



VALENTINES DAY



We all got together on the most romantic day of the year to celebrate Valentines' Day.

The event organisers (Nazira, Yetti and Devika) graced us with beautifully heart shaped cakes and decoration.



We had the pleasure of welcoming a few friends from the local community.

Led by Shameem, we all joined in to hear and talk about the origin and the different ways Valentines' Day is celebrated around different countries and cultures.

After dinner, Service Users and Staff continued the celebrations on the dance floor!

AFTERNOON TEA AND CAKE WITH GAMES

On 30th January 14 we decided to have an event to work in partnership with Apasenth Day Centre which is close by us in Thornton Heath.



Our Service Users enjoyed making cup-cakes and brightly icing and decorating them. They looked too good to eat, but of course we didn't have any left!

We all played games like bingo, darts, pool and skittles enthusiastically as there were prizes to be won, but alas the time to go home came round quickly.



Yetti, great Bingo Entertainer

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO TAKE PART IN OUR ACTIVITIES OR REFER A PERSON TO JOIN OUR GROUPS, PLEASE CONTACT US FOR A VISIT TO THE CENTRE AND FOR A FREE TASTER SESSION.



Service Users delicious and beautifully decorated cup cakes!



BENSHAM RESOURCE CENTRE

Promoting the Skills and Talents of People with Autism and Learning Disabilities

It has been a really busy year in restructuring the Centre and the whole team are able to say that the changes have made a real difference. We now work to a three term year with each Service User having the choice to change to a different group each term. This gives them the flexibility to be able to experience different groups, learn new skills, become more independent and follow new interests.

I hope you enjoy reading all about it in our Newsletter!

(Kay Jardine)



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THE DRAMA GROUP TOOK US ALL ON A SUMMER HOLIDAY



When Kay and I first had a meeting about doing Drama Workshops, we looked through programmes from previous productions and I thought 'My goodness, how will I ensure that this one is just as good?!'

The sessions began on the 21st May 14 and for the first few weeks we played improvisation and vocal games in order to get to know each other, as we were joined by a group from Apasenth Day Centre. Very quickly confidence, enthusiasm, understanding and enjoyment grew within the group and together we self-devised 'Summer Holiday', basing it on everyone's personal holiday experiences.

As the weeks flew by, props, scenery, music and scripts developed and then on a sunny Wednesday (10th September 14) morning we welcomed around a hundred invited guests to come and watch the production.

It was a resounding success! and the applause and photos seemed endless! Everyone rose to the occasion and it was so uplifting to hear Bensham Hall full of laughter and applause from the audience.

Afterwards everyone was able to socialise as we enjoyed a light buffet lunch and drinks. It was a wonderful end to the project. **The support from Kay, Ana, Nazira, Muhammed, Rafi, Cass, Rajiv and the team was endless and they helped me to bring the whole thing to life!**



As we were clearing away the confetti, Gregory asked me 'When is the next Drama?' I smiled to myself.

The benefit of Drama for adults with autism and learning difficulties has been highlighted to me. Everyone was able to take a active role, regardless of their level of communication or physical ability. **Through imagination, improvisation, props and music**

Alan, Amir, Angela, Annette, Asif, Jenny, Keith, Maxine, Palak, Roseler, Shabnam and Sophia have been able to express themselves, be open, learn new things and make new friends.

Once everyone has had a well deserved rest, I can't wait for our next Drama instalment! (by Sharon Lewis - Drama/Keep Fit Tutor)



Sharon Lewis in the Driver's seat, Kay, Nazira, Ana and Rajiv (The Bus Maker)





FUN & SPORTS WEEK - 5 TO 8 AUGUST 14



Special Fun Keep Fit Session led by Sharon Lewis

The fun week is held annually and this year we had an organising committee who planned and led all the activities. Service Users Keith Johnson, Gary Tulloch, Maxine Clarke, Alan Alpe and Annette Fencott with the support of staff members Kay Jardine, Ana Bemidele, Abdi Farah and Sonia Lavine planned the activities.

We were divided into groups with different coloured T-shirts and the committee members were captains. Annette and Kay were the umpires.

As in previous years all the teams enjoyed the egg and spoon race, balls in the buckets, tins to knock down and the wet sponges race – some of us got very wet! There was great rivalry amongst Service Users and Staff with the tug of war game with everyone cheering their teams on. All the teams wanted to win!

For Thursday's session professional trainers from The Box Office joined us with a stimulating and exciting programme of team groups and outdoor golf. We all learnt to play golf - that was a first for us! The trainer's feedback was that the Staff Team was "the most competitive team they had worked with for a long time!"

The week finished with a closing ceremony. This included the presentation of medals and certificates, which was followed by a barbeque for Service Users, Staff and friends.

Even the rain held off until it was time to go home!

Well done everyone!



Outdoor Golf with the Box Office Trainers

CHARITY DAY

During our weekly discussion meetings we decided as a group that we would spend a day thinking of other people and supporting a charity along the way.

This year we supported Marie Curie Cancer Care as we all knew a Service User who had passed away with cancer.

During the afternoon break on Wednesday, 2nd July 14, we had a cake and drinks sell. There was also a raffle with lots of prizes and everyone was concentrating on watching their ticket numbers.



Raffle Draw

Once again our cooking skills with making and decorating cakes came in useful.

Also, a huge thank you for everyone who kindly donated cakes. They were all scrumptious!

For a small Centre we made a wonderful amount of £200.91 for Marie Curie Cancer Care.

Thank you and well done to all.



Service Users making and decorating the cakes



DELICIOUS FRUIT PICKING & PICNIC



Garson's Farm

This was a very popular trip - we had to split and went in two separate groups on the 8th and 15th July 14.

You can see by the photo all the lovely strawberries and raspberries that were picked and also eaten!

However some strawberries arrived back for us to enjoy the next day.



Bambo and Bernard picking the best strawberries

WORLD CUP



We thought we would spend the evening together watching ENGLAND!



Desmond with his England Flag

On 24th June 14, we painted our faces in the England colours, got our flags ready to wave and settled in front of the screen to watch England. Not very impressive were they? We are now waiting for 2018. Will they do any better?

We consoled ourselves with a super supper.



CINEMA EVENINGS - MAMMA MIA & GREASE, THE MOVIE



On 11th April 14: This was our first cinema evening and everyone arrived in good time to take their seats. The Mamma Mia Movie with the ABBA songs was enjoyed by all.

This was such a successful event Service Users asked for another one which was held on 14th November 14. No-one could keep still at the sound of John Travolta and Olivia Newton John!

There was popcorn and soft drinks during the films and we finished the evening with a hotdog and chips supper.



CROYDON LEISURE MAP DAY



A group of Service Users and Staff attended the Leisure Map Day organised by the Croydon Learning Disabilities Commissioning Team on 8th April 14. The day was held in the new council offices at Bernard Weatherill House. The aim was to find out what was available for people with learning disabilities in Croydon. Everyone was fully included in the activities which made it enjoyable for all.

