



# Annual Review

2020/2021 DEMONSTRATING IMPACT

**CENTRE**  **404**

*Supporting people with learning disabilities, autism & their families*





# CEO Introduction

Welcome to this edition of our annual review 2020/21.

**W**ell it has certainly been an eventful and memorable year. We finally moved back in to our newly refurbished building in July 2020 and 12 months later we are still delighted with the facilities. Due to the additional space people were using the premises while still being able to safely socially distance. Our centre certainly matches the original vision we had and the positive feedback from families, service users, funders and other organisations has reassured us that all the hard work and upheaval have been worth it.

The main driver for this work was the crucial need for more space and to upgrade our current accessible facilities. We are currently supporting people across 6 London boroughs so we really needed room to carry out additional activities. A prominent goal underlying this building redesign was to be as sustainable as possible to reduce our carbon footprint while at the same time be sensitive to the heritage aspects of our Victorian property. We hope you will agree that we have met these goals when you see the pictures in this report and/or visit us.

The global emergence of the coronavirus over the past year or so has inevitably overshadowed some of our work and plans, but we were determined that people with a learning disability and their family carers would not be forgotten during this crisis. I strongly believe our agile, flexible and creative response went someway to alleviating some of the strain on our service users.

Of utmost concern to us was how this pandemic has served to highlight the prevalence of the digital divide. There are 3.4 million people aged 65+ who have never used the internet,\* and while it is a well-known fact that many elderly people are not online, recent research highlights that digital exclusion is not just a generational issue.

Overall 22% of the UK population lack basic digital skills.\*\* Our own experience with older family carers as well as younger families on low incomes and people with a learning disability has brought this into sharp focus. Fortunately we were able to work with funders and other partners to deliver tablets and laptops to those who needed them. Digital exclusion correlates to social exclusion and this inequality will deepen if more is not done. So as an organisation we want to work with partners to ensure basic access to Wi-Fi and training going forward.

It is always reassuring and satisfying to have an external organisation come to audit and accredit aspects of our work and this year we were pleased to receive the following recognition and awards: Advice Quality Standard Mark for our advice work to family carers, Investing in Volunteers Award and the UK Investor in Equality and Diversity. Please take the time to look through our review. We aim to clearly illustrate what we have been doing over the year and through the power of family carers and service users own words, we hope the reader can see the difference and impact Centre 404 can make to peoples' lives.

Finally, pivotal to the success of getting through a year of change, due to the pandemic and our relocation, has been the joined up efforts of staff, volunteers and trustees. I was grateful to witness the impressive drive and determination shown throughout the whole organisation. I must also record my profound gratitude to our support workers and colleagues delivering frontline support to people with learning disabilities in exceptionally demanding conditions.

**Linda McGowan**  
CEO

\*Age UK 2020 Report - Not Like Riding A Bike \*\*Lloyds Bank Consumer Digital Index 2019 report

# Contents

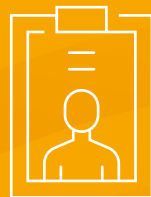
<b>Section 1   Independent Living &amp; Specialist Services:</b>	<b>4</b>
Supported Living	<b>8</b>
CASE STUDY: Leigh Road	<b>10</b>
Outreach Services	<b>14</b>
CASE STUDY: Floating Support Services	<b>16</b>
Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)	<b>18</b>
CASE STUDY: Positive Behaviour Support	<b>19</b>
<b>Section 2   Learning &amp; Leisure:</b>	<b>20</b>
Day Opportunities	<b>24</b>
CASE STUDY: Day Opportunities	<b>26</b>
CASE STUDY: Adult Clubs	<b>27</b>
Adult Clubs and Activities	<b>28</b>
Children & Young People Clubs	<b>30</b>
CASE STUDY: Children & Young People Clubs	<b>32</b>
CASE STUDY: Finding & Matching	<b>33</b>
Finding & Matching (PSWFMS)	<b>34</b>

<b>Our Newly Refurbished Building</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Section 3   Supporting Families:</b>	<b>40</b>
COVID-19 Support	<b>43</b>
CASE STUDY: COVID-19 / Digital Exclusion	<b>44</b>
Groups and Activities	<b>46</b>
Workshops and Support Groups	<b>47</b>
CASE STUDY: Supporting Families	<b>48</b>
CASE STUDY: Income Maximisation	<b>49</b>
Casework Support & Income Maximisation	<b>50</b>
Coproduction	<b>52</b>
<b>Section 4   Volunteers:</b>	<b>54</b>
CASE STUDY: Volunteer	<b>58</b>
CASE STUDY: Volunteer	<b>59</b>
Money Counts	<b>60</b>
Thank You	<b>62</b>
Message from the Chair	<b>63</b>
Tribute to our Chair Jean Willson OBE	<b>64</b>

# 1 Independent Living and Specialist Services



**Boroughs:** Islington, Camden, Brent, Haringey



**Total Number  
of Service Users:**

164



**Hours of support  
delivered weekly:**

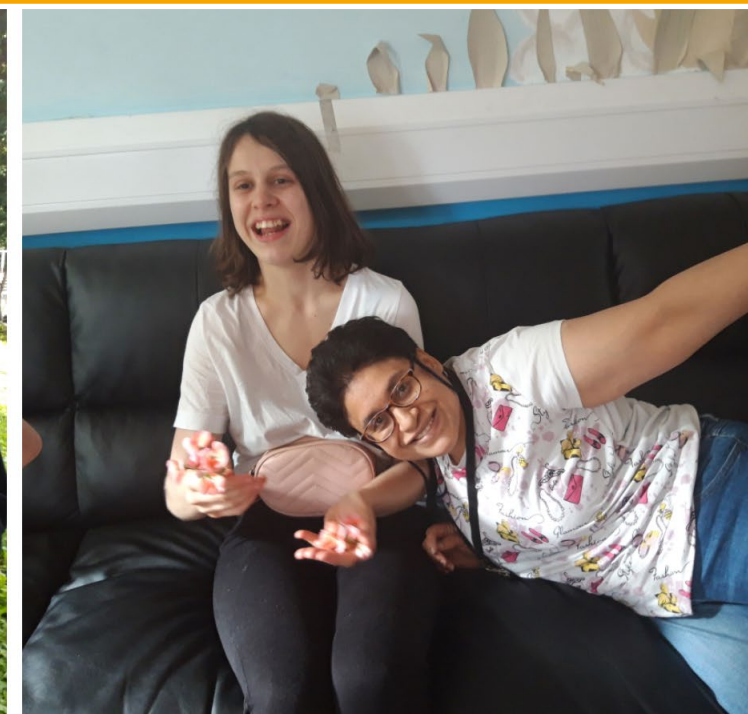
4306



**Total  
Projects:**

13

**New Projects: 3**





# Independent Living and Specialist Services

**I**t was a tough year for all due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but people with learning disabilities have been especially impacted by the resulting restrictions. Centre 404 has been leading on the front line and despite all the challenges, we have continued to offer high quality support to our service users across the North London Boroughs.

Our approach to the pandemic has been our greatest achievement! We acted decisively and much earlier than advised. We immediately implemented focused communication with managers and staff and created a dynamic COVID-19 Risk Assessment which was updated weekly in line with latest government guidance.

We reviewed our training offer and developed bespoke in-house remote training sessions, continuing to deliver our full training and induction programme. We developed a PPE stock control system that allowed our staff and service users to be safe and protected at all times, never running out of stock.

To ensure the continuation of access to quality activities, we developed a wide range of online activities, increased phone and virtual contacts with those isolating and worked closely with families and circles of support.

As restrictions eased and service users and staff were supported to be fully vaccinated, we began to introduce in-person activities. These included outdoor activities, sightseeing trips, and in-person social groups, which has been hugely beneficial after so long being isolated from each other. We even had our first large in-person event on 24th June 2021 to celebrate Learning Disability Week, which had an amazing 85 staff and service users join from across the organisation to take part in a sponsored walk and picnic.

### FEEDBACK FROM INTERNAL RESEARCH:

**88%**

of service users are happy and comfortable with their support workers.

**100%**

service users feel safe in their home.

**88%**

family carers are very satisfied with the overall service from Centre 404.

**88%**

family carers would recommend Centre 404 to a friend.

“

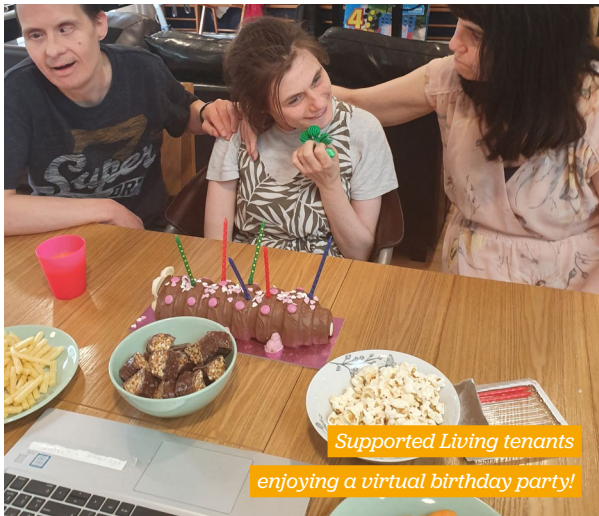
*I have such admiration for how Centre 404 has coped during the pandemic, both the overall Independent Living team and staff supporting people in the projects*

**FAMILY CARER**

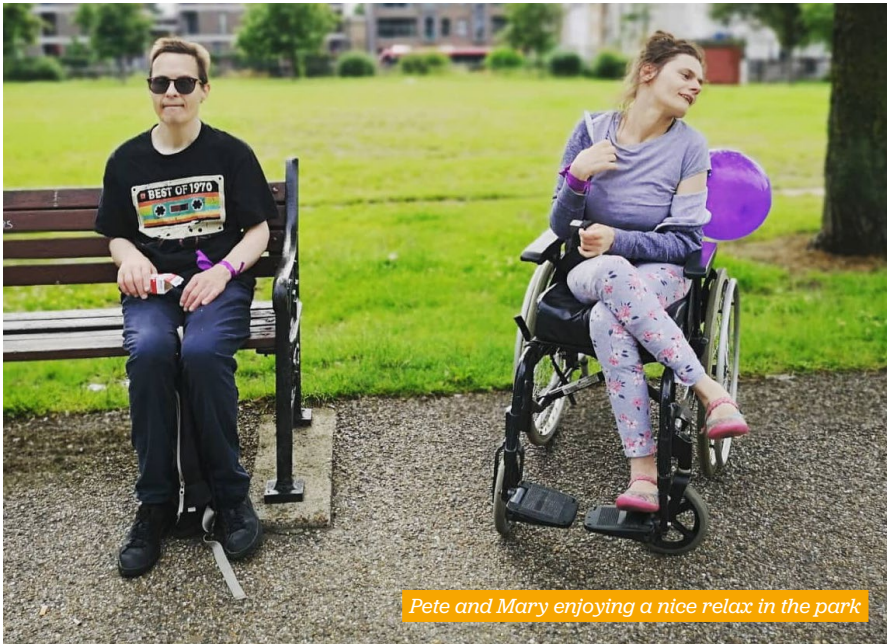
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Some of the Independent Living team at our sponsored walk



Supported Living tenants enjoying a virtual birthday party!



Pete and Mary enjoying a nice relax in the park



Cynthia from Anson Road unpacking their shopping delivery brought by a local volunteer

### FUNDERS:



Camden



ISLINGTON



Good Things Foundation

Digital devices from Digital Lifeline Project from the Good Things Foundation.



“

*It feels much better being with Centre 404, as it is quite different from the previous provider. It is gradually getting better. I feel like the staff listen to me and try their best to deal with mine and my friends concerns. I feel like I get a lot of emotional support.*

**CHRIS, SERVICE USER**

”



*Julie having a lockdown haircut!*



*Mary after winning the virtual Fun Face Mask Competition!*



*The Anson Road team having a dance in the park!*



*Service users and staff from Tollington Way enjoying a picnic*

## Supported Living

**W**e have continued to provide high quality support to 55 people with a range of needs and even expanded the reach of our support during the height of the pandemic.

We started working in a new supported living home for 7 people with mild learning disabilities in Islington and won two Supported Living services for 10 people with high and complex needs in Brent. We were also delighted to win back Leigh Road, our much-loved and biggest project, housing 19 tenants.

With the pandemic changing our lives and forcing us all to be at home, we have focused on Active Support and Independent Living Skills with service users developing a wide range of skills to feel more empowered in their homes.

Each project created new activities for their service users and joined the wider online offer developed by our Activity Coordinators in Islington and Camden. Unable to join their usual activities in the community, staff have prompted service users to discover new passions and have found new creative ways to make sure they could still participate and contribute. For example, organising in-house shops with favourite items, zoom pub lunches, quiz nights and coffee mornings.

**Total Number  
of Service Users:**

55

**New Service  
Users:**

7

**Hours of  
support  
delivered  
weekly**

3626



Supported Living

Islington

Leigh Road

Leigh Road is our largest supported living service being home to 19 people. For the first time in our annual review history, we wanted to spotlight a whole supported living home, as it truly illustrates the way our tenants live and how our community interacts in order to thrive.

This feels particularly important to highlight after the pandemic meant that many of our service users, even those in the same building, had to stay apart from each other. Staff therefore had to find new innovative ways for service users and families to interact to keep everyone’s spirits up.

Leigh Road initially found this very hard, as they were forced to close the doors to families and visitors for many months as tenants needed to shield. Even those not required to shield themselves, were fully supportive in complying with restrictions to meet the safety needs of everyone.

Supporting this diverse group of people safely through the pandemic was a challenge that the team embraced. Anyone who knows Leigh Road and its tenants knows that it is usually a lively, active, and busy building where people are always mingling, doing activities and making great use of the shared spaces and garden. Therefore, the team had to get creative in supporting people to spend time at home in their flats and not using shared spaces.



Anne enjoying the arts and crafts



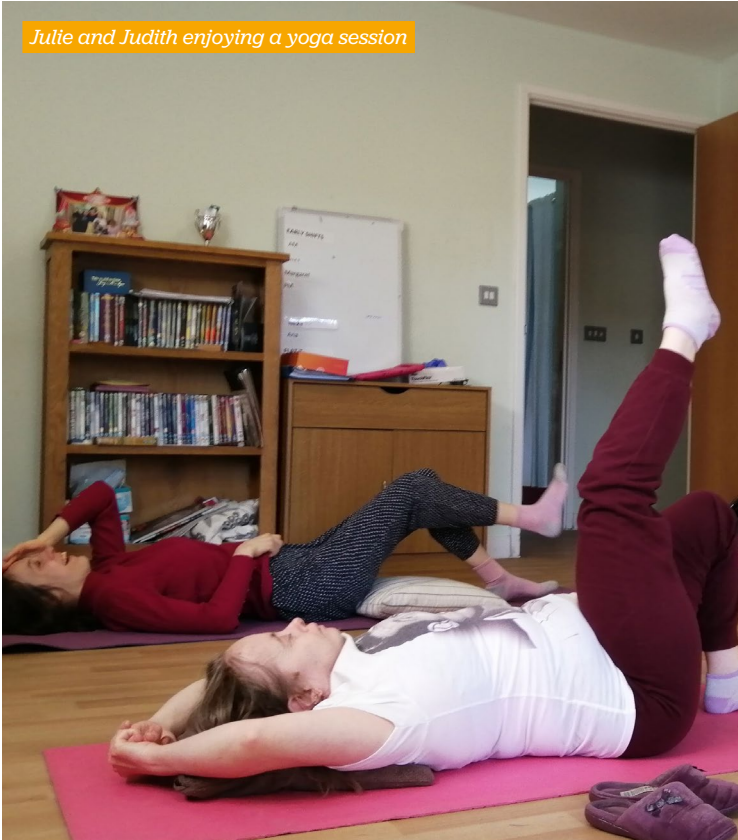
Monica enjoying her coffee.

“

It was interesting, it was good and fun. I really enjoyed myself and the big chocolate cake, you know me and cake. I had help setting up my zoom and other staff helped to make sure everyone joined to sing happy birthday to me

PETE

”



Julie and Judith enjoying a yoga session



Mary, Mary and Rosie out together at Highbury Fields



## CASE STUDY



Toye dusting off the decks and DJing again.



Danny and Peter enjoying the atmosphere



Roste and Alyson getting together again



Judith found it very hard during lockdown as her usual activities and her college stopped. Being able to see her family and meeting up together outside for daily exercise was important.

### HOW WE PROVIDED SUPPORT THROUGH THE PANDEMIC:



- ✓ We held zoom tea parties and birthdays between flats.
- ✓ We transferred our regular activity programme to zoom including music therapy, cooking, arts and crafts and a reading group.
- ✓ We developed an in-house shop where the team purchased people's favourite items and tenants could come to the shop to buy them.
- ✓ We held a coffee morning for teas, coffees, and cakes instead of our usual weekend coffee shop breakfast.
- ✓ As restrictions eased, good weather allowed tenants to socialise in small groups outside and utilise the garden again, with social distancing measures in place.
- ✓ Leigh Road also made great use of our volunteer network. It is strange to reflect and think about the start of the pandemic where the loo roll ran out and supermarkets were empty of food! So, before we could get online slots secured, a dedicated group of volunteers linked up with local supermarkets to do shopping; filling up the landing with toilet roll, pasta and goodies.
- ✓ We were also lucky enough to recruit a Dog Support Volunteer for people to go dog walking, which helped with anxiety around going out.
- ✓ As restrictions eased, we facilitated visits and holidays for tenants where they could reunite with families.
- ✓ We also started bigger in-person summer events now restrictions have been lifted such as our Summer BBQ.



Sam enjoying time with Guizmo as part of the Dog Support Volunteering

“  
The dog's name was Guizmo and we had nice walks around Highbury Fields. I would like to do more similar activities in the future.  
SAM”



Susan with the in-house shop



# Outreach Services

Our Islington Outreach Service is now a well-established service with more than 10 years of experience in successfully providing support to adults with learning disabilities both within their homes and out in the community. The Camden Floating Support Service, which started in July 2019, has also become an established service with positive feedback from all stakeholders.

Throughout this time, both services have developed strong local connections with various groups, which have been useful over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring that people we support remain safe and well during these uncertain times. For example, in collaboration with our local Waitrose and volunteers through Centre 404, we organised essential food deliveries to some of our most vulnerable service users when food stocks were very low and bulk buying was limited.

Similarly, we very quickly transferred many of our activity offers online and now many of our service users are still happily ‘zooming’ away! People have multiple options of activities to choose from such as the online Friendship Group, also known as the ‘The Pub Group’ as it was initially designed for a pub catch-up pre-Covid. This has been a regular meet-up that has been ongoing from before the pandemic to now and allows that regular familiarity and seeing friendly faces.

As part of tackling digital exclusion, we are very proud to have applied for, and successfully received, 32 computer tablets via Digital Lifeline from the Good Things Foundation. We distributed these tablets to some of our most vulnerable and socially isolated outreach service users. As a result of the tablets, those service users are fully connected and have been accessing many of our in-house and external virtual activities including consultation with their GPs.

Our Activities Coordinators have been busy providing a range of meaningful virtual activities that people of all ages, interests, and taste can choose from, with sessions timed to ensure a variety of options 7 days a week.



Roy feeding the birds in Hyde Park with the weekly Walking Group

## Total number of service users

Outreach Services Islington:

49

Camden Floating Support Services:

55

## Hours of support delivered weekly

Camden Floating Support 450  
Islington Outreach 160



An art project started by one of our service users as part of Autism Awareness Week 2021



Sightseeing in London!

## FEEDBACK FROM INTERNAL RESEARCH

90%

are confident in who to speak to if they have a problem with their house

I am happy with the levels of care given throughout this pandemic.  
FAMILY CARER

...there have been a number of efforts to find creative ways to make life better (during pandemic).  
FAMILY CARER

I like going to the main building at 404, I like talking to and spending time with people here.  
SERVICE USER



The first day trip after lockdown to Hayling Island!

One important key focus was to ensure that all of the people we support understood the lockdown rules, which at times were confusing. Several sessions were dedicated to providing clear, concise and accessible information on lockdown restrictions.

As the pandemic progressed, focus shifted to managing isolation and mental health. Our staff including the Activities Coordinator, called all Outreach service users daily and checked they were OK. For some we supported them to have befriending calls from vetted volunteers.

To promote physical well-being due to prolong lockdown restrictions, a weekly Walking Group was established that has been attended by over 25% of our service users. We have also prolonged outdoor and face to face activities as restrictions have eased including having our Friendship Group meeting back in the new Centre 404 building and arranging lots of fun outings and activities around London and beyond!



# Floating Support Service

📍 Camden

🕒 SERVICE USER FOR: 2 years

**ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES ENJOYED OR ACCESSED:**  
Cooking classes, music and dance classes, trips to different places in London and in the UK.

**AGE:** 75

**B**rian has been using Camden Floating Support Service with Centre 404 since we started in July 2019 and has always enjoyed using local support services in Camden to connect with people.

Brian does not have any close family and unfortunately therefore the pandemic had a major impact on his mental health, as well as his behaviour. His routine changed due to places having to close; restaurants where he loved going to have a meal, places to visit and the activities provided by Centre 404.

Although the pandemic had a major impact on Brian, our support staff have still managed to keep Brian happy as much as possible by supporting him to take walks outside in places he enjoys. Staff also supported him to still attend all his health appointments, as well as making sure he understood Covid-19 and what he needs to do to minimise the risk of catching it and keep himself safe. Staff also ensured he understood all the constantly changing restrictions that were often confusing especially for someone with a learning disability. Staff also supported Brian to go shopping, maintain a healthy diet, and keep up with cooking and cleaning his flat, which helped with his overall wellbeing.

As restrictions have started to lift, Brian's mental health and behaviour has improved a lot, and support staff have been arranging for him to join some of the activities he used to enjoy, such as karaoke, personalised trips to the Tate and a London Landmarks Trip! Brian also enjoyed attending our sponsored walk and picnic in Finsbury Park 2021, our first opportunity to have a larger outdoor event and see new and familiar faces.





# Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)

The COVID-19 pandemic and consequent lockdown has created challenges for us all. For many service users with learning disabilities and autism this has meant community activities being placed on hold leading to a host of physical and mental health risks. At Centre 404, our Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) team has been working with service users and their families in North Central London where obstacles such as limited access to activities, and difficulties in understanding the pandemic lead the service user to behaviours of concern.

During lockdown it has been difficult to support service users with a regular schedule of activities or to be able to try new things that might pique their interest. To find creative ideas and focus our attention, we have been completing Quality-of-Life assessments with several service users. From these assessments the PBS team have used service user's goals to promote interest in other activities. This has led to service users being able to make progress with career and life goals such as passing their driving test and training to become a barber.

The Quality-of-Life assessments have been so successful that we have now rolled them out across Centre 404, ensuring that all staff understand the value and we offer meaningful support that can be measured in an objective manner. In addition, the PBS team has helped design new policies and procedures to ensure a whole organisation approach is taken to embed PBS ethos across Centre 404.

Another key focus has also been on training and coaching staff via the PBS and Active Support training programme, which is now embedded in the Centre 404 Induction Training for new starters. The training is delivered by our qualified PBS coaches and includes both theory and practical examples to aid learning.

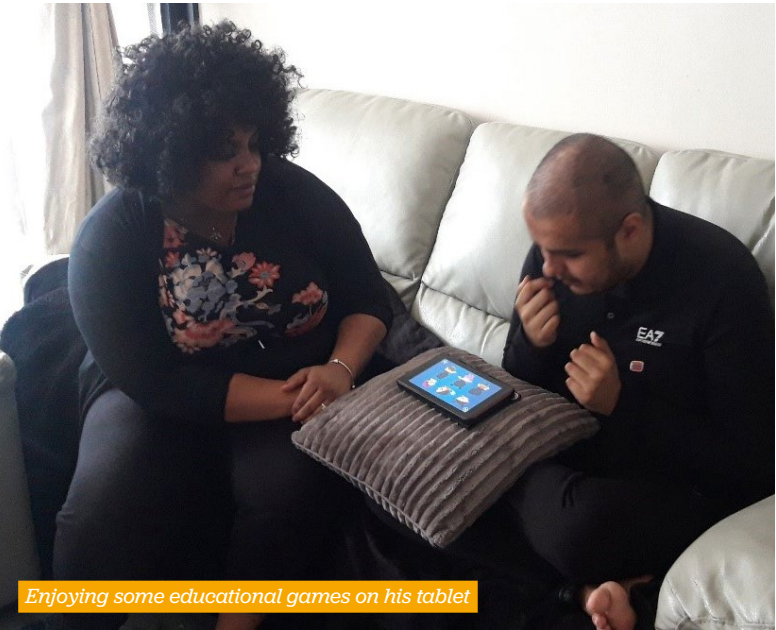
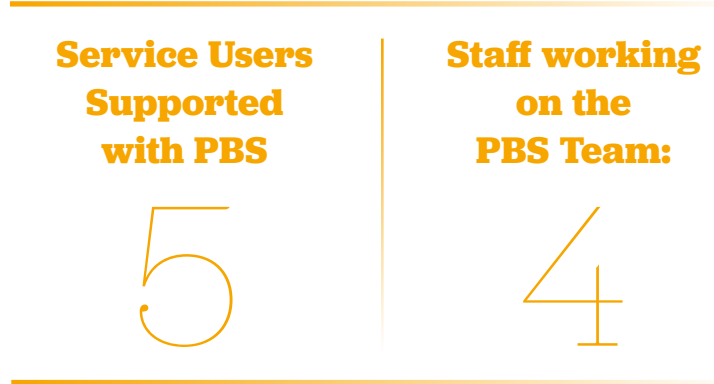
I am very pleased with the level of care my sister receives...The whole team of staff are very kind and helpful.  
FAMILY CARER

The Staff are lovely people and help me a lot, I would give them 5/5. SERVICE USER

If I could give 100% I would. I am totally happy...I trust them. SERVICE USER

These training sessions have been peer review endorsed by Skills for Care. Our Autism Awareness Training has also been rolled out and positively received, which we will seek accreditation for from the National Autistic Society.

To further expand and consolidate the work done around PBS including adding further specialism, we are very excited to develop our current PBS and Autism Lead role into an Assistant Psychologist Post. The role will ensure that Centre 404 continues to benefit from in-house clinical expertise, adding to our existing in-house Speech and Language Therapist.



## CASE STUDY

### Positive Behaviour Support

Camden

SERVICE USER FOR: 1.5 years

ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES ENJOYED OR ACCESSED:

Art & crafts, playing educational games on his tablet and canal walks.

AGE: 23

Mizanur, a 23 year-old man with a learning disability and autism living with his family in Camden, has been receiving PBS support from our experienced staff at Centre 404.

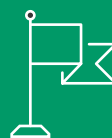
He has spent a long time without structured community activities so our plan was three-part; firstly to build the man's trust in his support worker through structured rapport building using activities he enjoyed, secondly work on functional and educational skills so that he could be as independent as possible in the home, and finally support him to access community activities at our day group with the confidence he had built in his support worker and himself.

As a result of these steps the service user's family and support team have realised that Mizanur is very capable and through encouragement can build confidence in himself. He is also a lot more patient now because the educational games have taught him that it takes perseverance to get what we want.

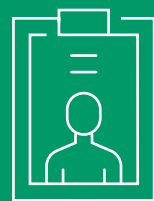
The service user's mother feels a big part of Mizanur's growth is down to the confidence of our support worker to try new activities and ideas.



# 2 Learning and Leisure



**Boroughs:** Islington, Camden, Tower Hamlets, Haringey, Enfield



**Number of Service Users Supporting:**

444

**50 New Service Users**



**Hours of support delivered weekly:**

1,357



**Different Projects:**

23

**2 New Projects**







The Day Opportunities team at the Finsbury Park sponsored walk

## Learning & Leisure

**T**his year we were faced with one of the biggest challenges of our lifetimes. Despite the pandemic and with national lockdowns and restrictions in place, we have remained open throughout and continued supporting service users accessing Day Opportunities in Camden and Islington and our Finding and Matching Service.

Unfortunately, we had to temporarily suspend our face-to-face Children and Young People provisions and Adult Clubs between March and September 2020, but since then have been able to offer support in 22 of our 23 projects.

In early 2020 we successfully won the contract in London Borough of Haringey to deliver PBS Day Opportunities to 30 individuals living in Haringey over a four-year period April 2021 to 2025. We were faced



Club members enjoying some arts and crafts



Club members having fun with fancy dress!

with delays due to COVID-19 and building works but are pleased that the project has now started. We are looking forward to working with Haringey to support individuals to access opportunities and increase their independence through a Positive Behaviour Support approach.

In early 2021, we also successfully won the contract to deliver short breaks overnight stays for children and young people with autism in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. This project started in June 2021 and will support 106 children and young people every year, with 27 supported this year so far. This will be the first time Centre 404 will be providing support in Tower Hamlets and in addition to overnight stays we will be running 3 after school clubs and Family Forum which will be facilitated by our Supporting Families Team.

We have also started PBS support for children and young people and increased our Children Outreach support in Islington and Camden. We are also pleased to report the implementation of the Learning & Leisure Forum attended by service users and family carers. As a result, we have been able to create new personal budget groups, additional activities such as service user's coffee mornings and more joint working with the Supporting Families Service to enhance our offer as holistic person-centred services.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, we have had 23 new service users join the service and we are very much looking forward to our work in Haringey and Tower Hamlets as well as continuing providing support in all London Boroughs we work in.



# Day Opportunities

**D**ay Opportunities offers support to 21 service users across two centres in Islington and Camden. Support is person-centred and therefore delivered Monday-Sunday, including evenings. Our activities include sports and days out, sensory activities and life skills trainings.

This year we have implemented educational activities and themed activities such as Nature Week and Italy Week, and continue to develop our activity programme to offer a wider variety of activities and opportunities.

Despite the pandemic and lockdown restrictions, the service remained open throughout the year. As many community-based activities were closed, we have mainly delivered centre-based activities in line with the local restrictions. Service users were able to take part in online sessions as well as attend socially distanced small groups that took place in the Centre 404 building.

During this time, we have also been able to reduce public transport use and have continued to adapt to ever changing restrictions in place. We are pleased that as restrictions eased, service users have been able to return to community activities and access more local opportunities.

In June 2021 we were even able to attend a sponsored walk and picnic in Finsbury Park also attended by staff and service users in the Independent Living Service as part of Learning Disability Week celebrations. Our staff and service users travelled there on our minibus and were able to gain access directly into the park thanks to the Finsbury Park staff. This was a great opportunity to get out and about safely, and feel part of an organisation wide in-person event attended by 85 people.



**FEEDBACK FROM INTERNAL RESEARCH**

**80%**

of family carers said they are happy with the overall service and staff are on time for their shifts.

**90%**

have said they are happy with support offered to them and their cared for.

FUNDERS:



Service users receiving their donated phones and tablets to help tackle digital exclusion

Service Users Supported

21

New Service Users

2

Day Opportunity hours of support delivered weekly

403



CASE STUDY

Day Opportunities

📍 Islington  
⌚ SERVICE USER FOR: 2 years

ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES  
ENJOYED OR ACCESSED:  
Trampolining, cooking, painting, drawing,  
and cinema.  
AGE: 24

Before joining Centre 404, Tariq was a shy man who spent a lot of time at home and not taking part in many community-based activities. He was affected by anxiety and found it difficult to participate in various activities.

However after getting to know the staff at Centre 404 and building relationships with staff and other service users, Tariq has become much more confident. He has been engaging in the centre based and community led activities and has made positive friendships with other service users. Tariq now leaves his home every single weekday to access different activities around his local community and meet his friends from Islington and Camden Day Opportunities. He has become more certain and positive over the last year and has developed more skills to increase his independence. He is able to make his own choices and decide which activities to participate in.



“Centre 404 has given Tariq a beautiful space without judgement which has helped him navigate his way through the everyday challenges he continues to face. Looking at him now, I see my son who’s becoming more and more confident, engaging and present. He thoroughly enjoys going to Centre 404 and is a lot calmer now. My family and friends have noticed a big difference in his behaviour and confidence. Thank you for all your hard work and continued support and a big Thank You to his Support Worker who has remained constant in Tariq’s life, he has helped shape Tariq and given him a platform to just be a sense of stability and calm.”

TARIQ’S MOTHER



CASE STUDY



“Centre 404 is something that Nathan really looks forward to going to. He looks forward to doing things, being there and taking part. He enjoys going and really missed the guys during lockdown.”

NATHAN’S MOTHER



Adult Clubs

📍 Islington  
⌚ SERVICE USER FOR: 10+ years

ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES  
ENJOYED OR ACCESSED:  
404 Stormers, Friday Night Social  
AGE: 25

Nathan has been attending Centre 404 since secondary school, for over 10 years. He lives in Islington with his family and is very independent, working at Itsu part-time as a cashier.

Nathan has been performing with the 404 Stormers for several years, Centre 404’s resident band. He is a rapper and has written a few songs. He is also a really good dancer. His favourite music is Hip-Hop, R&B, and reggae music from Jamaica where his family originates.

Through participation with the 404 Stormers, Nathan’s confidence and skills as a performer have increased. His mum notes that he has learned a lot about music and having this passion and talent supported by Centre 404 is really important and something he enjoys very much. Nathan is a big fan of the Friday Night Social, Centre 404’s weekly disco with over 70 attendees, and is looking forward to when it can resume again.

During lockdown, when the band could not rehearse, Nathan joined our Aiming High Group on Wednesdays for a few sessions. He was a great addition to the group and was an excellent role model to the other members. He brought maturity and calm to the sessions.

In March 2021 Nathan was nominated for a Young Catalyst grant to purchase DJ equipment to further support his love of music and DJing skills. His goal is to DJ one evening at the Friday Night Disco, which Centre 404 will support him to do.



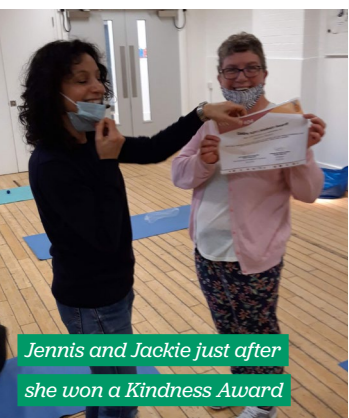
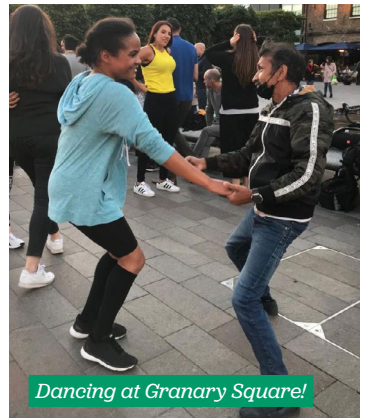


# Adult Clubs and Activities

**W**e offer 11 different clubs and activities for adults, and now hold regular coffee mornings on the last Friday of every month for all our service users. We offer a variety of times to suit different people, with three clubs in the evening and the remainder in the mornings and afternoons. Many of our service users attend multiple clubs and activities during the week. Warm & Welcome Wednesday and the Friday Night Social remain our most popular offering.

Through the variety of fun and creative activities and clubs that we offer adult service users, we aim to support choice, improve quality of life, combat loneliness and isolation and promote social connections. We want our service users to feel a sense of community at Centre 404 and within the wider community. All our clubs promote healthy eating, well-being, and relaxation.

**FUNDING FROM:**



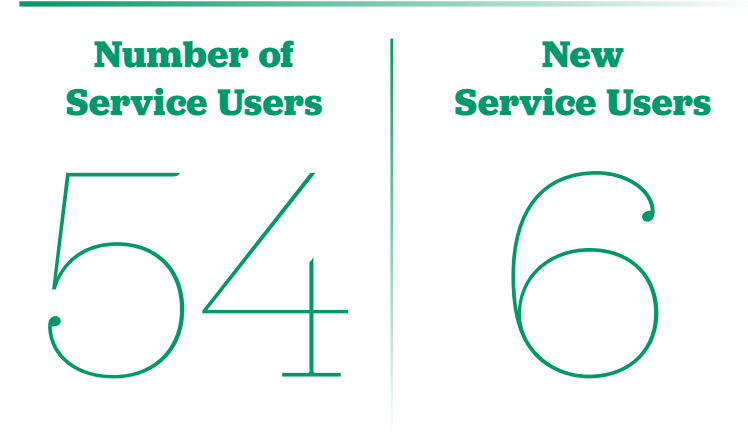
**“** I like the clubs because it breaks down the evenings for me and making new friends. I like trying different foods that the Senior Support Worker makes. **”**

**SERVICE USER**



In September Warm & Welcome Wednesday and Young Adult Group reunited following lockdown restrictions in our lovely new hall. The groups benefited from the interactive C-Touch screen taking part in online dance and fitness activities, and of course Karaoke! Friday Night Disco moved online, to keep the party going during lockdown! Gardening Group was also able to meet weekly to enjoy the fresh air and comradery, while working hard alongside other volunteers and staff to maintain our beautiful garden.

Happy Tuesdays and Out & About were unable to meet regularly due to restrictions; however, in December the Tuesday Group had a special Zoom Dinner Party consisting of Nandos, party games, and a much-needed laugh. It was evident that the group missed each other and the interaction, and we are delighted to confirm that both groups are now able to meet regularly again.







Club members having fun with various activities at Centre 404



“

*The Tuesday session is such a release for him. And he's getting it and I am so grateful. Just for them to get out of the house with people other than their family, but with people that they know is exactly what they need.*

**PARENT**

*It was nice to have a focus and somewhere to be. It was challenging at times, but seeing those beautiful faces and run a group and see our young people enjoying themselves was so fulfilling!*

**SENIOR SUPPORT WORKER**

*My son is very happy everywhere. He really likes it and is very happy. In general, I don't have any problems.*

**PARENT**

”

## Children & Young People Clubs and Activities

**W**e currently run 5 after-school clubs as well as school holiday playschemes in Islington and Enfield. We also provide outreach support to a total of 62 children and young people who live in the boroughs of Islington, Camden, and Enfield. Of the 62 service users, 12 also access our Enfield Playscheme and 16 receive outreach support on a weekly basis.

We have also started Positive Behaviour Support in Enfield with 1 service user in September 2020 and now increased this reach to 3 additional service users in Enfield, Islington, and Camden.

All of the support we deliver, whether via after-school clubs, outreach support, or play schemes, are centred around helping children and young people to achieve positive differences in their lives. We aim to deliver this thorough fun, exciting and positively engaging sessions.

The activities that our children and young people have participated in this year include: sensory-toy making, science experiments, various arts & crafts projects, baking, cooking, yoga, fitness, and dance. Group programmes are designed and planned by service users to promote choice and focus on interests and aspirations, and then tailored to each member's abilities and development.

**Service Users Supported**

62

**New Service Users**

13



A Siblings Group service user with her Jack Petchey Outstanding Achiever award!

This has been a challenging year for clubs; however, our children have shown resilience in the face of lockdown and COVID. In September service users were excited to be back in the building and inspired by the refurbishment. The favourite areas were the garden and sensory room. For the majority of the year, activities took place in the hall, including self-defence, yoga, drama, arts & crafts, and music.

As an organisation, we were able to continue to provide support and run clubs during lockdown; which provided consistency and an outlet to our service users and families.

For our older groups, we focused on mental health and well-being. Our Youth Group held discussions about isolation and how lockdown was making them feel. They also expressed themselves through various art activities. For our younger groups, we focused on play and physical activity. We added a small trampoline to the sensory room, which was very popular. We also received a large donation of Lego; which we used for creative play and skill development.

**FUNDING FROM:**





CASE STUDY

Children & Young People Clubs

📍 Islington  
🕒 SERVICE USER FOR: 6+ years

ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES ENJOYED OR ACCESSED:  
Juniors Club on Tuesdays, playschemes during school holidays, and Outreach Support  
AGE: 12

Eghosa has been attending Centre 404 for over 6 years, reaping the benefits of youth clubs that support different ages, as many of our service users do. Before attending Centre 404 Eghosa was quite shy, however since receiving support from Centre 404, Eghosa's mum has noticed that she has become more independent and helpful around the house.

Her support workers have noticed that she has come out of her shell and opens up more, making more eye contact and initiating conversations.

Eghosa is a lovely young woman who is well-liked at clubs and known for making a delicious cup of tea! She enjoys baking and is very popular for regularly making brownies for everyone to enjoy on Fridays with her support worker. Eghosa is a great helper and role model to the younger service users that she encounters on Fridays. She likes to help staff with cooking and setting the table for the younger ones.

Eghosa is supported to practise and explore her many talents and interests. She loves dancing and dressing up and is constantly performing and showing off her moves. She also loves arts and crafts and made a lovely Mother's Day card for her mum, Tracy, and participated in one of our fundraising projects making thank you cards for our supporters.



“Eghosa enjoys Centre 404 and looks forward to going. She has made really good friendships with quite a few people. Everyone there puts a smile on her face. She can be herself, which is really important. Everyone accepts her for who she is. This is very important for a child with needs. I am very relaxed when she is there. She is in capable hands. That's really important for me and her.”  
EGHOSA'S MUM – TRACY

CASE STUDY



Finding and Matching (PSWFMS)

📍 Islington  
🕒 SERVICE USER FOR: 6 months

ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES ENJOYED OR ACCESSED:  
Tennis, Pedal Power, arts & crafts, games and outing to pubs, restaurants, and day trips.  
AGE: 25

Ian has 21 hours of support every week with Centre 404 and is supported by Finding and Matching to access a variety of community activities.

Shortly after starting support with Centre 404, Ian unfortunately had a family bereavement. This was a great shock for Ian, and it was very sad to lose someone so close to him. Being able to go out into the community with his support workers, helped him to take his mind off what had happened. It was good for him to be able to leave the house during this very stressful period and additional support was implemented to support Ian with bereavement.

Ian has been able to enjoy activities of his choice and despite the lockdown and restrictions, access a variety of community and centre-based activities. Ian's support sessions have enabled him to become more independent and socialise, rather than solely depend on his family members. He plays tennis every Tuesday at Finsbury Park and also attends Pedal Power (an accessible bicycle club) every Tuesday and Saturday. Both activities give Ian opportunities to socialise with others and to make new friends. During lockdown, Ian has done artwork, and played games such as Scrabble at Centre 404. As lockdown comes to an end, Ian will be supported to go on outings to pubs, restaurants, and day trips.

Ian's sisters have told Centre 404 that they do not know what they would have done without Centre 404's support. They were very grateful for the support, especially during their recent bereavement and very pleased that his support was recently increased by ten hours per week.



# Finding and Matching (PSWFMS)

The Finding and Matching service offers a wide range of person-centred support to people with a learning disability and/or autism, who have a personal budget.

We ‘match’ staff to service users, based on variables such as, personality types, shared interests, skills and hobbies. Ideally, we aim to achieve a good fit between staff and service user to ensure positive relationships and outcomes. Support workers can assist in all aspects of peoples’ lives, for instance, searching for a job or volunteering opportunities, paying bills and managing their finances, accessing primary health care services, going on day trips, participating in activities, and making new friends. We also support 28 service users to manage their personal budgets.

Finding and Matching aims to expand within our existing borough of Islington, and other boroughs, to provide person centred outreach support to many more people. Despite the pandemic and lockdown restrictions, the service remained open throughout the year. Although community activities were restricted, service users made excellent use of the Centre 404 building and were able to enjoy individual and socially distanced group activities with their support staff. We implemented telephone and video support for those that were required to stay at home to shield or self-isolate. Thanks to funding from The National Lottery Community Fund we were able to allocate tablets and smartphones to service users that were at risk of digital poverty.



Lekan's photoshoot with the Inside Out Project

FUNDERS:



Lekan's photo on display as part of an exhibition at Kings Cross



Service users receiving tablets to promote digital inclusion

Service Users Supported

47

New Service Users

2

Hours of support delivered weekly

387



# Our Newly Refurbished Building

We are pleased to announce that following the completion of our Phase 3 building works we were able to move back into our main premises, on Camden Road on the 31st July 2020!

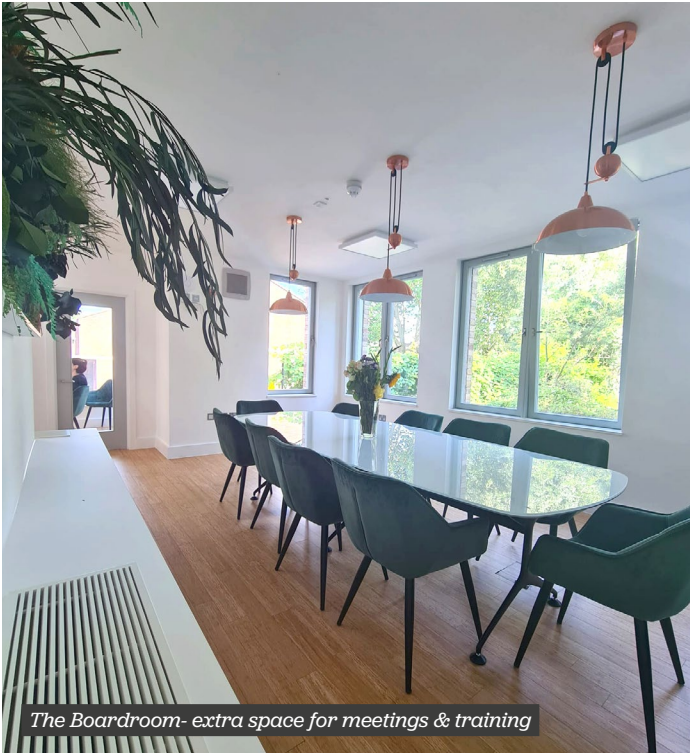
The Phase 3 works have been the largest upgrade to the premises since the charity moved in. The building works were a necessity due to the organisations’ continued growth and expansion over the last few years. The works created additional space to deliver crucial services and for the people who use our services, our staff and volunteers to enjoy.

We first moved out in June 2019 to allow the builders to begin the transformation. There were some delays along the way, the main one being caused by COVID-19 and the fact that it was a complex renovation. However, we were still able to move in back just three months later than originally planned.

### ADDITIONAL SPACES & IMPROVEMENTS

Phase 3 included the building of three new meeting spaces, two additional toilets, and a new staff kitchenette as well as other improvements throughout the building. The dated front façade and forecourt was given a spectacular make-over, including new storage spaces & bike sheds with sedum roofs, an electric charging point, and a new resin driveway to allow for better drainage. The whole front of the main building was repainted, new Victorian-style railings were fitted and the existing 1970’s hall extension was insulated, to not only better heat the room, making it more comfortable for our service users but also allowing it to be painted to better match with the original building.

Next to the hall we installed raised flower beds and a rain garden to house an abundance of seasonal plants and shrubs, which will attract different wildlife throughout the year. Climbing plants and honeysuckle that add texture, encourage invertebrates and obscure less aesthetic areas such as waste bins; were also planted. To help care for these plants we added a large water butt to collect rainwater which will act as an overflow system and feed the plants.



The Boardroom- extra space for meetings & training



Ashley and Ian from our weekly Gardening Group having their temperature checks and sanitising their hands at reception



Sedum roof- preserving wildlife



Our service user Edward making good use of the new bike storage facilities



Greening the balconies



Our Islington play scheme group out enjoying the new front façade of the building







Internally, all the rooms were repainted and the carpets replaced. We reworked the design of our top floor to carve out an additional and much needed small one to one meeting space. The main kitchen on our lower ground floor had a huge makeover too, we fitted heavy-duty steel cupboards, replaced the flooring and installed a new industrial dishwasher.

These improvements have future-proofed this space so it can be used by service users and staff for years to come.

#### ACCESSIBILITY

Another key factor of the improvements was to allow for better accessibility throughout the building. In order to do this, we extended our lift up by another floor, added an ambulant toilet, improved our signage, and installed new lighting in the garden. These improvements make sure that the people we support can access and utilise the building to its full potential year-round.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL

All of the improvements made to the existing spaces and in the newly built spaces were done with the view of being more sustainable and creating a healthier space for, service users, family carers, staff and volunteers to enjoy. We used eco-friendly, non-toxic paint throughout, natural content carpet tiles, natural rubber tiles in the new stairwell and used bamboo flooring in new rooms. We also installed hand driers to reduce the use of paper and ultimately reduce the number of deliveries reducing our carbon footprint further. We made sure all new appliances were rated above A in energy efficiency and installed a new filtered water drinking tap to reduce the use of plastic bottles and the impact on the environment from the chain of supply.

We replaced all the windows at the back of the building with double glazing and installed secondary glazing on the front windows to reduce heat and energy loss. The rooms in the attic received new insulation and the roof was repaired for the first time in over 30 years!

This is all powered by our new Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP). This state-of-the-art technology works using renewable energy by transferring heat from outside the building to inside, whilst also heating the water. To help our ASHP we installed solar panels on the roof which further reduce our energy consumption.



#### HERITAGE

Our premises was built in the 1850s and you will notice from the pictures that we were very sensitive to maintaining the heritage of the building where we could. This included restoring the original door and choosing heritage colours, matching the original window stencil designs, choosing lighting fixtures to match the period of the house and fitting Victorian railings. These improvements were made to be complementary to the original Victorian façade and out of respect for being part of the Hillmarton conservation area. Our building and community “heart centre” is now a future-proofed space for our service users and families to connect, learn and thrive.

*I like the new building because it reminds me of the old one. The new building is easier to get around in.* **SERVICE USER**

*I like the garden. It's nice to have the fresh air and it will be great for a bbq and celebrations. It helps us get out more. It helps us see more and be more active. It's nice. It's a nice place to hangout.*

**SERVICE USER**



# 3 Supporting Families Service



**Boroughs:** Islington, Camden, Tower Hamlets, Haringey



**Family carers active  
in our database:**

1402

**11% more than last year**



**One to one referrals  
for casework support**

712

**2% more than last year**





# Supporting Families Service

The Supporting Families Service provides specialist advice, information and support to families who care for a child or adult with learning disabilities or autism. We also run regular support groups, workshops, and activities; empowering family carers to speak up for their rights and those of other carers.

Our support to family carers is vital to many London families and our projects heavily rely on funding from small Foundations and Trusts.

This year has been like no other, as we were all affected by a pandemic and continuous government restrictions. Everyone had to adapt to a new reality and, as a service provider, we had to change the way we worked very quickly to support family carers effectively and efficiently during one of the most distressing times. We had to quickly change our way of working to the virtual world and offered appointments through skype, zoom and phone.



# COVID-19 Support

We reached out to as many vulnerable family carers as we could in the first months of the pandemic and provided practical support and help with telephone calls, information and advice, emergency grants for food and disability equipment and arranging matching volunteer befrienders.

For many families, support services stopped or were significantly reduced which created new challenges such as: further isolation, lack of access to vital information, digital poverty, decrease of health and wellbeing and bereavement. We kept families up to date with the changes in legislation and benefit system during the pandemic and put on more online workshops and wellbeing activities to give family carers opportunities to take care of themselves, have a virtual chance to socialise and share their concerns.

28 family carers benefited from our new befriending service; receiving a weekly or fortnightly call from a matched volunteer. Many of the volunteers were family carers themselves.

Emergency grants have been given at a higher rate during the COVID-19 outbreak. We used more than half of the funds for the whole year in two months. We are very grateful to the local grant-making funders such as Cloudesley, for topping up the individual grant funds to allow more emergency payments to family carers, and to the Residential Support Scheme for changing the requirements to make the application more accessible.



“ Our family support worker was worried during lockdown that children will not get sensory input. Centre 404 provided sensory equipment as well as an iPad which improved the quality of our lives over lockdown. Thank you, Centre 404, things which seems small can make such a big difference. ”  
FAMILY CARER



**LOTTERY COMMUNITY RESPONSE FUND:**  
This funding covered the core costs of our caseworker and volunteer coordinator during the first months of the pandemic.



**TACKLING DIGITAL POVERTY:**  
funding from Tesco Bags allowed us to purchase and distribute mobile phones and tablets to families in digital poverty.



**THE SOCIAL BOX.BIZ**  
Thanks to our partnership with the social box. biz we now receive deliveries of refurbished laptops to distribute to families.



**CLOUDESLEY EMERGENCY FUND:**  
Centre 404 is a trusted partner to Cloudesley's Charity. We received a top up grant of £10,000 from Cloudesley to increase the hours of one of our staff members to be able to further support our beneficiaries during the Covid outbreak.

**CLOUDESLEY WELFARE GRANTS PROGRAMME:**  
Each year a sum of money is agreed for us to hold and to be distributed when requested to families that fall within the remit of the Trust. Cloudesley agrees this would be a quicker way of getting resources to those in need.

**CLOUDESLEY PRINCIPAL GRANTS FUND:**  
This project was funded by Cloudesley in May 2019 to provide casework support and wellbeing activities for family carers of children and adults with learning disabilities or autism in Islington.



# COVID-19 and Reducing Digital Exclusion Case Studies

## Cleo

Cleo found Centre 404 two years ago when she was looking for support in the area. She recently lost her daughter who she cared for and has been on a lonely desolate journey ever since.

During the coronavirus pandemic, she had to isolate herself and could not visit her son and grandchildren and was struggling to cope. She spent Christmas alone hoping that the coronavirus restrictions will soon end. The carer never owned a laptop, nor does she know how to use one. Thus, she could no longer benefit from our activities the way she used to.

The carer received her first laptop from Centre 404 and although she needed support to learn how to use it, she was tremendously happy about it. She has used to join Centre 404's online workshops and activities.

The carer would also like to video chat with her son and see her two bright grandchildren. She wants to keep track of her doctor appointments and start sending emails like everybody else. Overall, the laptop will help the carer be less isolated and feel more connected to her family and community. The laptop will also enable the carer to be more organised and access the news and weather forecast at any time.

**“** I cannot wait to learn how to use Zoom. I am very grateful for the laptop; it is the best incentive to learn how to use one. **”**

Stock image- service user wished to remain anonymous

**T**he COVID-19 Pandemic has further highlighted how much social connection is increasingly online, and therefore that digital exclusion can be a big driver of isolation and loneliness. One of the ways we tackled this problem was to team up with SocialBox.Biz to distribute refurbished laptops to our family carers. The case studies below demonstrate what the need of our service users are, and where the laptops have been donated to help promote digital inclusion for older people in our community.

## Kathleen

Kathleen is an older carer of her son who is 40 years old. The carer is currently 73 years and has been isolating since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic.

Before the coronavirus pandemic, the carer did not need a laptop, nor did she know how to use one. However, being completely cut-off from her usual daily routine which did not rely on technology, the carer lost her point of references. She could no longer go out to buy groceries, nor could she arrange food deliveries. The carer had to rely on friends to drop her off food which was not ideal. Additionally, the carer was feeling isolated from her community and was unable to benefit from Centre 404's weekly activities and workshops.

Thanks to the laptop received, the carer can now order food without relying on anyone. Although she is still learning how to use her computer efficiently, the carer reported finding it immensely helpful. Unlike before, the carer can now open and reply to her emails. She can easily stay informed of her doctor appointments and regularly access the latest updates and information on local news and services. The carer has also reported using the laptop to entertain herself while she is isolated. She can now watch a wide range of videos and listen to her favourite music.

Stock image- service user wished to remain anonymous



# Groups and Activities

**T**his year Centre 404 offered regular coffee mornings, information sessions and well-being activities. We ran regular wellbeing events where families had a chance to relax, socialise and look after themselves.

Some of the activities included: mindfulness, crafts, meditation, music sessions, zumba, yoga, online tours and coffee mornings, both virtually and at different parks during the summer of 2020.



**Wellbeing Events**

45

- 1 international women’s day event with coffee morning and mindfulness.
- 1 week of daily events around Carers Rights Day focusing on information, meditation and arts and crafts.
- 4 wellbeing events on Carers Day around music, crafts, and Zumba.
- 5 Zumba sessions.
- 30 Yoga sessions.
- 2 Online tours of the museum including arts and crafts activities for children.
- 2 mindfulness sessions with parents and children.
- Festive gift distribution to 15 family carers and their cared for.




**“** I had a very positive experience; Centre 404 changed my life. I learnt how to not stress. Amazing service for parents. Staff are patient, professional, and helpful. **”**

**FAMILY CARER**

## Coffee Mornings

24



- 13 online weekly coffee mornings in the beginning of the pandemic.
- 5 coffee mornings with Haringey carers.
- 2 coffee mornings with Enfield carers supported by Peer Volunteers.
- 2 coffee mornings with male carers.
- 2 picnics in the park with Camden carers.

# Workshops and Support Groups

## Counselling and Coaching Sessions:

Due to the demand for emotional support, we organised and ran a course of counselling and coaching sessions facilitated by two trained family carers.

- 20 families benefited.
- 10 carers received 6-weeks of counselling sessions.
- 10 carers received 6-weeks of coaching sessions.

Funding from CAFT covered staff training for advice services as well as counselling and coaching sessions for family carers.

## Workshops: 6 in total

- Disability benefits and Covid
- Impacts of the Covid 19 Act on the Care Act
- Flexibility at work in Covid times
- 1 workshop around mental health and depression
- 1 workshop around dealing with anxiety
- 1 workshop around managing conflict and mediation

## Drop-ins: 35 in total

Reaching out to family carers in their local community.

- 30 Haringey drop ins online and socially distanced in a park with between 4 and 7 LD carers attending each session
- 2 online information sessions at Swiss Cottage with 4 professionals and 3 family carers
- 3 parent meetings in Hackney and Islington schools



## Support Groups

- 6 sessions of the ASC for Tea group for parents of people with autism. The donation from the Mayor of Islington supported the delivery of our autism support group.
- 4 Sessions of an informal LD for Tea group for parents of people with learning disabilities.

Both groups provided an opportunity to share information, tips and advice between parents and professionals.

## Support to older family carers

- 24 new family carers aged 76+ accessing the service
- 85 new family carers aged 61-75 accessing the service
- Weekly drop ins at the park and online

## Support to family carers age 65+:

A three year grant was offered by City Bridge Trust to offer outreach and support to carers over the age of 65, across the London boroughs of Camden, City of London, Haringey and Islington. We received a continuation of funding for two further years in October 2019.





Supporting Families

📍 **Islington**  
🕒 **SERVICE USER FOR: 7 years**  
**AGE: 43**

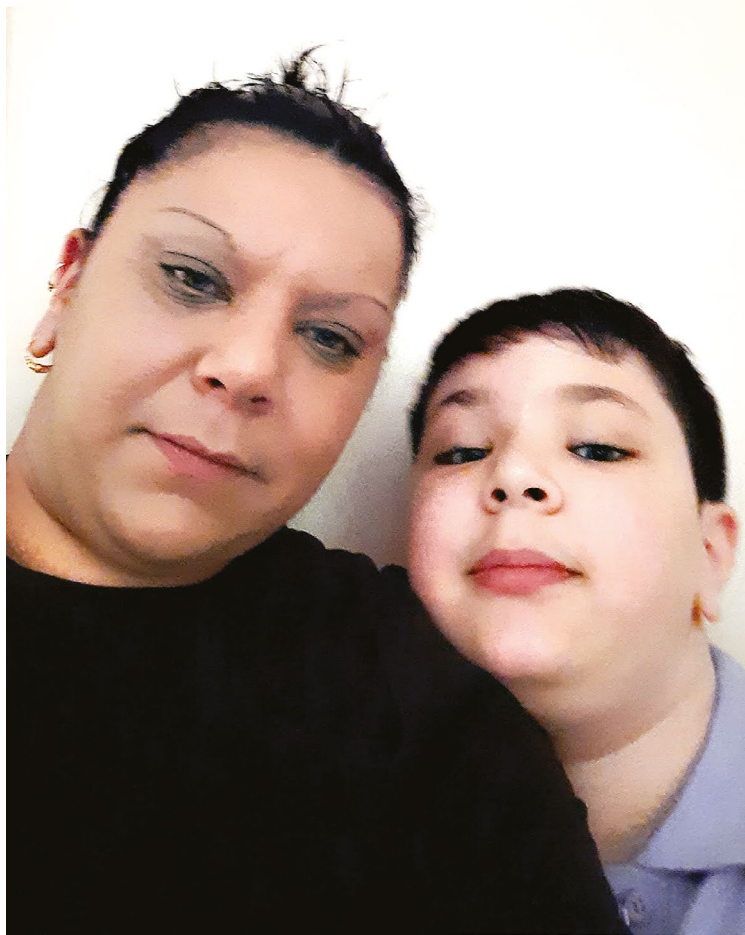
**L**isa found Centre 404 7 years ago when she was looking for support in her caring role. Lisa is the mother and carer of Johnny, who is 10 years old and has learning disabilities and autism. At first, Lisa was experiencing a great deal of stress and anxiety relating to her work and caring responsibilities. She was struggling to understand Johnny’s condition and unsure how to get the right support for him.

Furthermore, Lisa was facing financial pressures to meet the costs of disability-related spending. This was worsened by the pandemic in which she saw her working hours being reduced. Additionally, Johnny stopped going to school and was eating all his meals at home. This resulted in Lisa having income problems and struggling to afford even the basics for her household. For instance, she was unable to buy a laptop, although she desperately needed it for her work. She had to resort to using her phone for many consecutive hours, which took a toll on her physical and mental health.

Due to her work commitments, Lisa could only join a few coffee mornings organised by the Supporting Families Team. However, she reported finding them very useful as she learnt a lot about Johnny’s condition. Lisa also found the opportunity to meet other family carers who are always exchanging wholesome advice and sharing their experiences.

Throughout the pandemic, Centre 404 also supported Lisa to maximise her income to meet her household expenses. We successfully helped her apply for a grant that allowed her to buy groceries for a few weeks. Furthermore, her family also benefitted from a food parcel delivery, which enabled her to save some money for her personal shopping. Centre 404 was also successful in putting together a grant application for a laptop to support Lisa. Lisa can now use her new laptop to work from home comfortably. She is also now reassured as she has a support network she can turn to in times of difficulty. She is less anxious and more confident in her abilities to care for Johnny.

Lisa



“My family and I are quite impressed. We think Centre 404’s support is really good, and we are happy and pleased that we are receiving support from you. Whether it is grants, the laptop or any other way you have supported me across the years, thank you.”

Leanne



Stock image- service user wished to remain anonymous

Income Maximisation

📍 **Camden**  
🕒 **SERVICE USER FOR: 6 years**  
**AGE: 43**

**L**eanne is the mother of two disabled children. Her son Corey, 11 years old, has severe learning disabilities, and her daughter Riann, 15 years old, has autism. Leanne has been on a long, lonely journey to get the right support for her children and really struggled to obtain the information she needed around autism and learning disabilities.

Leanne was finding it hard to understand her children’s conditions and cope with the emotional and physical demands of caring for them. This resulted in Leanne being isolated for a long time as she did not have contacts within the local authority nor a peer network. During the first lockdown, Leanne was shielding with her children due to her daughter’s needs. For almost six months Leanne could not leave her house, which was extremely distressing. This isolation caused Leanne income issues and she was struggling with the lack of emergency supplies due to the prolonged registration of her extremely vulnerable daughter by the government. The children became more anxious as they couldn’t go out and it became increasingly challenging to stimulate and entertain them.

Throughout the years, Leanne has been attending several workshops and coffee mornings organised by the Supporting Families team and support from us continued and adapted during the pandemic. This support has helped her learn more about her children’s conditions to better cope with their needs and relate to other family carers who share similar circumstances.

Centre 404 has helped Leanne to maximise her income and secure new activities for her children. She was supported to change her daughter’s DLA to be awarded more money and we invited her to our parents forum where she could liaise with the Strategy and Commissioning Manager from Islington Council. Thereupon, Leanne gained a grant which allowed her to buy a bike for Corey, and a piano for Riann, which they both now regularly enjoy. Leanne now feels less anxious and more confident about her children’s conditions and benefits from a solid support network.

“Centre 404 has done a lot for me over the years and especially during this pandemic. They have supported me filling up forms such as my children’s DLA. They also helped me with other things that I have going on, or whenever I am seeking some advice. So, I feel Centre 404 has gone above and beyond really.”

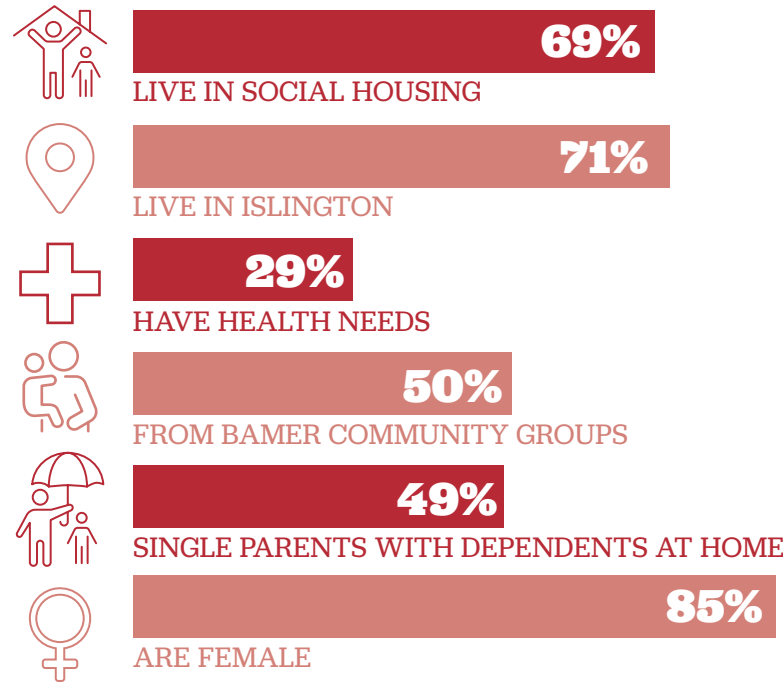


# Casework Support & Income Maximisation

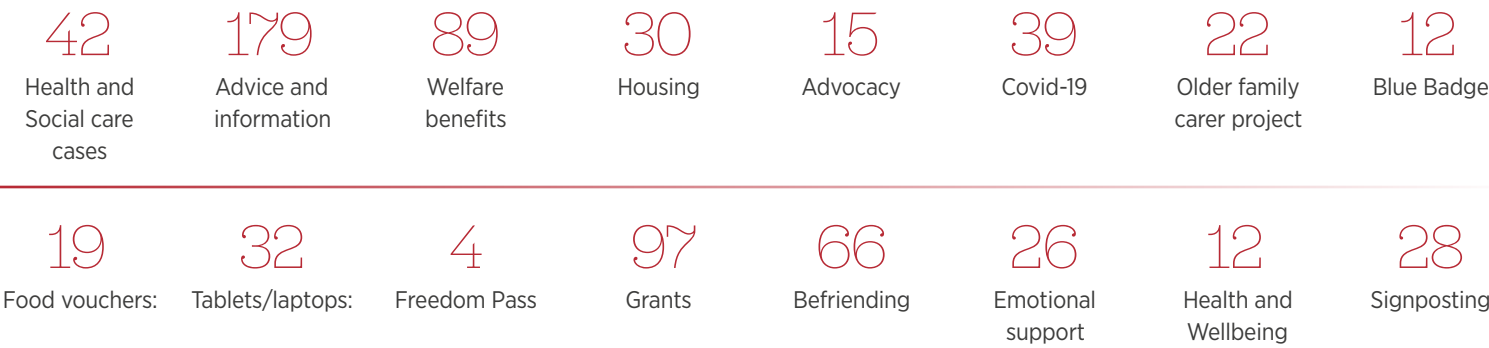
This year the most common issues that family carers needed support with were their welfare benefits and practical support around grants. The pandemic hit our service user households very hard, which was reflected in the support we provided through casework referrals. Emotional support, befriending, housing advice, personal budgets, and digital inclusion were also equally important.

712  
referrals from families

### OF THE 712 REFERRALS FROM FAMILIES:



### BREAKDOWN OF THE 712 INDIVIDUAL REFERRALS:



I am very grateful for the support. Talking with my caseworker about my situation is like talking to my sister, as I can tell her anything and be honest and not feel ashamed or embarrassed about it or my English language.

I know that my caseworker will understand and not judge me and will support my family the best way she can. I always feel happier after our calls and my caseworker gives me hope.

I talk about her with my family at home and they said what a lovely lady she must be, and I never had a caseworker like her. Thank you.

FAMILY CARER RECEIVING CASEWORK SUPPORT

This year Centre 404 helped families generate a total of :

£653,961.02

- Breakdown of total:
- PIP £163,038.2
  - DLA £455,681.2
  - ESA £3,884.4
  - Grants £9958.70
  - Universal credit £21,398.52



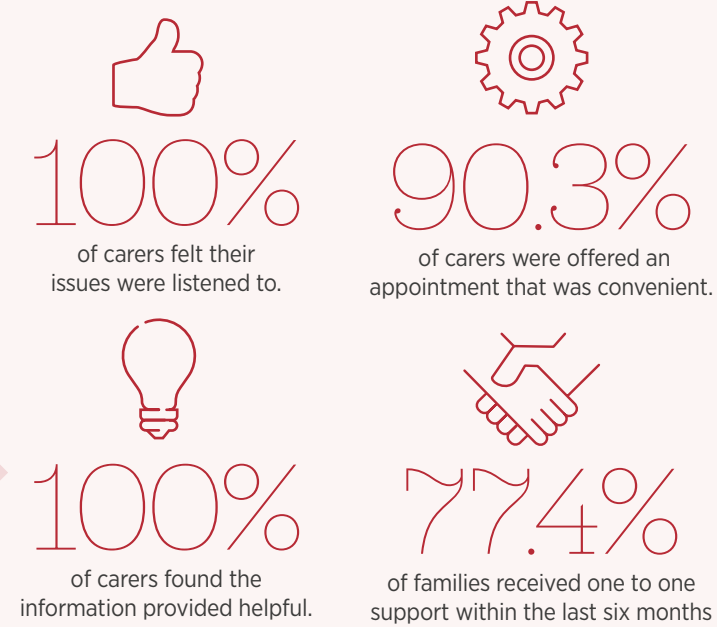
# Coproduction

## Supporting Families Yearly Evaluation 2020/21

As part of our commitment to ensure we continue to listen to the views of the people that we support, we surveyed 47 family carers. We also gathered feedback at the end of activities, workshops, and casework support sessions whenever possible.

Overall, the evaluation of our service has provided extremely positive feedback and insights into how our performance as a service is viewed by the community as well as helpful suggestions on how we can improve.

### HIGHLIGHTS:



## Peer to Peer Support

The Peer Volunteer Project has always been a valued one at Centre 404 as it is an important and effective tool for coproduction and utilising service users own wisdom, knowledge and empathy to support others in a similar situation.

This year it continued to give our volunteers the opportunity to support each other and contribute to their community. It gave them a purpose and a chance to share their valuable experiences.

This year we were also funded to employ a Peer Coordinator for 6 months who supported and recruited new peer volunteers. These volunteers have supported the service with casework support, befriending, and delivering information sessions, such as two workshops on Learning Disability and Autism Awareness coproduced and delivered to GP surgeries.



One of our peer volunteers Djamila receiving her tablet to help promote digital inclusion

**PEER TO PEER PROJECT:** Funding from the Lottery Awards For All allowed us to develop and maintain a Peer to Peer project which included parents delivering training, casework support, outreach and awareness sessions.



Our 'Fun with Science Day' done in partnership with the Learning & Leisure Service

## Speak Up Groups – Have Your Say: 12 in total

Six meetings of the Family Carer Reference Group + 4 focus groups + 4 partnership board meetings Funded by Islington Council to support carers of adults with learning disabilities to get involved with decision making and policy consultation in Islington.



## Six monthly meetings of the IPCF

With between 7 and 24 parents attending each meeting. This year we have supported the Islington Parent Carer Forum to move into a more independent module. Today, the Forum is fully led by parent carers and supported by Centre 404.



## Forum and focus groups

Funded by the Department for Education for parents of children with any special needs and disabilities. We facilitate a forum and focus groups to encourage parent participation in policy consultations and to influence local policy within Islington.



## Collaboration with Learning & Leisure

We partnered with the Leisure & Learning Service and jointly delivered a few arts and craft sessions for the whole family and shared resources for the benefit of all of our Centre 404 users and their families.



# 4 Volunteers



**Total  
Volunteers**

159

**2020/2021**



**Current  
Volunteers**

121

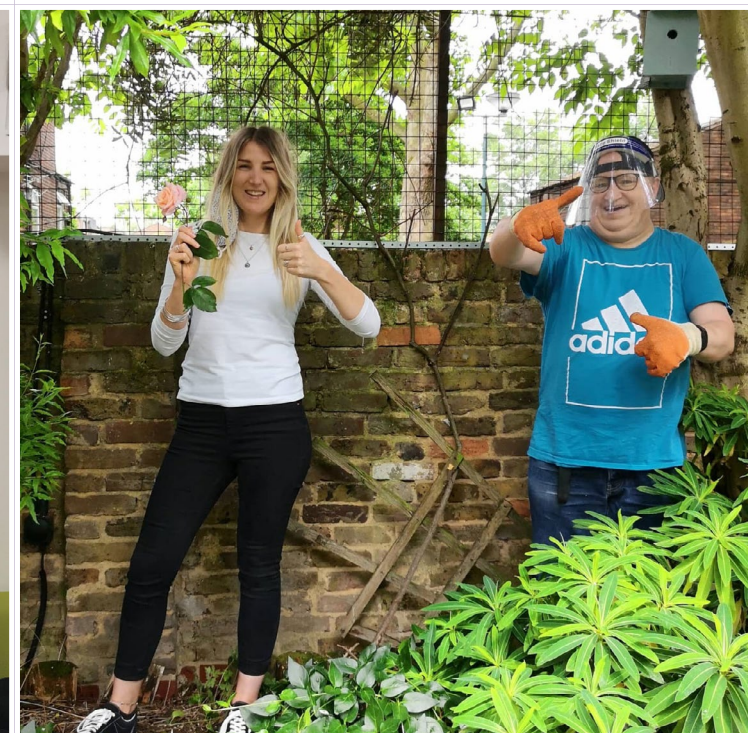
**increase from  
89 last year**



**Of which have  
a learning disability**

27%

**33 out of 121**







Digital Transformation Volunteer Neil and his son Joe at one of our Garden Volunteer Days



One of our service user Receptionist Volunteers Judith with Alexa

# Volunteering with Centre 404

**V**olunteers have always been at the heart of what we do at Centre 404, and it has been inspirational this year to see the whole world realise the true value of volunteers to our communities. Time and time again throughout this challenging period we have been awe-inspired by how the community, and volunteers especially, have rallied round in times of need.

Our main objective this year was to help support our key frontline services throughout the pandemic, helping to fill gaps in provision caused by additional needs and ever-changing priorities in an uncertain time. We also successfully fulfilled our ambitious target of increasing our young volunteer base to over 40 for 2020/21 as part of our Jack Petchey Giving Something Back Grant. We were delighted to successfully achieve our Investing in Volunteers reaccreditation in October 2020 as well, demonstrating our continued commitment to supporting an exceptional volunteer experience even in the face of COVID-19.

Our initial COVID-19 volunteering response, such as vital shopping deliveries to vulnerable people, telephone and video befriending and virtual Zoom activities befriending, have mostly continued to this day in line with changing needs and requirements. Telephone befriending has continued to prove popular and successful, with many distance befriending relationships still active now in summer 2021. We have had a total of 19 telephone befrienders involved and 33 service user befriendees. We also had a successful Dog Befriending Volunteer, who through the last long lockdown provided a much-needed different activity. Service users at our Leigh Road Supported Living Project enjoyed going for socially distanced dog walks out and about in the community and the friendly interaction with the befriender and her dog.

As we moved towards reopening our clubs and activities in September the recruitment of 7 Travel Buddy Volunteers was particularly important. It was also wonderful to be able to engage with our service user volunteers again as they were eager to get back involved with the community, see their friends face to face and have something meaningful to do after months indoors. For example, we were thrilled to welcome back our Gardening Group in August 2020, which is primarily made up of volunteers with a learning disability. As we moved into 2021 and more of our office staff started working from the building again, we also started work placements on our reception, which three of our young service users are now benefitting from.



Christina out and about with Guizmo as part of the Dog Support Volunteering

**“**Without the Travel Buddies, due to social distancing rules on minibuses, many of our club members would have been unable to attend when we reopened. The pairs have been hugely successful and travel buddies have been increasing their confidence and independence with travel as well.**”**

**JOSIE, VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR**

As part of the Jack Petchey Project, we also organised a youth Social Action Project delivered solely by 9 of our service user volunteers. This project included our young people creating small gifts, craft kits and personalised cards to send out to family carers identified as particularly vulnerable or isolated during the last long winter lockdown.

We have also been extremely lucky in having some highly skilled volunteers contributing to our community over the last year. Neil, our Digital Transformation Volunteer, has been working many hours to transform our technology systems. Also Kata, our Graphic Design Volunteer, has created some beautiful and engaging posters, fundraising promotions and even our special AGM invitations.



## Young Volunteers Project

**FUNDER: JACK PETCHEY'S GIVING SOMETHING BACK GRANT**

44

**young volunteers  
(up from 17 the year before)**

1845

**total hours of  
volunteer work**





Volunteer

📍 Islington

★ **ROLE AT CENTRE 404:**  
Travel Buddy, Telephone Befriender, Children and Young People Activities Assistant at afterschool clubs and holiday play schemes.

🕒 **VOLUNTEERING SINCE:** March 2020

**A**tlanta applied to volunteer right at the start of the pandemic in March 2020 and started as a Telephone Befriender for vulnerable and isolated family carers. She then moved on to support our Children and Young People's clubs through Travel Buddying and activity support both at our term time clubs and our holiday play schemes. She has been an invaluable volunteer to us, always going the extra mile and giving 200% to make our service users feel happy, safe, and supported.

Atlanta is a neurodiverse person and has an ADHD and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) diagnosis, having been diagnosed very late in life in her mid-30s. This is much more common with women who are often underdiagnosed for ASD. Atlanta shared that after diagnosis it felt overwhelming reliving certain moments in her life that she could have done differently, and also how some people's reaction of how she seems "quite normal" have felt very dismissive. She explains how she understands that diagnosis can be very affirming for lots of people, however she feels more comfortable in owning being neurodiverse over any other label or diagnosis. Atlanta importantly described; "I love my brain but I get frustrated with it sometimes", as she finds it difficult to read between the lines.

At Centre 404 though, she explained how she feels comfortable, accepted, and understood, and how her anxiety goes right down as soon as she walks through the door. She described how supporting the young people at Centre 404 became her favourite volunteering role and helped her get through the lockdowns. She reflected how she loves supporting their talents and that "I am honoured to work with them." She also describes proudly how they can do things that she couldn't do; how articulate they are and how safe they feel to contribute in the group.



Atlanta started volunteering to help out and not to build her experience or CV as she has always been a successful freelance artist. She had no experience working with children and was unsure of her abilities when first asked to do the Travel Buddy volunteering. However, she was encouraged by our Volunteer Coordinator that she could excel in the role and had the opportunity to meet the young people and start slow. She explained how important it was to be eased in, made to feel comfortable and how she trusted us as a charity.

Starting slowly gave her the confidence to have now successfully applied to be a Support Worker, a role she started in April 2021. We know that we can gain a lot from supporting people like Atlanta into Support Worker positions within our charity. We will be continuing to support recruitment in this way, offering opportunities to people within the community and accessing a talented pool of people that perhaps might not have previously considered Support Work as a valuable and well-suited career path.

“ I feel safe, comfortable and understood [at Centre 404], my anxiety goes right down as soon as I walk through the door. ”

Volunteer

📍 Islington

★ **ROLE AT CENTRE 404:**  
Travel Buddy and Children and Young People Activities Assistant at afterschool clubs and holiday play schemes.

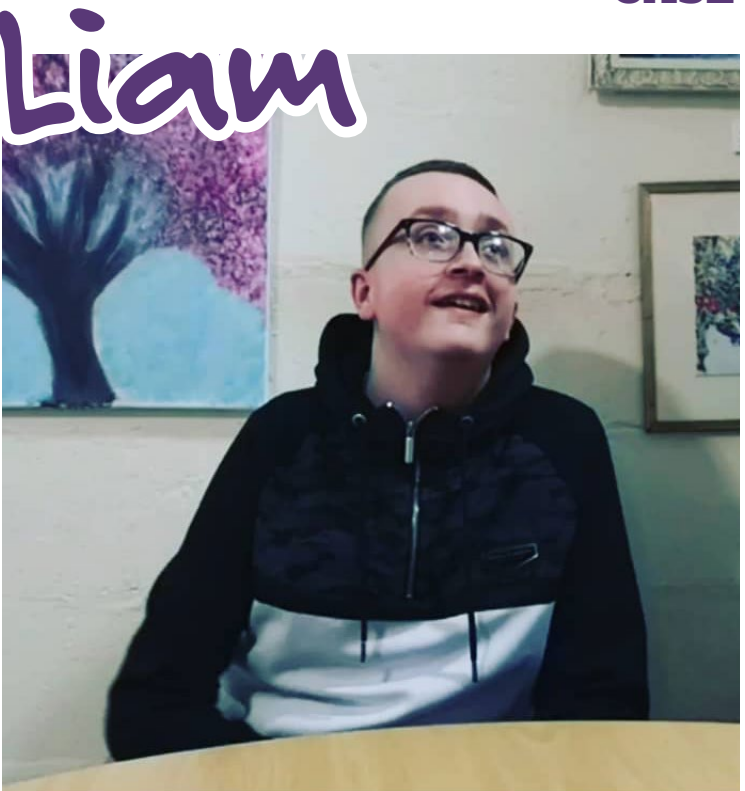
🕒 **VOLUNTEERING SINCE:** November 2019

**L**iam has been a member of Centre 404 since he was a child, and it has been truly inspirational to see the responsible and caring young man he is turning into. Liam is a great example of the long-term support that Centre 404 can provide and what it truly means to give back to your community.

Liam, now 18 years old, deservedly won both our Jack Petchey Star Volunteer Award from the Giving Something Back Project, as well as our Centre 404 Volunteer of the Quarter for February 2021. He can be very proud of the passion and enthusiasm he's shown for volunteering and to giving back to the clubs that he has come through himself.

As soon as he started in 2019 he has been an excellent role model for the younger service users at the afterschool clubs and holiday play schemes. They respect and listen to him, and he provides positive support and is very patient and empathetic. He is also very responsible and very aware of safeguarding and care. These young people have made huge positive improvements since being supported by Liam.

During the pandemic he then stepped up into the responsible role of Travel Buddy Volunteer and helped two of his peers to become more confident, with one of them now able to travel independently.



10

**Volunteers successfully recruited as staff since 2019, including three family carers and one service user.**

“ It's actually fun to volunteer to build up confidence, learn new skills and even to put it on your CV. I just think you should go for it! ”

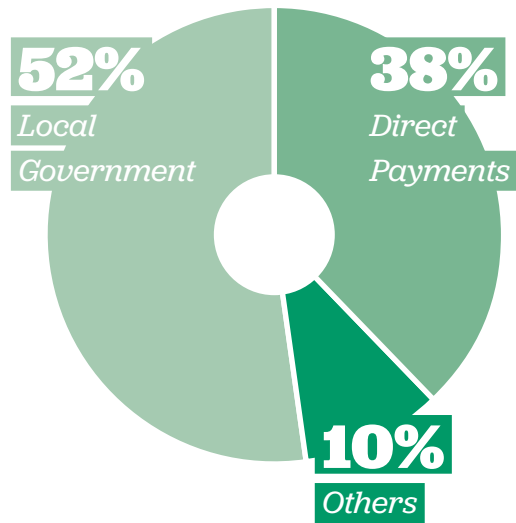
I feel safe, comfortable and understood [at Centre 404], my anxiety-



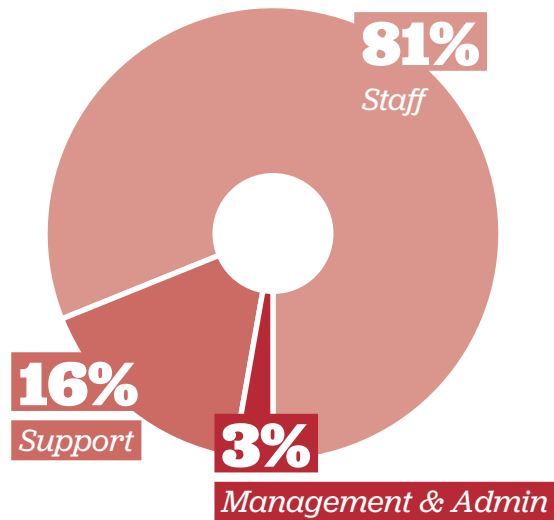
# Money Counts

## Independent Living and Housing Related Support Services

+ Where the money comes from		
DESCRIPTION	VALUE	%
Local Government	£2,708,004	52%
Direct Payments and Spot Contract	£1,981,730	38%
Others	£505,597	10%
TOTAL	£5,195,331	100%

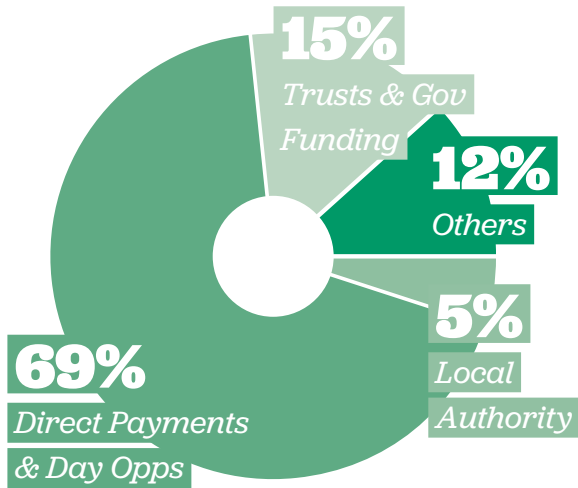


- How the money is spent		
DESCRIPTION	VALUE	%
Staff	£4,071,673	81%
Support	£811,572	16%
Management and Administration	£93,791	3%
TOTAL	£4,977,036	100%

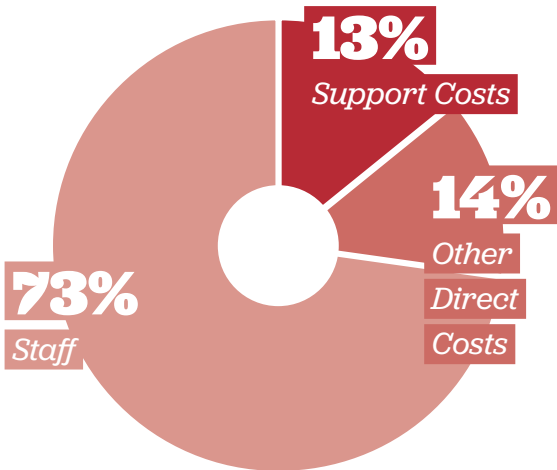


## Learning & Leisure and Family Support

+ Where the money comes from		
Description	VALUE	%
Trusts & Government Funding	£211,585	15%
Local Authority	£60,545	5%
Direct Payments & Day Opps	£958,016	69%
Others	£166,307	12%
TOTAL	£1,396,453	101%



- How the money is spent		
Description	VALUE	%
Staff	£830,498	73%
Other Direct Costs	£164,825	14%
Support Costs	£147,866	13%
TOTAL	£1,143,189	100%



MESSAGE FROM THE TREASURER: **DEREK WEIST**

**C**entre 404 continues to expand. Annual revenue is now more than £6 million. We achieved a surplus for the year, despite the challenges of Covid. We were helped significantly by some of our major funders who provided additional money to cover higher staff costs and protective equipment costs. This allowed us to continue with our support for our service users and their families during this difficult time. Our reserves remain healthy and we look forward to expanding and improving our services to the community over the coming years.



# Thank you!

On behalf of all of us here at Centre 404, we would like to thank all the funders and partners

## Thank You Funders

Cloudesley Welfare Grants Programme,  
Cloudesley Principal Grants Fund,  
Lottery Awards for All, The National Lottery Community Fund,  
BBC Children in Need,  
Islington Giving,  
Young Catalyst Programme,  
Jack Petchey, Individual Personal Budgets, CAFT,  
Mayor of Islington, Islington Council,  
Camden Council, Haringey Council, Hackney Council,  
Enfield Council,  
Department for Education,  
Good Things Foundation,  
City Bridge Trust, Lottery Community Response Fund,  
Cloudesley Emergency Fund,  
Tesco Bags of Help

## Accreditors



## Training Partnership



## Thank You Community Partners:

Socialbox.Biz, Brickworks Community Centre, Kentish Town Community Centre, The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, Pedal Power, Friday Night Social DJ Kevin, St Luke`s Church, Williamson Street Community Centre, The Charlie Ratchford Community Centre, Islington Play Association, Lumpy Hill Playground, Samuel Rhodes School, Oaktree School Enfield, The Bridge London Trust, Matthew Anthony, Short Breaks Islington, Camden and Enfield Council

We would also like to thank the community fundraisers and volunteers who have given their time to help Centre 404.

Finally thanks to Tim and the designers at Pinup Design for helping to create this annual review.

## Phase 3 Funders



# Message from the Chair

Having been chair of Centre 404 three times, and now completing the tenth year of this term, I feel the time is right for me to retire. These past ten years have been wonderful, often exciting, always challenging, and I have been very proud to be part of it.

During the last decade, we have successfully completed major phased works to refurbish inside and outside the building, added rooms and overall improved our much-loved building. Now, it better reflects our values and aspirations and will be a wonderful legacy for many generations to come.

Our roots are still in Islington, but our reputation and reach has grown beyond the borough. We now work across north London boroughs which means we are reaching more people and families who might need our unique brand of support. But despite our expansion over the past ten years, we have maintained our core values and commitment to our ‘customers,’ people with learning disabilities and their family carers - involvement rather than just paying lip service. This starts from the level of governance of the organisation where currently over half of the board are family carers or service users.

I was very proud of being awarded The Freedom of The Borough of Islington in 2013, which reflected the work done by Centre 404. That same year, sadly my daughter Victoria died, and I entered, and won the Linda McEnhill award for her exceptional End-of-Life work done by Centre 404’s Independent Living and Supported Housing team.

For many years, I have also helped to run a team of volunteers for the garden and enjoyed every moment working with our learning-disabled members and other volunteers. We have cared for and loved our garden which gives joy and happiness to so many people. I hope someone takes on this baton.

I would like to acknowledge and thank all our exceptional staff, now and down the years. Staff who have been loyal and gone that extra mile, which includes our incredible CEO Linda. Thanks also to all the volunteers for their hard work and commitment; family carers and members who give their time, energy, and commitment to Centre 404.



A big thank you to our very skilled board of trustees, for their wisdom, tenacity and commitment having taken Centre 404 through some major decisions and changes. Thank you all!

Whilst there are children and adults with learning disabilities and autism in North London, there will always be demands for our services. I am confident that Centre 404 will continue to provide exceptionally good services, and help each other navigate what can be some very difficult times and share the good times.

Looking back over the fifty years I have been involved with Centre 404, it is incredible how far we have come, the completion of the building and the impressive growth of our services. Centre 404 has played such a major part in my life, and I cannot ever see a time without it. It’s been my passion, my hobby, my work and focus, and I love it, but now is the time for change. Although I will not be disappearing, I will find another role within this wonderful organisation which remains in my hearts’ centre.

Jean Willson OBE



# Tribute to our Chair

## Jean Willson OBE

**I** am, like many others, sad to see Jean stepping down as Chair this autumn after many years of dedicated service and we will certainly miss her indomitable energy. Incredibly, her contribution to Centre 404 goes back just over 50 years when she first came to the charity seeking support as a young parent carer of her daughter Victoria.

Over the years Jean immersed herself in all aspects of the charity. She volunteered for many different roles and became well known both locally and nationally as a strong advocate and activist for family carers' rights. Throughout the decades of various campaigns, fundraising events and her day to day involvement, her dedication and passion for the work of Centre 404 remained consistent and steadfast.

All the books and theories on running effective charities tell you that the relationship between the Chair and CEO is vital to the success of an organisation. I now know this to be true. Jean and I have been a great team so I believe this relationship played an important part in the way Centre 404 has thrived over the past 10 years. More than that Jean has been a mentor and inspiration to me and many others in the learning disability community.

Her expert by experience as a family carer, as well as her vast professional knowledge of learning disabilities issues especially around the support of families has been invaluable. Much harder to quantify, but no less important is the heart and soul Jean brought to Centre 404.



Jean and Linda

She always guided us back to the core of our mission and ensured service users and family carers were first and central to every decision and action. Due in no small part to her influence we continue to have strong representation of service users and family carers on the board of trustees. In addition, we have service users and family carers involved in subcommittees and other groups pertinent to the running of the organisation.

Jean was awarded an OBE in 2013 for her services to people with learning disabilities and their family carers. This was a much deserved recognition and all of us at Centre 404 were immensely proud.

Much more detail and stories about Jean's involvement and achievements over the years will be presented on our website. We also plan to record an interview with her as part of a wider project with other family carers to commemorate the charity's 70th anniversary in the coming year. I also have it on good authority that Jean will shortly be completing her memoirs and I know it will be a fascinating and colourful read.

Now it just remains for me to pass on a huge heartfelt thanks to Jean on behalf of everyone at Centre 404 for her Chairing role. However, although her tenure as Chair is coming to an end we look forward to maintaining contact with Jean in the new ambassadorial role of President for Centre 404.

**Linda McGowan**  
CEO







***Supporting people with learning  
disabilities, autism & their families***

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