



The latest news, events and opportunities from Abbey Community Centre, Kilburn



Please feel free to take a copy of our Spring 2024 newsletter – and grab one for a friend so we can let everyone in Kilburn and beyond know about all the lovely things going on at Abbey Community Centre.

## What's been happening: Recent highlights

Happy May everyone! Spring has well and truly sprung and it's the perfect time to drop by the **Abbey Garden**. Anyone can come in and enjoy the tranquil outside space with picnic benches, herbal aromas and the occasional frog! In April we enjoyed a bumper garden volunteering day where our brilliant Abbey Green Guardians planted, watered and dug to prepare for Spring and Summer. Head Gardener Maria Elena told me it's her dream that more locals will come and enjoy the garden space so do pop by whenever you like!

This last couple of months we also held a fabulous **International Women's Day coffee morning** with spoken word; helped launch Camden's **Active for Life** campaign; started a **karaoke session** and our new **Abbey Choir** alongside much more! We're also busy planning for Volunteers Week and will be holding a Volunteers Party at our next community lunch.



**Men's Fitness:** The boys chuffed with their progress after another great session with trainer Daniel. Join them on Wednesdays 10.30-11.30am. Ages 50+

Some highlights of what we've been up to from Feb-April 2024 are pictured here and overleaf along with this season's feedback, 'You Said We Did', and thank you section. Enjoy and hope to see you soon!



**Creche (right):** Our head gardener Maria Elena has been running some glorious creative outdoor sessions for our under 5s!

**Love Where you Live (left):** We linked up with Heath Hands to enjoy a sunny Hampstead trek for our local walk.



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

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# Up Your Street

Spring  
2024

**Active for Life sessions:** John and George are pictured below with intern Alex at an Abbey Green Guardians session, along with some of the Table Tennis gang! You can still sign up to the Camden Active for Life programme and attend our taster sessions: details overleaf.



**This is just a fraction of all we've had going on! Grab a timetable/programme guide or see the whiteboard in the foyer to find out days and times of regular sessions. See page 4 for upcoming special events.**



**Creche:** Sunnier weather means more time outside for our Under 5s. This time developing creativity and fine motor skills with Tissy through a face dress-up game!

**Creative Writing (below):** The writing classes are in session again on Fridays 10.30am-12.30pm and 2.15-4.15pm.

Member JD kindly gave me permission to share her lovely piece (*So what are we doing here?*) below which expresses what we do together wonderfully.



**"So, what are we doing here?"** Well, we all come to see Bryony! And to read the amazing excerpts she gives us; the food. Sometimes there's biscuits too. But it's a time to concentrate, to draw in, to write down some of the endless stream of chatter which dulls the senses and numbs the intellect.

We sigh. We get hot. We get cold. We think we know what we're doing and then see that it's something else entirely. We get to know others in our group, especially after a few terms. We are grateful when we hear their pieces, authentic and true, uttering words in foreign syllables that we can't articulate ourselves, but bringing us closer to what we know and think and feel.

There is a familiarity and like a family we learn to tolerate others' foibles and feel familial affection for others in the group who come and go, like a real family.

We meet, we write, we support each other and we learn about English, other people and their ways of living and being."

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**Thank you from us**  
Our gratitude section!



We couldn't do all we do without our volunteers, funders, partner organisations and community members like you. This is just a section to highlight who we'd especially like to thank this season!

- We'd like to thank our fabulous (volunteer) Volunteer Coordinator **Carrie** who starting working in this role in February. With Carrie helping us, volunteer enquiries have leapt from an average of 4 per week to 14! And applications from average 1 per week to 4! This is all thanks to her hard work distributing publicity in new locations, updating our online listings and bringing new ideas in for volunteer recruitment.
- Big thanks to our CAPA interns **Aiden and Alex** who have finished their stints with us and jetting back off to the States! You have helped us so much with vital administration, our befriending schemes, food redistribution and much more to keep us running smoothly.
- Thank you to the **North London Community Fund** and North London Waste Authority for awarding us £2512 to run our much-loved Re-cycle-art sessions over the next few months!

### Overheard at Abbey Your recent feedback

Abbey Community Centre stands as a testament to the help a community centre can provide. People of all ages walk through these doors seeking assistance, activities, or simply somebody to talk to. The staff here at Abbey are fiercely committed to helping with these endeavours, no matter how big or how small... Coming as a student from New York, I felt right at home here.

I have enjoyed every class and learnt so many recipes about different vegetables that I never knew how to cook. I have tried out some recipes at home. I enjoy eating with other people, it makes a nice change from always eating lunch on my own.

I would like to say that the staff at Abbey do a fantastic job! They just have a wonderful way about it. They have a good way of communicating with us, it feels secure and comfortable. I noticed their mannerisms with people, it seems to be very good.

I've been attending the Men's Fitness for 8 years. Apart from benefitting my physical fitness, I find the camaraderie with other members exhilarating! It appears to be the only one around in the local area. Here's hoping that these classes will continue running to help older men like myself remain fighting fit and healthy.

I started volunteering at Abbey when I retired and felt lonely. My children and grandchildren have all grown up. Abbey team gave me the spirit and helped me feel important and needed. I always look forward to coming here.

Living on my own can be challenging, however I don't feel alone anymore as I know I belong to a lovely, generous community of people who bring me joy every time I share a cup of tea and delicious biscuits with them.

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## Coming up / Notices

Dates for your diary



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### Health Talk with UCLH: Hearing & memory loss - Tues 18th June 11am-1pm

An interactive session giving you a unique chance to learn from the experts at University College London Hospital on topics you have voted for. In June that's hearing and memory loss and we'll follow in July with vaccines. Talks will be held in the Garden Room and will include a delicious healthy buffet! Free to attend. Book with Reception on 020 7624 8378.

### Active for Life: Sign up sessions and tasters

By signing up to Camden's Active for Life campaign, you'll receive info about fitness sessions across the borough as well as regular tips, motivation and support from Camden PLUS a free one-day leisure centre pass thrown in too! To make it easy for you to join in, we are running **special sign up sessions on Mondays from 2-4pm** at Reception where you can use our Chromebook to sign up with a unique code, and ask about our taster and regular exercise sessions.

**TASTER: Seated Dance with Emma:** Friday 7th June 2.45-3.30pm / Main Hall

Active for Life participants can also join our regular exercise sessions: Zumba, Green Guardians, Men's Fitness, London Trips, Strength and Balance and many more. See our timetable for details.

### Abbey Book Club: Wednesday 29th May, 3-4.30pm

In May we'll discuss a memoir, *Strong Female Character* by comedian Fern Brady. Exploring class, mental health, societal pressures and individual ambition, *Strong Female Character* is a candid and groundbreaking memoir of autism, sexism and defying expectations. Join Bryony in the kitchen or on Zoom for a lovely discussion, recommendations and laughs from 3pm. No need to book, just turn up or for more info/Zoom link email me on [bryony@abbeycc-kilburn.org.uk](mailto:bryony@abbeycc-kilburn.org.uk).

### New: Karaoke Club! Thursday 30th May, 3.45-4.45pm

Our monthly Karaoke club with Rosamund got off to a flying start last month with 15 of you joining in! Whether you want to belt out a ballad, chill out with some reggae or get back to your rock'n'roll roots, there will be a song for you. Kick off the weekend early! Free to attend. Call Reception to book on 020 7624 8378.

Please see our noticeboard or posters for more upcoming special events.

### You said, we did....

#### Some of the ways you've made an impact

- Following members' feedback we have allocated a separate timeslot (two Tuesdays per month) for members who would like to access the step-by-step **Learn My Way** online platform (made available by our funder Good Things Foundation). Jordan delivers these sessions. Learn My Way is also accessible during other Tech Buddies sessions if needed while still keeping the tailored 1-on-1 support from volunteers at the forefront.
- Strength and Balance** with Sharon has been doing from strength to strength (ahem) and is often at full capacity in the main hall. To prevent overcrowding, we changed the setup of seats and equipment in the hall so everyone has plenty of space for their workout.

## Donate to Abbey



We are a charity and our projects are not funded by Camden Council. Please support our community work by giving us a cheque, cash or donating via card at Reception. You can also text **ABBEYFIVE to 70085 to donate £5 from your phone.**

### Closure notices

Some activities, including our Creche, Drop-In and several Camden Adult Community Learning classes, will not be running in the one-week May **half-term** break commencing Tuesday 28th May. The centre will be completely closed on **Monday 27th May** for Spring Bank Holiday.

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