

# BOWER GROVE PARENT SUPPORT



## LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

This information was correct at time of typing but may be subject to change

### Information and support

#### Citizens Advice

<http://www.maidstonecab.org.uk/>

#### Walk-in advice at the Maidstone Gateway

Monday - Friday 9.30 am - 4 pm (*to join our queue please get a ticket at the main Meet & Greet desk*)

#### Walk-in advice at No.2 Bower Terrace, Tonbridge Road

Monday - Friday 10 am - 4 pm (receptionist will acknowledge your arrival and conduct a short interview to obtain some details before the next adviser can assist you)

**Postal Address:** No: 2 Bower Terrace, Tonbridge Road, Maidstone Kent ME16 8RY

**Enquiry Line** 01622 757882 or 01622 752420

#### Community Liaison Officers

(Supporting people e.g. Hate Crime)

[http://www.kent.police.uk/about\\_us/diversity/pages/comm\\_liaison.html](http://www.kent.police.uk/about_us/diversity/pages/comm_liaison.html)

#### Dial-Kent (Disabled Information Advice Line)

**Free phone:** 0808 800 33 33

<http://www.dialuk.info>

Offer information and advice on all aspects of disability.

#### Gateway in Kent

Gateway is the new way for citizens to access public and voluntary services with the added convenience of being in a town centre or high street location across Kent. Comfortable, modern places make it easier to reach specialist, voluntary and charitable agencies. Services include:

- information and self help, including free internet, service directory, payment kiosk
- routine advice and transactions, including bus passes, refuse, parking, licensing
- surgeries by agencies such as Hi Kent, Connexions, NHS and registrars for births and deaths
- cross agency services, including council tax, benefits, planning, housing, library, adult education and occupational therapy

Information on Gateway locations and the roll-out programme can be found at: <http://www.kent.gov.uk>

#### Maidstone Gateway

Maidstone Borough Council, Maidstone House, King Street, ME15 6JQ

The Maidstone Gateway is a one stop shop for services, including information and advice surgeries on selected days.

### Support Groups and Local Organisations

#### Avenues Trust

<http://www.theavenustrust.co.uk>

The Avenues Trust support young people aged 12 upwards with learning disabilities, autistic spectrum disorder, complex needs and challenging behaviour etc. The Trust also has an Adult service. Young people are encouraged to develop their skills, confidence and self-esteem and are supported through transition to a more independent lifestyle. Services can be purchased through Direct Payments (**see Direct Payments section on our website**)

**Bower Grove Parent Support,**

Bower Grove School, Fant Lane, Maidstone ME16 8NL  
01622 726773

Email: [psg.bowergrove@btinternet.com](mailto:psg.bowergrove@btinternet.com)

<http://www.bower-grove.kent.sch.uk> (select **parent support**)

Meetings are open to all parents/carers of children with special or additional needs, an autistic spectrum condition or any disability including those in mainstream schools. Friends, family and professionals are welcome to join us too. Regular free workshops/presentations are held on key subjects such as Behavioural Strategies, Autism, ADHD, Speech and Language, Health, Benefits etc. and a host of agencies and speakers are invited. Regular newsletters are provided along with a website for information. Parent consultations on key issues are facilitated There are occasional social events for parents and regular coffee mornings. Contact Josephine Cousins

**Beacon Centre THE VINE****01622 746839**

Support for families living in the Shepway, Mangravet, Parkwood and Senacre areas. Provide several services including a toddler group and the Oasis Café which is open on a Wednesday and Thursday morning from 9am – 1pm.

**British Red Cross** 25 College Road Headquarters

01622 690011

<http://www.redcross.org.uk>

As well as teaching First-aid to all age groups in Kent, the BRC gives skilled care to people in crisis in the UK and abroad.

**Caudwell Children**

07814121486

[www.caudwellchildren.com](http://www.caudwellchildren.com) Email: [bernice.scott@caudwellchildren.com](mailto:bernice.scott@caudwellchildren.com)

Caudwell Children provide family support services, equipment, treatment and therapies for disabled children and their families across the UK. They also run Enable Sport programme for talented disabled athletes and Destination Dreams holiday for children fighting life threatening conditions. The Family Support programme offers families with a disabled or seriously ill child (0-18) the support they need, the free service works around the needs of families, using skilled volunteers to help with practical necessities and support families to gain access to therapy, treatment, supports groups, equipment, help identify grants and sources of funding, information relating to medical conditions and signposting to specialist sources of advice

**Challenging Behaviour Foundation**

0845 602 7885

<http://www.thecbf.org.uk>

Provide information and support to parents and professionals caring for individuals with severe learning disabilities and challenging behaviour.

**Contact a Family**

0808 8083 555

<http://www.cafamily.org.uk>

Offer telephone support for parents of disabled children and provide information fact sheets. For further information see website above.

**Crossroads Care West Kent**

01622 817114

<http://www.carerskm.org/>

Support parent carers by offering high quality replacement care for children with care needs. Referrals can be made by anyone, including Carers themselves, in person, by telephone or in writing.

**Crossroads Young Carers Project**

01622 817114

[jan.hall@crossroadswestkent.org.uk](mailto:jan.hall@crossroadswestkent.org.uk)

[sophie.butler@crossroadswestkent.org.uk](mailto:sophie.butler@crossroadswestkent.org.uk)

Offers club nights, trips out and 1:1 support for young carers, which includes siblings of kids with Special Needs

**Counselling Support Network**

[www.counselling-directory.org.uk](http://www.counselling-directory.org.uk)

Provides a search engine to find a counsellor or psychotherapist near you.

**Cruse Bereavement**

01622 671011

<http://www.cruse.org.uk>

Helps bereaved people to understand their grief and cope with their loss. Provides support information and advice.

**CXK Limited**

01795 439397

Email: [info@cxk.org](mailto:info@cxk.org)

<http://cxk.org/>

**Head Office:** St Michael's House, St Michael's Road, Sittingbourne ME10 3DW

Provide information and independent advice to young people on school and college courses, different careers and the training that may be necessary.

**Dandelion Time, West Farleigh**

Email: [info@dandeliontime.org.uk](mailto:info@dandeliontime.org.uk)

01622 814001

<http://www.dandeliontime.org.uk/> Dandelion Time is a charity for children aged 7 years plus, struggling with complex emotional or behavioural difficulties. These children may be socially isolated and many have been excluded or withdrawn from school. Based in West Farleigh, near Maidstone, Dandelion works with the whole family in a therapeutic programme of activities around the farm. Children discover their abilities in a practical, stimulating way, building confidence and self esteem realising they are capable of achievement. This provides a valuable opportunity for parents and their children to see each other in a different and more positive light. Referrals are made through GPs, Social Services and Education.

**District Partnership Groups - Valuing People in Kent**

Email: [louise.flatman@nkias.co.uk](mailto:louise.flatman@nkias.co.uk)

**District Partnership Groups** work together with people with learning disabilities and family carers. Write a District Work Plan. Make sure Valuing People now happens across Kent. Support people to be involved with local decision making. Promote easy read information. Help people to understand about voting.

**Domestic Violence**

**Refuge:** National Helpline: 0808 2000 247

**Mid Kent Refuge:** 0845 072 7625

**Email:** [info@casasupport.org.uk](mailto:info@casasupport.org.uk)

**Opening times:** Mon-Fri 9am-10pm

Mid Kent Refuge provides safe and secure supported housing for women and children fleeing domestic abuse. Women can access this service by self referral to the above telephone number or with the assistance of any external agencies. All services are offered with a maximum of confidentiality. Women are given emotional support, and advocacy in relation to domestic abuse, safety, housing, finance and health concerns. Contact Carol Webster.

**Downs Syndrome - Kent Wide Group, PO Box 534, Chatham,**

07740 348908

<http://www.kentwideds.org/>

Fundraising, social events, training and specific projects that benefit children and young adults with Downs Syndrome.

**West Kent Dyslexia Association**

Helpline: 0845 601 2553

Email: [admin@kentwestdyslexia.org.uk](mailto:admin@kentwestdyslexia.org.uk)

Website: <http://www.kentwestdyslexia.org.uk>

Provides support and information to parents of dyslexic children, dyslexic adults and teaching staff in Sevenoaks, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and surrounding areas. Offer a helpline, parent support group and drop-ins in Sevenoaks library.

### **Dyslexia House Association**

Helpline (10am-3pm): 01622 717308 (Tue-Thur) or 07 939 232 537 (Mon & Fri)

Email: [dyslexia.house@googlemail.com](mailto:dyslexia.house@googlemail.com)

Website: <http://www.medwaydys.org>

parents/carers and teachers of children and young people with dyslexia in Maidstone, Gravesend, Dartford, Swale and Medway areas.

**(British Dyslexia Association's helpline 0845 251 9002)**

### **Dyspraxia Support Group**

[joff.atkinson@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:joff.atkinson@blueyonder.co.uk)

01622 209530

For information about meetings and social events in the Maidstone area contact Joff Atkinson as above.

### **Epilepsy Action**

<http://www.epilepsy.org.uk>

Main Enquiry Line 0808 800 5050

Tunbridge Wells support group that meets once a month.

### **Fathers' Club in Kent**

Contact 01634 405168

The Fathers' Club provides support and guidance to fathers and grandfathers of children with an autistic spectrum condition. Monthly evening meetings across Kent and an informal atmosphere provide the core of support and give members the opportunity to share information and their experiences.

Membership is free, a library of relevant publications is available and a regular newsletter that goes to all members.

### **Find a Voice**

49 Beaver Lane, Ashford TN23 5NU

01233 640443

<http://www.findavoice.org.uk>

Offer advice and help finding suitable communication aids, also have a resource library with switch toys, training videos and useful books.

### **Hi Kent**

01622 691151

<http://www.hikent.org.uk>

Aims to enable hearing impaired people overcome the socially isolating aspects of being or becoming deaf, by provision of information, environmental equipment, deaf awareness training for relatives, carers and professionals and sign language courses. Hi Kent is available to individuals, family members, carers and professionals

### **INFORMATION, ADVICE AND SUPPORT KENT (IASK) (Formally PWP)**

Helpline 03000 41 3000 Office 03000 412 412

[iask@kent.gov.uk](mailto:iask@kent.gov.uk)

[www.kent.gov.uk/iask](http://www.kent.gov.uk/iask)

Information, Advice and Support Kent (IASK) is statutory, which means that every Local Authority (LA) must provide a service for parents\* of disabled children\*\* and children with Special Educational Needs (SEN). The Service operates at arm's length from the LA and provides **free confidential, impartial advice and support** to parents. IASK are committed to parental involvement and offer a range of support to increase parental confidence. The experienced team is available to listen and discuss any issues around your child's education and development in complete confidence. The Helpline is open Monday to Friday 9am-5pm (answer phone and email are available 24 hrs). IASK staff are available for face to face meetings either at a drop-in (please telephone or see website), or in a place that is mutually convenient (out of these hours if necessary). \* adults with parental responsibility \*\* children and young people

### **Job Centre Plus**

<http://www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk/>

0845 604 3719

A Disability Employment Adviser can advise on employment/training options and benefits available for young disabled people.

Maidstone Job Centre Plus

County Gate One, Staceys Street, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1ST

## **KASBAH (Kent Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus)**

01474 536501

<http://www.kasbah.org.uk>

Provides support services for people, carers and families affected by Spina Bifida and/or Hydrocephalus throughout Kent.

## **Kent Adult Education**

**0845 606 5606**

<http://www.kentadulteducation.co.uk>

Offer courses that can help improve reading, maths, computing and communication skills including Managing Money, Healthy Lifestyles, Community Living & Work Skills.

## **Kent Association for the Blind (KAB)**

01622 691357

<http://www.kab.org.uk>

Provide a service sensitive to the needs of those who are visually impaired by helping them to attain the highest level of independence. They offer counselling, information and advice on all matters concerning sight loss.

## **Kent Autistic Trust**

01634 405168

<http://www.kentautistic.com>

Specialise in services for people with autism and offers information, advice and support to families and carers. The Trust can provide individuals with an "Autism Alert Card" This card been designed to alert the police and other emergency services to the fact the holder has an Autism Spectrum Condition. They run support groups throughout Kent. Maidstone group meet regularly at the Salvation Army Hall, 74-80 Union Street, Maidstone. Contact Jo Blamires as above.

## **Kent Supported Employment**

<http://www.signpostuk.org/organisations/kent-supported-employment-maidstone>

Kent Supported Employment (KSE) can provide support for people with a disability who are looking for a job.

## **Kent Deaf Children's Society, 11 Beatty Avenue, Gillingham ME7 2BZ**

<http://kentdcs.blogspot.co.uk/>

Self funded, self help group run by parents in partnership with professionals and other organizations. They work with various statutory bodies across Kent and Medway as a consultative group to promote the issues of deaf children and the impact this has upon family life.

## **The Kent LINK Unit 24, Folkestone Enterprise Centre, Folkestone.**

01303 297050

E-mail: [info@kmn-ltd.co.uk](mailto:info@kmn-ltd.co.uk)

The Link (Local Involvement Network) is an independent network of local people and community groups working together to influence and improve Kent's health and social care services.

## **KENT PARENT CARER FORUM**

**01233 469 241**

[info@kpcf.co.uk](mailto:info@kpcf.co.uk)

<http://www.kentpeps.co.uk>

Kent Parent Carer Forum (KPCF) CIC (a Community Interest Company) was set up to Unite parents/carers of children with SEN and Disabilities, to Listen to their views and then help to Influence change. What do KPCF do? They listen to parents, carers and families about the issues they face. They then share these issues (anon) with the relevant people at KCC or NHS and they also share this information with the relevant MP and councilors. KPCF CIC sit on a range of boards and decision making groups helping to make parents voices heard. They aim to actively involve parents and carers in planning and making decisions about services for children and young people. They also share the information on a national level so that the Government hear about what issues are being faced. Membership is free! Becoming a member will mean they can keep you updated about important local and national developments. Joining is FREE and you can participate as much or little as you like. Get involved, have your say and together you can help to influence the services available to our families. They hold a Parent Advisory Group which is for all mums, dads and carers in Kent who have children and young adults of up to 25 years.

### **Maidstone Carers Project**

01622 685276

<http://www.vam-online.org.uk/>

The Carers Project supports people caring for a family member or friend. Information is available on local services, benefits, entitlements and rights. Practical help with forms, claiming benefits and making complaints is offered. An information booklet signposting support and services for parent carers is produced. The project also facilitates a range of social activity groups for carers. Emotional support by telephone, face-to-face and within carer support groups is available. MCP also facilitates a regular carers' forum and consultation with carers on specific issues.

### **Maidstone Mediation Scheme**

01622 692843

[maidstonemediation@gmail.com](mailto:maidstonemediation@gmail.com)

<http://www.maidstonemediation.co.uk/contact.html>

The Scheme is a registered charity offering a free confidential service to people in interpersonal conflict or dispute. Offer training to schools to enable them to set up and maintain their own mediation services. Cover disputes between parents & children, neighbors, bullying at school.

### **Maidstone Mencap Charitable Trust**

<https://www.mencap.org.uk/local-groups/group/maidstone-mencap-charitable-trust-ltd>

01622 670464

Maidstone Mencap provides support to families of children and adults with learning difficulties in the Maidstone area. They also provide holiday play schemes and clubs, see Leisure Section.

### **Maidstone Mind**

01622 692383

<http://www.mind.org.uk/>

Mind in Maidstone provides information and support to people with mental health needs and their family and carers

### **M4S Special Needs Support Service**

01622 764 566

<http://www.m4s.org.uk>

M4S is a Parent Charity offering services, leisure and Short Breaks. They organize events and activities including Short Breaks for families of children with special needs. They also run a Youth Club in partnership with VAWK for children and young people who are members of M4S. (See Parent Charity information in Leisure section) For further information about other services offered please see website above. M4S Charity are a member of Kent Disabled Children Parent Driven Consortium (KDCPDC)

### **MCCH: learning disability, mental health & autism support**

<http://www.mcch.org.uk/>

0800 028 2815

MCCH supports people with learning disabilities, mental health needs and autism. Providing accommodation, community support, employment, engagement

### **Netmums Parent Supporters**

<http://www.netmums.com/support>

Netmums has a range of Parent Supporters who can offer on-line support and advice to mums with every problem ranging from domestic violence to Post Natal Depression, special needs to relationship issues.

### **SCOPE Response**

<http://www.scope.org.uk/>

0808 800 3333

Email: [response@scope.org.uk](mailto:response@scope.org.uk)

Scope Response is an information, advice and support service. Open 9 am – 5 pm weekdays, closed weekends and Bank Holidays. For information on cerebral palsy, disability issues and all their services, Scope Response is the first point of contact - Nigel Marsh, Senior Regional Response Worker.

### **Sense Kent Branch**

01622 831345

<http://www.sense.org.uk> (National website)

Sense Kent Branch offer a Support group for parents and those caring for people who are deaf/blind living in Kent. Provides a link with services offered by Sense nationally which includes information, training and holidays for children/people who have a sensory impairment.

### **SlideAway**

Email: [slideawayone@aol.com](mailto:slideawayone@aol.com)

07794486816

<http://www.slideaway.org/>

SlideAway is a Charity that helps young people who have had a bereavement in their family. SlideAway is also operating in the Tonbridge & Malling area, as well as Maidstone.

### **SPACE Charity**

01892 731758

[www.spacecharity.org](http://www.spacecharity.org)

Space is a Parent Charity working partnership with M4S charity that organizes events and activities including Short Breaks for families of children with special needs. They also run a Youth Club in partnership with M4S for children and young people who are members. (See Parent Charity information in Leisure section) For further information about other services offered please see website above. Space Charity are a member of Kent Disabled Children Parent Driven Consortium (KDCPDC)

### **StarJumpz**

01892 510257

<http://starjumpz.com/contact-us/>

Star Jumpz offer help for children with learning, developmental and/or behavioural problems. Children's Therapy Education & Wellbeing. (OT & SALT) Providing comprehensive assessments, reports, therapy, and insets on behalf of children with a range of disabilities including dyspraxia, autism, sensory integration, ADHD and allied conditions. The team consists of paediatric occupational therapists and speech and language therapists. Services include training and educational programmes for parents, teachers and health professionals primarily on Sensory Processing Difficulties and Therapy. [This organisation provides therapy privately \(for a fee\).](#)

### **Children Centres: Maidstone**

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/childcare-and-pre-school/childrens-centres>

'Children's centres are places that provide information and services for families with young children. On average, a children's centre will serve a community with about 800 children under five years old.'

### **Services you might find in Kent Children's Centres:**

- High quality early education and childcare for children aged 0 to 5, available in hours to suit working parents
- Drop-in sessions for parents and children
- Ante-natal classes and baby clinics
- Information and advice about breastfeeding, parenting and speech & language
- Services for children with special needs and disabilities
- Links to local schools and holiday play schemes
- Encouragement and support for parents thinking about training or finding a new job
- Links to a childminder network
- Support from **Kent Children and Families Information Service** to provide a range of information about childcare and related issues for families'

### **TLC for Carers - Moving and Handling Advice Project**

01622 749885

The service is available to carers of patients living in the Maidstone/Weald area. It offers advice to carers about how to help the person they care for to move around safely. Carers may contact the team directly or ask someone else to refer them.

### **TOPAZ**

01622 609284

Topaz Community is a Charity which is a User Led Voluntary organisation which promotes independence, peer support where our members are given opportunities to have the voices heard. We are involved in statutory organisations such as Kent LINK, Kent LD Partnership Board, Good Health Group and the Keeping Safe Group.

### **IMAGO - NEW NAME FOR VAWK (Voluntary Action Within Kent)**

**01892 530330**

<http://www.imago.community/>

Imago is a social action charity working across Kent, Medway, East Sussex and London. They deliver a range of services and projects; supporting independence, reducing social isolation and creating opportunities, for some of the most vulnerable in our communities. In addition they help voluntary and community sector organisations operate more effectively by offering a range of information, advice, resources, training and support. Formally known as VAWK they offer social inclusion projects and Weekend Fun Clubs some being residential Short Breaks and Kent Young Carers, see leisure section.

**Voluntary Action Maidstone (VAM)** Marsham Street, Maidstone

01622 677337

<http://www.vam-online.org.uk/>

Voluntary Action Maidstone started in 1975 as Maidstone Volunteer Bureau. VAM is still a local charity serving people in the Borough of Maidstone and has grown to become a Council for Voluntary Service and offer a range of services to organisations and to individual people. The Volunteer Centre provides an enormous choice of exciting opportunities for people to volunteer. The infrastructure support role for voluntary and community groups means they are able to help local services flourish. Frontline services offer assistance to older people, people with disabilities, people with mental health problems and carers. Whether you want to be a volunteer, need help with writing a business plan for your group or want a driver to take you to hospital, you are most welcome to contact them. VAM also facilitates an umbrella group which brings together local voluntary and community groups that work with children and young people. It aims to improve outcomes for children and young people by strengthening and supporting those groups that work with them. VAM also have an on-line directory listing other voluntary organisations and groups in and around Maidstone.

**Wheelchair Users** 119 Enbrooke Valley, Folkestone CT20 3NE

<http://www.wheelchairusers.org.uk>

Amongst other things they run a support help-line and provide a comprehensive information service covering all aspects of wheelchair use throughout Kent.

## **YOUNG KENT**

Young Kent: Young Kent provide a range of programmes and services all aimed at helping young people (aged13-25) do more, see more and achieve more. These programmes aim to ensure that every young person, regardless of their background or other barriers; has the opportunity to unlock the talent within them, realise their true potential have the brightest possible future. You can find out more about the full range of programmes available on the Young Kent website [www.youngkent.org.uk](http://www.youngkent.org.uk) or by calling one of the team on 01622 351150