

AUGUST 2018

If you go down to the woods today, you're sure of a big surprise...



Children at the Open Door Teddy Bear's Picnic in Victoria Park

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From the Editor

The long hot summer has resumed. There is still time to enjoy activities outdoors before our thoughts turn to the autumn.

Lots of sport and fitness activities are available and the new Fit and Active Barnet (FAB) campaign will help everyone to know what is going on. Residents are able to get a FAB card, which helps with the costs and the details are on page 6.

Please take a look at Holly's article on fundraising. She highlights the great successes we've had this year, but I would also echo Holly's point that we do need more families to support the fundraising events. Lots of the things Barnet Mencap needs or wants to do are not covered by the grants and contracts, so raising money through events is a huge help to us.

Learning Disability Week was a chance to focus on improving healthcare for people with learning disabilities. Campaigning on this issue will continue to be a high priority for Barnet Mencap. We want more people to get annual health checks and the right care if they go into hospital.

The AGM will be held on 21st November this year. I would urge all members to come along and find out what we have achieved, and to hear from some of the people who benefit from Barnet Mencap's support. We are very keen that more people join the organisation. If you support our work then please consider becoming a member. Membership gives you a say in how we develop Barnet Mencap and helps the organisation to thrive.

Contact Project Support on projectsupport@barnetmencap.org.uk to join up.

Ray Booth

Planning ahead for 2018-21

In April, Barnet Mencap agreed its new Business Plan for 2018-21. People with learning disabilities, carers, staff and trustees all had a chance to say what the organisation should be doing over the next three years.

People told us what was needed for people to live active, healthy lifestyles, reduce isolation and develop friendships. They said how important it is for people to be safe, have support to live independently, get jobs and enjoy good health.

The Business Plan looks at the changing demographics in Barnet and how the Children and Families Act and Care Act have helped us to put more emphasis on prevention and early intervention, and how we will work within the ongoing austerity.

Barnet Mencap will develop its current services and support including parenting programmes; advice and information for parent carers and adults with learning disabilities and autism; short breaks; support to live independently; leisure and learning activities and Quality Checks. We will continue to support volunteers and ensure parents and carers have a voice.

There are new areas where we want to expand our work or do better; for people with autism; to support carers to plan for the future; and young people preparing for adulthood. We want to tackle hate crime, and improve people's access to justice.

To achieve all of this, Barnet Mencap will continue to work closely with other organisations, especially Royal Mencap, Healthwatch, and other local voluntary organisations. We will continue to campaign to influence public opinion and policies to improve the lives of people with learning disabilities and their families.

Staff and trustees will be working hard to ensure the plan succeeds. They will do more to get feedback from people who use the services, monitor plans, manage the risks and ensure Barnet Mencap has the money it needs to carry out its work.

At the AGM, we will report on how well we are doing and answer people's questions.

Please contact us if you want a copy of the Business Plan and we can email or post it to you.



Photos from our Learning Disability Week events across the the Royal Free NHS Trust, where we had stalls to promote awareness, as well as getting staff to pledge to make reasonable adjustments.

Focus on... Learning Disability Week

This year, Learning Disability Week was all about health with a big focus on the Mencap 'Treat Me Well' campaign. This aims to make simple changes in hospital care that can make a big difference – better communication, more time and clearer information.

Throughout the week, we ran several events across the Royal Free NHS Trust. Tuesday saw our amazing volunteers, Youssef, Hamid and Xavier get 34 people to pledge to make a reasonable adjustment in their ward or department; 4 people additionally signed up to be ambassadors including Debbie Sanders, Chief Nurse.

Wednesday took Barnet Mencap to Barnet Hospital, with Makaton lessons and talks from Aeren giving her experience of going to hospital as a person with a learning disability

and Maria speaking about what works and what doesn't work during hospital visits from a parent's point of view. There was a great turnout with staff pledging to use Makaton and basic language, give longer appointments and hospital passports to give people with learning disabilities a friendlier hospital experience.

The week finished with an awareness-raising presentation on learning disabilities at the Royal Free A&E department and another visit to Barnet Hospital to get more staff to pledge their support. The week was a fantastic step in the right direction to making a big difference to the hospital experience. Thank you to all of our wonderful staff and volunteers who gave up their time to campaign and to all of the staff across the Trust who pledged to make simple changes. We look forward to seeing these actions put in place.

FUNDRAISING

Focus on Fundraising

Fundraising has continued to be busy for Barnet Mencap with several events taking place over the last six months. We've held a Family Fun Day in partnership with Mill Hill RFC; an Alice in Wonderland themed Afternoon tea which was sponsored by Tesco Ballards Lane; and a quiz night supported by the Old Finchleas FC.



We kicked off our programme of challenge events with 3 of our clients running their first 5k back in March, raising over £250 in sponsorship in the process. Thank you to ASM, who sponsored one of their employees, Gary Bishop, £200 to run the 5k for Barnet Mencap. This was shortly followed by three of our Barnet Mencap Staff members Sophie, Terri-Anne and Holly who gave up their bank holiday to run the Vitality 10k. The team raised over £600 for Barnet Mencap in the process.

It's been an extremely good period for grants and community funds. We've been awarded £9,500 from the Big Lottery Fund, allowing us to continue much needed support and play activities for children and families aged 0-8.

We've also won the Tesco Groundworks Bags of Help scheme, receiving £4000 towards setting up a new project providing activities for the 11-25 age range. Thank you to everyone who used their blue tokens to vote for us; your support is enabling us to provide a range of new experiences for children and young adults across the borough, including a summer adventure camp which we are holding in August. In addition, we've also received £500 from the green token scheme at Asda Colindale – again thank you to everyone for your support.

Last year we supported approximately 280 adults, 420 children and 400 carers across Barnet. We cannot do this alone or without the funds needed to provide this level of service. We are extremely grateful to all of our external supporters who help us in



so many ways, but we also need support from the people and families we work with. Money raised goes towards paying for:

- Children's Services
- COPs
- Working for you
- Take a Break
- Sherrick House
- Adults Holidays
- 11-25 year old activities

Your support is vital to Barnet Mencap and plays a crucial role in the work we do.

Alongside the success we've seen in fundraising we've also had several setbacks. We've seen poor attendance at events and the lack of ticket sales recently resulted in the Family Farm Day being cancelled. six months of planning from both Barnet Mencap and Sweettree Farm had gone into the event, costs had been incurred and 16 members of staff had agreed to volunteer their time on a Saturday. Similarly, nearly half the people who had booked in for Quiz night did not attend, costing Barnet Mencap money.

Barnet Mencap needs your support and we want to work with you on what works for you as individuals and families and what you would like to see us do with fundraising. There are many ways you can support:

- Tin Collecting
- Holding your own event (e.g. coffee morning or similar)
- Signing up to a challenge event
- Providing us with links to organisations who would like to support our cause

We would love to hear your views and will be holding a meeting soon at the office to discuss ideas for fundraising going forwards. Email Holly at holly.wilson@barnetmencap.org.uk or call the office 0208 349 3842 if you would like to attend or to get involved in future activities.

MEMBERS' REVIEWS

Let's Rock Festival



As a regular feature, we ask our service users to review an event or performance they have attended through our projects. Here's what **Aeren Fitzgerald** had to say about the Let's Rock Festival.

Let's Rock Festival is a retro music festival celebrating all things 80s. Held at Clapham Common, the day saw non-stop acts delivering fantastic performances.

There was a great atmosphere throughout the day, the sun was out, and

everyone just wanted to enjoy themselves and have a good time. The crowd was bright and colourful, with many dressed up for the occasion – think neon, wigs and glitter!

I liked the different variety of food and drink on offer and the fact that there was a section for children so they didn't get bored. The festival has a family-friendly feel and no matter what your tastes, there is something to entertain you.

The day saw an array of incredible bands and performers take to the stage. The Fizz were one of the first bands and the crowd went wild when they performed 'Making Your Mind Up' complete with a skirt pull! Shortly after, Technotronic burst on stage, hyper and with so much energy, the crowd couldn't stop jumping up and down and grooving whilst they were on.

Go West were towards the end and were really cool, performing hits such as We Close



Our Eyes. However, they did cheat slightly performing some modern songs; Sex on Fire was thoroughly enjoyed by the crowd but did detract from the 80s vibe.

My favourite two acts of the day were Tiffany and From the Jam; they were both awesome and the crowd loved them, really coming alive when they were on stage.

It was an amazing experience. I would definitely go next year and recommend it to others. To sum the day up in one word... ROCKTASTIC!



FIT AND ACTIVE

Feel Fab with Barnet's Fit & Active Campaign

Being active is easy, fun and social. It can also be a great way of reducing stress and lifting your mood as well as reducing the risk of serious illness; strengthening muscles and bones and improving your health.

Despite the benefits, we understand that there are often numerous barriers in the way, which prevent you from leading a more active and healthy lifestyle.

Barnet Mencap are supporting Fit and Active Barnet (FAB), which is designed to help you on a journey to a more fit and active you, and leave you feeling fab.

Visit the FAB Hub (see link below) where you will find an activity finder to help you locate an activity that is right for you and much more. You could try water workouts, health walks or basketball as well as a range of fitness classes, cycling and tennis; there are a whole range of activities for people of all ages and abilities. The FAB hub will show you useful tips to increase your activity such as reducing the amount of time you are sitting down and it provides links to other advice such as the Chief Medical Officer's factsheets on physical activity at different ages.

What's more, Barnet residents can register for a **FREE** FAB Card; offering exclusive access to a range of benefits including leisure discounts and more. It's quick and easy to sign up by visiting www.better.org.uk/fab-hub or by popping into your local Barnet Better Leisure Centre.

Working together to help you **#feelfab**

NEW LOGO

A Change of Image

We have been working on refreshing the look of Barnet Mencap and that is starting with our website and logo.

Over the summer we will be meeting groups of clients and families to show them our new website and to collect feedback before it goes live. If you would like to be involved in one of these groups please do get in touch with us at Hendon Lane (contact details are on the back page).

We are also refreshing our logo, keeping true to our own ethos and values, and we hope to launch the new logo alongside our new website. You will see the new logo roll out over the late summer and autumn on our stationery and signs and we hope you like the fresher, more contemporary look.



Left: The Fit and Active campaign features this photo, taken at one of the rugby sessions at Mill Hill Rugby Club which we help to organise.
Above: How our new logo will look

Being... Krishna Lockhart



My name is Krishna Lockhart. I am 24 years old. I have a wide range of interests. I enjoy playing online multiplayer video games as you can meet people from all over the globe in a fun and interactive way.

Some of the people I have spoken to have been in some very hostile and dangerous areas where you never know if you're going to speak to them the next day, others live in the middle of nowhere in beautiful countryside. It's interesting to talk to these people and hear their stories. Who would have thought playing a video game, one of the most anti-social things, can also be one of the most social.

I also enjoy listening to music ranging from Jazz, Old school funk and disco to modern-day Techno and house.

Before I started volunteering I worked at the Iceland in East Finchley for a year and a half, but I never felt like it was the thing for me and in the end, I had to leave. I enjoy playing basketball when the weather is good,

and I am feeling up to it, being 6 foot 4, basketball was something everyone said I should do at a young age and it kind of grew on me as I got older. I enjoy cycling and even went on a course to learn how to maintain and repair bikes.

I started doing a weekly session of Dungeons and Dragons with some friends I met through Mencap and its one of those things I never thought could be so fun.

I found out I was Autistic last November and my family told me I should see Barnet Mencap. As a result I was pointed in the direction of the Autism Service. I for one had no interest in going but after some nagging and pushing I went to my first workshop. I started talking to like-minded people and slowly saw the similarities between myself and everyone in the group.

I was asked by one of the staff members of Barnet Mencap if I would be interesting in doing some volunteering work for them due to my performance in the group; I agreed. I started off with working at office-based sessions such as the afternoon tea and the over-50s nosh nights. Gradually I moved on to volunteering at external events like going to Southend for a trip to the seaside.

I really enjoy the work I do with the clients who come down; they are all nice, interesting and interactive people and getting to know them all has been fun. A lot of the fun helping in these sessions comes from enjoying the time with the clients who all come in wanting to have a good time. It's nice to be able to have the time to get involved with the activities too which make the whole experience amazing. It makes me feel fantastic to be able to have the chance to do work that revolves around helping and supporting people with disabilities and like-minded attitudes.

I look forward to continuing volunteering at Barnet Mencap and with the experience I have gained, progressing to a paid position.

Photo Finish



A group of our service users enjoying the sunshine at the Let's Rock Festival



General Information

You can also view this newsletter on your computer! It's on our website in the 'Newsletters' section, or please email james.wheatley@barnetmencap.org.uk to be added to the emailing list, so you'll save paper and never miss an issue!



How to find us

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Tel: 020 8349 3842 Fax: 020 8349 2192

Email:

projectsupport@barnetmencap.org.uk

Website: www.barnetmencap.org.uk



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Diary Dates

Thursday 30th August 2018

Barnet Mencap Summer Celebration

Everybody is invited to our picnic and games afternoon to celebrate Barnet Mencap, our clients, staff and the work we do!

12 - 3pm at Victoria Park (meet near the cafe), Long Lane N3 2PU



Wednesday 21st November 2018

Barnet Mencap's AGM

Everybody is welcome to come along to our Annual General Meeting
10:30am - 12:30pm at St Paul's Centre, Long Lane Finchley N3 2PU

Friday 7th December 2018

Barnet Mencap's Christmas Party

Members, service users, staff, friends and families are invited to our Christmas Party!

7:30pm onwards at Old Finchleians Football Club, 12 Southover, N12 7JE

To book, or for more information about any of these events, please contact Project Support on 020 8349 3842 or projectsupport@barnetmencap.org.uk

The next newsletter, with all the latest news and features, will appear in November 2018

Barnet Mencap Registered Charity No.1089388 Company Registration No.4274621

