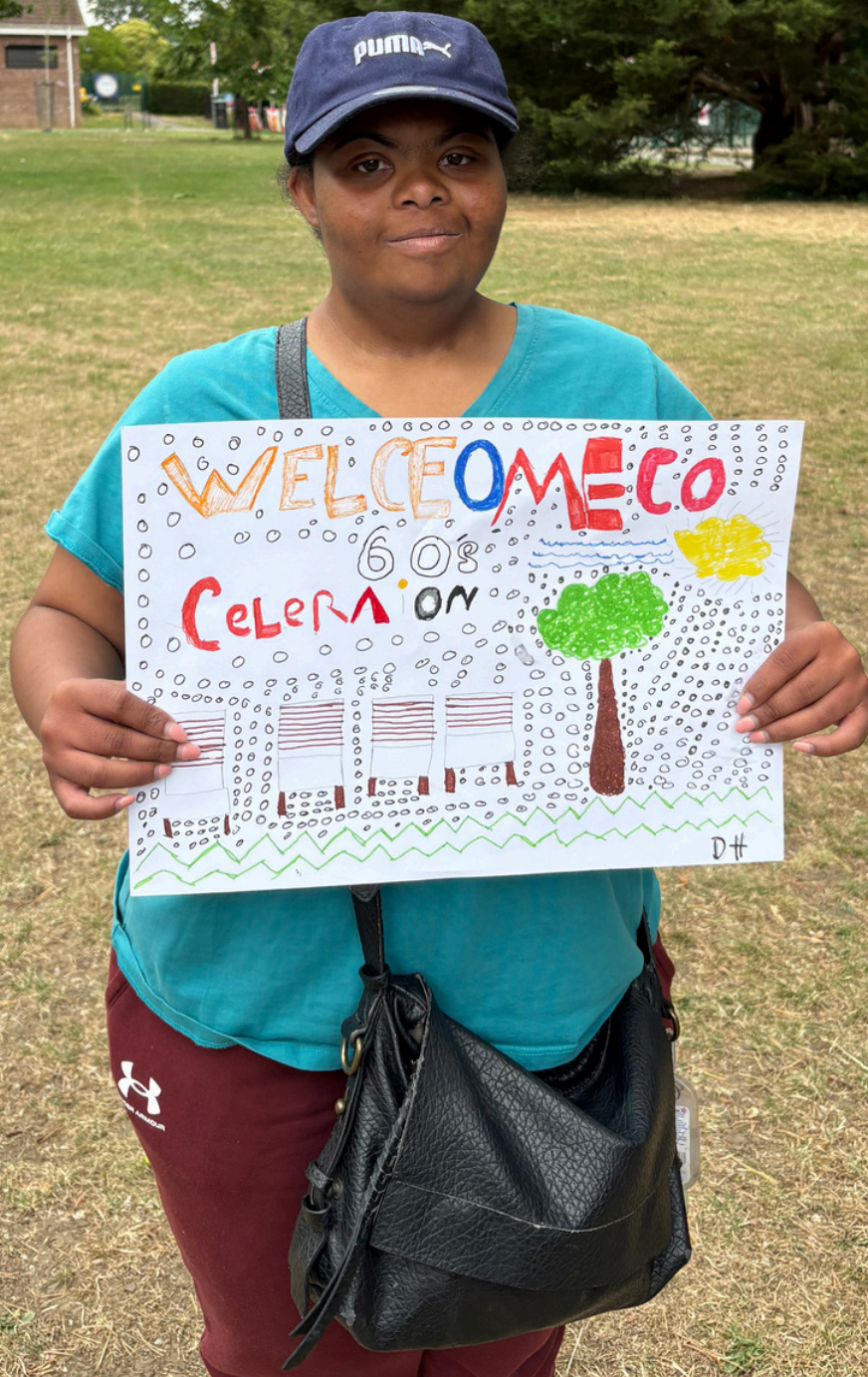


Barnet men-cap



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From the Editor

As the bright days of summer slip into the cooler embrace of autumn, we find ourselves reflecting on what a truly special season it has been for Barnet Mencap. This summer wasn't just about sunshine and shared moments — it was about celebrating 60 years of inclusion, support, and community. Our anniversary reminded us of just how far we've come together.

From our park celebrations and library event, to two lively barbecues, the Carers event, trip to Clacton and Sound Hub concert, the summer was full of laughter, stories, and togetherness. These moments remind us that Barnet Mencap isn't just an organisation — it's a family, built on care, resilience, and joy.

Of course, none of this would be possible without our incredible staff team, whose dedication and compassion drive everything we do. Their hard work and commitment are reflected in initiatives like our annual wellbeing survey, which helps ensure that everyone at Barnet Mencap feels supported and valued.

Now, as September arrives and autumn begins to colour the world around us, we look ahead with renewed hope. Just as the season changes, we too continue to grow, adapt, and move forward. With our roots firmly in the strength of the past 60 years, there's so much more to look forward to.

Thank you for walking this journey with us, for sharing your voices and your hearts. Here's to the memories we've made — and to the new ones waiting for us in this next chapter.

Warm Wishes

Annette Zippis (COO)

MEET THE MANAGERS

VALERIE LAM

I have worked at Barnet Mencap for over 12 years, but only recently became the Children's Service Manager in October 2024.

I am originally from near Glasgow in Scotland, as you may be able to tell from my accent. I studied Psychology at Strathclyde University in Glasgow and then worked for the Employment Service as an Occupational Psychologist, helping people with disabilities find work or training. I worked there for two years before moving to Tunbridge Wells in Kent. This was meant to be a temporary move as I was a Community Service Volunteer at a residential school for young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. However, after six months, I got a job as a residential social worker at the school and stayed there for another 6 years before leaving to train as a Primary School Teacher, completing my PGCE at Brighton University.

My first teaching job was in a small village school in East Sussex, where I worked for two years before I got married and moved to a very large primary school in Enfield, a bit of a culture shock!

I worked in the school for around 10 years, and during that time I

moved to Barnet and had my two children. Megan, who is now nineteen and Kian, who is seventeen. Kian was born with Down syndrome and needed a heart operation at 5 months old. His physiotherapy, speech and language therapy and visits from the amazing Pre-school Teaching team (now called the Early Years Send Advisory Team) meant that it made sense to stop work for a few years and it was during this time that we started attending Barnet Mencap's Open Door Sessions, never knowing that a few years later I would actually be running the Open Door Project myself.

Kian was five and Megan was seven when the Open Door position was advertised, and I was thrilled to start work with Barnet Mencap in May 2013.

Since then, I have worked across all the projects in the children's service, and I am honoured to now be the manager of such a wonderful, hardworking team.

When I am not working, I enjoy reading, particularly Murder Mysteries, visiting the theatre and exploring as much of the UK as I can.



BM'S 60TH BASH

Sixty years of care, laughter, and courage.
We marked the journey with dance and song, stories shared in the library and sunlight in the park where the community gathered strong.

Every smile, every step, every gift of support made this milestone shine brighter.

Here's to the past we honour, and the future we build — together.
Our heartfelt thanks to the community whose support has shaped Barnet Mencap into what it is today.



FUNDRAISING UPDATE



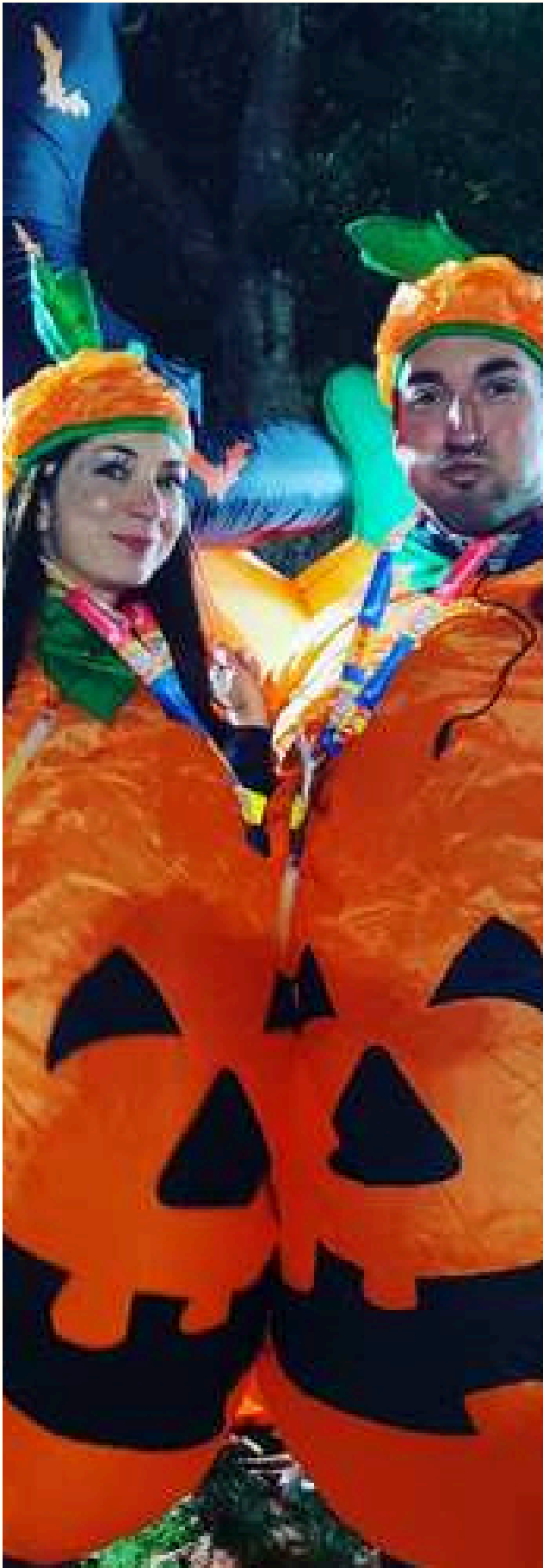
*Thank you
for your support*

It's been a fun and exciting time in the world of fundraising! We were so excited to organise a fun park fundraiser in Victoria park to get our clients active and celebrate Barnet Mencap's special birthday! Our clients and staff came together and enjoyed a range of activities in the sun including rounders, badminton, plank, sit ups and more. Not to forget all the staff taking part in a lemon and spoon race! We raised money and had fun!

We are so grateful to have received a Barnet Community Grant to cover Volunteer Coordinator salary for our Autism Hub. Huge thank you also to BKL for the unrestricted funding. We are always excited to develop new corporate partnerships.



ULTRA CHALLENGES



We have 6 supporters taking part in the Moonwalk Challenge on 12th September – thank you and good luck! If you would like to challenge yourself, take a look at the exciting list of events coming up across London and throughout the UK!

Whether it's a London Halloween walk or a trek through historic Windsor, the fun awaits! Just choose your challenge and select Barnet Mencap.

[Events Overview - Ultra Challenge](#)

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

OPEN DOOR WORKSHOP



The Open Door Project is our service for families with children five and under with additional needs. We are very lucky to have it funded by John Lyon's Charity. Throughout the year we have coffee mornings where parents can come along, with or without their children and they can meet, chat, play and make friends.

During school holidays we also run family friendly activities. This summer we have had a bumper range of activities. We offered many of the activities on several different days so families could book to fit in with their holiday plans.

We had three lovely visits to Sweet Tree Farm where they ran bespoke sessions for our families, making bug hotels, petting the animals as well as creative clay play.

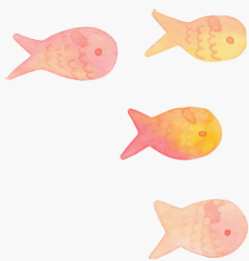
We had four fun mornings with Fixation Academy of Performing Arts, which was an amazing sensory experience. We also held an Ice Cream Party at Lewis of London, complete with a bouncy castle and of course Ice Cream!

Bonnie the Bubble Lady got us all creative with bubbles, some so huge that we were able to stand inside them.

We also had a fun time at Malibu Soft Play in Oak Hill Park and visited Aldenham Country Park where we were able to visit the farm, play on the inclusive adventure playground and SEND pavilion. We rounded everything off with a princess themed end of summer Party.

If you are interested in attending future Open Door activities, then please get in touch with projectsupport@barnetmencap.org.uk or call 02083493842.





CLACTON SEA TRIP



Equality Housing and COPs organised a joyful seaside outing to Clacton with our clients, and it was truly a day to remember!

The trip was filled with laughter, sunshine, and great company as everyone enjoyed the sea breeze, beach walks, and fun rides. From sharing ice creams along the promenade to trying their luck in the arcades, there was something for everyone to enjoy.

For many, the highlight was simply being by the sea — relaxing on the sand, paddling in the water, and soaking up the cheerful holiday atmosphere. Others loved the excitement of the fairground rides and the chance to experience something new together.

It was wonderful to see so many smiles, hear so much laughter, and watch friendships grow stronger throughout the day. Moments like these remind us of the importance of community, connection, and creating joyful experiences for all.



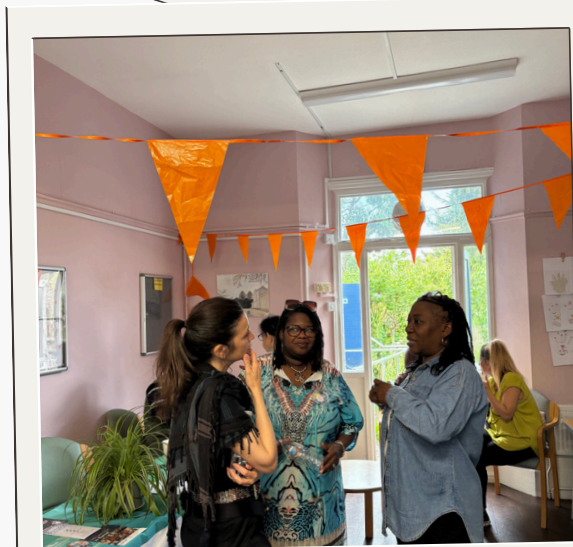
CARER'S EVENT

As part of Carers Week, we arranged a special event bringing together local

Barnet organisations to support and connect with the incredible carers in our community.

The day was filled with useful information, heartfelt conversations, and above all, genuine appreciation for the vital role carers play.

A heartfelt thank you to all the organisations who joined us and helped make the event so valuable.



BEING...MIA



When I first joined Equality Housing, I felt completely out of my depth. I didn't know how to manage day-to-day life. Things that seemed simple to other people — paying bills, keeping my place tidy, even cooking — felt impossible for me. I was nervous, unsure, and I didn't think I'd ever be able to stand on my own two feet.

But with support, I began to learn and grow. I wasn't judged for what I couldn't do — instead, people showed me how to take one step at a time. Slowly, I started to believe in myself. I learned new skills, began making decisions for myself, and found that I was more capable than I had ever imagined.

One of my proudest moments was cooking a sausage casserole for everyone in the house. It might sound small, but for me it was huge. I went from not being able to cook at all, to making a meal that we could all share together. Seeing people enjoy something I had made gave me a real sense of pride and belonging.

Now, I feel independent and confident. I can look after myself, make my own choices, and I no longer doubt that I can live the life I want. Equality Housing didn't just give me support — it gave me the chance to discover who I really am.



SIZZLING SUMMER BBQ'S AT BM

This summer, we fired up the grills and brought our community together for not one, but two fantastic BBQs. The first was hosted by COPS, and the second by Equality Housing.

These gatherings were a wonderful chance to relax, connect, and celebrate the spirit of our community.

A big thank you to COPS and EQH for making them possible!



SOUNDHUB SUNFLOWER TOUR 2025



BOOST



BARNET
LONDON BOROUGH

Sound Hub Sunflower Tour Arts Depot Concert was a powerful celebration of creativity, inclusion, and raw, original talent.

Over the last 11 weeks, a group of neurodivergent artists have come together not just to make music, but to find their voice. They've built something honest, bold and deeply personal through writing, composing and rehearsing. Every note performed was created from scratch, shaped by lived experience and driven by passion.

Supported by Wigginton, Barnet Council, and BOOST, the Sound Hub became a place where expression thrives and difference is celebrated.

The Sound Hub concert at the Arts Depot was more than a performance. It was a statement. A moment of courage, connection and creativity. We are so proud of every artist taking the stage.



Annual General Meeting

This is to remind you that the Barnet Mencap Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2025 will be taking place:

Date: Wednesday, 19th November 2025

Time: 10:30 am

Location: St Paul's Centre, Dukes Avenue (off Long Lane), London N3 2PU

We would be delighted if you could book this in your calendar and let us know if you'll be attending by sending your RSVP to bhumikas@barnetmencap.org.uk.

Your presence is very important to us as we reflect on the past year and look ahead to the future of Barnet Mencap.

Meanwhile, to continue your support for the year, consider becoming a Barnet Mencap member.

BECOME A MEMBER

Support Barnet Mencap as a member.
For just £15 per year, (or £5 if you are not in work).



SCAN TO JOIN

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

- ♥ Support Barnet Mencap's work and community.
- ♥ Get access to exclusive events and the Barnet Mencap's newsletter.
- ♥ Get a chance to vote at our AGM.

AND MUCH MORE!



Barnet
mencap



Great Yarmouth



PHOTO RECAP

Barnet Mencap

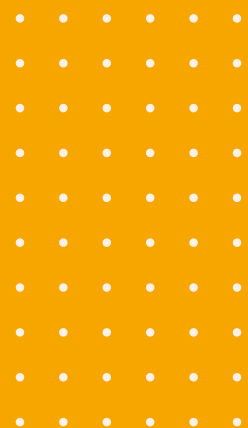
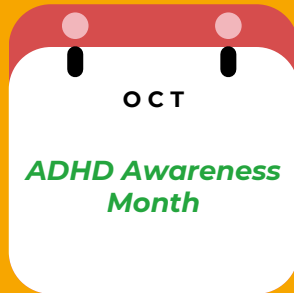
June 2025 - August 2025

60th Anniversary Library Display



Lincoln's Inn Field

Diary Dates



How to find us



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FINCHLEY, LONDON
N3 1RT**

CONTACT US



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Next edition will be in Winter 2025

