



Monica at the AGM party 2015

# Celebrating 65 Years

Annual Review 2015/2016

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## Mission Statement

Centre 404 is working towards a world where people with learning disabilities and their families have the support they need to enjoy the same rights, freedoms, responsibilities, respect, choices and quality of life as people within the wider community.

We aim to contribute to this by providing excellent quality services and by supporting people with learning disabilities and their families to get their voices and views heard.

Centre 404 was founded in 1951 by parents of children with learning disabilities and over the years has built vital services across three main areas: Supported Housing and Independent Living, Clubs and Activities and Support for Family Carers.

*Tiles painted in Warm and Welcome Wednesdays group*



## Introduction

We will be celebrating our 65th anniversary in 2016 so it has been a year to reflect on the impact the charity has made over the years, but also to look forward to the opportunities and challenges ahead.

In the last 12 months we have completed over 400 consultations with our families and service users. During this process they told us they wanted more evening and weekend provision, plus additional space to deliver these activities both in our building and across London. I am therefore pleased to report we have been able to include these wishes among other goals and objectives into a new strategic plan going forward.

Although we were overall pleased to be able to continue to offer the majority of our vital services, we were saddened to lose key funding for work with children with disabilities, their siblings and family carers during the year. Along with many other small and medium sized charities, we have observed a growing trend of large national organisations securing funding from local authorities that long established local charities like ours have been delivering. We are concerned that in the future there could be a real loss of local knowledge, strong community networks and enhanced local accountability and transparency if this trend is allowed to continue. We will therefore work with local authorities, other funders and large national charities to find workable solutions to this situation.

In other areas there has been real cause for celebration, such as our commitment to offering flexible and innovative services whereby people with a personal budget or other forms of funding can purchase services that exactly fit their needs and/or interests. For instance our Finding and Matching Service, which matches support workers to those who want one to one support has grown by 25%

across four London boroughs. Specific group activities have also been further developed, which allow people to pool their budgets and benefit from savings, as well as foster friendships and community links.

Looking back over the incredible changes in society since 1951 there has been real progress in the lives of people with learning disabilities and their families and we know that Centre 404 played a crucial part over the years. But in the 21st century we still see discrimination, lack of information and fewer opportunities for people with learning disabilities than other people within the wider community.

Therefore the charity intends to keep working to improve lives. To do this we need to continue to support our committed and passionate workers and volunteers who deserve our thanks and recognition for their dedication and hard work.

Finally please enjoy our 2016 report; a snap shot of the year gone by, including case studies that demonstrate the difference we strive to make to people's lives.

**Linda McGowan**  
CEO

Centre 404 provided direct daily or weekly services to **over 2,063 individuals** over the past year. This is an increase of 20% from last year.



## Independent Living

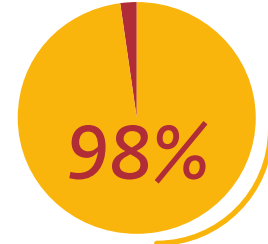
It has been another busy year for the Supported Housing service at Centre 404. We have a dedicated and hard-working team that provide one to one support to 123 individuals living in their own or family homes, and we also provide support to 51 people living in shared supported accommodation.

We have continued to provide added value through many events held over the year at Centre 404 and around Islington. We held our own multi-sensory story day and showcased this further at the Learning Disability Week celebrations at the Whittington Hospital. We held a Christmas lunch on the 25th December to make sure that no-one had to spend the day on their own if they didn't want to. We also hosted a range of inclusive activities on the 1st February to celebrate dignity day, an annual opportunity for health and social care workers, and members of the public to uphold people's rights to dignity and provide a truly memorable day for people who use care services. We held numerous parties over the year, all of them providing great opportunities for people to make friends and help reduce isolation.

We remain committed to working across London and we are now on the framework to provide outreach and low level support in Waltham Forest, Hackney and Enfield. We have also increased our one to one support work by 10% over the last year in Haringey.

We have been working hard to develop and bring training in-house by developing our own courses. This is more practical and efficient for us and this is something we are continuing to develop over the next year. So far we have developed our three day rolling induction program, including safeguarding, person centred practice and intensive interaction training.

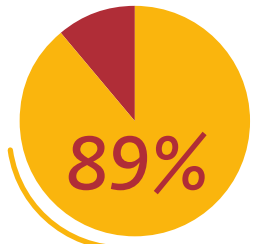
Another quality objective for us was to improve efficiency and data collection to evidence outcomes. We are gradually phasing in the use of Charity log database so we can track outcomes and staff performance on task completion.



said they are supported to go out as much as they would like to



said they are supported to make choices about their health



strongly agreed that their loved one likes living where they do

## Supported Living

We provide support to individuals with a range of disabilities to live independently or with others in shared housing.

We have six projects where we support people with learning disabilities to be active and responsible citizens within their community, by promoting individuality and by offering support to increase independence and access to community services and activities. We are also moving forward with Islington Council to work with more service users in supported living environments and using our experience in palliative care.

Our hard work over the year was validated by a CQC (Care Quality Commission) visit where we received a 'good' rated report and excellent feedback from service users, families and other professionals that we work with.

## Leigh Road

It has been the first fully operational year of Leigh Road, which is our largest supporting living project.

We have been pleased with the excellent feedback we have received from families and service users in our annual survey. There have been challenges and we have worked hard to help people feel settled with a growing team in an active environment that offers a diverse and personalised programme of activities. Our family involvement post proved crucial for the opening phase of this project and really helped families stay informed and cope during a time of transition and change.

## Dora

Dora has been a service user with Centre 404 for the past three years. Two years ago she was diagnosed with dementia however this has not prevented Dora from wanting to stay active and get involved in events.

In September she was supported to complete the Memory Walk for The Alzheimer's Society where, with the help of staff, she was able to raise money and awareness for dementia. Two thirds of adults with Down's syndrome will develop dementia<sup>1</sup> so it is hugely important to contribute to raising awareness.

Dora thoroughly enjoyed her day out, where she completed the walk and had a great time meeting and connecting with others who also supported the cause. She felt she would not have been able to do this without the assistance of her support workers.





## Danny

Danny is a young man whose life is affected by extremely complex health needs that mean he is frequently in pain with attendant challenging behaviour (to self and others). Moving into his own flat at Leigh Road has been a major achievement for him.

Before the transition, Danny was living with his mum, and spending two nights a week at his dad's and one night a week with Corey, his long-term family friend and support worker, who lives on a boat. The smooth transition from his family home to Danny's settlement into a new life was made possible by the harmonious support of family and friends, Centre 404 and the local authority. Danny has been developing his daily living skills, is able to attend social activities and enjoy the company and support of new friends and staff. When his health permits, Danny attends trampoline sessions once a week, has music therapy and cooking sessions in his flat. Danny also keeps in touch with family and friends by receiving visits at home and also by spending one night each a week with mum, dad and Corey.

*"Danny has settled in really well thanks to the support from Centre 404 and Islington Learning Disabilities Partnership (ILDP), who have enabled a positive partnership to exist between them and Danny's family and friends. I believe it has gone so well because the Centre 404 team have been incredibly dedicated in their work, which can be extremely stressful and tiring when Danny is unwell. They have a very positive and caring attitude to the complicated mix of health, communication and behavioural needs that Danny has. As a result, he has built a strong rapport with his support workers, and is beginning to take a tentative interest in the other tenants. Another reason the transition has gone well is that Danny is regularly able to spend time away from the flat, supported by his personal budget team (employed by Beam), in the familiar environments he enjoyed before moving. While still living for the majority of his time at Leigh Road, he seems really happy with the variety that his weekly routine brings." Virginia, Danny's mum*



## Robbie

Throughout his adult life, Robbie has had difficulties with managing his finances. He would regularly take out multiple phone contracts in order to have the latest phone or a new piece of technology, resulting in the accumulation of a great deal of debt.

Even with support from his parents and support workers, Robbie consistently could not pay off all of his contracts with his monthly wages and would take out more contracts after being contacted by phone companies with special offers.

Over the last year, with consistent support from his staff team, Robbie has taken full advantage of his support around finances and his phone contracts and has achieved a huge amount of improvement. Robbie has not taken out a new contract or upgraded one

of his current ones since April 2015 meaning that he is on track to be completely debt free by this summer.

For the first time in years, Robbie now ends each month by paying off all of his bills, and then has some money left over to spend on himself.

Last month Robbie used some of his extra money to welcome his mother back into the country from a long trip with a lovely bunch of flowers.



*"I feel that he is now truly appreciating the value of what he earns through his part-time job, as he has gotten into the steady habit of putting his bills before other purchases."*

Cecilia, Robbie's support worker

## Twice

as many disabled as non-disabled people have had to take out a loan in the last year to pay for utilities such as water and heating.

Scope 2014<sup>2</sup>







## Elinor

Elinor lives at Tollington Way. She loves music, especially live music, and often goes to concerts and gigs. For a long time there has been a dream for Elinor to attend a weekend music festival.

Last summer she was able to attend her first one with Centre 404 staff; the “Victorious Festival”, in Portsmouth.

Elinor went with her friend Charlotte, who moved into Leigh Road when it opened a couple of years ago. They have been friends for many years, since they met at primary school, but Charlotte lived out of the borough in Kent, for a long time. Now that Charlotte lives nearby, she and Elinor often go out together on trips, regular meet ups and holidays – such as going to Portsmouth.

Both Elinor and Charlotte had a great time at Victorious Festival, so much so that they plan to go to another one this year!

*“A huge thank you to the brilliant Centre 404 staff, especially Elinor’s key worker Tiffany, who organised the trip. Elinor and Charlotte both have profound learning disabilities, and it was a wonderful achievement to take them to the festival, even if wellies and waterproofs were needed as it rained a lot! Hopefully this year the sun will shine.”*

Clare, Elinor’s mother



## Outreach Services

The aim of our Outreach Service is to enable people with learning disabilities to live independently in the community. We currently support 48 service users and aim to encourage, enable and empower service users to take responsibility to do things themselves.

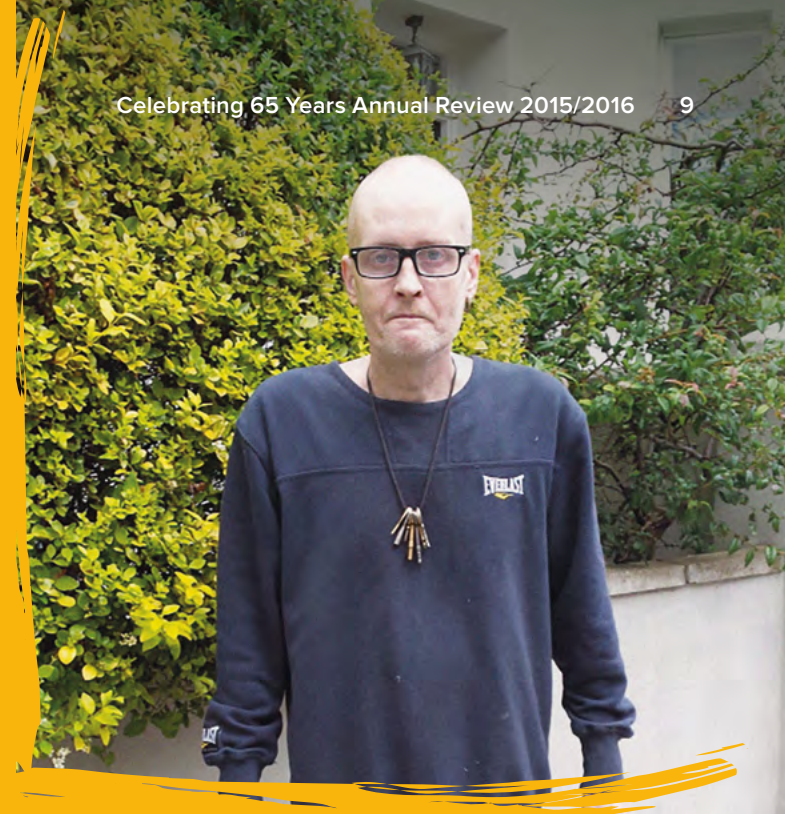
We offer a personalised service, where type and timing of support is catered to the individual’s needs. In general, the service offers support with attending appointments, budgeting, social activities and daily living tasks.

## Adrian

Adrian was referred to Centre 404 over two years ago by the Camden local authority, with the presentation of schizophrenia, mental health issues, depression and was at risk of isolation.

As a result Adrian found it difficult to trust others, including professionals. When he was feeling very low he could not find the motivation to attend meetings with professionals, resulting in not getting the support he needed and therefore other aspects of his life were also neglected.

After being referred to Centre 404, Adrian’s support worker has worked with him on building up his confidence. Previously when in the community, Adrian would usually shy away from slightly crowded places and choose not to enter a shop if other people were in there. Now he feels more



reassured and confident in going into a shop and getting whatever he needs when he has support.

With encouragement from his Centre 404 support worker, he is now addressing other basic areas of his personal health such as his dental care.

*“My overall well-being has benefited and I now have a support worker I can trust, who is consistent and reliable in supporting me in expressing my wishes. I no longer feel the anxiety of losing control over things, such as correspondence and leaving bills unpaid to pile up.”*

Adrian



## Personalised Services

Personalisation and person-centred support are core values that run throughout all of the services provided by Centre 404.

We also offer specific tailored services for children and adults who receive a Personal Budget. Having a Personal Budget enables people with a learning disability and their families to have more choice, control and confidence around managing their own support, the services they access and how they want to achieve their goals.

With more people now receiving a Personal Budget, we have seen lots of growth in these service areas and have developed our provision to include:

- Finding and Matching Service: recruiting, training and managing support staff and schedules to match the needs and wishes of individuals and families.
- Affordable group activities: including healthy cooking groups, wheelchair ice skating, yoga, art and music groups.
- Individual Service Fund (ISF): supporting adults with a learning disability to manage the money and paperwork for their Personal Budget.

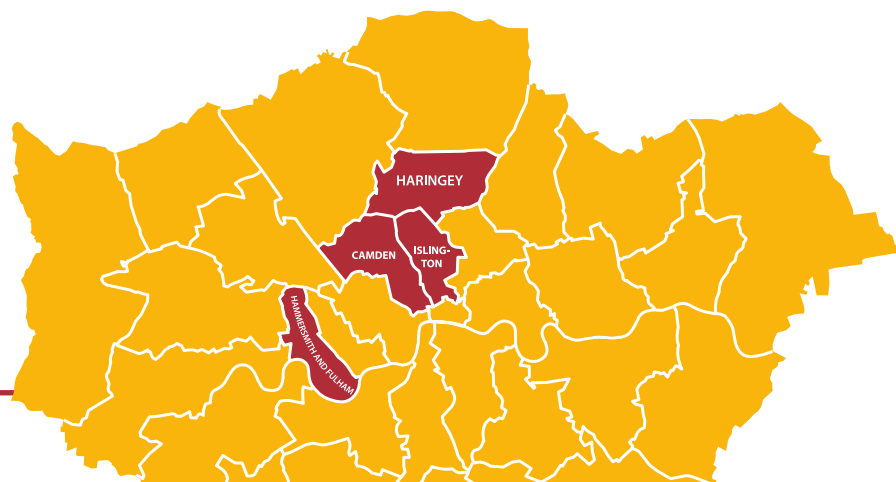
**We currently provide personal support workers across Islington, Camden, Haringey and Hammersmith & Fulham**

## Finding and Matching Service

Our Personal Support Worker Finding and Matching Service is an innovative and responsive project that currently provides support to children and adults across north London.

The service has grown by 25% since last year and we now work with over 70 people with a wide range of learning disabilities and their families.

People using the service are matched to support workers according to their requirements, support needs and interests. We aim to maximise their control and choice in this process on an ongoing basis as their needs develop and change. We focus on recruiting a pool of support workers who reflect the diverse requests for support received. In the previous 12 months we have seen an increase in referrals for people with more challenging behaviour who require 2:1 support, as well as growing numbers of young people seeking additional care during school and college holidays.



*"I like my support workers, they are my friends and look after me. I like that I can go out without my parents and have my independence."*

Tom

## Tom

**Tom has a learning disability, autism and epilepsy. He lives with his parents who help him to manage his Personal Budget. Tom has had support from Centre 404 since 2012 and over that time his needs have changed, as he finished secondary school and now attends college.**

Staying at college for full days was a challenge for Tom. He found he could stay focused in the mornings but when it came to break time he began getting restless and often wanted to go home, which meant he missed the rest of his college day. In response to this, Centre 404 provided a support worker who now spends break and lunchtimes with him. They go for walks and browse the local shops together. Since receiving this support, Tom has spent more time at college, having increased it from one full day and several half days, to attending three full days of college every week over the last year.

He is also supported to go to the gym in order to stay healthy, and to volunteer at a local charity shop, where he has developed his work skills and is able to give something back to his community.

Although Tom is quite independent, due to epilepsy he needs somebody trained in managing this to attend the activities he enjoys with him. It is important to him and his family that his workers are a good match so that he does not feel as though he is going out with a parent or with somebody supervising him. This is also an opportunity for his support workers to really get involved and build a good relationship with him. This type of support allows Tom to access the community like any other young person without drawing attention to his additional needs and vulnerabilities.



## Group Activity and Pooling Budgets

‘Pooling’ is when people with a personal budget can come together as a group to fund activities and achieve their objectives and goals more cost effectively.

This area of our work is an essential part of our provision of group activities for people with a learning disability. Groups are flexible and responsive to need within the community and are created in consultation with, and alongside our members. The holiday periods in particular see a lot of adults isolated from social activities in the community. In the last year Centre 404 has developed new partnerships with local providers and created bespoke art and yoga groups for our users. These projects are delivered alongside the core activities of Ice Skating, Music Group and the Friday Night Social, helping to give a wide range of activities for members to select from all year round and opportunities to learn new skills, develop friendships and create a better quality of life.

Dorian at Jackson Lane's circus skills workshop



*“Alex really enjoys his music, the staff are patient with him and he is so happy being a part of the group. It is helping him to realise his dream of making his own album one day. As a carer the support from Centre 404 has been something that is really needed and I am so happy with Centre 404 and what they have done for Alex and myself.”*

Cila, Alex's mum

### Alex

Through his time at Centre 404 Alex, 21, has been able to pursue his passion for playing music, with a dream to be able to one day create his own album.

Alex is able to come to Centre 404 each week, hone his craft on the guitar and work with his fellow music group members to create music. They have been able to record their own Christmas single, selling it to raise money for the group, and have also taken

part in various live performances, giving Alex and the group experience of an essential element of being a musician. They always manage to pull a crowd with their lively and energetic performances, with Alex taking on a George Harrison like persona at the gigs.

Alex has been gaining confidence and new skills along the way and these experiences have reinforced his dream of playing music for a living.





The Day Opportunities Service  
enjoying an activity in the centre

## Clubs and Activities

At Centre 404 we recognise the important role that social activity plays in promoting positive mental health and wellbeing; confidence; improved social networks and improved resilience to deal with unsafe relationships, including “hate and mate crime”.

continued to provide 12 regular group activities for children, young people and adults, as well as our Day Opportunities Service for adults with complex needs; bespoke pooled budget groups during holiday periods for adults; an Outreach service for children with complex needs in Camden and Islington; play schemes in Islington and Enfield and our ever popular residential canal boat trip for young people.

Over the last year we have developed a range of activities and “pop up” bespoke groups, in addition to our regular after school and evening groups. These included a 10 week project co-delivered with an organisation called Tender, designed to increase young peoples’ awareness of how to keep themselves safe, focussing on safe relationships and internet safety, as well as short yoga and art courses for adults during the holiday periods.

We have managed to do this despite the loss of core funding to our youth provision. However, the impact of this loss will continue to be felt in the coming financial year and in order to remain competitive we will continue to seek opportunities to provide adult group activities at evenings and weekends, as this is when families and group members tell us their need is greatest. Over the last year we have

*We have worked with:*



*adults across 11 different projects*



*children and young people  
across 9 different projects*



## Stavroulla

When Stavroulla, 43, first started using the Day Opportunities Service in 2013 she could barely walk independently. For the first year she was very dependent on her wheelchair and didn't walk at all in the Centre 404 building.

However, a persistent approach from her staff team over a very sustained period has resulted in Stavroulla now walking into the building every day from the minibus, pushing her wheelchair.

This improved confidence and agility has opened up a range of activities that Stavroulla can enjoy. She has always been a keen table tennis player, but since the summer of 2015 she has become an equally keen yoga enthusiast. It's been amazing to see her walk into the room and sit straight on the floor in the lotus position ready to stretch! She also enjoys trampoline sessions and has started to interact more with the other service users at these sessions.

*"When Stav refused to go to her old day centre we were worried that we wouldn't be able to find anywhere else suitable for her. Thankfully she is very happy at Centre 404's Day Opportunities Service and we are really pleased with the progress she is making, particularly with her communication and participation in activities."*

Bessie, Stavroulla's sister



## Provision for Adults

Over the last year we have reviewed our group provision for adults with complex needs and our younger adults to ensure that we deliver activities that really meet their needs.

We have created a clearer focus on health and wellbeing for our weekly evening group for adults with complex needs. This group have really benefitted from working with a dance tutor, who has created tailor-made sessions incorporating different styles of dance and movement. It has been inspiring to see how well the group are able to understand and follow the sessions, as well as to observe how keen they are to join in. Other activities that members tell us are their favourites continue to run including bowling, DJing and trips out to restaurants. We have also introduced more provision of therapeutic and sensory activities.

Our Young Adults Group has been re-vamped with much greater emphasis on activities that will support young people to develop their independent living skills; their personal safety awareness as well as their employment readiness. This group had fun practising their first-aid skills and have worked with the local fire service to improve their fire safety awareness. They have also been trying out different volunteering opportunities, including helping out in the gardens at both a residential care home for the elderly and The Kindness Offensive on Camden Road.

### Friday Night Social Stats:

**146** attended in the last year. On 11th March 2016 we broke our record for the most attendances in one night, peaking at **73**



### Loneliness and social isolation

are harmful to our health: research shows that lacking social connections is as damaging to our health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day

(Holt-Lunstad, 2010<sup>3</sup>)



## Charlie

Charlie, 23, has always enjoyed going out to activities such as bowling, golf and Quasar with the Young Adult Group.

Over the last year, this group's focus has turned much more to supporting our young adults to develop the independent living skills they need as they enter adulthood. Charlie has benefited from Employment Readiness workshops with the Adult Community Learning team where he has been able to think about his future employment wishes, and learn how to develop his CV and present himself at interviews.

Charlie moved into his own flat in Summer 2015, so is benefiting from sessions about fire safety; kitchen safety and First Aid regularly run at the Young Adults Group. He is always keen to show us his culinary skills in the kitchen!

Charlie also enjoys coming to the Friday Night Social, along with some of his friends and neighbours. He is able to spend time with friends from both Centre 404 and his home, in a safe and friendly social environment.



*"Centre 404 has been my life-saver. It has given Charlie a chance to make friends and socialise from being a teenager, which he wouldn't have had otherwise. It also gave me and Charlie's younger brother a few hours a week where we could get things done, or just relax. Whenever I needed any help with applications Centre 404 was always my first port of call."*

Elaine, Charlie's mum



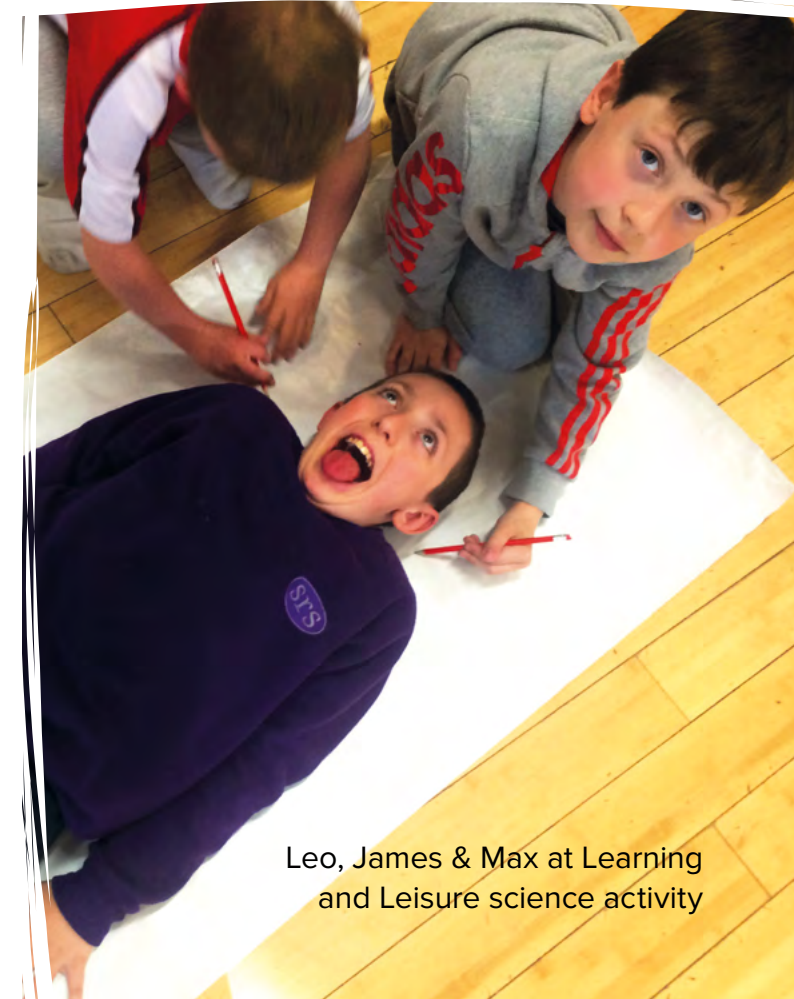
## Provision for Children and Young People Services

In the last year we have continued to provide six weekly after school and evening groups offering an exciting range of activities including dance, drama, rugby with Haringey Rhinos, adapted cycling with Wheels for Wellbeing; DJ workshops at Spectrum; dog safety sessions with The Dog's Trust and lots and lots of paint, glue, glitter and even some home-made light sabres!

We are pleased that our Short Breaks Outreach service in Islington has developed over the last year, we now work with four different children each month. As with our Camden service, we provide support either in the home with things like communication development, and out in the community with swimming sessions, visiting parks and farms, and soft play. In total we have worked with nine children and young people in our Outreach service over the last year.

We also ran playschemes in Enfield in the May and October half terms, as well as throughout the summer last year offering arts and crafts, games, drama and cooking to 12 young people. We are really lucky to be able to work in partnership with Durants School in Enfield who allow us to use their excellent

facilities, including their playgrounds and garden areas, as well as their kitchen suite. We use these facilities alongside another provider called Playtedz, enabling children from both play schemes to have some shared activities and meet a wider range of their peers. Over the next three years we will continue to deliver play schemes in Enfield, with a greater focus on workshops which will support young people to develop life skills that help equip them for fulfilling lives as young adults.



Leo, James & Max at Learning and Leisure science activity



## Faith

Faith, 12, has been a member of our Juniors Group for three years, and is a regular attendee at our play schemes. She is an extremely bright and sociable young person, with a fabulous sense of humour, as evidenced by her recent suggestion that we should make a piñata in the shape of the Queen's head as part of our garden party to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday!

*"When Faith attends the weekly Juniors Group I get a longer day to do the things I want to do. When she comes home she's already had dinner, so I don't need to rush to prepare a meal for her. She's usually had fun and has a lot to talk about. It's great that they do so many activities outside of Centre 404 at places that I might not get to take her, such as the play scheme outings. Faith is a social butterfly and loves meeting new people at play schemes."*

Iryna, Faith's mum

When Faith first started attending the group she could be anxious about taking part in physical activities that involved her being out of her wheelchair, such as rock climbing and sailing. However, with support from both staff and her peers, she is now much more willing to take a risk and try something new!

Faith is also more in control now that she has a manual wheelchair that she can steer herself, this has increased her independence and autonomy within the group.

Recently she joined other young people at our circus skills workshops at Jackson's Lane where, amongst other things, she turned her hand to plate spinning. As with most things she does, Faith showed a determination to succeed and master this skill!

## Three-quarters

of UK children spend less time outdoors than prison inmates

The Guardian survey, March 2016<sup>4</sup>



Faith at Jackson Lane's circus skills workshop



**1169 families**




received one to one support – of these:

**273** are new to the service

This is an **8%** increase on the previous year

## Families receiving one to one support from Centre 404



**761** care for a child under 18 with SEN or disabilities

This is a **6% increase** on last year



**408** care for an adult with learning disabilities

This is a **12% increase** on last year

This year we are delighted to break through the

**£1m**

barrier of generating funds for parents/carers, many of whom live below or on the poverty line.

## Maximising income for families

Centre 404 helped generate **£1,348,650** for families this year:

Charitable Bodies

£51,608

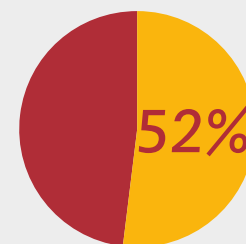
Other welfare benefits

£310,237

DLA/PIP applications

£986,805

A combination of factors has contributed to the increase in Income generated for families in 2015-16. For instance this year saw nearly 3 times more new applications for DLA/PIP (Personal Independence Payment) than the previous year. A third of these new applications were conversions from DLA to PIP.



of families with a disabled child are at risk of experiencing poverty.

Contact a Family, 2014<sup>5</sup>

## Supporting Families

We offer personalised support to family carers based on their needs and changing responsibilities through life's transitions, from their child's initial diagnosis through to when they are ready to leave home and plan for later life.

Our services for families include:

- Advice, information and practical support on income maximisation, education, health and social care matters.
- Support groups and practical workshops.
- Forums and focus groups allowing family carers to have a voice and influence decisions makers.
- Social activities for carers and whole family events.

This year we witnessed the implementation of the new Special Educational Needs and Disability reforms. To respond to these challenges we have delivered Education Workshops to parent carers to make sure that parents and young people understand what has changed, what rights they have and the responsibilities of local authorities.

Stella and her daughter Chisam at the AGM & Summer Garden Party





## Keeping Family Carers Informed

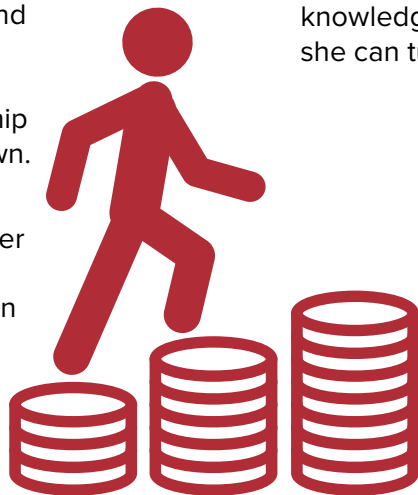
Research indicates that over 80% of carers feel isolated as a direct result of their caring responsibilities (Alone and Caring, Carers UK 2015)<sup>6</sup>. Also that carers easily lose touch with friends and family and other social networks due to having caring responsibilities.

### Anne

Anne first approached us in Spring 2015 wanting support and advice for her six year old son, Aaron, who had recently been diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Through offering one to one support and advice around completing grant and benefit applications we soon identified that Aaron was also having a lot of difficulty accessing mainstream education, only managing to attend for an hour each day. This was putting an incredible amount of stress on Anne and her relationship with the school was breaking down.

Centre 404 supported Anne at meetings with the school and other professionals, and to understand the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) process and SEN school provision system.



Providing regular information and updates on local news and services allows carers to stay in touch with what is happening and access new networks and opportunities. Alongside our quarterly newsletters that reach around 2,500 people we also continue to develop better ways to connect with family carers through social media, text messaging and group emails.

Aaron started at his new mainstream school in January, is attending full time and making great progress. The family have now engaged with other Centre 404 services and Aaron has been attending the Fun Fridays Short Breaks group. The family have become regulars at our parties and events!

Anne has become noticeably more confident in self-advocating. She has broadened her own knowledge and widened the support network she can turn to in times of difficulty.

## It costs up to three times

*as much to raise a disabled child, as it does to raise a child without disabilities.*

Contact a Family 2012<sup>7</sup>



*"I was very stressed with Aaron's lack of education and couldn't seem to move forward. Things are so different now Centre 404 has helped me get the outcomes my family deserve."*

Anne

Anne, Aaron and sister Gemma



## Social Activities

All our events and activities are co-produced and planned in advance taking on board comments and suggestions from family carers. This feedback has shown that carers value the opportunity to get together and build peer support networks and that our wide range of social activities and events help to reduce social isolation and allow space for carers to come together and enjoy themselves.

We ran an exciting calendar of events this year including our Children's Festive Parties attended by 199 people, whole family relaxed cinema showings were attended by 112 people, 195 people came long to our annual Family Fun Day and 309 people attended our Health and Wellbeing Day during Carers week.

Social events are greatly valued by families as an opportunity to relax and connect with other families and have fun in a welcoming and accessible environment, and Centre 404 is committed to continuing this essential provision for our families.

## Rahwa

Rahwa cares for four children all under the age of 10 years including her daughter Danayt who has Down's Syndrome. She approached us as she was feeling overwhelmed with her caring responsibilities, in particular with the challenging behaviour Danayt was displaying.

English is not Rahwa's first language, but with face to face support over time we were able to understand her needs. Rahwa was in desperate need of some respite and wanted to find an activity which would enable her daughter to make friends whilst also allowing Rahwa to enjoy some time away from her caring responsibilities. Centre 404 contacted a local adventure playground and arranged for Danayt to attend, and were also successful in putting together a grant application for an iPad to support Danayt's learning.

Our work with Rahwa has enabled Danayt to have more resources to help her learn and play, and we have made sure that Rahwa continues to receive all her welfare benefits without any gaps in income. Rahwa now feels more informed and able to express her needs, she is confident about seeking support in order to receive help and advice when she needs it most.

*"I am very grateful for the help I have received from Centre 404. It was a very difficult time as I had no one else to help me and I didn't understand the system."*

Rahwa



Rahwa and daughter Danayt



## Family Carers Get Involved and Co-Production

Family Carers having their say is fundamental to co-production at Centre 404. We actively engage with and encourage family carers to express their views and to speak up on issues that affect their lives and those they care for. Family carers are consulted in planning services at Centre 404 and their feedback from events and activities is taken into consideration when planning future activities and services.

We host a number of information groups and forums across Islington and Camden. These provide opportunities for family carers to meet the people who plan and deliver services, to have their say and influence decision makers to help shape the service they receive.

### Lady

Lady is an older carer who has a serious long term health condition. She is the primary carer for her 19 year old son David who has a moderate learning disability. David finished school in July 2015 which meant that Lady was no longer entitled to child tax credit or child benefit.

Lady wanted to support David's plans to continue his learning at a local college but she was unsure of how to enrol him or how he would manage in a new environment. Centre 404 worked with her to help navigate this transitional period for her son. Her support worker contacted the Student Support Services at the college and arranged a meeting where they were able to discuss the



support that would be available for David. We also supported Lady to understand David's right to claim employment and support allowance (ESA) from the Department for Work and Pension (DWP) and that she could apply for Appointeeship, allowing her to manage David's money on his behalf.

David is now enrolled in college, we have supported them to complete an ESA application, and Lady is now David's Appointee and confident that he will receive the support he needs to help him learn and develop.



*"It was good to have the support of Centre 404 as I know I am not on my own and I can ask them for help at any point."*

Lady



29,000

adults with a learning disability live with parents aged 70 or over, many of whom are too old or frail to continue in their caring role.

Foundation for people with learning disabilities, 2016<sup>9</sup>



"We were finding it difficult to get the direct payments back and coping with the financial monitoring forms. Centre 404 were wonderful in helping us with this and explaining the process to us. We feel confident knowing that Centre 404 are there to support us."

Mr Artemi

## Support for Older Carers

### Mr & Mrs Artemi

Mr and Mrs Artemi have been accessing support from Centre 404 for 30 years. They are a retired couple both in their late 70's caring for their 47 year old son who has a learning disability and is living in the family home as well as managing their own long term health conditions. As Mr. and Mrs Artemi also have their own support needs we have provided several home visits to them in recent months.

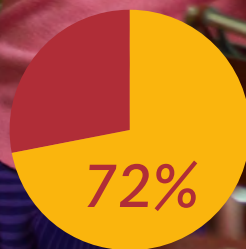
Due to their demanding caring role and their own health problems the couple reported that they were having difficulty with maintaining their caring role. We co-ordinated with external agencies and assisted them to set up Direct Payments as part of their support plan. This process took some time and there were problems with payments not being received over a three month period. Centre 404 liaised on their behalf with the social care finance team to ensure the payments were fully re-instated and any missed payments backdated.

This has allowed the family to be able to spend their Direct Payments in a way that has enabled them to continue to care for and be happy in their home. The back dated payments also allowed the couple to pay for a deep clean of the house. Centre 404 continues to support the couple and their son to complete financial monitoring forms for their Direct Payments and Personal Budget. We regularly keep in touch with the family by telephone and through home visits and they now have the reassurance that they can ask for support whatever the problem.

of parent carers experience mental ill health such as anxiety, depression or breakdown due to isolation."

Contact a family, 2011<sup>10</sup>

Family carers at Centre 404's Health and Wellbeing Day 2016





# Volunteers

It was volunteer parent carers who set up Centre 404 65 years ago and it is our volunteers who still play a key role in supporting us and the work we do.

We truly value the time and effort our volunteers give and aim to ensure we offer them an interesting and rewarding placement.

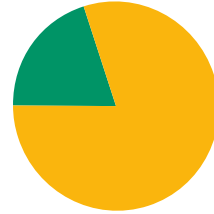
This year we had some exciting and fun events which many of our volunteers got involved in such as our Health and Wellbeing day, Santa run, quiz night, AGM Party and our mobile garden project.



This year over

## 25%

of volunteers have a learning disability



Here are some of the ways our volunteers got involved this past year:

- Supporting weekly club and activities such as yoga & cooking classes
- Volunteering at events such as the ever popular Friday Night Social
- Administration and data entry
- Reception cover
- Gardening
- One to one buddying.

It is not only us who gain something from our volunteers. Research has shown that Volunteering boosts self-esteem, employability and health<sup>1</sup>.

This year we had support from

## 133 volunteers

**1/3** are new to Centre 404



"I joined Centre 404 as I wanted to give something back to my community and get involved in something fun and rewarding. A friend of mine already volunteered there and suggested it would be a good fit, she was right!

I love coming to the Friday Night Social after a long week at work and just having some fun, it really helps to de-stress me! I also enjoy seeing all the familiar faces having a good time. I get along really well with the other volunteers which has made things easier.

I don't find the volunteering a chore, I love it and look forward to going each week. I hope to think I've added something to those that come to the Friday Night Social, because I've certainly gained a lot from them."

Mark

## Mark

Mark has been volunteering at the Friday Night Social since June 2015.

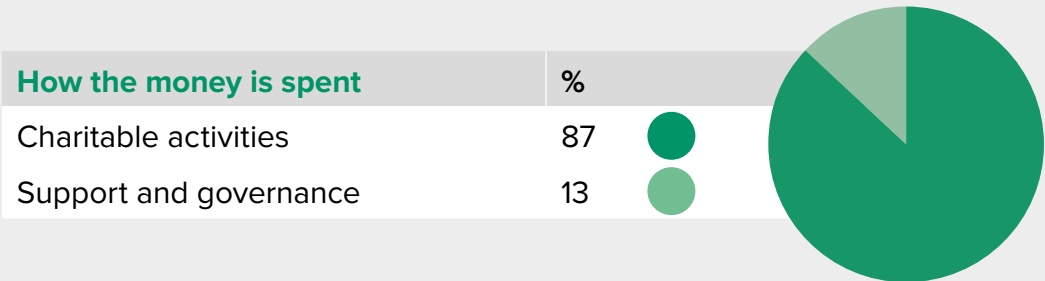
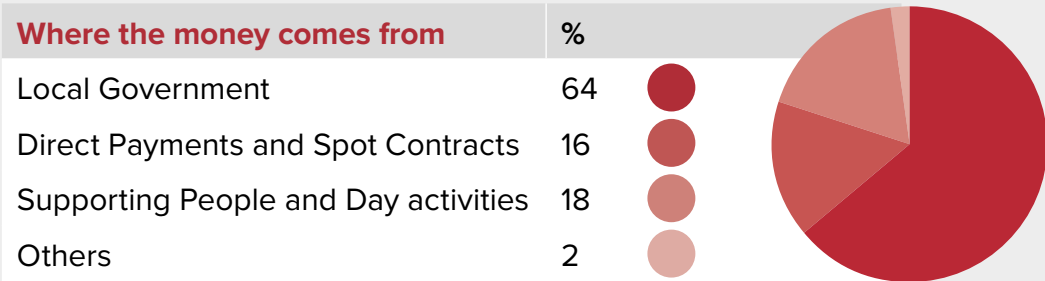
Mark enjoying the Friday Night Social with regular attendee, Savas



# Money Counts

In 2015/16 Centre 404 has delivered a wide range of services across Islington, Camden and other neighbouring boroughs whilst facing increasing challenges in the political and economic climate.

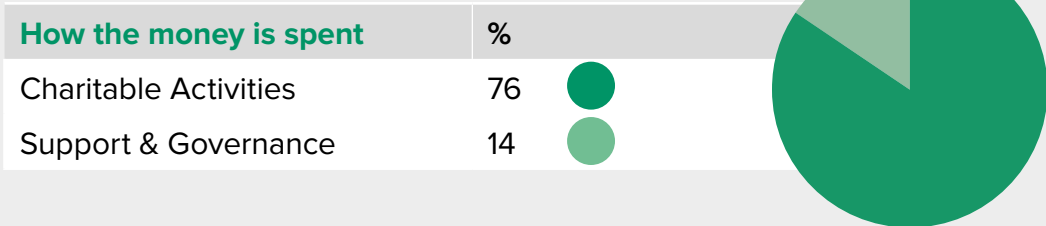
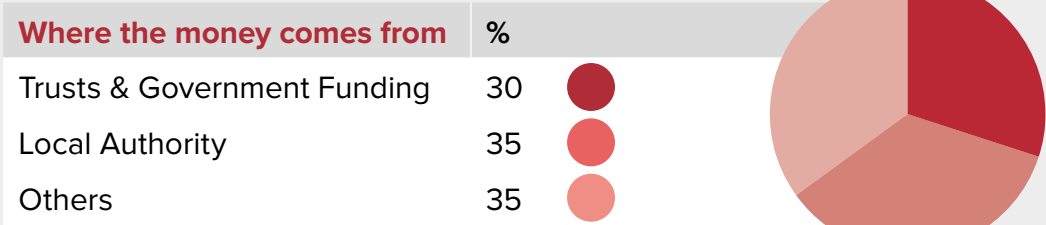
## Supported Housing and Independent Living



“It is testament to the dedication of the staff and volunteers that Centre 404 has been able to provide these services to such a high standard and within budget. More challenges await in 2016/17, with funding cuts hitting particularly our Family and Leisure & Learning activities, and with a number of housing contracts coming up for re-tendering. The fundraising environment is becoming increasingly difficult, but Centre 404 has strong reserves and I remain confident that we have the ability to continue to provide the core services to our community successfully and efficiently.”

Derek Weist, Treasurer

## Learning & Leisure and Family Support



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# Thank you

**We would like to thank all the funders and partners who have generously contributed to the successful running of our services this year:**

The Arsenal Foundation, BBC Children in Need, The Big Lottery Fund, Cripplegate Foundation, Department for Education, The Haberdashers' Company Charitable Foundation, Jack Petchey Foundation, The London boroughs of Islington, Enfield, Hammersmith, Camden and Haringey, Royal Horticultural Society and The Wills Trust.

We have been lucky to work with some wonderful organisations this year, including the Kindness Offensive, Manor Gardens Centre and Islington Arts Factory. We would also like to thank the community fundraisers and volunteers who have generously given their time and effort to fundraise for us and raise money for Centre 404. Lastly, thank you to Ellie, Laura and Bruce at Ave Design and photographer Chris for creating this annual review.



The Stormers playing at the AGM & Summer Garden Party 2015



## A message from the chair

**Our charity has reached a great milestone this year as we celebrate with pride our 65th Anniversary. Founded by family carers in 1951 to overcome the stigma and prejudice against their children with disabilities, we have provided continual support for children and adults with learning disabilities and their families over the decades.**

It is very important as an organisation to continue our legacy of knowledge and experience which is deep rooted within the communities in which we serve.

This year has seen some disappointments in key areas in relation to statutory funding, but we are determined to seek funding for our essential services and develop provision to meet the needs of all our service users.

We will continue to fundraise for improvements to our building; a planning application has been submitted for essential extensions to meet growing demand for services and to restore the external heritage features of the Victorian facade. In addition we are also fundraising to install an accessible multi-sensory play structure and storage in the garden.

We are living in a complex and fast changing world so we need to remain vigilant to the needs of people with a learning disability and their families. As such, the feedback we received from service users in the last year in relation to developing a new strategy for the coming five years remains at the heart of everything we do now and, our plans for the future.

Centre 404's high quality services are delivered by our hardworking and innovative staff; committed and generous volunteers and behind the operational activities of our charity, our loyal and dedicated board of trustees. I wish to thank each and every one of you.

**Jean Willson OBE  
Chair Centre 404**







Meeting tomorrow's  
challenges today

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