



Our plans to support autistic people

Lewisham All-Age Autism Strategy 2022-2027



easy
read



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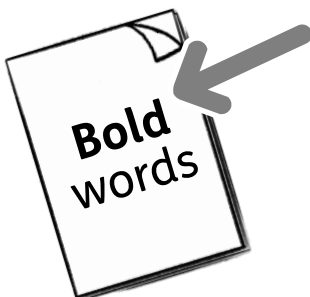
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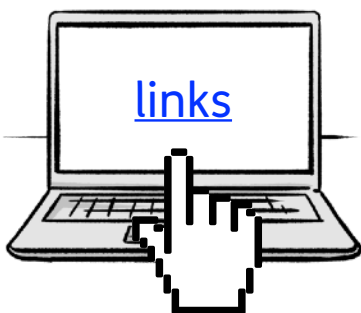
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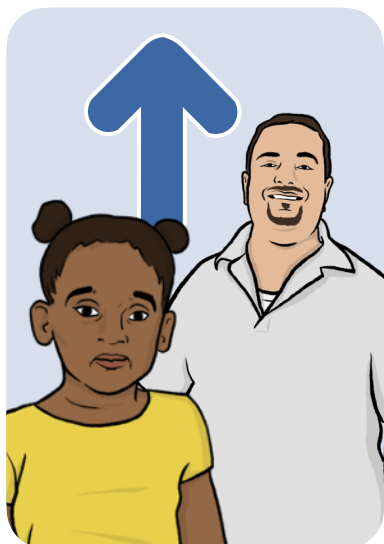


In this Easy Read document, difficult words are in **bold**. We explain what these words mean in the sentence after they have been used.



Some words are [blue and underlined](#). These are links which will go to another website which has more information.

Introduction



South London CCG and Lewisham Borough Council have been thinking about how to improve life for **autistic** people.

Autistic people have autism, which affects things like communication, being with other people, or how you think and feel about things.

Autistic people often have a harder life than other people, because of:



- Being treated differently to others.



- Not getting the same good healthcare as others.

Over the past year, we have spoken to:



- Autistic people.
- Local carers.
- People who work in support services.

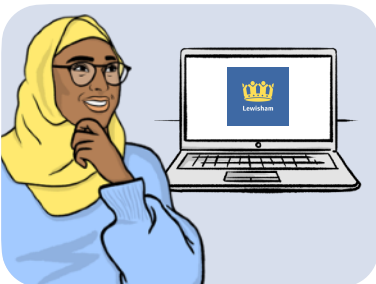


This has helped us write the Lewisham All-Age Autism **Strategy** 2022-2027.

A **strategy** is a plan of things to do over a period of time.

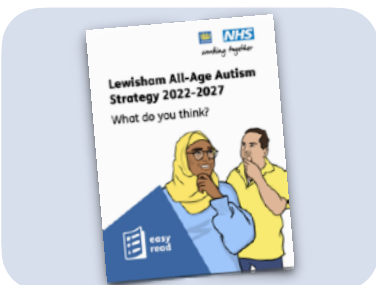


This information explains our plan.



You can tell us what you think of our plan by filling in the survey on our website:

<https://consultation.lewisham.gov.uk/joint-adults-commissioning/autism-strategy>



You can find an Easy Read version there if you prefer.

What autistic people can expect



We worked with autistic people and the people who support them to find out what would help them the most.



Together, we wrote 9 sentences that describe what autistic people should expect in Lewisham. They are:



1. I am accepted by local people for who I am.



2. I can get an **autism assessment** when I need it.

An **autism assessment** is when a doctor who knows a lot about autism decides if someone has autism or not.



3. I get support while I am waiting for an autism assessment.



4. My carer or carers get the help they need to care for me and themselves.



5. I can use and enjoy local spaces.



6. I am able to learn in ways that work for me.



7. I am able to take part in training that helps me to get a job.



8. I am able to use my skills in a job I am proud of.



9. I am always listened to.



We will use surveys to ask autistic people if they feel these sentences are true for them.



We will use their answers to check if our plan is working.

Our priorities



Priorities are the most important things that should be done first.

We have 7 priorities:

1. Understanding more about autism



More people know about autism now than they used to.



But lots of people still don't know how to support autistic people.



This can make life worse for autistic people.

We will work to help people understand more about autism. We will train:



- Local people.
- Health and care staff.
- Prison staff and police.
- Housing staff.
- People who work in local services.

2. Supporting carers



A lot of carers don't get enough support.

We will work to support local carers more. To do this, we will:



- Help them get support from other carers.



- Listen to carers when we make decisions.

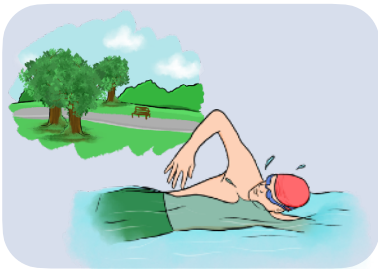


- Support young carers who are getting ready to be adults.



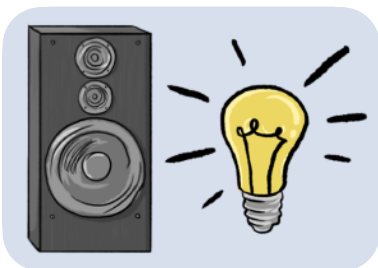
- Help carers to have breaks.

3. Improve leisure spaces



Leisure spaces are places where people go to enjoy themselves, like swimming pools and parks.

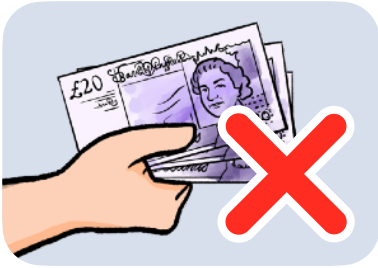
Autistic people can find it difficult to enjoy leisure spaces because:



- There is loud music and bright lights, which can be hard for autistic people to cope with.



- They can find it difficult to get to the leisure spaces.



- They might not be able to afford to go.

We will:



- Work with local companies and support them to include autistic people.



- Make sure that autistic people are listened to when planning new leisure spaces and events.

4. Improve autism assessments



A lot of people have to wait a long time to have an autism assessment.



This can cause health problems.



There is not enough support for people who are waiting to find out if they have autism.

We will:



- Support people before and after they find out if they have autism.



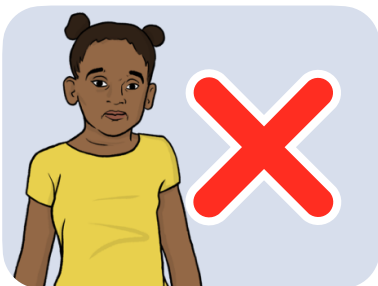
- Make sure people don't have to wait so long to find out if they have autism.

5. Support in schools

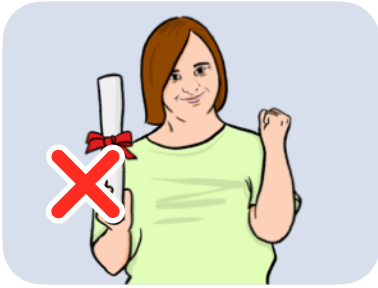


Most autistic children go to **mainstream schools**.

A **mainstream school** is a regular school that teaches children with mixed abilities.



Often these schools don't give autistic children the right support.



Autistic people are less likely to go to university or college than others.



We need to make sure that autistic children get the right support to have the same chances as everyone else.



We will improve the support that children can get in mainstream schools.

6. Better training



A lot of autistic people don't have jobs.



Those who do have jobs are often unhappy at work.



When we spoke to autistic people in Lewisham, they told us that it is more difficult for them to find a job.

We will:



- Support autistic people to find a job.



- Help autistic people to stay happy in work.



- Support autistic people to work in jobs that use their skills.



- Support companies to work in a way that suits autistic people.

7. Treating everyone the same



White men and boys are much more likely than other people to be checked for autism in the UK.

It is less common for people to be checked for autism if they are:



- A woman or girl.



- From an **ethnic minority**.

An **ethnic minority** is a small group of people of the same race, in a place where most other people are a different race.



This can mean that some autistic people do not get the support that they need.



Autistic children get a lot more support than autistic adults.

We will:



- Make sure that autistic people who have been ignored in the past are listened to.



- Let services know more about autistic people so that they can find and support them.

What do you think?



We would like to know what you think of our plan.



Please fill out the survey on our website:

<https://consultation.lewisham.gov.uk/joint-adults-commissioning/autism-strategy>



We will use your answers to think more about our plans and change things for the better.