Up Your Street

September – November 2026

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

Abbey Community Centre

Please feel free to take a copy of our Autumn 2026 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

Hello wonderful people and welcome to our September – November 2026 Abbey Community Centre newsletter!

Recently it's been all about celebrating our 50th Year! We've had two official celebrations so far with one more to come in December. As well as it being our 50th, the marvellous Lindsay Richardson – our Director for 30 years – is approaching her full retirement. Our brilliant Chair Caroline is stepping down as it's the end of her 5-year term, and we will be welcoming Vikki Osborne as our new Chair of Trustees. So, it feels like a really special but very busy time here at your favourite community centre.

Here you'll get a small flavour of what we've been up to the last couple of months, see our recent feedback and thank-yous, 'You Said We Did' and get details of upcoming special events. As always, come and see us sometime soon, or give us a call on 020 7624 8378 if you'd like to get involved.



50th Celebration: Our November cocktail afternoon was focused mostly around former and current staff and trustees, volunteers, and a few long-time members plus funders, partners and supporters. We enjoyed speeches from Caroline, Lindsay, Paul and Tulip Siddiq MP plus performances from Henna Asian Women's Group, South Sudanese Women's Skills Development and spoken-word poet Nelissa Mendy (her poetic tribute to Abbey is overleaf!).





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

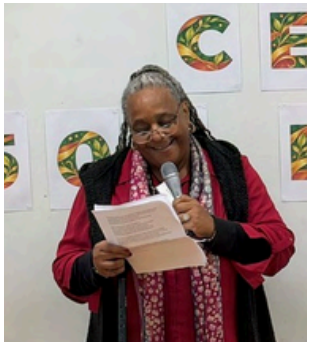
T: 020 7624 8378 **W:** abbeycc-kilburn.org.uk

E: reception@abbeycc-kilburn.org.uk

Charity no. 295191 Ltd company: 2028600

Up Your Street

September-November 2026



Abbey Community Centre

Nelissa's 50 Years of Abbey poem

"If I had to describe the Abbey Community,
It would be one of fun and unity.
Coming together from all walks of life,
Meeting others, alleviating strife.

With so many different activities to do,
Sometimes its hard to choose.

Various Exercise Classes... Table Tennis,
Bingo, Colouring Calm, Tech Buddies,
Gardening, sewing, creative writing,
bookclub and cookery... to name but a few.

Citizens Advice, Debt Relief, Local
Councillors and MP surgeries are support
services that can be accessed too.

No pressure to learn, drop in when you can,
Or have a cuppa, and a space to sit down.
There is a community lunch, once a month,
A time to socialise, whilst having a munch.

I call it the best playcentre for over 50s,
But then I remember there are others who
also benefit from this.

The stay-and-play drop-in for under 5s
Where children can develop and thrive.
Offering parents & carers a space to meet,
Watching their children mix and play,
helping isolation be beat.

The Sudanese and Henna Women's Groups
have cultural support and activities.
And currently the Abbey also hosts... the
temporary Kilburn Library.

The Abbey staff are an amazing team,
helping people get through,
approachable, friendly and welcoming,
with time to listen too,
Helping problems and worries be solved,
giving dignity and respect, treating
individuals like gold.

With a listening ear, and in confidence,
These marvellous workers, go to
extraordinary lengths.
Along with Board Members and
volunteers.
Making this centre a safe and
accessible place to be,
inclusive and engaging, with a 50-year
long history.

Times have changed, wonderful workers
have come and gone,
Each one contributing to how this
centre has remained so strong.

So happy 50th Birthday to an
outstanding community,
Thank you to the investors and sponsors,
may it long continue to be.
Thank you to all the staff, volunteers,
and trustees, Committees and
Supporters for steering this magnificent
centre in the right direction.
Thank you for all the services you
provide to combat loneliness, isolation,
suffering, and grief.

For welcoming, educating, uplifting,
inspiring and appreciating the
vulnerable. God bless you all."

© Nelissa Mendy 2026

Abbey Community Centre, 172 Belsize Road, Kilburn London NW6 4BJ
T: 020 7624 8378 **W:** abbeycc-kilburn.org.uk
E: reception@abbeycc-kilburn.org.uk
Charity no. 295191 Ltd company: 2028600

Up Your Street

September – November 2026

Abbey Community Centre





Welcome CJ!: This month, we're welcoming CJ Lim to our board of trustees. CJ is an architecture academic who has lived in Camden for over 30 years. CJ says: "Abbey is one of the few places where I have experienced a genuine sense of belonging. I value its welcoming, vibrant and caring environment, sustained by a passionate and dedicated team."

On Reception: Huge gratitude, as always, to all our Reception and admin volunteers who are vital in keeping us operational and organised! Here's Arash helping us out.



Pumpkin Carving Workshop: Spooky season well underway! We celebrated Halloween (and half term) in quintessential Abbey style with a jam-packed, intergenerational pumpkin-carving workshop! Thanks to our interns Melana and Ameira for their help.

Abbey's Gardening Group: Maria Elena has been teaching her fellow volunteer gardeners how to plant cuttings safely.





Colouring Calm: We love a full house! Simone's Colouring Calm group here with 22 attendees.

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.

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

T: 020 7624 8378 **W:** abbeycc-kilburn.org.uk

E: reception@abbeycc-kilburn.org.uk

Charity no. 295191 Ltd company: 2028600

Up Your Street

September – November 2026

Thank you from us

Our gratitude section!

Abbey Community Centre

We couldn't do all we do without our volunteers, funders, partner organisations and community members like you. Here's who we'd especially like to thank this season!

- **Sophie Elgood:** Made a flying start as our volunteer Volunteer Coordinator over the last few months.
- **Goodgym Brent:** For all the support they've given us recently with leaflet distribution and cleaning.
- Our wonderful reflexologist **Anne Power** for doing a funding app to continue & expand her sessions at Abbey, benefitting all of us.
- **Picasso Hairdressers & Camden Council** for their free haircuts on Thursdays!
- **Thrive London** & the **London Communities Micro-grant fund** for giving us £2637 towards our Soup-er Tuesdays & Welcome and Thrive project.



Overheard at Abbey

Your recent feedback

For many years, one of your exceptional volunteers Helen visited my 93-year-old Aunt at her home in Kilburn. Helen brought warmth and companionship and I know that her kindness and genuine engagement contributed hugely to the quality of my aunt's life. – **KGN family member**

A BIG THANK YOU to Lydia and Jordan for everything – your expertise, all those fabulous recipes we cooked together, your patience and for being utterly lovely warm human beings. The world, charity sector and education in general needs more devoted, hard-working and talented people like you. It's been a pleasure to learn from you and I couldn't be more grateful if I tried. – **Agnieska, Cooking and Nutrition Intern**

A variety of toys and equipment for children to enjoy. The space is spacious as well. Friendly and supportive staff. Clean and well-prepared environment. Suitable for all ages under 5, as it is well-equipped for different age groups. – **Parent**

Happy 50th Abbey. A community that grows and grows and just keeps giving. Thankyou for welcoming me into the family.
–Janet, Children's Services Volunteer

It enables me at the age of 82 to keep moving and bending which is good for me. The Table tennis are good and useful sessions, well organised by Jason.
Rick, CAP member

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

T: 020 7624 8378 **W:** abbeycc-kilburn.org.uk

E: reception@abbeycc-kilburn.org.uk

Charity no. 295191 Ltd company: 2028600

Up Your Street

September – November 2026

Coming up / Notices

Dates for your diary

Abbey Community Centre

Pampering Day for 60+ on Thursday 3rd December - 4.30 to 6pm
Home Instead Camden are offering free pampering treatments at Abbey for people aged 60+. Appointment only - book your spot now on 020 7624 8378 for gentle nail care, hair styling or even a makeover! Refreshments available too. Refundable deposit of £3 applies upon booking.

Abbey Book Club: Wednesday 2nd December 3-4.30pm
The next Book Club read will be The Outcast by Sadie Jones. A mesmerizing portrait of 1950s hypocrisy and unexpected love, the novel follows nineteen year old Lewis journeying back home from his time in prison. His return will have dramatic consequences not just for his family, but for the whole community. Email Tricia on patriciateahan@hotmail.com if you have any questions or would like to join.

Chess Club with Sandy: Following the relocation of our wonderful Ali, our member Sandy kindly stepped up to volunteer to run the Chess Club on **Mondays, 5.30-8pm**. This is a free drop-in class - please come and find him in the foyer Mondays if you're keen.

Please see our noticeboard or posters for more upcoming special events and new courses. Ensure you check our full timetable for any date changes/cancellations of regular activities.

You said, we did....

Some of the ways you've made an impact

- Following feedback from **Active for Life** taster sessions, participants suggested providing **take-home instructions** to help them practise exercises learned during the Rise & Shine taster session. Simone contacted the tutor to arrange this, and the leaflets are currently being developed. This is a positive example of responding to members' suggestions and supporting their wellbeing beyond the sessions.
- Following a request in our suggestion box, **people aged 55+** are now welcome in **Tissy's Zumba Gold classes** (previously 60+). We are also considering the other dance session ideas people have submitted.
- We received a request for resuming the **Boccia group.** We have tried this previously a couple of times, but there was always low take-up when we set it up. Our target number for activity sessions is always 10 or more people, so it would need to have at least ten interested in attending each week.

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, or visit our website 'Support Us' page.

Closure notices

- There will be no classes at the centre on Thursday 20th Dec. It's our staff away day.
- Friday 18th Dec: Last day of activities in 2026.
- Monday 4th January: Centre re-opens and activities resume on Tuesday 5th January.
- Please see our timetable for all activity dates and break weeks.

Abbey Community Centre, 172 Belsize Road, Kilburn London NW6 4BJ
T: 020 7624 8378 **W:** abbeycc-kilburn.org.uk
E: reception@abbeycc-kilburn.org.uk
Charity no. 295191 Ltd company: 2028600