

IMPACT REPORT



**Croydon Mencap: Creating a Croydon
that is a great place to live if you
have a learning disability.**

2022-2023

Table of Content

01	Table of Content
02	Introduction
03	Foreword
07	70th Birthday
09	Mayor Election Hustings
10	Enterprise Lounge
12	Family Advocacy Support Team
15	Monday Club
17	Chill and Chat
19	Out and About
22	The Saturday Club
29	Volunteer Buddies
31	Board of Trustees and Thank You's
32	Treasurers Report
34	Annual Review



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our April 2022 to March 2023 Impact Report! Croydon Mencap supports preschool children and adults with learning disabilities and additional needs. We also support their families and carers. Together with our partners, we continuously aim to make Croydon a great place to live if you have a learning disability. We want a Croydon where people with learning disabilities can live in a place they want to call home, with the people and things they love, in communities where we all look out for one another, doing the things that matter most!

This Impact Report is a time to reflect and acknowledge the part we play in contributing to this vision and take the time to appreciate and thank everyone who joins in to help us with our work.

FOREWORD



James Kiamtia-Cooper **Chairperson**

As a board of trustees, we are responsible for putting our mission first and ensuring that we are on track to achieve it. As always this requires trustees to learn and improve, embrace change, and work effectively with others to secure improvements in areas that are important to people with learning disabilities and their families in Croydon.

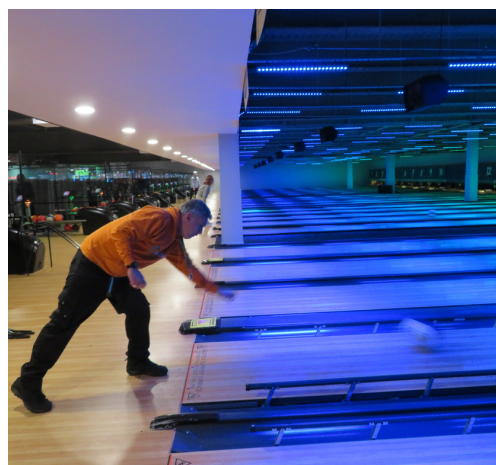
This year we have been supporting key decisions around moving out of our rented head office base in Thornton Heath as this building has become underused and the cost spent running this building could be better utilised. We have also been working with Katherine our CEO to evaluate whether we can purchase the current building from which we deliver our Enterprise Lounge services. With support from parents and carers, we have also reviewed our transport model. These are big moves that will help us free up money and time for better use and provide us with long-term security.

The financial situation of Croydon Council has been a key concern for many Charities and residents in the borough. Croydon Mencap was part of a successful and extremely well-attended learning disability-led Mayoral Hustings. Residents with learning disabilities had a real opportunity to question the prospective mayors on what matters to them. Katherine and other Charity CEOs now regularly meet with the elected Mayor to understand the impact of the council's financial position and to look at how we can work together despite this.

We are fortunate to have a diverse range of funding streams and the teams have worked to increase these.

This last year has been tough, tough on those with learning disabilities as well as their families and our colleagues, with the rising costs of living and uncertainty around support. Despite changes occurring everywhere, and having to think on our feet, the teams have managed to flourish and continue to deliver excellent services and work in exciting new ways with people with learning disabilities and community partners.

We are really excited about the future.





Katherine Wynne CEO

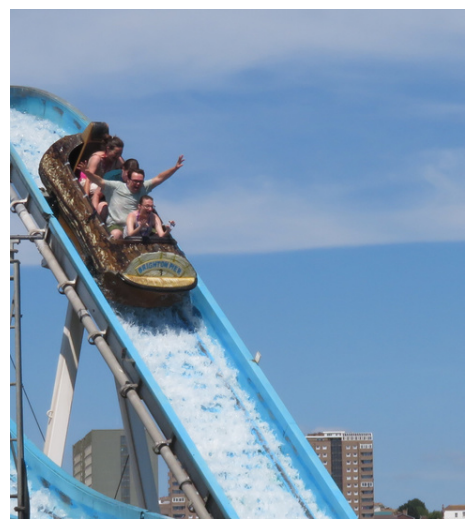
Together we have been gradually moving to new ways of working, creating the freedom in teams to try new things and make decisions that contribute to the changes that people with learning disabilities and their families want to see.

The teams reviewed and rebranded most services, planned new services, and set goals, big and small. This is not always easy, as we move into unknown territory, however, we are contributing hugely to the vision of making Croydon a great place to live if you have a learning disability. I just want to point out that along with our front-line teams, we have people working hard in the background who help us all do our jobs. Our finance manager Carole helps teams understand costs and reports on all the finances and we have an administration operations officer Dee who keeps everything ticking along!

There continues to be many uncertainties around funding and charities have had to find ways to be resilient and sustainable long term.

Part of our plan was to review all our prices and contracts and we were successful in achieving an 8% pay increase from social services for our Enterprise Lounge service and to secure an extra year of funding for our Carers Services for 2023/2024. As funding from the council for our volunteer buddies came to an end, this year we spent time applying for other funding to ensure the well-loved project continues into the future. We were also pleased to secure funding from the NHS to start delivering cooking, walking, and community craft activities in the near future.





We have seen some positive signs of growth with new partnerships, especially the newly formed 'Learning Disability Alliance', a group of residents with learning disabilities and various charities who care deeply about working and making a change. With the energy and passion of this new alliance, we are working closely with the council and NHS to create a new learning disability action plan. We really want to make a difference in the areas that matter most, like having lots of meaningful opportunities, respite, and finding good homes to live in.

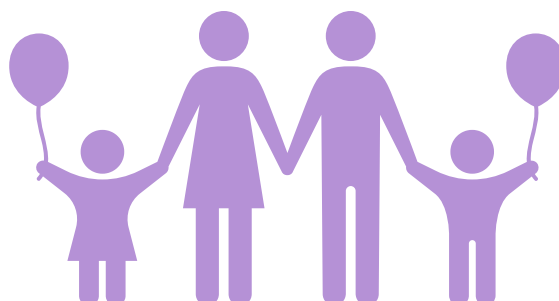
Croydon Mencap has also begun to partner with Age UK Croydon and Croydon Alms Houses to create 'Croydon Cares'. This partnership will create a pool of services around gardening, DIY, personal care, shopping etc., and will be led by shared community link workers who are very knowledgeable about what is going on in our communities.

Adversity has driven us to identify challenges and innovate and we hope to continuously learn and improve.

Before we share the impact we had this year, I want to note that it was a very special year for Croydon Mencap as we celebrated our 70th birthday. Originally, we were called 'Croydon & District Society for the Mentally Handicapped' formed as a society in 1952 by a group of caring parents who all had children with learning disabilities.

Their very first action as a committee was 'to have a picnic in Selsdon' and 'the committee to provide refreshments and charge sixpence per head' and 'each committee member will supply one dozen cakes'.

We owe a lot to these founding parents, and we celebrated our 70th in style with a big party including the conga!





BIRTHDAY

We held a garden party and invited people from the past and present to celebrate our community and wonderful teams.





BIRTHDAY

To celebrate our 70 years, our CEO Katherine completed a 70-mile walk, solo (with Betty her Pug) around the Isle of Wight raising £1000 for Croydon Mencap!



MAYOR ELECTION HUSTINGS



We began the year by working with the Learning Disability Alliance to arrange a Hustings. All prospective Mayors attended, the Hustings was led by people with learning disabilities who asked questions that were important to them and the residents in the community. It is important to influence and engage with leaders at this level.

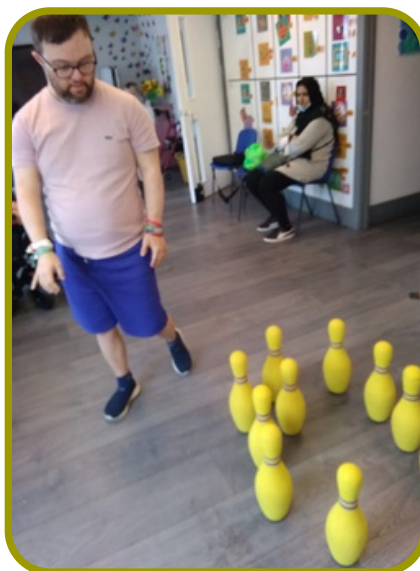
We hope in the future that we can regroup and ask the Elected Mayor Jason Perry ‘what did you take on board that day and what have you done to make Croydon a great place to live if you have a learning disability?’





ENTERPRISE LOUNGE

Clubs at Leslie Park became the newly branded Enterprise Lounge. The Enterprise Lounge continues to provide a day-to-day hub for adults with learning disabilities. We have a program of activities which are designed to ensure we can have fun, learn new skills, relax, make friends and keep fit and healthy.



People with learning disabilities and their families can open up to us about all sorts of things that are going on in their lives, including the things that they struggle with. The Enterprise Lounge team works with social workers, NHS services including Psychology, Speech and Language and our Family Advocates to support where necessary. We work closely with families too. This year we had to think long and hard about our Transport Model. There were positive and negative impacts from running two buses, so we went into consultation with families. We moved over to a local, reliable, safe taxi firm. This has freed up time for the team to make a bigger contribution to the development and running of the service.

We are lucky to have some regular local supporters!

- Yoga with Amanda from Supriya Yoga
- Drama with Andree from Make a Scene
- Tennis coaching with Nathan from Shirley Tennis Club
- Football sessions with the Crystal Palace Foundation

Statistics

44

Members in total registered



25

Members on site everyday

Average of 2 days



a week

39000
hours

of activities and fun
throughout the year

Staffing ratio



of 1 to 5



FAMILY ADVOCACY SUPPORT TEAM

This year two separate teams (Croydon Mencap Support Services and PiP @ Croydon Mencap) came together to form the Family Advocacy Support Team bringing colleagues together, pooling skills, increasing peer support, and making it easier for parent carers to understand the support we are offering.

The work of this team is mainly funded by Croydon Council and parts of our work is done in partnership with Mind in Croydon and the Carers Centre. We were pleased to be able to secure an additional year's funding until March 2024.

2268 parents and carers had support from Croydon Mencap

This was by assisting them with useful information, and 1:1 support from the team for issues such as:

- Cuts to care packages
- Delays with care assessments and outcomes of assessments (needs assessments and financial assessments)
- Tribunals and reviews
- Support with emotional crises due to the stress of a caring role
- Breakdowns in relationships with schools, social services
- Benefit advice and support



The members of staff are amazing so helpful and knowledgeable and if they don't know will find out for you.

Because Croydon Mencap have helped me navigate my way through the very complex transition of my disabled daughter from home into a specialist provision. They have supported me practically and emotionally and have been tireless in their care for her and me.



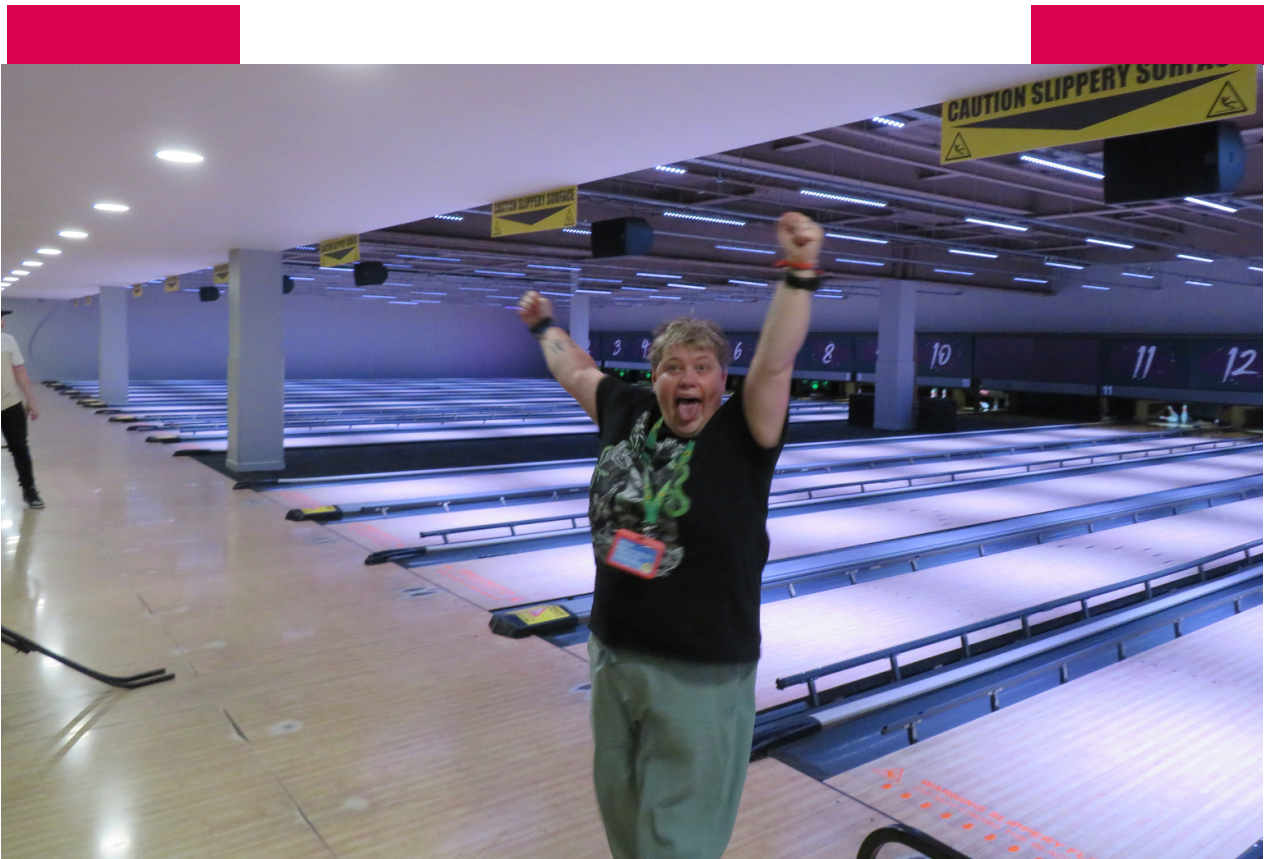
I really appreciate all of your support and am happy to inform you that my son was re awarded the high rate for his benefit again. Your service was very beneficial to the process so thank you



Benefits advice and support

By providing information and support we were able to help families secure the following in benefit to support their family:

£81,122.40



MONDAY CLUB



Our popular Monday Night Social Club has been growing with numbers as high as 70 per session. Every week we do different activities and have lots of fun. We are now running on a team of 5 staff. David our Volunteer attends every other week, and who loves running the arts and crafts activity.

We have a lovely lady called Aza who also volunteers and covers staff annual leave. This year we have welcomed a new DJ a member of Enterprise Lounge DJ KEL who presents a session every eight weeks.

By popular demand we have extended the number of weeks we are open by 2 weeks a year, so we are now only closed for August's holiday season.

March 2022-
July 2023

80
Voluntary
hours

194
enrolled
members

OUR SUPER TEAM



It helps me see my friends “I like having a social life” “Monday club helps me release my energy



We enjoy social life together” “It helps me with my mental well being, as I struggle to meet friends” “I wish club was on every night



CHILL AND CHAT



36 Families

Are supported through a very busy informative, helpful toddler group. It is a source of information, a place to exchange ideas, share concerns and learn of upcoming courses and activities. Families supporting families with professional help if needed.



44 Toddler groups and 42 Zoom calls


There have also been 12 picnics in Ashburton park with old and new families. We supported 2 families outside of the group whose children had life threatening illnesses.



Chill and Chat Group face to face



A supportive group for Children. With additional needs under 5 and their parents/carers. It is a very welcoming, understanding, and knowledgeable setting. Parents/carers share their concerns and experiences without being judgmental. Activities are always available for the children with singing and signing in a group at the end.



Croydon Mencap Chill and Chat has been our lifeline since my daughter's diagnosis. The staff are so welcoming and knowledgeable with nothing ever being too much for them to advise on or seek help and support. We have met many families from attending these sessions and now have a community that I worried we would never have. It's so nice to be accepted and share views and experiences without being judged or not understood. I honestly don't know where we would be without the support from this group.

Chill and Chat provides a wonderful, fun, and supportive community to our little girl and us as parents. The drop-in sessions on Tuesdays give our daughter the chance to play and meet other children, and us to share experiences, advice, or just good old-fashioned gossip with other parents and the team. And the WhatsApp group helps connect us to other parents. We so appreciate the service, thank you!

OUT AND ABOUT



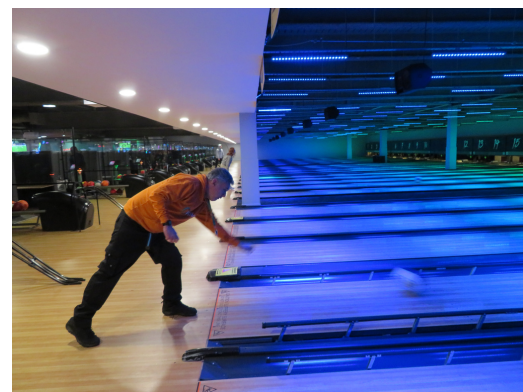
Some examples of the activities Out and About offered included: bowling, eating out, park walks, trampolining, tennis, cricket, cinema, theatre trips, seaside trips, cycling, discos and picnics.

48 different people with learning disabilities attended

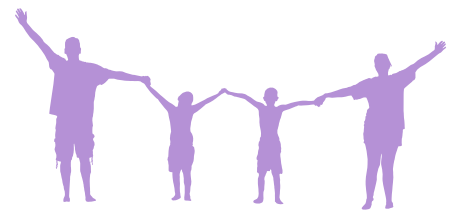
Members attended just under eight sessions each

Our best-attended activities reached highs of 16 and 20 people

We occasionally had to operate a waiting list for the most popular activities



The Positives



- Encourages social inclusion
- Facilitates new friendships
- Encourages movement and fitness

- Encourages participation in sport
- Gives carers a break
- Actively encourages member participation in choosing sessions

- Raises awareness and understanding of the availability of green spaces in and around Croydon
- Helps members access nature

- Members re-attending after initial session demonstrates that they are enjoying the programme

“ Thank you so much for this year, it's been brilliant meeting new friends and going to so many places. ”

Future Aspirations



Out and About has become so successful and popular and because of this, we have some planned changes.

We will offer members new sessions that will focus on physical and mental wellbeing, and on accessing the community. Members will be involved in deciding what they would like to do for sessions and the timetable will be determined by them.

THE SATURDAY CLUB

Croydon Mencap's Saturday Club provides an avenue for members to connect, form and develop friendships, learn basic life skills through activities that they can actively engage with, providing a much-needed social setting that allows them to get out into the community with their friends.



As most of the members that attend the club experience the same issues regarding financial support, social care and support, it has given the families an opportunity to network with one another finding ways to navigate a sometimes-confusing social care system.

“

I really love that Saturday club gives individuals with disabilities an environment to socialise with peers. I also like the range of activities that are done. Especially the cooking. The set up (especially the kitchen) is very well adapted to the members and their individual needs.

”



The coordinator of the Saturday Club has over time established an ongoing relationship that benefits the members and their families, providing support on common issues that occur, providing both internal and external agency referrals, along with advice and guidance.



General summary

- An increased membership to the club by offering engaging activities designed for various ability levels
- Offering a safe space for meeting and engaging with other members of the community in a social setting
- Excellent staff that assisted the members in being as independent as possible
- Members socialise amongst themselves and become friends
- Building stronger ties with families and carers of members
- Establishing ties with care homes and their residents

Feedback from members



How has attending club impacted the young person you support?

For the young person I support, it has given her a club to belong to. She looks forward to coming to 'her Saturday club', belonging to a group of people, and seeing her friends in a safe space with support when needed to do a range of activities.



How are members supported to be independent?

Members are supported to be independent as they have the facilities at Leslie Park to do things for themselves. Members are encouraged to get themselves a drink and clean up after themselves (with support where needed).

Special days

Trip to Brighton



It was by popular vote that we planned a day trip to Brighton, and luckily the sun was shining!



Volunteer Awards and picnic



Our volunteers dedicate some of their spare time to support our Charity, we never take them for granted and this year we were able to celebrate them on two occasions. Our Volunteer awards and our Volunteer Picnic.



VOLUNTEER BUDDIES

Over the past 3 years:



27

supported
volunteers have
benefited from
the project



18

volunteer
buddies have
been trained



2000

hours, of
volunteering
together was
provided

We are proud to announce that 75% of our supported volunteers have secured regular volunteer roles that they enjoy, with 15% even going on to secure paid positions.



We also continue to offer monthly evening interactive Zoom sessions, with 50% of volunteers attending and expressing their enjoyment of the meetings. These sessions provide a platform for volunteers to chat, voice their opinions, learn, and have fun.



Whilst trying to secure new funding for next year we have not brought on any new buddies and four have moved on, we created a temporary role of a 'flexible buddy'.

This role allows two existing buddies to support a variety of volunteers in community-based roles on a more flexible basis during weekends.

Croydon Mencap has agreed to fund the project from our reserves at the end of this year while we awaited news on the lottery funding application. We are pleased to confirm that we have been awarded 3 years lottery grant starting September 2023.

We look forward to continuing working closely with existing partner organizations and finding new ones!

We thank MHA Wilderness, Food bank with ARCC, BabyZone, CVA and Park Hill gardening for their continuing support by providing volunteer placements.



SUPPORTED VOLUNTEER SUCCESS STORY



Croydon Mencap supported Emma to find a placement as an office volunteer with the local Charity Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA) in November 2021, she was one of our very first supported volunteers.

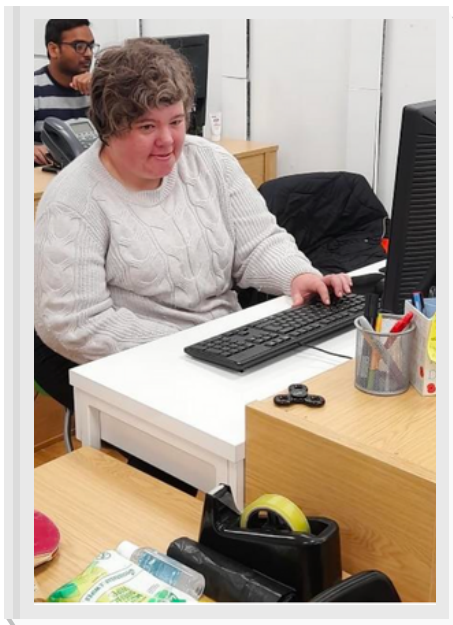
Emma has a learning disability and a physical disability that affects one of her arms and one leg. While she can travel independently, she sometimes requires assistance with new routes which her buddy was able to help with.

Emma was keen to find a role that suited her office skills, something she had learned to love by attending course. Emma was thrilled to secure her placement as an office volunteer at Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA) and eager to get started.

Emma's role includes assisting and collating details to support CVA's website, as well as talking to customers who come into the Charity.

Very sadly, Emma's mother passed away at the end of the year, and understandably, this setback took a toll on her. She became withdrawn and depressed and expressed a desire to be alone. However, after some time off, Emma was eager to "get back to work." She said she felt happy at CVA, liked the people she worked with, and wanted to continue volunteering and keeping busy.

GROWTH AFTER GRIEF



We know from CVA that Emma has lots of good relationships with other volunteers and staff members. While working, she quietly concentrates on her work, other volunteers check in with her to make sure she is okay.

During coffee breaks, Emma actively engages in conversation and talks about what she had done and what she had planned for the forthcoming week. CVA is keen to continue supporting Emma in her volunteer role and will be working on helping her develop more knowledge and skills in IT.

Continuing to flourish

Emma continued to flourish in her role, and in April of last year, she even took part in the hustings to find a new mayor for Croydon, making sure that the voices of those with a learning disability in Croydon was heard.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

CHAIR - James Kiamtia-Cooper

Deputy Chair - Sue Culling

Treasurer - Stuart Dunk

Chief Executive and Company Secretary – Katherine Wynne

David Congdon

Tim Flood

Angelene Rackett

Farzana Hayat

Patricia Holmes

Thank you to our Funders, Donors and Supporters

London Borough of Croydon

The Royal Mencap Society

Department for Education

MIND in Croydon

NHS Clinical Commissioning Group

The Dodds Family

Christopher Hilton

Mrs. R McLuskey

T and S Moss

Mrs Freda Pearce

Addiscombe Baptist Church

Addiscombe Catholic Social Club

Croydon Active Voices

In Memoriam donations, donations with subscriptions, and all those individuals who have kindly and generously supported us in so many ways – thank you

TREASURER'S REPORT ON THE YEAR TO 31ST MARCH 2023

We give below an abbreviated financial report for the 2022-23 year. All figures are to the nearest thousand pounds. Full statutory accounts are available from the office at 020-8684-5890 and will be published with the Charity Commision in January 2024.

The results for the year showed a planned investment deficit of £94k compared with a deficit of £31k in the previous year.

INCOME		2022-23 £'000	2021-22 £'000
	Income from donations and legacies	61	168
	Income for support services and projects	506	494
	Income from renting out office space	8	6
	Investment Income	7	5
	Other Income	0	2
	Total Income	582	675
EXPENDITURE	Operations	382	334
	Drop-in services - included in Operations	0	11
	Leslie Park	246	245
	PiP Services - included in Operations	0	90
	Active Lives	25	10
	Other support services and projects	23	16
	Total Expenditure	676	706
	Surplus / (deficit)for the year	(94)	(31)
	Funds held at the start of the year	786	817
	Funds held as of 31 March	692	786
	Where the funds are held:		
	Bank balances	583	610
	Leasehold improvements	70	87
	Equipment - Including Minibus	47	58
	Net asset / (liabilities)	(8)	31
	Total assets	692	786



Our income had grown by 23% during the previous year ended March 2022, largely due to our merger with Parents in Partnership (PiP) in April 2021. Whilst our total income fell by 14% during the year ended March 2023, due to certain funding coming to an end, it still remained at 6% higher than our income level prior to the merger. Our impact remains the same as we continue with our parent carer services. Our key funder continues to be the London Borough of Croydon, from whom 80% of non-legacy income came in 2022-23 – we are grateful for their ongoing support.

The overall deficit of £94k for the year was due to our planned investment from available reserves. This was to maintain our wide range of services, whilst we seek additional funding and in addition investing in capital expenditure for infrastructure improvements to ensure long-term sustainability. Due to legacy funding we are very fortunate as a charity to have a healthy balance of funds available for future charitable activities. The board is currently reviewing how some of these reserves can be spent on purchasing our building.

We remain committed to a core programme of support in the learning disability community of Croydon and continued to operate a range of clubs and programmes throughout the year.

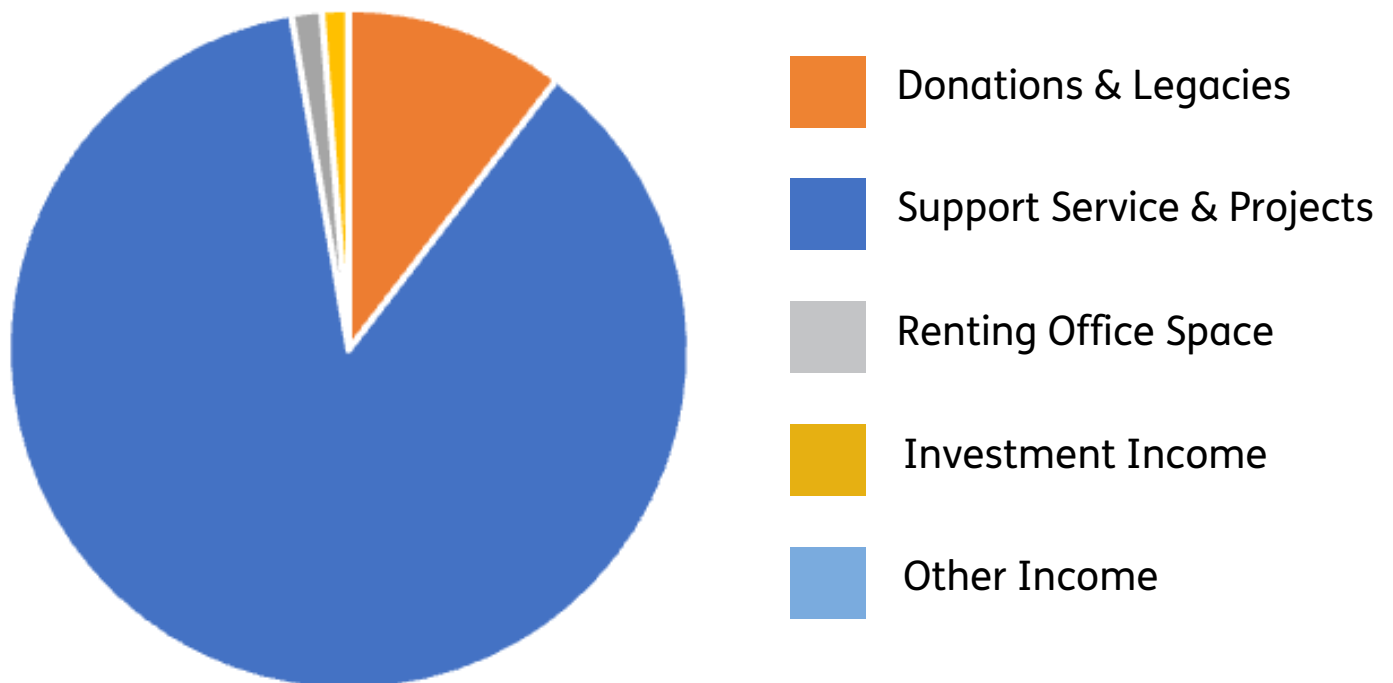
We continue to look for new funding sources to maintain and develop services and projects, and the ongoing efforts to raise funds by our members and staff are as always very much appreciated. Assistance in our efforts to raise funds, improve the current services offered to our client base and to develop new ones, is always most welcome.

ANNUAL REVIEW

2022 - 2023



Proportions of funding we received April 2022 to March 2023





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Thank you to everyone
involved for making
this a successful year!