

Supported Internship Student Honoured with Prestigious LSEC Award



LONDON
SOUTH EAST
COLLEGES

Project SEARCH: Apply Now for September 2025

Project SEARCH is a year-long Supported Internship Programme for young adults with learning disabilities and/or autism, who want to find employment.

Bromley Mencap is working in partnership with Kings College NHS Trust, London South East Colleges and the London Borough of Bromley to support students while on placement at the Princess Royal University Hospital.

Find out about the entry requirements and the application process [here](#) or turn to pages 25 and 26 for more information and success stories.

Well done!

Huge congratulations to our supported internship student, Bevan Brewster-Gajadhar, for winning the prestigious London South East Colleges (LSEC) Principal's Award for his outstanding contribution to the student experience at the College!

This well-deserved recognition highlights Bevan's dedication and achievements. Not only is he an intern on the Princess Royal University Hospital (PRUH) Supported Internship, but he also serves as the elected SEND Officer on the LSEC Student Council.

Bevan consistently demonstrates commitment with perfect attendance and punctuality, always bringing a positive attitude and a smile. Well done, Bevan!



Follow us

@bromleymencap

www.bromleymencap.org.uk

Editor's Note



Staff selling their wares at the Christmas Fair

Happy New Year

The Christmas period has been a whirlwind of festive fun for our members, with activities enjoyed across all services.

As we step into 2025, we're thrilled to share that many exciting developments are on the horizon, including the launch of our new 3-year strategy later this month – stay tuned for updates!

Plus, meet three of our fantastic new Trustees on pages 28 and 29.

In this issue

CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT
AUTISM SERVICE UPDATE
LOCAL NEWS & EVENTS
COST OF LIVING SERVICE
BROMLEY WELL UPDATES
CHILDREN'S SERVICE
ADULT SERVICES
EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING SERVICES
FUNDRAISING
MEET OUR NEW TRUSTEES
NEW STAFF

Pages 4-5
Page 6
Pages 7-8
Pages 9-10
Page 11-17
Page 18
Pages 19-22
Pages 23-26
Page 27
Pages 28-29
Page 30

Happy Reading!

Alex Powell

Communications Officer
alex.powell@bromleymencap.org



Incorporating Bromley Scope

Supporting disabled people, their families and carers to enjoy better lives

Events and Activities

BROMLEY MENCAP

Please check our [website events section](#) or phone our helpline on 020 8466 0790 to find out about our latest events.



Don't forget to keep updated on what is going on at Bromley Mencap by following us on [X \(formerly known as Twitter\)](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).



Bromley Well Physical Disabilities Workshop: Feedback Session

Date 20 January 2025

Time 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

Venue The Bromley United Reformed Church

Organiser Caroline Hackett

Category Bromley Well Physical Disabilities

[MORE INFO](#)



BROMLEY WELL

Bromley Well has various support sessions running virtually and in person. Please check the [website for details here](#).

Bromley Well services include employment support workshops, workshops for people with learning difficulties and physical disabilities, and regular catch-up sessions. [You can self-refer here](#).

Thank you: Big Yellow Self Storage

Thank you to Big Yellow Self Storage Bromley for providing free storage space. With no space in our office, this is an invaluable space to keep equipment for events and donated goods.

Members also receive a 10% discount on storage from Big Yellow when mentioning Bromley Mencap. Telephone 020 8313 0854 for further details.





Welcome from our Chief Executive

Hello everyone,

Happy New Year to all our members!

I hope you had a lovely Christmas break, even though it already feels like a distant memory.

In the lead-up to Christmas, I was delighted to visit many of our groups and join their celebrations. It was wonderful to meet more of you, hear your experiences, and see the fantastic work being done across our community.



Photographed above: The Adult Disco in full swing and the Cotmandene Day Opps Christmas Cake!

Since our AGM in November, when members shared what's most important to include in our new strategy, we've been working hard to finalise it. I'm excited to share that we'll be launching the strategy very soon!

We've started the year on a high note with an Ofsted inspection at the Training Centre. I'm so proud of our learners and staff, who showcased the very best of what we do. We're now eagerly awaiting the report.

Photographed right: Learners from Station Road at the Lodge Christmas Fair.



The start of a new year is always a good time to reflect on our achievements and look forward to what's ahead. 2024 was a year of significant change for Bromley Mencap, and while challenges in the charity and social care sectors remain, we're staying positive and committed to working hard for our members.

At the end of last year, we campaigned successfully against proposed parking charges at Norman Park, a decision that will benefit many in our community.

We also raised concerns about the introduction of parking charges for Blue Badge holders, which we know will affect many of you.

Although the council has decided to go ahead with these charges, we are continuing to work with councillors who opposed the proposal.

If you'd like to share how these changes will impact you, please do get in touch – your voices are vital.



Here's to another year of making a difference together.

Don't forget, I am always at the end of an email or phone call, so do feel free to drop me a line at anna.mcewen@bromleymencap.org or call the office on 0208 466 0790.

Warm regards,

Anna McEwen, CEO

Bromley Mencap's Autism Service: Important Update

The autism service will come to an end in January 2025. We understand this change may raise questions or concerns, and we are committed to ensuring a smooth transition for everyone affected.

To provide continuity and ongoing support, we will hold monthly workshops for people with autism from February to April 2025. These workshops will focus on building networks, developing peer support, and creating opportunities for people to connect and share experiences.

If you have any questions or would like further information, please do not hesitate to contact Anna McEwen, CEO at Bromley Mencap on anna.mcewen@bromleymencap.org

Upcoming Autism Service Workshops

Join us for our upcoming workshops at Bromley Scout Hut, 15 Prospect Place, Bromley, BR2 9HL from 10am to 12 noon:

10 February: Craig Manavele (Oxleas Autism Service) will talk about the support available and Steve Hithersay (Bromley Mencap's All-Age Autism Welfare Benefits Officer) will provide insights on welfare benefits for those with autism. The workshop will also provide information on stress, burnout and coping strategies.

17 March: Allison Gill (Cost of Living Coordinator) will offer money-saving advice, with Digital Champions providing one-to-one tech support.

14 April: Sharon Morgan (Adult Services Manager) will discuss membership benefits, including clubs and events such as our Walking and Cycling Club and discos, as well as opportunities for peer support.



Please contact emma.andrew@bromleymencap.org for more information and to book.

Local News and Events

Bromley's SEND Local Offer Website Survey

The website is currently undergoing some changes in the hope to better serve families of children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). The team would greatly appreciate it if you could take a few minutes to complete an [online feedback form here](#).



CASPA is Expanding to Meet Growing Demand

CASPA has announced plans to open two new clubs in September 2025. As part of this expansion, they want to ensure their services reach those who need them most, even if they cannot currently access their existing locations.

To help them determine the best locations for the new clubs, anyone interested in accessing CASPA's services should [join their waiting list by filling out this form](#). Your input will help them assess the need for additional clubs, including the possibility of opening in another part of the borough or even an adjacent borough.



Bromley Y Parent/Carer Survey

Bromley Y want to improve their service for the young people of Bromley and are seeking feedback from as many parents and carers as possible, to develop the service they want.

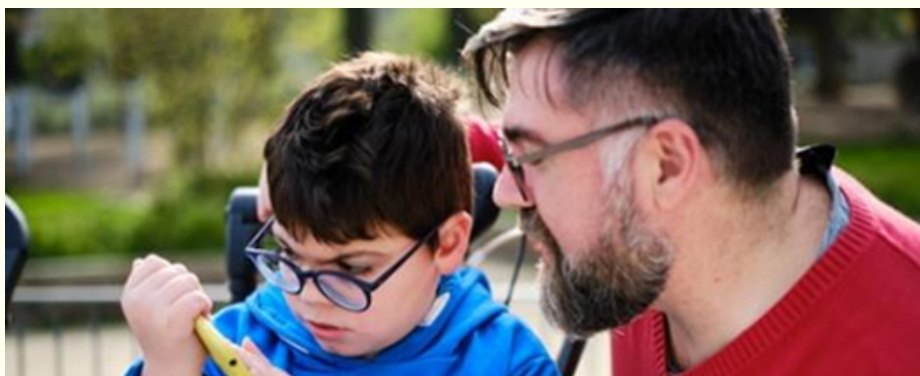
[The survey is accessible online here.](#)

If parents and carers complete the survey by the end of 31 January, they will be entered into a prize draw for a £30 Amazon voucher



Financial planning for children with SEND

Financial planning for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can be a complex matter for families. To help you, the Clarkson Wright and Jakes (CWJ) team are holding a free talk for parents of children with SEND on Thursday 30th January from 4- 5.30pm at their offices at Valiant House, 12 Knoll Rise, Orpington, BR6 0PG.



If you would like any further information regarding the seminar please contact:

Email: spencer.moyer@cwj.co.uk Telephone: 01689 887861.



Bromley X by X Bromley Independent Living Forum

Tuesday 21st January 2025 from 2pm to 4pm

Join Bromley Experts by Experience to discuss barriers to independence and explore how to get the right support to live independently and realise the 12 Pillars of Independent Living.

Attendees will also be entered into a raffle for a chance to win 'One for All Vouchers.' The meeting is at Community House, South Street, Bromley, BR1 1RH and can also be accessed online.

Please [register here](#) or phone 0208 650 2102.



Work for Bromley Experts by Experience



Coordinator of Volunteers – paid position

Salary: £27,000 per year, pro rata

Hours per week: Part-time role for 14 hours per week

Contract length: 18 months

This role involves recruiting volunteers and promoting opportunities. Responsibilities include responding to enquiries, interviewing candidates, supporting volunteer induction and development, coordinating meetings, monitoring progress, and maintaining records. You'll also lead initiatives like Volunteers' Week and organise volunteer fairs.

[More information can be found on their website here.](#)

Closing date: 11:59pm on Sunday 19th January 2025.

Share Your Views on SEND Provision in Bromley

Parents and carers of children with SEND are invited to a confidential session hosted by Bromley Parent Carer Forum (BPCF) and Your Voice in Health & Social Care (YVHSC). Share your experiences and suggestions to help improve local services.

When: Monday 3rd February, 10:30 AM–12:30 PM

Where: United Reformed Church, 20 Widmore Rd, Bromley BR1 1RY

Key themes will be shared anonymously with the SEND Partnership. Refreshments provided, little ones welcome. Book at events@bromleypcf.co.uk (places limited).



Upcoming courses and workshops

We are excited to launch our brand new Cost of Living Cooking Course. It is now fully booked but if you are interested in joining the waiting list to learn how to plan, budget and prepare healthy, budget-friendly meals, please do get in touch.

We run monthly Cost of Living workshops every second Wednesday of the month.

Our February workshop topic will be about ESA and Universal Credit migration. Come and join us at Orpington Methodist Church on Wednesday 12 February from 10:30am.

We also offer one-to-one appointments and can help with budgeting, reducing energy tariffs and bills and so on.

Email costofliving@bromleymencap.org to enquire.



Cost of Living Support



Meet the Team

Allison Gill, Cost of Living Coordinator

My role is to support you with all things financial from benefit enquiries and tribunals, to claiming housing benefits, or helping bring your bills down. I will help you stop worrying about money and teach you life skills to support you going forward with budgeting, food planning, and helping you make sense of your money. Outside of work, I love reading, coffee, and stationary, curling up with my two cats and spending time with my son and grandson.



Martin Kelly, Digital Champion

I am one of the two Digital Champions working at Bromley Mencap. My role is to try and make people's lives easier during the Cost of Living Crisis, showing folk how to shop smart, make budgets, and use applications for shops and companies such as Morrisons and Lidl on phones and tablets. Outside of working hours, I have a relatively big family that take up a fair bit of my time, and I practice yoga during school term times.



Lee McPherson, Digital Champion

I love to help people in need. I have brilliant digital skills which I can pass over to people to improve their IT skills. My main goal is to put a smile on people's faces.

COST OF LIVING

WORKSHOP



ESA Migration to Universal Credit

Join us to learn about the transition from Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) to Universal Credit (UC). This workshop will explain what the migration process involves, how it may impact your benefits, and what steps to take to prepare. Ask questions and get support from us during this important change.

 **Orpington Methodist Church,
Sevenoaks Road,
Orpington, BR6 9JH**

Map overleaf

WEDNESDAY
12 FEBRUARY

 **10.30am until 12.30pm**

Book Your Place:

 **020 8466 0790 or 07714 686723**

 **costofliving@bromleymencap.org**

By Sue Charles
Information & Support Officer

We support adults with physical disabilities by providing information, advice and guidance on a range of issues. We offer emotional support and practical help to complete paperwork, forms and grant applications, as well as accompanying people to medical appointments. We hold workshops and drop-ins and provide outreach at venues around the borough.

MONTHLY WORKSHOPS

In November, we hosted a Meditation and Well-being Workshop as part of Self-Care Week.

The session focused on sharing tips for well-being and exploring ideas for future workshops.



Our Workshop in December was a joint Christmas party with the Learning Difficulties Pathway – There was a quiz, refreshments and the opportunity to meet new people.



UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

Feedback Session
Monday 20 January
from 11am



Your views and ideas are important to us. Come along and share them. The workshop is followed by a drop-in from 12 noon to 1pm. Booking required. [Download the flyer.](#)

DROP-IN SESSIONS

Central Bromley Drop-ins

These are held at The United Reformed Church, 20 Widmore Road, Bromley BR1 1RY from 12-1pm and follow our monthly workshops.

Orpington Drop-ins

These are held on the third Tuesday of each month, from 10am to 12 noon at St Paul's Cray Library and Community Support Centre, Mickleham Road, St Paul's Cray, BR5 2RW.

Please Note: The January session will be on the second Tuesday of the month.

- 14 January
- 18 February
- 18 March
- 15 April
- 20 May
- 17 June



CONTACT US

Sue Charles:

Tel 07484 673090 or email sue.charles@bromleywell.org.uk

Caroline Hackett:

Tel 07938 740361 or email caroline.hackett@bromleywell.org.uk

Alternatively, you can call the office on 020 8466 0790.

In the News

MCCAUSLAND'S STRICTLY WIN 'OPENS DOORS' FOR ALL

Comedian Chris McCausland's victory in the 2024 Strictly Come Dancing competition marked a significant moment for people living with partial or full sight loss. His journey from a hesitant start to winning the Glitter Ball trophy inspired many, including fellow blind dancer Shaun Hayward from Manchester.



Hayward, who shares McCausland's condition of retinitis pigmentosa, praised the win as proof that disabled individuals can pursue their dreams fearlessly. He emphasized that McCausland's inclusion in the competition was not tokenism but a powerful demonstration of talent and determination.

For Hayward and others, dancing offers a sense of "liberty and freedom," and McCausland's success raised vital awareness about the potential for people with sight loss to excel in the performing arts. Fans hope this message will influence TV production companies to embrace greater inclusivity in the future. Read more on the [BBC website](#).

Monday Afternooners



Join our monthly recreation club supporting people with cerebral palsy to live a more independent life.

In December, we gathered at the Rose & Crown in Green St Green for a festive Christmas lunch. Everyone embraced the holiday spirit and had a great time.

For more information, please contact Sue Charles. Telephone: 0208 466 0790.

By Tina Penn
Mutual Carers Support Worker

The Mutual Carers Pathway provides specialist support to families where one of the carers is aged 55+ with a disabled son, daughter or sibling living at home.

Tina Penn, the Mutual Carers Support Worker, can be contacted on 07719426680 or via email tina.penn@bromleywell.org.uk

The Mutual Carers enjoyed a busy schedule of activities and events over the festive period time.

OLDER CARERS WORKSHOP & LUNCH

Tina arranged a trip for the older carers to visit Rochester Christmas market which was set in the castle grounds. The market was filled with lovely stalls to purchase that special Christmas present, a Bavarian food market plus a funfair complete with a ghost train and ferris wheel. This was all topped off with street performers singing some Christmas songs getting everyone in the Christmas mood. Everyone had a great time, and the weather was very kind to us with no rain.



We were delighted to welcome the choir from St James Primary School and the Pearly King of Bromley to the older carers' Christmas party. The carers enjoyed a heartwarming performance of Christmas carols in the church, including all the favourites—with delightful actions to 'A Partridge in a Pear Tree.'



The children sang beautifully and had clearly worked hard on their performance, making it a truly special occasion. It was especially lovely that the children stayed for lunch, giving them the chance to chat with the carers.

After lunch, everyone joined in for a cheerful sing-along with the Pearly King of Bromley, who also kindly posed for photos. We finished with a raffle, adding to the excitement of the day.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Friday 17 January, Friday 14 February and Friday 14 March.

LEARNING DISABILITY (LD) COOKERY CLASS

Tina organised an exciting trip for the LD cookery clients to the Kent Cookery School in Ashford. The day gave clients the unique opportunity to cook in a professional kitchen under the guidance of a skilled chef. They prepared a delicious Thai green curry and vegetable spring rolls, resulting in some very clean plates!



In December, everyone enjoyed a Christmas party filled with festive fun and games. They tucked into delicious festive pizza, Christmas pudding, and homemade mince pies before rounding off the day with a lively disco.



COFFEE MORNINGS

The coffee mornings held at the Harvester on Southborough Lane remain popular.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

The next [cookery classes](#) will be on Friday 24 January, 21 February and 21 March.

Our twice-monthly [coffee mornings](#) are held at the Harvester from 11am to 1pm. Upcoming dates are Friday 31 January, Friday 7 and 28 February and Friday 7 and 28 March.



By Chetan Ravel
Information & Support Officer

We support people who have a learning disability or learning difficulty through one-to-one appointments, assisting in meetings and contacting organisations. Our approach is to run a person-centred service giving information, guidance and support. The Learning Difficulty Pathway has recently offered support with welfare benefits, grant applications and day-to-day finances at our weekly correspondence drop-in sessions. We also arrange monthly workshops and run a life admin course for people with ADHD.

MONTHLY WORKSHOPS



In November, we celebrated Self-Care Week by focusing on ways to enhance both our mental and physical well-being.

We explored activities like walking or cycling to improve physical health, while for mental wellness, we considered relaxing pursuits such as reading a book, listening to music, or trying meditation.

In December, we held a Joint Festive Fun Workshop with Bromley Well Physical Disabilities Pathway, which was a resounding success. The event had a fantastic turnout to close the year on a high note. Guests enjoyed plenty of festive music, engaging quizzes, and a delicious variety of food, all contributing to a cheerful and celebratory atmosphere.



Bromley Healthcare joined us at our Christmas get-together to offer flu and Coronavirus vaccinations to people who had missed out earlier. With rates of infection rising, this was an important service to offer.



OUTREACH

A key part of our work is engaging with the community to raise awareness about the support we offer. We have been very busy meeting with other organisations, professionals and the general public to explain more about our service.

Emma Andrew, Senior Information and Support Officer, is photographed below (middle) at the transition event at Marjorie McClure School with members of Bromley Mencap.



UPCOMING WORKSHOP: BENEFITS AND BUDGETING

Join us for a practical workshop led by Allison Gill, Bromley Mencap's Cost of Living Coordinator.

Monday 3 February from 10am – 12pm

Bromley Scout Hut, 15 Prospect Place, Bromley, BR2 9HL

This session will cover:

- ✓ Understanding benefits you may be entitled to
- ✓ Practical budgeting tips to manage your money
- ✓ Advice on making your finances go further

Download the flyer [here](#).

To book, phone 020 8466 0790 or email chetan.raval@bromleywell.org.uk



ADHD LIFE ADMIN COURSE

The next ADHD Life Admin course starts in March. Please contact Emma Andrew to book your place. Emma.andrew@bromleywell.org.uk or telephone 07482 558 660.

The course supports people to discuss ADHD symptoms, develop coping mechanisms and work towards overcoming obstacles. No diagnosis is necessary.

CORRESPONDENCE DROP-IN

Our Drop-in runs every Friday from the Bromley Mencap Station Road office. Simply pop in between 10am-12 noon and 1-3pm. We can help you with letters, emails and any other literacy issues.

Supporting people with Learning Difficulties

ADHD 5-WEEK LIFE ADMIN COURSE

Our support officers will assist you with a person-centred plan to create and achieve your goals.

You might want to better manage your paperwork or sort out a long-standing issue.

"I need someone to help me get everything organised"

"Things pile up and I don't know where to start"

We can help you:

- Complete an initial assessment
- Create your action plans
- Work on coping mechanisms
- Increase your independence and resilience

For more information and to sign up, please contact Bromley Well and quote 'ADHD Life Admin Course.'

FREEPHONE: 0808 278 7898 EMAIL: spa@bromleywell.org.uk

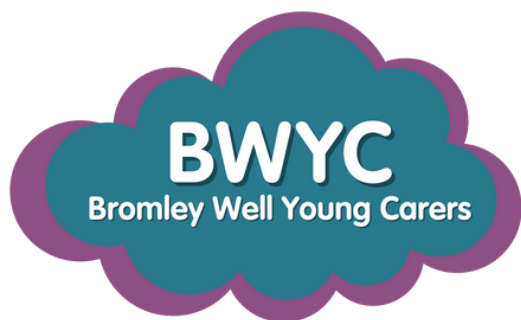
In the News

DYSLEXIA SHOULDN'T HOLD YOU BACK – PADDINGTON WRITER

James Lamont, co-writer of Paddington in Peru, shares his personal journey with dyslexia, emphasizing that with the right support, children and adults with dyslexia can achieve their dreams, including writing films. Speaking to [BBC London](#), Lamont reflected on his struggles with reading and spelling as a child but noted that dyslexia didn't limit his creativity or ability to write.

Dyslexia affects about 10% of people in the UK and impacts reading, writing and spelling but not intelligence.





YOUNG CARERS SERVICE

Bromley Well Young Carers support young carers aged 4-19 to manage their caring relationships whilst still enjoying their childhood. [You can make a referral here.](#)

Survey: Get your voice heard

Overnight Break Survey

We want your opinions on an exciting respite opportunity for young carers aged 7-11, offering a chance for some well-deserved, longer breaks from your caring duties.

Your feedback and ideas are so important to us and play a huge role in making these projects happen. We'd greatly appreciate your thoughts and feelings – your input truly makes all the difference!

Our survey is running until the end of January 2025! [Have your say here.](#)

Young Carer Champions

Before Christmas, we had a fantastic assembly at St Mary Cray Primary School, where we connected with more amazing Young Carers and continued to grow our network of Young Carer Champions throughout schools in the borough.

If we haven't visited your school yet, let us know! Our mission is to establish Young Carer Champions in schools across Bromley, and we'd love to include your school in this important initiative.

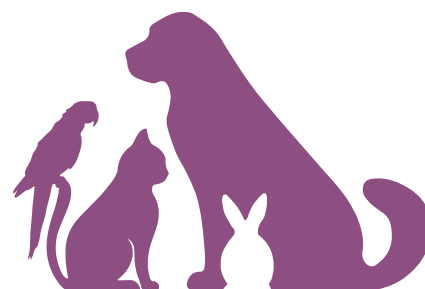


Let's keep growing our community and supporting each other!



Pet Corner

Tuesday 21 January – Pets Corner via Teams.
Look out for the flyer for this and other events on your BWYC APP Calendar.



You can read the Winter edition of the [Bromley Well Young Carers newsletter here.](#)

Our services provide support for disabled children, young people, and young carers through to their transition into adulthood. Whether it is advice and information, signposting, opportunities for peer support, support with short breaks, or leisure activities, our services work with disabled children and young people and their families in order to make lives better.

Festive Fun and Celebrations!

Our Children's Christmas Party at Cotmandene Day Opps was a magical afternoon filled with festive fun! Children enjoyed a picnic tea, crafts, singalongs, a Christmas story, and even a special visit from Father Christmas.

Back in November, Bromley SEND Stars Awards brought together families, young people, and service providers to celebrate over 100 nominees for their contributions and achievements in the SEND community.

Bromley Mencap's Children's Team added to the joy by providing a safe sensory space for children and young people to enjoy the event.





Adult Day Services

Happy New Year from Day Services! Everyone enjoyed a full programme of festive activities in the run up to the holidays, and of course, we kick-started the celebrations with the Christmas Fair!



Find out more

If you are interested in finding out more about our Day Services, please do contact us to discuss your requirements.

For The Lodge:
Caroline Stone
caroline.stone@bromleymencap.org

For Day Opps Eden Park and
Cotmandene:
Louise Kelly
louise.kelly@bromleymencap.org

Telephone: [020 8466 0790](tel:02084660790)

Despite the weather the fair was a great success, and we raised £2,000 for Bromley Mencap – all credit to our clients and staff team for making the items to sell, for their support on the day, and to our volunteers who give their time, and of course, the family, friends and supporters who always come along on the day to spend their money.

The Day Service teams were busy throughout the end of the year crafting and cooking up all sorts of treats to sell at the fair including handmade Christmas decorations, Christmas cake, wreaths, jams and chutneys.



Highlights from Day Services include a delightful 1940s-era tea party, a festive group sewing project, handmade table decorations, glitter artwork, a birdbox woodwork project, and beautifully crafted Christmas stockings.

The services also welcomed visits from the team at Care Dogs, enjoying a festive dog walk together. Other memorable moments included live music and singing with Paul, as well as a heartwarming Christmas carol singalong session.





Join our 4-week *Pottery Course*

The course will guide attendees through various pottery and ceramic techniques. Participants will be able to take home their finished pieces.



Every Tuesday for 4 weeks.
Starts Tuesday 11 February until
Tuesday 4 March 2025



4-6pm



Eden Park Day Opportunities,
170 Upper Elmers End Road,
Beckenham, Kent, BR3 3DY



£50 for 4 sessions including all
materials and firing and glazing
costs



Places are limited, and attendees
must sign up for the full course.

To book, please email
joe.stapleton@bromleymencap.org /
louise.kelly@bromleymencap.org

Bromley Mencap provides a wide range of social and leisure services for disabled adults to try new activities, meet with friends and have fun.

Walking and Cycling Group

On 8 December, 32 disabled people and their carers embarked on a magical trip to experience the iconic London Christmas lights.

The highlight of the outing was a 90-minute open-top bus tour, offering breathtaking views of the city adorned in festive sparkle. It was a truly memorable evening for everyone involved.

Christmas Disco Extravaganza

On 17 December, over 150 disabled people, carers and staff came together to celebrate at our lively Christmas Disco. The evening began with a festive buffet, followed by hours of dancing and holiday cheer.

It was a fantastic way to end the year and get into the Christmas spirit!

Adult Leisure Services Update

By Sharon Morgan, Adult Services Manager



Station Road Training Centre Update

Our new learners have settled in well and November and December have been packed with events, trips, and guest speakers.

November started with a bang, featuring remote talks from Juliet at the animal charity Blue Cross. These engaging sessions covered Animals and Well-being and Safety Around Dogs, which tied in perfectly with the weekly visits from Benji, our beloved Station Road K9.



Photographed above: Blue Cross Talk

November Highlights

For Remembrance Day, we visited the Bromley War Memorial and created a striking wall display to showcase learners' understanding of world events. Later that week, students attended the Bromley Mencap AGM at the United Reformed Church. This gave them the opportunity to engage in the democratic process by voting for trustees and contributing to the organisation's future strategy.



Photographed above: Bromley War Memorial
Photographed below: First Aid Training

December Highlights

In December, learners participated in a first aid refresher course delivered by the London Ambulance Service. They practiced CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) during a hands-on session, and new learners will have the chance to gain a first aid certificate later in the academic year. We wrapped up the term with a festive Christmas Quiz in Orpington, run by Allison Gill and her Cost-of-Living Team. Tariq had double the reason to celebrate – he was part of the winning It's Quizmas! team and also won a prize for the best value snack!



Jack Petchey Winner

The learners voted for the next Jack Petchey Award winner and we are pleased to announce that the chosen recipient is Chloe Brittain (pictured right) for being kind, helpful and supportive towards her peers.



For more information, please email Station.road@bromleymencap.org or phone 020 4558 8779. You can download the [Station Road Training brochure here](#).

Employment and Training Update

Disability Pride

Bromley Mencap member Holly Allison and Bromley Well Employment Advisor Richard Wiseman performed at the Bromley Experts by Experience (X by X) Disability Pride event in December.

They kicked off the performance with a fun mix of the Super Mario theme and The Entertainer, followed by Tetris. Holly wowed the audience with her original songs, including her debut single, This is Me.

Holly was even congratulated by the Deputy Mayor, who shared how deeply her song resonated with him as an autistic person. Holly made sure to include Richard in a photo with the Deputy Mayor, despite his attempts to shy away!

Holly's album, which reflects her journey as an autistic individual, is out now! [Listen to This is Me on Apple Music.](#)



Retention Support

Our Retention Worker, Alison Alexander, supports individuals to remain in employment. In December 2024, Alison visited a candidate at the Look Out Café, where they are thriving in a busy environment, engaging with customers and learning new skills. Regular workplace visits continue to ensure candidates receive any additional support needed to reach their potential.

2024 has been a positive year, with many clients maintaining employment and enrolling in new courses, including opportunities with the Crystal Palace Foundation, demonstrating their ongoing development and achievements.

Tops Programme

Alison has successfully led the TOPs programme, which provided weekly employment workshops for young people aged 18-25 and has now concluded. Participants will continue to receive support from the Employment and Training team.

To celebrate their achievements and mark the project's conclusion, Alison organised a special party featuring pizza making and a craft activity, creating a memorable send-off for the group.



Project SEARCH success at the Princess Royal University Hospital (PRUH)

Bromley Mencap is proud to partner with DFN Project SEARCH, the PRUH, London South East Colleges, and Bromley Council to deliver an internship scheme providing work experience for young adults with learning disabilities and autism.

One inspiring success story is Erica Moyle, a graduate of the 2023-24 Project SEARCH programme, who is now a full-time Healthcare Assistant (HCA) at the PRUH. Erica credits the programme, along with the encouragement from her tutor and Bromley Mencap job coaches, for boosting her confidence and helping her achieve her career goals.



“Project SEARCH has given me a very good career. I’ve had tremendous support from Bromley Mencap and my colleagues at the PRUH,” Erica shared.

Erica now works on the Acute Medical Unit and M9, where she thrives in her role and values the support of her team.

Project SEARCH helps young people like Erica transition from education to meaningful employment, with life-changing results. Read the full story on the [King’s College Hospital website](#). If you are interested in applying, turn to the next page for more details.

NHS Supported Internship Information Event

If you are feeling inspired by Erica's story or our front page news about current Supported Internship student, Bevan, why not consider applying for an NHS Supported Internship?

An information event will be held on Thursday 27 February or Tuesday 11 March at the Princess Royal University Hospital. Please email david.king@lsec.ac.uk to book your place.



NHS SUPPORTED INTERNSHIP



INFORMATION EVENT

Thursday 27th February 2025 / Tuesday 11th March 2025
3.00pm – 4.30pm @ Princess Royal University Hospital

The NHS Supported Internship is for young adults aged 17-25 years with a learning disability and/or autism. You are required to have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, and should want to gain the skills and experience needed to find employment in the NHS or healthcare. If this sounds like you, then please email david.king@lsec.ac.uk to book your place at our information event, where you will learn more about the programme and the application process.



COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING

NICHOLAS RUST TAKES ON THE SAS 'FAN DANCE'

A huge thank you to our incredible supporter, Nicholas Rust, who completed the SAS 'Fan Dance' on 11th January!

Tackling 24km of challenging Brecon Beacons terrain, including the infamous Jacob's Ladder, in just 5.5 hours is no small feat – especially in freezing temperatures and tough weather conditions.

Nicholas raised £1,150 for Bromley Mencap and shared how much the charity has supported his family during their autism journey with his daughter, Tallulah:

"You've been a light, offering courses, information, care and reassurance when we needed it most."

Thank you, Nicholas, for your inspiring dedication! And it's not too late to donate by visiting his [fundraising page](#).



Nicholas photographed left

Welcome to the Board

We're excited to welcome new trustees to our board! Learn what inspired them to join Bromley Mencap and their vision for the future. Stay tuned – we'll introduce more trustees in the next edition of the Bulletin.

Maria Chukwu-Nsofor

Meet Maria: A Trustee Bringing Personal and Professional Experience to Bromley Mencap

A former IT consultant and charity fundraiser, Maria transitioned to advocacy after the birth of her son, who is now 18 and has autism. For over a decade, Maria and her family have benefitted from Bromley Mencap's services, inspiring her to volunteer and support other families.

Currently pursuing a Master's degree in psychology with plans for a PhD, Maria is driven by a strong sense of purpose. She aims to make a meaningful contribution by enhancing and sustaining Bromley Mencap's valuable services.

Reflecting on her journey, Maria highlights the staff's unwavering dedication and countless moments of impact that have enriched her family's life. Outside of her work and volunteering, Maria enjoys painting (oil on canvas is a favourite medium), exploring architectural history and antiques, and sharing a love of pottery and cycling with her son.

As a parent, carer, and advocate, Maria brings a unique perspective to the board. Describing herself as compassionate, resourceful, and driven, she is excited to contribute her skills and insights to Bromley Mencap's mission of making a positive difference in people's lives.



Claire Nelson

Meet Claire: A Trustee Committed to Supporting Families and Improving Resources at Bromley Mencap

Claire works for the RAF Benevolent Fund in the grants team, where she provides veterans with grants for mobility equipment and aids for use at home. Additionally, she serves as a well-being champion at work, offering support to colleagues when needed.

As a parent of a young son with autism, Claire has first-hand experience with the challenges that families face. She has utilised Bromley Mencap's short breaks service and attended events for children and parents during the school holidays. This personal connection to the charity has inspired Claire to bring her skills and expertise to Bromley Mencap's board as a trustee.



During her time as a trustee, Claire hopes to help Bromley Mencap navigate its new strategy and ensure that all members and carers feel heard, seen, and understood. She is particularly excited to contribute her professional experiences from the voluntary sector, where she understands the importance of teamwork and making strategic decisions. In her role as a grants officer, Claire works closely with managers to ensure that funding is used effectively to create positive opportunities. She looks forward to applying these skills to help Bromley Mencap ensure resources are focused on making a real impact for disabled people and their families.

Reflecting on her personal experience with Bromley Mencap, Claire shares how the short breaks service made a significant difference in her life. The team provided excellent care for her son, giving her the opportunity to take a much-needed break. Claire was able to complete tasks while knowing her son was well looked after and happy. She has since recommended the service to friends in the borough who have children with learning disabilities.

With her combination of personal and professional experience, Claire is passionate about contributing to Bromley Mencap's mission and supporting the charity's work for families in the community.

Hannah Ford

Meet Hannah: A Trustee Combining Personal Insights and Professional Expertise to Champion Bromley Mencap's Mission

Hannah brings a unique blend of professional expertise and personal experience to the role, making her a valuable advocate for the communities we serve.

Hannah's professional background spans various industries, with extensive experience in business management, sales, HR and risk assessment. She has also been involved in strategic planning and fundraising, having supported charitable efforts in her workplace. These skills equip Hannah with a well-rounded perspective to help guide Bromley Mencap as we continue to grow and innovate.

On a personal level, Hannah's journey as the mother of an autistic son has given her deep insight into the challenges faced by families navigating diagnosis, education, benefits and childcare. Bromley Mencap's support during these times proved invaluable to her, and she is now passionate about giving back by becoming a voice for other parents and carers.

Hannah is committed to upholding Bromley Mencap's mission, goals, and values, while helping to ensure our services remain accessible and impactful. She is especially inspired by the charity's personable approach, as seen at our 2024 AGM, where the strong connection between staff and members truly stood out.

Outside of her professional and trustee roles, Hannah enjoys spending time with her family, going for long walks, and pursuing creative hobbies such as painting and photography. She describes herself as tenacious, diligent, and ambitious – qualities that will undoubtedly strengthen her contributions to Bromley Mencap. We are thrilled to have Hannah on board and look forward to her contributions as part of our team!



WELCOME TO OUR

NEW STAFF

Brenda Yearwood: HR Manager

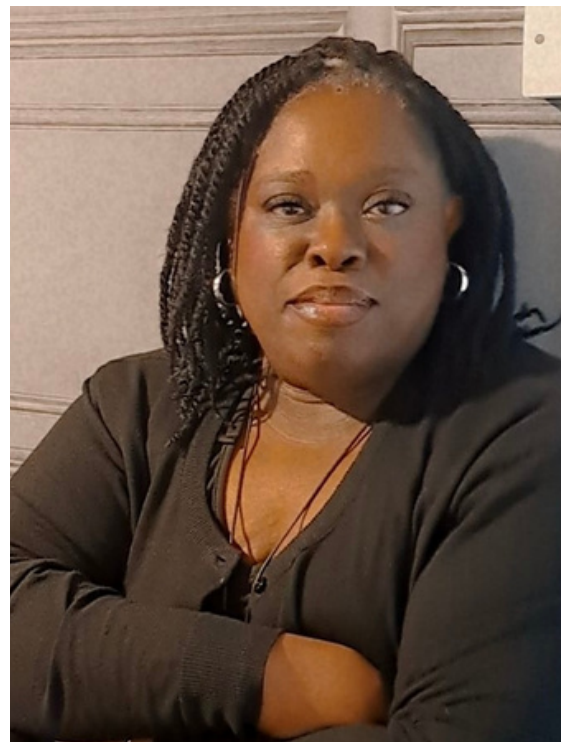
Hello everyone!

My role is to create a supportive and effective environment that helps all staff thrive. As HR Manager, my objectives include understanding all policies and procedures, streamlining processes, and staying updated on employment law to provide the best possible support and guidance. All of this aligns with Bromley Mencap's vision and values.

Since joining, it has been an incredible journey, and I am passionate about fostering a workplace where everyone feels valued and included.

At Bromley Mencap, diversity and inclusion are not just priorities – they are essential to our success as an organisation.

I look forward to working with you all to ensure that our workplace celebrates the unique perspectives and experiences of every team member. Together, we can create a workplace that reflects our commitment to supporting disabled people.



WORK WITH US

JOB

Can you make a difference to the lives of disabled people in the Bromley borough?
Please do check our job page for the latest paid and volunteering opportunities available.

Please visit: <https://www.bromleymencap.org.uk/work-with-us/>



Copy deadline for the March/April Bulletin is 1 March 2025.

Editor: Alex Powell - alex.powell@bromleymencap.org

**Publisher: Bromley Mencap, Rutland House, 44 Masons Hill, Bromley, Kent
BR2 9JG. Tel: 020 8466 0790**

Copyright © Bromley Mencap Charity Number: 800685

The opinions expressed in Bromley Mencap Bulletin are those of the individual contributors and not necessarily those of Bromley Mencap. We reserve the right to edit articles before publication.

