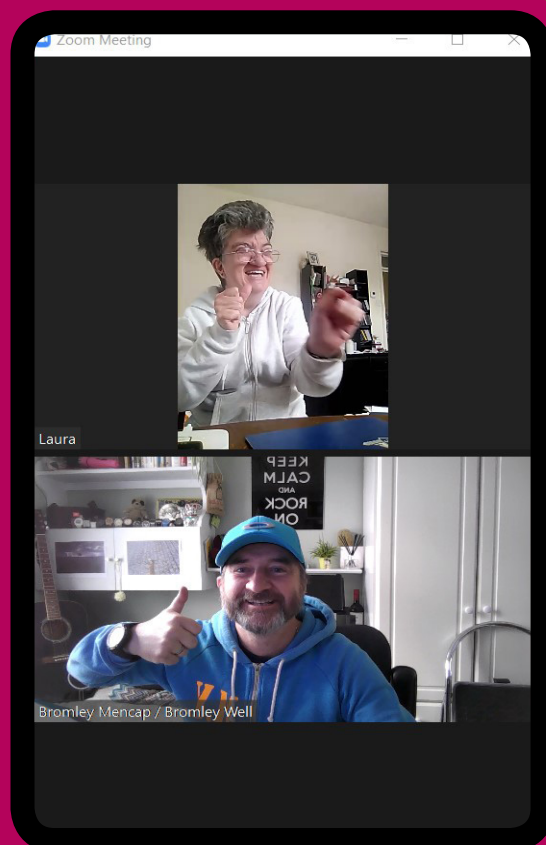


## Getting connected!

As part of our digitalisation project, long-standing Bromley Mencap member Laura Frewin received a tablet and was very excited to be able to contact people using Zoom and WhatsApp. The project has been funded by the Lottery and London Community Response Fund. Laura is pictured here with Matt Yule after volunteer Marian helped set up the new technology. As well as Bromley Mencap meetings, Laura has now been able to catch up with her best friend Gill Rees and see all her friends from the Gateway Club virtually... Go Laura and a big **THANK YOU** to Marian from all of us!





Hi everyone,

I hope you are keeping safe and well. We are into May already... Hopefully we can get some sunshine to coincide with the easing of lockdown restrictions. Or maybe that's too much to ask for?!!

If the pandemic has taught us anything, it's the importance of technology in our lives. Take a look at how we are progressing with our digitalisation project on page 4.

We also have our usual updates and some fab photos from our Children's Wellbeing Service (those cakes!!) and from our Monday Afternooners' recent events.

Take care and stay safe,

Luan  
[luanlanham@btinternet.com](mailto:luanlanham@btinternet.com)

## *What's in this issue?*

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| <b>BROMLEY WELL UPDATES</b>         | <b>7-13</b>  |
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| <b>CHILDREN'S WELLBEING SERVICE</b> | <b>16-17</b> |
| <b>COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING</b>        | <b>18-19</b> |

# Events and Activities

Please check our website here <https://www.bromleymencap.org.uk/> or phone our helpline on 020 8466 0790 to find out about our latest events.

<https://www.bromleymencap.org.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-latest-update/bromley-mencap-services-update/>

Bromley Well has various support sessions running virtually, please check the website for details. <https://www.bromleywell.org.uk/events/>

**Bromley Well**

Bromley Well online services include Employment Support workshops, workshops for people with learning difficulties and physical disabilities, Autism support sessions as well as our monthly Facebook quiz night.



### OUR DIGITALISATION PROGRESS

Over the last few months, we have seen significant progress with our digitalisation project. I am delighted to report we have received two further grants to add to the previous grants we secured from the National Lottery Covid-19 Fund and the London Community Response Fund Wave 3. The two new grants are from the Good Things Foundation – Let's Get Digital and Digital Lifeline and these grants have enabled us to buy 35 more tablets.

Further funding from the Bromley Day Opportunities and Respite COVID-19 Fund has enabled us to fund additional data for 25 tablets. The funding will ensure that even more disabled people and their carers, with our support, can access technology and services online and reconnect safely with others preventing further social isolation.

Our project is not only helping us to make our services more accessible to disabled people, it's also helping disabled people to learn new skills, develop friendships and break down the barriers across the digital divide. It is improving the wellbeing, confidence, mental health and independence of many of our beneficiaries.

The funding has supported us to provide digital technology for users across many of our services including Bromley Well's Mutual Carers Pathway, Bromley Well's Young Carers, our Day Opportunities, the Lodge Community Hub and Step Forward, our training and employment project based at Astley Day Centre.

As well as equipment, we are also providing training to individuals on how to set up and use their new technology, we are continuing to produce our podcasts and we have commissioned a new website. You can listen to our ever-popular podcasts [here](#). We will be reporting on the success of this project in future issues and featuring case studies of people who have benefitted.

**The London  
Community  
Foundation**



**Good Things  
Foundation**

Improving lives through digital



### **Learning Disability Week 2021**

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, we are all feeling the impact of the lockdown. Many people with a learning disability are feeling isolated, as they are unable to see their friends and families.

We know that people with a learning disability already experience high levels of loneliness and social isolation and that this will only have been made worse by the lockdown. We want to show the importance of friendships to help with tackling isolation, as well as exploring the different ways of maintaining friendships during this unusual time. Learning Disability Week 2021 will take place online from 21st to 27th June. **The theme of the Week is the importance of friendships during lockdown.**

Look out for resources and activities to help celebrate the week. Weather permitting, Bromley Mencap will be holding an event in Norman Park to celebrate friendships as we move out of lockdown.

More details soon!



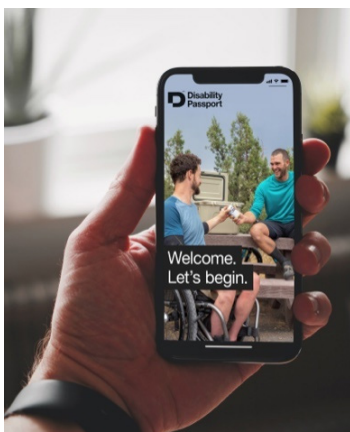
### Number of DWP disability employment advisers falls by a third during the pandemic

The DWP is facing questions over its commitment to disability equality after new figures revealed the number of Disability Employment Advisers (DEAs) fell sharply during the pandemic, while the number of mainstream work coaches soared. Figures show that at the start of 2021 there were just 447 full time equivalent DEAs in post across the DWP, compared with 661 on 1 February 2020. Read more on the DRUK website [here](#)

**DWP** Department for Work and Pensions

### Disabled parking in London New Disability Passport

The Disability Passport is a mobile app that will give disabled people in the UK a quick, easy and trusted way to identify themselves and their needs to places like shops and venues. The system is designed to be a discreet alternative to the Sunflower lanyard scheme. In time, the idea is that the app will also exist as a lifestyle tool by allowing users to book accessible travel tickets, hotel rooms, disabled or companion tickets for events and so on. The passport will be free to use for disabled people. To register your interest in the scheme, go to <https://disability-passport.com>



### Campaign to scrap social care charging

Inclusion London has launched a campaign to highlight the impact of social care charging on disabled people, with many forced to pay for social care out of their benefits. The campaign is calling on it to be scrapped, or as an interim, calling on the Chancellor to radically increase the amount of money people are left with from benefits before charging is applied to them. You can find more information about this campaign [here](#)



### Office for National Statistics Report: the impact of COVID-19 on disabled people

This is the fifth in a series of articles exploring the social impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on disabled people in Great Britain, from their well-being to impacts on their day-to-day life. The new analysis also looks at vaccine behaviours. You can read the full report on the [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\) website](#).



Tina Penn, the Mutual Carers Support Worker, is still busy providing telephone support and checking in regularly with all families. She provides specialist support to mutual carers where one of the carers is aged 55+ with a disabled son, daughter or sibling living at home. Tina can be contacted on 07719426680 or 020 8466 0790.

It has been a very exciting time for the Mutual Carers pathway. Bromley Mencap has received funding from the National Lottery Community Fund, the London Community Response Fund Wave 3 and the Let's Get Digital programme to help digitalise services in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. This has meant that cookery clients and older carers have been provided with Samsung tablets, which has enabled them to access technology and services online such as remote cookery classes and workshops via Zoom.

Our first online cookery class was a great success. We delivered ready-measured ingredients to our clients in advance and, on the day, clients were extremely excited to see their friends again and thoroughly enjoyed cooking pitta bread pizzas and strawberry Angel Delight crunch. The feedback was really positive with the clients saying how much they enjoyed being back together again as a class. It was a fantastic achievement as some of our clients have never used tablets before. A big congratulations to everyone that attended.



Tina, the Mutual Carers Support Worker has plans to do another online class at the end of May and with the easing of the COVID-19 restrictions, we hope to meet a small group of cookery clients outside for a picnic, following the appropriate government guidelines.

We are also planning to run an online workshop for our Older Carers on Friday 21st June from 11.45am. This session will also be attended by James Warne from Essex Reptile Encounters who will give a talk on a variety of different animal species.

We support adults with physical disabilities by providing information, advice and guidance. Although we are currently unable to make face-to-face appointments or home visits, we are still able to work closely with our clients via the telephone, emails and Zoom calls.

We are able to offer emotional support and we are working remotely to help our clients to complete paperwork, forms and grant applications.

### **Monthly Workshops**

In March we were joined by Francis and Barry from X by X Bromley, a user-led organisation for Deaf and Disabled People and Carers in Bromley. Francis and Barry explained about the various forums and committees X by X run to help the voices of disabled people to be heard. Barry told us about the Independent Living Centre at Lewis House which they hope to open again soon so people can try out various mobility aids and gadgets. Several clients were keen to join the forums and membership forms and further details were sent out.

Our workshop in April focused on our general health and signs to look out for regarding certain health conditions. Many people may have neglected their health during the pandemic and now is the time to get ourselves checked out and up to date with routine tests and assessments.



### **Contact Us:**

If you are interested in attending one of our Zoom workshops or you would like to find out more about our service, please contact the office on 020 8466 0790.

You can also contact one of our Support and Information Officers as follows:

Sue Fuller on 07484673090 or email [Sue.Fuller@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:Sue.Fuller@bromleywell.org.uk)

Chetan Raval on 07421106922 or email [Chetan.Raval@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:Chetan.Raval@bromleywell.org.uk)

On Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BWPhysicalDisabilities/>

**Alternatively you can call us in the office on 020 8466 0790**

# NEWS -

## Physical Disabilities

### Downing Street admits the PM ignored accessibility of new media briefing room

The prime minister's office has admitted that it made no attempt to ensure that a new £2.6 million Downing Street media briefing room would be accessible to disabled people.

Read the full story [here](#)



### Campaign calls for supermarkets to scrap delivery charges

Disabled campaigners are calling on supermarkets to scrap their delivery charge to help disabled people who have seen food costs rise sharply during the pandemic.

You can read the full story [here](#)



### A disabled man from Ramsgate launched a petition to make his town more accessible

Joe Shaw says a lack of dropped kerbs in the town hampers the ability of people using wheelchairs or mobility scooters to be able to get around freely.

Read his story [here](#)



### 'Concerning silence' from government over disability ambassador roles

The government has been slow to contact a number of disabled experts who applied for voluntary positions as its "disability and access ambassadors".

Read more on the story [here](#)



We support people who have a learning disability or learning difficulty through one-to-one appointments, assisting in meetings or contacting organisations. Our approach is to run a person-centred service giving information, guidance and support.



Our service has recently supported people to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and helped with new benefit applications and benefit checks and with various housing matters.

## Outreach

Please visit our Facebook page [here](#) for up-to-date guidance and information for people with Learning Difficulties. We have run a number of stories and articles on our page including easy read guidance on COVID-19 vaccines and the latest lockdown restrictions. We also have a Facebook group.

This is a private group on Facebook where only members of the group can see what you have written or posted. We are available every working day and are currently in regular contact with many clients on this platform. If you would like to learn more, please join the group at [here](#) or contact Rob for help with setting this up.



**Bromley Well LD Workshop Group**

Private group · 41 members



## Monthly Workshops and Drop-ins

### Census 2021

In February we were joined on Zoom by Alexandra who spoke to us about the upcoming Census. She was able to give the group details of why it was necessary and how to complete it. Over the following month, we supported over 100 people with a Learning Difficulty to complete their Census using this guidance.

# census 2021

## Parliament and Accessibility

In March we spoke about how some tasks, particularly during lockdown, are more difficult for people with a Learning Difficulty. We discussed measures that some organisations take to make easy read documents. The group had some great techniques for making information more accessible, such as apps on smartphones and computers.

We also went on a virtual tour of the Houses of Parliament which led to a discussion about how we can make our voices heard and can pressure organisations to make information clear and manageable.



Call, text or email Rob Morgan if you would like any more information on 020 8466 0790, mobile 07482 558 660 or email [robert.morgan@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:robert.morgan@bromleywell.org.uk)

# NEWS Learning Difficulties

## Actor with Learning Disability finds out how others have coped

Ruben Reuter, an actor on TV shows such as The Syndicate and Dumping Ground, has been speaking to other people with a Learning Disability about their experiences of Lockdown for Channel 4 News.

<https://www.channel4.com/news/covid-actor-with-learning-disability-finds-out-how-others-have-coped>



## Ask the experts: Is ADHD or anxiety to blame for my perfectionism?



According to an article in ADDitude, Perfectionism shares many similarities with ADHD. Setting unreasonable standards and constantly comparing themselves negatively to others are common issues for perfectionists, just as individuals with ADHD often compare themselves critically to neurotypical peers. Perfectionism is one way that adults with ADHD try to control outcomes, a fundamental aspect of managing anxiety. Read the full article here:

<https://www.additudemag.com/adhd-and-perfectionism-anxiety/>

## People with dyslexia have skills that we need, says the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ)

The UK surveillance agency says those with dyslexia have valuable skills spotting patterns that others miss – a key area the spy agency wants to encourage as it moves towards high-tech cybersecurity and data analysis. GCHQ says it has long valued neuro-diverse analysts – including Alan Turing.

More here:

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/apr/29/people-with-dyslexia-have-skills-that-we-need-says-gchq>



# Supporting People with Autism

**Bromley Well**

We support people aged 16 and over who have an Autism diagnosis, or believe they have Autism and are seeking a diagnosis, through one-to-one appointments, assisting in meetings or contacting organisations. Our approach is to run a person-centred service giving information, guidance and support.

## Online

Find us on social media for up-to-date guidance and information for people with Autism. Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/BWAutismSupport>

Facebook group:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/BWAutismSupport>

Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/bromleywellautismsupport/>

## WhatsApp Groups:

- **Autism Support Group:** if you are aged 16+ with Autism, join us to meet new people, chat like likeminded individuals and join in daily games
- **Autism Parents & Carers Group:** A space to chat about supporting someone with Autism aged 16+

Please contact Lauren to sign up: [lauren.titheridge@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:lauren.titheridge@bromleywell.org.uk)

Alternatively, sign up to our regular e-newsletter with details, including Zoom links, for all of our upcoming events. Please contact Lauren to receive this newsletter.

## Monthly Workshops and Drop-ins

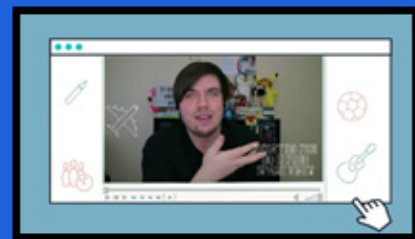
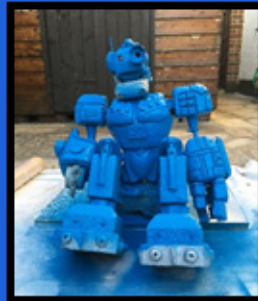
Our catch-up sessions run on alternate Fridays on Zoom. We discuss what we have been up to, any information or stories we would like to share, and there is also an opportunity to take part in a group activity such as a quiz or bingo.

Our TV and Film Club runs on alternate Wednesdays on Zoom. We share our favourite films or what we have recently been watching. It is a lighter session and a great way to get some good recommendations and to let the group know why your choices are important to you.

Call Lauren if you would like any more information about the Autism service on 020 8466 0790 or email [lauren.titheridge@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:lauren.titheridge@bromleywell.org.uk)

## Autism Awareness Week

From 29th March-1st April, the Bromley Well Autism Service virtually celebrated Autism Awareness Week with Zoom sessions focusing on the positives of Autism. During the week we heard from Indie Andy, who answered some questions on becoming a YouTuber, his hobbies and Autism. We learned about triathlete Sam Holness, including his journey, his ambitions and how his Autism helps with determination. We were also joined by Robert White, a comedian who appeared on Britain's Got Talent. Robert shared his thoughts and experience of Autism, including how he uses numbers as a coping strategy. Lastly, we celebrated the achievements of our service users, which included creating drawings focusing on loneliness, building a robot sculpture displayed at the Maudsley Hospital and raising over £200 for Prostate Cancer UK by running 150 miles in a month!

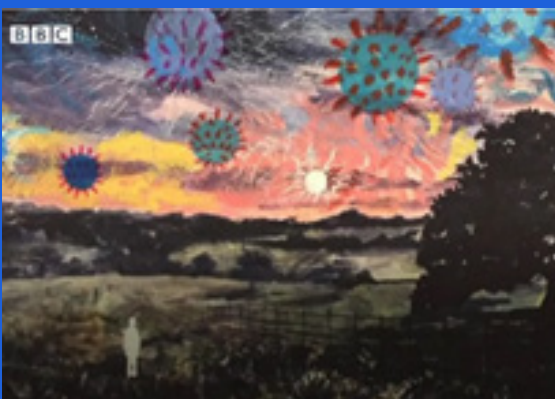


## IN THE NEWS

### How watching and playing cricket helps with my Autism

BBC Sport speaks to Andrew Edwards, a 35-year-old recreational cricketer, about how the sport has helped with his Autism. "It really helps me switch off," he says. "It makes me forget sometimes. If I'm feeling a bit stressed or anxious I can watch the Test and just drift away."

Read more [here](#)



### 'Covid artwork is 'a way of expressing how I feel'

An Autistic artist says painting has helped him cope with the stresses of the coronavirus pandemic. David Downes started out creating pictures of giant cells looming in the sky, but different themes emerged in his work as the past year ran its course. "It's a way of expressing how I feel," said the 49-year-old from Manningtree, Essex. "I've tried to get how I feel about the world into my art."

Read more [here](#)

One of the activities that falls under the umbrella of Bromley Mencap's Education and Employment Services is the London South East Colleges Supported Internship Programme. The course runs from both Bromley and Bexley Colleges and, like so many of our programmes, has had to be altered in view of the pandemic.

With some creative planning and negotiations with the individual colleges and funders, we have managed to run a great programme with the students benefitting from a wide variety of activities to replace the scheduled community workplace settings, which were all cancelled.

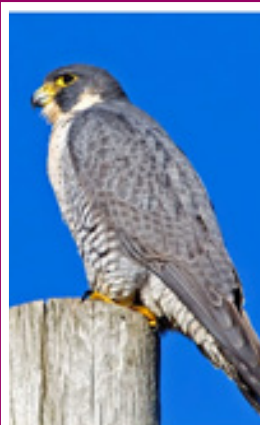
The replacement sessions have included classroom and Zoom learning, forest-school activities, baking and cake sales, garden/outdoor space clearing, and carpentry. The students have enjoyed these activities and learnt vital new skills such as team working, time management and customer service.

None of this work would have taken place, or been as successful, without our wonderful team of Job Coaches who have been creative, innovative, flexible and enthusiastic in all the varied activities.

Thank you to our Job Coaches for all your hard work and commitment.



In March our group met via Zoom and were joined by Joe's Bows who ran an interesting session on birds of prey. Joe had three birds to show us: a bald eagle, an African spotted eagle owl and a falcon. We learnt a little about each type of bird and were able to ask questions at the end.



In April we were all able to meet up face to face for the first time since September. Although sunny it was a chilly afternoon, but no one seemed to mind. It was just good to be able to meet, chat and enjoy a picnic together.





## The Children's Wellbeing Service

The Children's Wellbeing Service, funded by Children in Need, organised some very egg-xciting activities over the Easter holidays that were enjoyed by over 40 families.

### Whipsnade Zoo

Firstly, we were treated to a virtual trip to Whipsnade Zoo where a zoo keeper took us to see the Wolverines. Children had the opportunity to watch them being fed and then were able to ask the zoo keeper about other animals at the zoo and about her experience of being a zoo keeper.

*'Thank you for organising the zoo session, it was brilliant to see such an unusual animal'*

### Craft Activities with Maleficent things

Three online craft workshops (with all materials supplied) were organised with different craft being created at each session. The first two sessions had an Easter and spring feel to them – with bunny hats and spring garlands being the main feature and were suitable for all ages. During our final craft session of the day, older children created some lovely lanterns using the decoupage technique.



### Cupcake Baking with Meg's Bakes

The next online activity session involved baking yummy cupcakes and decorating them. It was definitely a challenge not to eat the icing before it went on the cakes! As usual, all the ingredients were weighed out and supplied to families taking part.

*'They are fabulous and thank you so much for organising these wonderful sessions. She loves cooking, she really enjoyed getting stuck in and with her young brother too.'*

*'As always a huge thank you for the lovely workshop today. We are so appreciative of the time and effort you put in to organising.'*

*'Thank you so very much Julie from us. We really enjoyed making the cupcakes. The cupcakes are really delicious. She couldn't wait to try them...Many thanks to you and Megan for arranging a lovely activity for a lovely afternoon.'*



### Drumming Workshop with Tim from Rhymicity

Families used Pringles tubes, saucepans, wooden spoons and anything they could find to make some fun tunes about their names and what they ate for breakfast.

### Farm Workshop

We joined Cronkshaw Farm for a visit to their farm. We saw the sheep, hens and goats and found out lots of interesting facts and asked lots of questions.

Watch this space for information about our May half-term activities!



## Community Fundraising

### Fundraising

We are delighted to be celebrating our 70th anniversary this year. We have continued to grow and expand over the past seven decades and our plans for the future are extremely exciting as we aim to create and develop a Centre for Community Living: a safe, inclusive and accessible area for our services, activities and office duties to be conducted. Take a look at our plans in detail [here](#).

Please do join in with our fundraising events and challenges to help us hit our target and continue to support disabled people and their families for the next 70 years!

### Upcoming Events

#### The "Bromley70" Challenge – 1-31 July

Bromley Mencap has been putting the paces in for 70 years to help change lives for the better. How far would you go to help change even more lives?

We want you to join the "Bromley 70" and travel 70 km for our 70th Anniversary. You can walk, wheel, jog, run, cycle, swim or any other way of moving to hit your target. And don't worry if 70km seems too far for you, sign up as a team with your family, friends or colleagues and jointly you can hit your target! There is something for everyone and all abilities! The main aim is to have fun and raise some money. Sign up [here](#) today!



Please note Bromley Mencap's entries for The Vitality Big Half have been postponed to the 2022 event. Date to be confirmed.

#### Virtual London Marathon – Sunday 03 October

All our places for this virtual event have been taken but if you are lucky enough to have a ballot place in this event and want to fundraise for a great cause then we would be very pleased to have your support.

Join our #BromleyMencapTeam to receive a runners T-shirt and fundraising advice. All you need to do is set up a fundraising page online.

#### Become a Bromley Mencap Champion

As part of our 70th anniversary celebration, we are launching a new scheme: Become a Bromley Mencap Champion. As a Champion, you will be supporting us through regular donations and will be the first to know about our work.

We rely on voluntary donations to support the services we offer and regular giving provides us with a reliable source of income that we can direct to where it is most needed. Your monthly donations allow us to plan ahead more effectively, ensuring that we can continue to offer the best care and support for our families.

#### [Join today](#)

You can also set up donations by phone and text BMCHAMPION followed by the amount you want to donate to 70085 ie BMCHAMPION17 to donate £17 a month. Texts cost £3 plus two standard rate messages and you'll be opting in to hear more about our work and fundraising via telephone and SMS. If you'd like to give but do not wish to receive marketing communications, text BMCHAMPIONNOINFO 17 to 70085.

## Grand Summer Raffle

Our Summer raffle is back with some grand prizes for our 70th year. We are moving with the times and tickets are available to purchase online [here](#).

Raffles are a huge part of our fundraising every year and we want to make this one even bigger and better. So buy your tickets now for a chance to win a Fortnum & Mason Hamper, £100 cash, champagne, wine hamper and lots more.



## Fundraising from home

Don't forget you can recycle stamps, old jewellery, mobile phones and inkjet cartridges and make money for charity. We have teamed up with Recycle for Good Causes so you can donate your old items and declutter while making a donation to our great cause.

Have a clear out today and help us raise much needed funds:

<https://www.recyclingforgoodcauses.org/individual-donors/>

For inkjet cartridges, follow details here:

<https://www.recycle4charity.co.uk/Send-your-cartridges.aspx>

Please note we are no longer using Stamps n All to recycle unwanted items. The owner, Dave Allwright, is reducing his workload after many years of helping lots and lots of charities. We wish him all the best and would like to thank him for the wonderful service that has helped us raise over £5,800!

# THANK YOU!

## Thank you to our supporters

Thank you to the Wilsenham family for donating £500 for all the support they have received over the years.

Kath Kiff for a donation of £100 and for donating many items for our future tombolas and fundraising stalls.

A big thank you to Mrs Handen Tunca for her donation of £50 as a token of her thanks for the support provided by our employment services.

Thank you to Mr Scott McKinven for donating a car via the Giveacar.com scheme which generated a donation of £440.45.

George Bell and Martin Durman for continued generous donations towards our services.

Thank you to family and friends of Sidney Rugman who have donated £1,000 in his memory.

Thank you again for all the generous donations we have received.



Don't forget you can keep updated on what is going on at Bromley Mencap by following us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

**Copy deadline for July/August 2021 is 1st July**

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