

ISSUE 9



Off The

WALL

Autumn
NEWSLETTER 2015

TAG Youth Club for Disabled Young People is an independent organisation which relies on grants and donations to continue its work in supporting young people with disabilities, who either live, learn or earn in the Royal Borough of Kingston. Our thanks go to the Royal Borough of Kingston for their continued financial assistance.

The club also receives support from Achieving for Children and has a service level agreement with the youth service relating to facilities and staffing arrangements.



Welcome to our autumn term newsletter

At the end of each term I mention in our newsletter about how good the last term has been and our autumn term has been no exception. Our programme as usual included new or, in some cases, improved activities while still giving members the opportunity to take part in some of their favourite ones like Get Me Out of Here!

We continued to celebrate our 15th anniversary with an enjoyable afternoon on the river. Members and their families enjoyed taking part in the games and disco on board while taking in the sights of London.

We have worked hard to provide new resources and are pleased that we have been able to add a ball pool and soft play to our sensory area. We have also been lucky to purchase a new bouncy castle which is lower and smaller, both in length and width.

It's always nice to bring you the positive news but occasionally we have to share the negatives; the youth club is about to enter a period of uncertainty, mainly due to the decision made by the local authority to change the way they support organisations like ours with funding.

Achieving for Children and the Royal Borough of Kingston are currently consulting service users and the wider community on how they should provide services to young people in the future. Part of this consultation includes the proposed closure of youth centres including the Devon Way Centre. Please visit Kingston.gov.uk for more information and to take part in the consultation.

Rest assured the leadership team are working hard to secure the facilities and funds required to continue our great adventure.

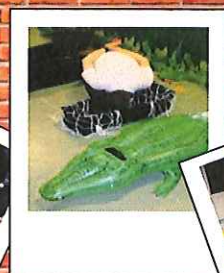
Back to the good news! The staff team received a certificate of recognition for providing Accessible, Diverse and Exciting Activities to Disabled Young People. This was presented to the workers at a special celebration event back in September by the Head of the Youth Service for Achieving for Children.

Our achievements continued with a special crystal award presented to the club by the Jack Petchey Foundation.

As with our last newsletter, I thought I would share with you some of my highlights.

Giles Hobart

Lead Youth Worker





Around The World In 80 Minutes

Young people participated in our world games; taking part in the egg and spoon, bean bag and sack races. The competition was hard fought. Medals were presented on our podium for first, second and third by Daniel, our very own Special Olympics World Games gold medallist.

The evening wasn't complete until we had the chance to enjoy the various cuisines from around the globe.

A massive thankyou to those who brought along the food to share.



Dragons Den

Young people pitched their ideas and inventions to the Dragons. Were they prepared for the questions being fired back at them? They must have been as everyone received investment. This must have been a first for the den!

Investment was paid on time and in full with chocolate coins.

Young people role played the various roles; Those taking part used their imagination and were required to improvise during the activity.



Game Show Marathon

Good Game, Good Game! Higher or Lower!
What's a Hotspot Not!

Young people raced around the various stages to take part in Deal or No Deal, Strike It Lucky, Play Your Cards Right and Bullseye. Prizes were presented to the winners.

We followed the individual show formats and adapted where necessary to meet the needs of the group.

Young people learnt the importance of good showmanship during the course of the evening.

To end the fast passed evening of activities we held a few rounds of bingo.





Come Dancing

With our new larger mirror ball sparkling, the lights dazzling and the music playing, it could only mean one thing, the return of Come Dancing, well our version!

Most acts were intended to be individual but as each performance progressed the more 'backing dancers' appeared. After each dance it was time for the judges feedback. This year we had new scoring paddles which enabled young people to write their chosen score. We even managed a few perfect 10's through the course of the evening.



Winter Games

The beginning of October was mild, providing us with the opportunity to hold our Winter Games outside. Winners were awarded TAG medals and all participants received a certificate and cake!



Star For The Night

With another stage set it could only mean one thing, it was show time!

The evening gave young people the opportunity to show their talents but in fact brought us another singing competition minus one, a stand up comedian act.



Hocus Pocus Challenge

Young people ate doughnuts hanging from chains in our dungeon, hooked a skull from our watery coffin and had the opportunity to have their face painted.

If that wasn't enough, they also bobbed for apples from the witches cauldron and some young people completed activity sheets.

Those winning the challenges were able to pick a prize from our treat bowl, however the witches were keeping guard and grabbing those who were too slow!

Young people also made chocolate apples on sticks to take home.

A truly busy night for all.



Trick or Treat

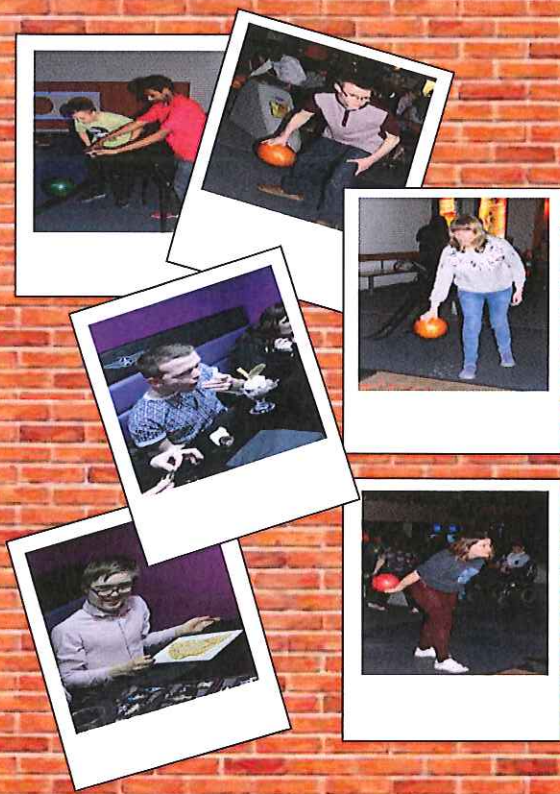
Another night of spooky going on's including a disco and fancy dress competition.

We played traditional party games as well as some challenges including catching a worm. Was there a catch, oh yes, participants couldn't use their hands; another option was to use their teeth!

Young People also had the opportunity to decorate biscuits, learning best practices in the kitchen including washing hands and keeping prep areas clean and tidy.

Biscuits were boxed so young people could take them home and enjoy over the weekend.

Those wanting some quiet time were able to complete the various activity sheets which were available.



The Big Night Out

We continued providing community based activities during the term.

The Big Night Out felt like a military operation. Planning started many weeks in advance with members pre booking their place, organising the venues and making sure the right amount of staff were available.

We started the evening with a bowling tournament. Trophies were awarded to the highest scorer of each lane and the overall winner received a special TAG bowling pin. All participants received a certificate.

The evening ran smoothly and at times we were running ahead of schedule until we arrived at Creams. Ordering 27 desserts takes longer than you might think!



Explosive November

The evening started with a visual fireworks display projected onto the wall in the main hall while the youth workers lit the BBQ and prepped the food.

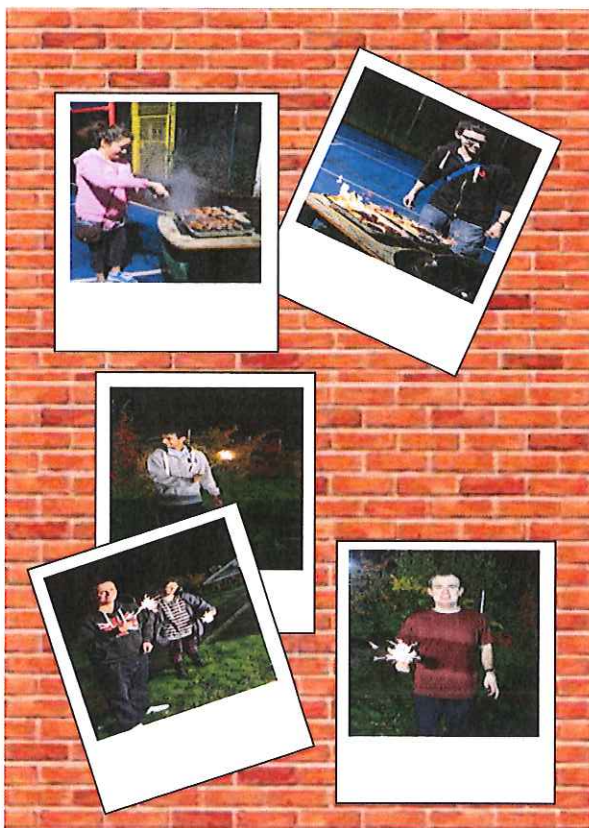
The flames were high and bright, which gave us the opportunity to toast some marshmallows.

Back inside some young people decided to complete themed activity sheets while others played board games and played on the table games.

It was time to tuck into the sausage baguettes, as usual we made plenty, so enough for a few rounds each!

Back outside the sparklers were lit and young people enjoyed waving them around.

Finishing the evening we made chocolate bonfires.





Best of British

Our Best of British evening included traditional fish & chips, sausage or pie and chips supper, obviously eaten the proper way out of the wrappers. This was followed by a quiz night. Some picture rounds and a quick fire 'buzzer' round, perhaps not the right description to use! The final question was eventually answered and prizes were awarded.

The evening continued with a performing arts workshop on our new stage.

Young people played cricket outside and darts inside.

The evening finished with the choice of playing bingo or taking part in a sensory story.



TAG Factor

Our members always like a good sing along and our TAG Factor night didn't disappoint. Young people could choose from our large selection of tunes, from one hit wonders to gold disc favourites.

Just like the original show, young people sang their hearts out during their performances.

Young people performed on their own, in pairs and groups.

All performers were stars on the night and with the judges taking a break and the viewers enjoying the acts, the evening was relaxed.

Next year we will be looking at the format of the production and will be looking at ways to engage the participants further.



Get Me Out of Here!

This was the night that definitely didn't disappoint. The evening was hosted in our very own jungle full of leaves, logs and creepy crawlies.

The camp mates were getting used to life in the jungle and viewers were on the edge of their seats, however, one thing was missing and that was the public vote. So it was down to the campmates to nominate each other and to take part in the challenges and trails.

Even our guests were not exempt from taking part and it was fun watching the mayor complete a trial and we were certainly not going to allow the youth service manager and area youth work lead to get away without completing the food challenge during their official visit.

For each activity participants had to wear their protective goggles or blindfold and for some activities had to search for stars using either their hands or mouth. The food challenges had interesting tastes, but no fear, treats were instore for those who took part.

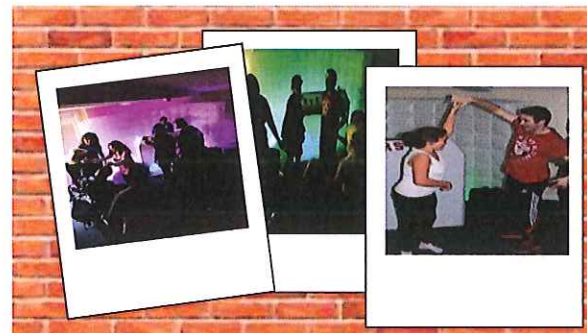




Christmas Cheer

With streets lit and shops playing their Christmas jingles it was time for us to start celebrating!

We transformed the lounge into our own white winter land and danced away to popular Christmas tracks.



Festive Fun

Party time!

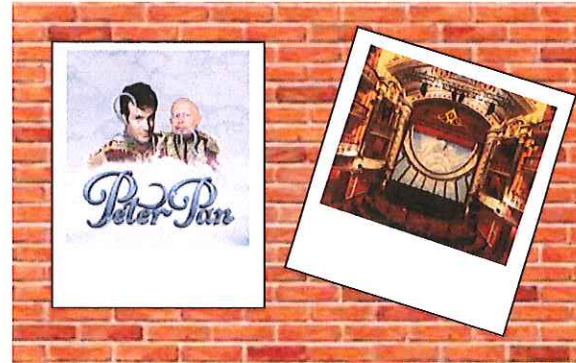
Food, music, games and prizes... do we need to mention anymore!



Oh Yes It Is

On no it isn't, oh yes it was for our last session of the term and the year as we headed off to see Peter Pan the panto at Wimbledon Theatre. This was the first time we have attended a performance on a club night.

Arrangements started way back in August!



Christmas Fayre

Young people from NCS The Challenge organised a special Christmas fayre for us.

Those who attended enjoyed Christmas themed activities, performances and more. We will be looking at developing our own fayre next year.





Hampton Court Palace Ice Skating Night

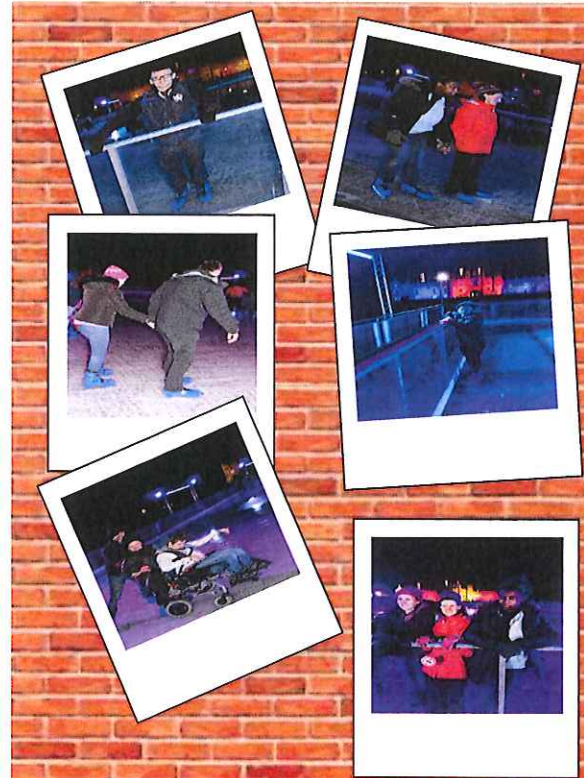
With continued success in our family activities offer it was only suitable that we included a wintery activity.

We have not attended Hampton Court Place's ice rink for a number of years and this gave us the opportunity to re-establish this event in our calendar.

We started off with a general get together, discussing Christmas and the youth club while indulging on snacks and enjoying a warm drink.

Then it was time for us to change our comfortable footwear for painful skates.

With a few wobbles and mishaps we glided along the ice while taking in the views of the wonderfully lit palace.



Kingston Round Table Carol Wagon

We are always looking at ways to enable us to engage with the local community and what better way than to roam the streets with Father Christmas.

Members of Kingston Round Table have supported the club in the past with their financial contribution towards the purchase of our storage container and they were keen to build their relationship with us.

How to do this...by walking around the residential area of North Kingston with their carol wagon on a cold and windy night.

Members, parents and staff however enjoyed the experience and, along with the volunteers from the Round Table, managed to raise some cash.



T shirt Workshop

We continued to engage with the local business community during the festive season. TAG joined staff from Uniqlo to create some spectacular t shirt designs, unlike the previous workshop when designs were created using iPads, this time young people got stuck in using good old fashioned paint to create their master pieces.

Uniqlo staff and TAG members along with parents, carers and youth workers produced some of next year's 'must have' fashion. Watch out for the new TAG range!



OUR NEW RESOURCES

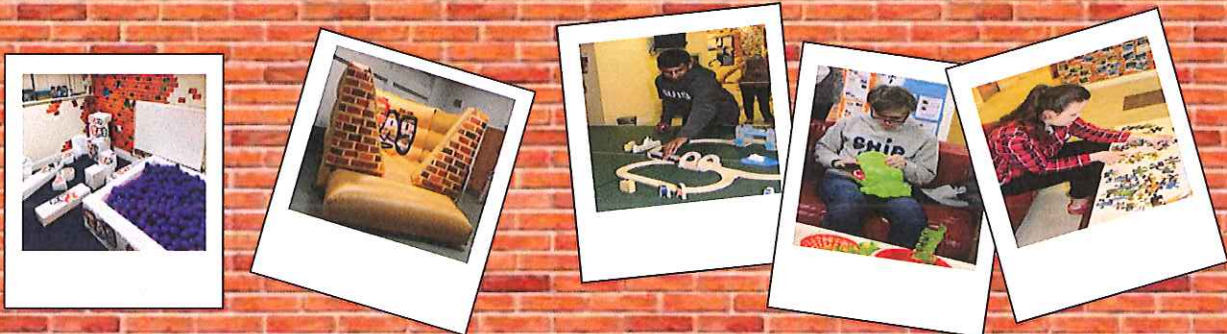
With lots of hard work and generosity from members, their family and friends, grants, the local community and businesses we have been in the position to purchase some new and exciting resources to enhance our offer.

We have been able to purchase phase one of our portable stage and are approximately a grand away from purchasing phase two, which includes an extra three panels, providing an extra 1X3 metre performing space and a portable ramp, making the stage fully accessible.

We have been fortunate to be in a position to buy extra equipment for our new sensory room including lighting, a ball pool and soft play shapes.

We have also been able to purchase some larger soft play and an indoor bouncy castle for use in the main hall.

We have invested in our general offer and have added musical instruments and increased our range of board games, jigsaws and fine motor skill activities.





Community Day

We teamed up with young volunteers from NCS The Challenge and together we repainted the youth club's storage container.

Before the repainting could start Giles, Kyle and Matthew had to carry out some tree pruning. Their hard work paid off as they were rewarded with freshly prepared sausage baguettes by Geraldine.



Special Crystal Award

We were one of just 150 organisations who were awarded a Crystal Award by the Jack Petchey Foundation.

Giles & Matthew were invited to a special awards night at City Hall.

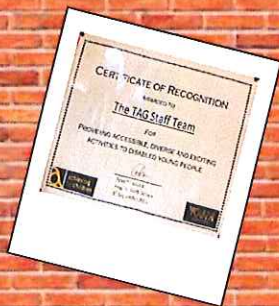
As part of the award the club received £1,500 to purchase some sensory and soft play equipment.



Staff Team Award

Kingston and Richmond Youth Services, part of Achieving for Children held a special celebration event back in September.

Our club youth workers were in attendance and received a certificate of recognition for Providing Accessible, Diverse and Exciting Activities to Disabled Young People.



Mayor, Mayoress & Councillors Visit

This term we have welcomed the mayor and mayoress as well as all three local ward councillors, the chair of the local neighbourhood committee and our local MP; they were all keen to hear about our work with young people.

We discussed the club and the challenges we are facing, including funding and the proposed closure of the Devon Way Centre.





Anniversary Boat Party

The music started and the dance floor was full of balloons filled with party favours. The treats continued with rainbow jelly jars, fruit kebabs and more.

After cruising up river for a while we turned and headed downriver towards Tower Bridge. This was when we started playing loads of party games with prizes, of course! After the games we had just enough time to cut another anniversary cake, we do love our cake at TAG! The afternoon finished with even more singing and dancing and the highjacking of the music decks. Our thanks go to everyone at Cruise London who made the afternoon so special.



Anniversary Cake Competition

As we continued to celebrate our anniversary year, we were challenged by the Area Youth Work Lead to cut 15 cakes! This then turned into a full competition with three heats of four cakes per week. The only rules were that it had to have a TAG theme.

Heats were judged by young people. Each heat winner then took part in the grand final which was judged in week 4 by the mayor, mayoress, our local MP and ward councillors. Kyle won the final and was awarded a bottle of champagne, gym pass and boat tickets.



SPRING TERM ACTIVITIES

 <p>01 January New Year After Party</p>	 <p>08 January Sweaty Antics</p>	 <p>15 January Knight To Remember</p>	 <p>22 January Clowning Around</p>	 <p>29 January Take Me Out</p>
STAY & PLAY ACTIVITY Look Out For More Details	DEVON WAY CENTRE Normal Times & Subs	DEVON WAY CENTRE Normal Times & Subs	DEVON WAY CENTRE Normal Times & Subs	DEVON WAY CENTRE Normal Times & Subs

 <p>05 February Pancake Mayhem</p>	 <p>12 February At The Movies</p>	 <p>19 February Bowling Tournament</p>	 <p>26 February Just The Ticket</p>	
DEVON WAY CENTRE Normal Times & Subs	DEVON WAY CENTRE Normal Times & Subs	OFFSITE ACTIVITY Look Out For More Details	DEVON WAY CENTRE Normal Times & Subs	

 <p>04 March Going Potty</p>	 <p>11 March Ready Steady Cook</p>	 <p>18 March Easter Madness</p>	 <p>25 March Good Friday Social</p>	
DEVON WAY CENTRE Normal Times & Subs	DEVON WAY CENTRE Normal Times & Subs	DEVON WAY CENTRE Normal Times & Subs	OFFSITE ACTIVITY Look Out For More Details	

 <p>01 April TAG Has Talent</p>	 <p>08 April Ye Yah</p>	 <p>15 April Place Your Bets</p>	 <p>22 April Crazy Fashion</p>	 <p>29 April Game Show Marathon</p>
DEVON WAY CENTRE Normal Times & Subs	DEVON WAY CENTRE Normal Times & £10	DEVON WAY CENTRE Normal Times & Subs	DEVON WAY CENTRE Normal Times & Subs	DEVON WAY CENTRE Normal Times & Subs

