

## Supporting Parentsactive in Hammersmith & Fulham to become a Community Interest Company (CIC)



Parentsactive run the Parent Carer Forum (PCF) in Hammersmith and Fulham. In 2024 the PCF decided the time was right to become independent from HF Mencap who had hosted the PCF for 20 years. They wanted to do this to give them more flexibility and a structure that would help them to grow.

Parentsactive received support from Contact Associate Ruth Hobbs and Contact's partner organisation Community Matters to help them consider different models including becoming a charitable organisation, a Community Interest Organisation (CIO) or a Community Interest Company (CIC).

After looking at all the options they decided to become a CIC. The Associate supported them to develop their steering group and introduce a new staffing structure. She helped them review policies and procedures (as many of these had been covered by the host organisation previously) and to create Articles of Association and register with Companies House. She also supported with the transition of staff to the new organisation and the transfer of the Advocacy service to the new organisation.

The move to become an independent organisation was a complicated process and came with several additional costs for the forum. The Contact Adviser supported the forum to submit a Priority Grant application to help with the administrative burden of becoming a CIC.

Nandini Ganesh Parentsactive's CEO said *"We were delighted to be in a position to move forward with increased ambition and aspiration to offer more services and support to our parents. The process of moving from a hosted organisation to CIC needed significant investment in operational setup, legal compliance and administrative support to ensure long-term sustainability"*

### Going from Strength to Strength

Parentsactive became a CIC in December 2023 and since then have gone from strength to strength. They now have 3 projects under the CIC including the **Parent Carer Forum** itself, **Post 19 coordination** focussing on families on the transition pathway to adult services post 25 and an **Advocacy service**. Parents are able to participate through each of these projects and contribute to service development.

Parentsactive received funding for their **Wellbeing Programme** for parent carers, funded by NHS North West London ICB. They also successfully applied for funding for an Administrative Assistant from Young Hammersmith Fulham Foundation in February 2025.

Parentsactive received one off grants from the Local Authority and health partners for the **Partners in Change Initiative** (a borough-wide collaboration led by Parentsactive to amplify the voices of residents who are too often unheard, including disabled people, parent carers, and vulnerable communities).

In July 2025 they also received funding for a new Parent Carer Advisor funded by The Earls Court Development Company thereby expanding their advocacy service.

Parentsactive received a CIVIC Honour in 2024/25 winning the **Award for Building a Stronger, Safer, Kinder, Borough**. The award recognised their remarkable dedication and impact on the community and their commitment to assisting parents and carers facing various challenges including housing issues, mental health concerns, education and youth crime.



Parentsactive celebrated their 25<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2025 by organising a celebration at the Riverside studios. The event was attended by more than 70 participants which included the Local Authority, Health partners along with parent/carers and voluntary sector partners.

#### **About the Support Parentsactive received from Contact**

The Associate supported Parentsactive throughout the process of becoming independent and a CIC. They say that the process has enabled the larger CIC to explore new ways of working with members, which involved being transparent about its governance structure and expanding its reach via more social media platforms.

Nandini said;

*“In essence, a CIC has provided us with a framework for: Ensuring transparency in funding Ensuring correct audit procedures are in place Balancing social impact with business sustainability. Attracting investment while maintaining a commitment to community benefit. We hugely valued being hosted by HF Mencap for so long but becoming independent has enabled us to operate with greater flexibility and becoming a CIC has, in many ways, freed us up to do more.”*

Nandini said;

*“The decision to become a CIC was not an easy one. We approached Contact, who fully understood the reasons behind the decision and helped us through the process. They assigned an experienced Associate to initiate the process and signposted us to Community Matters who completed the needed paperwork to register the company for us. Our Associate Ruth Hobbs then stood with us every step of the way and guided us through the entire process of working with the host company, through the Tupe process of transfer of employees and ensuring we had correct documentations/agreements in place to do so, making the complicated process as seamless as possible.*

*“We simply could not have done it on our own as leaving a hosted organisation after more than 20 years, with whom we had a good relationship, was both difficult as well as emotionally draining on both sides. The Associate also ensured that we were settled and had all our policies in place after our company started operating independently from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2025, thereby easing us into the process before leaving. We are truly grateful for the support.”*

This work the work was funded via the DFE Annual grant and priority grant and via Contact’s Associate Support fund.