

Me2 Club Expansion Q&A's

Me2 Club's ethos is 'Inclusion for All'. Specifically, we aim to ensure that every child we support has the opportunity to attend a mainstream activity – to be included, to belong. We are proud of what our team of dedicated volunteers have achieved over the past 16 years. We have built a scalable model and, as we look to the future, we plan to grow and develop the charity; to broaden its geographical reach thereby ensuring more children have access to Me2 Club's core service and additional projects.

With this in mind our Board of Trustees have voted to widen the charity's geographical reach in Berkshire to initially include 5 wards of Reading Borough (Katesgrove, Redlands, Park, Church and Whitley). This we will do gradually and with appropriate care and attention, ensuring there is no impact on the excellent work done by our staff team and volunteer group here in Wokingham.

Why is it important for the charity to widen its geographical reach?

For a charity to thrive and continue to attract the necessary financial sponsors it must continue to develop, demonstrating that it is reaching as many beneficiaries as possible. In recent years Me2 Club has dramatically reduced its Wokingham waiting list. Whilst there remains a short waiting list (4-6 weeks) we are aware that the situation for Reading families is desperate with no equivalent charity operating there. Me2 Club is unique in its service delivery and, as it stands, children with additional needs living a couple of miles away in Reading Borough are not benefitting from our ability to aid them to access mainstream activities.

Why is Me2 Club only initially expanding into 5 Wards in Berkshire?

It is important that the project is planned and implemented in a measured, gradual manner. The decision to widen our reach to only 5 wards initially was taken by the Trustees in consultation with the Manager to ensure that our staff can implement the new project whilst ensuring that its current core service and additional projects continue to run efficiently and successfully.

How will the new project be funded?

Me2 Club will be applying for funding in the new geographical area, funding will also be sourced from corporate champions. Wokingham Borough is seen as an 'affluent' area which can prove difficult to fund, it is hoped that by growing the charity, we can expand our funding network. Widening the geographical reach will open up a number of new funders in the Reading area including potentially applying to the National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund

Will you be recruiting another member of staff?

Yes, recruitment for a new Activities and Volunteers Coordinator (AVC) will start in June. The new person will work alongside the existing AVC's, to support the core service and additional projects.

Will there be a Reading branch and a Wokingham Branch of Me2 Club?

No! There will be one Me2 Club, with one team of staff operating from the Woodley Office. Me2 Club is broadening its service to include new geographical areas not replicating the current set up in a new area.

How will you source the extra volunteers required to support the new children?

Me2 Club has an excellent track record in volunteer recruitment, the addition of a new Activities and Volunteers Coordinator will result in us reaching schools within the Reading area to recruit more volunteers.

My child is currently supported by Me2 Club, will they be affected?

No! Existing Me2 Club children will take priority during rematching. Our goal in expanding is to extend the same high quality service to a wider population, to scale up ensuring that more children benefit from the high level of service currently provided by Me2 Club team. Contact [Me2 Club](#) if you know of anyone who requires our support in either the Wokingham Borough or the new 5 Reading Borough wards.

Will you be moving into the other Reading Wards in the future?

Assuming that our expansion into the initial five wards is a success then, yes, as part of our 3 year business plan we are looking to grow into all of the wards of the Reading Borough. And when we say 'success' we mean more children in a broader geography benefitting from the unique Me2 Club services without those who already do so – those in our Wokingham Borough home – seeing any negative impact. Success will therefore be measured by our existing families/children, not noticing any change while many others in Reading do.