

SHE BANGS THE DRUMS

Bloco Mente is a community based Samba Reggae percussion band based in Tameside. The group meets every week to learn percussive music from around the world and shares it with local people through public performances. They also support community events such as carnivals, festivals, sporting events and parades.



Bloco Mente's members range from young to old and come from all walks of life, the youngest is 8 and the eldest is in his 70s. Members have a variety of health and social needs ranging from low level mental health issues to heart disease and limiting illnesses. They also have children who suffer from ADHD or are on the Autism spectrum. **This inclusive group brings joy to its members and the wider community through a shared passion of music.**



Vicky Jeffers has benefited greatly since being involved in the band. *"I sometimes struggle to get my daughter to engage in activities"* explains Vicky. *"Coming to drumming together allows us to participate in a joint activity, which helps us to be active together. It also enables us to engage with people of different ages and backgrounds.*

"I get to speak to others, and also observe my daughter making friends of different ages and having fun with them. We perform together at events and she also takes a lead in teaching new members drum patterns, she even teaches retired members about social media too! I always come away from the weekly sessions smiling.

*"Support from Forever Manchester has allowed our group to purchase new instruments as our group expands. We have also been able to bring samba to Tameside, entertaining our community at local events such as Stalybridge's Tulip Sunday where the children in the audience joined in using various junk jam instruments we made. We were also joined by a jazz trio who jammed with us in the sunshine to a huge crowd gathering on the grass – **we felt like real musicians.**"*