

# Autism Hub

**Barnet Mencap's Autism Hub is a FREE service for autistic adults (18+) in Barnet.**

- If you think you are autistic
- Self-identify as being Autistic
- Wanting to navigate or explore how to get a diagnosis

**Then this service maybe for you.**

**We are a Waiting & Living Well Service.**





## **Members Testimonials:**

“a place of refuge”

“this saves lives”

“I finally feel heard and supported”

“I don’t usually like groups, but this  
feels safe”

“an essential service for autistic  
people”

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## About Us

The Autism Hub is a safe, inclusive, and supportive space designed by and for neurodivergence.

We are open Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays

### Our Staff

Lived  
experience

We shape  
and evolve  
our services  
with YOU

Small &  
dedicated  
team

- All of our staff have lived experience of neurodiversity.
- Many are autistic, have ADHD, support autistic family members — or all three.
- That lived experience gives the Hub authenticity. Staff and members can relate to each other, and communication differences are less of a barrier.
- We understand the importance of boundaries and reliability. We strive to achieve the outcomes that we identify together.
- While we can't always offer everything at once, we're here to walk alongside you in a way that feels supportive and sustainable.

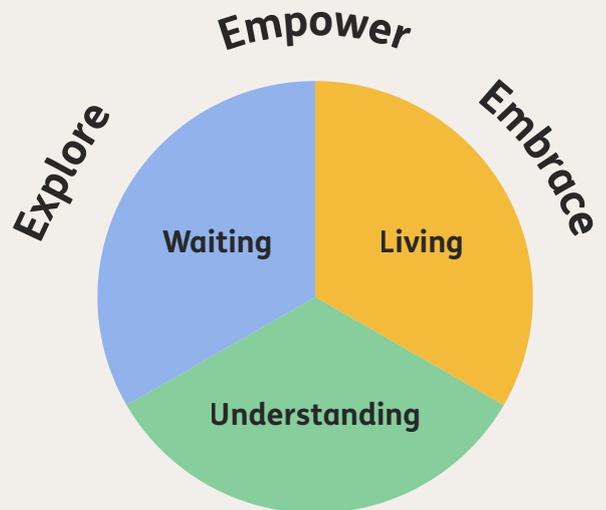
# Our Ethos:

## Explore, Embrace, Empower.

- We support people to explore their identity, embrace their needs, and empower themselves as they navigate life with neurodivergence.
- Just like our brains, this journey is not linear.
- You might be wondering “Is diagnosis right for me?” one day, and the next you're diving into “What does it actually mean to be autistic?”

You may move between:

- **Waiting:** I think I might be autistic — now what? Do I get diagnosed?
- **Understanding:** What is autism? What does it mean for me?
- **Living:** How do I build a life that supports my neurodivergence?



There's no one “right” order — and you're allowed to revisit, pause, or sit with any part of that process, as often as you need.

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## FAQs — Things You Might Be Wondering

- **Do I have to talk to people?**

No. You can join just to sit in the space. Silent presence is absolutely okay.

- **What if I feel awkward or anxious when I arrive?**

A staff member or peer will greet you gently (no big introductions) and help you find a comfortable space. You're never expected to explain or push through discomfort.

- **Do I have to stay the whole time?**

Not at all. You can come late, leave early, or just pop in for a few minutes.

- **What if I don't know how to start a conversation?**

You don't need to. Some people bring things to do — colouring, Switch games, a book — and let connection happen naturally, if at all.

- **Do I need to book in advance?**

Some events need an RSVP for numbers, others are fully drop-in. We'll always let you know clearly in advance.

- **Is it sensory-friendly?**

Yes. We're mindful of lighting, sound, and space. You can bring your own comfort items (headphones, stim toys, snacks), and there's always a quieter zone.

- **What if I have a meltdown or shutdown?**

You can take time out, leave if needed, or speak with a staff member. There's no judgment. You're in control.

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# Our Services: Where do I start?

Welcome Session



## Our Services:

Drop-in & Advice

Peer-support groups

Socials - The divergent Way

Workshops - Supporting Neurodivergence

The Welcome Email includes the dates/timings for this session.

Sign the consent form to

- Join our WhatsApp group
- Join our Monthly Newsletter (email-based)

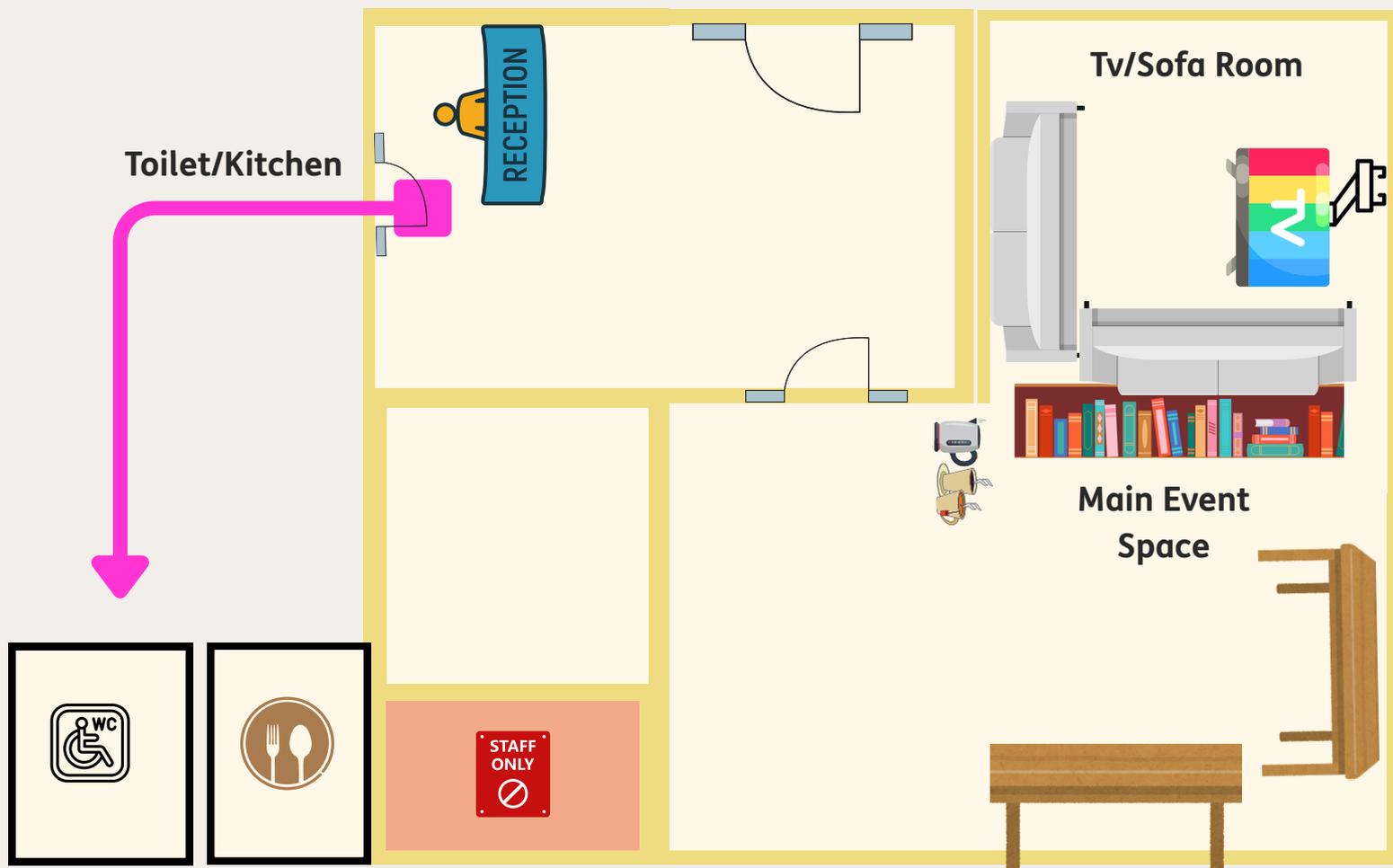


# STRATERGY GROUP

## Some gentle reminders

- TV Room – a non-verbal zone for rest and quiet screen time
- Quiet Zone – located opposite reception, for times you feel you need a minute to yourself
- Outdoor Area – feel free to step outside at any time, no need to ask

Take your time, resist the urge to "fix and do everything today". We don't want you to burnout - Small consistent steps WITH your neurodivergent brain.



Floor plan for the Sratergy group

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## 1. Quick Advice

This is a 15 to 20-minute, structured and non-judgmental space.

You can talk with an Autism Advisor about a specific issue or concern.

Examples:

- Asking for reasonable adjustments
- Understanding diagnostic pathways
- Finding counselling or mental health support

## 2. Two Communal Tables: Task Support & Art

This is a calm and quiet space where you can get something done or take time to explore a creative hobby.

- At the Task Support table, you can work on things like ending an email  
Calling your GP, Filling out a form, Writing a message.
- At the Art table, you're welcome to Draw, Colour, Paint or Work on a creative project at your own pace.

## 3. Digital Support

If you need digital support, one of our volunteers will be at the Digital Support Desk. They can support you with things like:

- Using a computer, phone, or tablet
- Sending emails
- Filling in online forms



# Peer Support Groups – Shared Journeys, Safe Spaces

## Purpose

Our peer groups are spaces to connect with others on similar — but-never-identical journeys.

They're not therapy or social obligations. They are calm, respectful spaces built on lived experience and mutual understanding.

## You can:

- Share what's on your mind — or just sit quietly.
- Connect with people who truly get it.
- Learn practical tips and coping strategies.
- Be yourself, without needing to mask or explain.

All Sessions are Hybrid — join in person at the Hub or online via a secure Zoom link which is Provided on our monthly calendar.

## We offer three Peer Groups

Women's  
Group

Men's  
Group

Carer's  
Group

## Women's Group – Quiet Connection & Real Talk

Who it's for: Autistic women

Common themes include identity, masking, late diagnosis, and menopause.

Facilitators: Neurodivergent women with lived experience.

Atmosphere: Supportive, reflective, and flexible — silence is okay, big feelings are welcome, and real talk is valued.

## Men's Group – Peer-Led & Laid-Back

Who it's for: Autistic men

Common themes include emotions, masking, late diagnosis, and relationships.

Facilitators: This group is self-led. Staff provide guidance materials and support if needed

Atmosphere: Relaxed, informal, and pressure-free — ideal for those who prefer connecting through shared activity.

## Carers' Group – Shared Space, Shared Strength

Who it's for: Carers and supporters of autistic adults

Common themes include boundaries or burnout, and space to share challenges and practical strategies.

Facilitators: Neurodivergent women with lived experience.

Atmosphere: Supportive, reflective, and flexible



# SOCIALS - THE DIVERGENT WAY

## Purpose

Our social sessions aren't about forced fun or fitting in — they're about comfort, choice, and connection on your terms. We create low-pressure, flexible environments where autistic adults can:

- Be around others without masking.
- Choose how much (or how little) you interact.
- Try different kinds of social spaces that feel accessible, not overwhelming.
- Connect authentically — without small talk or social rules that don't make sense.
- Whether you join to talk, play, observe, or just exist in the same space — all forms of presence are welcome.

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## AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT WE OFFER: QUIET COFFEE AFTERNOON

Location: Hub common area

Setup: Low lighting, minimal noise, sensory-friendly seating

Options:

- Sit quietly with a cup of coffee or tea.
- Join a table game or puzzle
- Bring something to fidget with or read
- Chat with others or just listen — no pressure

Facilitators: Friendly neurodivergent staff who can help you settle in, find space, or leave early if needed.

Duration: Drop-in over 90 minutes — come and go as you like.

Socials change based on feedback from our members, as we grow and learn WITH them



# WORKSHOPS: SUPPORTING NEURODIVERGENCE

## Purpose:

- To help you empower yourselves as you navigate through your Autistic journey and day-to-day life.
- To build on your strengths and acknowledging your differences.
- To enable you to better advocate for yourself and your needs.

Our free monthly Autism Workshops cover a different topics like Autism, from general awareness through to Autism & Women, Employment & Education, Mental Health and many more.

Location: Hybrid, online & at the Autism Hub

Booking: Online via our Forms – Advertised in Newsletter, Calendar & WhatsApp community

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## Workshop



2 weeks later

## Strategy Group

Each session is followed by a strategy group ( after a 2 week period ).

These groups are about

- building and sharing skills
- tips & tools that work for you

Our workshops and strategy groups are a place for us to learn from each other.

Facilitators: Friendly neurodivergent staff who can help you settle in, find space, or leave early if needed.

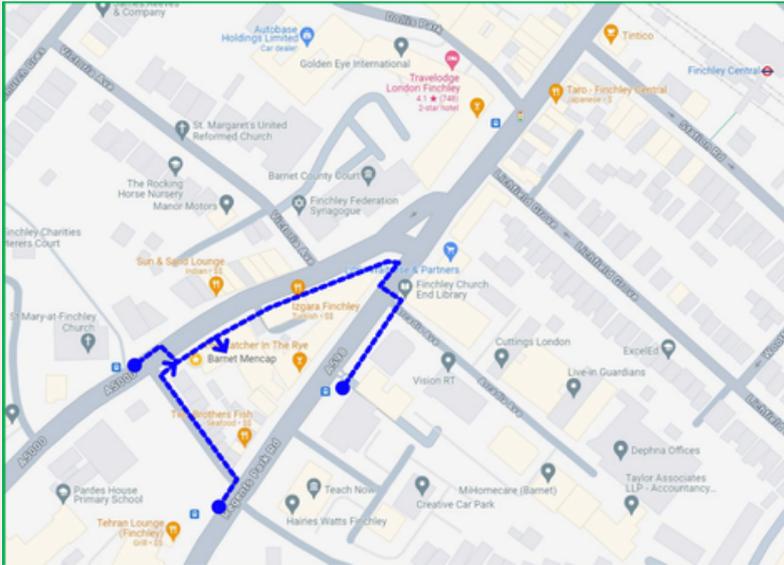
Duration:

- Workshop – 2-3 Hours with breaks
- Strategy Group – 2-3 Hours with breaks, depending on the topic and attendance

# Address:

We are open Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays

Autism Hub, 23 Hendon Lane,  
Finchley, N3 1RT



## Bus Stop

The nearest bus stops are:

- Hendon Lane H (13, 125, 143, 326, 460, 683)  
- 3 minute walk
- St Mary's Church (125, 326) - 1 minute walk
- Hendon Lane J (13, 143, 460) - 3 minute walk



## Underground

The nearest Underground Station is Finchley Central (Northern Line - 8 minutes walk)



## Contact Information:



0208 349 3842



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www.barnetmencap.org.uk

Your engagement & support is crucial  
to the present & future of the hub!



Helping it form and grow.