



# **Wakefield and District Down's Syndrome Support Group**

**AGM 6<sup>th</sup> May 2016**

## **Chair of Trustees Report**

As you will have seen from the report this has been an incredible year for our group. One in which, I believe, we have successfully taken a significant step forward.

As I speak, I believe we are a different organisation to the one we were at last year's AGM.

I think the RLI training (and follow up) we did, the formation of the Sibs Group, and the development of Star Speakers have taken us to a different level.

We have introduced these new activities without losing any of our established events or groups. It is therefore pure growth in the group's 'offer'.

We have managed this financially, the group remains in a strong financial position with significant unrestricted funds giving the group a solid base to maintain its regular events on an ongoing basis. And we have a good spread of 'Ring Fenced' funds to enable us to finance those specific projects.

In particular, my personal priority is to develop the ideas we have had in conjunction with Sam and Mike to create our legacy to our superstar, Logan.

I think we have taken a step forward this year in increasing the number of people organising and managing on behalf of the group, this, as much as anything, has allowed the growth described above.

Jo Mayne with Star Speakers, Sara Beaumont with Super Sibs, Claire Fisher with the RLI work, the first BLF award of £6400.00, and the fantastic newsletter, Neil Courtman and our first Independent Trustee John Crawshaw with the managing of the tender process for the new website. Alison Brown is now co-ordinating fundraising, ensuring that we respond quickly and appropriately with thanks.

Family Fun Day has, for the second year running, become an event that not only covers its cost but actually contributes to group funds. Ann Marie Sheard and Andrea Arnold put an enormous amount of work into this event, which is demonstrated by how well the event runs. This event has, I believe, now become an established 'local' event and is an enormous achievement for a group of our size.

Family Fun Day is definitely a 'sponsorable' event should we wish to pursue this for next year.

Gym Club is now stand alone, run by Normanton Acro, and co-ordinated on our behalf by Emma Jukes.

Our group for older kids now has a few people organising activities, Alicia, Sue Hodgson, Ann Aylward, and Tracey Fairham and has established its own regular events, Valentine's Disco, Bofire Disco, Theatre trips etc

In particular this year, Alexis Sharp has done an amazing amount of work for the group resulting in a £10k award to continue Star Speakers for this coming year, and of course was responsible for our successful £50k bid.

The £50k bid will define this group, not just for this coming year in which it has to be spent, but for the next stage of the group's growth.

It is significant; it is a step change in the growth of the group. We have moved up a level.

This is nothing we should fear, we have the skills to manage this growth, we have a spread of people able and willing to be involved, and the more we do, the more this will grow. We need to communicate with each other; we need to support each other.

As the year progresses and we put in place the projects contained in the bid we need to look at the next stage, to formulate what we want to do next year and the year after.

We have in place the 'Visions' for the group that the, at the time, the 'doers' in the group completed about 18 months ago. I think later this year it would be appropriate to open this up to the wider group and put together a plan for the next couple of years.

This fantastic organisation can go wherever those prepared to do things on behalf of the group want it to go.

This message never changes.

We will manage and steward the group in the cautious and sensible way we have always done, this is the basis for the group to take strides and to be brave in its next steps.

Well done everyone for a fantastic year for WDDSSG.

Time to get started on what will be our biggest year to date.

Exciting times!

Geoff Tulley  
Chair of Trustees  
May 2016