

Newsletter 2021

The Official Centre 404 Newsletter

December 2021

Vol. 3



Merry Festive Season from Centre 404!

Hello and welcome, we are happy to introduce the Festive Edition and 3rd volume of our new Centre 404 Newsletter. On the following pages you'll find a summary of the last three months from across our services, as well as our festive plans over the next few weeks. We hope that you enjoy the photos and the stories! Wishing all of our service users, staff, volunteers and supporters a very Merry Festive Season and Happy New Year for 2022!

Contents

Annual Review 2020-21 & Winter Wonderland

The Safeguarding Unwise Friendship Group

Independent Living: Getting Out & About & Mildmay's Trip to Hastings

Learning & Leisure: Our New Library & Tower Hamlets Short Breaks Provision

Supporting Families: Autumn Activities & Enfield & Waltham Forest SENDIAS

Trustees & Events: Jean's Stepping Down Event & Electric Vehicle Launch

Volunteers: Garden Group & Festive Volunteering

Fundraising: The Big Give 2021 & Amazon Smile



Annual Review 2020-21

We are delighted to present our Annual Review from June 2020 to June 2021, which has all our up to date information on our recent Phase 3 Building Renovation Project and our case study stories from the year, importantly including how we continued to respond and adapt to the coronavirus pandemic.

Please [click here](#) or on the front cover image to the right to see the full Annual Review.



Annual Review

2020/2021 DEMONSTRATING IMPACT

CENTRE 404
Supporting people with learning
disabilities, autism & their families

Winter Wonderland 2021

We were very excited to organise an in-person festive celebration again this year. However due to the escalating situation with the Omicron variant we had to cancel the event to put people's health and safety first. We plan to run something in the New Year as soon as we can.

We had lots of exciting things planned for the Winter Wonderland for children, adults and family carers; Father Christmas, games, Photo Booth, food stalls, mulled wine, hot chocolate and special performances. With all three of our services involved; Learning & Leisure, Supporting Families and Independent Living, we know that we can make a replacement event in the new year just as good!

There have been lots of smaller festive celebrations though and our Supporting Families Team will also still be sending out presents (from Father Christmas) to approximately 55 families with children!



Safeguarding Unwise Friendship Group

Learning & Leisure & Independent Living

Our work on keeping the people we support safe continues to go from strength to strength. In addition to our ongoing work with Safeguarding Unwise Friendship Group, we also had a full week of activities to celebrate Safeguarding Week that commenced on 15th November. For each day of the week, there was a session on the theme of safeguarding, with a blend of easy read, accessible information sessions on various topics, such as well-being, coercive relationships and keeping safe on transport.

For our Safeguarding Unwise Friendship Group, we transitioned from the BBQs that were held over the summer months to relaxed evening gatherings indoors, continuing the focus of offering engaging social opportunities to our vulnerable service users.

Safeguarding Week

- Monday 15th Nov**
3PM - 4PM:
 Coercive and controlling relationships with Rory & Aidan
 Via Zoom
- Tuesday 16th Nov**
11AM:
 Wellbeing session with Javed
 Via Zoom:
- Thursday 18th Nov**
12.30PM - 1.30PM:
 Safeguarding coaching session for staff with Sarah and Claire
 Via Zoom
2PM - 3PM:
 Scams via email and phone with Jayde and Dave
 Via Zoom
3.30PM - 4.30PM:
 Discussion about experiences where relationships/friendships have become difficult or harmful with Mark and Susan
 In the Board Room
- Friday 19th Nov**
2PM:
 Safe use of mobiles and cashpoints with Billy and Mags
 Via Zoom

CENTRE 404 | Supporting people with learning disabilities, autism & their families



Our Family & Service User Engagement Officer will soon be starting a Men's Social Group. The aim of the group is to specifically focus on engaging male service users who often do not engage in various activities, perhaps due to not being able to relate to those activities. Our hope is by offering a relatable environment which is lead by a male staff member, that more male service users will engage in their support.

For the New Year, our aim is to hold an event each month of the year on safety, followed by a grand event in December 2022 to bring all the yearlong events together.

A tweet from one of our service users

Independent Living

Getting Out & About

An important part of what we do in Independent Living is to support people to get out and about in the community and attend activities and outings that they enjoy.

For example, one of our Supported Living projects has done lots of different and exciting activities with their service users over the last few months, that are person-centred and tailored to what the service users enjoy:

- Meric went to a theatre show by Frozen Light who put on shows specifically for people with PMLD (profound and multiple learning disabilities).
- Peter went to Madame Tussauds to "meet" Michael Jackson and visited different stations including Archway, which is Peter's favourite tube station.
- Elinor went to the Tate Britain for the Paula Rego show and visited Centre Parcs in Woburn Forest, which was perfect balance of accessible but still feels like an adventure!
- Meric and Elinor went to a Van Gogh exhibition together.



Mildmay Trip to Hastings!

A group of four service users and two staff made the journey to Hastings on October 5th, stayed overnight in a hotel and returned to Mildmay Avenue the following day. Service users had decided on this destination themselves and were then supported by staff to book rooms and tickets. This trip was highly anticipated, our service users were really looking forward to it and we are happy to have been able to facilitate this for them!

While in Hastings, the group spent most of their time at the beach and in the old town centre. They had a great time together and it was a nice change of scene for them. We were fortunate with the weather, which was relatively good for the time of year. Sunshine and blue skies were enjoyed by all! The trip was undoubtedly a success and we look forward to planning more outings with our service users in future.



Learning & Leisure

Our New Library!

The Learning & Leisure Library was launched in November 2021. Service users of all ages are invited to “borrow” a book while they are visiting Centre 404. We've got a great foundation of books including educational, fictional, picture-based and interactive crafting and colouring books focusing on well-being. We plan to have books for all ages and interests: including picture books, novels, non-fiction, reference books, and magazines.

The library is located in Room A on the ground floor. Monika from Supporting Families recently donated several books to the library and we are always looking for more donations!

Should you have any books that you would like to donate to our library, please contact our Children and Young People Lead, [January](#).

Happy Reading!



Tower Hamlets Discovery House

Children and young people from our Tower Hamlets Discovery House project went to the Science Museum on Saturday 4th December to take part in the amazing Wonderlab sessions! Wonderlab is a hands on interactive gallery where service users were able to take part in experiments and interact with real scientific phenomena. They saw lightning strike before their eyes, played with forces on giant slides and travelled through space under a canopy of stars! This educational visit was kindly funded by Jack Petchey Foundation so a big thank you to them. As you can see everyone had a wonderful time!

Our new volunteer AI was also there, as he now does after-school clubs and weekend daytime activities volunteering. AI started as a service user at Discovery House when he was very young and was there all the way through until he was 18. He missed it so much that he then came back as a volunteer! He is a great addition to the team and everyone is delighted to have him back!



Supporting Families

Autumn Activities

It's been a busy autumn so far for the Supporting Families Team. We're still holding events such as workshops and yoga classes online, and returning to in-person events for a family carers as well. We're enjoying holding parents meetings and coffee mornings back at our newly refurbished base here at Centre 404, and the team are also getting the opportunity to explore slightly further afield. So far this autumn we've visited venues such as our local city farm Freightliners Farm, Kew Gardens and the British Museum, with almost 100 people attending ones of our events in the last two months! We're now planning our Christmas events. To keep up to date with our events [check here](#). Do you know of an organisation that would like to host a day out for our family carers and their families? [Let us know!](#)



Enfield and Waltham Forest SENDIAS Service

The Supporting Families Service is excited to announce that we have successfully won two new contracts to support London families. We have recently started the Enfield SENDIAS Service and will be running the Waltham Forest SENDIAS Service from January 2022. The SENDIAS service supports residents aged 0 – 25 with any Special Educational Need or Disability, and their families. We are excited to have MG and Mary join our team. We're looking forward to working more closely with Enfield families – information on the Enfield service please [click here](#). Our team will be growing again and we're excited to meet more families and widen our reach further.

We now support families across even more of London, and we're excited to have our team grow again so we can meet more families and widen our reach further.



Trustees and Events



Jean's Stepping Down Event

On Thursday 2nd September we arranged a very special evening for our Chair, Jean Willson OBE, to thank her and celebrate her 50+ years of support and involvement at Centre 404.

After 10 years in her current role (and third time being the Chair), Jean stepped down as Chair and stepped into a new ambassadorial role of President for Centre 404. Paul Formosa, then Vice-Chair, has now been elected as Chair for 2021/2022.

We would like to thank Jean again for all her remarkable work over the years and welcome Paul as Chair of Trustees.

Thank you to all our trustees as well as guests, staff and volunteers that helped make this event a success.

Centre 404's

→ 70th Birthday!

Look out for a bigger AGM party next year to celebrate...

Our Electric Vehicle Launch

In early October we celebrated the arrival of our first electric vehicle. Besides providing an improved journey for our service users, the new car is powered by electricity from our new solar panels, which enables us to lower our carbon emissions, reduce the impact of traffic pollution and make a substantial cost saving.

The launch of our electric vehicle is part of our wider commitment to sustainability and reducing our environmental impact. Our recent Phase 3 refurbishment and renovation works had an important environmental focus, such as installing our ASHP pump, solar panels, green sedum living roofs, electric charging point, and sourcing eco-friendly and energy-efficient materials inside.

We are proud that our efforts can contribute to the wider community as well, helping to meet Islington Council Net Zero Carbon by 2030 target.



Volunteers



Garden Group Reunion

On Thursday 2nd December the Garden Group went on a special trip to Ally Pally Garden Centre for Xavier's birthday treat! The group had a lovely festive trip around the garden centre looking at all the amazing Christmas decorations and plants. They also had a wonderful time celebrating with cake around the table!

The trip was made even more special by the fact that some old regulars; Mariah and Savaas came along too. It's been a while since we have seen them and it was great for the group to see that they are happy and well!

Merry Festive Season to all our amazing Garden Group volunteers, our longest service volunteer group, which is primarily made up of volunteers with a learning disability and/or autism

Festive Volunteering

As is the case with every normal year (pre-COVID), we have got a variety of special festive volunteering happening:

- Festive Card Mail-Out group, primarily made up of volunteers with a learning disability, who will be helping to sign, package and post our festive card on 14th December.
- Volunteers assisting their usual clubs, groups and activities with a festive theme!

We are delighted to be able to do some of our normal volunteering activities this year!



Kalim and Ken in 2019 who have both helped with festive volunteering the past

Fundraising

[Click Here to Donate](#)



The Big Give and Quiz Night

For the first time ever, we were delighted to take part in the Big Give Christmas Challenge this year to raise money to restart our [Young Adults Group!](#)

As part of the campaign, we organised a Festive Quiz Night Fundraiser, which took place on 3rd December. As is customary, the quiz was hosted by our trustee Derek – although, this time, without our Chair, Paul, and his glorious gold suit!

We certainly were in high spirits and hope everyone enjoyed themselves as much as we did. And of course – congratulations, the winning teams Nerd Immunity and Omicronymous! You are the champions!

By donating to the campaign between 12pm 30th November – 12pm 7th December, our supporters' gifts were doubled with funds from our matching pot from Human Rights Fund, Jack Petchey Foundation, Critico Security, Sir Andrew Cahn and Catherine Powloski.

Thank you so much to everyone who contributed and donated! We are so grateful for your support. Together we raised £3,816. With Gift Aid, that is £4,168!



Amazon Smile

Christmas Shopping Online? We're on Amazon Smile!

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support Centre 404 every time you shop

<https://smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/299889-0> this festive

season, at no cost to you. You'll find the exact same low prices, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to us!

AmazonSmile is also available in the Amazon Shopping App to all Amazon customers using an iPhone or Android phone. Once you have activated AmazonSmile in the app, every eligible purchase will automatically generate a donation for Centre 404. Go to "Settings" in your app's menu to activate AmazonSmile.

What is Amazon Smile? Click [HERE](#) to read more.

Your £ + AmazonSmile = 😊





Centre 404



Centre 404



Centre 404



@Centre404



Centre 404



@Centre 404



Centre 404

Follow us!