



MCSC News

The Home of Community Work

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NEW MEETING ROOMS NOW OPEN!



The recent decision by MCCH to give up the Club Connect rooms on the ground floor (see story on page 2) gave us the perfect opportunity to finally achieve our aim of making the ground floor an all-public area.

It has also given us the much needed chance to increase our meeting room space. March was our busiest month ever for sessional room hire with 42% occupancy of all our rooms and we have reached the point, as you may have found yourselves, where it has become difficult to string a series of weekly bookings together.



MCSC Leisure Learning
Flower Arranging

The new rooms are as follows: The "Meeting Room" will hold up to 30 people, theatre style, and is being finished to a high spec which includes it's own mini kitchen, Smart Board, built in projector and sound system. A wide, disabled friendly corridor has been created which leads to the "Small Meeting Room". This is a wonderfully sunny room which will



seat up to 10, making it ideal for smaller board meetings and training sessions. Both rooms have the usual internet (both wired and wireless) and telephony available along with all office equipment.

The rooms are now available for bookings and you are welcome to inspect them at any time. The bookings system has already been updated to reflect the new rooms which will cost £7.50 and £10.50 per hour respectively.

The plan is for the old meeting room in the annex to revert to office usage. We are currently discussing terms with a number of potential tenants but the room will be available as an overspill meeting room until that time.

We do hope you approve.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

JUNE

Thursday 9th

VAM Voluntary Sector Focus Group meeting - [here](#)

JULY

Tuesday 12th

Kent Ambassadors visit - [here](#)

Tuesday 19th

MCSC AGM - [here](#)

OCTOBER

Friday 17th

Voluntary Sector Conference - [here](#)





JOB VACANCIES

The benefits of the Centre being a hub of like-minded community groups and charitable organisations could be of further advantage in internal recruitment. We plan to reserve a space on the notice board outside Reception to advertise any vacancies from within the Centre.

With a footfall of over 25,000 people a year, 185 external user groups and over 300 people already working within the building this notice board could help you to recruit that special person. If you would like to have your recruitment advert displayed on our board please let Reception have the details and we will feature it for you on the notice board as well as the soon to be relaunched MCSC website.



MIKE BROOK—THE HERO

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No— it's Mike, the Site Manager. A would be thief had not counted on the intervention of Mike Brook when he tried to relieve the till in the Check In Café of its float. On trying to leave the building he was intercepted singlehandedly by Mike who then guarded the reception door until the police arrived. Well done Mike!

COMINGS AND GOINGS

After some 15 years based at the Centre, Club Connect have vacated their rooms on the ground floor just off the Check In Cafe to move to their own premises. The group had successfully staved off a threatened closure of the service some two years ago but the changing nature of adult services meant that the Day Centre here was no longer viable.

They staggered the move to give their clients time to adjust to their new surroundings and are now happily ensconced at Compass House in Holland Street another building belonging to parent group, MCCH . Two touching thank you letters from their clients have been reproduced below.



Catch22 have, sadly, recently lost funding for their West Kent service and has been forced to regroup to Ashford on a smaller scale. Their very good work in supporting vulnerable young tenants will continue from there and they retain the hope that they may return here in the future. We wish both groups well.

RESET, who have operated a project supporting offenders out of Room 108 for the last year will become a part of Kenward Trust in June. Unfortunately, as part of a streamlining of their facilities, Kenward have no use for either Room 108 or one of their own rooms, Room 210.

On a brighter note, we have several groups interested in taking space here and we hope to announce the arrival of new members in the next Newsletter. However if you know of any groups looking for office space ranging from £1,272 pa to £4,343 pa please do ask them to get in touch with Richard, the Centre Manager.

**LEISURE LEARNING
FOR ALL
COURSES for ADULTS**

Maidstone Community Support Centre

In partnership with
**Kent
County Council**

**Join A Course Today
NEW COURSES FOR SUMMER**



Gain confidence Meet new people Have Fun

**Ask for a leaflet at Reception or call Joan,
our Leisure Learning Coordinator on 01622 230711**

LEISURE LEARNING ALL WELCOME!

Following the successful launch of the Leisure Learning for learning disabled programme, we are delighted that extra courses have been added to the range to appeal to everyone.

The new classes include Basic French, Dance Exercise to Rock Music, Hula Hoop for Fitness and Laughter Yoga as well as plenty of creative topics so there really is something for everyone!

The learning disabled programme now offers Mosaic and Fun with Clay while still including the ever popular Cook & Eat classes.

Classes begin in May & June so please do enrol as soon as possible as places are limited. You can contact Joan On 01622 230711

Vodafone World of Difference

Groups reliant on volunteers to help deliver their service may be interested in a scheme run by Vodafone which aims to fund 500 places a year by paying successful volunteer applicants a salary for 8 weeks. Last year Marie Curie Cancer Care volunteer, Louise Jacobs, was one of 77,000 applicants applying for a paid eight week placement with their chosen charity. In spite of the seemingly overwhelming competition, she was successful and has nearly completed her eight week stint. For further information on how Vodafone may be able to help your organisation, please go to their website: www.worldofdifference.vodafone.co.uk

END OF AN ERA OR A NEW BEGINNING?



Jenny Meehan will be a familiar face to many of you. For 18 years Jenny has been employed by MCCCH and for the last 7 years has been the driving force behind the creation of District Partnership Groups in Kent. Having built Maidstone DPG into the formidable group that it is and helped to create Topaz, a vibrant organisation that provides a wide range of leisure activities and information, Jenny has felt it time to hang up her gunbelt.

However, I don't think that Jenny knows the meaning of retirement. Her urge to campaign for the rights of the learning disabled, based on years of experience, both personal and work related, and her continued enthusiasm will see her back in the Centre as usual. Indeed, we are currently working on a range of ideas to enhance communication which could be of benefit for many of the groups based here. Enjoy your retirement while you can Jenny!

HOUSEKEEPING NOTES

Our recycling bin is usually bursting at the seams, which is great. However, it would really be appreciated if Members could flatten cardboard boxes before putting them into the bin.

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Could we also ask that the person who fills the shredder to the brim, replaces the bag rather than walk away. There is always a spare bag under the full one. There is also a dustpan and brush to clear up any stray paper.

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In the interest of the environment Reception is now collecting used batteries which will be taken for recycling.

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Richard Swainston

Manager's Report



As the front page points out, it has been a long held ambition of ours to make the ground floor of the Centre a "communal" area. The process was started two years ago when InTouch vacated their rooms off the Foyer and the final piece of the jigsaw has been the taking back of the Club Connect rooms.

We now have a wholly public ground floor. Not only does this mean that we now have more, much needed, meeting room space but also it allows us to develop some of our community based ideas to make the Centre a more welcoming place.

I can't stress enough the importance of the additional meeting room space. At a time when everyone is looking to be as efficient as possible, the ability to grow our hourly meeting room hire is a crucial part of our plans for a secure future. We have recently recorded our busiest month ever and these new rooms will provide an additional boost to that growth.

To help market both our own services and to highlight the work that all groups do here, our website will be getting a much needed revamp in the next few months. We are hoping to have a page where groups can post their own news, views and job vacancies and we are aiming to make the whole experience more interesting and reflective of the work that goes on here. We'll keep you posted on developments.

The loss of member groups is always a sad situation and we are sorry to see Catch22, RESET and Club Connect leave us. However, we are delighted that so many groups are managing to weather the current storm and I am in discussions with a number of groups keen to join us here. We are proud of the range and diversity of work that goes on here and it is our aim to add to that rich mix whenever the opportunity arises.

We are due to have a Managers' Lunch shortly when we can discuss all of the above and more. I will be in touch in the next few days to let you have a date for your diaries.

MCSC IN-HOUSE

SERVICES

These are some of the services offered by MCSC:

Photocopying:

- A4 black & white —4p per copy (A3 8p)
- A4 colour—10p (A3 20p) per side
- Brochure collation, stapling and delivery to your office—FREE

Fax service

- 5p per sheet

Laminating

- A4 30p / A3 60p

Reception Service

- Phone answering and message taking service—FREE * only available to members of MCSC Telephony service who can choose to divert calls.

Meeting room equipment:

- OHPs, Flip charts, white boards, P/A system, TV, video, CD/DVD player.
- laptop and multi media projector.
- All items can be requested when making a booking by pressing CTRL and clicking on the items you want.
- Hearing Loop

For more information about these and other services our reception team can offer please contact Jackie Avery on extension 103 or Reception on 101.

MAIDSTONE COMMUNITY SUPPORT CENTRE

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