

Annual Review 2020-2021

Croydon Mencap

Board of Trustees

Chair - James Kiamtia-Cooper
Treasurer - Stuart Dunk
Chief Executive and Company Secretary - Alan Avis
David Congdon
Tim Flood
Amy Creatura
Angelene Rackett
Farzana Hyatt
Kevin Oakhill
Anne Simpson

Portland House

Chief Executive - Alan Avis
Operations Manager - Abigail White
Finance Officer - Carole Letchford
Administration and Communications Officer - Jo Ramsay
Carers Support Worker - Sue Payne
Welfare and Rights Worker - Lloyd Thomas
Volunteering Buddies Project Coordinator - Rona Ahmed
Strictly Come Walking Coordinator - Deneshia Campbell

Clubs @ Leslie Park

Centre Manager - Kat Edwards
Deputy Manager - Emma Ouzman
Deputy Manager - Rebecca Perry-Bridgewater
Tracy Gunaratnam
Georgie Amroussi
Anita Belcher
Liz Psaila
Jenny Shannon

Chill and Chat

Coordinators Christine Bush
Sue Payne

The Saturday Club

Coordinator - Rory Goring
Nana Opoku-Acheampong
Helen Kenyon

Monday Night Social Club

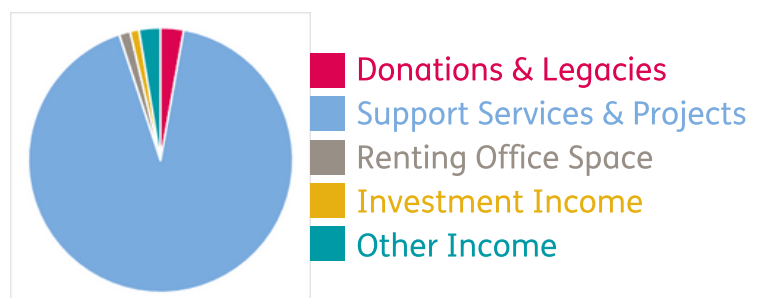
Interim Coordinator - Rory Goring
Toni Daws
Daniel Collison
Georgie Amroussi
Liz Psaila
Tracy Gunaratnam

Thank you to our Funders, Donors & Supporters

London Borough of Croydon
Addiscombe Cricket Club
Day Lewis Pharmacy Croydon
Screwfix
Mr and Mrs Baker
Mr and Mrs Bush
Mr Ho
M M Khan
K Khanova
Linekar family
Mrs R McLuskey
T and S Moss
E Odegbami
Mrs Freda Pearce
Ms P Willard

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

Proportions of funding we received April 2019 - March 2020





James Kiamtia-Cooper Chairperson

Welcome to our review of the financial year April 2020 to March 2021.

This financial year was 1 of the most challenging years we have faced as a charity, and I would like to start by thanking the staff, members and wider family who support Croydon Mencap.

The pandemic has very much changed how we live, work, and spend time in our communities. I am grateful for the work and support our team have provided over this year. Despite the pandemic Croydon Mencap was able to continue running services remotely with online group sessions, activity packs, our YouTube channel, along with remote advice and support for member and carers. During this difficult time, our team worked creatively to continue services for our members who were at increased risk of isolation and the effects of the virus.

During 2020, we were also able to refurbish Leslie Park. Members returned to a completely updated centre, and we were able to increase our reach and amount of members attending.

There are still challenges ahead, but I want reassure you of our continued commitment to providing support, services, places to meet, and space for our members to share your thoughts, concerns, and aspirations.

We continue to work with Croydon Council and other key partners to look at future service provision and have developed good partnerships to be able to continue our good work.

On behalf of the Trustees, I thank all the team for their tireless efforts over such a difficult year. I also give thanks to our colleagues in the other organisations that work in partnership with us, our service commissioners, and donors who provide vital support and funds to make our work possible.



Alan Avis CEO

This review covers the period that end on 31 March 2021. Just 1 day later, on the 1 April and into the current financial year, our colleagues from Parents in Partnership joined us as our 2 charities merged to provide a fuller range of support. The benefits of the merger will be reported in our next Annual Review.

This has been another year of great progress, creative new practice and innovative development for Croydon Mencap despite the unprecedented challenges that Covid-19 presented. We utilised the time that we were unable to provide services at Leslie Park to fully refurbish the centre. Ceilings came down, floors came up, the double glazing was replaced, new electrics, fire and intruder alarms plus a new heating system were all installed. The centre now has a purpose designed training kitchen, designated art and activity rooms plus an IT suite. It was decorated in colours that the members chose and it looks wonderful.



Our Portland House based staff, who provide advice, information and support for carers and organise volunteer schemes, as well as our administrative and finance staff, all worked from home and provided a full service. We were thankful that we had invested in a new IT system the year before otherwise this would not have been possible.

Sadly, Covid restrictions also necessitated the temporary closure of Chill and Chat and our popular Monday and Saturday clubs.

Whilst we were unable to meet in person the staff engaged members in an innovative range of online activities plus a number of outdoor, socially distanced pursuits.

The staff team and our volunteers are to be congratulated for their incredible commitment and for coming up with such innovative programmes during this time. We also thank all of our members and their families for their joining in so enthusiastically and for their unwavering support through what was a very challenging year.

On a final note, I wish to thank everyone for their friendliness and support over the 5 years I have had the privilege to be the Chief Executive at Croydon Mencap.

I have been extremely fortunate to have had the passion and commitment of the Croydon Mencap family and the marvellous generosity of our supporters and funders. As I begin my retirement, I am confident that the years ahead will see further progress for Croydon Mencap.



Abigail White
Operations Manager

Clubs @ Leslie Park

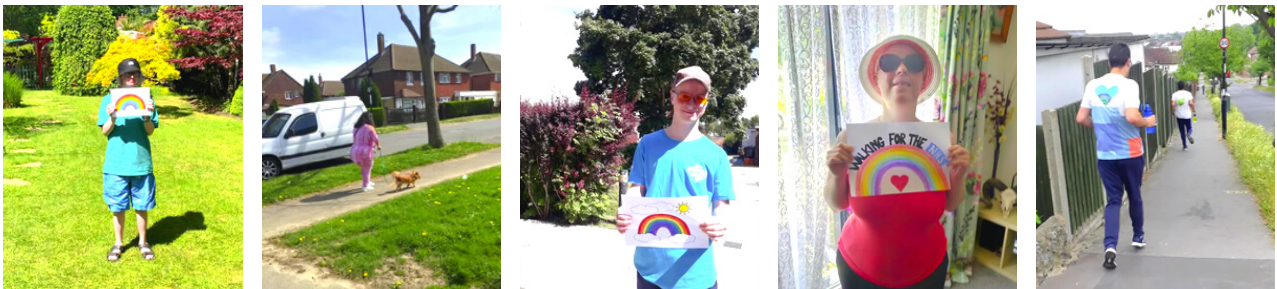
Under Kat's leadership, Clubs @ Leslie Park quickly and effectively responded to the Covid pandemic, from moving all support to online and over the phone to tailoring support up and down according to frequently changing government restrictions.

- 1st lockdown

The creativity and resilience of the whole staff team was outstanding during this period, producing brilliant online sessions and ensuring all members and carers were supported in a person-centred way through these incredibly challenging circumstances.

All Leslie Park members could access live daily Zoom sessions run by the staff team, an innovative library of online activities and received regular deliveries of activity packs. Support workers phoned families on a weekly/daily basis depending on their circumstances to see how they were doing and if they needed any other kinds of support.

Croydon Mencap staff and members took on challenges to find out who amongst us could do the most press ups, the most keepie uppies and who could eat the most marshmallows! Members also wanted to do something to recognise the efforts of the NHS, so led a charity walk, walking a marathon in total and raising money for NHS charities.



As restrictions were lifted, we adapted our services accordingly, first organising for members to meet their key workers for a 1 to 1 outdoor activity or walk outside in the community. Not only was it great for members to have some face to face support but family members and carers also benefited. All contact was fully risk assessed and in line with Public Health guidance.

- Bubbles

As restrictions continued to be lifted we were able to welcome small groups of members into our brand new refurbished centre while everyone else continued to access online and telephone sessions and support. As restrictions changed, we ran online forums for members and carers to share their worries and ask any questions. Again, all contact and activities were risk assessed and an outbreak plan was implemented.

Back in the centre, members took advantage of the new kitchen to develop their kitchen skills and cook up a storm.

Challenges continued but this time in arts and crafts form. Each month prizes were awarded to the winning bubbles. The philanthropic Leslie Park spirit continued into December when we organised a food bank collection, the response from everyone was incredible.



Early in the new year we designed and printed a Clubs @ Leslie Park recipe book. Each member sent in 1 of their favourite recipes - 45 in total! - and we called it the Feel Better Recipe Book.

As the pandemic response continued, we continued to tailor our offer depending on Public Health guidance and the needs of our members and carers.

Chill and Chat

The parents and carers of Chill and Chat were also greatly impacted by Covid lockdowns. Chris and Sue went over and above the call of duty to ensure they felt supported, able to share struggles and still come together albeit virtually.

Chill and Chat sessions were run twice a week on Zoom for the first few months and Chris provided extensive phone support to parents outside of these sessions.

Sue worked with parents and carers who needed support to access social care or advocacy when liaising with schools and nurseries.

Chill and Chat membership increased during lockdowns evidencing how vital a service this is. As restrictions were lifted, staff met individual parents and children for a walk and some respite in a local park and by November we were thrilled to be offering block booked, risk assessed sessions back at Malling Close children's centre.



During lockdown we sent activity packs to all our Chill and Chat families, and they sent us great pictures of their children using the packs.

Active Lives

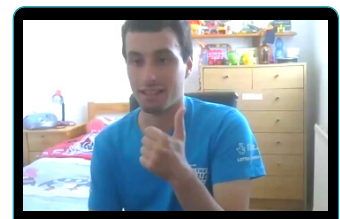
- Monday Night Social Club

While we unfortunately had to close this club during the initial wave of the pandemic, we kept in touch with members and provided additional support when required.

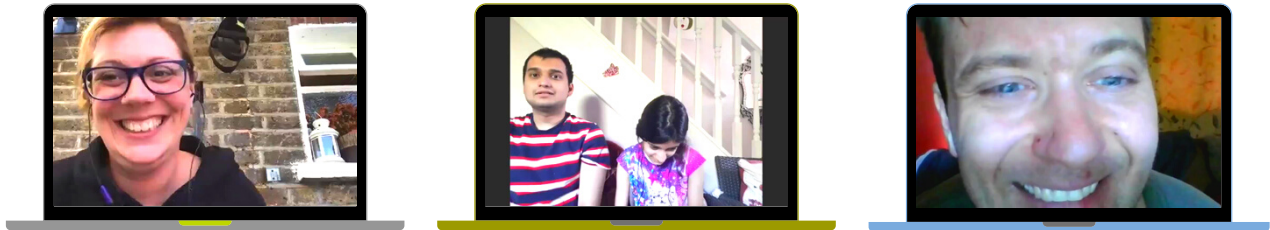
Aliye sadly left the team as coordinator of the Monday Club to focus on her very demanding day job and Rory took over as interim Club Coordinator. As we entered another lockdown, we decided to offer an online version of the club and members were thrilled to access sessions where they could sing, dance and have fun with some familiar faces.

- The Saturday Club

Like all other clubs, The Saturday Club was required to move online which staff and members adapted to with enthusiasm.



Rory and his team offered innovative cook together sessions and ended each club with a group dance with music chosen by members. Festivals from various cultures were celebrated and members shared their own traditions.



When we were able to open in bubbles, The Saturday Club responded to demand and opened 4 weekends a month instead of the usual 2. This was to ensure support was available to as many members and families as possible while keeping numbers low according to Covid guidelines.

- Strictly Come Walking

We were very happy to secure funding from Sports England through Royal Mencap which meant we could offer members opportunities to keep fit and healthy, at a time when it had never been more essential.



Deneshia did a brilliant job over a crucial 6 months offering weekly walking sessions for members at different locations around Croydon.

When we were unable to meet, members kept in touch with weekly Zoom meetings and took part in a walking challenge.

Deneshia sent members step counters and step count sheets and motivated them all to keep on walking. At the end of the challenge the total steps walked were over 1 million! A massive achievement for everyone involved.



Volunteering Buddies Project in partnership with Croydon Voluntary Action

Our new project for 2020 matches volunteers with a learning disability with a volunteer buddy mentor who support them into a volunteering role.

During Covid, volunteers with a learning disability were supported through lockdowns, and then back into community spaces ahead of starting volunteering roles. Strictly Come Walking sessions were a great opportunity for buddies and volunteers to meet face to face.

Project Coordinator, Rona, organised brilliant weekly Zoom sessions bringing the volunteers together for peer support during lockdowns and also to prepare for when it was safe to volunteer.

Croydon Mencap Support Service

Our revised Support Service launched in April 2020. Sue supporting carers of adults with a learning disability with their wellbeing and getting the social care support they have a right to. Lloyd providing welfare benefits advice and support for both adults with a learning disability and carers.

High quality support continued over the phone and online and we launched Croydon Mencap Elevenses, a online weekly social drop in. Once it was safe to meet indoors, in a well ventilated space, Sue met with carers on a 1 to 1 basis for some vital respite at Portland House.



Yvonne Pennant-Taylor

We cannot talk about this year without mentioning the loss of our brilliant Active Lives Manager, Yvonne, who sadly passed away from coronavirus in June 2020.

Yvonne worked with people with learning disabilities for over 30 years and had incredible passion and enthusiasm for her work. She was a really lovely woman and is very much missed.

Treasurer's report on the year to 31st March 2021

I give below an abbreviated financial report on the 2020-21 year. All figures are to the nearest thousand pounds. Full statutory accounts are available from the office on 020 8684 5890.

Results for the year showed a deficit of £13k compared with a deficit of £75k in previous year.

Income	2020-21 £'000	2019-20 £'000
Income from donations and legacies	15	10
Income for support services and projects	506	462
Income from renting out office space	8	14
Investment income	6	7
Other income	14	0
Total income	549	493
Expenditure		
Operations	311	294
Drop in services	12	9
Leslie Park	210	214
Active Lives	11	27
Other support services and projects	18	24
Total expenditure	562	568
Surplus / (deficit) for the year		
	(13)	(75)
Funds held at start of year	830	905
Funds held as at 31 March	817	830
Where the funds are held		
Bank balances	709	788
Leasehold improvements	94	0
Equipment – including Minibus	1	14
Net assets / (liabilities)	13	28
Total assets	817	830

Total income grew by 11%, largely due to an increase in the number of grants awarded at the start of the year such as Volunteering Buddies, Carer's Support services and Strictly Come Walking. Our key funder continues to be the London Borough of Croydon, from whom 82% of non-legacy income came in 2020-21 – we are grateful for their ongoing support. Due to Covid restrictions, some core activities such as Clubs @ Leslie Park, Monday Night Social Club, The Saturday Club, Chill and Chat, Active Lives, and Volunteering Buddies, were initially provided by an innovative range of online and 1 to 1 socially distanced activities until the easing of restrictions. Croydon Mencap Support Service continued throughout the year. The overall deficit of £13k for the year was funded by available reserves, and the charity still has a healthy balance of funds available for future charitable activities. We continue to look for new funding sources to maintain and develop services and projects, and the ongoing efforts by our members and staff to raise funds are, as always, very much appreciated. Assistance in our efforts to raise funds, improve current services, and develop new ones, is always most welcome.

Croydon Mencap Ltd
Portland House
678 London Road
Thornton Heath
CR7 7HU

Registered charity no. 1073063

Tel 020 8684 5890

Email info@croydonmencap.org.uk

Website www.croydonmencap.org.uk

