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For the community, by the community. A not-for-profit service

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Epsom’s Love Me Love My Mind celebrates 20 years of community care

27 July 2026



An Epsom charity which has supported thousands of people affected by mental health difficulties has celebrated its 20th anniversary.

Members, volunteers, friends and supporters of Love Me Love My Mind gathered at St Barnabas Church in Temple Road on Saturday 25th July for a buffet meal, raffle, dancing and anniversary celebration. Among those attending was Epsom and Ewell MP Helen Maguire.

The evening marked two decades since the charity’s Monday Drop-In began at St Barnabas in 2006. What started as a welcoming place where people could meet, talk and share refreshments has developed into an entirely volunteer-run charity promoting better understanding of mental health throughout Epsom and Ewell.

Today, Love Me Love My Mind seeks to break down stigma, offer friendship and encouragement to people experiencing mental health difficulties and their families, and direct people towards sources of further help. Its regular Monday Drop-In attracts around 30 to 40 people each week for refreshments, activities and a home-cooked meal. The charity also runs a Men’s Pit Stop group, peer support and community activities, as well as organising the annual Epsom Mental Health Week.

The anniversary exhibition placed the charity’s work within a much longer and sometimes painful chapter of Epsom’s history. From 1896 onwards, five large psychiatric hospitals—Long Grove, Horton, West Park, St Ebba’s and The Manor—were built around the town. By 1925 the “Epsom Cluster” formed what was described as the largest psychiatric facility in the world.

The hospitals provided employment, recreation, companionship and care, but their position on the edge of the town also reflected the isolation and stigma experienced by people with mental illness. St Barnabas developed particularly close links with Long Grove Hospital, while members of its congregation were involved with the Friends of Long Grove.

When the large hospitals were gradually closed under the policy of care in the community, many former patients were discharged into group homes around Epsom, including within St Barnabas parish. Some had lost the friendships and support networks they had known inside the hospitals.

A number began attending weekday services at St Barnabas. The then vicar, the Revd Michael Preston, offered coffee afterwards and listened to the life stories of those who came. The exhibition records that from this modest act of welcome grew “a very significant mental health community support project”.

The charity’s late founder, the Revd Susan Bull, subsequently researched the relationship between churches and people experiencing mental distress. Her study, *Voices of the Voiceless: An evaluation of local church care for those in mental distress*, examined what enabled St Barnabas to provide acceptance and hospitality at a time when fear and stigma remained widespread.

The anniversary also remembered the long-standing social divide between St Barnabas parish and more affluent parts of Epsom. Separated from the town centre by the railway embankment and reached through low bridges, the neighbourhood was historically home to many lower-paid hospital workers and successive communities arriving from other parts of Britain and overseas.

Against that background, Love Me Love My Mind has spent 20 years building a place in which people can find companionship, belonging and acceptance. The charity says its work over that period has supported thousands of people, promoted positive mental health and helped create a stronger and more connected community.

Saturday’s summer party was one of several events being held during the anniversary year. The charity thanked Direct Residential, Love Your Accountants, Park View Café, St Barnabas Church and the Rotary Club of Ewell for supporting the celebration.

Further information about Love Me Love My Mind, its activities, volunteering and donations is available at www.lovemelovemymind.org.uk.

Lionel Blackman

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Photo: Helen Maguire MP addresses the 20th anniversary party of LMLMM

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