So here we are! We’ve finally landed and after overcoming a few obstacles, it feels like we’re becoming well-established, and people are noticing the services we provide for our trainees.

Our Dare to Dream training centre is doing very well and we’ve been working hard to help prepare the trainees (see their smiling faces above!) for the world of employment.

As a result, a number of our trainees have started taken up volunteer opportunities in the community, to build their confidence and experience life at work. In all cases so far, the feedback on both sides has been very positive, which is excellent for everyone involved.

Next door at The Show Room - our elegant artisan boutique - we’ve been selling a range of upcycled and recycled home and garden furnishings as well as handcrafted gifts, many of which are made by our design team who are based at Enterprise Lodge.

We’ve featured a couple of very stylish highlights (pictured right) from our shop which are available to buy now.

If you like the look of them, why not pop along and see us? The Show Room is on Leeland Road in West Ealing, and we’re open Monday to Friday 10.30am – 2.30pm, and the first Saturday of the month between 9.00am and 12.00pm.
E<\n\nenterprise Lodge receptionist Fiona got a surprise on a shopping trip in Ealing recently - seeing herself smiling back from a 12-foot billboard on Perceval House.

It was part of the advertising for Shared Lives Week, with the aim to recruit carers for the placement scheme for adults with learning disabilities.

Fiona said: “Shared lives is like a respite scheme, I can go and stay over at the weekend at Sharon’s house. She has a dog and a cat, Lexie and Smudge. We take Lexie out for a walk when I go round. I love it!

“I’ve been going to stay with Sharon for a couple of years now and I really enjoy it. We go shopping, to Ealing Broadway, to Harrow, and it’s really good fun, I enjoy it.

“Ealing Council got in touch about taking some photos but I thought it might be in the Around Ealing magazine, but I wasn’t expecting to see a poster that size!

“I think Sharon knew because she took me to Ealing and we saw it, but I was really surprised! I was a bit embarrassed at first, I put a hat on to disguise myself and Sharon put some sunglasses on when we were walking around Ealing. I’m used to it now though and I think it’s a great picture.

“Sharon’s really nice. She’s like a mum to me, and I feel I can go to Sharon and get some advice. She’s like a friend as well. I really love Shared Lives and it’s really good fun.”

Dare to Dream Employment Service Gets Thumbs Up from Trainees...continued from front page

The Dare to Dream trainees have been taking the opportunity to enhance their communication skills and build their confidence by speaking with and helping customers at The Show Room on a daily basis. They've been doing a great job of it too!

You can read some of their comments about their Dare to Dream experiences in the speech bubbles here. We’re glad to hear they’re having a good time!”

We learn new skills and do training that helps us to get a job

We are learning about how to become more independent

We gain different experiences

Staff listen to our points of view and act upon them

We work together as a TEAM!
Surviving or Thriving?
Activities across Ealing Mencap for Mental Health Awareness Week

As part of the Health and Wellbeing program for staff, Ealing Mencap took part in a number of activities for Mental Health Awareness Week in May.

Research indicates that 40% of people with learning disabilities will have issues with mental health in their lifetime, so it’s important staff are aware of this to provide basic support to our customers if needed.

Down at the Lido Centre, members of the Travel Training team decided to take a break and focus on the importance of talking about your feelings and being there to listen. They had a range of leaflets and information to give to out, and were joined by staff from Family Action’s I SAID! project, and others based at the centre in West Ealing.

Travel Training Manager Annemarie Braganza-Hawkins said: “A group of us had our lunch together and played a game of Articulate. The aim of the game is to describe as many things to your team without using the actual word. It was as crucial that the person guessing really listened to the clues to help the person describing.

“The pained expressions on some are actually faces of concentration! It was a success and something we can hopefully do on a regular basis in the Lido.”

Members of the Business Support team at Enterprise Lodge took advantage of the good weather with a long walk around nearby Perivale Park, taking time away from desks to clear heads, talk, and take in some exercise.

Personnel Manager Clare Penfold organised a raffle to further raise awareness of the week, with the prize of a day of rest and relaxation at a local spa being won by Head of Services Kathryn White and RealMe Support Worker Pathe Said.

Clare said: “Good mental health is vital in the workplace. Taking some time to stop and think about how you’re feeling, and knowing that you can talk to your colleagues or manager about it goes a long way to keeping yourself well.

“We’ll certainly be looking to do more to promote awareness of mental health issues to all staff in the future, and hopefully that will go some way to help improve their overall wellbeing.”

Ealing Buskathon brings in over £200 for Love Thunder...

Fresh from a fifth consecutive appearance at the Hanwell Hootie, I Love Thunder followed up with an acoustic gig as part of Ealing Broadway Shopping Centre’s Buskathon recently.

The band with ‘rockability’ entertained shoppers at lunchtime on Saturday 20th May in the Town Square at the centre, with a stripped-back set list that saw usual drummer Dan making his debut on vocals.

Other bands on the line-up that day included Beer O’Clock, Dean St James and New Age Thrills, who all fundraised for Ealing Mencap. Thanks everyone! The bands raised a fantastic combined total of £238.15 for Ealing Mencap, which will be used to help keep I Love Thunder rocking!
Just how important are charities today?

Social Landscape 2017, published on 28th February by the Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), has revealed that almost one in five UK larger charities and more than a quarter of smaller UK charities are “struggling to survive”.

In common with more than a third of charities, Ealing Mencap has had to dip into reserves in the last year to cover a shortfall in income.

In common with more than a quarter of charities in the past 12 months, we have reduced staff numbers and front-line services delivered to try and reduce our outgoings.

Demand for our services has increased year on year and we have worked to the best of our abilities to meet this demand.

Last year we provided support and services to more than 2000 vulnerable and disabled people in Ealing and in neighbouring boroughs.

But securing income to meet this demand is becoming harder and harder, and some of our essential services currently have no funding or grants.

Our advocacy service, campaigning, and most of our children’s services are only being able to be kept running by spending our reserves.

As a charity we don’t like to ask for help, we prefer to be helping others. But we are asking now.

We know how vital the work of Ealing Mencap is to our local community, and need to fundraise £80,000 this year to keep some of our most vital services going.

As we face the challenge ahead we are urging individuals, groups and businesses from Ealing to get behind us, to unite, and to share your passion, energies and time to fundraise on our behalf.

To make your promise to make a difference, please email us at fundraising@ealingmencap.org.uk

Save the Date! Free Sports Festival on 28th July

Over 20 sports to try out at one-day event at West London fitness centre

Disability Sport Coach are holding their free annual Summer Festival on Friday 28th July, with more than 20 sports on offer to try.

There will be chances to try skateboarding, cheerleading, wallball and rugby, alongside old favourites like football, basketball, cricket, tennis, cycling, boccia, and dance.

There will also be special guests from the world of sport and music on hand to offer support and encouragement throughout the day, including Olympians and Paralympians.

For a full list of activities and more details have a look at the DSC website at https://goo.gl/yYgGs3

The DSC Summer Festival will be held at Westway Sport and Fitness Centre, 1 Crowthorne Road, W10 6RP, between 10am and 2.30pm.

For more information or to bring a group along, please contact information please email event organiser Lauren on laurenm@disabilitysportcoach.co.uk or call on 0207 021 0973.
Project Search Celebrates Another Successful Year

Class of 2016-17 set to graduate and are ready for paid employment

by Steve Poole
Project Search

For our current group of Project Search interns, their year of practical college learning and meaningful work experience at the Hilton London Heathrow Airport Terminal 5 Hotel is nearly over, with graduation day on 29th June their last as interns with us.

I’m pleased to announce that three of this years’ graduating interns have already secured paid employment. Amaan and Paul will be staying on at the Heathrow T5 Hilton, and Nathan will be taking up a position at Ealing, Hammersmith & West London College. Congratulations to each of them.

It’s truly amazing to see the change in the interns over the course of a busy year.

They mature, develop in confidence, and you can see them really begin to focus their energies on finding employment as their next step.

During the final term, the Project Search Job Coaches begin to concentrate on job development and supporting the interns to find paid work once the course finishes.

As well as the three who have already secured jobs, the remaining 2016/17 interns all have interviews arranged with various employers over the coming weeks. We wish them all the very best of luck in fulfilling their dreams of gaining paid employment.

This is the third group of young people with disabilities who will have graduated from the rigorous and challenging Project Search course. We’re well underway with our plans for what will be year four of the partnership between Ealing Mencap, the Hilton and Ealing, Hammersmith & West London College.

We have 11 new interns confirmed to be joining us at the Hilton in September, and we’re looking forward to welcoming them all to Project Search.”

Let’s Talk About Sex?!
RealMe customers talk healthy relationships in pilot scheme

by Kathryn White
Head of Services

From 7th February to 28th March a small group of RealMe customers based at Enterprise Lodge took part in a new Healthy Relationships and Sex programme. This was run in partnership with a specialist facilitator from the Family Planning Association (FPA) and organised and funded by Mencap as a pilot project.

Despite some initial reservations, our experience was really positive and we would highly recommend this programme. All of our customers valued having the opportunity to learn more, and found out how they can be supported to have positive and safe relationships. The customers were engaged with the facilitators teaching style and this was apparent in the information they retained and their enjoyment of attending the sessions. Both he and colleagues at Mencap were a pleasure to work with.

Reading our customer feedback it was sad to read that the majority have never been in a relationship but some would like to be. If only this type of training could have been available to them at an earlier stage of their life.

The FPA offer a range of topics within sex education and have developed this programme specifically for people with a learning disability. This currently only runs in Westminster but Mencap are now working to try and develop a bigger project based on the results of the pilot in Ealing. This would give more people with learning disabilities support to be more informed about sex education and sexual health.”
A new campaign from national Mencap and NHS England is encouraging people with learning disabilities to make sure they Don’t Miss Out when it comes to receiving an annual health check.

Just 23% of people with a learning disability are registered as having a learning disability with their GP and just 44% receive an Annual Health Check.

This is despite well documented evidence of the health inequalities experienced by people with a learning disability, with 1,200 avoidable deaths every year.

Don’t Miss Out has launched with lots of easy read guides and videos to raise awareness of the importance of being on the learning disability register with your local doctor. Registering with your GP entitles you to extra help, which can include:

- extra time and support when you visit your doctor - including with making an appointment
- Easy Read information that is accessible and can help you to understand what your doctor says
- more time to talk about how you are feeling
- Annual Health Checks that help to maintain your health, detect conditions and illnesses, and help GPs to understand how to provide you with better care.

For more information about the Don’t Miss Out campaign and annual health checks, visit the national Mencap website at www.mencap.org.uk/dontmissout

I f you’re holding a paper copy of this newsletter, we hope you’ve enjoyed reading it. Unfortunately this is the last issue of the Ealing Mencap newsletter that we will be posting out hard copies of.

The changes to our constitution last year, a review of our environmental impact, and the continued financial pressures that we face as a charity operating in a time of “austerity” means that we are not able to subsidise the print and postage costs any longer.

We will of course still be putting together a newsletter on a quarterly basis, and this will be available electronically, through our website (www.ealingmencap.org.uk) or sent straight to your email inbox.

We will be launching a new newsletter email subscription sign up on our website soon to support this, so please sign up to receive all the news from us straight to your email. We hope this will give us the chance to share news in a better way, with video and sound in the future.

If you would like to continue receiving our newsletter, please email us to let us know at newsletters@ealingmencap.org.uk, or alternatively call Kate Venus on 020 8566 9575.