

EBR MENCAP

SPRING NEWS



WELCOME

We begin this edition by remembering our dear friend and long-standing member, Jack Wilson, who sadly passed away on 25 December 2025.

Jack was a much-loved part of our community, a regular at Chill Out Club, known for his passion for Gardening Club, his enthusiasm for Basketball Club, and his friendly presence at so many of our events. Many of us will smile at the memory of how particular he was about making his cup of tea - it always had to be just right.

As we honour Jack's memory, we continue with the activities and friendships he valued so much. With that spirit of community, we're delighted to share all the latest news from across our clubs and beyond.

As some of you know, we experienced technical issues with our website and email leading up to Christmas. As a result, this is our first newsletter since the summer - so there's lots to catch up on!



CLUB NEWS

BASKETBALL CLUB

Basketball Club restarted on Sunday 11 January, with everyone keen to get back on the court. Coach Mike keeps us on our toes with new training challenges that test our skills and thinking. As always, we finish with close, competitive matches and plenty of laughter.



CLUB NEWS CONT...

DANCE CLUB

Our Christmas party was made extra special by a wonderful performance from our talented Dance Club. The group delighted everyone with a reprise of their much-loved dances previously performed at the Community First Eastleigh Community Showcase earlier last year. Their energy, confidence and enthusiasm lit up the room and brought smiles to so many faces.

A huge well done to all the dancers and to everyone who supports the club - you helped make our celebration truly memorable.



CALLING ALL DANCERS & FUN-LOVERS!

Are you ready to move, groove and make new friends? Join our Dance Club at EBR Mencap, where our ethos is all about fun and fitness.

We use a variety of music styles to get us moving, warm up our bodies, and build our fitness through dance. Right now, we're learning an exciting new routine that we add to each week. Our aim is to perform this at the next Community Showcase at The Point later in the year!

Dance Club is a fantastic place to have fun, feel good, and meet new friends – whether you're an experienced dancer or just love to have a boogie, everyone is welcome.



What to expect:



- Great music
- Friendly vibes
- Fun & fitness



- Building a dance routine together
- A warm, welcoming group
- Plenty of smiles!



Find out more: www.ebrmencap.org.uk/groups-and-clubs/dance-club/

CLUB NEWS CONT...

ACTIVE CITIZENS

We've had a fabulous time recently - celebrating Halloween, creating autumn-themed wind chimes, and enjoying a wonderful day out in Winchester using our explorer tickets.

We visited the Great Hall and the Westgate Museum, learning about local history while enjoying the beautiful surroundings.

More recently, our Active Citizens explored Eastleigh town centre to identify Safe Places - venues where anyone can go if they feel upset, unsafe or need help. We found four cafés/venues proudly displaying the Safe Place logo:

- Eastleigh Library (Swan Centre)
- Eastleigh BID
- Wells Café
- Poppins Café



Everyone also carries their own Safe Space card with emergency contacts, ensuring support is always close at hand.

A huge thank you to the welcoming staff at each location, and well done to our Active Citizens for building confidence, raising awareness and strengthening community support.



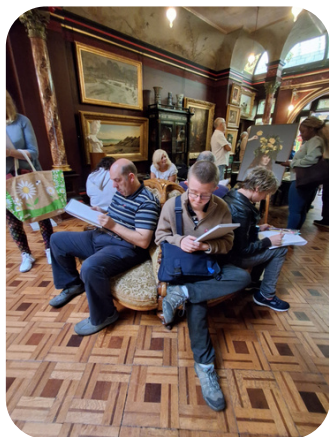
WALKING GROUP

Our dedicated Walking Group has persevered through winter, missing only Boxing Day. We restarted on January 2nd with a new quiz theme - guessing food, drinks, and brands (the letter "J" was particularly tricky!).

Huge thanks to the Blackbird Café for looking after us when we turn up wet and muddy.



CLUB NEWS CONT...

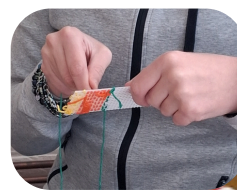
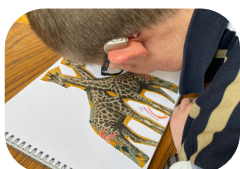


FLAGSHIP ART

In September, our Flagship Art group visited the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery & Museum, where members explored beautiful exhibits and reflected on their own creative projects. The visit sparked ideas, conversations and lots of smiles.

Since returning, the group has been practising sewing and embroidery inspired by the textile work of May Morris. Members have been learning new stitches, experimenting with patterns, and adding their creations to sketchbooks and artwork.

We're grateful to Mencap for providing the funding that made this trip possible.



WEDNESDAY CLUB

Since our last newsletter, Wednesday Club has met six times - September through to February!

Themes have included Harry Potter, Disney, Halloween, Christmas, Football and Valentine's Day (with pancakes for Shrove Tuesday!). Each session is packed with fun activities like quizzes, wordsearches and skittles, plus a tasty treat.



CLUB NEWS CONT...

CHILL OUT CLUB

Chill Out Club enjoyed our annual Bowling Night just before Christmas. Well done to Claire, our top female player, and Simon, our top male player. It was a brilliant evening full of laughter and friendship. A big thank you to Elaine for supplying the lovely prizes.

We meet every other Monday in a friendly local pub. As we've rolled into 2026, we've welcomed even more members. Every meet-up includes drinks, music, pool, and plenty of laughs.



GARDENING CLUB

It's a quieter time of year, but we met twice before Christmas at the Hilldene Centre for quizzes, games and decoration making. We created wreaths with wind chimes and enjoyed plenty of festive snacks.

We hope to be back at the allotments from Saturday 7 March, weather permitting!



If you would like any further information on any of our groups, or how to join, please email clare.shaw@ebrmencap.org.uk

EVENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

QUIZ NIGHT AT THE CONCORDE

The Concorde Quiz Night 2025 raised **£859!**

Thank you to everyone who took part!

It was a wonderful, fun evening with some very interesting questions. We were especially delighted that our amazing volunteer and committee member, Janice, was on the runners-up team!

AGM & CHRISTMAS PARTY

What a wonderful evening! We started with our AGM, where Richard shared highlights from across the year. Then the celebrations began with entertainment from Michelle Murdoch (Letz Dance), festive music, and performances from our amazing Dance Club. We enjoyed delicious food from Sonny's Fish & Chips, a fun festive quiz, and a chance to browse beautiful crafts created by our Active Citizens. Thank you to everyone who donated raffle prizes and helped make the night a success.



LOOKING AHEAD / SAVE THE DATE

- Life Skills – Bereavement Session - **Thursday 12th March**, 12–2pm (lunch included) £4, Pavilion on the Park. Please email clare.shaw@ebrmencap.org.uk for more information.
- **Thursday 30th April** - Sponsored Walk and Scavenger Hunt - More details coming soon!
- **Saturday 18th July** - Summer BBQ - Back at Royal Victoria Country Park - more details soon.
- Autumn Quiz Night – **Monday 28th September**, The Concorde Club
- **Friday 11th December** - AGM & Christmas Party

FUNDRAISING & SUPPORT

A HUGE THANK YOU TO THE SOUTHAMPTON & DISTRICT WOMEN'S BOWLING ASSOCIATION!

We were delighted to have been chosen as their President's Charity of the Year. At their Presentation Luncheon on 10 October, our Chair, Elaine, received a generous **£1,500** cheque from President Ann Milne - raised through collections, raffles, and the sale of bowls cloths throughout the summer. Their support will make a real difference in helping us keep our clubs running. Thank you to everyone involved for your wonderful generosity.



EASYFUNDRAISING – SUPPORT EBR MENCAP WHILE YOU SHOP

We're excited to announce that EBR Mencap is now on easyfundraising! It's a simple way to support us at no extra cost whenever you shop online.

Here's how it works:

1. Sign up for free at www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/eastleigh-mencap/
 2. Shop online at your favourite stores through the easyfundraising portal.
 3. The retailer donates a percentage of your purchase to EBR Mencap.
- It's an easy way to raise funds while doing your usual online shopping – every little really helps!

JUSTGIVING – ONGOING SUPPORT

You can also continue to support us via JustGiving, whether it's a one-off donation or raising funds through your own sponsored challenges. Every contribution helps us deliver activities, clubs, and events for our members. Donate or start fundraising at www.justgiving.com/charity/ebrmencap

Thank you to everyone who has supported EBR Mencap so far – your generosity makes a huge difference!

FUNDRAISING CONT...

Janice and Elaine had an early start on Sunday morning (22.2.26), with their cars loaded up with games, soft toys, clothes, puzzles and bric a brac to take to the Quob Stables indoor winter car boot sale. Kudos to the organisers for such a well run event - the positioning of so many cars in the barn was a sight to behold! We met some lovely friendly people who were interested to hear about EBR Mencap while they browsed our stall. We made nearly **£100** so the early start was well worth it!



AND FINALLY



**THE PAVILION ON THE PARK
1 KINGFISHER ROAD, EASTLEIGH,
SO50 9LH**

We now have some office space at Pavilion on the Park. Please feel free to come and visit. We will be open on a Monday 09:00-12:00 and a Thursday 09:00-12:00.

Or, you can contact us on 07853 240150.

CLOSING NOTE

We are so excited for everything 2026 has in store and hope you will continue to support us.

Thank you for being part of our wonderful community.