



Wave Cafe Development Plan, 2022



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So much more than a cafe

Wave Café is a charity whose aim is to reduce inequality in society, and radically change attitudes to learning disability and difference.

While there is plenty of provision for people with learning disabilities in our society, places where people of all abilities mix with each other as equals, outside of a helping or 'service user' relationship, are very rare.



By creating a community space where We're All Valued Equally, Wave Café showcases an alternative model of community – one where people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities spend time together - socialising, working, creating, and enjoying each other's company.



Through this, attitudes are changed:

- those identifying with disability or difference see themselves as a full and natural part of the community, not separate
- at the same time, those with limited experience of learning disability see that being amongst difference benefits them too.

What we have learnt

It can be hard to enable true mixing of people with all abilities. Those without learning disability, or with limited experience of people who are 'different' from them, are often resistant, feeling awkward and expecting to be involved to 'help' rather than 'participate'.

A truly inclusive space needs to be attractive to those without learning disability, to engage them in their own right. It also needs to be accommodating of different personal needs without running under a 'service user' model, so that those with learning disability are able to take part and express themselves naturally rather than being managed or directed.



We call it "with not for". It is tricky to get right - but it can work and is worth the effort.

How we achieve it

At Wave Café, we host a vibrant community arts café that offers:

- Tasty food and drink at a price point accessible to all
- Creative activities to enable mixed ability mixing, creating and socialising
- A friendly, non-judgemental welcome to all, regardless of ability, age or background
- A live example of a mixed ability staff team with opportunities
- Partnerships with local learning disability provisions (as staff and as attendees).



We use a recently refurbished venue (the Muswell Hill United Reformed Church) which has been fitted with an attractive open plan café space, a catering quality kitchen with service hatch, and separate rooms for art and other activities.

It is vital that the café appeals firstly as a café. It needs great food and drink, a warm atmosphere and the 'something different' factor, to encourage people to come in. Once in, they can see first-hand how a genuine inclusive environment works.

There is no requirement to use the space in any particular way. People can work, socialise, join in creative activities or just relax quietly.

At the core is the informal, inclusive environment where being amongst difference is normalised.

This is, of course, far from "normal" – but then that is our point.



Our work so far...

2017

First inclusive “pop-up” events



2017

Wave Café registered as independent CIO



2018

Weekly evening arts workshops



2018

Community consultations and fundraising



2019

Trial day café summer events



2020

Weekly all day café opens in new premises

2020

Online events during Covid-19



2021

Re-launch of the physical cafe

2021

Appointment of new Development Director



2021

Plan for opening 2 days/week + evening events

Funded by local supporters and grants, including from The National Lottery, Comic Relief, The Funding Network, and The Michael and Betty Little Trust

The next chapter – plans for 2022

Our ambition

We have run Wave Café events for long enough to know what works; everything we do is well received and receives great feedback. But the need is huge, and we have so far only scratched the surface. So we aim to achieve a step change this year to:

- Offer a fuller and richer service for our existing community
- Bring Wave Café and the societal benefits of genuine integration to a much larger local community
- Establish Wave Café as a financially sustainable social enterprise.



Specific objectives

- Double the number of hours during which we are operating
- Run the daytime café and arts events all year round, including during holiday periods
- Hold regular events outside working hours
- Double the number of people attending each day
- Attract new people to visit every day we open or hold an event
- Increase the variety of our events and art offerings to attract a broader community
- Increase the number of internships we offer for people with Learning Disability
- Engage local businesses and other corporates in supporting our work financially
- Grow a community of local supporters who make a regular financial contribution

Putting it into practice

To achieve these objectives operationally, we will:

- **Run the daytime café two days / week**
- **Run inclusive evening events at least once a month**
- **Run a weekly inclusive After-school Arts club for school children and parents/carers**
- **Promote Wave Café through multiple new channels**



Wave Café Organisational Structure for 2021 - 2022



Board of trustees and Executive Committee



Development Director

Manage café staff; plan and promote activity programme; secure funding; manage website, communications, publicity and partnerships.



Administrator

Finance; HR; grant applications; compliance; CRM.



Café Manager *

Source and cook café menu; manage volunteers; health and safety.



Events Coordinator

Venue; social media; evening events; café shifts.



Kitchen Staff

Assistants with and without learning disability; community volunteers; partnership apprentices.

**To be employed from July 2022*



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Registered Charity Number: 1171421