

# FRIENDSHIP CLUB



Friends make life more fun!



# THE FRIENDSHIP CLUB

THE STORY SO  
FAR..

## WHAT WE SAID WE'D DO

- Find out what people with learning difficulties wanted.
- We did this by talking and listening to over 100 people with learning difficulties, as well as other people directly linked to them including carers, social workers, families, support staff.
- People told us they wanted more friends and places to meet their friends safely in the community.

## WHAT HAPPENED

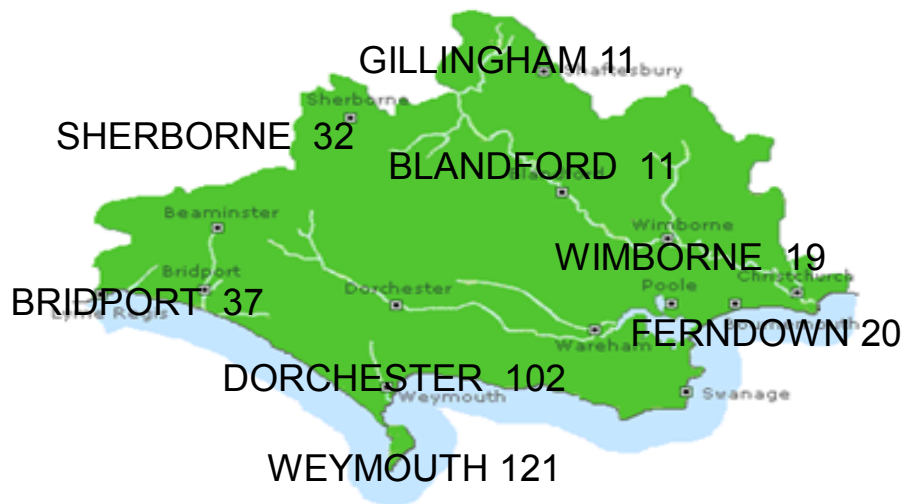
- A few 'taster' events were organised in Weymouth, Bridport and Dorchester, which were very popular. These were open to anyone with a learning difficulty and The Friendship Club was formed.
- The initial funding was for 8 hours weekly until April 09 when it was increased to 30 hours after it's initial success
- The Friendship Club employs one person and is supported by volunteers and other organisations



## EVENTS SO FAR

**PUB NIGHTS, CINEMA, TEN PIN BOWLING, FOOTBALL NIGHTCLUBBING , WORKSHOPS, WII, STORYTELLING CAFE CLUB, SKITTLES, KARAOKE, SALSA, THEATRE ETC**

# WHERE ARE WE DOING THIS? HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE COMING?



The Friendship Club has made contact and set up links with lots of people and organisations, including:-

Social Workers      Residential Homes      Mencap      Arts Centres      Dorset V  
Learning Disabled Clubs ie Gateway      Physiotherapists      Dorset Police  
Dorset History Centre      Local Businesses      Schools      Care Providers      Day Centres  
Charities      GP's      Occupational Therapists      NHS      Mental Health Orgs

Many of these people have offered their support, which is how we have been able to put on so many events. A subscription of £1 is collected at each event to help contribute towards the running costs.

## WHAT NEXT?

- Continue with existing events and activities whilst developing realistic and sustainable activities in response to what people want
- Develop sustainable links with volunteer organisations, schools, businesses, colleges, DCC, other charities, arts organisations etc
- More marketing and publicity
- Develop database of people and activities
- Support people with transport and with community safety
- Link and support people to clubs in community or create clubs
- Develop accessible website
- Develop Cafe Drop Ins
- Have paid workers with a learning difficulty as part of development
- Residentials, Volunteering at Festivals, Community Based Projects , Football matches etc

## JUST SOME OF THE FEEDBACK

I thought I would write and let you know how much difference the Friendship Club has made to my son, Zachary's life. Since attending the Friendship Club, he has had social events to look forward to that also allow him to meet new people. Zachary keeps the colourful, well thought out fliers on his noticeboard next to his bed. He then writes all the events into his diary so he can show and remind friends and family at every opportunity! I feel the Friendship Club events have boosted Zachary's confidence and self worth. The opportunity recently for him to be a club mascot at Dorchester Football Club and to meet and play with all the players was an incredible and rewarding experience that Zachary will never forget. He is already planning his various outfits for the forthcoming Buddy Holly and Hawaiian events! These wonderful opportunities enable Zachary the same social opportunities that he deserves as a young adult. Julie Cocking, mum and social worker

Since the start of the Friendship Club I have noticed a huge improvement in the social skills and confidence of many service users attending the club events. I have certainly found it easier to get people out to other events away from Friendship Club, now that they are accustomed to, and enjoying, their increased social life. Carolyn Brightwater, Mencap Leisure Development

It's helped me come out more in the evenings and make new friends. I only had one friend before I came to the Friendship Club and now I've got lots! I'm doing things now I would never have done before, like I'm on the Dorchester Steering Group and I've helped to get raffle prizes for Rockabilly. I'm going to help by being a bouncer on the night too! William Parminter, member

It feels like a big family, of friends and I feel very lucky or else I wouldn't have got to know them. I feel much safer going out in the community and people have been really friendly at pubs and places. Joseph Bevan, member

I thoroughly enjoy the Friendship Club and think it has definitely targeted a niche in the LD service provision. I can't imagine what things would be like without it. Hopefully something will happen to prevent this? Safa, Psychologist and volunteer