



DiverseAbilities
Dorset's Disability Charity

60 YEARS OF MAKING A DIFFERENCE 1955-2015





Dorset's Disability Charity

OUR MISSION

To enable children and adults with disabilities to achieve their full potential by providing a lifetime of sustainable support and educational services.

OUR VISION

To be the leading disability charity locally offering the broadest choice of high quality services tailored to individual needs.

DIVERSE ABILITIES IS THE ONLY CHARITY IN DORSET THAT SUPPORTS CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH PROFOUND PHYSICAL AND/OR LEARNING DISABILITIES, AND THEIR FAMILIES, THROUGH A RANGE OF SERVICES.

DIVERSE ABILITIES PROVIDES OVER 70,000 HOURS OF SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN IN A YEAR. DIVERSE ABILITIES PROVIDE OVER 180,000 HOURS OF SUPPORT FOR ADULTS IN A YEAR. IT COSTS OVER £17,000 A DAY TO RUN ALL OF THE SERVICES. DIVERSE ABILITIES IS COMMITTED TO PROVIDING A LIFETIME PARTNERSHIP FOR THE PEOPLE WE SUPPORT. DIVERSE ABILITIES SUPPORTS OVER 600 FAMILIES IN DORSET. OVER 400 STAFF WORK ACROSS THE CHARITY'S SERVICES.

THANK YOU

A big thank you goes to everyone that has been involved with the charity since the day it was formed and to those that have contributed to this piece of history, which is celebrating the past 60 years of the charity.

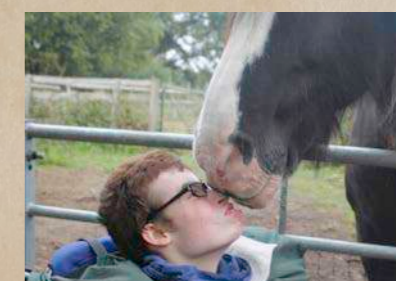
This book is dedicated to everyone that has been a part of Bournemouth, Poole & District Spastics Society; Dorset Spastics Society; Dorset Scope and Diverse Abilities throughout the eras.

Happy reading!

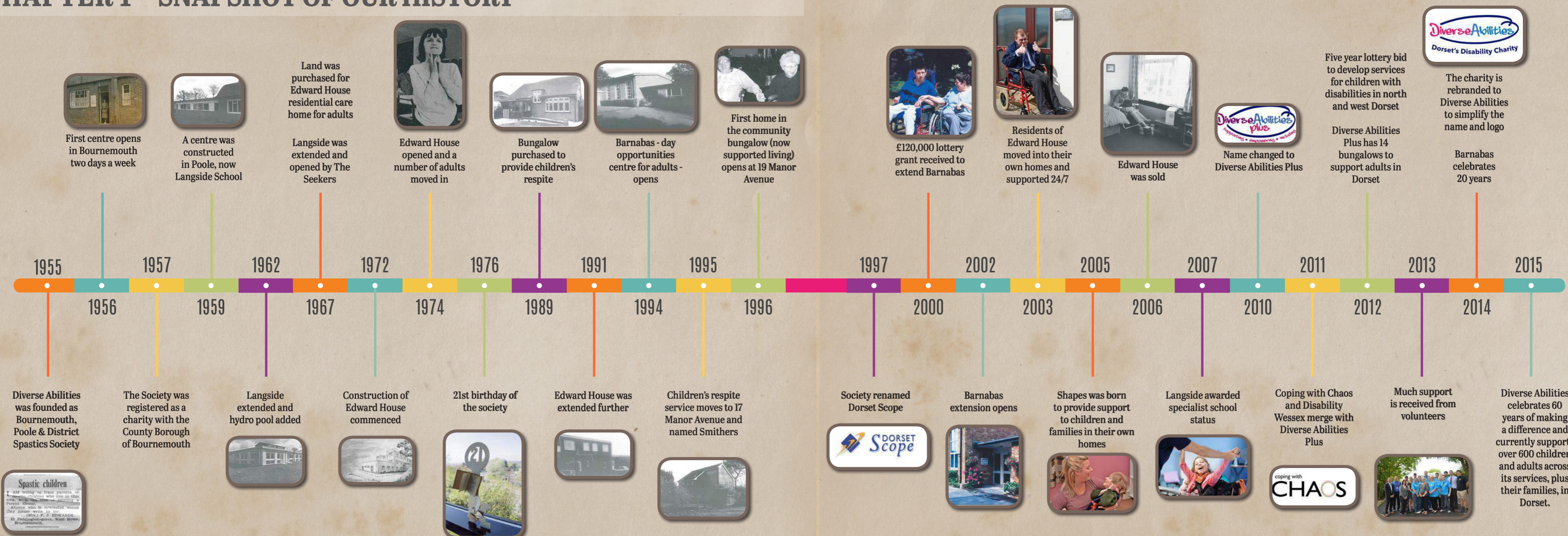
Jenny and Hugh - Diverse Abilities Communications Team

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CHAPTER 1 SNAPSHOT OF OUR HISTORY



First centre opens in Bournemouth two days a week



A centre was constructed in Poole, now Langside School

Land was purchased for Edward House residential care home for adults

Langside was extended and opened by The Seekers



Edward House opened and a number of adults moved in



Bungalow purchased to provide children's respite



Barnabas - day opportunities centre for adults - opens



First home in the community bungalow (now supported living) opens at 19 Manor Avenue



£120,000 lottery grant received to extend Barnabas



Residents of Edward House moved into their own homes and supported 24/7



Edward House was sold



Name changed to Diverse Abilities Plus

Five year lottery bid to develop services for children with disabilities in north and west Dorset

Diverse Abilities Plus has 14 bungalows to support adults in Dorset



The charity is rebranded to Diverse Abilities to simplify the name and logo

Barnabas celebrates 20 years

Diverse Abilities was founded as Bournemouth, Poole & District Spastics Society



The Society was registered as a charity with the County Borough of Bournemouth

Langside extended and hydro pool added



Construction of Edward House commenced



21st birthday of the society



Edward House was extended further



Children's respite service moves to 17 Manor Avenue and named Smithers



Society renamed Dorset Scope



Barnabas extension opens



Shapes was born to provide support to children and families in their own homes



Langside awarded specialist school status



Coping with Chaos and Disability Wessex merge with Diverse Abilities Plus

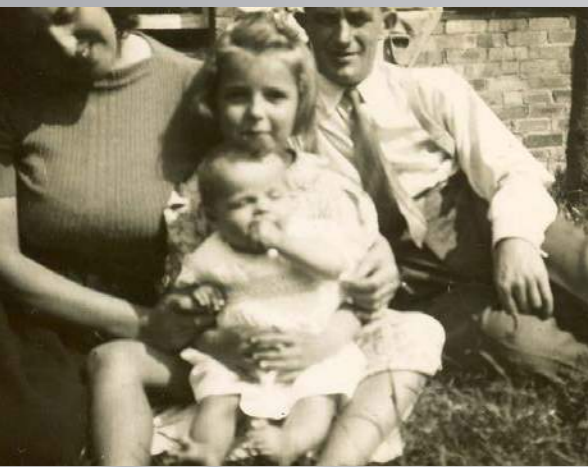


Much support is received from volunteers



Diverse Abilities celebrates 60 years of making a difference and currently supports over 600 children and adults across its services, plus their families, in Dorset.

CHAPTER 2 HOW IT ALL BEGAN



THE EDWARDS FAMILY

Phyllis and John Edwards' daughter, Marilyn, was born in 1948 with cerebral palsy. It took nearly two years for her disability to be diagnosed and Phyllis was told to, 'put her away she will only be a cabbage'.

Undeterred, Mrs Edwards discovered a need for support for local families with disabled children and wrote a letter to the Bournemouth Daily Echo in 1955. The advert received a number of responses and within two months a group was formed with the parents' intention to provide better opportunities for children with physical and learning disabilities.

The first meeting was held in Mrs Edwards' front room, the Bournemouth, Poole & District Spastics Society was formed and a committee appointed.

Spastic children
I AM trying to trace parents of spastic children who live in this area, with the idea of forming a Parent Group.
Anyone who is interested would they please write to me.
(Mrs.) P. J. EDWARDS.
43 Paddington-grove, West Howe, Bournemouth.

Monday
Dear Mrs Edwards
Re your advert Spastic children I should be interested to join your group. My daughter is now 14 years of age.
Yours sincerely
Wendy Stephenson

Telephone Winton 4966
Dear Mrs. Edwards,
I have just read your letter in this evening's "Echo", and would like to offer help if you are successful in starting a Parent Group for spastic children.
I am very interested in this matter, and have a 15 year old daughter who fortunately is in perfect health but who hopes eventually to train to become a teacher of spastic children. If a Group is formed perhaps she could be of use to some of the mothers, even if only to watch over them occasionally to give the mother's a rest, and it would, at the same time, give her an idea of what she would have to cope with if she takes up such teaching as a career. I also would be pleased to help in any way I could.
I am enclosing a stamped addressed envelope, and if at any time you feel we could help, perhaps you will let me know.
Yours faithfully,
Ann Chamberlain



Phyllis outside the house where it all began (2015)

Dear Mr. Mrs Edwards,
I have been given your address by Mrs Beale. Physiotherapist at Poole Hospital.
Our little girl is a Spastic and we would like to join the Society.
So if you would let us know when your next meeting is, and were it is held we would be very much obliged.
Yours Sincerely
Mr Mrs Pennington.

THE BEGINNING – BY PHYLLIS EDWARDS

My second daughter Marilyn was born on 1 October 1948. She was born severely disabled but this wasn't recognised by the medical profession until she was nearly two years old. At six months I began to think she was in need of perhaps vitamin tablets, or some sort of medication as she appeared not to have much strength in her arms and legs. I took her to the clinic and asked for advice only to be told I was just an over-anxious mother and that Marilyn was perfect in every way.

Just after her first birthday she appeared to be getting stronger and would try and pull herself up to a standing position but her arms and legs were still floppy. When she tried to pick up a cup, she would miss it, or knock it over. She had a very intelligent expression and would look at me as if to say "I won't be beaten."

When Marilyn was 18 months old I was advised by my GP to take her to see a paediatrician as she wasn't making any progress. After explaining about Marilyn, he said: "And what do you expect me to do?" I looked at him in astonishment and said 'I've come to you for help. I've tried everything, but her progress is very slow.' I then had the shock of my life. He told me that no one could do anything for her; she will never grow up as a normal person. It was a dreadful shock, I came away, as you can imagine, in tears. I saw my GP and he confirmed that Marilyn was brain damaged.

When Marilyn was four years old, she was walking fairly well, had learnt to pick up a cup and drink, and could feed herself by placing her thumb alongside the spoon. She was very hyperactive, not destructive, but would open drawers and throw everything out, liked to investigate the gas cooker and turn taps on. She couldn't concentrate, couldn't talk, had only a few words, and needed very little sleep.

It got to a point that I felt I was sacrificing three lives for the sake of one and neglecting my other daughter. My health was not good and I came to the conclusion I couldn't go on like this forever. With no help it was an impossible situation, so my husband and I agreed it that after her fifth birthday Marilyn should be admitted to Coldeast Mental Hospital, but on the very same day we had to go and sit in front of a Magistrates Court, where the question was asked, "do you want this to happen to your daughter?" I wanted to scream out "no we don't but what are you going to do to help her"? I knew the answer; I couldn't fight this anymore after five years. The powers that be had won and she had to be certified as simple minded. She was admitted to Coldeast Hospital.

I then decided to write to the National Spastics Society (NSS) in London. I poured out my heart and was so pleased when they answered my letter so sympathetically, saying that parents of disabled children were writing to them day after day telling their similar stories, and suggested I should start a group for parents with disabled children. Apparently there were groups forming up and down the country but so far nothing was happening in Bournemouth, Poole or surrounding areas. I had no idea how to start a group up but then a small voice inside my head said to me; well what are you going to do about it? You are criticising other people, you are no different yourself. It made me stop and think... was there something I could do? I thought about it for a few more weeks hoping someone else would come along with lots of ideas, but nothing happened. Still the small voice wouldn't go away.

Then one day I decided to write just a short letter to the Bournemouth Daily Echo... I received no replies so had another go and wrote a second letter. This time I was successful and nine people replied and so it began...

CHAPTER 3

Nitty

Fitties



Within a year of the second letter being sent to the Bournemouth Daily Echo the first committee of the Society was formed and included Phyllis as treasurer, John as secretary and Miss Joseph, the physio from Bournemouth Hospital, as chairman.

The Mayor of Bournemouth (Councillor D.N. Willoughby) was the first president of the group and offered his support. A number of prominent people in the town accepted his invitation to become vice-president.

In February 1956 the first centre opened in Stafford Road in Bournemouth and the Bournemouth, Poole & District Spastics Society was formed. It was run by Miss Honnieford and voluntary staff two days a week, and six children attended the centre. Volunteers kindly pick up the children and also arranged meals. Funds were raised by arranging jumble sales and coffee mornings to keep the centre open.

In 1957 the Society was registered as a charity with the County Borough of Bournemouth.

It soon become apparent that there was a need for larger premises so in 1959, within three years of the initial letter, a centre was constructed on Langside Avenue in Poole, named the Langside Centre. This was possible thanks to the Poole Corporation. To ensure the centre could be built as quickly as possible, parents of children that attended the centre helped build the school in the evenings after a full day's work.

Langside catered for 12 children at this time and employed a matron, state registered nurse, a qualified teacher and a physiotherapist. Children attended five days a week from 9.30am - 3.30pm. The local authorities continued to provide transport and school meals were provided through Poole School Meals Service.

Langside's aims in the early days were:



GENERAL AIMS

To provide, in a holistic way, education, care and therapy, to suit the individual mental and physical needs of physically handicapped children from two years of age, so they may use their potential to the full.

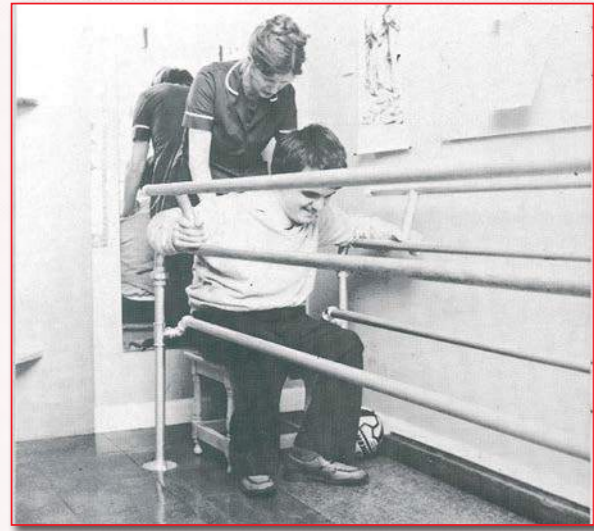
To teach the basic Christian principles as a foundation for individual character and personality development.

To foster an acceptance of handicaps and a positive realisation of abilities and achievements, independence, self-reliance and confidence without indulging in self-pity.

To encourage an appreciation of life and beauty in the world around and the ability to make worthwhile use of leisure time.

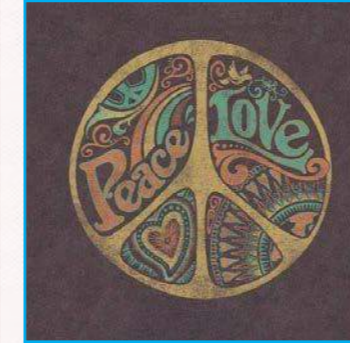


Credit: Bournemouth Echo



The school took a systematic approach to the teaching, content and timing of the curriculum but it remained flexible enough to ensure that the best possible use was made of available time and resources. The curriculum included subjects such as arts and science alongside basic skills such as toilet training, feeding and dressing. Play experiences included sand and water, finger painting and dressing up. Sensory and social training continued throughout the children's school life. Speech therapy also took place with the aid of Makaton signs and symbols.

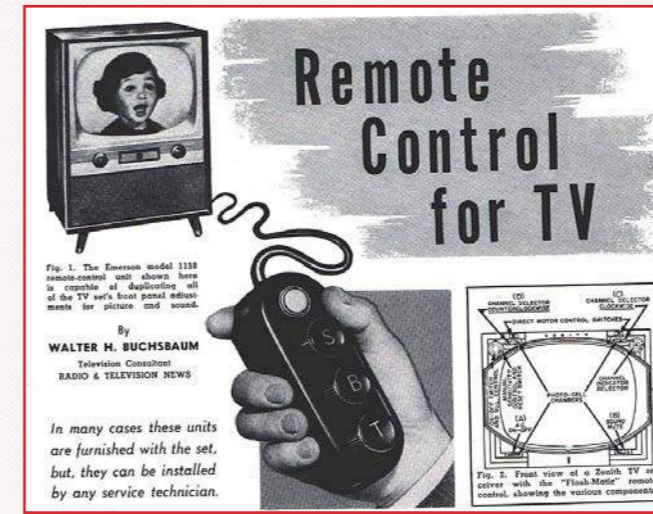
SNAPSHOT OF THE 50s



Peace symbol created



Winston Churchill becomes Prime Minister of Great Britain



TV. remote control invented



Colour TV introduced



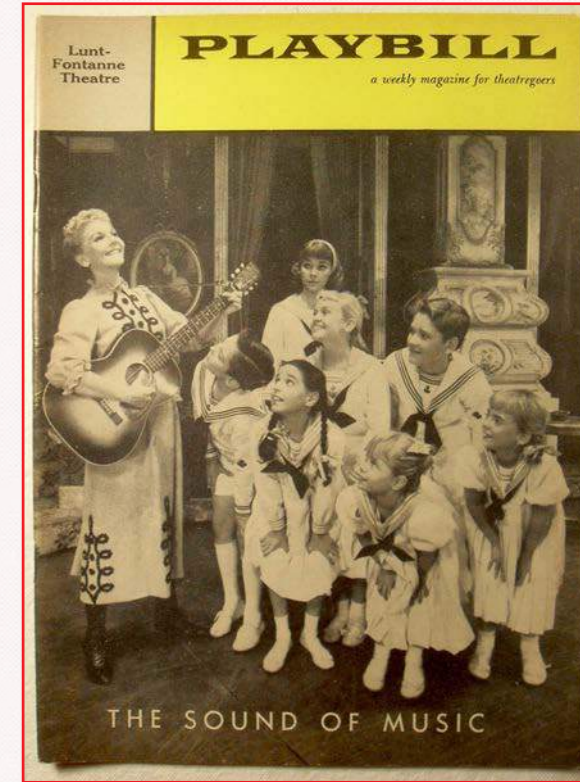
First Atomic Submarine launched



Car seat belts introduced



Princess Elizabeth becomes Queen at 25



The Sound of Music Opens on Broadway



Disneyland opens

Swimming

Sixties

In the early 1960s the demands on the **Langside** facilities increased so quickly that an additional class and therapy room, coupled with a toilet block and storage space, were soon needed. In 1962, the additional class room and therapy room opened, plus a hydrotherapy pool in 1963.



Enjoying hydrotherapy



Poole Round Tablers donate an ambulance

For two years running, the Poole Round Tablers very kindly sponsored a fund on the charity's behalf and donated a much needed ambulance in 1965. This 13-seater vehicle was specially designed for carrying wheelchairs and fitted with a rear ramp. It was very beneficial to the Society as it meant children could be transported to and from school or out on trips.

The teaching staff increased as **Langside** grew to support 25 children and plans became quite ambitious with regards to its growth. Work started on an extension to the school, which included a training and treatment room complete with specially designed physio and speech therapy room, consulting room, admin office, modern kitchen and caretaker's flat. The cost was met by the generosity of the public through fundraising, the Cluewin football scheme and a grant from the Spastics Society.

The larger size **Langside** was then officially opened by The Seekers, an Australian folk-influenced pop group, in July 1967. There to witness this was the Sheriff of Poole and his Lady, the Mayor and Mayoress of Christchurch, the Mayor and Mayoress of Wareham, Alderman and Mrs D S Scott and some 300 guests.



The first Langside extension, 1962

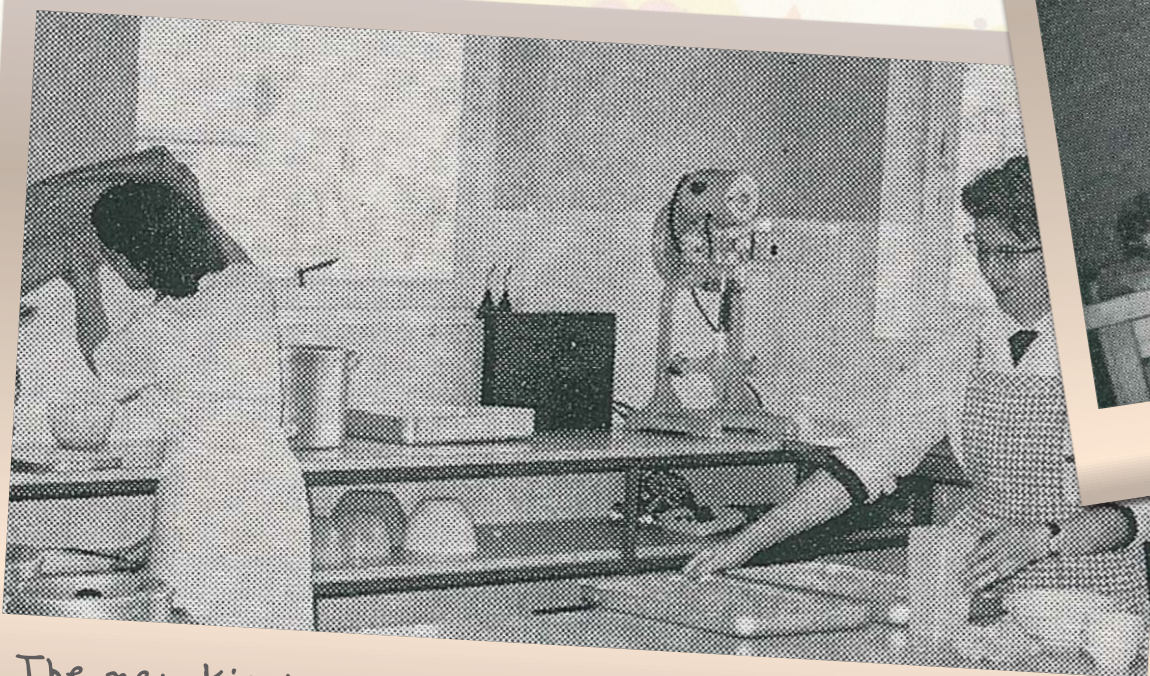


The second Langside extension, 1967



The Seekers open Langside, 1967

The new extension enabled the charity to provide support to more children who couldn't benefit from a mainstream school, with specialist care and education.



The new kitchen meant that a cook and one assistant could prepare 60-65 dinners every day at Langside

In 1968, the school had even more reason to celebrate – it was registered as an independent school by the Department of Education and Science. In turn the centre was named Langside School in 1972.



A Langside classroom, 1965

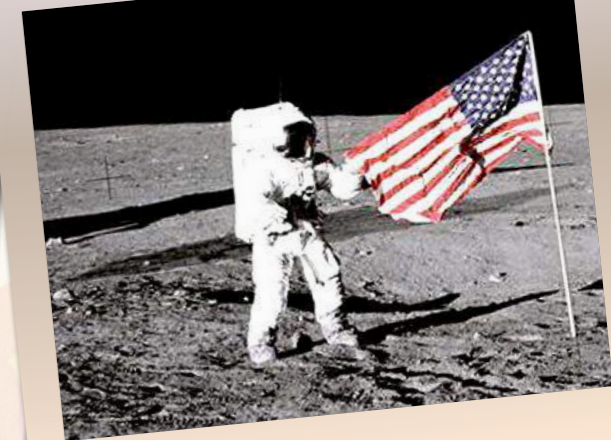


A Langside classroom, 1965

Snapshot of the 60s



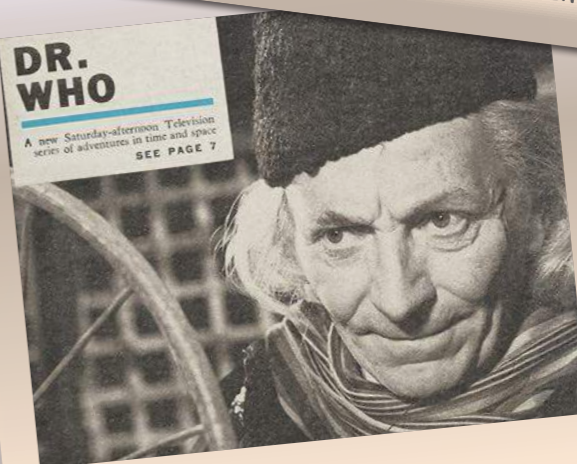
Berlin Wall was built



First man on the moon



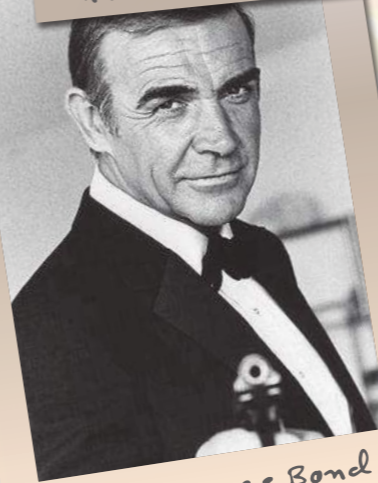
Martin Luther King Jr. makes his "I have a dream" speech



First Dr Who episode airs



Great Train Robbery



First James Bond movie



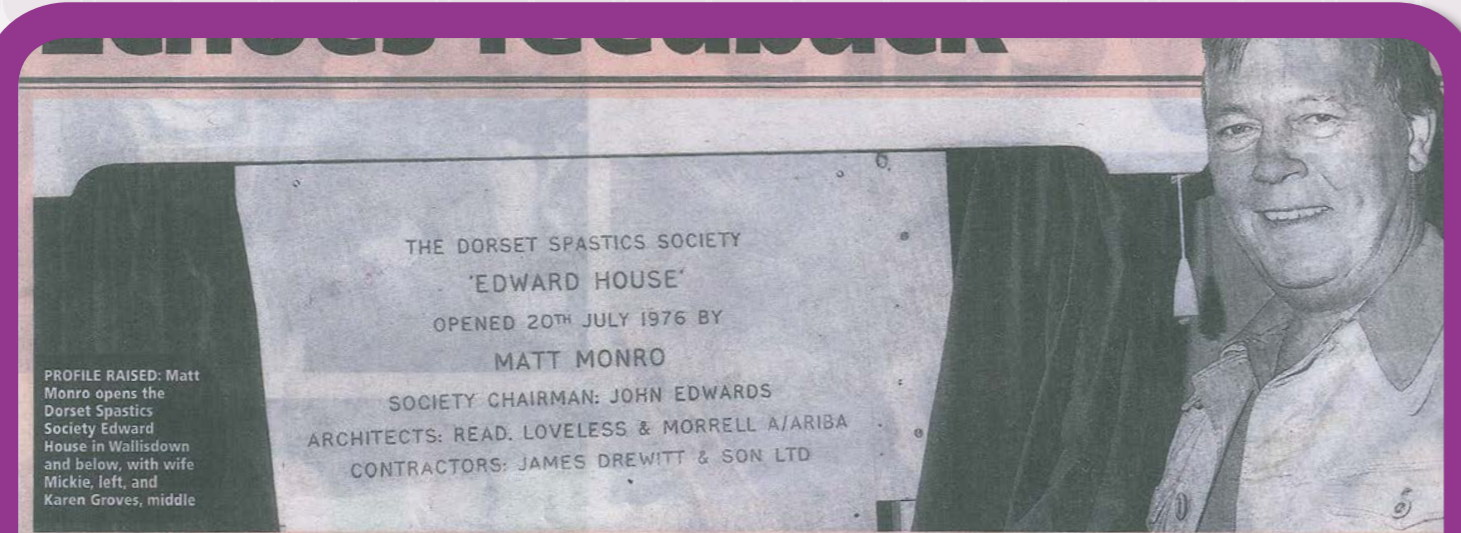
First Woman in Space



The Rolling Stones mega hit song – (I can't get no) Satisfaction

Psychedelic Seventies

After the construction of Langside it was decided there was a need for somewhere adults could move on to once they reached 19 years of age. In 1967 land was purchased in Talbot Drive, Poole for a residential home to accommodate adults over the age of 16 and provide care as they grew older. The Bournemouth Round Table kindly donated half of the cost so it was possible to purchase the land. In 1972 the build commenced and was named **Edward House**, after the founders Phyllis and John.



PROFILE RAISED: Matt Monro opens the Dorset Spastics Society Edward House in Wallisdown and below, with wife Mickie, left, and Karen Groves, middle

A special connection

A TEN-year link forged between young disabled girl Karen Groves and the popular singer Matt Monro helped lift the profile of Langside School and their residential home, Edward House in Parkstone. Mrs Phyllis Edwards, herself the mother of a disabled daughter, formed the Poole, Bournemouth and District Spastics Society, as it was then known, in 1955. A committee was formed with her husband, John as the chairman and a small centre in Stafford Road, Bournemouth was set up. A few years later a

spastics' day school was opened in Langside Avenue, Wallisdown. "When my daughter Karen attended the school in the 60s and 70s a number of celebrities visited, including the Kay sisters, Tommy Cooper, Dickie Henderson and Mr Pastry, who started the fund for a new therapy pool, officially opening some time later", said Derek Groves, Karen's father. The Seekers were also at the school in 1967 to open an extension. After Karen met Matt Monro at Langside, they corresponded regularly

and proved to be excellent therapy for her. "It really helped to bring Karen out of herself. Before she had been very shy", said Derek. Aged 17 Karen moved from the school to a new residential home at Edward House in Talbot Drive. When Matt was invited in July 1976 to formally open the £100,000 Edward House, he didn't hesitate, breaking off an arduous trip from Bognor Regis to North Wales to come down to Bournemouth to unveil the plaque dedicated to the founders of the society.



Credit: Bournemouth Echo

Spastics' home with a family feeling



EDWARD HOUSE FIRST OF KIND



These photos show Edward House and one of the bedrooms.

- 3 AUG 1976

HAVING at last established and built Langside School which enables 50 spastic children to receive education, care and treatment on a daily basis, members of Dorset Spastics Society aimed their sights at a residential home.

For many years this remained a dream, but in July, 1967, it became possible to place emphasis on such a project, with the late Mr. Stan Stephenson launching an appeal for funds for the then estimated cost of £45,000 for a residential home for spastics over the age of 16.

In April, 1969, Dorset County Council offered land at a reasonable price and this was bought, with half the cost donated by Bournemouth Round Table.

A working committee was formed to investigate the position regarding residential accommodation, and in June 1971, the construction of such a home was agreed by members of the society.

The Cluwin Spastics Football Club also proved a staunch friend. Members must be pleased that their weekly pool investment contributed to the establishment of Edward House and provision of local facilities for spastics.

The officer in charge and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Ken Hillsdon, took up their appointment in January, 1974, their brief being to establish and run a home for an extra large family.

The creation and maintenance of a family atmosphere in which residents could live together in harmony and understanding, yet at the same time preserve their independence, soon became their prime objective.

Edward House was to be the first home of its kind, with no prototype. It was a new concept, and the first completion cost had

In support of the project, and the society thanks the many for support so generously provided.



Credit: Bournemouth Echo

Edward House aimed to preserve the independence of the residents, as the adults were referred to in the seventies. The principal aim was to create and maintain a family home atmosphere where all residents could live together in harmony.



In March 1974 the first eight adults moved into Edward House and it was officially opened by singer Matt Monro, a favourite of Karen Groves who the charity continues to support to this day. Edward House was three storeys high and situated on a hill with fantastic heathland views and each person we supported could choose their own room décor. All those that lived at the house were funded by their parents and by mid-1975 Edward House was fully occupied supporting 24 adults.



During this era the medical facilities at Langside included a local authority medical officer and they were supervised by the matron who, besides being a state registered nurse, was trained in orthopaedic nursing. The matron was also able to take children to hospital to see the paediatrician. There was a well-equipped physiotherapy room, run by three part-time chartered physiotherapists. A speech therapist was employed for two days a week and undertook special sessions with the children alongside advising staff on children's problems linked with speech. A dental surgeon inspected the pupils' teeth at the school and any work required was carried out at the surgery on days especially reserved for the school.

SCHOOL HELPS SPASTICS

£350 cheque will buy a special bath

A CHEQUE for £350 was presented by pupils of Henry Harbin School, Poole, to Mr. F. W. J. Moore, chairman of Edward House, the new purpose-built residential hostel for spastic children in Talbot Drive, Bournemouth, yesterday.

The money had been raised during the past term from various events, including a talent contest, sponsored walk and raffles. It had been used to provide a special bath.

Mr. Moore said it would be a great advantage. Spastic children could be wheeled into the bath in their chairs and they had greater confidence.

He thanked the pupils and staff of the school for the substantial effort they had made to raise the money in one term.

Mr. Kenneth Hillsdon, officer-in-charge at Edward House, said the object of the hostel was to provide a family atmosphere. There would be accommodation for

twelve permanent residents up to the age of sixteen, and also two short-stay beds to relieve parents of the burden temporarily during holidays, weekends and other periods.

Children slept at the hostel, and attended a training centre during the day. He said it was difficult for pupils to imagine the difficulties and frustrations suffered by spastic children, and he asked them to treat them with consideration.

The presentation was made by Alison Mayhew. Also present was Miss Hazel Draper, the local appeals officer of the Spastic Society.

The hostel is administered by Bournemouth, Poole and District Spastics Society.

Echo picture shows Alison presenting the cheque to Mr. Moore, watched by (left to right) David Van-Hees, Mr. M. Beesley, Mr. R. J. Mellings, headmaster, Mr. K. Parsons and Miss Draper.



Credit: Bournemouth Echo



The Dorset Spastics Society

The **Society** changed its name to **Dorset Spastics Society** at the end of 1974 to reflect how it supported children and adults across Dorset, not just Poole and Bournemouth. It also hit a critical period in the winter of 1974/75. Inflation affected resources but thanks to the local authorities agreeing to more realistic fees, a loan from the national Spastics Society (which was repaid), fundraising events and local contributions the Society came through the crisis.

In 1976 the Society was in a better financial position and was celebrating its **21st anniversary** and a dinner and dance took place to honour the occasion.

Edward House was also able to accommodate a further ten adults by the end of the 70s.

SNAPSHOT OF THE 70s

First killer whale born in captivity

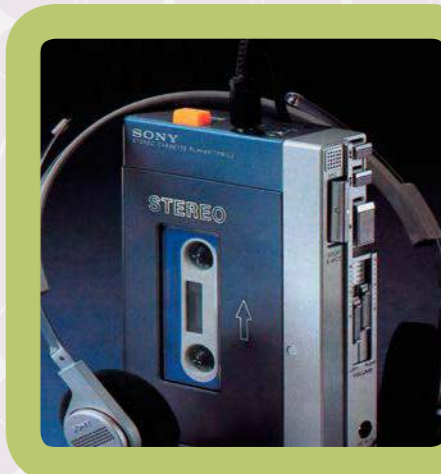


Margaret Thatcher became the first woman Prime Minister of Great Britain

Beatles split up



Sony introduces the Walkman



Footballer Bobby Moore retires



First Star Wars movie is released



Microsoft founded

MICRO
SOFT

Computer floppy disks introduced



BOOMING EIGHTIES

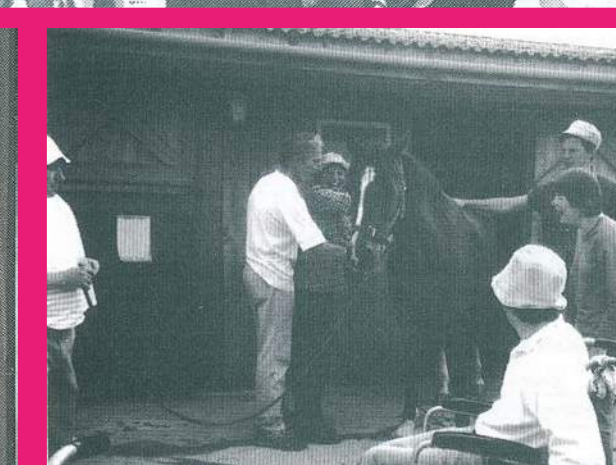
In **1980** the charity celebrated its **25th birthday** and a buffet dance was held to honour the anniversary during the summer at the Allendale Centre in Wimborne.

Langside appointed Mrs Kathleen Vandervelde as headmistress in **1981** and at this time Langside started the year with **25 children**. Key highlights in a report by Mrs Vandervelde from **1981** included:

- Ian Downton was awarded the 'Endeavour Cup'
- Children had an outing to Marwell Zoo
- The ambulance had been modified with a lift
- Many hours were spent on the beach
- Outings to the Arndale Centre (now the Dolphin Centre) and an Easter Fayre in Beales
- Christmas lunch and a party was held with Father Christmas
- Christmas concert where mince pies and coffee were served to parents – and this still remains to this day
- At Easter the school visited St Marks for a service (and this still occurs today)
- The school provided a wide and varied curriculum
- Sports Day was always great fun.



In **1983** the Friends of Edward House was formed to provide those supported with further interests and activities. The group included a number of devoted parents and friends. Activities included swimming sessions, entertainment evenings, bingo, BBQs and skittles.



The number of people **Edward House** could support in **1987** increased to **28**. The centre provided activity holidays and encouraged those the charity supported to participate in water sports, rock climbing, camping and outings to local beauty spots. During May, August and September, three groups of residents travelled to Lanlivery in Cornwall to enjoy the facilities of Churchtown Farm.



In March 1988, a bungalow was purchased at Kinsbourne Avenue near Ensbury Park to provide respite care for children aged 2 – 19 years so parents could have a much needed break. The property had four bedrooms, two bathrooms, a lounge, dining room and hall. Up to five children were able to be cared for at any one time. Marion Lawford was registered manager at the time, as well as being the executive officer for the whole charity.

A typical day at the respite home included the following:

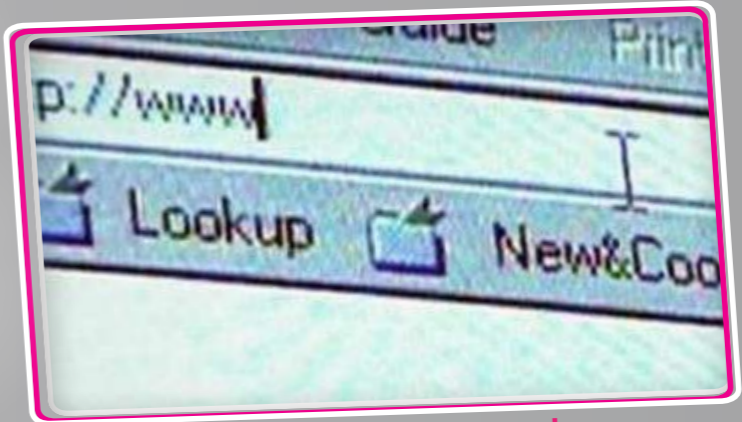
- Popping the kettle on for a cup of tea
- Everyone that stayed overnight had a bath and got dressed
- Once all ready, breakfast was enjoyed all together with an opportunity to plan the day's activities
- If it was term time children went off to school... a horn beeped when the transport arrived
- During the school holidays excursions were arranged, but first housework and washing had to be done! Everyone would pile into the bus and then perhaps take a trip to the beach, the local market, or to the shops
- Once home the children would watch some tele (on Thursdays it was usually Top of the Pops), have tea and then it was bath or shower time before bed.

Kathleen had the opportunity to send two members of staff from **Langside School** to Hungary in **1988** to visit the Peto Institute, thanks to funding from local businesses. The Peto Institute introduced a way to teach children who had cerebral palsy to lead independent lives by the means of conductive education. It assisted **Langside** to take an holistic approach to teaching and a number of adults the charity still supports now, including Andrew Corbin, Katie Miller and Simon Shave, made use of 'The Programme' brought in by Kathleen from the Peto Institute. 'The Programme' consisted of using wooden slats to help the children sit up, and this was undertaken for half an hour a day. This was a big step for **Langside** as it started a daily programme for all pupils.

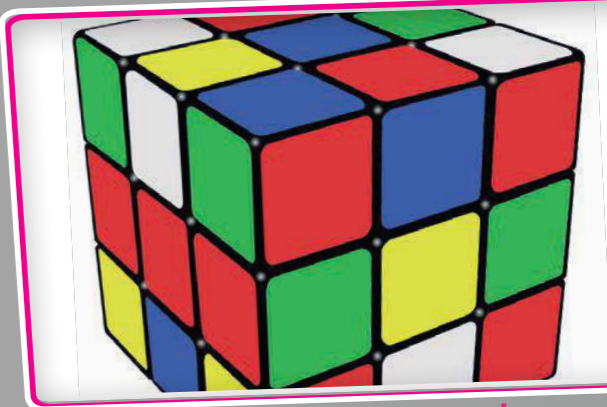


In **1984** a visit from Matthew Kelly to **Langside** took place. He spent a few hours chatting to the children and a number of them wrote to him and received signed photos and a letter back.

SNAPSHOT OF THE 80S



World Wide Web invented



Rubix cube became popular



First British mobile phone invented



The British sitcom Hi-de-hi hit the television screens



The film ET was released



PC introduced by IBM

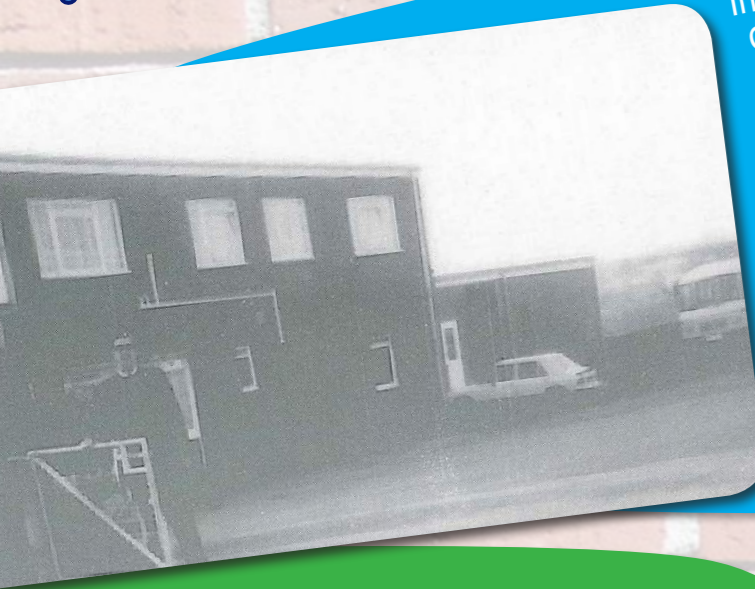


Pac-man video game released



DNA first used to convict criminals

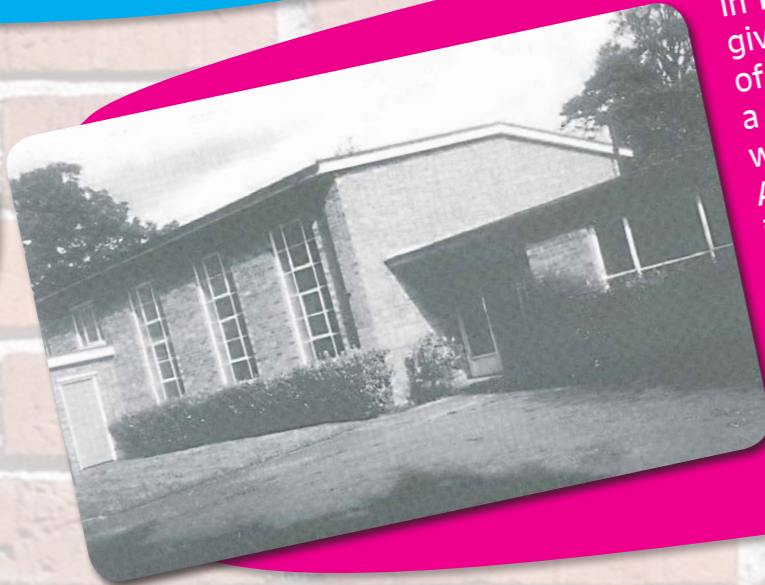
notorious nineties



In January **1990** John Ashby became Deputy Headteacher at **Langside**. At this time there were around ten children per class with one full time teacher and a classroom assistant, plus one nurse, two physios and a speech and language therapist. The building was split into two to separate the lower and upper school.

In **1991** the respite home received funding from Children in Need, **Edward House** introduced a garden project for the residents and Langside School's numbers increased to **40 pupils**.

Edward House was supporting **28 adults** and everyone would enjoy socialising together, especially on Tuesday's parents' evenings. People from all over the country, including London, Liverpool and Wales, came to live in **Edward House**, which shows the demand for adults with disabilities to live in a nice, caring and accommodating environment.



In **1992** the Society was fortunate to be given the opportunity to purchase a plot of land in Manor Avenue, which included a redundant church, parsonage and wooden building at a price of £200,000. At the same time, the charity was informed that it was to receive a legacy of just over £150,000, thanks to Lily Smithers - a friend of Marion Lawford. The committee moved quickly and became the owners of the St Barnabas site and appealed for donations.



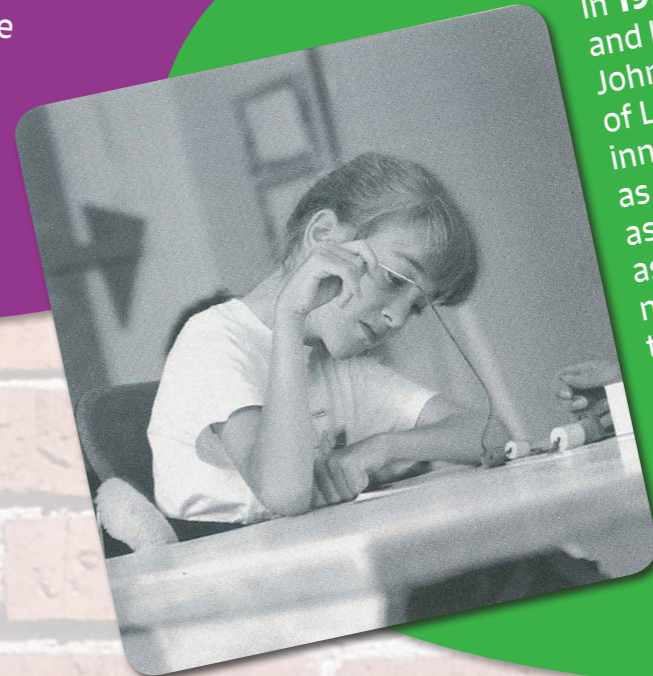
The church was turned into today's adult day centre - **Barnabas** - and opened in September **1994** to provide a creative and sociable environment for **25** students aged between 18-77 years.



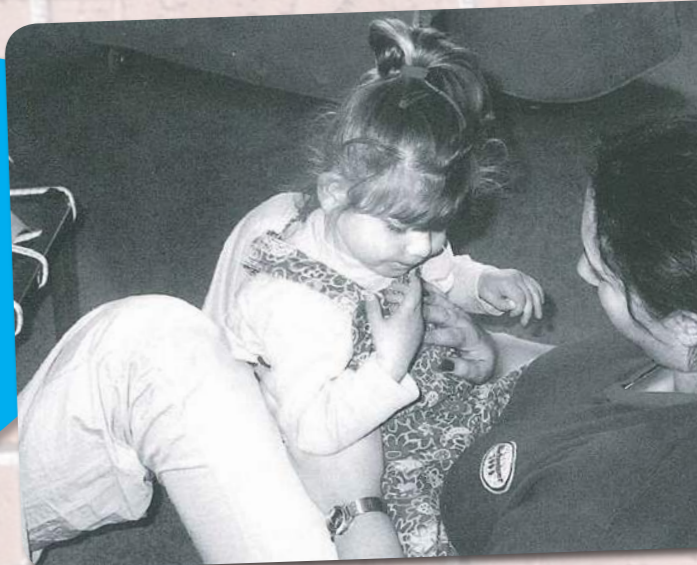
Number 19 Manor Avenue, located next to **Barnabas**, was turned into a registered home in **1994** and four people that the charity supported moved in.



During **1995** **Smithers** moved to 17 Manor Avenue from Kinsbourne Avenue. It now catered for seven children up to the age of 19 and each child had an individual care package to meet their unique needs. They also ran day care sessions for pre-school children.



In **1996** Kathleen retired as headmistress and became CEO of the charity, while John Ashby took over as headteacher of Langside. Langside School saw many innovations during the nineties such as literacy hour, numeracy, baseline assessment and benchmarking as well as new legislation on special educational needs and professional reform. In **1999** a trip to Edinburgh took place and all that attended visited a ski centre, Edinburgh Castle and Loch Leven. Benefits of these trips were huge as they brought personal independence, seeing incredible scenery and spending time with friends.





In 1997 the charity was re-named Dorset Scope. The vision of the charity was:
Dorset Scope promotes the care, welfare, interest, education and advancement in the county of Dorset of any person with cerebral palsy and any other disabilities.

During 1998/99 Edward House saw many changes. Several residents moved into their own homes and new residents were welcomed. Residents enjoyed weekends away to France as well as in England.



During 1997 Barnabas put on their first Christmas show – Grease. This was very popular and over 20 of the students took part. The following year the students and staff put on a variety show and acts included singers, dancers, impersonators, comedians and a choir. Dave Austin was the Barnabas Manager from 1994 until 2012 then changed roles to manage the charity's facilities, properties, transport and all matters relating to health and safety, which he continues to do today.



Snapshot of the aos



First successful air balloon ride over the Pacific Ocean



The Euro introduced



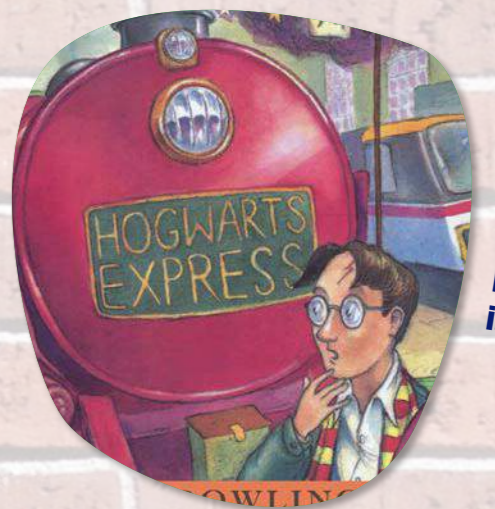
Official end of the Cold War



Nelson Mandela freed



Mad cow disease hits Britain



First Harry Potter book is released



Ebay founded



Kathleen retired as CEO and in September 1999 Paul Barnard joined Dorset Scope as Chief Executive. Paul had extensive experience of managing services for adults and children with disabilities.

CHAPTER 8

THE NOUGHTIES

Barnabas was extended in the year **2000** thanks to a lottery grant received in **1997** of £120,000 and supported up to **30 students** a day on a full or part time basis. Each student had a specific programme of activities tailored to their individual needs and preferences. The range of activities included computers, music, arts and crafts, gardening, fitness, numeracy, swimming, drama, horse riding and therapies.



In **2002**, due to changes in social care, Edward House was due to close and went through the process of being sold, as did many other residential homes for those with disabilities. The proceeds of the sale of Edward House enabled the purchase of **12 properties** with Golden Lane Housing as landlords for supported living, and the aim was to give people their own lives and freedom.



Between **2003** and **2005** those supported in Edward House moved into their own homes to be supported 24/7 by the charity's team. The first official supported living bungalow opened with Graeme and Simon moving in, who are both supported by the charity still today. In addition the registered home at 19 Manor Avenue became unregistered and turned into a supported living bungalow. In June **2005** the last residents of Edward House moved into their own supported living bungalow and Edward House closed in **2006**.



During **2007** the trustees at the time embarked on a major programme of change designed to modernise and equip the charity for the changing needs of the sector. By **2011/12** it was fully implemented and the aim was to ensure that the charity was fit for purpose and able to face an increasingly tough economic climate.



From **2001 – 2011** Margaret Rustici was registered manager for Smithers. The service continued to support children from 2-19 years and aimed to provide a home-from-home, providing parents a much needed rest. The house included a large lounge, good size garden, an annexe for soft play and a play house. Activities were varied and included art, crafts and games.





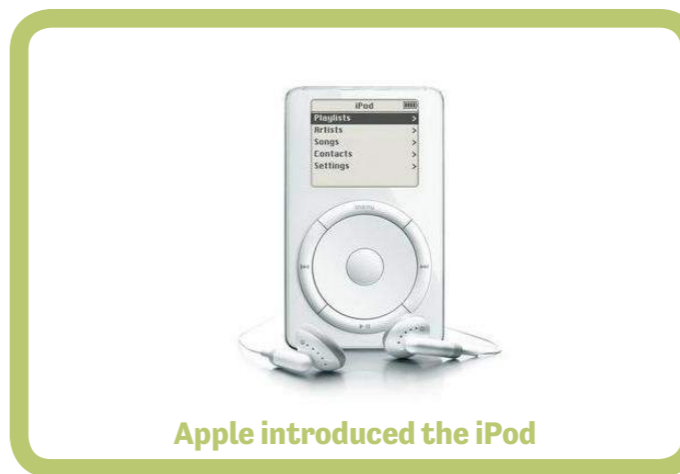
In **2007** Langside School was awarded special school status and its fundamental aims were to focus on providing a broad and balanced curriculum that was relevant, cohesive and challenging to the social, intellectual, physical and emotional needs of every pupil. The school was supporting **40 plus students** at the beginning of the noughties who all had a statement of special educational needs relating to physical and learning disabilities. The school had five groups which roughly coincided with key stages. All children at Langside followed a course of study determined by attainment targets of the national curriculum but tailored to individual needs. There were eight qualified and experienced teachers, full time therapy support, two full time nurses, three part-time physiotherapists, a full time occupational therapist, two part time speech therapists, three physio assistants and 12 learning support assistants.



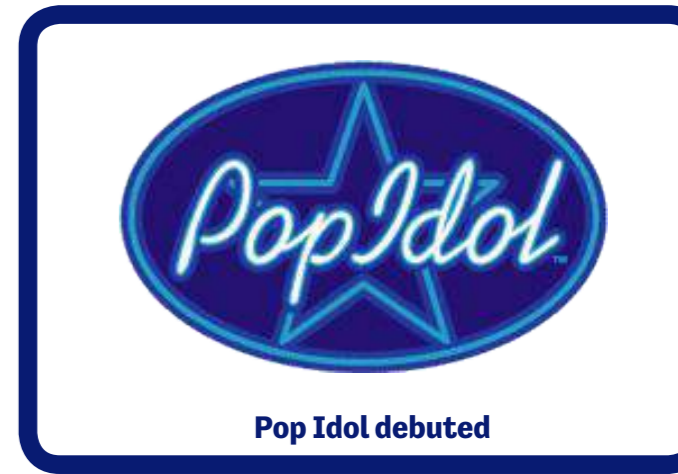
Project My Time and **Term Time** provided activities to children with disabilities during the school holidays and after school from **2007**. This was managed by Cate Reade and Amiee Barnett.



SNAPSHOT OF THE NOUGHTIES



Apple introduced the iPod



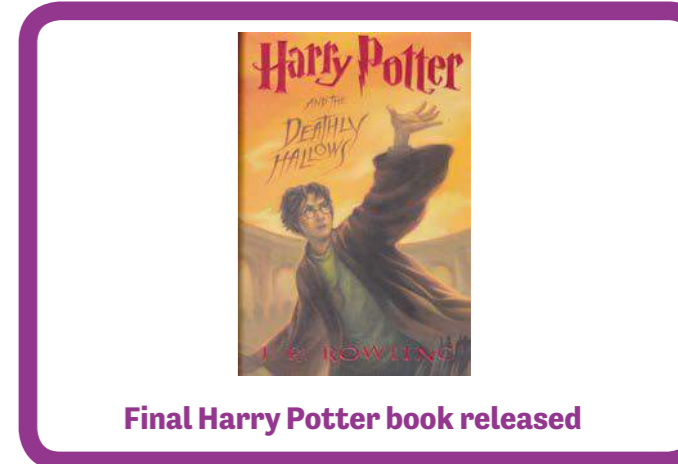
Pop Idol debuted



Opening ceremony of the dome



Facebook launched



Final Harry Potter book released



Kylie Minogue steps out in her famous gold hot pants



Twitter introduced



Hit film Slumdog Millionaire released

CHAPTER 9

THE TWENTY TENS



Paul Barnard stepped down as CEO and Mark Powell was appointed in October 2010 to take on the role. Prior to this Mark's role at Diverse Abilities was business operations and marketing and he joined the charity in February 2010. Paul was still part of the charity and continued to work for Diverse Abilities as the Director of Development until April 2011.

In 2010 the charity also changed its name to Diverse Abilities Plus following a consultation with people the charity supported. It was chosen to reflect the charity's support of a diverse range of people with all manner of physical and/or learning disabilities and aims to portray its positive ethos and focus on people's abilities rather than their disabilities.



Two local organisations supporting those with disabilities joined the charity in 2010 - **Disability Wessex** that offers advice and advocacy and **Coping with CHAOS**, providing activities after school and in the holidays, a youth club and activities for children with disabilities and their siblings. This brought an extra dimension to **Diverse Abilities Plus** at the time and further supported those connected to the charity and further afield.



In 2010 the charity employed Helen Mortimer as Fundraising Manager. Over the course of the next few years she appointed a team to increase the number of fundraising events that took place to raise vital funds, obtain corporate and community support, raise awareness in the local area and attend events, such as the Dorset County Show. Key initiatives from the fundraising team during 2010 – 2014, have included the Gold Challenge, Great Dorset Bake Sale, Dragon Boat Race, It's a Knockout and many more.



Langside celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2010 and to mark the occasion staff at the school successfully completed a 50km sponsored walk to raise £12,000 towards the required £50,000 for a new minibus. During this year five students at Langside also were presented with Duke of Edinburgh Awards – a great achievement for them and a first for the school.



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

Diverse Abilities Plus achieved Investors in People accreditation across the whole organisation in 2011, with interviewees commenting enthusiastically on the considerable improvements that were made over the previous two years to develop a more professional and structured approach to the development of both the charity and its staff.



During 2011/12 practical support in the home via Shapes was provided to 20 children, overnight occupancy at Smithers increased and demand remained strong with 34 families being able to regularly enjoy short breaks, while their child's needs were met by the staff.



Langside supported between 21 and 24 children during the 2011/12 period and two school residential trips took place, including a trip to Cornwall with fun adventures such as zip wiring, archery and boat trips.

During 2011/12 the charity's supported living team provided 24/7 care to 31 adults in their own homes. A big step was made to reduce the use of agency staff and a flexi team approach was adopted. During this time the charity were able to celebrate enabling some of the people supported to achieve their dreams: Chrissie and Karen regularly spent a few hours at home unsupported; Lawrence studied at college; Andrew took his first steps at 54 years and Simon and Graeme were able to move into a new home – the man cave! During this time, Barnabas had started to look at ways to help adults supported to be inspired to do things they would never dream possible, whether it was a hobby, qualification or an experience.



Throughout **2011/12 Disability Wessex** focused primarily on benefits advice and support and during the year 96% of benefit appeals were won. The team were working towards increasing the number of lasting power of attorneys and deputyship work undertaken in **2012/13**, while continuing to assist more clients with an affordable advice service.



In early **2011** the volunteer strategy was reviewed and **Diverse Abilities Plus** embarked on a recruitment campaign to enhance the service offered by the charity. Volunteers were very important for the charity during the noughties, especially with bungalow refurbishments, painting and gardening at the services alongside attending events. Many corporations and individuals have been involved with the charity over the last few years and their support continues to be vital for Diverse Abilities in the future.



During **2012** Phyllis was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Wessex Charity Awards for founding the charity back in **1955**. The award also acknowledged how the charity has changed many people's lives and evolved into supporting hundreds of children and adults, and their families, in Dorset.



The **2012/13** period was quite difficult for the supported living team due to the reduction of rates and government cuts to reduce costs. But even though the service saw a reduction in hours of 2.5% from the previous year the team managed to overcome the difficulty and supported more adults than in **2011/12**. Barnabas continued to grow and supported **52 adults** during the **2012/13** year. The service also started a horticulture project at Kingston Lacy allowing adults to test out their green fingers and manage an allotment.



Langside numbers increased to support **25 children** in **2012/13** and the arrival of Jon Seaward as Principal was the biggest change for the school at this time following the retirement of John Ashby, the previous head teacher for 22 years.



Disability Wessex provided advice to **475 clients** in **2012/13** over a total number of **580 cases**. The numbers increased dramatically during this time from the previous year, mainly due to the impact of the changes to the benefits system and assessments.

During **2012/13** numbers at **Smithers** increased to **39** and Shapes supported **17 families**. **100 children and young people** were part of **Project My Time and Project Term Time** and activities included camping breaks, painting, bowling, high ropes, visits to Pizza Hut and watersports. Other activities were offered through **Coping with CHAOS** Play Opportunity sessions during their school holidays as with **Awesome Nights** – the Wednesday night youth club for young people. In this year a five year grant was received from the Big Lottery Fund, which allowed expansion across north and west Dorset therefore supporting more children and their families in the local area.



During the **2013/14** year the charity did well by investing in people and assets while complying with its reserve policy and achieved budget. The **Children's Team** saw a growth in numbers during the year and supported nearly **600 families**. Shapes delivered **8,343 hours** of support. Overnight stays at **Smithers** increased to **41 families** being able to enjoy a short break while their child or young person's needs were being supported and the short break home received 'good rating' by Ofsted in **2014**. Over **145 children** were part of **Project My Time, Term Time and Hangout**, an increase on the previous year.



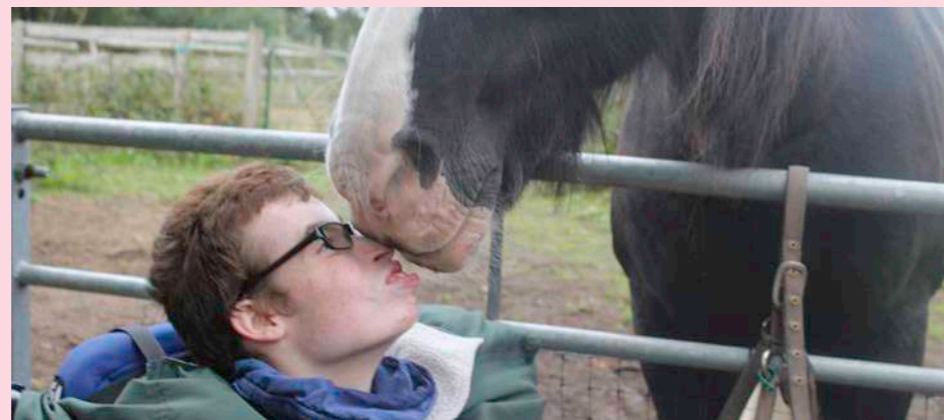
Langside's pupil numbers increased during **2013/14**. During the year some research was conducted and it was found that **Langside** is utterly unique. There is no other school exactly like **Langside** in the whole of the UK, so the school's offer is very special. The school introduced a new curriculum which it began to implement.



Coping with CHAOS play opportunities supported **368 families** over the year **2013/14** and provided **6518** hours of support, again an increase on the previous year. During **2014** the service also celebrated its 15th birthday.



The **Adult Services** team increased the number of adults in supported living to **35** during **2013/14**. Many staff achieved qualifications and team members were praised for their work by the Care Quality Commission. Barnabas continued to grow and was in high demand. It supported **58 adults** at this time and those that attended Barnabas loved taking day trips to Holton Lee and walking Elfin, the charity's therapy pony, around the grounds. In addition **Barnabas** celebrated its 21st anniversary during **2014** with a party at the service. The day included a quiz, games, a giant feast and a disco.



SNAPSHOT of 2010s



Apple introduced the iPad



Prince William and Catherine Middleton got married

The **Advice Team** provided **493** clients with support during **2013/14**. Support provided included benefits advice, appeal hearing representation, lasting power of attorney, deputyships, employment and support allowance. It also introduced writing wills in 2014.



The charity went through a consultation process in **2014** and changed the name to **Diverse Abilities**. The decision was made to simplify the name, while still reflecting that we support children and adults with a range of abilities.



Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth



The 2012 Summer Olympics were held in London



Same sex marriage became legal



Mars Rover landed successfully



Hit TV series Breaking Bad hit the screens



Driverless cars hit the roads

CHAPTER 10 NOW

Sixty years on, the charity now supports over 600 children and adults with disabilities across Dorset and enables them to reach their full potential through a range of services.

The charity is proud to offer a lifetime partnership to the people it supports and today it provides specialist services to:

- Children and their families at Langside School
- Families who access day and overnight short breaks for their children
- Children and their families who access domiciliary services
- Children and their families who access holiday and youth club activities
- Adults who access day opportunities
- Adults who enjoy living in their own home
- Adults who need advice and guidance on a range of disability matters and health conditions.

Over the past **60 years** the charity has changed the lives of hundreds of children and adults, helping them to gain greater confidence and independence through the provision of a lifetime of education, opportunities and support. **Diverse Abilities** remains dedicated to supporting their needs today and the needs they will have tomorrow while enabling them to experience a lifetime of opportunities and challenges.

All the services provided reflect the charity's founding purpose. The needs of the individual are paramount and the needs of the family are never forgotten.

The charity provides a truly integrated and flexible support network to help each person achieve their full potential.

We provide a little bit of sunshine to the people we support, giving them everything they need to have an enjoyable and fulfilling life.

Our services are full of fun, laughter and joy. Staff work extremely hard to support the people's needs and ensure every day is fun, fulfilling and challenging.

As well as continuing to fundraise for the charity's existing work, the charity intends to make some significant improvements to its buildings in the coming years. This will really enhance the support and quality provided to hundreds of local people with disabilities.

Fundraising is essential for the services to be sustainable and the small team continues to run events each year to raise funds to support the services.

When looking ahead, **Diverse Abilities** has learnt it will never be easy, however it will work hard to ensure the people supported have the services they deserve.



CHAPTER 11 OUR MEMORIES



"I worked at Langside for 22 years and was employed as Deputy Headteacher in January 1990. I was then promoted to Headteacher in 1994 when Mrs Vandervelde became Chief Executive. In 2011 I also took on the role of managing all the children's services at the charity. When I first arrived the school had about 40 pupils and I had responsibility for a class mostly with moderate special needs. There were a few pupils with more complex needs that were taught in a special class group. Now all the pupils in the school have very complex needs and the building can only accommodate up to about 28 because of all the specialist equipment they needed. The school has become something of a centre of excellence for supporting pupils with very complex needs.

I think the highlights for me, and my favourite memories of working at the school will always involve my time spent with the pupils and particularly on residential visits. There have been so many over the years that it is hard to single any one particular one out. You learn so much more about the pupils, their personalities and needs, and the impact on families, when you spend twenty four hours a day for a week with them. The fact that we have been able to offer so many opportunities to the pupils will always be a source of pride for me. Trips abroad to Germany, Malta, France and Jersey together with "adventure holidays" going sailing, canoeing and abseiling in wheelchairs, were fantastic experiences for the children and, I would like to think, we have given them the opportunity to experience things they may not have otherwise done."

John Ashby,
Previous Headteacher and
Head of the Children's Team at Diverse Abilities



"Diverse Abilities has been a big part of my life. My mum, Marion Lawford, was involved with the charity for almost 40 years. My sister, Sue who is now 56, has been supported by the charity since she was four and I have been working here for nearly 25 years.

An accounting background meant that mum was ideally suited to the position of honorary treasurer and her role grew and grew over the years until ultimately she became Executive Officer in charge of all the services. She oversaw the setting up of Edward House, the charity's residential home, from the initial fundraising to the placing and funding of residents. The children's respite service was also her brainchild, initially provided in a chalet bungalow in Ensbury Park until a legacy from her friend, Lily Smithers, secured the whole of the Manor Avenue site. After a considerable amount of work to what was the old church, Barnabas our adult day service was opened. After a period of being used as student accommodation for the newly established Bournemouth University, more fundraising eventually meant that the old rectory could be extended and adapted to become the relocated respite home, which was named Smithers after its benefactor.

Sue attended Langside for 15 years and has lived in one of the charity's supported living bungalows since 1994 and was one of the first adults to live independently in their own home. Much of my younger childhood was spent at Langside, attending the numerous jumble sales and summer and Christmas fayres organised by mum - I almost feel as if I grew up as part of the charity!

I am still very much involved with the charity today and mum's memory lives on. The organisation was mum's life and she did everything she could for it."

Cate McGrath, Office Administrator



"The charity has been part of my life since I was a baby so you could say I am part of the furniture! My mum, Susan Roberts, and grandmother, Kathleen Vandervelde, were a big part of the charity and I have continued to be involved, now as Deputy Manager at Barnabas.

I used to go to the playgroup that my mum ran at Langside during the school holidays called Acron, which was the start of the short breaks for parents with children that had a disability. Two of the ladies I supported at Barnabas when I joined, and still attend to this day, used to go along to the playgroup so I have known them a long time and have a close connection with them.

I started helping out at Barnabas when I was 12 years old and have known many of the families and people we support since then. I went to college and studied care, then joined the charity officially in supported living when I was 18. After a year I joined Barnabas and provided one-to-one support to Katie, who still attends Barnabas to this day.

I have some great memories of my time with the charity but two of my best ones are when my granddad was Father Christmas at the Langside Christmas Fayres for many years and when we used to have wheelchair races at the end of the day at school! A memory that will always live on is the playhouse that was donated to Smithers remembering my mum. I love being able to see it every day in the Smithers garden from the Barnabas office as it is very special to me.

I hope I continue to be part of the charity's future. I would also like my daughter to be involved and continue the family tradition."

Chelsey Mills, Barnabas Deputy Manager



"It was a dream come true for me when Marilyn could move out of the institution into Edward House. She was around 30 at the time and finally could go out and about in the local area and express her feelings to us. Marilyn did not really speak, but I remember so clearly the time she visited us after she left the institution and she pointed at a photo of her sister Wendy and said 'rendy' which was an amazing moment."

Phyllis Edwards, Founder



"Hello... I am Eric and I am 56. I currently live in my own home with Tim and have been supported by the charity since I was 18.

I used to live in Edward House and really enjoyed it there as I met some lovely friends and the love of my life, Lynda. I moved into my own home in 2002 and I love living in supported living as I take part in many activities, have my own room plus my own pets - a cat called Gorgeous and two guinea pigs - Colin and Fluffy.

Over the years I have been on some fantastic holidays with the charity. My first holiday was to the Eden Project and since then I have been to Spain many times.... Eviva España.

My favourite hobbies are doing my washing in my top loader machine and collecting hoovers, records and cuddly toys!"

Eric Garlick
Supported by Diverse Abilities



"I started volunteering for the charity's advice team as an advisor around four years ago and still attend groups and speak on various subjects for them. I also am involved with the fundraising team, undertaking bucket collections and I even skydived out of a plane! Wendy, Phyllis' daughter, encouraged me to do the skydive as she had undertaken the challenge herself for her 70th birthday. I am also very much involved with the staff training at the charity as I can talk about personal experiences of having a disability.

I love being part of such a fantastic charity and I really feel part of the team. My best personal memory is the skydive as I was able to feel able bodied. Meeting Wendy and Phyllis is one of the best things that has happened in my life. Being part of Diverse Abilities has helped me gain confidence and achieve things I never thought I would while being in a wheelchair."

Hannah Fielding, Volunteer for Diverse Abilities



"I remember when one afternoon Thordack Galloway (someone supported at Edward House) shouted 'I hate you' – I racked my brains as to what had caused this amiable and well liked man to hate me but could find no reason. A couple of days later the episode repeated and a third time he knocked on my office door and said the same thing. I invited him into my office and asked him 'what have

I done to make you hate me so much?' - a very excited Thordack shouted 'No, No, No, I don't hate you, I was asking you if I could help you' – misunderstanding sorted and we became the best of friends."

Tony Allen, Edward House Manager 1989 - 1998



"My son Simon went to Langside School and I also worked there as a cook for four years. I have great memories of Ian holding Daniel, Simon's brother, when he was born at Christmas for the nativity play. I also spent some time working with adults and have fond memories of driving the minibus to take the adults carriage riding."

Eric Shave, father to Simon Shave who is supported by Diverse Abilities



"I started with the charity in September 1981 when I joined Langside as headmistress. I was also involved in the start of Edward House, Smithers, Barnabas and the first supported living bungalow. It was important to me that we created facilities for adults to secure the future of the children and it is fantastic to know that children I worked with at Langside attend Barnabas or live in one of the charity's supporting living bungalows now.

One special memory is that my daughter, Susan, was a team leader at Smithers. Susan also used to run the playgroup at Langside and my granddaughter, Chelsey, who is the current Barnabas Deputy Manger used to go along and feed Katie Miller. It is lovely that my family are still involved with Diverse Abilities today.

One of my key achievements at the school in my first year in the post was gaining a 'good' following an Ofsted inspection when others schools did not. Other achievements were taking the children on fantastic holidays, which my late husband also used to help with, and bringing in conductive education.

I have great memories of the many services in St Marks Church, which became annual at Christmas, Easter and at harvest time. The first church service saw one of the children from Langside, Peter Bennett, take himself in his wheelchair to the front of the service and collect his prize. A child had never done that before but because of the conductive education, he achieved this."

Kathleen Vandervelde, previous Langside Headmistress and CEO of the charity



"Looking at the charity now, it is remarkable to think that the whole organisation came into being as a result of a small advertisement in the Bournemouth Daily Echo in 1955. I am proud to be part of such an amazing charity and I hope its work can continue long into the future so more people with disabilities flourish and live happy, independent lives."

Phyllis Edwards, Founder



"I have some brilliant memories from my time at Barnabas. The staff shows were fantastic and I always remember Maizy enjoying the 'itsy bitsy teeny weeny' song."

Dave Austin, previous Barnabas Manager and current Facilities Manager at the charity



"After receiving the letters from the nine people, a meeting had to be arranged. At the time John and I did not have our own phone and I had to walk a good half a mile to make calls and arrangements. I remember many a time, I'd always forget to call someone or mention something to someone, so I had to go back again!"

Phyllis Edwards, Founder



"Marilyn is the real founder of the charity."

Phyllis Edwards with daughter Marilyn



"During my time as CEO I saw many changes. We worked hard with the adults who lived at Edward House to move them into their own homes and with support that met their needs much more individually. This was a great move for them and what we provided was very unique to Dorset at the time. I was particularly proud of and grateful for the support and sheer hard work from all staff that went into making the moves a success.

My role in the organisation was mainly administrative, developmental and strategic, but there were times of great staff pressures, particularly in the early days, when I had to work some shifts in Smithers, Edward House and No 19. I really enjoyed working more directly with the children and adults we support and gained an invaluable understanding of the dedication and 'heart' that so characterises many who work with the children and adults. It wasn't all rosy though; when the Norovirus struck both the people living at Edward House and the staff, those of us on duty and remaining healthy, were not allowed to leave the home for 3 or 4 days!

There was a name change too, of course. Whilst not universally welcomed, the new name of Diverse Abilities Plus did deliver a strong message about celebrating ability, and the strap-line endorsed the strongly held principles of support, empowerment and inclusion. The last few years since I retired have been marked by changes in Government policy and payment streams, and scything cuts to the welfare budget, I have been pleased to watch Diverse Abilities adapt, grow, prosper and continue to celebrate individuality, choice and control for all those it supports. Long may it continue to do so."

Paul Barnard, previous CEO at Diverse Abilities during 1999 – 2010



"I have worked for the charity for 11 years. I initially started working at Edward House and was there for six months before moving onto supported living working with Graeme and Simon, which I still do to this day.

When the guys moved into their new home – the 'man cave' it was just fantastic. You could tell Graeme loved

it just from the expression on his face. Moving into the property changed his life and had such a positive effect. He had quite a few ups and downs before this point so it was great to see how the charity had a encouraging impact on his life."

**Emma Wray,
Supported Living Team Leader**



"I have been supported by Diverse Abilities since I was three years old and attended Langside School. Langside was great and I really enjoyed being on the computer and writing stories. I once won sports personality of the year at Langside too as I loved horse riding and swimming. When I reached 19, I didn't want to leave as my Dad worked there as a chef.

I moved into Edward House and then supported living and really enjoy living with Graeme now in the man cave. I also attend Barnabas, which I very much like as we undertake so many fun activities. I remember creating the 'Shave the Planet' fashion show which involved using recycled pieces and rubbish. I always love being part of the Barnabas shows too."

Simon Shave, age 40, supported by Diverse Abilities



"My time with the charity started in 1991 when I volunteered at Langside School and helped with the IT. As time went on I got more involved and assisted the teachers in the classes and on school trips. I was then very privileged to be asked to become a school governor in 1993, a trustee of the charity and on the committee at Barnabas in 1994, plus I also was on the first Smithers committee in 2001. I became the Vice Chairman of the trustees in 1995 and took over from the Chairman in 1999. I stood down as Chairman in 2010 but continued to be part of the charity as a trustee and a governor at Langside until 2011.

During my 20 years at the charity I saw many positive changes and we really progressed and expanded, which meant we could support more people with disabilities. Some great memories include the school trips, which were always good fun. I remember on a trip to Malta, one of the people we supported at the time, Thordack was asked what the best part of his holiday was. He replied – playing cards with Graham on the plane. It was lovely to hear and made me laugh."

Graham Mallet, previous Chairman of the trustees



"I have been with the charity for 14 years when I started working at Edward House as a Team Leader for Jeff, Karen, Chrissy, Tim, Eric, Linda and Lawrence. From January 2002 I started going through the process of talking to parents, carers and people we supported about the change to supported living. I moved over to supported living and was a Team Leader for Eric, Lynda, Karen and Chrissy.

Working with the people we support was such an amazing experience and something I'll treasure forever. I am still very lucky to be involved with the charity and get to see some of the people I worked with before.

A lovely memory I have is when Chrissy and I used to bake cakes and she was also so amazed how they grew. At Edward House it was an experience that would never have happened as someone would cook the cakes and they would just appear. Supported living provided the independence for people supported to do something themselves and see how things change or grow. I used to love how she was so amazed by the cakes rising and hearing her squeal with excitement."

Stephanie Vaughan, Trainer and Assessor at Diverse Abilities



"We all had a meeting and the first committee was formed after a visit from the secretary from the National Spastics Society, who provided advice and guidance. Six months on the first premises were officially opened by the Mayor of Bournemouth Cllr.

D. Willoughby on 23 February 1956 – this is when it all began. We only had one gas ring to heat water and cook dinner for the younger children, and the older children and helpers were provided dinners by the Bournemouth Police on Madeira Road in their canteen. Everyone pulled together to support us."

Phyllis Edwards, Founder



"I was overwhelmed with the replies from the nine people and was so glad it was a success. A number of professionals also got in touch including a physiotherapist from Bournemouth Hospital. She wanted to do more for those with disabilities in the area, which was great news and meant we had our first person that could help the children we supported."

Phyllis Edwards, Founder



"When I started as the new principal of Langside School in 2012, I was struck by two things, firstly how wonderful the children were and secondly the level of care and commitment given by all of the staff. The children and staff of Langside make for a truly inspirational school."

Jonathan Seaward, Principal of Langside School and Head of the Children's Team



I joined Langside School in January 1999 to cover maternity leave and soon became part of the family. My role is extremely varied with all the usual administrative tasks, and I am always on hand to help parents in any way possible. The most rewarding part is seeing the children every day with their smiles and vocalisations, and to watch them grow and flourish over the years. I have seen many changes but have always enjoyed my time here working with the wonderful children and staff."

Joan Skinner, Langside School Secretary

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO SUBMITTED STORIES FOR OUR MEMORY BOOK.

How your support will help.

£10 could buy a percussion musical instrument to provide fun and engaging music sessions for both children and adults with disabilities and sensory impairments

£18 is enough to fund a therapeutic swimming session for an adult with disabilities.

£50 could fund a place at the charity's special youth club for young people with disabilities.

£100 will fund our entire nursing team for an hour, monitoring children's health, administering medicines constantly and dealing with emergencies.

Your donation will make a huge difference.

Thank you for reading this book. If you have any questions please e-mail jenny.pearce@diverseabilities.org.uk or call 01202 718266.

Make a donation to our future and be part of the next 60 years of Diverse Abilities.

First name Last name
 Address
 Postcode

Yes - I'll help children and adults with disabilities in Dorset:

£10 £15 £25 Other amount of: £

I enclose a cheque made payable to: **Diverse Abilities**

OR

Please debit my Visa/AMEX/MasterCard/CAF Charity Card/Maestro (please circle your card type)

Card Number Card security code:

(Maestro only)

Name of Cardholder Expiry Date: -

Signature: Date: --



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Freepost RTES-KTBR-KKUG, Diverse Abilities, Unit C,
Acorn Business Park, Ling Road, Poole, BH12 4NZ

Help us to continue supporting children's and adults with disabilities, and their families, for many years to come.

Play your part now.



Diverse Abilities

Dorset's Disability Charity

Diverse Abilities

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