defeat Dementia. More plans are described in the March newsletter. Readers who are willing to offer to contribute time to assist with this most encouraging work (all expenses are paid) are asked to tel. Sally on 01223 746147 (email: srj32@medschl.cam.ac.uk) or Maddie on 01223 746172 (email: mjw208@medschl.cam.ac.uk). For more information visit www.dementiainds.com/Research

STAY UP LATE

A serious campaign now with its website www.stayuplate.org promoting the right for people with learning disabilities to have a choice about how they live their lives. Problems arise when care staff in residential homes have to bring back residents before the end of the staff shift, even if this means leaving a class or social event before it has finished.

STUDENT CARD

Parents advise that, if your son or daughter with Down's syndrome is over 16 and in education you can apply for a Student Union card. The application must be authenticated by their place of education and the card brings a number of advantages.

HOSPITAL WORK EXPERIENCE

At St. George's Hospital, Tooting, a work experience plan is in operation entitled 'Project Search'. Professor Sheila Hollins was one who introduced training a team of people with learning difficulties, some years ago, to give medical students an understanding of treating patients with such disabilities. Adults with learning difficulties are now, through 'Project Search', being given the opportunity to try their hand at jobs which form a part of hospital life. We are told no entry level is expected and no interview is required. Applicants are able to be assessed while at different work stations. Contact the Education Centre at St. George's Hospital, Blackshaw Road, London SW17 0QT.

WORK EXPERIENCE

One parent writes: "My son who has quite average abilities is now successfully participating in work experience. He works at clearing tables and spray cleaning at the Carshalton College Cafeteria. He is accompanied by a support worker who is gradually working up his independence so he can work alone. Although usually quite poor at following instructions, he is rising to the challenge and completes his work satisfactorily. We consider his work experience a great success."

YOUR SPACE

Beside the Sutton by-pass, near Cheam village, is a nursery offering a broad range of horticulture to enable people of all ages with disabilities to learn skills while sharing in community gardening. Therapeutic work-based learning is the description and Sears Park, St. Dunstan's Hill, the place. Tel. Kevin Plicio on 07940 375 667 or visit www.yourspacesutton.org

FREEWHEELERS MUSIC IN ASHTEAD

The Freewheelers Theatre Company is very pleased to be running regular music workshops on Fridays at Ashtead Baptist Church Hall, Barnett Wood Lane from 10.15am - 12.15pm during term-time. They are led by Jay Bristow. Previous performing experience is not necessary, but a willingness to work hard, commit to the company, work well with others, and to have fun, is! For more information, tel. 07599 077044, email: gillian@freewheelerstheatre.co.uk or visit www.freewheelerstheatre.co.uk/get-involved/music/ The next Freewheelers performance, entitled *A Twist of Oliver*, will take place at the Nomads Theatre, East Horsley, on Thursday evening 15 July.

COLD AND WET

This is the title of the latest production by the Freewheelers Theatre Company. It has benefitted from funding from the Arts Council and the BBC Performing Arts Fund and displayed many new and advanced skills by performers including poetry, stand up comedy, stage fighting and song writing. The story is based on fact and includes scenes of the First World War. It is hoped to tour this drama which includes a signer for deaf people and skilled audio description, through personal head phones, for those with limited vision.

HELP FOR BLIND PEOPLE

Sight for Surrey is the current name of the excellent centre at Rentwood, School Lane, Fetcham, Surrey KT22 9JX which has for years specialised in information and equipment to help blind and partially sighted people. A newsletter is available by email from: communications@sightforsurrey.org.uk The recent edition reports fun activities for young people as well as a course entitled *Eccentric Viewing*, a technique which helps people with central vision loss to use their remaining vision more effectively. Funds were raised at a Silent Auction which will enable a Friendship Group to enjoy fun outings in spite of both hearing and sight loss. Tel: 01372 377701 or visit www.sightforsurrey.org.uk to learn more.

GIRLS AND ASPERGER'S SYNDROME

For a fascinating insight into challenges faced by a girl with autistic spectrum disorders, visit The Curly Hair Project. This social enterprise is dedicated to supporting females with ASD and gives clear and friendly explanations plus available booklets by Alis Rowe which are highly recommended. Description of *Posters for Schools* increase a carer's or teacher's understanding. www.thegirlwiththecurlyhair.co.uk

TRAINING DAY IN EAST SUSSEX

Lisa Turner of the Down Syndrome Development Trust offers a training opportunity for their event on **Thursday 7 May** to cater especially for professionals and parents supporting children with Down's syndrome in the early years of mainstream schooling. The course will take place at Kings Church, Brooks Road, Lewes, BN7 2BY from 9.14 am - 3.30 pm and is offered with specialist speech and language expert, Leela Baksi of Symbol UK. Visit www.downsyndromedevelopment.org.uk or email: hello@downsyndromedevelopment.org.uk or tel 01273 615073 for details or to book. Teachers and parents will find this day invaluable, as they work to improve the communication skills of a child who has Down's syndrome, as much is now known about their learning profile. Fee for professionals is up to £60 whilst parents are asked for a donation of £25.

SYMBOL UK TRAININGS

Whilst it is recognised that children with Down's syndrome generally need speech and language therapy, not all therapists have the specialist knowledge of Symbol UK to bring out the best in communication skills of those with Down's syndrome. Symbol are the official Speech and Language Therapy Advisers to the DSA and have trained parents to be therapy assistants to run groups under the supervision of Symbol-trained speech therapists. The Down's syndrome section of the Symbol UK website describes co-working and notes trainings to help people working with those with Down's syndrome. There is a three day course for therapists which is reportedly found to be very valuable, causing them to re-think guidance received in their original training. Visit www.symboluk.co.uk or contact them at Dickey Court, Dickey Lane, Lenham, Maidstone, Kent, ME17 2DD Tel: 01622 859216 email: info@symboluk.co.uk www.symboluk.co.uk

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NOTICE is hereby given that the twelfth ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of downsyndrome OK will be held on **Saturday, 9 May 2015** at 12.30 pm at The United Reformed Church, 38 Stoke Road, Cobham, KT11 3BD. (Only full members may vote).

A G E N D A

1. Chairman's welcome
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of the eleventh Annual General Meeting held on 10 May 2014
4. Adoption of the Trustees' report and the Financial Statements for 2014/15.
5. Election of Trustees: Mrs. Helen Pattison and Mrs. Shirley Quemby retire by rotation and offer themselves for re-election.

A member entitled to attend and vote at this meeting is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend, speak and vote in his stead. A proxy need not be a member of downsyndrome OK.



MINUTES of the eleventh Annual General Meeting of downsyndrome OK held on **Saturday, 10 May 2014** at 1.20 pm at St. Dunstan's School, Anne Boleyn's Walk, Cheam, Surrey SM3 8DF. Eighteen members and friends were present.

CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

The Chairman, Mrs. Karen Edmonds, welcomed the parents and friends who were present especially very new parents and those who had come for the first time. Mrs. Edmonds explained that we are a

limited company and registered charity and the meeting has to be quite formal. Only current members of downsyndrome OK may vote.

THE MINUTES OF THE 10th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, held at St. Dunstan's School, Anne Boleyn's Walk, Cheam on 11 May 2013 had been sent to all members with today's programme in the April 2014 dsOK news and it was agreed that they should be taken as read.

THE TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR 2013/2014.

Introducing the Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for 2013/2014, which had been sent to all members with dsOK news, the Chairman thanked the helpers who assisted the Trustees in running dsOK, the Morrin family, Colin and Roger Quemby, Bart Gomes, Agnelo Gonsalves and the Pottinger family. The adoption of the Report was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Mr. Ajit Mané and agreed.

ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

Trustees' meetings take place in members' homes on Sunday afternoons, usually four times each year. One third has to retire each year and Mrs. Karen Edmonds and Mrs. Kathy Maillet both offered themselves for re-election. The chairman spoke about the benefit she received by being able to discuss problems with fellow trustees and asked for volunteers to become trustees but there were no offers. Mrs. Pattison and Mrs. Vine proposed and seconded the re-election of Mrs. Edmonds and Mrs. Maillet which was agreed.

The chairman stated that the cost of organising Education days and social events was draining dsOK funds and fundraising was becoming necessary. She asked that members consider arranging events such as coffee mornings with a view to donating the proceeds to dsOK.

Karen Edmonds Chairman

REPORT of the TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 28th FEBRUARY, 2015

OBJECT OF THE CHARITY

To create and develop the conditions which will enable people with Down's syndrome to attain their full potential in south eastern England.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

Information Day

Guidance for parents who wish to teach their children and young people how to understand the developmental stages of adolescence and keep safe is requested by members from time to time. Both our speakers at our annual Family Information Day suggested practical ways in which to lead on Relationships and Positive Behaviour. These illustrated talks were focussed separately for parents with a child under or over the age of 12 years old.

Lunch was served by trustees and members of their families. Daniel Gonsalves then described with enthusiasm having a brother with Down's syndrome before brother, Claude, ably entertained with tunes played on his keyboard. It was disappointing that no new trustees came forward during the Annual General Meeting. Members were invited to bring ideas which they found useful with their child or adult. These were shared over a cup of tea or coffee at the end of the day.

The Down's Syndrome Association held a study day on 'Transition' which considered the needs of school leavers moving on into the world of college or work. Three dsOK trustees who attended found the presentations helpful but incomplete. It appeared that possible employers required more advanced academic qualifications than was possible for most people with Down's syndrome. Bookings are being taken for the next 'Transition' study day for Saturday 25 April at the Langdon Down Centre.

Social Events

Families from a wide area came to Thames Ditton on a June Sunday for the annual picnic. Free rides on the model trains at the Charity Day of the Malden and District Society of Model Engineers Ltd. were

enjoyed by older and younger offspring with their parents. It is hoped to repeat the visit in 2015.

The Christmas Party on Sunday 7 December in the Unity Hall in Epsom was particularly successful in enabling newer parents to meet others and learn about local groups. The Gonsalves and Morrin families catered and organised Christmassy craft activities but the highlight was the enthusiastic leadership of Stephanie which ensured all present had a lively, fun afternoon followed by the arrival of Father Christmas.

Publications

Concern has been expressed by trustees at the cost of posting around 400 newsletters. Therefore, only two editions, Nos. 34 and 35, were issued this year. Requests have been published for email addresses from members who would be willing to receive dsOK news electronically. So far, only forty addresses have been received which were used for despatching the November 2014 edition, the balance being posted.

Efforts have continued to publicise activities which welcome people with Down's syndrome who are too old for Youth Clubs. Members and general publications have provided information about relevant organisations across our area and more contact details for such activities would be welcome.

As always, dsOK trustees are constantly aware of the needs of new parents. Information about parent support groups across our area is published when we are told about them. Hints and tips are also shared which could help parents and carers to improve the confidence, skills and independence of babies, children and adults with Down's syndrome. Four years ago, trustees delivered our leaflet for New Parents to 15 maternity wards in our area. It was the trustees' intention to return in a year or two to replenish stocks but, to do this, more volunteers are needed to share this valuable work. Meantime,

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REPORT of the TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 28th FEBRUARY, 2015 (continued)

the leaflet is available on the dsOK website together with details of contacts who are available to listen and be there for enquirers.

Response to email Enquiries

Electronic messages have led to trustees meeting new parents, some from overseas, and to attending a school open day at which displays by organisations providing support for families with a child with special needs led to valuable sharing of knowledge. dsOK has also been contacted by other groups around the country which enables trustees to make useful links and share information.

Website

Family commitments and progress to University of the student who had been engaged by dsOK have limited the availability of time to keep the website up-to-date. Improvements are taking place gradually and it is hoped will continue.

Research

Co-operation continues with the Defeat Dementia in Down's Syndrome programme at Cambridge University. Not everyone with Down's syndrome will become ill with dementia but it is because some do contract this disease earlier than in the general population, that this research could be important for people with and without Down's syndrome. More people with Down's syndrome aged over 40 are asked to make contact and help with this study.

Trustees have been contacted by students who require children or adults with Down's syndrome to enable planned studies to take place. A recent request from Birkbeck College has been publicised. A Bristol study requiring babies was announced in the November 2014 dsOK news.

FUTURE PLANS

Trustees will continue to arrange events which will help families to improve the good health and independence of their son or daughter. An increase in the number of people giving help to the trustees, especially a Social Secretary or two working together, would make it possible again to organise an activity for teens and twenties. Social events are important both to improve the social skills of the children of our members and for siblings and families to meet and share experiences. Some with Down's syndrome lack social opportunities for developing friendships and reducing feelings of isolation.

Trustees aspire to running another Education Day, given sufficient help, possibly in autumn 2016.

RISK

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed and have taken steps to mitigate exposure to them.

FINANCE

Trustees watch carefully the total held in dsOK bank accounts. The costs of running Information and Education Days and some social events have reduced our funds which, from time to time, must be replenished by donations and fundraising. The purchase of Easy2Name labelling products brings small sums of commission from time to time provided dsOK is mentioned with the order. Trustees are grateful for donations received and invite support to increase funds to enable us to continue to provide a wide variety of information to families, individuals and professionals. Donations may be made through our website to Virgin Money who will reclaim Gift Aid on our behalf.

TRUSTEES

Trustees are elected by members in general meeting: one third retire by rotation each year and are eligible for re-election. Mrs. Helen Pattison and Mrs. Shirley Quemby retire by rotation and, being eligible, offer themselves for re-election.

Four board meetings were held on Sunday afternoons in trustees' homes, attended by between four and six trustees. Trustees have also met informally and when assisting at dsOK events. All are in email contact to ensure smooth running of the charity.

Approved by the Trustees on 29th March, 2015 and signed on their behalf by

Karen Edmonds, Chairman

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - 2015

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

REGISTERED OFFICE

61 Ruskin Drive, Worcester Park, KT4 8LJ

CONSTITUTION

Company limited by guarantee governed by its memorandum and articles of association. Company number 4756272. Registered Charity Number 1099580.

TRUSTEES

Karen Edmonds

Bambina Gonsalves

Kathy Maillet

Ajit Mané

Helen Pattison

Shirley Quemby

BANKERS

National Westminster Bank plc,

St.Nicholas Centre, High Street, Sutton, Surrey, SM1 1AW

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 28th FEBRUARY, 2015

	2015	2014
	£	£
INCOMING RESOURCES		
From generated funds:		
Donations	372	373
Interest received	27	40
From charitable activities:		
Education days	-	1,999
Social integration	66	80
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TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES	465	2,492
RESOURCES EXPENDED		
Cost of generating voluntary income	-	120
Charitable activities:		
Education days	-	2,397
Social integration	381	395
Governance costs:		
Administration	13	44
Annual General Meeting	351	438
Newsletters	510	555
Website	35	255
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DEFICIT for the year	(825)	(1,712)
BALANCE brought forward	8,872	10,584
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BALANCE carried forward	8,047	8,872
	44444	44444

downsyndrome OK**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - 2015 (continued)****ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice, Accounting, and Reporting by Charities issued in March, 2005.

Subscriptions, donations and interest are included in incoming resources when received.

Income and expenditure relating to fundraising activities are included in the financial year in which the event takes place.

TRUSTEES

No expenses have been reimbursed to trustees.

RELATED PARTIES

£510 (2014 - £765), the cost of producing and distributing newsletters and other material has been reimbursed to Colin and Shirley Quemby.

BALANCE SHEET - 28th FEBRUARY, 2015

	2015		2014	
	£	£	£	£
ASSETS				
Cash and Bank balances:				
Current accounts	1,794		3,121	
Charities deposit fund	6,253		6,226	
))))	8,047))))	9,347
LIABILITIES				
Creditors		-		475
	}}}}))	8,047	}}}}))	8,872
	44444		44444	
REPRESENTING				
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS				
General Reserve		8,047		8,872
	44444		44444	

The financial statements, have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to companies subject to the small companies' regime within part 15 of the Companies Act, 2006.

The company is entitled to the exemption from an audit given by Section 477 (1) of the Companies Act, 2006 and members have not requested an audit under the provisions of Section 476 of that Act. The trustees acknowledge that they are responsible for ensuring that the company's accounting records comply with section 386 of the Act and for preparing accounts which give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs at 28th February, 2015 and of its incoming resources and application of resources for the period then ended in accordance with the requirements of Section 396 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to accounts.

Approved by the Trustees on 29th March, 2015
and signed on their behalf by

Karen Edmonds, Chairman

RELAXING WITH A GLOVE PUPPET

A bright and cheerful glove puppet could assist telling off a child by being different from the person who usually has to do this action. Adding fun to a task will often be more effective than giving a serious instruction.

RESOURCE FROM A PARENT MEMBER

A trustee reported in November a seller she had discovered on ebay who makes and sells useful educational resources. The ebay shop is at stores.ebay.co.uk/wearespecialkids/_i.html?rt=nc&pgn=2&ipg=48

CBBC STAR

A friend reports from the BBC News App: "Child star with Down's syndrome returns to TV screens". Ruben Reuter has Down's syndrome and has secured a main role in a new show for CBBC.

NETWORK INTERVENTIONS

The newsletter of this organisation, experienced in understanding and improving children's behaviour, describes benefits of 'play dates' i.e. arranging for your child to play with others. Play can teach: how to wait, taking turns and sharing, how to negotiate, how to listen to others' opinions and ideas and how to express their own opinions and ideas and get what they want. These are skills which will help children to develop into adults who are able to navigate their world successfully, complete their studies through perseverance, follow others' requests and even work at something they may not want to do. However, distress can be caused to parents who find their child is not included in others' groups and NETwork Interventions welcome calls from parents seeking advice. Free confidential coffee mornings are available in Epsom on a Monday where you can come along just to enjoy a coffee and have a chat! Tel. 03333 440201 or info@networkinterventions.com

GET ON DOWN'S

This group started, appropriately, on Down's Syndrome Awareness Day in 2014 and recently celebrated its first birthday. When announced in dsOK news No. 34, it was meeting on Thursdays but now has changed to Wednesdays 9.30 - 11 am in term time still at Cedar Lodge, 3 Metcalfe Avenue., Carshalton SM5 4AW (near the new Stanley Park Secondary School off Woodmansterne Road). The group is still there to assist and support families coming to terms with the news their baby has Down's syndrome and is willing to arrange for a mum to meet the new parents at their home if this would help at a busy time. Their leaflet invites: "Come along and feel the power of chat, coffee and cake!" There is a sensory room, counselling, and the cost is only 50p. To contact founder, Lu, email: getondowns@btinternet.com or contact Sutton Portage service.

FUN FOR TEACHING

A parent of a 10 year old son who has Down's syndrome has sent us some fun ideas for simple teaching aids to make at home. Visit www.sharedvisualaids.wordpress.com for many bright and useful suggestions. Debbie Proctor invites readers to share ideas which have worked with your child (or not) and has set up a blog and facebook page *Shared Visual Aids*. The *Personalised Book*, made when Shaun was one, looks to be particularly valuable. Thank you and well done, Debbie! (*When teaching my son about which day it was, I placed a clothes peg at the side of the card. Moving this each morning improves pincer grip which, with a shorter thumb, some with Down's syndrome find difficult - Ed*)

SPACEKRAFT

SpaceKraft develop and manufacture sensory products for carers and teachers who face the difficult challenges of people with special needs. Their website illustrates a remarkable variety of imaginative ways in which to help children and adults who benefit from sensory products. Tel. 01274 581007 or email: enquiries@spacekraft.co.uk or visit www.spacekraft.co.uk for information.

PEOPLE FIRST

The telephone number of this self-advocacy organisation, given on page 2 of dsOK news No. 35, is now 020 7274 5484.

YOUNG FOOTBALLER ACHIEVES!

Eleven year old Jay Beatty from Lurgan has won the Goal of the Month award which he achieved during a match between Celtic and Hamilton Academical in January. Jay has Down's syndrome and has apparently already been to Barcelona to receive an award and spend time with famous Spanish footballers. On BBCiplayer, the comment was made that children with Down's syndrome are not expected to be in the limelight. In fact, the experience of many of our parents is that children and adults with Down's syndrome love to take part in drama groups, some are willing to stand up and address a large audience and generally many delight in being in the limelight!

SUTTON UNITED FC NEW TEAM

A popular local Neighbourhood Policeman, Steve, invited people (over 18) with any disability to join free football open sessions led by Sutton FC during March. These were held in Collingwood Rec. (next to West Sutton Station and Sutton Football Ground) on Saturdays 12.30 - 2.00. For more information, email communityteam@suttonunited.net A new team of players will be launched in May.

DISABILITY SPORTS COACH CLUBS

Recommended by a dsOK parent member, these Community Clubs offer a wide variety of activities all over London for people from age 11 with any disability. Sutton's takes place at 11 am on Saturdays at the David Weir Centre, Carshalton, SM5 1SL (close to St. Helier Hospital). Visit www.disabilitysportscoach.co.uk/clubs or tel. 020 7021 0973. Cost is only £2.50 per one and a half hour session. Just turn up to join.

SUTTON DISABILITY SPORT SESSIONS

The Sports Village, Rosehill Park West, Sutton. SM1 3HH offers a wide range of activities for children, young people and adults with disabilities. For information visit www.thesportsvillage.org.uk/OtherFacilities/DisabilityProgramme Booking in advance is required for which tel. reception on 020 8641 6611 or email info@thesportsvillage.org.uk

SURREY SPORTING OPPORTUNITIES

Lawrie Baker has sent to us another long list of websites listing opportunities for disabled people in Surrey to join in a variety of activities. In addition to the Football, Cricket, Shooting and Inclusive Sports mentioned in dsOK news No. 35, we are offered: Basketball, Netball (including for deaf people), Boccia, Golf, Trampolining and a free taster day. email Lawrie for all the details on lawrie.baker@surreycc.gov.uk or visit the Surrey County Council website www.surreycc.gov.uk

THAMES EXPLORER TRUST

A guided foreshore walk for children of all abilities (and their parents of course) who would like to increase their understanding and enjoyment of our great River Thames will take place on Sunday 26 April 11.30 - 1.30. The leader is an experienced archaeologist who will help the young people to find lots of evidence of London's past. The start is in the area of the Millennium Bridge. To book, visit the website www.thames-explorer.org.uk or email: lorraine@thames-explorer.org.uk and indicate that you are a member of downsyndrome OK. Tel. 020 8742 0057. To add to the interest, a Young Archaeologist Club is being run at Fulham Palace in partnership with the Trust.

THE DISABLED AFLOAT RIVERBOATS TRUST

The Disabled Afloat Riverboats Trust provides boating holidays on canals for people with physical, visual, aural or learning disabilities together with their carers, families and friends. These give to the passengers new experiences where they can learn new skills and move towards independence in a safe environment. Along the way they will make new friends, help with operating the canal boat and generally enjoy visiting the local area and watching the wildlife and scenery through which they pass. For more information, contact Paul Treble, Chair of the Trust tel. 01242 674 092 or visit www.glosdart.co.uk Dates of trips available on the Kennet & Avon Canal are shown on the website.

PARENTS IN PARTNERSHIP - CROYDON

PIP is a registered charity linking parents of children and young people with disabilities and additional needs in Croydon. By working in partnership with statutory and voluntary agencies it supports parents to raise awareness of unmet needs and to obtain the best possible care and services for their families. For contact details and activities visit www.pipcroydon.com

SUTTON'S LOCAL OFFER

Parents may request an Education, Health and Care (EHC) needs plan for a child from birth to age 25. The Local Offer contains information, advice and support relating to schooling, health, travel and social care services. Visit localoffer.sutton.gov.uk for how to request an assessment.

CROSSROADS CARE SOUTH THAMES

South Thames Crossroads focuses on the provision of home based respite care for carers of older people, adults and children with physical or learning disabilities. Based in Mitcham, their contact tel. is 020 8648 9677 or visit www.crossroadscaresouththames.org

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**Saturday 9 May****Sunday 21 June****Sunday 28 June****Sunday 28 June****Sunday 20 September****Sunday Nov/Dec
2016****Saturday 8 October****Family Day****Picnic and trains****Capital to Coast****meeting of trustees****meeting of trustees****dsOK Christmas party****dsOK Education Day****FAMILY DAY - 9 MAY 2015**

All welcome - see details
in programme

The views expressed in articles in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the company. No responsibility can be accepted for services described.

TRUSTEES

All trustees are available to DSA and dsOK members seeking help or support. E-mails can be sent to <firstname>7@downsyndromeOK.org.uk (note the extra 7)

Website www.downsyndromeOK.org.uk

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**Contributions for the next issue to the Editor by Sunday
20 September 2015 please**