

January 2017



Dear Friends

I start this by wishing each and every one a truly Happy, Healthy & prosperous New year.

The end of 2016 was tough for me personally. Moving just before Christmas was extremely stressful and took up a considerable amount of time which gave me less to concentrate on the things I enjoy. Moving on I certainly hope that I can get back to normal and 2017 will be as exciting as I hope.



We ended the year with our collections with the float which I add was another successful one, just £3 short of total collections for 2015. At the start we were met with some animosity from staff at H & M and at one point the police were called. I have written a letter expressing my disgust to H & M head office asking where their Christmas and community spirit is but their reply as we guessed was only in support of their staff and stressed we were causing them loss of trade despite having a licence to be there. Thankfully Ipswich Borough Council

licencing department were extremely understanding and we were able to move to outside Marks & Spenser's. Staff at both M & S and Primark were very helpful and were happy for us to be there.

We were also extremely short of volunteers and at some points there were just two of us. I would like to thank those who did help but especially to Michael Houghton for his time and dedication to the collections. Michael stood 15 days from 9am until 8.30pm to help.

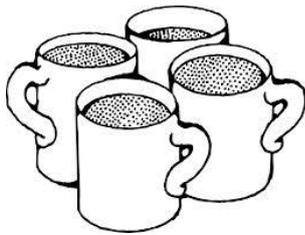


Also at the end of last year we heard the news of the passing of two of our members Colin Griffiths and Jean Fulcher. We offer our condolences to both families. Our thoughts and prayers are with you all.

We also thank you for thinking of Ipswich Mencap at such a sad and difficult time.



The Christmas fayre was an extremely successful event and was well attended. Thank you to Jean Southgate, Diane & Keith Brett and family for their help in organising this. The Christmas Fayre for 2017 is 26<sup>th</sup> December 2-5pm and will be at The Norbridge Social Club. The event will be in doors and there will also be a bar on hand.



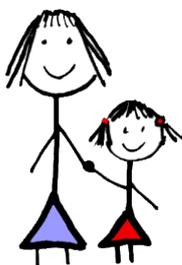
The coffee mornings will resume at Burgess House with the first of the year being on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> January at 10.30am. The success of these is great and it is lovely to chat and catch up with people. Why not come along and join us for a cuppa and a chat.

B I N G O				
1-15	16-30	31-45	46-60	61-75
4	23	40	55	64
10	16	34	56	70
15	19		52	66
6	30	44	49	68
11	21	41	47	74

Although the bingo nights have not been so successful but we do have a laugh and a bit of fun and that's what it is all about. These will continue at Rushmere Hub, Humberdoucy Lane on Thursday at 7.30pm. The first sessions will be on 26<sup>th</sup> January and 9<sup>th</sup> March. We look forward to seeing you there.



Our garage sales will resume again at the beginning of March weather permitting. We had hoped to carry on through the winter but cold got the better of us which is a shame because we had built up quite a regular amount of customers. Hopefully they will see the sign and return. Like the car boots its gives us the opportunity to put our name about and it is surprising just how many people require help and support yet don't know we exist.



On 21<sup>st</sup> May we will be holding an open fun day for parents of younger children. This will be a mixture of fun events and info stands for parent to find out just what is available locally for people with learning disabilities or any other disability. There will news from support groups, wills, day services, respite care, sports activities and much more. If you can't find what you are looking for I will be on hand to take your details and we can see how we can help you. Do come along and support it you never know you may just find something that is of interest to

you. Letters and posters with full details will be going out to local schools nearer the time.

Obviously if there any groups which support people in the community and would like to be involved with a stall please do contact me.



The office for Ipswich Mencap is now based at Burgess House although is not manned all the time. There is a new telephone number for the office **01473 401987** The answerphone is on at all times for you to leave a message if you prefer not to then it's my mobile 07766 103563 as normal. The post box for the office is situated

on the front of the garage by the side of the door for you to leave a message, this is checked daily.



The annual BBQ for the Rotary club will be on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> June 6.30/7pm until 9.30pm at Rushmere Hub. This is an annual event put on by the Rotary club of Ipswich which is completely free of charge so when the letters come out with the next newsletter we do need to know who will be attending. I will not this time be ringing round to find out numbers.



There will be no Easter party this year. After much deliberation it was decided to cancel it. The lack of response over the last few years has been really poor and the fact that I have to ring round the week before has not helped the situation. We took the decision to cancel which is such a shame when people moan about the lack of support and events and yet don't turn up when you do them, this leaves me to wonder just what people do want.

2017 looks set to be a busy year so watch out for things going on and please get involved we look forward to seeing you. Your next newsletter will be towards the end of April so if there is anything you would like to add please do contact me and I will try to include it.

Regards

Barbara