



The Big Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Richmond upon Thames Learning Disability Strategy
2023 – 2028



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The Learning Disability Big Plan (2022-2028) for The London Borough of Richmond Upon Thames (LBRUT) has been co-produced by the Learning Disability Partnership Board and Richmond Mencap's Working Together Group. The Big Plan is centred around the shared vision that people with a Learning Disability:

Want to live, work, enjoy and feel seen and safe in our local communities [...] live healthy lives, see the people who are important [to them], make new friends and, do the things [they] love.

There are an estimated 2931 people in Richmond Upon Thames who have a learning disability and approximately 23% have a moderate to severe learning disability. By the year 2030 it is estimated this will increase to 2960 people.

We want to ensure that people with a learning disability and/or autism who live in Richmond Upon Thames can live fulfilling lives and can achieve their full potential.

This Plan was made because it is important that as a local community, we continue to support people with learning disability and autism living in Richmond-upon-Thames to live a fulfilling life and achieve their full potential. People with a learning disability and autism continue to face inequality in all aspects of their lives.

The Big Plan describes the actions the local community commit to taking to improve the lives of people with a learning disability and autism to help reduce this inequality.

The following principles have shaped The Big Plan:

Having a Voice and Coproduction:

People with a learning disability and autism have a right to make decisions about their own lives, to decide what outcomes are important to them.

As the 'experts by experience', we will commit to ensuring people with a learning disability and autism have a voice in the design, delivery, and evaluation of services.

We will do this by providing information that is accessible, creating formal and informal structures and processes to seek the views of people with a learning disability and autism before major decisions are taken and feed back in a variety of ways how we have used their views were used to shape the design and development of services

Inclusive Citizenship:

People with a learning disability and autism have a vital contribution to make to the local community and should be able to access their local community facilities and be active citizens in the same way that their peers do. We will commit to ensuring local facilities and services are a first choice for people with a learning disability and autism because they are safe and accessible.

We will do this by supporting local facilities to make reasonable adjustments and adapt to meet the needs of local residents.

Prevention and Early Help:

There is substantial evidence that shows the benefits of good prevention and early intervention. We will commit to ensuring that all services commissioned or delivered directly by the NHS and Local Authority are proactive in supporting people with a learning disability and autism to build and maintain good health and wellbeing and are able access the right information and advice at the first point of contact to ensure problems do not escalate.

We will do this by developing by ensuring all health and social care staff have the right skills to engage adults with a learning disability in order to provide the right advice and support first time and to identify earlier where people may need some additional support.

Promoting strengths:

We will commit to focusing on the strengths and abilities of the individuals in our approach to service delivery so that the support is person centred, puts people in control of what they do and ensure that people are treated with dignity and respect.

We will do this by focusing on outcomes-based commissioning and person-centred planning.

The Big Plan focuses on 8 key themes derived from the findings of research undertaken by people with a learning disability and autism who are members of Richmond Mencap's Working Together Group. Members of Richmond Learning Disability Partnership Board, including representatives from across education, health and social care and the voluntary and community sector have helped to develop The Big Plan.

A central focus of The Big Plan is to acknowledge the role families and carers play in the lives of people with a learning disability and autism. Therefore, the views and experiences of local carers have been integrated into each of the themes within The Plan. It is hoped this will contribute to further recognition of the support carers need socially, financially, physically, and mentally.

The Big Plan builds upon the aims and objectives of its predecessor published in 2015-2020, whilst accounting for key changes to legislation, flexibility of provision based on learning from the COVID-19 Pandemic, National Legislation and local policies as well as changes in local demand and need.

We also maintain awareness that The Big Plan is being published at a time of uncertainty due to emerging economic pressures, namely, the impact of COVID-19, The War in Ukraine and Brexit. Therefore, we will strive to listen to people with a learning disability and their families and continue to work together in our response to influence our community.

Each of the 8 themes are focused on what we will do, including a clear 5-year action plan to drive development. See the 'Our Priorities' section of The Big Plan for a complete overview of the actions associated with the themes, including timescales.

We will continue to monitor the delivery of our plans, as demonstrated in the 'Measures of Success' Section of The Big Plan. The Local Authority alongside the Learning Disability Partnership Board will play a critical role in ensuring that users and carers have a voice in shaping the priorities identified going forward.

For further information or to get more involved in the delivery of The Big Plan please email:

ldcommissioningenquiries.gov.uk

The eight key priorities addressed in The Big Plan are:

Key Priority 1

Ensuring Adults with a Learning Disability can travel around the borough confidently and as independently as possible.

What we will do

Travelling independently is a key life skill that enables people to meet with friends and family, travel to their place of work, visit new places and enjoy different experiences. The focus of The Big Plan will be to maintain and increase people's confidence in using public transport and other forms of transport.

We will do this by working with Transport for London and Southwest Trains to ensure they continue to make reasonable adjustments in response to the feedback that has been collected through the Council's Mobility Forum.

We will create opportunities for people with a learning disability to have access to different forms of transport to reduce some of the anxieties that people can experience on public transport. We will do this by exploring greener forms of transport and how travel training might assist people to increase their independence and confidence.

We will also focus on maximising the use of technology to help people plan their journeys, during journeys and to help when journeys are changed or delayed. Travel training and assistance to people where they lack confidence planning new journeys might support increased independence and confidence in travel for people with a learning disability.

Key Priority 2

Supporting people to gain employment and skills and having an active role in their local communities.

What we will do

The opportunity to work provides a range of benefits to people including improved self-esteem, financial independence, the opportunity to make friends and to learn new skills. People with a learning disability and autism also have unique strengths and skills that they can bring to the workplace that include increased attention to detail, the ability to undertake repetitive tasks for longer than people that are not on the ASD spectrum, honesty and integrity and a different perspective on the customer experience. The Big Plan will focus on continuing to increase the number of people in employment and supporting local employers to embrace the benefits of a diverse workforce.

We will do this by ensuring people with a learning disability and autism have access to effective employment support and that potential employers are supported to make reasonable adjustments.

We also aim to create different types of job opportunities including volunteering and work experience placements so that people can gain experience and trial different types of employment including self-employment.

We will ensure that through the Council's commissioning practices that we maximise the Social Value of the Social Care contracts awarded to local organisations by ensuring is a strong emphasis on employing people with a learning disability and autism to deliver local services.

We will work closely with local organisations to understand and address the barriers to employing people with a learning disability and autism and find creative ways to bring together potential employees and employers.

Key Priority 3

Supporting people to live as independently as possible in their own home.

What we will do

Having a stable place to live is a basic need and can influence people's job opportunities, daily routines, mental health and wellbeing, their ability to stay connected to friends and family and sense of safety.

The Big Plan will focus on developing incrementally a housing pathway that includes different types of housing arrangements that reflect people's age, gender, culture and preferences and helps people to develop and maintain their independent living skills whilst also keeping families living together for as long as possible.

We will do this by co-producing our local quality standard for different accommodation types to include the key features which are required to meet modern standards and expectations, and to support independence and affordability. This will include looking at how we ensure all services have wi-fi, are technology enabled and as energy efficient as possible. We will reshape, in partnership with Housing Associations, the local housing provision to meet these standards. We will also develop new types of supported living schemes to meet current and future needs.

We will ensure people with a learning disability and autism are more aware of their housing options and the responsibilities and benefits that come from living independently by developing accessible information about this topic.

In partnership with people that are eligible for support from Adult Social care and their families we will redefine the minimum standards and expectations of providers and landlords who support people to live independently.

Key Priority 4

Ensuring young people are supported to successfully transition into adult life

What we will do

Reaching the age of 18 is typically an exciting time of life. Young people with a learning disability have a more ambitious perspective on their potential and greater awareness of their abilities than their older peers had when they were a similar age, and we want to encourage and support all young people with learning disabilities and autism to maximise their potential.

Choices made at this stage in life have profound consequences for the rest of life and we want our young people to have the best start in adulthood and to live well.

The Big Plan will focus on continuing to improve the transition process between Children's Services and Adult Services by reviewing the impact of the recent transition information that has been published and continue to listen and learn from people's experience of transition. We will continue to engage with the partners who are critical to a young person's successful transition, like Education, so that we can contribute to their plans to improve access to things like careers advice, guidance, and opportunities of work experience and longer term employment.

We will also work parents and carers to improve the support to them as they undertake this transition and to evolve their relationship with their adult son or daughter that all parents and children must navigate.

We will also ensure that more young people are able to continue their learning and education locally by working with the local education provision to ensure that the right courses are on offer that enable young people to enter paid employment and fulfil their aspirations. We will also work closely with the local economy to understand better the skills that are required.

We will work in a way that supports young people to be heard and involved in decisions that affect them.

We will also work with our partners in health to develop and implement effective transitions for young people, to ensure that the health services they need to achieve this are available to them.

Key Priority 5

Maximising the use of technology and make full use of its benefits enhance their life and everyday living

What we will do

Society in general is becoming increasingly reliant on digital technology. For many people technology is part of their everyday lives.

There are many benefits to digital technology and people with a learning disability are often early adopters. Technology has the potential to make a significant and positive difference to the lives of people with learning disabilities.

It can aid communication and assist people to connect with other people, it can assist people to manage risks such as fires or falling, help create greater privacy or dignity. Technology can enable people to have more control over the way they live as well as enhancing more traditional care solutions.

The potential of cutting-edge technologies to support predictive, preventative, and personalised care is huge.

The Big Plan will focus on enabling people to access and use technology for a wide range of activities more independently by helping them to learn about how to use technology safely and to ensure those who support people with a learning disability are also confident in how to use it to best effect.

The Council has already invested in new technologies and a demonstrator programme named 'Gloria' to ensure people with a learning disability benefit from the digital tools and devices available.

We will also upskill the health and social care workforce that support people with a learning disability by offering training in different types of technologies to enhance the care and support they provide.

There will be an increasing expectation on providers commissioned by the Council to ensure digital technology is a core feature in how they provide services.

Key Priority 6

Enabling adults with a Learning Disability to feel connected to friends and family

What we will do

Friendships and relationships are a rich and important part of everyone's life. People with a learning disability and autism can face several barriers to finding love and creating the rich and meaningful relationships. Some of these include:

- not knowing how to meet a partner
- a lack of social opportunities and finances, isolation and not having a job or places to go in the community limited their opportunities to meet new people
- barriers within social care services, with shift patterns preventing day staff from taking people to social events; and safeguarding concerns for co-residents when someone in a household wanted their partner to stay over.
- a lack of autonomy and limited privacy, having to explain where they are going, or having family and staff making decisions on relationships for them.

The Big Plan will focus on ensuring people with a learning disability have access to more information about relationships and an inclusive community in which to socialise and meet new people.

We will also upskill the health and social care workforce that support people with a learning disability by offering training in how to provide information and advice on healthy relationships and gender and sexual orientation to enhance the person-centred care they provide.

There will be an increasing expectation on providers commissioned by the Council to ensure that relationships are a key element of their care and support planning and to reduce the barriers that people have identified.

We will also work with the community to ensure people with a learning disability and autism have safe and supportive environments to go to and where technology can also safely facilitate opportunities to build new friendships and relationships.

Key Priority 7

Promoting being fit and healthy

What we will do

Everyone with a learning disability over the age of 14, will be offered an Annual Health Check by their GP. This is particularly important for those with communication difficulties.

Everyone will have a Health Action Plan, which identifies how any physical and mental health needs will be met, and this should form an integral component of a person-centred care and support plan

Access to online training for GP practices with an aim to improve the quality of referrals into the diagnostic service and access to provision will be put in place.

We will increase awareness of the importance of good dental ophthalmic care for people with Learning Disability and Autism. We will increase access to information about screening checks, for breast cancer and bowel cancer, for example, working with practitioners and the learning disability population and their carers.

Increase access to local gym by consulting with the council around special programme for people with LD and Autism.

People with Learning Disability and Autism who are obese will have access to information around healthy eating, diet and healthy lifestyles from public health and dietitians.

The Big Plan will focus on enabling people with Learning Disability/ or autism who display behaviour that challenge to have the same rights as other people to access a range of health resources that will enables them to lead good and healthy lifestyle.

Staff in Primary care having good awareness of their roles in supporting patients with LD and Autism will be key to implementing the Big Plan.

Key Priority 8

Thriving and be resilient by managing and maintaining their mental health and wellbeing.

What we will do

People with a learning disability and/or autism who have a mental health condition or display behaviour that challenges will have access to prevention and early intervention with the aim of reducing the likelihood of behaviour that challenges, by providing support at an early stage to proactively address these risk factors, through early screening and Dynamic Support Register planning.

Maintaining good mental health and wellbeing and being able to work through significant life events is important for everyone in society but even more important for people with a learning disability and autism who are more likely to experience poor mental health. Being able to access the help and support needed is essential to overcoming periods where your mental health is low and you are finding life challenging.

The Big Plan will focus on ensuring the right support mechanisms are in the community and in people's daily lives to promote good mental health and wellbeing.

The Dynamic Support Register will focus on people in crisis and work with the system to reduce hospital admission and placement break down for the individual and the family.

The Community Treatment Review (CTR) will be activated as and when is necessary to pull the person in crisis care and treatment together by making system responsible and accountable for the person wellbeing.

We will also explore how to create alternative settings in the community that will prevent people from having to go into hospital and that can support people ready to be discharged back home in a timely way.

There will be an increasing expectation on providers commissioned by the Council to ensure that mental health and wellbeing are key elements of their care and support planning and that they actively work to promote positive mental health and wellbeing in how they deliver their care and support by adopting a strength-based approach rather than a risk and deficit led approach to working with people.

We will also work with the community to ensure people with a learning disability and autism have safe and supportive environments to go to when they experience distress or anxiety and where technology can also help.

