

Abbey

Community Centre



Impact Report 2023



Abbey Community Centre, 172 Belsize Road, Kilburn London NW6 4BJ

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Charity no. 295191 Ltd company: 2028600

ANNUAL IMPACT STATS

November 2022 to October 2023



Food Support

providing shared meals and food bags

1410 community meals, provided, prepared and shared in the centre

828 food bags

370 to low income families

458 to older isolated residents

232 delivered in person

98 hours of volunteering on food bags

Equivalent of 15,500 meals received in partnership with the Felix Project



Digital, IT and online learning skills

making tech accessible for those over 50

117 sessions provided

236 hours of sessions provided

709 session places filled

898 contact hours generated through sessions



Early Years Children Services

supporting children under 5 and their families

142 Creche sessions

1,202 Creche session places filled

145 children received outreach support

144 stay and play sessions

3,366 Stay and Play places filled

372 individual children and their families supported



Kilburn Neighbours

volunteer befriending scheme for over 70s

120 members

40 volunteers

34 regular befriending volunteers

1,700 hours of befriending and community support

480 hours of contact support from staff

216 referrals and signposting



Community Activities Programme (CAP)

for over 50s to socially connect, be creative, stay active and healthy

563 active CAP members

55 types of activities

1,037 sessions

1,787 hours of sessions

9,551 number of session places filled

13,121 contact hours with members

Female CAP members: 360

Male CAP members: 160

Gender 'not known' CAP members: 43



Fit and Active

physical, accessible, fun exercise groups

360 sessions

508 hours of sessions

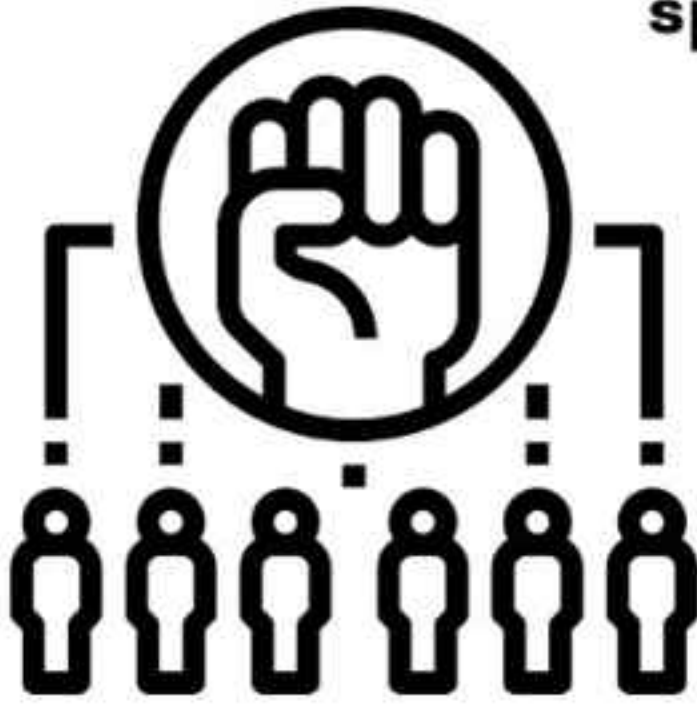
3,569 session places filled

5,090 Contact hours generated through sessions

Empowering Communities

Social Action

Between November 2022 to October 2023 Abbey offered free subsidised space for community groups and organisations to meet, come together and unite in social action.



Over **510 hours** of community space given

Within those hours with our partners we delivered minimum **219 session**

'in-kind' value (from us to partners) of minimum **£17,850**
(based on hourly room rental rate of £35)

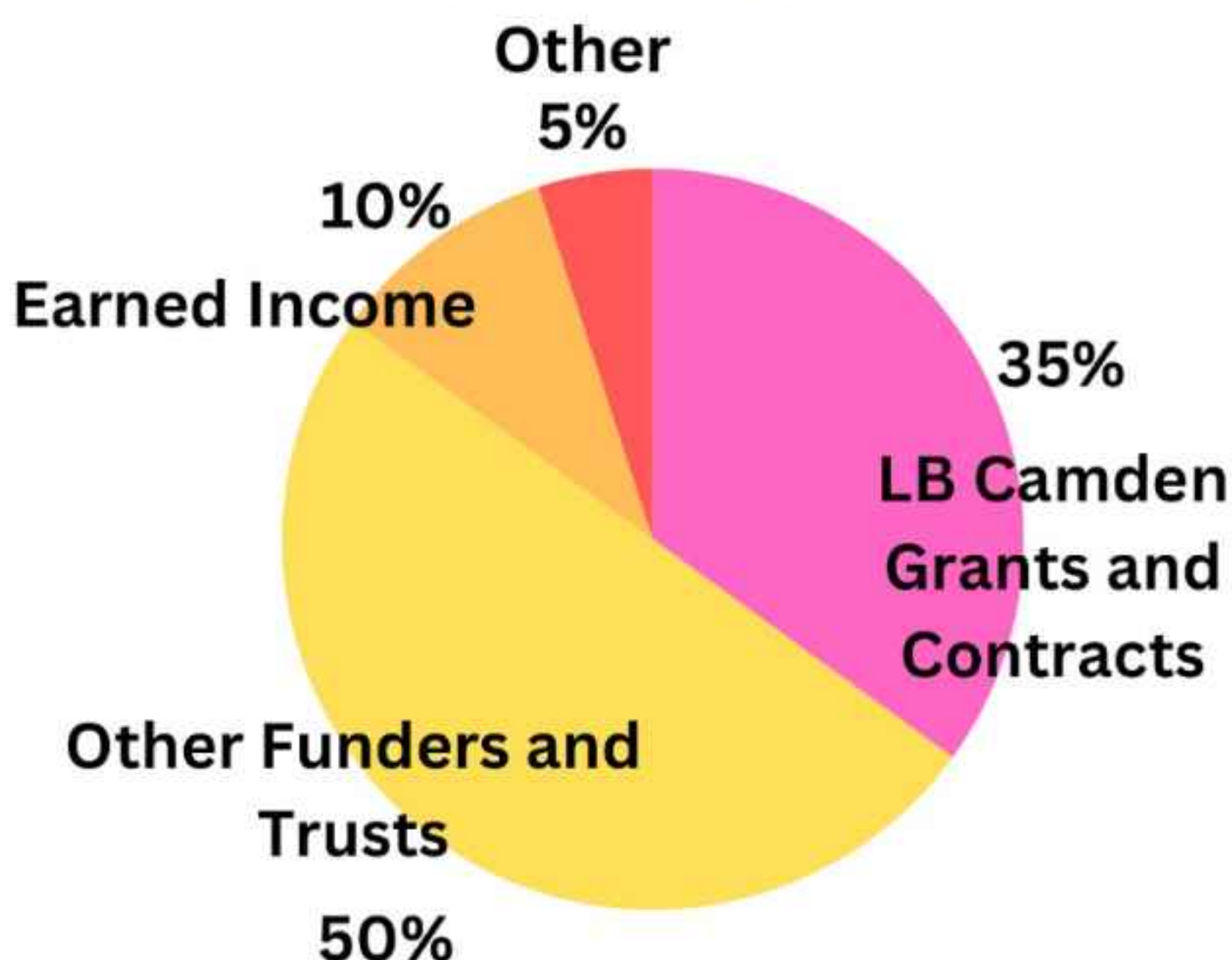
Collaborative working and partnerships

Over 30 statutory, local and pan Camden partnerships/collaborations

Key examples; LB Camden Strategic Partners Team, Adult Education, Supporting Communities, Adult Social Care and Children's Services, C4, VAC, VCC, Central and Northwest London NHS Foundation, Warm Welcome Spaces Campaign, the British Museum, Kiburn Priory Health and GP centre, SHAK, Sidings CC, the Felix Project, Restart, Master Gardeners, The Challenge, Street Bank, Good Gym, Age UK Camden, Bumble Bee Physio, Abbey Road Housing Coop, South Sudan Women and Training Development and Henna Asian Women's Association.

LB Camden Adult Education classes include - ESOL, IT (First & Next Steps), Creative Writing, Seated Yoga, Tai Chi, Sewing; LB Camden Supporting Communities includes Job Hub sessions.

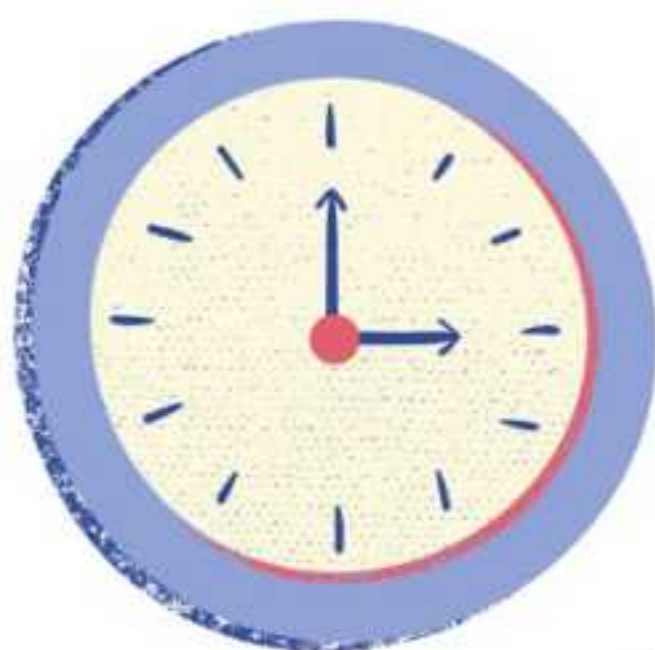
Sources of income April 2023 to March 2024



£1,023,642

**raised in the five years
2018 to 2023
from Charitable Trusts
alone**

133 Volunteers



Volunteers

Hours

3,686

=

£

**In-kind Value at
£11.95 (London
Living Wage)**

£44,048

Total volunteer assignments/occurrences 1,948

**210 new-volunteer enquiries received, 114 new-volunteer applications received,
25 new volunteers successfully recruited**



In February 2023 we further developed our open door 'Warm Space' for the community

185 warm space sessions, supporting over 160 individuals monthly

Over 8,510 hot drinks provided



Based on an anonymous survey of 106 members, Abbey helps.....

91% connect with other local people

89% make new friends

87% socialise regularly

71% from feeling lonely

68% from feeling socially isolated

82% feel inspired to learn new skills

79% develop new interests

80% make their lives happier

72% improve their confidence

78% have things to look forward to

70% improve their mental wellbeing

75% to be physically active

72% improve their physical health

66% feel better informed about other organisations they can contact for help & support

59% have opportunities to support other people in their community

COMMENTS, CASE STUDIES AND TESTIMONIALS

Food Club - offering community cooking groups, meals and food bags.

'Receiving the food bags each week really helps me and the family. There is always such a wide range of fruit and vegetables and other bits, I can always put a meal together. Even though I get healthy start my son has a dairy allergy so most of the money from that goes towards his oat/almond milk which isn't cheap so what I get in the bags really does help'. Creche mum.

'I've learned more from cooking classes, I can go home and make a meal for myself. You pick up little tips that you would never get to learn. I save money by coming here because you (learn to) buy the right stuff and nothing is wasted. Absolutely first class and I hope it keeps going forever'. Regular Men's Cooking class member

Case study - Food Parcels

Child N accessed our children's services when he turned one. The family circumstances started to decline shortly after this, there were some complex issues for which the family (mum, dad and two children) were getting statutory support.

Child N was unsure of some of the fruit snacks that were offered to him during creche snack time. Mum told us that as dad was on a zero hour contract income fluctuated and there was also some challenges around dad mispending the family money. This meant money was often very tight for food, fresh fruit and vegetables were often replaced with more processed and cheaper foods. The weekly food bags became a lifeline for mum and we often double up the bags for this family, we also sign posted mum on to other food provision in Camden. Child N was always keen to tell us the new words he was learning for the new foods he was trying!

Case study - Cooking Group and Shared Meal

BC aged 79, has been a KGN member since October 2021, we have found him a volunteer and engaged him in various classes at Abbey. BC has Parkinson disease and his experience at Abbey has helped him to view his disability in a different way.

It has been fantastic to see BC's confidence grow and connect with fellow members. He has really enjoyed engaging with the Men's Cooking class and has delighted in cooking and trying new food. BC's confidence has grown in his ability to get to the centre and has, in fair weather, used his electric scooter to attend classes, rather than relying on the taxi service.

Tech Buddies - tech savvy volunteers offer one to one assistance and support to older users as they learn to master smart phones, tablets, and other devices.

'Thank you for the phone. I am just about getting the hang of it and I've even been using Whatsapp to video call my sister in Ireland'. Tech Buddy learner, recipient of one of our donated Google phones.

Case Study

T aged 87, lives by himself in local sheltered housing and was signposted to Abbey. T initially joined the men's cooking and our activities coordinator, Jordan, spent time getting to know him. It soon became apparent that T was very socially isolated and his only family were back in Ireland, and he was struggling to stay regularly in touch.

During this period we received a corporate donation from Vodafone of pre paid sim cards and handsets. Jordan suggest to T that he came along to tech buddies to start to learn about smart phones. T started to come along to tech buddies and was explained the basic ideas of a smart phone and was given one of our donated handsets and sim. He was soon hooked and came along for a weekly tech buddy sessions hitting it off with several volunteers. We made some adaptations on his phone to make it more accessible, i.e. larger font and talk to type app.

T has mastered video calls via what's app and now speaks frequently to his sister and made connections with further family members. He is noticeably more upbeat and feeling positive. T still attends tech buddies on a monthly basis, and is determined to master the internet!

Children's Services - supporting local children under 5 (and their families) to have the best start in life through stay and plays, an afternoon creche and one to one outreach support.

"We are very appreciative for the a sense of community, a safe, nurturing, and supportive environment for developing body and soul. For us, the space, opportunities, and support are invaluable, a large indoor play space is absolutely fantastic and essential." Drop In parent

"I'd like to thank you for everything that you've done to help my daughter, to grow, learn and have fun. Through the creche experience, she learnt how to make a bond with friends and teachers. Your unconditional care and affection boosted her confidence, made her feel safe being herself and more open to interact with people. Now she started to go to a new nursery and seems to get used to it smoothly! Thank you again for all your dedication and commitment". Creche parent

Case Study

Child E, Turkish family, stay at home mum, Dad zero-hour contract, minimum wage, and family access universal credit. Mum speaks limited English.

Family signposted to our drop in via health visitor when child 12 months. At 18 months Child E was still not making eye contact, threw and snatched toys but didn't engage. Family support worker referral recommended as mum was overwhelmed but turned down. Zamzam started to offer one to one support as mum was struggling with child's behaviour and embarrassed in group setting. After 4 weeks of one-to-one support mum accepted a creche place (child A aged 1 year, 9 months). She was hesitant due to cultural pressure. After 2 months in the creche Child E was engaging with eye contact, and learnt regular songs, however very routine focused and found any changes distressing. Still little to no interaction with others. Learnt words and starting to link some 'bring the car' but this was mirroring what he heard others saying and he didn't connect the meaning behind it. He was frustrated as he didn't have the ability to communicate his needs and wants. With mum's permission Zam referred to the health visitor who completed his 2-year-old check, they had some concerns but when coupled with ours it was agreed that an assessment was needed for possible special needs. With our support mum took up the two-year-old scheme and Child E left us at age 2 years and 9 months. Mum has gone to nursery more prepared; support needs have been identified and Child E is on the waiting list for a full assessment.

Our Queen's Award Winning Kilburn Good Neighbours Scheme - supporting older local residents to be independent for longer through befriending, support and signposting.

Your Volunteers have been amazing and a lifeline for some, so thank you.'
Camden Complex Care Peer Support Worker

'Thank you for all of your help and support, and great friendship.' KGN Member

'[volunteer] is really wonderful and I am very grateful for her company and all of your help. I really look forward to the visits very much.' KGN member

'It's such a wonderful group and being able to help [Member] when I could are some of my best memories from my time in London.' Ex KGN Volunteer (moved away)

Case study

JW aged 95, has been a KGN member since 2016, uses a wheelchair due to severe arthritis, and lives alone with no family nearby. She has some assistance from a carer but otherwise little opportunity for social interaction. She can drive using a modified car (blue badge) but isn't able to get in and out of the vehicle without assistance. JW became depressed and lonely and showed irritability during phone calls as she was frustrated with her circumstances. During the pandemic, JW benefitted from a telephone befriender as well as check-in calls from KGN staff and centre volunteers.

Since restrictions lifted in 2022, JW was keen for more face-to-face interaction and agreed to attend activities at the centre. Lydia introduced JW to Simone's Colouring Calm class as she is interested in crafts. Previously she loved needlework but can't do this anymore due to severely arthritic fingers - however, she can still hold a pen and pencil for Simone's class. JW is also interested in forms of meditation, so she enjoys the breathing exercises during the class, which help with her low moods.

It was difficult to book taxis that can take JW in her wheelchair for a short distance and this was a big obstacle. To overcome this, Jordan and Lydia started taking JW to and from the centre in her wheelchair.

With Jordan's help, JW now also attends the Friday Coffee mornings. JW enjoys the social interactions with Jason who leads the sessions as well as with other service users.

Community Activities Programme (CAP) - keeping the local community, particularly those over 50, socially connected, physically active and creatively stimulated to support their physical and emotional wellbeing.

'Colouring calm is a fulfilling, relaxing sanctuary, peaceful. It helped me to find a safe haven, away from life's struggles, issues, obstacles. It's home.' CAP member

'It gets me out of the house and gives me confidence. It makes me stronger. It makes me come out of isolation and meeting other people. It makes me feel good inside' CAP member

'Thank you all for your kind and positive impact that you had on our mother. Since coming part of your 'gang' mum has a better quality of life just by hanging around you lot' CAP member, family feedback

Case Study

CB is in her 70s, she lives alone locally and was worried about feeling isolated after retirement. CB joined Abbey around 8 years ago, she was looking for somewhere to socialise. She felt very welcomed at Abbey, staff made her feel comfortable. She first joined Saturday Club and eventually she joined choir, bingo, yoga, colouring calm, and London Trips. Her life got so much busier; she met new people and made new friends. CB enjoys the fact that her week is all scheduled. She has even volunteered with us. CB feels that joining Abbey changed her retirement expectations. It motivated her to continue to be active, she was able to share her skills & knowledge. She finds that volunteering makes her feel helpful and doing something positive and participating in activities facilitates socialising, allowing to meet new friends. CB likes the new Abbey building, she feels it's giving the same positive energy which the old building had. CB is thankful for all work we provide at Abbey and how much this has helped improve her mental and physical health by continuing to remain active after retirement.

Partnership and Collaborative working - In addition to our extensive, directly delivered, programme of activities, we strive to ensure our centre is best utilised to meet local, cultural and specialised need. Abbey offers accessible space and resources for residents, community groups and organisations, social enterprises, LB Camden, and other voluntary, public and statutory organisations to meet and deliver activities and services.

'I am going to re-enrol on the Camden course next term. Bryony is a brilliant teacher and facilitator... She has created a safe space to be creative and to by myself in...I have rediscovered how enriching and helpful to my mental health writing poetry is.' Creative writing class attendee

Partner feedback

LB Camden Adult Education, Digital Inclusion Classes

'Abbey Community Centre provides much needed support to local residents. When you walk through the door, you are immediately greeted with a busy, well-used community resource with a broad ranging timetable of activities, including wellbeing, fitness, advice services, social connection, and more.

Camden Adult Community Learning (ACL) has worked in partnership with them for many years. Our Digital Inclusion programme targets mainly older residents with low digital skills, and we have worked with the Abbey Centre to provide accessible, beginners' courses in basic digital skills.

Whilst we provide a tutor and digital devices, our funding from the GLA does not include paying for venue costs, and the Abbey Centre kindly makes their space available, in the spirit of real, community-focused partnership working. Partnerships such as this enables our work to have real impact - for example, our recent survey suggests that 92% of our learners said that their digital skills and confidence had improved, and that coming to a class had had a positive impact on their lives.

However, without centres such as Abbey, we simply wouldn't be able to reach local residents at all. We are well aware that the costs of running a building and a charity infrastructure are increasing exponentially. The Abbey Centre works with residents who are the most vulnerable, and are amongst the least able to pay. The Abbey Centre is a fantastic local organisation and we will do everything we can to help them continue on a sustainable footing well into the future.' - **James Drummond, Digital Inclusion Programme Manager, London Borough of Camden.**

Partner Feedback

LB Camden Adult Education , ESOL Classes

'We have partnered with Abbey Community Centre for a number of years. Throughout this time, they have been instrumental in enabling us to deliver ESOL classes in high quality premises to residents in the local community. The staff at Abbey are very helpful and responsive to our needs, they help us promote our classes and have facilities that are suitable and professionally run according to our needs. ESOL classes are life changing for many of our students, as they help to prepare individuals to access opportunities for further education, volunteering opportunities and most importantly employability.' - **Joanna Basinga, ESOL Programme Manager, LB Camden**

Partner Feedback

LB Camden, Job Hub, Employability Support

'During our time co-locating across various locations across Kilburn we have been fortunate to have worked with Abbey Community Centre, working from both of their sites. Only last week, I heard an older resident gaining confidence via a digital support class. They were sat next to a resident enrolled on the knitting club. The employment support that we provide is therefore only a small part of the wider holistic support on offer at Abbey Community Centre. ACC is crucial in creating social cohesion, giving meaning and empowering residents whilst equipping them with the tools for self-reliance. Long may it continue.' **Tom Palmer, Job Hub Lead, LB Camden.**

Partner Feedback

Felix Project, Food Support

'The Felix Project have worked with the Abbey Community Centre since The Felix Project first started in 2016. This partnership enables them to support 100 local residents with food support. In particular, they are able to support local families and older people. In 2023 alone, they were able to support their local community with the equivalent of 15500 meals (meal equivalent, based on 420g FSA average meal weight). This relationship supports Felix's aim of reducing the environmental impact of food waste and supporting Londoners experiencing food poverty. They are a very friendly and helpful team and a pleasure to work with.' - **Helen Stanley, Community Coordinator, Felix Project**

Partner Feedback

Age UK Camden - Debt, Money and Scam Prevention Advice Sessions

'The Abbey Community Centre has enabled Age UK Camden Information & Advice Service to provide an outreach service for debt and money advice to older local residents. Abbey Community Centre is ideally based within the Kilburn area of Camden which has been identified as an area of Camden which has high deprivation. Local residents are grateful that we are able to use the Centre as it is more accessible to them, especially those with limited mobility. Without the ability to use the Centre, Age UK Camden wouldn't be able to reach the local residents especially those with limited mobility who are unable to travel or use public transport. The Abbey Community Centre is very familiar to those in the local area so it gives them the reassurance and comfort that they are being seen in a place they know well, trust and are familiar with. The facilities at the Centre are very accessible and the staff at the Centre are friendly, approachable and helpful. Publicity of our services in the centre has been crucial to getting people involved. There is always a waiting list to access our services at the Centre.' **Ann-Marie Carrol, Debt and Money Advice Officer, Age UK Camden**

Partner Feedback

Bumble Bee Physio, For Children With Motor Neuron Challenges, Social Enterprise

'I have been hiring out a community room and just wanted to say how fantastic the experience has been, how well looked after we are, and how that has had a huge impact on our ability to serve the kids in our community. We have managed to work with the children's team to invite children to our services for free of charge who are from low income families.

We have worked in 2 other community centres, and I must say that our experience at the Abbey Centre has put them to shame! Thank you so much to your wonderful team, and we are so pleased to be able to serve the community together.'

Hannah Spink, Director, Bumble Bee Physio

Volunteering at Abbey - volunteering is at the heart of Abbey, with roles from reception to cooking, gardening to befriending. Most of our volunteers are from the local community, and we also host student placements from UK and America (via CAPA) Universities.

'Working with Abbey Community Centre has been an eye-opening experience in learning the significance of providing a safe place for social interaction in the Kilburn community. From my time at Abbey, I have developed passion and a willingness to help others.'

Student volunteer

'It has been good volunteering here and I like that there is a mixture of different tasks including answering the phone, meeting people in the foyer and call rounds. I am happy here and do feel I have developed my social skills in a short space of time.'

Local volunteer