

Wokingham Area All Age Autism Strategy

The remit of this strategy is improving outcomes for all autistic people, including those who self-identify, as well as those who are possibly autistic. We will take a broad, neuro-inclusive approach wherever possible, recognising that many autistic people are neurodivergent in multiple ways and that action we take as part of this strategy can positively impact people who are neurodivergent in other ways too.

Jointly owned by Wokingham Borough Council, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board, Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust, SEND Voices Wokingham, Promise Inclusion, Autism Berkshire, ASD Family Help and CLASP. Developed with autistic people and their families.

The strategy focuses on six priority areas, which also take into account:

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Building Blocks of Health and Wellbeing
- Carers

Our Ambitions

1

Neuro-Inclusive Communities

- **Raise public awareness:** Enhance understanding of autism and neurodiversity and improve access to information and support.
- **Neuro-Inclusive practices across partner organisations:** Increase knowledge amongst professionals and develop employment practices.
- **Collaborate locally:** Partner with local services, businesses and community groups to foster neuro-inclusion and create opportunities for volunteering and employment.

2

Identification and Improving Health Outcomes

- **Identify autism and support early:** Develop pathways and services so people can access support early -based on individual needs -including those exploring autism.
- **Proactively improve health:** Early support to improve outcomes for all autistic people with a focus on equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- **Neuro-Inclusive health services:** Develop consistently neuro-inclusive practices and awareness of co-occurring health conditions.

3

Start Well

- **Neuro-inclusive education:** Support all educational settings to become more neuro-inclusive environments and provide needs-led support.
- **Improve SEND provision:** Increase and improve support for autistic children through the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) system.
- **Support into adulthood:** Increase opportunities and support including training and employment, especially for those not eligible for adult social care support.
- **Neuro-inclusive children's social care:** Develop consistently neuro-inclusive and trauma-informed practices.

4

Live Well and Age well

- **Co-develop community support:** Further develop support for adults with organisations and autistic people, including employment, social opportunities and practical help.
- **Neuro-inclusive adult social care:** Co-develop adult social care with autistic people, addressing service gaps and embedding neuro-inclusive practices.
- **Neuro-inclusive housing:** Increase affordable housing options, embed neuro-inclusive practices working with registered providers, and strengthen joint-working with partners.

5

Emotional Wellbeing, Mental Health and Crisis Support

- **Early mental health and wellbeing support:** Tailor for autistic people and their families, supporting people to better understand themselves and what supports them.
- **Neuro-inclusive mental health services:** Develop consistently neuro-inclusive practices, including earlier identification and support with co-occurring conditions.
- **Crisis prevention and recovery:** Strengthen joint working across statutory and community partners, including to prevent crises and to support transition to adulthood.

6

Safer Communities and the Criminal Justice system

- **Reduce risks to safety:** Address bullying, antisocial behaviour and criminal activity to reduce the risks to autistic people's safety and potential involvement in crime.
- **Build protective factors:** Including psycho-social education on relationships, online safety and raising concerns, alongside developing more neuro-inclusive environments.
- **Neuro-inclusive Criminal Justice System:** Sustain partnership-working to support autistic people, including those who are accused of or who have committed crimes.