



Summer 2023 Newsletter

CALENDAR DATES

- Sat 8 July [Family Support Meeting](#)
Hitchin Youth Trust, 111 Walsworth Rd,
Hitchin SG4 9SP 2.00-4.00pm
- Sat 29 July [Thomley SEN Activity Centre Trip](#)
Thomley, Menmarsh Rd, Worminghall, Bucks
HP18 9JZ 10.00am—**BOOK NOW!**
- Sat 12 Aug [Family Support Meeting](#)
Hitchin Youth Trust, 111 Walsworth Rd,
Hitchin SG4 9SP 2.00-4.00pm
- Wed 23 Aug [Standalone Farm Visit](#)
Wilbury Way, Letchworth Garden City, SG6
4JN 10.30am
- Fridays [Choices Youth Group](#)
Hitchin Youth Trust, 111 Walsworth Rd,
Hitchin SG4 9SP 6.15-8.00pm
- Mondays [Teen Fitness Group](#)
With Tom and Emily Enoch, via Zoom at
5.45pm
- Thursdays [Teen Social Communication Group](#)
With Emily Enoch, via Zoom at 6.30pm
- Saturdays [Speech Development Group Meetings](#)
With our Symbol trained practitioners at
various locations on Saturday mornings



Up
On Downs

*If you have any questions
or
suggestions please
contact Sande, Jan or
Gemma at:*

[enquiries.nhdowns
@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:enquiries.nhdowns@yahoo.co.uk)

*call:
07738 470634*

*Or visit:
www.upondowns.co.uk*



Welcome Gemma

We are very excited to formally welcome Gemma Albon to the team as our new Assistant Family Services Coordinator. Lots of you will have already know Gemma as a longstanding member of Up on Downs and there will be a chance to meet her at our family meeting on 8th July. As many of you already know we said a sad farewell to Eleanor Stapley-Alexander as a regular staff member in April; a big thank you to her for all her hard work.

Thank you Eleanor

Huge thanks to Eleanor for everything she has done for us throughout her time with Up on Downs. It has been great fun working with Eleanor on so many interesting projects, trips and parties over the last few years; her input has been invaluable. It's not all sad news though, Eleanor will be continuing to help administer the Choices youth group and is one of our most active members so we look forward to seeing her at lots of future events.



Hello from Gemma

Hi I'm Gemma. My husband Mark and I have 3 children, James, Abigail and Oliver. Oliver is our youngest and he was born 2009. We found out just after birth he has Down's Syndrome. Oliver also has Autism and ADHD. We have been part of Up on Downs since Oliver was 6 months old. They have helped and supported us over the years since he was born. We have attended the baby and toddler groups and trips, where we met and gained friends who have travelled on this journey with us. I also found the signing courses very helpful. I am very excited to be putting my experience as a parent, event organiser and fundraiser to use in my new role working with families and events.



Summer Activities

Thomley SEN Activity Centre

Menmarsh Road, Worminghall, Bucks HP18 9JZ

Saturday 29th July—10am



For our annual summer outing this year we are excited about trying somewhere new following personal recommendations from members. We are off to [Thomley SEN Activity Centre](#) which has something for all ages and provides us with a great venue to spend the day together. We will meet at the venue at 10.00 and once in the park families will be free to explore at

their own pace. Do have a look at their [website](#) to see what you might fancy getting up to. Those who would like to can meet up for lunch (bring a picnic or make use of the on site cafe). Siblings are most welcome as ever – it's sure to be a great day.

[Click here to book now](#) to join us for a day of fun activities – free to members ([donations welcome](#)) – we are meeting the cost of tickets from ongoing fundraising.



Standalone Farm

Wilbury Way, Letchworth Garden

City, Herts SG6 4JN

Wednesday 23rd August—10.30am

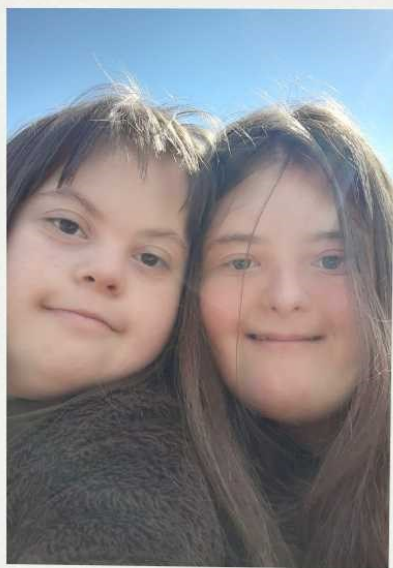


Later on in the summer we will be returning to one of our favourites for lots of fun on the farm. We will open the booking for this one a bit nearer the time but save the date if you fancy joining us.



Magdalen Farm Residential 31 May - 2 June 2023

It was great to be joined by even more families this year to make some more great memories at this beautiful farm





Family Support Meetings

8th July and 13th August 2.00-4.00pm

Hitchin Youth Trust, 111 Walsworth Road SG4 9SP

We will continue to hold our family meetings throughout the summer holidays so do drop by if you are free. In July there will be a chance to meet Gemma, our newest member of the Up on Downs team. In August we will be planning ahead and starting to create the image for our official Up on Downs 2023 Christmas card. We'd love your family to join in and make a really special festive picture. We will also be making the best of the glorious weather with lots of garden games and some cool refreshments.



Join us at future meetings for more fun, games and friendship; always on the second Saturday of the month. The meetings are run in a drop in format so just come along if you are free. If you'd like to let us know you'll be coming or have any questions please email us at: enquiries.nhdowns@yahoo.co.uk

Out and About

St Albans Cathedral

The first St Albans Cathedral Community showcase was a good opportunity to meet families, network with other local charities and spread the word about what we do. We were also delighted to be able to attend a special evensong celebrating the work of local charities and accept a grant towards the support we are providing to families



St Albans Half Marathon 2023

We had great fun cheering on all the runners and walkers at the St Albans Half Marathon. The extreme heat didn't make for an easy race (especially for those in fancy dress) but everyone gave it their all—including our super supporter Alison Wilde who raised £470 for us

in the walking half. Do let us know if you'd be interested in running, walking or cheering for us next year on the 9th June 2024. There is time to get a little bit of training in yet!



SEND Champions Meeting

This was a great opportunity to meet with and present to over forty health visitors working in Hertfordshire.





Softwire

Following on from his birthday fundraiser which raised over £600, member Neil Challis's employer Softwire donated a further £500 in matched funding - Thanks Softwire and Neil

A huge thank you to Alison Wilde who once again walked the St Albans Half Marathon for us and raised an amazing £470 for us with her super fundraising efforts - amazing!





Member Bea Tamizi, mum of Oliver, pictured here at the Choices youth group, very kindly nominated Up on Downs to benefit from a non uniform day fundraiser at Marriotts School in Stevenage. This raised a magnificent £393.51 - many thanks to Bea and all at Marriotts



A very kind person raised £78.25 for us with a Facebook fundraiser in May - your settings mean your donation has reached us as 'anonymous' - we'd love to know who you are so we can thank you properly!



Youth Group for people with learning disabilities aged 12 – young adult

Young people have been making the most of our popular Choices youth club in Hitchin this term.

Every week they have the opportunity to make friends over a range of regular games, and exercises well as a main activity for the evening. Over the past months they have enjoyed dressing to impress with a catwalk and a photobooth, picnic making and garden games, animal modelling, online gaming and a special dance class based around show tunes. They are now busily planning a trip to Legoland before they take a break for the summer.

Choices youth club runs every Friday for 30 weeks of the year. If you would be interested in volunteering or have a young person who would like to join next term, please get in touch. We are grateful to Herts Building Life Chances Fund, Hitchin Youth Trust, Marriott's, Paradance and our wonderful volunteer team for their support.

WHEN: Friday evenings 6.15pm

WHERE: Hitchin Youth Trust, Walsworth Rd, Hitchin, SG4 9SP

CONTACT: Magda - 07940 224165 magdapol75@hotmail.com



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HOW TO FIND UP ON DOWNS

You can find us in a variety of ways, whatever way suits you best please come and find us:



enquiries.nhdowns@yahoo.co.uk



Call us on (01727) 420365



Visit the website: www.upondowns.co.uk



Like Up on Downs on facebook

For members we have a private facebook group called Up on Downs Community. To request to join please go to our public page, click on groups tab to find the Up on Downs Community group.



Follow [upondowns_herts](#) on Instagram



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Charity registration number 1126111