



## AGM: Celebrating Achievement and Shaping the Year Ahead



Ann Kean

14th November 1936 –  
8th April 2025



### What's included:

This festive edition also includes highlights from our Christmas Fair, updates from across our services and ways to get involved – plus a wonderful showcase of our Christmas Fundraising Art Competition.

You can see all the fabulous entries on pages 14-16.

**Our AGM was a real success, with a fantastic turnout. It was a great chance to look back on the year and for members to help shape how we deliver our strategy.**

We were proud to present the first Ann Kean Memorial Award and are delighted to announce our inaugural winner: **Ethan Rosling**, pictured above with his award.

The award recognises a member who has overcome significant challenges, and Ethan's achievements over the past year are a wonderful example of resilience and determination. Read the full story on pages 4-5.



## Follow us

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[www.bromleymencap.org.uk](http://www.bromleymencap.org.uk)

# Editor's Note



Beautiful Christmas wreaths on sale at the Lodge Christmas Fair.

### Welcome to the December edition of the Bulletin!

This issue is full of festive cheer and brilliant stories from across Bromley Mencap.

You'll find highlights from our AGM, where members helped shape our next steps, and a wonderful showcase of creativity from our Christmas Fundraising Art Competition. We're also proud to be supporting Royal Mencap's I'm In campaign, encouraging more people with a learning disability to join the Learning Disability Register and access the healthcare they deserve.

As always, we love to hear from our members. If you have feedback, ideas, or stories you'd like to share in a future edition, please do get in touch.

**Wishing you a safe and happy festive season.**



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## Happy Reading!

**Alex Powell**

Communications Officer  
[alex.powell@bromleymencap.org](mailto: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

Bromley Well offers free health and wellbeing services for people living in the London Borough of Bromley.

Please check the [website for details here](#).



**13**  
December

**Children's Christmas Party:  
Winter Wonderland**

 **Date** 13 December 2025

 **Time** 2:30 pm - 4:30 pm

 **Venue** Amrita Hall

 **Organiser** Sarah Astill

 **Category** Bromley Mencap Events

[MORE INFO](#)

Bromley Mencap delivers several Bromley Well services including employment support workshops, as well as workshops and one-to-one support for people with learning difficulties and physical disabilities, mutual carers, and young carers.

[You can self-refer here.](#)





# Interim Chief Executive Update

**Dear Members,**

**It was wonderful to see so many of you at our recent Annual General Meeting and Christmas Fair, and you can read more about what happened at both events in this bumper issue of the Bulletin.**

As well as the usual business meeting reflecting on the last year, the Annual General Meeting saw a fantastic co-production session which will help inform the delivery of our strategy and the presentation of the inaugural Ann Kean Memorial Award.

Branwen Austyn-Jones, one of our long-standing trustees, paid tribute to Ann who was involved with Bromley Mencap as a trustee, vice-chair and fundraiser for over fifty years.



Ann left a very generous gift in her will to establish this award which will be given at the AGM to one of our members, who has overcome significant challenges.



We were joined by the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Gemma Turrell, who presented the award to our first worthy winner, Ethan Rosling. Ethan was nominated by Steve O'Hara from the bike team at the Lodge, where he had been attending for the last year.

After a serious injury changed Ethan's life, he joined the Lodge to rebuild his strength and confidence. With considerable support from his family and the Lodge team, Ethan overcame anxiety and learned new skills. As a regular visitor to Norman Park with his family, one of Ethan's goals was to learn to ride a bike again with the aim of cycling his young nephew around the park during their visits.



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Through determination and hard work, Ethan has become a valued and respected member of the workshop, and Steve's nomination highlighted the progression that Ethan has made in the last year, and how this is a credit to his hard work and determination.



At the AGM, I updated members on progress with the merger with Lewisham Mencap and I'm very pleased to be able to let you know that our Board of Trustees have now signed the final legal agreement.



This will now be submitted to the Charity Commission, and the merger should be completed in the new year.

The new year also sees our 75th anniversary and we're starting to make plans as to how to mark this milestone in the history of the charity. There'll be lots more on that in the next issue!

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy 2026.



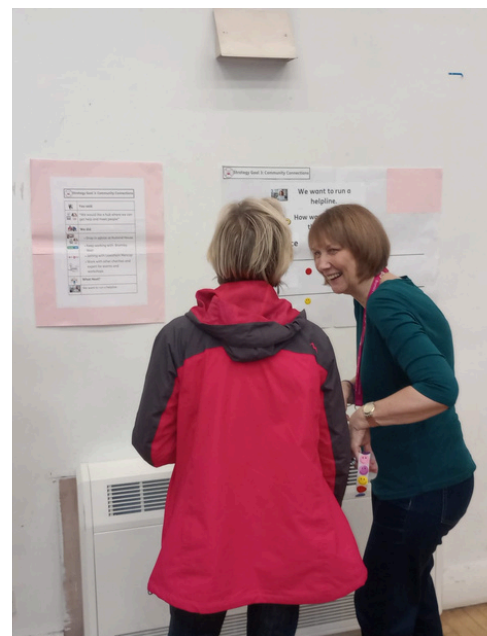
**Best wishes,**

A stylized, handwritten signature in pink ink that reads 'Steve'.

**Steve Barnes, Interim CEO**

# AGM WORKSHOP: YOU SAID, WE DID, WHAT NEXT?

## How members are shaping Bromley Mencap's future



**At our recent AGM, members took part in a special “You Said, We Did, What Next?” workshop led by Perdie Brown, Co-production Officer. We worked together to review our progress on Bromley Mencap’s 2025-2028 strategy and what we should do next.**

We put posters around the room and on the tables, asking questions about our four strategy goals:

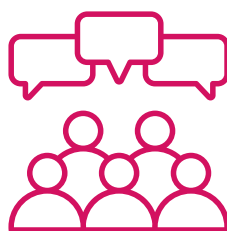
- **Social Inclusion**
- **Employment & Training**
- **Community Connections**
- **Campaigning**



**We also had an extra section, asking about children, young people and families.**

Members used stickers and wrote comments to tell us what they value, what needs to change and which ideas should be top priority.

This feedback will be used by our Senior Management Team, Trustees and member-led Strategy Delivery Group to shape the next stage of our plans.



### **Goal 1: Social Inclusion – more to do, closer to home**

Last year, members told us that they want more evening and weekend activities. This year, we asked for details. Popular ideas included pub trips, lunch clubs, cookery, nature walks, games cafés, pottery and tai chi.

There was strong support for activities in Bromley, Orpington and Beckenham, with preference for Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings.



This confirms our out-of-hours social and wellbeing strategy is on track and provides new ideas to explore.





## Goal 2: Employment & Training – social enterprise ideas

There was strong support for Bromley Mencap running its own social business:

**48 people said YES to the idea and nobody said no.**

The most popular ideas were a shop, a café and a food truck, with other suggestions including a garden centre, charity shop, theatre or panto, online selling and gardening or cleaning services.



This feedback will feed into our business case for future social enterprises, and links directly to our existing Supported Internship and employment programmes, giving people more real-world work opportunities

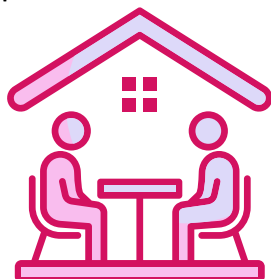


## Goal 3: Community Connections – helpline and hub

Members told us they would most like to contact a future helpline face-to-face, followed by phone and email.

The biggest areas of support requested were help with forms, letters and paperwork and help with benefits.

This is shaping our plans for a Central Hub at The Lodge, with a helpline that combines in-person support, telephone advice and even more digital support.



## Goal 4: Campaigning – what should we speak up about?

When asked what Bromley Mencap should campaign on locally, the top answers were:

- **better support when people move from children's to adult services**
- **public transport**
- **better information for families**

These themes will help us focus our future campaigning work, alongside national campaigns we support with Royal Mencap and others.



## Children, Young People & Families – more support

The Bromley Mencap team are aware that disabled children and young people and their families need more support and almost all our members agreed.

### Top ideas included:

- **Advice for parents**
- **Family trips and events**
- **Clubs and wellbeing activities**
- **Support for siblings**

This feedback links directly to our Short Breaks development, and to plans for more family-focused activities and peer support.



## What happens next?

All of this AGM feedback is being reviewed by the Senior Management Team, the Strategy Delivery Group and the Trustees.



**Together we are:**

- updating our Strategy Delivery Plan so it reflects what members told us
- checking where we can act quickly (for example, piloting new out-of-hours activities)
- building member priorities into our plans for social enterprise, the Central Hub and campaigning work

We will share updates in future Bulletins and on our website as these ideas turn into concrete plans and new activities.



## “Working Together” Updates

The “Working Together” team has had a busy autumn, continuing to explore new ways for members and people who use our services to shape what we do.

We have been listening, sharing ideas and making sure people’s voices are heard across our services.

### Workshops

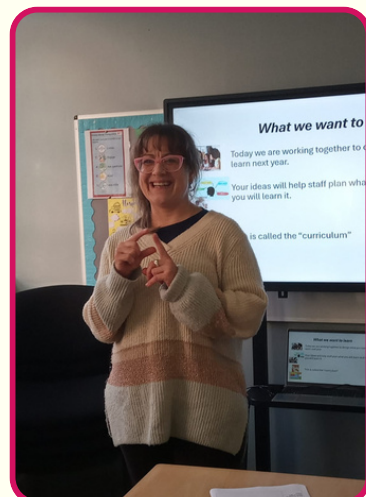
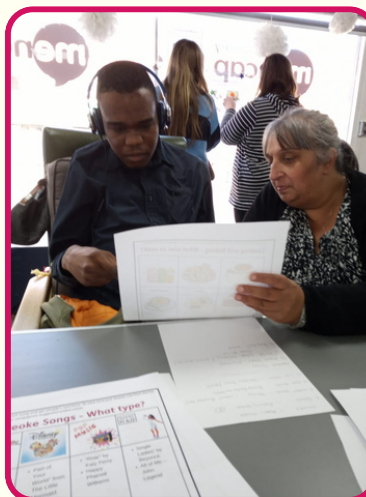
We have run workshops at Cotmandene and Eden Park Day Opportunities. Together, we explored favourite activities, new things to try and how often we should do things.

Both sessions were a lot of fun, and we want to say a big thank you to everyone who participated.

Your ideas will help us improve services for everyone, and we will continue to work with the Day Opportunities teams to make “Working Together” a regular part of how we do things.

Perdie and Sushma have also started work with young people at our Rutland House Training Centre on designing a new curriculum.

The students had brilliant ideas and were keen to get involved in shaping what and how they want to learn.





## Meetings

### Parents and Carers Action Group (PCAG)

We chair the Parents and Carers Action Group (PCAG), which sits on the Bromley Learning Disability Partnership Board and helps inform the Adult Social Care Commissioning Strategy. This autumn, PCAG discussed Partnership Board updates and the recent Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection of Bromley Adult Services.



PCAG's work has also focused on respite, highlighting the need for clearer directories and Personal Assistant options and working closely with Andrew Royle from Bromley Council on a potential new framework for respite and PA cover.

We meet quarterly at Bromley Mencap's office and welcome new members on a rolling basis. The more members we have, the stronger our collective voice for change.

### Public Engagement Network (PEN)

Bromley Mencap has also recently joined the Public Engagement Network (PEN), which helps the CQC gather more feedback on services.

Members have been campaigning for better information sharing and helped shape the new Information Hub for adults with learning disabilities, with plans for co-production testing to ensure it is accessible and includes everything people need.

### Strategy Delivery Group

We also support the Strategy Delivery Group, bringing members, staff and trustees together to oversee progress on our 2025–2028 strategy. This group helps scrutinise our work, supports recruitment and strengthens quality across our pathways.

We're pleased to share that we have secured funding to recruit a new Out of Hours Activity Co-ordinator, supporting our plans to expand evening and weekend social and wellbeing opportunities. If you are interested in joining the group, please contact us!

## What's Next?

We're still working on launching a new Young Adults Group. If you'd like to help shape it from the start, please get in touch.

We will continue to support the Royal Mencap I'm In campaign and hope to host a roadshow event in the near future.

We'll also be inviting other local charities to join us for a Public Engagement Network event in the spring, with a Love2shop voucher for members who attend – keep an eye out for flyers!

### Get in touch for more information



**Telephone: 020 8466 0790**



**[coproduction@bromleymencap.org](mailto:coproduction@bromleymencap.org)**



**[www.bromleymencap.org.uk](http://www.bromleymencap.org.uk)**

# The Learning Disability Register – Are you in?

**We're backing Mencap's 'I'm In' campaign to help more people with a learning disability get the healthcare they deserve.**

**At the moment, some people with a learning disability do not get the same healthcare as other people.**

**This can make them more poorly and can mean they might die younger.**

**Being on the Learning Disability Register can help you get better care.**

**If your name is on the Learning Disability Register at your GP, it can mean:**

- Better healthcare
- A free health check every year
- Staff know about your needs and respect them



## Joining the register is simple:

- Go to Mencap's "I'm In" [webpage](#).
- Use the Easy Read letter tool on the website to make your own letter asking to join the Learning Disability Register.
- Print the letter or save it on your phone or tablet.
- Give or send the letter to your GP surgery.

**You can ask a family member, carer or support worker to help you.**



# Bromley Mencap has been working with Royal Mencap on the 'I'm In' campaign.

This month, we hosted a workshop at our Training Centre.

Sara Caravelas Santana from Mencap came to talk to our learners about the Learning Disability Register. They worked together to co-produce posters, videos and other campaign materials to encourage young people with a learning disability to join the Learning Disability Register.



We also had an information stall at our recent AGM to help spread the word.

We will be running more events in 2026 - keep an eye out for messages from our 'Working Together' team to help out.

Alternatively, email [coproduction@bromleymencap.org](mailto:coproduction@bromleymencap.org) or telephone 0208 466 0790.



In the meantime, get involved and help more people sign up to the Learning Disability Register and say "I'm In".

More information can be found on the Mencap website: <https://www.mencap.org.uk/get-involved/campaigns-and-activism/im-in>

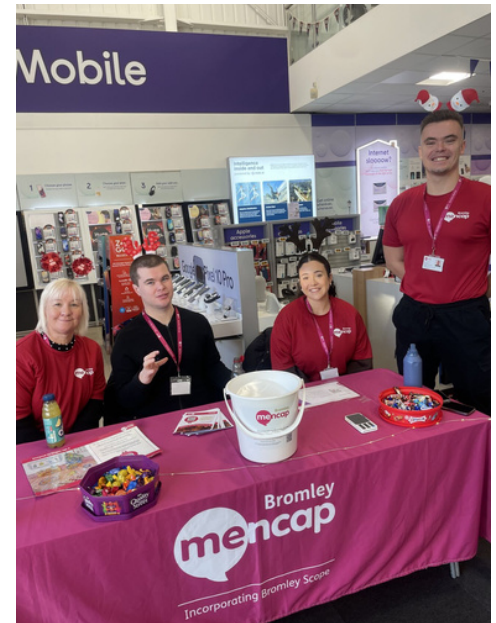


# Festive Fundraising

## How your support is making a difference

**Our Christmas fundraising is well under way, and we've already been blown away by the generosity of our community.**

Over Black Friday weekend, our Fundraising Ambassadors helped run a fundraising stall at Currys in Bromley, raising just under **£400** on our first visit there. They braved the crowds, chatted to customers and shared information about Bromley Mencap's work with disabled people and their families.



Over the coming weeks, our volunteers will be out in the community again with stalls at Morrisons Petts Wood and Tesco in Orpington and Elmers End, helping us to raise vital funds and awareness.

Our Christmas Fair at The Lodge was also a huge success, raising over £2,000 to support our services. You can read more about this on **pages 34 and 35**, including the fantastic support from local groups, stallholders, volunteers and Bromley Tuneless Choir who made the day so special.

**We are also delighted to be partnering with Vocollective Choir for a special Christmas performance at The Glades Shopping Centre.**

On Saturday 13 December from 12.00 to 12.30pm, shoppers can enjoy festive favourites on the Upper Mall (by Zara) while donating to support Bromley Mencap.

**Bromley mencap**

Enjoy  
*Christmas Songs*  
with Vocollective Choir

Take a break from your Christmas shopping and listen to festive favourites from Vocollective at The Glades, raising money for Bromley Mencap to support more disabled people and their families in Bromley.

Saturday 13 December

12:00 to 12:30pm

Upper Mall (by Zara), The Glades Shopping Centre, Bromley

Donate today

**This week is Christmas Jumper Week and we're inviting everyone across Bromley Mencap to get involved.**

From 8–12 December, people attending our Day Opportunities and Training Centre services are encouraged to wear their most festive jumpers and donate a minimum of £1.

Staff and volunteers will be joining in on Thursday 11 December at the staff Christmas event.

It's a simple, fun way to raise money and celebrate together, while helping us support more people who may be feeling isolated this winter.

You can [donate here](#) or scan the QR code.



We've also created a Christmas Community Fundraising Pack for anyone who would like to raise money for Bromley Mencap with their school, workplace, faith group, club or friendship group.

The pack includes ideas, tips and resources for activities such as festive dress-up days, collections, bake sales and sponsored challenges, as well as information on how donations help our work. You can download it from our website here:

[www.bromleymencap.org.uk/get-involved/christmas-with-bromley-mencap/](http://www.bromleymencap.org.uk/get-involved/christmas-with-bromley-mencap/)

**Together, these activities are helping us to bring comfort, connection and practical support to disabled people and their families in Bromley – so that fewer people feel alone or forgotten this Christmas.**





# Christmas Art Competition

**This year we held our first ever Christmas Fundraising Campaign Art Competition.**

We asked the Bromley Mencap Community to submit artwork on the theme of the meaning of Christmas and we were not disappointed!

The Bromley Mencap Senior Leadership Team had a very hard time judging the entries, but eventually chose our winner.

**Congratulations  
to Megan Sessa,  
age 8, from Orpington.**

The judges were impressed by the fantastic detail, sense of perspective and lovely use of colour.

They also felt Megan's design had a strong connection to the aims of our fundraising campaign, capturing the warmth, cosiness and comfort that everyone deserves to feel at Christmas time.

Look out for our fundraising poster featuring her work in businesses and public spaces across Bromley.





Here's a gallery of all the fabulous entries we received.  
Thank you so much to everyone who took part.



Please donate to our Christmas Campaign - Tackling loneliness and isolation for disabled people and their families this Christmas.





**Thank you to all our entrants: Will, Gavin, Billie Jo Ann, Sheena, Luca, Natalie, Derek, Maria, Peter, Susan, Laura, Sharon, David, Anita, Anthony, Jacqueline, Chris, Louise, Ed, Anna, Paul, Colleen, Ines, Denise, Olayinka, and Emma.**



# Simple Steps to Prepare for Emergencies



**With the colder weather now here, it makes sense to be prepared in case of an emergency. This could be caused by things like severe weather, or by equipment failure that leads to power cuts.**

Some emergencies happen quickly and are over in a few hours. Others can last for several days. Below are a few simple and effective steps you can take to prepare for any disruption. Many of these ideas are useful for different types of emergencies. Lots of them won't cost anything and only take a few minutes to do.



## 1. Be informed

- Check the Bromley Council website for current guidance: <https://www.bromley.gov.uk/emergencies/emergency-planning/4>
- See if you qualify for the Priority Services Register (PSR) with your gas, energy or water provider, for extra support during supply interruptions. Visit [thepsr.co.uk](https://www.thepsr.co.uk) or check your latest bill for details.



## 2. Make a plan

- Write down important phone numbers and keep them handy, especially for power cuts or emergencies.
- Add emergency contacts and medical information to your mobile phone, if you have one.



## 3. Prepare your home

- Do an online home fire safety check.
- Test your smoke alarms monthly.
- Make sure you know how to turn off your gas, electricity and water.
- Prepare for extreme weather by checking advice for hot, cold or stormy conditions.

## 4. Get emergency supplies

- Think about what you'd need if you had to stay at home for a few days.
- Keep your supplies in an easy-to-find place.
- Make sure you have enough medication for several days.
- You don't need to buy everything at once – you can build your kit up over time, as and when you're able.



### Suggested emergency kit:

- **Battery or wind-up torch (safer than candles)**
- **Portable power bank for your phone**
- **Battery or wind-up radio for updates**
- **Spare batteries (including for any medical equipment)**
- **First aid kit (plasters, bandages, thermometer, antiseptic, etc.)**
- **Hand sanitiser and wet wipes**
- **Bottled water**
- **Non-perishable food (tinned goods, ready-to-eat items, tin opener)**
- **Pet food, if you have pets**

# Cost of Living Support

As always, our Cost of Living service has been very busy – supporting our members and carers through one-to-one support, workshops, Friday drop-ins and our new podcasts. We've been helping people with utility bills, benefits and more, to reduce costs and plan finances so life is a little easier.

## Workshops

In September, we ran a digital skills workshop led by our wonderful Digital Champions, Lee and Martin. As usual, it was very well attended and incredibly helpful. We looked at accessibility tools and how to use AI on our phones and laptops to make everyday tasks easier.

In October and November, we held a two-part workshop on identity theft, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and comparison websites. These sessions were also very popular – people had lots of questions and said they learned a lot. We welcomed special guest Beverley Nicklin from Trading Standards to part two, who answered questions and reassured us about how to deal with scams and what to watch out for.

In December, we're rounding off the year with a festive Christmas Quiz workshop, bringing people together to have fun and recap what we've learned this year.

## Podcasts



Our Digital Champions have been working hard on new episodes of the Cost of Living Podcast, which you can listen to for free on our [website here](#).

Recent episodes have covered the Cost of Living cookery course, Wills and Power of Attorney, Young Carers, and a follow-up to our Scams and Identity Theft workshops for anyone who couldn't attend.

If you'd like to hear your voice on the Bromley Mencap airwaves or have something important you'd like to share, please contact Allison on 07714 686723.



## Did you know?

Nearly 90% of the disabled people and families we support have been affected by identity theft or scams. That's why our workshops on staying safe and spotting scams are so important.



## Steering Group

September also saw a jam-packed Steering Group at Rutland House – our best turnout yet. Thank you to everyone who came along and shared your time and ideas.

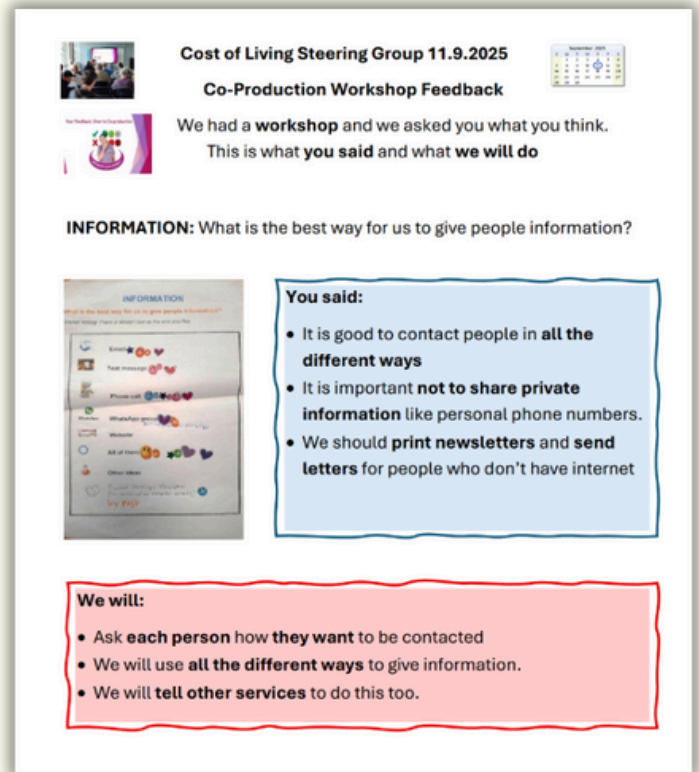
These Steering Groups are how we make sure the service reflects what disabled people and families actually need.

We worked with Perdie and Sushma, our brilliant Co-production team, and used interactive ways of gathering your feedback. The ideas you shared are now being used to shape our future plans, workshops and podcasts – so your feedback is genuinely put to good use.

## Date for your Diary

Our next Steering Group is on **Thursday 11 December at 2pm** at Rutland House.

Please let Allison know if you plan on joining the meeting. Phone 07714 686723 or email [allison.gill@bromleymencap.org](mailto:allison.gill@bromleymencap.org)



**Cost of Living Steering Group 11.9.2025**  
**Co-Production Workshop Feedback**

We had a **workshop** and we asked you what you think.  
This is what **you said** and what **we will do**

**INFORMATION:** What is the best way for us to give people information?

**You said:**

- It is good to contact people in **all the different ways**
- It is important **not to share private information** like personal phone numbers.
- We should **print newsletters** and **send letters** for people who don't have internet

**We will:**

- Ask **each person** how **they want** to be contacted
- We will use **all the different ways** to give information.
- We will **tell other services** to do this too.

## Cost of Living Service Drop-In

You are welcome to drop in to Rutland House any time between 10am and 4pm (no appointment needed) for help with:

- cost of living letters and other correspondence
- forms and applications
- any digital or tech support you might need

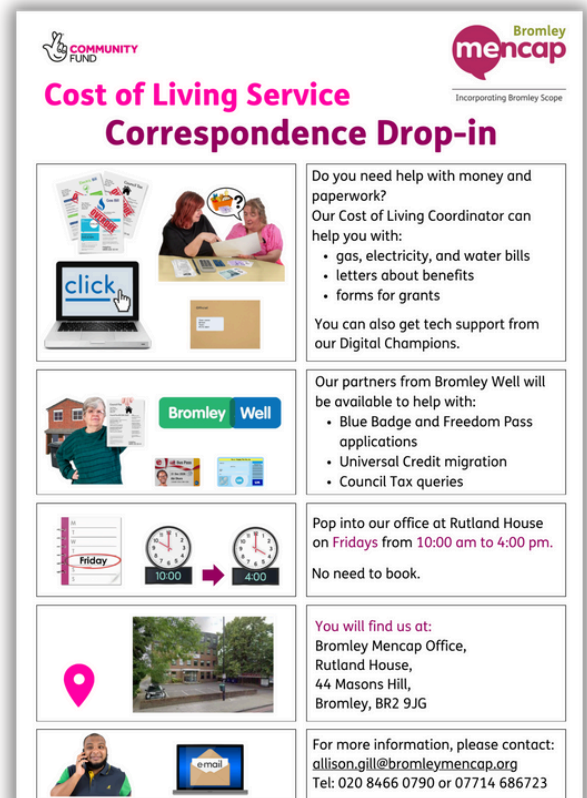
Please note our Christmas closure:

- No drop-in on Friday 26 December or Friday 2 January
- We will be back as usual from **Friday 9 January 2026**

For more information, please contact Allison Gill:

✉ [allison.gill@bromleymencap.org](mailto:allison.gill@bromleymencap.org)

☎ 020 8466 0790 / 07714 686723



**COMMUNITY FUND** **Bromley mencap**  
Incorporating Bromley Scope

**Cost of Living Service Correspondence Drop-in**

Do you need help with money and paperwork?  
Our Cost of Living Coordinator can help you with:

- gas, electricity, and water bills
- letters about benefits
- forms for grants

You can also get tech support from our Digital Champions.

Our partners from Bromley Well will be available to help with:

- Blue Badge and Freedom Pass applications
- Universal Credit migration
- Council Tax queries

Pop into our office at Rutland House on **Fridays from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm**.  
No need to book.

**You will find us at:**  
Bromley Mencap Office,  
Rutland House,  
44 Masons Hill,  
Bromley, BR2 9JG

For more information, please contact:  
[allison.gill@bromleymencap.org](mailto:allison.gill@bromleymencap.org)  
Tel: 020 8466 0790 or 07714 686723

**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](mailto:tina.penn@bromleywell.org.uk)

### OLDER CARERS WORKSHOPS & LUNCH

**In September, Tina was delighted to welcome Bromley Mencap's Digital Champions, Martin Kelly and Lee McPherson.**

They brought their IT expertise and gave a wonderful talk on staying safe online, sharing some very useful tips. They also spoke about the ever-evolving world of Artificial Intelligence (AI), which everyone found really interesting. Martin and Lee showed people how AI can help when writing letters and making complaints. The session was described as very helpful, and Tina is hoping to invite them back next year.



**The October lunch was a big hit, with Frances from Foal Farm kindly joining us.**

Foal Farm is a local Biggin Hill charity that rescues and rehomes neglected animals. Each year they help around 500 cats, dogs and small animals find new homes, and provide sanctuary to more than 100 animals. Frances shared some lovely photos of the animals currently in their care.



If you are in the area, Foal Farm is definitely worth a visit. They also have a tearoom serving delicious homemade cakes.



### UPCOMING EVENT

We are very much looking forward to our Older Carers Christmas Party. Please ensure you have booked your place with Tina.

**Date: 19 December 2025**  
**Time: 11.30am–2.30pm**  
**Venue: St Augustine's Church**



### ROCHESTER CHRISTMAS MARKET

We had a wonderful day out at the Rochester Christmas Market.

It was a great chance to enjoy some festive cheer and good company.





## LEARNING DISABILITY COOKERY CLASS

In September, the group were busy in the kitchen cooking a Lebanese dish of shish tawook served with salad, followed by the classic Eton mess. Everyone enjoyed a tasty lunch – with clean plates and full tummies all round!



In October, we made a vegetarian main of ratatouille with rice, along with chocolate croissants – a first for the class. People were impressed by how easy they were to make, with some saying they'd like to try them at home.



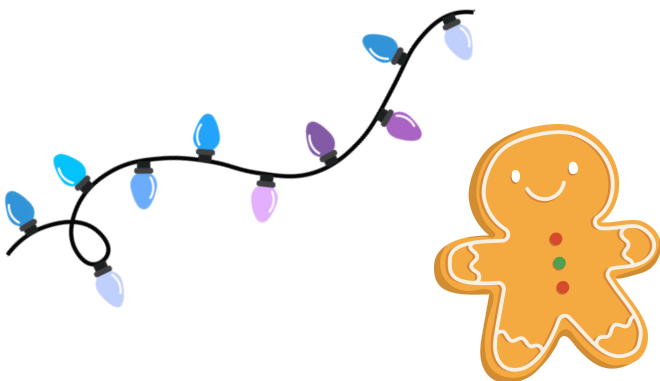
### Upcoming Event

We are very much looking forward to our Cookery Class Christmas Party. Please ensure you have booked your place with Tina.

**Date:** 12 December 2025

**Time:** 10.30am–2.30pm

**Venue:** St Augustine's Church



## COFFEE MORNINGS



Coffee mornings are held twice a month at the Harvester on Southborough Lane between 11am – 1pm.

The coffee mornings are always well attended, offering carers a chance to relax and take a break from their caring role.

# SAVE THE DATE

# 2026

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### OLDER CARERS WORKSHOP AND LUNCH

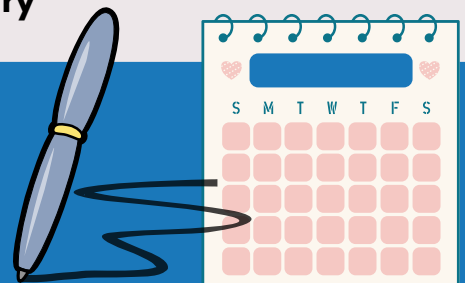
- Friday 23 January
- Friday 20 February

### LD COOKERY CLASS

- Friday 16 January
- Friday 6 February

### COFFEE MORNINGS

- Friday 9 January, Friday 30 January
- Friday 13 February, Friday 27 February



By Caroline Hackett  
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.

## MEDITATION MONDAYS

Our monthly meditation and sound bowl workshops continue to go from strength to strength.



Attendance has remained consistently high, and the feedback we receive is always incredibly positive. We've also welcomed several new people in recent months, including one who joined specifically to take part in these sessions, which is a wonderful testament to their impact.



## Christmas Party

**Monday 15 December | 11am to 1pm**

 **Bromley United Reformed Church,  
20 Widmore Road, Bromley, BR1 1RY**

We're hosting a joint Christmas celebration with the Learning Disabilities Pathway, with festive food and drinks, a fun Christmas quiz and plenty of seasonal music to get everyone in the holiday spirit.

If you haven't booked yet, please do so soon as spaces are limited. We're looking forward to celebrating with you!



**UPCOMING  
WORKSHOPS**

**Make a note of the dates for the start of our 2026 meditations and Sound bowl sessions.**

**All sessions take place on Mondays:**

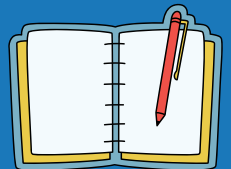
- 26 January
- 23 February
- 16 March

 **Workshop: 11.00am – 12.00pm**

 **Drop-in: until 1.00pm**

 **Lunch provided (please let us know if you are attending so we can cater for you and any dietary requirements/allergies).**

**FRIDAY DROP-IN AT  
RUTLAND HOUSE**



Do you need support with paperwork? Pop in on **Fridays** from **10:00 am to 4:00 pm**. No booking required. **Please note, there are no sessions on Friday 26 Dec and Friday 2 January.**

## CONTACT US:

 Caroline Hackett – 07938 740361  
 [caroline.hackett@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:caroline.hackett@bromleywell.org.uk)

 Sue Charles – 07484 673090  
 [sue.charles@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:sue.charles@bromleywell.org.uk)





**By Emma Andrew**  
**Senior 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 WORKSHOP HIGHLIGHTS

### October – Loneliness workshop

During our workshop, we talked about how loneliness can affect people with learning difficulties and what we can do to reduce the stigma around it.

Through group discussions, we connected with each other on a deeper level, shared stories and experiences, and felt part of a wider, diverse community – discovering the things that connect us all as human beings.



### November – Self-Care Week

In November, we ran a workshop to celebrate Self-Care Week (17–23 November).



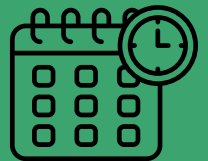
We were joined by our wonderful Physical Difficulties Information and Support Officer, Caroline Hackett, who kindly delivered a relaxing meditation session for everyone.



## ADHD ‘Life Admin’ Course

Our ADHD Life Admin Course runs regularly and the next dates are being planned. If you’re interested in taking part, please contact Emma to join the waiting list: [emma.andrew@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:emma.andrew@bromleywell.org.uk). For more information on the course, please take a look at our [flyer here](#).

## Save the Dates



### Christmas Party

In December, we’ll be holding a joint festive workshop with our Bromley Well and Bromley Mencap friends to celebrate the season together.

**Date:** Monday 15 December

**Time:** 11am to 1pm

**Venue:** Bromley United Reformed Church, 20 Widmore Road, Bromley, BR1 1RY



**Spaces are limited.**



To book, please phone 020 8466 0790 or email [chetan.raval@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:chetan.raval@bromleywell.org.uk)

## January 2026 Workshop – New venue

From 2026, workshops will be held downstairs at Rutland House in the Training Centre.

**We will be holding our next workshop on Thursday 22 January from 10am to 12pm at our new workshop venue.**

# COFFEE MORNING: CATCH-UP AND WORKSHOP IDEAS

**Join us to meet friends, share a cuppa, and help  
plan this year's workshops.**



**Thursday 22 January 2026**



**10am to 12 noon**



**Bromley Mencap,  
Rutland House,  
44 Masons Hill,  
Bromley, BR2 9JG**



Come along and bring your ideas for the topics you'd like us to cover in 2026. We're now downstairs at Rutland House with step-free access.

**Please contact us by telephone or email to book your place.**

**PHONE**

**020 8466 0790**

**EMAIL**

**[Chetan.raval@bromleywell.org.uk](mailto:Chetan.raval@bromleywell.org.uk)**

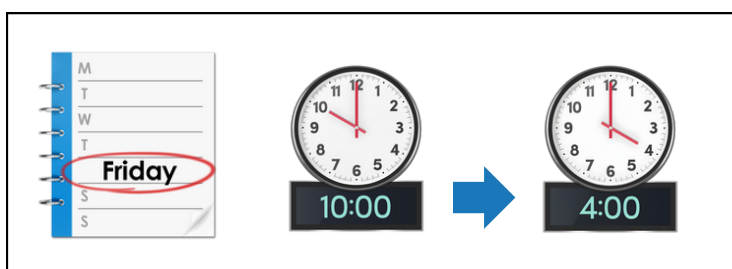


# Correspondence Drop-ins

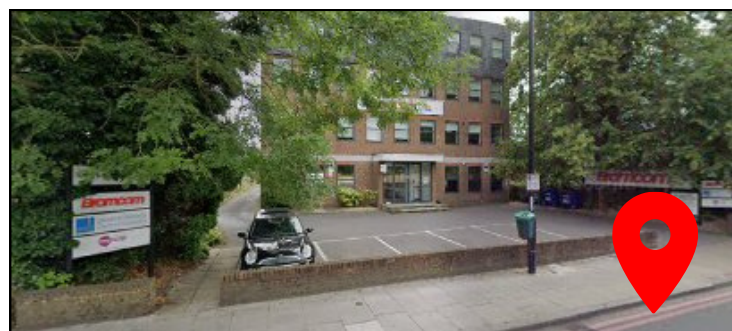


## We can help you with:

- Reading and responding to letters
- Blue badge applications
- Freedom pass applications
- Universal Credit migration
- Digital/Tech problems
- Council tax support



Pop into our office on **Fridays** from **10:00 am to 4:00 pm**.  
**No sessions on Friday 26 Dec and Friday 2 January.**



## You will find us at:

Bromley Mencap Office,  
Rutland House,  
44 Masons Hill,  
Bromley, BR2 9JG



For more information, please contact Bromley Well:  
**Freephone 0808 278 7898**

# Employment and Training Update

Our Employment & Training Services have had a busy and inspiring few months, with visits, partnerships and creative workshops helping learners build skills and confidence for the future.

## Mahaba Café Visit

Recently, members of the Education and Training Team, together with Business Development Manager Alex Best, visited Mahaba Café in Ealing – a café run by adults with a learning disability. The visit was a chance to see how the café runs day to day, learn more about how their social enterprise operates, and explore whether we could develop something similar locally for Bromley Mencap members. The trip has given us lots of ideas as we continue to look at future work and training opportunities for disabled people in Bromley.



## Job Brokerage Success

Pictured is Harry, who has received his first wage packet. Harry secured his job through our Employment Brokerage service, with support from Ian Breslin. He works for Nurture, looking after the plants inside the Bank of America offices in the City of London.

We negotiated Harry's start times so he can use his Freedom Pass to travel into London. He is now working independently, and we are confident that his hours will increase in the new year.

Well done, Harry – we are extremely proud of you.

## Supported Internships Creative Workshops

Our Higher Needs Supported Internship and Supported Internship students in Bexley took part in a bracelet making workshop in partnership with The Exchange, Erith – a community arts and heritage space. Students were able to express their creativity, practise mindfulness and build confidence as they designed their own bracelets.

Students also designed lanterns (pictured) in a previous workshop at The Exchange – a fantastic way to combine creativity, patience and pride in their work.







Thank you

## Plant Pot Donation

We were delighted that Willow Alexander Gardens Ltd kindly donated 18 plant pots to our Training Centre. These will be used in our horticulture sessions, giving learners more opportunities to learn practical gardening skills, grow and care for plants, and gain hands-on experience that can support future volunteering or work.



You can read the latest Training Centre newsletter [here](#).



# Celebrating our Volunteers



Bromley Mencap is very fortunate to be supported by an amazing team of volunteers – in our day services, workshops and drop-ins, at discos and keep fit, with our Young Carers and Monday Afternooners group, and as Fundraising Ambassadors.

Back in September, we were delighted to support Lucy Seaton, John Griffiths and Andrew Stammers at the Community Links Bromley Volunteer Awards, where each was nominated for their volunteering with Bromley Mencap.

Lucy and John both volunteer at The Lodge, and Andrew volunteers across several of our projects.

Our volunteers give so much to the organisation – we simply couldn't do it without them.

Congratulations to Lucy, John and Andrew and a huge thank you to all our volunteers.



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

If you are interested in volunteering with Bromley Mencap, please contact Brenda Yearwood, HR Manager:  
[Brenda.yearwood@bromleymencap.org](mailto:Brenda.yearwood@bromleymencap.org)



## Celebrating SEND Stars and Supporting Families

This December, the Children's Service has been busy supporting families in two key ways.



Firstly, we delivered Christmas hampers donated by Bromley Brighter Beginnings to families across the borough.

These hampers help ease some of the financial pressure at an expensive time of year, particularly for families who may face higher living costs due to their child's additional needs.

We also supported children and families at the Bromley SEND Stars Awards by providing sensory activities. Hosted by the Bromley SEND Partnership, the SEND Stars Awards celebrate achievements from children, young people, parents, carers, schools, community groups, charities and employers across Bromley's SEND community.

Bromley Mencap received a number of nominations from members and services. Our Supported Internship Team were delighted to be awarded Runners-Up in the SEND Champion for Employment category.

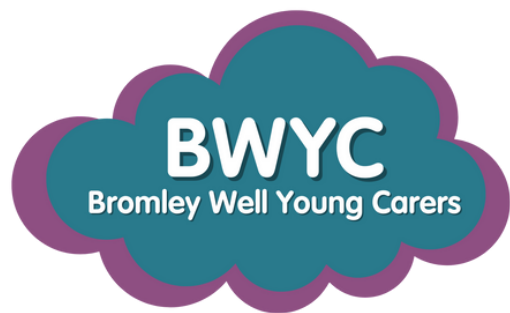
Former CEO Eddie Lynch was presented with the Lasting Legacy Award, in recognition of his inspirational twenty-year leadership of Bromley Mencap.

It was lovely to see Eddie again for the first time since he left in May 2024, and he was a very worthy and popular winner of the award.



*Congratulations!*

Our Interim Chief Executive, Steve Barnes, was also very pleased to be asked to present the SEND Champion in the Community Award to Fay Hicks, for her incredible hard work across Rhiannon's Café, CANDI and the Inclusion Festival.



## 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.](#)

### Celebrating Evelyn's success

At the recent Bromley SEND Stars Awards, Bromley Well Young Carers nominated Evelyn Brandt for the amazing support she gives to her sister, who has additional needs.



Evelyn was awarded Runner-Up in the SEND Champion for Peers and Siblings category, a fantastic recognition of her kindness, commitment and the vital role she plays in her family.

The Bromley Well Young Carers Team were incredibly proud to celebrate with her.



### Half-term Fun

Bromley Well Young Carers have also had a busy half-term, with creative art sessions, bowling and even a spooky visit to Chislehurst Caves, and they are now gearing up for a full programme of Christmas events.



You can read more about their recent activities and upcoming events in the [Bromley Well Young Carers newsletter here.](#)



# SHORT BREAKS SERVICE UPDATE



## For disabled children, young people and their families

Bromley Mencap's Short Breaks Service was commissioned by Bromley Council until the end of September 2025. Although this funding has now ended, Bromley Mencap will continue delivering these services, which families can access either through direct payments or by self-funding.

Being a carer can be physically and emotionally demanding. Short Breaks give parents and carers the chance to take a break from their caring role, while children and young people enjoy safe, fun time away from home. Our Short Breaks promote social inclusion and support personal and social development.



### Bromley Mencap offers:



**Community Support** from workers to support disabled children and young people to access their local communities and/or support to parents and carers in the family home to carry out day-to-day activities.



**Buddying support** by non-disabled young people to support disabled young people (14+) to access their local communities.



**Childminding** for children with mild to moderate disabilities including children that need one-to-one support.



**Short Breaks Clubs** - From early 2026, new Saturday Clubs will offer children and young people the chance to build independence and enjoy social opportunities in a fun, welcoming environment.

For more information, please contact Sarah Garner, Short Breaks Coordinator:

 07892 728643 or 020 8466 0790

 [sarah.garner@bromleymencap.org](mailto:sarah.garner@bromleymencap.org)



# SHORT BREAKS SERVICE



Incorporating Bromley Scope

**For disabled children, young people and their families**



## One-to-One Service

Enables children and young people to enjoy a happy and stimulating time both at home and in the community.

### Cost

£22.50 per hour



## Saturday Club

Encourages social opportunities and independence skills in a fun and enjoyable environment.

- Launching early 2026
- Location: The Lodge, Hook Farm Road, Bromley, BR2 9SX
- Clubs grouped by age ranges

### Cost

£67.50 for a 3-hour session

**For more information, please contact Sarah Garner, Short Breaks Coordinator:**



07892 728643 or 020 8466 0790



[sarah.garner@bromleymencap.org](mailto:sarah.garner@bromleymencap.org)





## Adult Day Services

### Autumn Activities

Here are just some of the things we've been up to over the last few months:

Pressed flower frames, puzzle tree autumn art, a garden centre visit, peacock art, sensory cloud dough making, cooking, Care Dogs walk and more.



### 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](mailto:caroline.stone@bromleymencap.org)

For Day Opps Eden Park and Cotmandene:  
Joe Stapleton  
[joe.stapleton@bromleymencap.org](mailto:joe.stapleton@bromleymencap.org)  
Telephone: [020 8466 0790](tel:02084660790)



# Christmas Fair

**We had a fantastic time at the Bromley Mencap Christmas Fair – even the weather wasn't as bad as predicted. With a 100% chance of rain forecast, we'd put up shelters in the garden to help keep everyone as dry as possible.**

With our ever-popular stalls – bottle tombola, raffle, homemade gifts made by people who attend our Day Opportunities service, cakes, chutneys and baked goods, Christmas wreaths and those lovely bacon baps to start the day off, and warm sausage rolls to keep us going – everything went really well.



The mulled wine, festive hot chocolates and mince pies also went down well on a wet and chilly day.



We even managed to squeeze in a flash bike sale to give people the opportunity to buy a refurbished bike for just £20. A great Christmas present!



At 12 noon we were treated to a wonderful performance of festive favourites from the Bromley Tuneless Choir, who got everyone singing along and brought lots of Christmas cheer to the garden.







We were also delighted to welcome Peter Fortune, MP for Bromley and Biggin Hill, who visited the fair to see our work first-hand and meet staff, volunteers and people who use our services.

Supported by Lesley Hine and her legendary gift tombola, Dave, Alec and David who keep us all fed, the Crystal Palace Supporters Children's Charity, Bromley Lions, Sheena from CANDI, Mona with her handmade gifts, and Ashley, Master of Disguise, who provided some great photo opportunities with his friends the Grinch, Olaf and, of course, Father Christmas himself.



Ho ho ho!



A huge thank you to everyone who donated a bottle for the tombola, a prize for the raffle, made an item to sell, baked a cake, gave their time to man a stall and to those who came along and spent their money.

The fairs are always special events, where the people who use our services, our dedicated staff, and amazing volunteers and Trustees, come together with family and friends new and old, to celebrate what Bromley Mencap means and our place in the local community.

*Thank You*

**We raised over £2,000, which will make a real difference to everyone who accesses our services! Thank you, and Happy Christmas – see you at the Summer Fair!**





# Adult Leisure Services Update

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

## Winter Highlights

### Keep Fit

Our programme of Keep Fit sessions, run in partnership with Bromley MyTime, continues to be very popular. We now have a record 32 people registered, with lots of new faces joining the group. We were even joined by the Mayor of Bromley, who took part in the class and helped boost everyone's energy levels!

The last session of this block will be on Wednesday 10 December, and we look forward to seeing you there.

### Winter Lights Spectacular

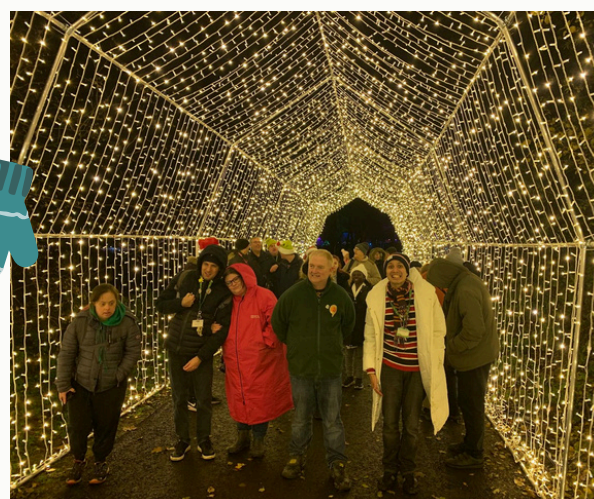
We had a truly magical evening at the Winter Lights Spectacular, set against the stunning backdrop of the Brands Hatch motor racing circuit.

The illuminated trail wound its way around the circuit grounds, with dazzling light displays and plenty to see along the way.

There was also time to enjoy seasonal food and warm drinks, making it a really special night out.

### SOLD OUT – Christmas Disco

We are all very much looking forward to our Christmas Disco on 16 December at Beckenham Rugby Club. The event is now sold out, and we can't wait to celebrate the festive season together on the dancefloor!





# Autism Workshops for people aged 16 plus



Incorporating Bromley Scope

**By Emma Andrew**

**Senior Information and Support Officer**

Our workshops for autistic individuals focus on building networks, developing peer support, and creating opportunities for people to connect and share experiences. We also have 30 minutes at the end of each workshop to support people with paperwork and admin tasks.

## Workshop Highlights

### Confidence and assertiveness

In October, Richard Wiseman, Employment and Education Information & Support Officer, gave a series of short presentations on how to be more confident and assertive. We looked at how these skills can help not only in work and education, but also in everyday life – from speaking up at appointments to feeling more comfortable in social situations.

### Autism support in Bromley

In November, we welcomed Colette Shrimpton, SEND & Autism Project Officer from Bromley Council. Colette talked about the Bromley Local Offer and the support available in the borough.



She also discussed her work with the NHS to highlight the need for better triage and reasonable adjustments for people with a learning disability and autistic people.

Attendees were invited to share their own experiences of health services and suggest ways the NHS could improve. Colette will be feeding this back to help drive positive change in people's healthcare.



## Upcoming Workshops

### Christmas Party

On 15 December, we'll be holding a joint Christmas-themed workshop to round off the year together. Booking is essential as spaces are limited – please see the flyer on the next page for full details on how to book.

### 19 January 2026 – Looking ahead

Our next workshop is planned for **Monday 19 January 2026**. We have provisionally invited CASPA to join us (to be confirmed) and we'll also be talking about CANDI and other local groups for future signposting and support. More details coming soon.



Incorporating Bromley Scope

# Christmas PARTY

for Autistic People aged 16 plus

**Monday 15 December | 11am to 1pm**



**Bromley United Reformed Church,  
20 Widmore Road, Bromley, BR1 1RY**

Join us for Christmas fun! Enjoy music and a quiz, some tasty sandwiches, cakes and Bucks Fizz.  
Feel free to wear something festive!

**Booking is essential. Please contact us to book your place:**



**Phone: 020 8466 0790**



**Email: [chetan.raval@bromleymencap.org](mailto:chetan.raval@bromleymencap.org)**





### National SEND reform conversation

The Department for Education has launched a national conversation on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), with families' lived experience at the centre of planned reforms.

There will be nine in-person events and five online sessions exploring key themes such as early intervention, local provision, fairness and joined-up working across education, health and care. [More on the Government website here.](#)

### Share your hospital experiences

There are new opportunities for autistic people and people with a learning disability to share feedback about hospital care.

An Easy Read Hospital Experience Survey is available here: [Hospital Experience Survey for autistic people or those with a learning disability. – Fill in form](#)

King's College Hospital is also seeking views on inpatient, outpatient, surgery and Emergency Department experiences, plus how to make MyChart more accessible. If you'd like to take part in this opportunity, please contact [kings.collaborators@nhs.net](mailto:kings.collaborators@nhs.net) or call 020 3299 6104.

### Adult ADHD referral update

A new South East London Adult ADHD Referrals Triage Service has launched, delivered by Oxleas. GP referrals for a first ADHD assessment in Bromley (and neighbouring boroughs) now go through this triage route to help ensure consistent access and the right support. [More information on the South East London Integrated Care System website.](#)

### Aqua Active

Mytime Active is offering four free Aqua Active sessions for children, young people and adults with complex needs and disabilities.

Sessions can be used during general swim times at The Pavilion (Bromley) or Biggin Hill Pool, with Changing Places facilities, hoists, specialist wheelchairs and carers going free.



The poster is for 'Aqua Active' sessions. It has a blue background with a grid pattern. At the top left is the 'Need2Change' logo. At the top right, it says 'CARERS GO FREE'. The title 'AQUA ACTIVE' is in large, bold, blue letters. Below the title, it says 'Free water based sessions for people with complex needs and disabilities'. There is a list of bullet points: '• Changing Places toilet at each site provide access to a hoist and changing bench', '• Specialist wheelchairs available so the pools are accessible', '• Floatation aids on hand to enhance the experience', '• Practice swim moves or just have fun in the water', and '• 4 x FREE Aqua Active swimming sessions'. To the right of the list is a QR code with the text 'SCAN TO FIND OUT MORE' and an arrow pointing to it. At the bottom left, it says 'For more information and to register visit www.mytimeactive.co.uk/aqua-active'. At the bottom right, it says 'Use your Aqua Active sessions at any programmed general swimming session at either: The Pavilion, Kentish Way, Bromley, BR1 3EF or Biggin Hill Pool, Church Road, Biggin Hill TN16 3LB contactcentre@mytimeactive.co.uk - 0208 323 1765 Check the website for general swimming times: www.mytimeactive.co.uk/swimming'. At the very bottom, there is a logo for 'LONDON MARATHON FOUNDATION' and the text 'aquaactive by mytimeactive'.

**Need2Change** CARERS GO FREE

# AQUA ACTIVE

Free water based sessions for people with complex needs and disabilities

Enjoy the benefits of the swimming pool with four FREE Aqua Active sessions for children, young people and adults\* with complex needs and disabilities.

- Changing Places toilet at each site provide access to a hoist and changing bench
- Specialist wheelchairs available so the pools are accessible
- Floatation aids on hand to enhance the experience
- Practice swim moves or just have fun in the water
- 4 x FREE Aqua Active swimming sessions

For more information and to register visit [www.mytimeactive.co.uk/aqua-active](http://www.mytimeactive.co.uk/aqua-active)

SCAN TO FIND OUT MORE

Use your Aqua Active sessions at any programmed general swimming session at either:  
The Pavilion, Kentish Way, Bromley, BR1 3EF or Biggin Hill Pool, Church Road, Biggin Hill TN16 3LB  
[contactcentre@mytimeactive.co.uk](mailto:contactcentre@mytimeactive.co.uk) - 0208 323 1765  
Check the website for general swimming times: [www.mytimeactive.co.uk/swimming](http://www.mytimeactive.co.uk/swimming)

FUNDED BY **LONDON MARATHON FOUNDATION** INSPIRING ACTIVITY

aquaactive by mytimeactive

\*Carers go free. Terms and conditions apply.

## One year at Bromley Mencap:

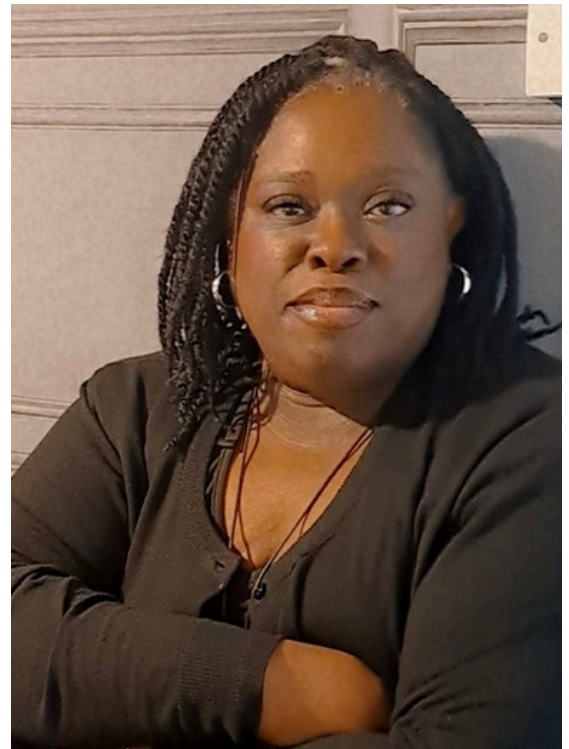
# REFLECTIONS FROM OUR HR MANAGER

I've been working for Bromley Mencap for just over a year as a stand-alone Human Resources (HR) Manager, and it has been an incredibly rewarding and transformative experience.

Over the past year I've managed the full HR function – strengthening processes, supporting managers and staff, and helping the organisation navigate a range of people-focused challenges. The role has allowed me to build strong relationships across all our services and ensure that HR support is consistent, responsive and aligned with our values.

I'm proud of the progress we've made and look forward to continuing to shape effective HR practices that help Bromley Mencap grow and thrive.

Bromley Mencap is genuinely a lovely place to work, and I'm proud to be part of such a committed and passionate organisation.



**Brenda Yearwood: HR Manager**

## WORK WITH US

Can you make a difference to the lives of disabled people and their families 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 Feb/March Bulletin is 1 February 2026.**

**Editor: Alex Powell - [alex.powell@bromleymencap.org](mailto:alex.powell@bromleymencap.org)**

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