



September 2018

## Wave Café Press Release

### Local organisation breaks new ground in inclusivity

Social enterprise Wave Café, recently featured on BBC Radio 4's Woman's Hour, are taking action on inclusivity. Starting September 13th, they are hosting a series of creative arts workshops in Muswell Hill, to bring together people with and without learning disability. Every Thursday evening, there is an open invitation to come and try out a different activity under expert guidance – screen printing, chocolate making, expressionist painting, group singing... something new each week.



Volunteer Jessica Hardie with Development Director Ben Sudell at a Wave Café event

#### Why is Wave putting on these events?

85% of disabled people aged 18 – 35 years feel lonely (Scope, 2018). This isn't surprising given previous findings that 1 in 3 young people with a learning disability spend less than 1 hour outside their home on a typical Saturday (Mencap, 2016). This has consequences, not just for those with a disability, but for the whole of society. But what can be done?

Wave Café are tackling this head on. Mencap's research shows that contact between people with and without a learning disability is the best way to increase positive attitudes and remove barriers on both sides. And even better if that contact is as equals, doing things together, without discrimination. In a nutshell, doing things "with" each other rather than "for" each other. This way, we all benefit.

This simple philosophy is the inspiration behind Wave Café (Wave stands for "We're all Valued

Equally”) and drives everything they do. It clearly works, as confirmed by people who have attended previous events:

*“It’s such a relief to have somewhere to go where we don’t have to worry about our son (a young adult with a learning disability) being accepted or included as everyone is so welcoming. Each person is genuinely valued just for being themselves.”*

*“I remember watching a member with learning disability dance at one event. She’s a really talented dancer. Watching her perform in a way I could never dream of, it struck me that this isn’t about being “abled” or “disabled”. She can do things that are impossible for me; quite probably I can do things that are impossible for her. Isn’t that just being human?”*

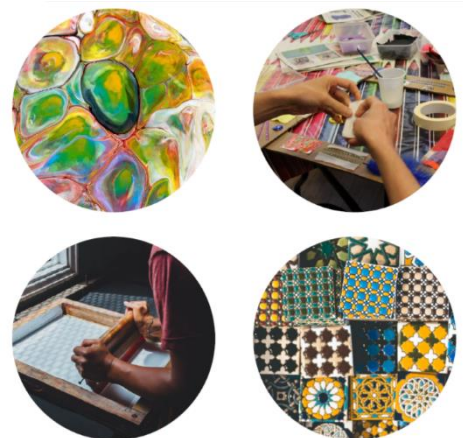
**Graham Wright**, Wave Café Chair, says: *“The aim of these evenings is to demonstrate social inclusion in action and inspire others to have a go. We know from our previous events what it takes to remove barriers and build relationships - this is about showing others the simple, practical things that anyone can do to make a difference.”*

## How can I sign up for an event?

Everyone is welcome to Wave Café events, regardless of previous experience or ability. That’s the whole point! Tickets are available now at [www.wavecafe.org/book-online](http://www.wavecafe.org/book-online)

Upcoming workshops are:

- 13th September - Abstract Expressionism
- 20th September - Chocolate Making
- 27<sup>th</sup> September – Decoupage
- 4<sup>th</sup> October – Mosaics



All workshops are at The Birchwood Centre, Fortis Green Rd, Muswell Hill, London N10 3BG. Events start at 7.30pm. Tickets £12 (£8 concessions). Refreshments included. Season tickets are available for discounted entry to the full term’s programme.

## Available for interview:

- Bernice Hardie, Wave Café Founder
- Jess Hardie, Wave Café Volunteer

(Bernice and Jess featured recently on *BBC Radio 4 Woman’s Hour*)

- Ben Sudell, Wave Café Development Director
- Graham Wright, Wave Café Chair

## For more information or to arrange interviews:

[www.wavecafe.org](http://www.wavecafe.org) or contact Ben Sudell ([ben@wavecafe.org](mailto:ben@wavecafe.org) / 07706 323904)

All photos (and many others) available at: <https://www.wavecafe.org/gallery>