

November 2022

## Her Royal Subjects!



Some members of our Community Opportunities Project (COPs) laying flowers at Buckingham Palace to mark the passing of the Queen

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## *From the Editor*

Hello! It's that time of year when the days are getting colder and the evenings are drawing in; and it has been another strange year. As we've continued to move further out of the pandemic, it's still been a year of great change - not least with Queen Elizabeth II passing away (see cover). And if you've caught the news at all over the past few months, you'll have heard about the 'Cost of Living Crisis'. On page 5 one of our advisors offers a few simple tips to help reduce the impact of this.

Despite all this, we've been lucky to have people take on cycling and running challenges to raise money for Barnet Mencap (see page 4), for which we are hugely thankful! We were also heavily involved in Barnet's Hate Crime Awareness Week, which you can read about on page 3 along with articles about the new Dementia Strategy in Barnet, and Barnet Wellbeing's new mental health strategy.

Other positive news is that we will soon have a new post at Barnet Mencap for a carers' support worker. We have been keen to do more for parent-carers of people with learning disabilities and autistic people for a long time; so we're really pleased to be able to do more of this.

Likewise, we have welcomed a new Deputy Manager of our Equality Housing team. Her name is Beth and you can find out more about her in our Being... article on page 7. It would be remiss not to mention Tim and Edyta, who have both left Barnet Mencap after many years, with their experience and expertise being hugely missed; and although we wish them all the best, we're excited to have new members of staff on board.

*James Wheatley*

## Dementia Strategy

Dementia is one of the key challenges for health and social care services. In response to this, there will be a new Dementia Strategy in Barnet.

The borough of Barnet has the highest prevalence of dementia across north and central London, and the numbers are expected to significantly increase, with delays in getting a diagnosis of dementia and accessing the support needed.

However a new plan has been co-produced between staff in the council, health services, community and voluntary organisations, and Barnet residents. This is so that over the next four years there will be clear and effective pathways wherein people know where to turn if they have any signs of dementia. They will get the advice and information they need, be aware of how the diagnosis works and the support available, and can make decisions that are right for themselves and their family. GPs will also have a better understanding of the pathways, there will be more support in the community and for Carers, and better care in hospitals.

Dementia friendly towns and boroughs are springing up across the country. In Barnet we have been officially recognized as working towards this, due to the work taking place to raise awareness of dementia through friends and champions. The desire is for people in the borough to live as safely and independently as possible; and to enlist businesses, faith groups, leisure centres, and cultural venues to help achieve this.

Barnet Mencap strongly supports this strategy. We are keen that the dementia pathways are effective for people with learning disabilities and their carers. We are not sure about the number of people with learning disabilities affected by dementia, but have looked at the issues with Age UK Barnet, Barnet Carers' Centre, and the Barnet Learning Disability Service; and our ideas will be included in the new strategy. We are keen to better understand the data, arrange preventative activities, develop training across all sectors, and take a whole family approach to support local families of people with learning disabilities who are living with dementia.





Cllr Sara Conway alongside Barnet Mencap staff and service users, and staff from other organisations across the Borough, at our stall in Finchley Central as part of Hate Crime Awareness Week.

## Focus on... Hate Crime Awareness Week

This October we hosted our 5<sup>th</sup> annual Hate Crime Awareness Week for Barnet residents. This is part of a national campaign to raise awareness of the importance of reporting hate crime to the police.

Hate crime is an issue that affects the entire community and research has shown it can escalate and spread if it is left unchecked. Hate crime can be targeted against its victims on the grounds of disability, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, faith and religion, race, ethnicity or national origin. It can include offences such as verbal abuse, criminal damage, bullying, physical assault, malicious complaints, harassment, offensive graffiti, and online abuse via social media platforms.

This year, Hate Crime Awareness and Information Stands were set-up in Finchley Central (Albert Place), Barnet Hospital, Islamic Centre Edgware, Golders Green Bus Station, Edgware Bus Station, Burnt Oak

Underground Station, and Hendon Central Underground Station. Staff and volunteers from the Metropolitan Police, Barnet Council, and Barnet Mencap were on-hand to share their expertise and spread public awareness and understanding of hate crime and the effect it has on its victims.

During the week over 300 residents visited our stands; and we signed up 32 Hate Crime Reporting Champions, who pledge to speak up and report hate crime should they encounter it in the community. They will also have the opportunity to attend free workshops and community events.

A webinar was also delivered, focusing on 'Hate Crime and Gender' and panel guests discussed whether "*Women are targets of hate crime more than men?*". Speakers included Councillor Conway (Chair of the Safer Communities Partnership Board) and Fiona Bateman (Chair of the Adult Safeguarding Board).

Continued→

# News&Events

The Week's events focused on making Barnet a safe community for all, and we continue to promote the Barnet Safe Places Scheme that was launched last year. The scheme is a network of safe places across the borough where people can get help if they feel unsafe, anxious, or threatened when out in the community.

The Information Stands also raised awareness of the hidden disabilities Sunflower Lanyard that disabled people and people with medical or health conditions can wear to indicate that they might need some support, space, or additional time when accessing services and facilities.

For more information on any of these schemes, visit our website or contact our Hate Crime Reporting Co-Ordinator, Reshma Hirani at: [projectsupport@barnetmencap.org.uk](mailto:projectsupport@barnetmencap.org.uk)

## FUNDRAISING

### Challenge Accepted!

Fundraising events for Barnet Mencap have been a huge success recently, and we have seen an increase in supporter engagement. In September this year, 4 amazing cyclists took part in the Skyline London to Brighton cycle challenge. The challenge itself (along with our exciting cycle celebration event) raised a total of £1,422! Our service users had the most incredible time exercising their arts skills and making good luck banners. They also took part in a competition to predict cyclist finish times, received manicures in brand colours, and enjoyed a home cooked meal. Well done to our cyclists and thank you to everyone who supported us with donations!

Then in October, our Equality Housing staff member, Kate, took part in the Royal Parks Half Marathon. Our enthusiastic service users (pictured) came along on the day to show their support and offer congratulations.

Following on from this success, we are now busy organising a Festive Pamper Extravaganza event to take place next month in December; and are reaching out to local businesses to encourage partnership working.

In addition, our grant applications continue to go from strength to strength. The National Lottery Community Fund accepted our application to fund the salary for a new Carers' Case Worker position and to extend our existing Project Support Officer's post. Likewise, the Forbes Charitable Fund has accepted our application for laptops in each of our 3 shared houses, and kitchen utensils for our new premises on Station Road. We are also waiting for a decision from several other grant providers - so watch this space!



(Top) Kate with some cheerleaders after finishing the Royal Parks Half Marathon. (Bottom) Katy after completing the London to Brighton bike ride



## COST OF LIVING

### Prices going up - what you can do

Have you noticed the cost of things we all need (like food, gas, electricity, travel) is going up quickly with some people being asked to pay more for their care as well?

At the same time, wages and benefits are not going up as quickly. So it is getting harder to pay for the things we all need.

Barnet Mencap's Working for You team has put together ten tips on how you can save money:

1. Turn off the tap when you brush your teeth.
2. Only put as much water as you need in the kettle.
3. A shower uses less water than a bath.
4. Try to wait until you have enough clothes to fill your washing machine before you wash them.
5. Only turn lights on when you need them.
6. Switch off things like your television. Do not leave them on standby.



One of our Working for You Advisors helping out a client.

7. It is colder now so wear warmer clothes inside.
8. When it starts getting dark close your curtains or blinds to keep the heat in.
9. Use the timer for your heating and hot water so that they are only on when you need them.
10. Use the thermostat to choose how warm the rooms are when your heating is on.

Working for You know that money advice and support are important right now, so please call us - we are here to help!

## MENTAL HEALTH

### Annual Health Checks

The Barnet Wellbeing Service are encouraging people living with mental health conditions to have regular annual health checks provided by their GP.

It is recommended by NHS England that these health checks happen once every year as they can reduce the risk of developing physical illnesses. You can book your physical health check with your GP.

At a physical health check, the GP will check your blood pressure; measure your height and weight; test your blood glucose for risk of diabetes; check your blood cholesterol levels; and ask some questions about any smoking or alcohol habits.

Your physical health is just as important as your mental health. The Barnet Wellbeing Service will be at various locations in Barnet engaging with the public and promoting the importance of this message. Details will be published across their social media channels, or you can email their Health and Wellbeing Manager, Kolsum, if you have any questions about it:

[kolsum.jahan@communitybarnet.org.uk](mailto:kolsum.jahan@communitybarnet.org.uk)

## SUPPORT FOR CARERS

### Carers' Project

In the autumn of 2021, we surveyed carers of adults with learning disabilities. Asking them what the main issues are that affect them, we found that the biggest single thing was feeling constantly worried about the future. Second to that, we found concern among carers about the lack of information on support and services available.

Highlighting the emotional impact of caring, it was upsetting to read about the daily experience of many carers; but the findings came as no surprise. Supporting carers to plan for the future has long been a gap in what we at Barnet Mencap, as well as other services, can offer families.

But the survey results have spurred us and the Barnet Carers' Centre to pursue funding for a new project to address this gap; and we are delighted that the Community Fund has awarded us a grant for three years!

We will now recruit a Carers' Case Worker, who will work with families to plan for their future. The Carers' Case Worker will spend time getting to know families, and understanding what is important to them. If families need any immediate support they will be offered it by other teams in Barnet Carers' Centre and Barnet Mencap.

The new project will help carers of people with learning disabilities, and their wider circle of family and friends, to think about the future. The Carers' Case Worker will help in recognizing strengths and what needs to be put in place as relationships and care arrangements change. All plans and details of how to achieve them will be written down.

Where necessary, these plans will be shared with adults social care, to see how future support will be funded and arranged; and to give families some reassurance.

Over the next three years carers will be able to meet others in the same position, and share their experiences, tips, and advice.

Carers play an invaluable role in the lives of many people with a learning disability. They take on a lot of responsibilities. But it is not fair that they have to worry so much about the future. Barnet Mencap and Barnet Carers' Centre are glad that we are now in a position to do something about this, and support families to plan ahead.

#### We Want You!



If you support Barnet Mencap, why not become a member? Join us for £15 per year (or £5 if you are unwaged)! As well as

supporting our work, members get a small welcome gift, a membership card, the chance to vote at our AGM, and much more!

Contact 020 8349 3842 or [projectsupport@barnetmencap.org.uk](mailto:projectsupport@barnetmencap.org.uk) if you're interested

#### Your gift for people with a learning disability

Including a gift in your Will to Barnet Mencap can give people with a learning disability someone to turn to. Someone who will fight their corner, and someone who will ensure they're seen and respected as individuals. You can make their wish your Will; supporting our work to make the UK the best place in the world for people with a learning disability to live happy, healthy lives.

Head to [www.barnetmencap.org.uk/get-involved/wills](http://www.barnetmencap.org.uk/get-involved/wills) to find out more.



# Being... Beth Salmon



**I** have recently graduated from the University of Hertfordshire where I studied Special Educational Needs (SEN) Education.

I like to travel and have recently returned from a trip to America where I visited Seattle, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Las Vegas. I had the opportunity to go up the Space needle, explore Alcatraz, tour Warner Bros studios, and complete the zipwire above the Las Vegas strip. As well as trying American food chains such as Applebee's, In-N-Out Burger, and (my favourite discovery) Olive Garden.

When I was 18, I backpacked Indochina (i.e. Southeast Asia) where I visited Thailand, Laos, and Vietnam. This is where I picked up my love for travelling. While there I stayed with a family in Laos and got a real insight into how they live and just how lucky we are. While exploring Indochina, I had

the chance to do some amazing things such as riding an elephant, hiking in a rainforest, and canyoning.

I am currently planning a trip to Budapest for November and looking forward to exploring a new city. I have set myself a target to visit 30 countries before I turn 30 - so any suggestions of good places to visit would be appreciated!

I also have a love for live theatre and regularly see a show in London. So far this year I have seen several (including some favourites) such as Hamilton and Matilda. I would love to hear some of your favourites and suggestions too.

Before starting with Barnet Mencap, I had a few jobs. While I was at school I worked at Sainsbury's, where I eventually ended up in management. As part of my A Levels I completed work experience in my local day centre working with adults with a range of different learning disabilities. When I left school, I went to work full-time at this day centre and decided I really wanted a career working with people with SEN.

The following September I started my degree in SEN Education where through placements, I had the opportunity to work across a number of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) settings.

Shortly after completing my degree, I got a job as a high-level teaching assistant in special needs school, where I was teaching different classes. After 2 academic years working in a SEN school, I decided I wanted to work with adults with learning disabilities again.

And thanks to Laura from Equality Housing telling me all about her lovely job, I have now started my role within the Equality Housing team at Barnet Mencap!

If you're interested in becoming a Support Worker with Barnet Mencap, head to <https://www.barnetmencap.org.uk/get-involved/jobs/> now!

# Photo Finish



One of the members of our Springboard social project enjoying a day out in Camden Town.



## General Information

You can also view this newsletter on your computer! It is on our website in the 'Newsletters' section; or email [projectsupport@barnetmencap.org.uk](mailto:projectsupport@barnetmencap.org.uk) to be added to the email list so you'll save paper and never miss an issue!



## How to find us

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## Diary Dates

### Barnet Mencap's Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2022

Wesley Hall, 9 Stapylton Road, Barnet EN5 4JJ

10:30 am - 12:00 noon

Everyone is welcome to come along to our AGM and hear what we have been getting up to over the past year, and how the services we offer have developed.



We'd like to say a huge thank you to  
BKL Chartered Accountants &  
Tax Advisers for their  
incredibly kind and generous donation of £5000  
which will enable us to extend the reach of our  
services.

The next newsletter, with all the latest news and features, will appear in February 2023

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