

Mersea Island Festival

Preparations are under way for this year's Mersea Island Festival that will be taking place in August on the coast of Essex. The Festival is a popular destination for Phab club members from all over the country with representatives from clubs in Chichester, Westminster, Southend and Oxford.

The Festival offers a wide range of activities. On site there is climbing, adventure courses, archery, drumming workshops, a large art tent and trampolining. Off-site there is fishing, pitch and putt, crabbing and water skiing at a local lake provided by Skiability. Each evening the Main Hall is the venue for some great entertainment including discos, live bands and the regular Camp Concert where anyone can get up and do their thing – sing, dance, tell a joke or juggle.

Arrival days are always hectic, with friends catching up with those they may have not seen for a year, and some putting up tents they may never have put up before! Fortunately there is a team of volunteers on hand to help out wherever needed. There are a few beds available in tents for those who can't sleep on the floor and some beds in cabins or the new residential centre for those for whom a tent just isn't practical. Wherever they are the campers aren't far from the Village Leaders who help get new friendships going and sort out any queries.

The new toilet and shower block at the centre has dedicated disabled toilet and shower facilities and there are two separate fully accessible wet rooms, one of which has an

electric ceiling hoist. Commodes, shower chairs, a portable hoist and ramps are also available to those who need them.

For many it's difficult to pick out one thing that's the best at the Festival. For some it's just seeing old friends again. For one of our campers it was "the way everybody is so happy and the environment gives each and every camper their chance to do things they may never have done if they had not come to Mersea."

For more information or to book your place at this year's Festival visit the website: www.merseafestival.org.uk or contact the centre on 01206 383226

Phil Ager
Festival Co-Ordinator



Worthing Kids and Dapper Snappers (WKDS)

WKDS is a support and activities group which became a registered charity three years ago. WKDS was originally two groups Worthing ki DS which was a Downs Syndrome support group, which started 7 years ago and Dapper Snapper a swim school for children with additional needs, which started 5 years ago.

The charity now has 200 families as members, with children and young people with a variety of disabilities and additional needs.

We have many and varied activities, A swim school, youth club, coffee afternoons with advice guests plus singing and signing. We have after school groups with sensory room sessions and music therapy. During school holidays we have parties, trips and workshops. We offer the children the chance to try something that they might not otherwise get an opportunity to experience like fencing, street dance, drama, kayaking and always include the siblings in these activities.

We offer the parents and carers support, friendship and information from visiting advice guests.

Apart from the swimming teacher and life guard, all of our dedicated staff are volunteers with many giving up hours each day to support our charity.

We have been affiliated to Phab for two years and many of our members have had wonderful holidays at the Phab holiday homes at Weymouth and really appreciate the opportunity given us.

(For details of the Phab Holiday homes – please see page 3)

Lydia Wilson
Events Co-Ordinator

