

Everyone should
be able to
hangout with
their *best friend*

2023/2024 Annual Review



Hammersmith and Fulham Mencap

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Everyone
deserves to
have their
voice heard

Purpose and Activity



Hammersmith and Fulham Mencap aims to support autistic individuals and people living with learning disabilities and their families in West London. Through offering assistance, combating discrimination, and providing leisure activities to enhance their lives.

This is achieved by promoting equal access to housing, employment, health services, education, and leisure, ensuring inclusion in the community, respect for rights, and active participation in decision-making.

The services and activities are personalised for adults and children with disabilities, along with their carers, focusing on equal opportunities and community inclusion.

What is a learning disability?

A learning disability is a reduced intellectual ability and difficulty with everyday activities – for example household tasks, socialising or managing money – which affects someone for their whole life.

People with a learning disability tend to take longer to learn and may need support to develop new skills, understand complicated information and interact with other people.

Different types of learning disability

There are different types of learning disability, which can be mild, moderate, severe or profound. In all cases a learning disability is lifelong.

It can be difficult to diagnose a mild learning disability, as the individual will often mix well with others and be able to cope with most everyday tasks. However, they may need support in other areas of their life, such as filling out forms.

People with a severe learning disability or profound and multiple learning disability (PMLD) will need more care and support in areas such as mobility, personal care and communication. People with a moderate learning disability may also need support in these areas, but not definitely.



What is autism?

Autism is a lifelong developmental disability that impacts communication and interaction with the world. Its definition has evolved and may continue to change as understanding deepens. We often find that autistic people or people with learning disabilities and their families regardless of their support needs share many of the same challenges. We will continue to fight to make society work for autistic people.

What support is needed?

The level of support someone needs depends on the individual. For example, someone with a mild learning disability may only need support with things like getting a job. However, someone with a severe or profound learning disability may need fulltime care and support with every aspect of their life – they may also have physical disabilities.

People with certain specific conditions can have a learning disability too. For example, people with Down syndrome and some people with autism have a learning disability.

What about Learning difficulties?

Learning disability and learning difficulties are different.

Mencap describes dyslexia as a “learning difficulty” because, unlike learning disability, it does not affect intellect.

CEO Report



Tim Balogun,
HF Mencap CEO.

I want to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt thanks and deep gratitude to our trustees, members, volunteers, and staff. Your unwavering dedication and tireless efforts are the foundation of our work, driving positive change and delivering activities that profoundly impact people's lives.

Our charity stands out in many ways, and it is only by experiencing our 'family' in action that one can truly appreciate why our specialised services are in such high demand. The enthusiastic response we receive from those we serve demonstrates the unique nature of our work and the results we achieve.



Despite the challenges of a tough fundraising environment and the impacts of the cost of living crisis on both our beneficiaries and our staff, our commitment to our mission has not wavered. We continue to collaborate closely with our Local Authority and partners; striving to offer creative and effective services to as many families as possible.

As one of our Senior Service staff members insightfully remarked: "The impact our service has on clients with disabilities and their families is immense. For many individuals we support, HF Mencap provides their only social outlet outside of home. Here, they have the chance to try new activities, form friendships, and enjoy experiences that help reduce their sense of isolation."

The period 2023 – 2024 has been particularly productive for us, with a strong focus on co-production and the importance of lived experience.

These principles are essential for developing programs that genuinely meet the needs and desires of our clients and their families. Their feedback provides us with invaluable insights, ensuring that our services remain relevant and impactful.

Our strategic themes, which are set by our dedicated staff and board, continue to drive our activities. These themes are crucial as we work towards our vision of an equal and inclusive society for people with disabilities.

Each initiative and program we undertake is aligned with these strategic goals, ensuring that our efforts contribute meaningfully to creating a more equitable future.

I hope you find this report illuminating as you read about the significant impact our services have on individuals with learning disabilities and autism. It is through the collective effort of our entire community that we achieve such remarkable outcomes, and for this, I am profoundly grateful.



**Thank you once again for
your unwavering support
and dedication to our
mission.**

**Tim Balogun,
HF Mencap CEO.**



Parent/Carer Services

**Everyone
should have a
*support network***



Parentsactive



This has been a period of change for Parentsactive.

We had started thinking about moving out independently during this financial year and started the process of becoming a Community Interest company. This involved discussions with HF Mencap and other stakeholders including funders. Parent/Carer advocacy was also involved in the discussions of moving over to the new Parentsactive CIC.

We finally became a Community Interest company on 9th December 2023 and started the TUPE process of moving 4 employees to the newly formed Parentsactive CIC

Family Hubs

Parentsactive was involved in the development of Family Hubs and was funded to ensure that the Family Hubs development was coproduced with residents. We worked alongside Action on Disability and Young Hammersmith Fulham Foundation and organised a series of coproduction sessions and fun days to ensure residents voices were heard throughout. We also took part in coproduction training and contributed to the Family Hubs charter.

Well Being project

Parentsactive organised the Physical and Mental Health well being sessions for parents in 3 blocks. Around 36 parents benefitted from the session which ended in November 2023. This was in partnership with HFEH Mind and Chelsea Foundation. The funding for the sessions has been extended to March 2025.

Partners in Change Initiative

The Partners in Change Initiative was started in 2023 to ensure that Parentsactive captures the views of all residents with disabilities, not just learning disabilities and autism. This would involve Parentsactive chairing the meetings with other voluntary sector organisations who support residents and ensure that the voices from the ground is captured. We held 3 meetings on varying topics including School avoidance, mental health and Early years and will be relaunching the meeting in the new financial year.



Workstreams

The service plays a key role in developing services related to disability by participating in various workstreams, including Independent Living, Inclusive Employment, Autism Strategy, and Preparation for Adulthood. Our involvement led to the establishment of a Transitions team, the co-design of a complex autism centre, discussions on therapy transformation, and contributions to SEND sufficiency consultations. We organised sessions for parents, such as ‘Meet the Commissioners’, ‘Understanding the Care Act’, and ‘Planning for Adulthood’. In summer 2023, we held a conference focusing on transitions for parents and health and social care colleagues.

Grants and funders

Funds directly to parentsactive from grants and contracts

£32,617

LBHF 3rd sector investment funds

Parentsactive

£26,000

Parent/ carer advocacy

£42,000

realising our children's rights

parents active

Parent/Carer Advocate

The service made a significant impact by supporting 31 clients, achieving several notable successes:

- 12 families were assisted under either a Child Protection or Child in Need Plan.
- 2 families successfully brought their young person back to school, collaborating with the school for necessary adjustments.
- 24 families experienced positive outcomes related to housing repairs or relocations due to safeguarding concerns.
- 7 families received aid in applying for adaptations to ensure their young disabled person could remain at home.
- 6 families transitioned to Independent Living with our support.



One sibling remarked, "The service is very accessible as the family advocate works around our limitations and time restraints." - NA, sister to three disabled young adults.

A single parent shared, "You supported me emotionally and professionally. I was out of work during this difficult time, but I'm pleased to say I have been able to go back to work."

"The advocate has greatly improved services. She provides tailored care and has built my strength to pursue our goals. Without her, my son and I would have been lost." - NZ, single parent of four young men with ASD.

Youth Projects

Everyone has the
right to pursue their
dreams



Youth Development Project

23/24 Reflections

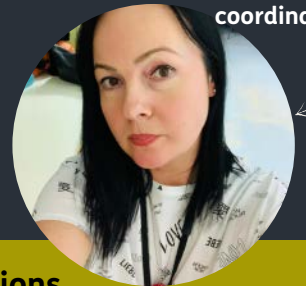


This year has been great for YDP. We've continued to succeed with our activities and workshops, and we've also worked with others to make the experiences of our young people even better.

We've seen all the participants grow and become more enthusiastic, which has been very rewarding. We're excited to keep offering new opportunities and experiences for our young community.

YDP provides a variety of group activities that help young people feel like they belong. They are encouraged to join in, have fun, and learn new skills. The staff keeps the atmosphere light-hearted so that everyone can enjoy themselves without feeling pressured. The focus is on positive encouragement, and this helps young people develop a constructive mindset and feel proud of their achievements.

Jolita A - Youth Development coordinator



After-school/college Clubs:

Drama club

The drama sessions are very rewarding! It's wonderful to see the young people gaining confidence and using their creativity to create entertaining performances.

They wrote and performed a play called "I THINK THERE'S BEEN A MISTAKE" during our weekly sessions, and it was fantastic.

Everyone was impressed with what the young people achieved and how well they worked together and supported each other.

Drama is a great way to learn, develop life skills, and have lots of fun all at the same time!

Dance sessions

Dance sessions are always popular among young people. They help them stay fit and promote overall well-being.

Art

Young people fascinated us with their creativity and enthusiasm: t shirt decoration, various paintings, thematic works (Black History Month, Learning Disability Awareness Month).


Our appreciation of Art was furthered by our trip to the new Moco art Museum which was a real highlight this summer. Even the young people who aren't usually that into art were fascinated and engaged especially with the interactive digital art installations.



This year, our half-term and holiday program emphasised physical and mental well-being, healthy eating, and empowering youth to discuss health issues. We provided healthy meals and involved the youth in their preparation, reinforcing the importance of nutrition for health. Their growing awareness of how a healthy body enhances well-being is encouraging.

Physical fitness is vital, particularly for those with limited physical abilities. Our weekly sessions with a qualified instructor, Richard, who infuses humour and motivation, have been highly effective.

Over the summer, we kept the youth engaged with trips around London, averaging 5 miles of walking daily, and activities like cycling, boxing, yoga, and arts. These not only kept them physically active but also fostered communication and life skills in a supportive setting.



When asked about the Summer programme:
“When college is closed, it’s boring and lonely sitting on my own at my care home with nothing to do and no friends. That’s why I want to come out with everyone and be included. Also, I like the food and the snacks!”

Our Impact

“We firmly believe that listening, being attentive, respectful, and inclusive are crucial in empowering our service users. By fostering choice, self-belief, and self-worth, we aim to help individuals achieve greater independence and lead fulfilling lives.”

Tim Balogun,
HF Mencap CEO.

800

approximately 800 people have benefited from our services during 2023/2024

90

Young people benefited from the Transition Practitioner roles over 18 months.

3

Individuals were supported to gain paid work



Projects

Details

Outcome

MyLife: Out and about

Personalised support and engaging activities

- Stronger Social Connections
- Improved Well-being

Community Advocacy

Advocating for community rights and needs.

- Improved access to resources and services.
- Strengthened community ties and empowered individuals

Youth Development project

Empowering youth through skills development and social inclusion

- Young participants report increased self-esteem and belief in their abilities
- Youth feel empowered to advocate for themselves and their communities, supporting their growth and success as they transition into adulthood.

“It’s boring and lonely sitting on my own at my care home with nothing to do and no friends. That’s why I want to come out with everyone and be included. It’s no fun. Also, I like the food and the snacks!” - Young person

We had an amazing time at the Sports Spectacular Event!

It was a fun-filled day for the whole family, with activities like circuit training, stretch exercises, meditation, and a health class.

The event was all about promoting family involvement in fitness and wellness.



We absolutely love the Great Exhibition Road Festival - it's the highlight of our year! The team from Imperial College were fantastic; they were super friendly and really made sure that all the young people had a great time.

We discovered so much at the interactive Science Pavilion and the Silent Disco was an absolute blast!



Grants and funders



Henry Smith:
£40,200



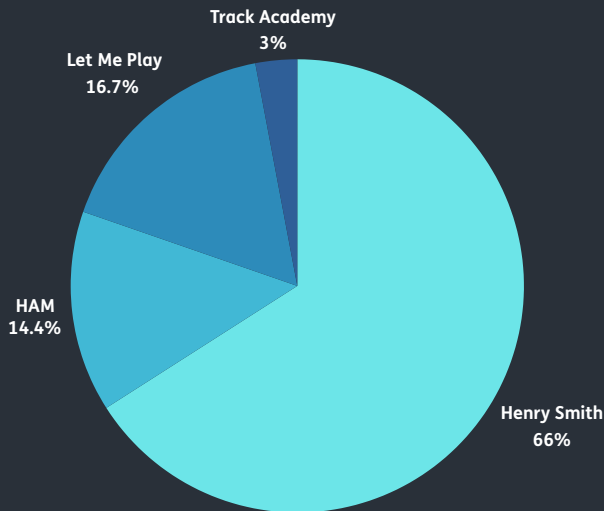
Hammersmith
United Charities:
£8750



Let Me Play (LBHF):
£10192



Track academy:
£1801



Transitions Practitioners

The Young Person's Transitions Practitioner service, funded by WLT since 2017, was based at Hammersmith and Fulham Mencap.

This service made a significant impact on young people's lives in the community, as one young person shared:

"I myself have experienced many issues over the last few years such as depression, low self-esteem issues and difficulties looking towards the future, which Priyanka has helped me with. It's made me look forward to the meetings because I know that I get help from someone kind that I truly feel I need."

In April 2022, the service expanded to the Bi-borough area, supported by the Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust.

This expansion allowed HF Mencap to provide transition services to children and young people (CYP) in Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea, and Westminster.

"Before my transition practitioner, I found myself very overwhelmed trying to become independent. With her hard work, we were able to find funding for my noise-cancelling headphones. These headphones have completely changed my life."

Young person

The service offered support to young people aged 14 to 21 years who had a learning disability (excluding specific learning difficulties) and/or Autism Spectrum Disorder, as well as mild to moderate mental health challenges.

After several successful years of operation and a positive impact on the community, including the parents of young people, as one parent expressed: "The transition practitioner got involved with us through CAMHS to support us with the transition for my son... She is very professional, patient, and understanding,"



Priyanka K. is the Lead Transition Practitioner and has now been promoted to Senior Manager.

Key Achievements from the Transition Practitioner Project

Work Experience:

Ten socially isolated young people (NEET), facing challenges like low self-esteem and mental health issues, completed a paid work experience program at HF Mencap.

This transformative experience led them to paid employment, voluntary roles, and further education, fostering significant personal growth.



Funder



NHS - Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, Westminster

£81,000

Co-Production and Choice:

Young people co-created one or two goals for their Person-Centred Plan with practitioners. This collaboration increased their confidence, autonomy, and trust, strengthening relationships with practitioners and families.

Notably, 95% of young people who previously refused professional assistance engaged with our transition service.



Adult Services



**Everyone should
be provided with
opportunities
*to grow***

Community Advocacy

Every person should
experience the
strength of
community



Deborah David -
Community
Advocate

The community advocacy service funded by Hammersmith and Fulham Council has been based in HF Mencap since November 2023. The community advocacy service provides non-statutory advocacy to residents within the London borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. The service is for people aged 18 and over.

To be referred to the service, a person must meet at least one or more of the following criteria: learning disabilities, autism, mental health, physical disabilities, brain injury, sensory impairments (sight and hearing problems), dementia, long-term illness, multiple disabilities, or complex health needs. A person can self-refer or be referred by a professional, family member, or friend.

Over the past year at Mencap, I have worked to empower clients by helping them understand their rights so they can make informed decisions and advocate for themselves. Since November 2023, I have supported 25 service users, advocating on their behalf and guiding them to develop self-advocacy skills. My support has spanned complex issues such as homelessness, benefits, housing, independence, employment, mental health, and access to essential services.

Service users have benefitted greatly from the advocacy service. They found it easy to use and understand.

When an advocate was involved, they felt more heard by professionals. For many, it was the first time they felt truly heard and understood.

Our advocacy service has connected with organisations and healthcare professionals, raising awareness and providing support for our community. This networking has allowed us to find accessible resources, reach service users and provide additional support for them.

I regularly attend meetings and appointments to advocate for service users' preferences and ensure their voices are heard. Recently, we hosted a housing forum with AOD at HF Mencap, which provided valuable insights into the challenges faced by people with disabilities regarding housing and independent living. The feedback from our service users will be included in the 'Housing for Independent Living Campaign' report, helping to drive positive change for those we support.

"I felt lost because my daughter is not diagnosed with learning disability there is limited help available. Deborah has shared helpful information, and let my daughter and I know our rights and support available" Parent of A

"Because of Deborah's effort I have been offered list of supporting living options to choose from. She is helping me through this process"- Client SH



Council Contract:
£10,000

MyLife: Out and About Support Service



**Manuel Moncayo -
Service Manager**

The MyLife Support Service offers personalised support based on the Social Model of Disability, which emphasises that a person is not 'disabled' because of their impairment or health condition but because of the physical and attitudinal barriers in society. Our Out and About Service provides opportunities for individuals with learning disabilities or autism to engage with the community through various activities.

Our main goal is to help our clients become more independent and included in their communities by using all available resources to educate, assist, and support them in improving their quality of life.



We take a personalised approach, tailoring our services to meet each individual's unique needs.



“I was worried our son would lose the skills he learnt at college but they are being built upon”

Our team is dedicated to engaging positively with individuals with disabilities and fully understanding their needs.

In the summer of 2023, we moved to a larger building within the grounds of Addison Gardens Primary School. The space has its own entrance, a large garden, spacious activity space, a sensory room, a gym, and a changing-place toilet.

The Service ran its annual fundraising walk and put on an end-of-year party for our clients and their families at the Hammersmith Club, which included a one-man band, photo booth, and dance class from DanceWest.



At MyLife, our clients' needs are always our top priority, and we are committed to enhancing our services through passion, courage, perseverance, preparation, goal-setting, adaptability, and innovation to guide each individual toward success.

MyLife Income

| | |
|--|---------|
| - Support Services (fees) | £962825 |
| Grants and Funders | |
| -3rd Sector Investment Fund - Community Support Post | £21000 |
|  Activities | £40000 |
|  Changing Places toilet | £5000 |
| The Percy Bilton Charity New premises | £4661 |
| - Other donations | £1710 |



Fabiana Alexander -
MyLife Supervisor

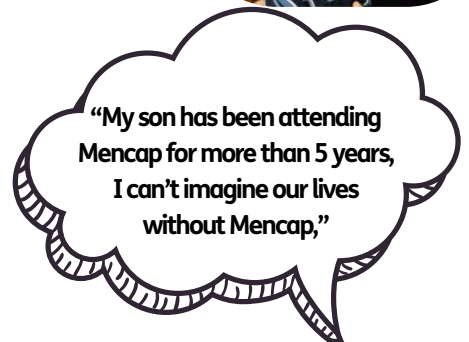
We'd like to thank all our donors, clients and community for their *generous support*



Andrea Puertas-
MyLife Supervisor

We express our gratitude to our staff and volunteers for all their hard work.

Without you, our achievements would not be possible.



The Digital Project

This project is all about giving our members a fun and friendly way to improve their digital skills.

It's not just about learning; it's also about making friends, hanging out, and having a good time with technology.



Everyone involved has had a great time, and it's been a big hit! Seeing how much everyone is enjoying it, we are planning to run more workshops like this and source funding to expand the offer.

These new workshops would give everyone a chance to do even more with the skills they've already picked up, and learn some new things too.

It's all about getting better together, trying out new stuff, and having a blast while we're at it. We want to make a place where being into technology means being part of a community. A place where everyone can grow, share, and explore the digital world in a way that's fun and friendly.

Here's to creating more spaces where learning new digital skills is all about having a good time and making lasting friendships!

Grant received from

digit<all>

£9880

Plans for the future



**Rebecca Rawcliffe,
Senior Manager**

HF Mencap is ensuring that vital learning disability services in Hammersmith and Fulham continue in the long term. Our founder CEO departed on 1st April, and our Trustees and Senior Management Team covered the CEO's duties.

With the support of our new CEO Tim, the charity will implement a new plan with these main focuses:

1. We will diversify our income by seeking sponsorships, hosting events, and exploring other avenues to strengthen our financial position and reduce reliance on income from the MyLife program.
2. Secure funding for Youth Development and Community Advocacy services and to promote and grow the MyLife Service by increasing participation and referrals.
3. Expanding our services: We are really interested in creating new projects with the people we help, to meet their changing needs.
4. Digitising our care records and reviewing our communication methods with our stakeholders.
5. Keeping health and safety and safeguarding standards strong by taking good precautions and managing risks well. We are committed to making sure our clients and staff are safe and well.

Response to MyLife: Survey

Visit www.hfmencap.org for full survey results

2023



53%

Of MyLife clients said they were very happy with activities

In response to client and carer feedback, we have co-produced an updated activity diary that balances structure with flexibility for ad hoc events.

Improving Resources: We are assessing resources to better support clients with complex needs.

We are seeking grants for adaptive IT equipment to help bridge the digital divide.

Day Trips: We're exploring more day trips to distant locations, which may incur additional costs. Extra smaller group activities will also be integrated into community outings.

Overnight Trips: These are highly requested. We'll identify suitable trips and create a plan to ensure safe staffing levels.

Weekend Service: We will assess the viability of a weekend service, responding to expressed client interest.

Evening Activities: Plans include reintroducing fun nights and potentially co-producing club nights.

100%

Of parents/carers who responded stated they would recommend

We thank those who provided feedback. We're happy to hear you appreciate our service and community.

Your recognition of our staff means a lot. While we know there is room for growth and development we are committed to enhancing our service under new leadership. With new trustee recruitment, the addition of a senior manager and new CEO we look forward to the charity becoming stronger.

Safeguarding: All concerns are logged and addressed. If uncertain about thresholds, we consult the local authority. Non-referral concerns are reviewed by senior management. Safeguarding is included in all meeting agendas, with training provided and updated policies displayed.

Training: MyLife staff hold bi-weekly meetings with action trackers based on risk assessments.

Parents have led three information-sharing workshops, with positive feedback. Client files are updated with family involvement. Bi monthly parent coffee mornings to be held.

Finance 2023/2024

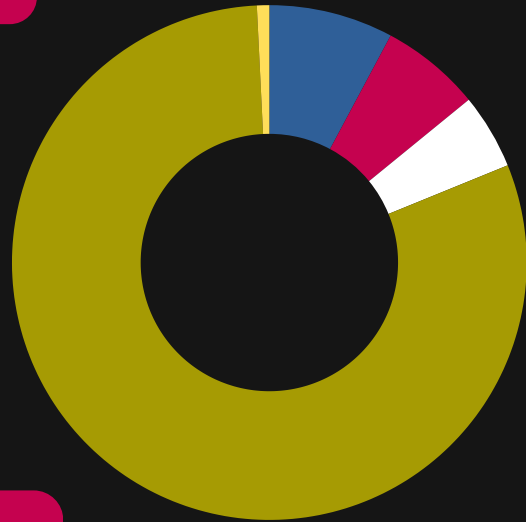
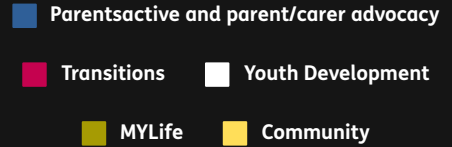
We'd like to thank all our donors, clients and community for their generous support

April 2023 to end March 2024

INCOME

| | |
|------------------------|------------|
| Donations and legacies | £1,676 |
| Charitable activities | £1,295,960 |
| Investments | £1,034 |

Total Income 24 £1,298,670



EXPENDITURE

Charitable activity costs for 2023/24 were:

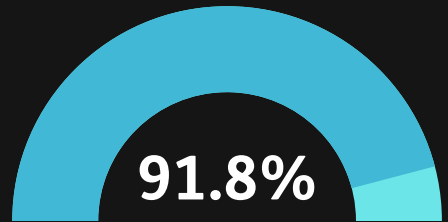
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| Staff costs: | £894,906 |
| IT, Finance, Audit and HR: | £71,977 |
| Rent: | £60,755 |
| Activities: | £44,846 |
| Transport: | £29,341 |
| Other project costs: | £46,544 |
| Repairs and renewals: | £38,171 |
| Training: | £16,995 |
| Other costs and depreciation: | £28,445 |

Total expenditure 24 £1,231,980

RESERVES

| | |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Restricted income funds: | £44,540 |
| Unrestricted funds: | £500,351 |

Total charity funds: £544,891



Unrestricted funds

Building on the years since the Covid epidemic where the charity has moved to better premises and expanded its MyLife service whilst running a range of grant funded projects, the charity has continued good financial performance.