



**Our plan for 2023 to 2028**

# Markfield

We are an inclusive community hub where people can play, socialise and get information and support.

## Our vision

A world where disabled, Deaf and Autistic people are treated as equals, have a voice and can live the life they want

## Our purpose

- To enable disabled, Deaf and Autistic people to be themselves, take risks and live life to the full
- To focus on the needs of the whole family and break down isolation
- To promote respect of disabled, Deaf and Autistic people and support their full participation in society

## Our values

### Inclusive

We are for disabled and non-disabled people

### Innovative

We explore new ideas

### Empowering

We enable participation

### Connected

We are part of our community

At Markfield we respect that people choose different ways of describing themselves and many people think that being Deaf or autistic is not a disability. We work both with people who have a diagnosed disability, and those without a diagnosis – to recognise hidden needs and include people labelled as ‘challenging’



“ Markfield is my favourite place I like seeing all my friends here ”



Markfield was set up in 1979 by parents of disabled children, whose initial vision was to create an inclusive place for disabled and non-disabled children to play. A Victorian pump house in Tottenham was refurbished by the charity to create a unique community centre that opened in 1986. Over a thousand people each year benefit from the various activities at the centre and outreach in the wider community.

### **We provide:**

- Inclusive after school clubs and holiday playschemes for disabled and non-disabled children and young people, which support them to develop and build positive relationships through play, and to develop independence, self-esteem, and active citizenship
- A range of family support services including advice, advocacy and information, parent/carer training and befriending. Mutual support is encouraged through drop-in groups, such as our parent groups, under 5s stay and play, information hub drop-in and family club, which support families to build relationships and find shared solutions to disadvantage
- Leisure services and travel training for adults with learning disabilities, giving access to ordinary and fulfilling activities that are self-chosen and support community participation
- Community access to our building and adventure playground through community group hall hire and Saturday 'Open Access' adventure playground drop-in sessions

### **In 2017 our Strategic Plan set out to:**

- Sustain and grow our core services
- Ensure participation in decision making
- Develop as a unique community hub
- Improve information sharing

### **In the last five years we have been successful in lots of ways.**

#### **Sustain and grow our core services**

- We have extended our training programme and other family support services
- We have established the Family Befriending scheme
- The number of people attending our clubs for adults with learning disabilities has grown, as

has the overall numbers benefitting from our range of family support services and drop-ins. However, the pressure on 'short breaks' funding has resulted in diminished numbers of children and young people being able to attend Markfield's services

- We have increased our community outreach by working with children centres, schools, and other community organizations
- We have improved accessibility to our services through further investment in transport, translation, and interpreting, as well as online services like zoom meetings and training

#### **Ensure participation in decision making**

- We have continued to nurture our participation group the Power of IYA (Independent Young Advisors) and have increased the length and frequency of their meetings

#### **Develop as a unique community hub**

- We have expanded services for the wider community, such as more Open Access sessions
- We have created links with other organizations that meet families at Markfield, including School Home Support and the Educational Psychology service

#### **Improve information sharing**

- We have upgraded our IT systems
- We have increased our Social Media reach by over 60%, which has improved communication about our services and those provided by other organizations

# Why Markfield is needed

Due to improvements in medical science, more robust assessment and diagnosis the number of disabled children and adults is growing.

## Our local community in Haringey

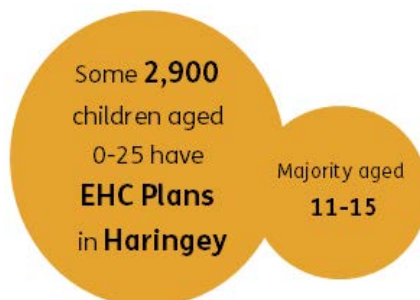
Haringey has a higher-than-average number and rate of children living in poverty. This equates to 14.7% of all 0- 18 year olds living in poverty



**Nationally 29%** of disabled children live in poverty – source DfE. Families with disabled children are much more likely to be poor

**16% of schoolchildren have an additional need.**

Haringey has a **growing number** of children with **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**



**Speech, language and communication** remain the largest special educational needs in Haringey, followed by social, emotional and mental health needs



Compared to London, Haringey has a similar proportion of young people that have a **learning disability (LD)**, but a slightly higher rate of **autism** in the school population

The **percentage of children in Haringey with special educational needs (SEN)** has increased in the last couple of years and is **higher than the London average**. (Department For Education 2022, Haringey Local Authority data November 2022)

## Stress and isolation

Many **people with learning disabilities** struggle to have a good social life – the opportunities are fewer, and far too many become isolated and **feel trapped** at home



**29% of carers** (over a quarter) feel lonely often or always (Carers UK, State of Caring 2022)

**1 in 5 adults** in the UK are currently providing care

**44% of working-age adults** who are caring for 35 hours or more a week are **in poverty** (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, UK Poverty 2022)

Average **anxiety levels** were higher for **disabled people** at **4.6 out of 10**, compared with 3.0 out of 10 for non-disabled people (year ending June 2021) (ONS 2021)

## Discrimination

**Over 40%** of respondents in Mencap research said there were times they **did not go out** because they were worried about something which happened in the past month. The most common reason was: **'People calling me names or bullying me'** (14.7%)



# What makes Markfield special

Our users tell us that Markfield feels like a second home. Markfield continues to be described as a 'lifeline' and many families have told us they know what they would do without Markfield. The ethos of Markfield as inclusive and a place that encourages choice, independence and empowerment are universally valued by those that attend Markfield, participate in running services and work here. Children and families describe Markfield as a place where they can be themselves and not judged, and where they can find people with the same experiences as them.

During our consultation with stakeholders in 2022, it was clear that they wanted us to keep doing what we do. They wanted a greater use of the building and Markfield to have more services out in the community. A constant theme from families and service users is not to have to worry or having to justify themselves. Professionals value the width of services we offer to families, and how easy the process of accessing our services is for families.



“ The staff make me laugh, we do lots of activities ”



## Developing our strategic plan

Involving disabled people and their families in determining Markfield's future is fundamental. We are committed to ongoing user participation in planning and decision making here at Markfield and promote this in the wider community. In developing our strategic plan for 2023-28 we have spent over a year reviewing our services and gathering feedback from children, young people, adults, parents/carers, staff, volunteers, our Trustees, funders and strategic partners. Our consultations have included art activities, games, and questionnaires, discussions, interviews, feedback forms and observation of how people engage with our building and services.

Our strategic plan draws together the priorities identified from this period of review and consultation, what we have learnt from our experiences over the last five years. We are striving towards a community where disabled, Deaf and Autistic people are treated as equals, have a voice and can live the life they want.

# Our goals for 2023 to 2028

## Build and grow

We will continue to sustain and grow our services.

Markfield's core services are all highly valued by disabled people and their families as well as the wider community. Family support, play, youth and adult services are all crucial in providing access to everyday and fulfilling life experiences. We have a dynamic approach to developing services; by working with our members to identify areas of need, we adapt, extend and review how services are planned and delivered. The services provided are often described by our members as essential and need to be protected.



### We aim to

- Secure funding for Markfield's current core services and continue to extend services to meet local needs
- Improve co-ordination between Markfield and other services so people get a more joined-up approach to meet their needs
- Further improve the stability, training and development of Markfield's staff and volunteer team
- Have an uncompromising commitment to high quality services

“ My child is SO happy there. I wish I could turn back time and have gone to Markfield earlier ”

## Everyone's voice matters



### We will ensure participation in decision making

Our members are the disabled people, siblings, friends, families and parents/carers that make up Markfield, they may attend regular clubs, drop into sessions at Markfield or access information and support. Members contribute to the vision, purpose and values that guide what we do and many are actively involved in planning and facilitating services. We will continue to strengthen the participation and involvement of our members in decision making at Markfield and promote this in the wider community.

### We aim to

- Ensure IYA and other steering groups have direct involvement and are represented in decision making at Markfield and within the wider community
- Participate in campaigns for disabled people's rights and campaign against disability discrimination within the community
- Support our members to fully participate in society
- Maximise, volunteering, training and work for disabled people and their families within Markfield



## Star of the show

### **We will continue to develop Markfield as a unique community hub**

The Markfield building and site is widely celebrated as unique and special. We are positioned in a key community setting and our adventure playground is described as special, exciting, challenging and 'like an adventure'. We aim to develop and extend the use of our building to maximise this unique space, to link more with the local community and to generate income which we can use to maintain the building and extend services. There is a long history of successful inclusion at Markfield that supports people to build positive relationships and work together on finding mutual solutions to disadvantage. We will continue to bring local people and groups into Markfield to develop shared values and approaches to inclusion of disabled people.



### **We aim to**

- Increase community use of Markfield's building, grounds, services and resources to improve links with local individuals and groups
- Continue to develop our outreach into the community and involve more groups of people in Markfield
- Extend the use of the building for services in line with members' feedback
- Increase the income generated from providing training and hall hire

## Hear all about it

### **We will improve information sharing**

Information, resources and services are vital for disabled people and their families to achieve their rights, and to challenge discrimination and disadvantage. We will ensure that our services are well publicised and easily accessed by disabled people and their families. We will share a wide range of useful information and resources as well as develop proactive ways to share our expertise effectively in the wider community.



### **We aim to**

- Develop Markfield's marketing strategy to improve our profile
- Improve Markfield's information management systems to keep pace with change
- Develop Markfield as an information hub, for example to meet the needs of young people
- Improve information and resource sharing with our members, local organisations, and partners

# Contact Markfield

**Address:** Markfield, Markfield Park, Markfield Road, London, N15 4RB

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**X (Twitter):** @MarkfieldProj **Facebook:** @TheMarkfieldProject **Instagram:** @themarkfieldproject



Our centre is in Markfield Park  
Walking either via Markfield Road,  
or Crowland Road through Markfield  
Park, or along the River Lea towpath  
Driving via Markfield Road.

**Parking is available at the centre.**

**Tube:** Seven Sisters, Tottenham Hale.

**Bus:** 41, 76, 123, 149, 243, 259, 279

**Overground rail:** South Tottenham,  
Seven Sisters, Tottenham Hale.

You can hire Markfield's amazing  
building and adventure playground  
for your party or event.

Our building is within the award-  
winning Markfield Park. We have a  
huge double height hall, two floors of  
softplay, extensive outdoor adventure  
playground, a kitchen, garden and  
much more.