

# Wirral All Age Autism Strategy

2024 - 2029



In Partnership With



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# What this Strategy is About

## Our Shared Vision

*Autistic people of all ages in Wirral can maximise their potential and live a full and active life within a society that accepts and understands them. That they can access diagnosis and support if they need it and can depend on mainstream public services to treat them fairly as individuals.*

This is an **All Age Strategy** which means it includes children, young people, those moving into adulthood and adults.



This Strategy has been developed with key stakeholders in Wirral, including

- Autistic people
- Carers
- Care and Health professionals
- Public, voluntary and community sector organisations, including care and support providers

It sets out our key priorities and commitment to improve the lives of autistic people, their carers, and their families over the next five years.

## Language

Within this strategy, we will be using the term “autism” to encompass Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC), Autistic Spectrum Difference and people with Asperger’s Syndrome. Some autistic people will also have learning disabilities.

People who were consulted have asked this strategy to refer to their cohort as ‘autistic people’ rather than ‘people with autism.’

## Purpose

The purpose of the strategy is to ensure that there is **the right support at the right time** for autistic people, their carers, and their families.

### It aims to:

- ✓ Improve access to healthcare and other services that affect quality of life.
- ✓ Empower people to shape their own lives and determine the services they wish to receive, and support access to self-advocacy services.
- ✓ Champion the provision of real opportunities for everyone to experience a fulfilling and rewarding life.
- ✓ Ensure there is training available for all staff to improve the identification, diagnosis and ongoing support of autistic people.
- ✓ Provide leadership for the development of services, including transition from child to adult services.
- ✓ Build public and professional awareness and continue to support the change in attitudes across our society.
- ✓ Reduce the isolation and exclusion that autistic people often face.

# What this Strategy is About

## Key Priorities

To achieve our shared vision, we have identified three overarching priorities:

1. Autistic people have the right information and support
2. Autistic people live fulfilling lives with access to education, employment, volunteering and social opportunities
3. Autistic people are safe and protected



Within these priorities we aim to have clear workstreams focusing on the main areas of concern autistic people have told us about. These are:



**Housing and the Community**



**Employment and Education**



**Health Equality and Improvement**



**Autism and Mental Health**



**Co-produce and Continually Listen to People's Experience**

The detail of our three Key Priorities, and how we will focus on these can be found on [page 14](#).

# Why this Strategy is Important

## National Strategic Context

It is estimated that around 1-2% of the UK population is autistic. This is around 700,00 people.<sup>1</sup>

This local strategy supports the Government's national vision for transforming the lives of autistic children, young people and adults for the better, as set out in:

- [The National Strategy for Autistic Children, Young People and Adults: 2021 to 2026](#)
- [NHS national framework set out in April 2023](#)
- [The Autism Act 2009](#)
- [The Care Act 2014](#)
- [The Children and Families Act 2014](#), and the [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\) Code of practice \(2015\)](#) – enabling young people to prepare for adulthood earlier
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)

As part of the delivery of this strategy we will work with local agencies who are implementing the National Autism Strategy; and support them to respond to local needs, expectations, and circumstances and maximise how we can best use available resources.

## Local Strategic Context

There are 3,950 autistic people registered with a GP in Wirral. The numbers of autistic people known to local primary care, education and social care have increased in recent years.<sup>2</sup>

Wirral stands at a pivotal moment, presented with the opportunity to define an exciting and ambitious future taking the practical steps to turn these ambitions into reality. These are set out in:-

- Wirral's [Council Plan 2023 - 2027](#) - translating our vision to work together to promote fairness and opportunity for people and communities.
- [Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnership \(ICP\) Interim Strategy 2023-2028](#) - placing autistic people as a priority.
- [Wirral Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2022 - 2027](#) - tackling inequalities and improving the lives of residents is integral to the plan.
- Wirral [All Age Disability Strategy 2024-2029](#) - realising aspirations, improving access to opportunities and reducing barriers for people of all ages with disabilities in Wirral.
- **Cheshire and Merseyside Learning Disability and Autism Housing Strategy**<sup>3</sup> - enabling the best quality of life we can for people with learning disabilities and/or Autism to live independently, with personalised support and care.

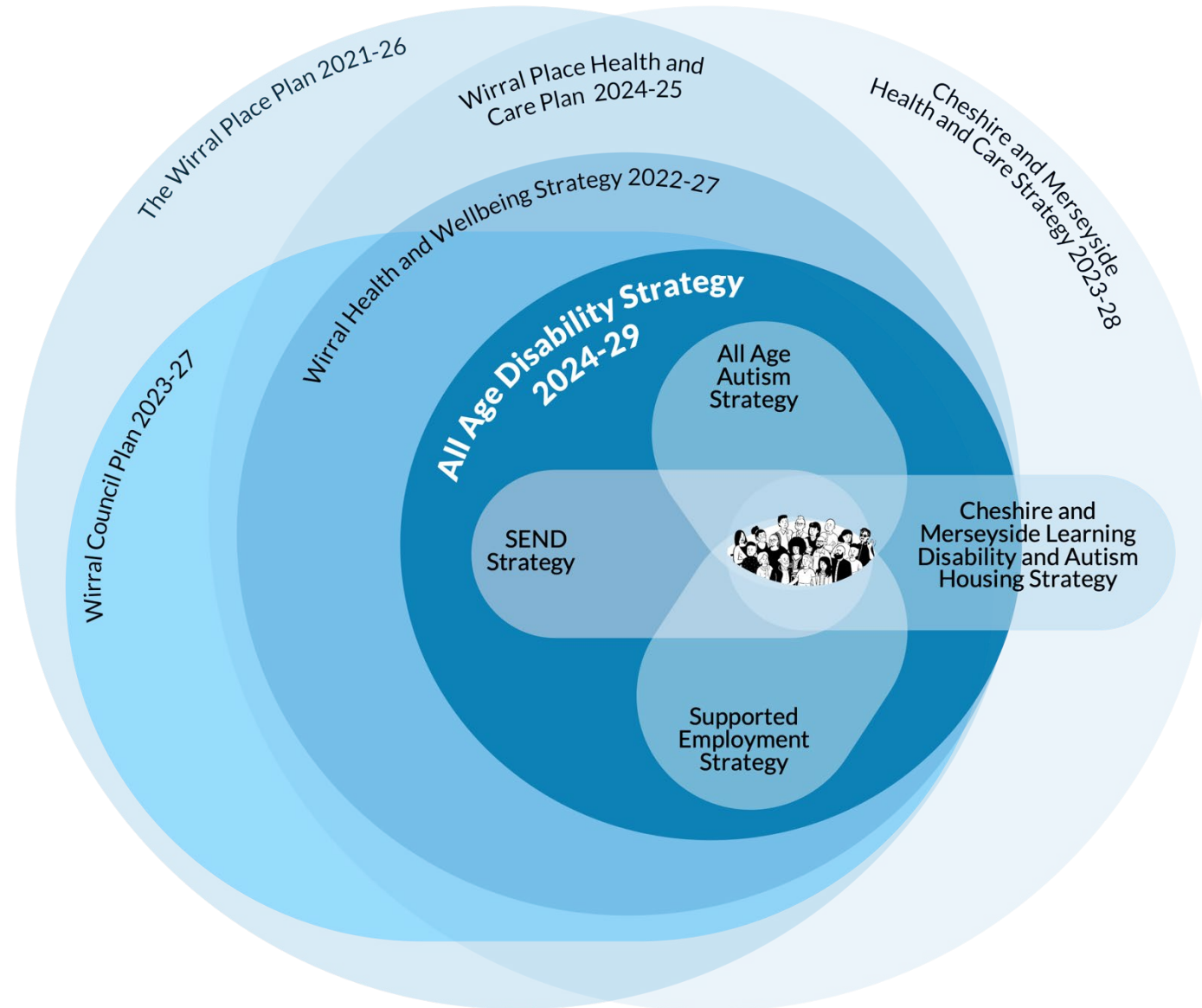
1. [National Strategy for autistic children, young people and adults: 2021 to 2026](#)
2. Data published by Wirral Intelligence Service (2024) – [Wirral Learning Disability & Autistic Spectrum Disorder Profile – March 2024](#)
3. This strategy has been approved and will be published May 2024

# How this Strategy Links with Other Strategies

There are lots of other strategies in place across Wirral as well as across Cheshire, Merseyside and the Liverpool City Region.

This Diagram shows how these strategies and plans overlap, and where this **All Age Autism Strategy 2024-2029** fits among this.

This is not an exhaustive list but shows how this strategy contributes to other strategies and plans that centre around Wirral residents.



# What We Know

## What is Autism?

Autism describes the way some people communicate and experience the world around them.

The Department for Health defines autism as 'a lifelong condition that affects how a person communicates with, and relates to, other people. It also affects how a person makes sense of the world around them.'<sup>1</sup>

Autism is a **spectrum condition**, which means there is a huge variation in autistic people's experiences.

This means that while autistic people share some difficulties, autism will affect them in different ways.

Some autistic people can live independent lives, but others may need a lifetime of specialist support.

### Autistic people may:

- Interact and communicate with others in a different way
- Prefer consistency and predictability, and find comfort in repetition
- Have different sensory experiences
- Be very knowledgeable about things they are passionate about
- Some may find tasks that involve planning, prioritising, and organising challenging, whereas others excel at this

### Many autistic people can have additional conditions, such as:

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Depression and anxiety
- Epilepsy
- Dyslexia
- Dyspraxia
- A learning disability

This is not an exhaustive list, and autistic people can present with any other co-occurring condition, but these are some of the more frequently associated.

## Self-Advocacy

Self-advocacy supports people to communicate their needs and understand their rights and is key part of a person-centred planning and transforming care.

It is important to ensure that there is support available to people to enable them to have their voice heard.

On Wirral, N-Compass provide [Wirral Advocacy Hub](#), which is an independent and confidential services for adults who are experiencing difficulties when accessing services.



# What We Know

## Outcomes for Autistic People

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) have published several different pieces of data together in the '**Outcomes for disabled people in the UK: 2021**'<sup>1</sup>.

Since 2020, the results from national surveys by the ONS has included asking respondents if they are autistic (including Autism Spectrum Condition and Aspergers).

The results that were published covered a range of topics including, employment, housing, and loneliness. Not all of these had findings that focused specifically on autism, but there were also some important takeaways about the issues autistic people face:

### Employment:

- Around half of disabled people aged 16-24 years in the UK were employed compared to around 80% for non- disabled people. Autistic people were included in the lowest employment rates (29%).
- Wirral's **Supported Employment Strategy**<sup>2</sup> has been created to improve employment opportunities for adults with care and support needs.

### Housing:

- Autistic people, and those with severe or specific learning difficulties were more likely than those with any other main impairment type to be living with parents (76% and 65.9% respectively). They were also less likely to own their own homes compared with other impairment types (3.8% and 8% respectively).
- **Wirral's Housing Strategy**<sup>3</sup> has been created to secure the provision of good quality and supported housing to enable people to thrive. The strategy includes autistic people.

### Wellbeing:

- These findings look at how people feel, e.g., happy, anxious or worthwhile. Autistic people had a lower rating of wellbeing compared with other disabilities<sup>4</sup>.
- We know that a lot of autistic people develop mental health problems like anxiety, or in crisis situations. If they do, it is important that they get the right support. [You can find more advice about autism and mental health here](#)

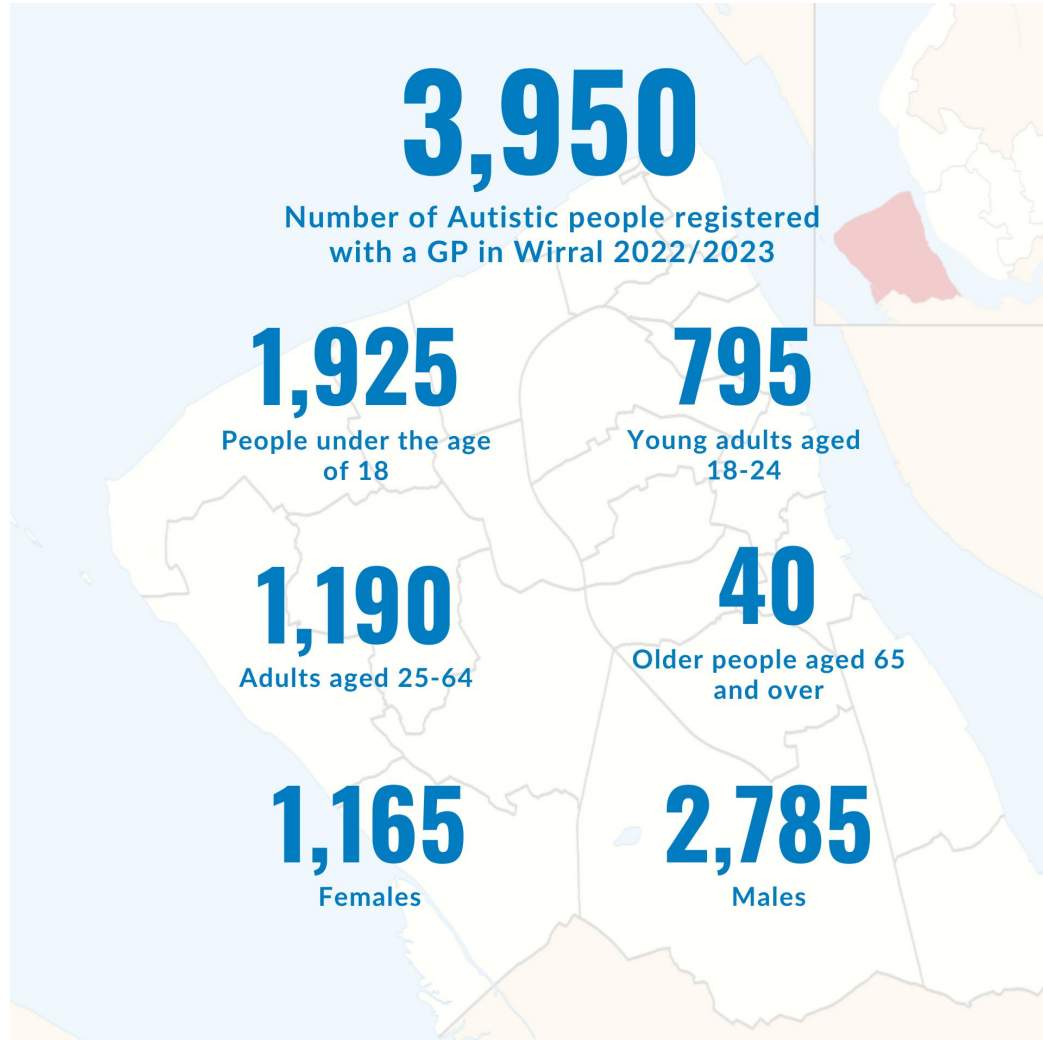


1. [Outcomes for disabled people in the UK: 2021 \(ONS\)](#)
2. This will be published 2024, once approved
3. This strategy has been approved and will be published May 2024
4. <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/datasets/disabilityandwellbeing>



# What We Know

## Autism in Wirral<sup>1</sup>



**Prevalence:** Numbers of autistic people known to services in Wirral are greater than those estimated using recent research (3,950 known vs 2,330 estimated). Numbers known to primary care, education and social care have increased in recent years

**Projected Trends:** Projected trends are unable to be completed at present. This relates to population changes following Census 2021 awaiting inclusion into data sources such as POPPI (Plymouth Online Practice Placement Information) and PANSI (Projecting Adult Needs and Service Information)

**Screening/Annual Health Checks** are not offered to children under 14, or to autistic people who do not also have a learning disability diagnosis at present. This remains an area of significant challenge for Cheshire and Merseyside. However, in Wirral uptake has improved in line with national trends and was just under 80% in 2022/23.

### Council Workforce

We work closely with our established employee groups and networks (which includes our Neurodiversity Staff Network Group) who are instrumental in developing and implementing strategies to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity.

This allows a safe and confidential space to provide a supportive environment for neurodiverse employees in their careers within Wirral Council.

Wirral Council is a [Disability Confident Employer](#).

1. Data published by Wirral Intelligence Service (2024) – [‘Wirral Learning Disability & Autistic Spectrum Disorder Profile – March 2024’](#)

# What We Know

## Diagnosis and Support

For many, a diagnosis of autism is the start and an important step towards understanding. It can help them, and their families understand their needs, and help others to make reasonable adjustments so they can access services and support where necessary. It is therefore important that health and social care staff have the knowledge and skills to make these adjustments.

We see key differences in autistic people that form the basis of the diagnostic criteria such as:

- Differences in social interaction and communication
- A need for predictability and repetition
- Highly focused hobbies and passions
- A difference in sensory experiences

## Children and Young People

The early identification of young autistic people is essential to ensure the right services are available at the right time. This includes support for parents who have had an early diagnosis for their child, to enable them to understand the behaviours linked to autism and how to manage this effectively.

For children and young people (5-17 years) with a learning disability and/or autism, an intensive support service should be in place to enable them to remain with their family, maintain friendships and to access their community. This service is to be based on the 'Ealing Model' of therapeutic intensive support and includes the provision of a range of short breaks.

## Adults

For autistic adults without learning disabilities, a post diagnostic service, 'step on, step off' interventions, consultation for staff working with autistic adults and bespoke interventions for autistic people who require them, (or do not meet the threshold for other commissioned services), has been developed. This offers a tiered approach and supports the facilitation of peer support groups and forums.

## Where we are on Wirral (2024)

For Adults, acceptance of new referrals for autism assessments has been suspended, we will ensure good communication and advise GPs when the wait list for adult autism services re-opens.

We encourage Adults seeking a referral to speak to their GP regarding an assessment and their 'Right to Choose' an alternative provider:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/a-national-framework-to-deliver-improved-outcomes-in-all-age-autism-assessment-pathways-guidance-for-integrated-care-boards/>

The demand for assessments for both children & Adults significantly exceeds capacity, resulting in high numbers of people waiting and lengthy waiting times for assessment.

We are working in partnership with colleagues in the local Integrated Care Board (responsible for planning and purchasing local health services), to increase the capacity and develop new pathways to enhance access to support and the wider offer available to all here on Wirral.

# What We Know

## Protecting Autistic People

Working with autistic people as part of our safeguarding process, the local authority and partners work together to help protect people with care and support needs, who may be at risk of abuse or neglect because of those needs. This includes autistic people.

Under the **Equality Act 2010**, all public sector organisations, including employers and providers of services are required to make reasonable adjustments to services with the aim of ensuring they are accessible to disabled people, including autistic people.



## Autism and The Criminal Justice System

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Autism<sup>1</sup> inquiry said that when Autistic people and their families encounter the justice system, they often have poor experiences.

The inquiry stated that there are many reasons for this including a lack of understanding among professionals. This absence of understanding can have negative consequences for autistic people and their families.

As with professionals within health and social care, staff working in the criminal justice system need to receive appropriate training to ensure that the correct support can be provided to autistic people.

The report recommended that the government should make a commitment to better training for professionals working in the justice system, including autism-specific training, as well as ensuring autistic people have access to relevant support such as Appropriate Adults.

Merseyside Police have protocols in place for dealing with autistic people, and those who present as autistic people. This includes ensuring that any person in custody who may be autistic should be treated as a vulnerable adult and is given access to an Appropriate Adult.

## Community Inclusion

It is widely agreed that better understanding and awareness of autism helps to support autistic people out in the community.

There are two locally recognised alert cards available currently:

- The National Autistic Society has produced a free [Autism Alert Card](#), which can help autistic people communicate to others that they may need understanding and support.
- Cheshire Autism Practical Support have worked with partners in Cheshire and Merseyside Police, and North West Ambulance Service to produce [The Attention Card](#) which confirms to services that the person has a medical diagnosis of autism, and should be treated as a vulnerable person.

There is also [The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower](#) scheme which helps people to share that they have a disability or hidden condition that may not be immediately apparent – and that you may need support in public spaces.

1. <https://www.autism.org.uk/what-we-do/campaign/england/how-we-work-with-parliament/all-party-parliamentary-group>

# What We Know

## Preparing for Adulthood

As set out in our [All Age Disability Strategy](#), we want to ensure that every young person has the best possible start to their adult life. We plan to follow the national framework designed by the Department of Education as guidance to support young people into adulthood with paid employment, good health, independent living and friendships, relationships, and community inclusion.

There are 4 areas of outcomes as part of Preparing for Adulthood:



# What We Know

## Awareness Training

It is acknowledged that previous autism diagnostic criteria was bias towards a classic male presentation, but awareness of female presentation is growing. There is still poor awareness generally about how autistic people with a learning disability may present, due to misrepresentation in the media.

The Department of Health and the people in Wirral state that it is essential that autism awareness training is available to people working, advising or supporting:

- Health and Social Care services
- Community care assessments
- Social care and clinical core training qualifications
- Criminal justice services
- Jobcentre Plus Disability Employment and Jobcentre Plus offices services
- Education, including Early Years settings and nurseries
- Public transport
- Voluntary, community and faith sector

*'It is important to identify people with lived experience as Autism champions to co-deliver the awareness training' - Autistic person*



In response **The Health and Care Act 2022** introduced a requirement that regulated service providers must ensure their staff receive learning disability and autism training appropriate to their role. [The Oliver McGowan Mandatory Training on Learning Disability and Autism](#) is the standardised training that was developed for this purpose and is the government's preferred and recommended training for health and social care staff.

# Key Priorities



## Priority One

Autistic people have the right information and support

### Aims

- Increase awareness and understanding of autism among professionals and society
- Improve access for autistic children and young people into education, and support a positive transition into adulthood
- Improve health and care inequalities for autistic people including access to mental health services (as outlined in the National Autistic Society's ['10 Years On Report'](#))
- Provide the right support in the community and for people in inpatient care

We aim to deliver this priority in line with what we have been told is important by autistic people, their carers, families, and organisations who support them, alongside [national strategy set out by the UK government](#) and [Wirral's All Age Disability Strategy 2024 – 2029](#).

# Priority One: Autistic people have the right information and support

## Our Calls to Action

Aims	We will
<p>Increase awareness and understanding of autism amongst professionals and society</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Foster and enhance a culture that understands and accepts that one size does not fill all for autistic people</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Use data, information and intelligence from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for Wirral to further enhance the understanding of local autism prevalence and influence policy and commissioning decisions</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Advocate and enable the delivering of the Oliver McGowan Mandatory training across the health and social care workforce</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Promote and celebrate ‘Autism Awareness Day’ in association with World Autism Awareness Week within local communities</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ensure that assumptions are not made that young people may have limited emotional range, poor vocabulary or low IQ because they are autistic</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ People should be assessed, treated and cared for in their community wherever possible</li> </ul>
<p>Improve access for autistic children and young people into education, and support a positive transition into adulthood</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Improve transition planning for autistic people aged 14-25 and their families as they prepare for adulthood ensuring that a diagnosis, strengths, needs and adjustments are accurately recorded</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ensure that autistic people are at the centre of coproduction and planning for their future aspirations and opportunities by targeting strength-based outcomes</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Coproduce clear pathways for autistic children, young people and adults, including post-diagnostic support, signposting to appropriate services, opportunities, information and advice</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ensure the regular review of the EHC plan and care and support arrangements to ensure this remains appropriate, drawing information from all agencies actively involved</li> </ul>

# Priority One continued: Autistic people have the right information and support

## Our Calls to Action

Aims	We will
<p>Improve health and care inequalities for autistic people, including access to mental health services (as outlined in the <b><u>National Autistic Society’s ‘10 Years on Report’</u></b>)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ With the support of commissioners, ensure that people receive a high quality and timely diagnosis to enable them to understand their needs and access the right support</li> <li>✓ Promote and signpost mental health services to offer personalised support, acknowledging autistic people and their individual needs</li> <li>✓ Explore how we can improve processes and increase capacity in health and social care to ensure early diagnosis and support</li> <li>✓ Ensure that there is good information available in accessible formats across services</li> <li>✓ Work with partners such as GP’s, community, voluntary and faith sector to help identify and signpost autistic people to the wider services available based on their own individual needs and wants</li> </ul>
<p>Provide the right support in the community and for people in inpatient care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Continue to improve crisis prevention and reduce avoidable admission to inpatient services for autistic people</li> <li>✓ When people are admitted, continue to improve the quality and care they receive in a person-centred way, close to their home</li> <li>✓ Continue reduce the use of psychotropic medication in line with the STOMP-STAMP national programme</li> <li>✓ Continue to work with partners to ensure a timely, appropriate and safe discharge from inpatient services</li> <li>✓ Adopt ‘top tips’ as common practice from <b><u>Thomas story ‘The benefits of personalised and systematic transitions to and from services’</u></b></li> <li>✓ Co-produce the Wirral delivery plan of the Cheshire &amp; Merseyside Housing strategy for people with Learning Disabilities and Autistic people</li> <li>✓ Input and influence the implementation of the <b><u>Cheshire and Merseyside Health and Care Partnership (ICP) Interim Strategy 2023-2028</u></b></li> <li>✓ Continue to promote self-advocacy organisations through <b><u>the advocacy hub</u></b></li> </ul>



# Key Priorities



## Priority Two

Autistic People live fulfilling lives with access to employment, volunteering and social opportunities

### Aims:

- Support more autistic people into employment and volunteering opportunities
- Work with local transport providers to enhance autistic adults' accessibility of public travel
- Improve information about opportunities for autistic people

We aim to deliver this priority in line with what we have been told is important by autistic people, their carers, families, and organisations who support them, alongside [national strategy set out by the UK government](#) and [Wirral's All Age Disability Strategy 2024 – 2029](#).

# Priority Two : Autistic People live fulfilling lives with access to employment, volunteering and social opportunities

## Our Calls to Action

Aims	We will
<p>Support more autistic people into employment, volunteering and social opportunities</p>	<p>✓ Identify Autism Employment Champions who ensure that Supported Employment Services within the Jobcentres support autistic people into employment</p>
	<p>✓ Work with people-led support groups to enable autistic people to build relationships with peers, friends, partners and colleagues, and support independent living and being part of the community</p>
	<p>✓ Ensure that employment and volunteering are a key focus within Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP`s)</p>
	<p>✓ Ensure that employment is a key aspect of the assessment and planning process for autistic young people and adults, enabling autistic people to benefit from wider employment and volunteering opportunities</p>
	<p>✓ Promote and signpost adults to the Support to Employment (STE) focus group who can identify more creative and meaningful ways to provide support into the employment journey</p>
	<p>✓ Work with organisations in Wirral to ensure that there are a variety of options available for voluntary work, work experience and vocational support for autistic people, including support for autistic people who would like to develop their own business</p>
	<p>✓ Ensure that support is provided to obtain and maintain voluntary/ employment opportunities within the Wirral, including making use of Disability Employment Advisors, using the Access to Work scheme and job coaches where appropriate</p>
	<p>✓ Work as a partnership to identify the number of autistic people in Wirral who are in employment, to enable us to track progress in increasing the employment rate over the life of the strategy</p>

# Priority Two continued : Autistic People live fulfilling lives with access to employment, volunteering and social opportunities

## Our Calls to Action

Aims	We will
<p>Work with local transport providers to enhance autistic adults' accessibility of public travel</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Engage transport companies to encourage reasonable adjustments to be made for autistic people</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Offer autism awareness training to all staff who meet members of the public</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Explore opportunities for autistic people to undertake travel training</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ To ensure that all transport options; Rail, Maritime, Bus, Coaches, Taxi and Private hire vehicles all meet their statutory obligations as detailed on Government website</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ To continue to provide Home to School/College/Centre transport in line with the Home to School Policy 5-16 years and the Adult Social Service Transport Policy</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Promote the English National Concessionary Travel Pass for those eligible for free pass</li> </ul>
<p>Improve information about opportunities for autistic people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Promote and signpost autistic people, their families and carers to partner organisations including: <b><u>'SENDLO'</u></b>, <b><u>Autism Together</u></b>, <b><u>National Autistic Society</u></b>, <b><u>WIRED</u></b>, <b><u>Wirral Mencap</u></b>, <b><u>CWP Autism Hub</u></b></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Review Information sharing protocols between all relevant organisations who support autistic people, to enable a seamless and effective service to anyone requiring information and support</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Explore opportunities for autistic people in receipt of personal budgets to pool their funds, to enable them to take part in a wider range of activities, hobbies and leisure together and increase social interaction</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Identify, develop and promote current support groups, and information on services that are available in Wirral for autistic people and their families</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Further promote and encourage the use of the <b><u>'Two Ticks Scheme'</u></b> in Wirral. This Jobcentre Plus scheme recognises employers based in Great Britain who have agreed to take action to meet five commitments regarding the employment, retention, training and career development of disabled employees</li> </ul>



## Priority Three

### Autistic People are safe and protected

#### Aims

- Work in partnership with the Criminal and Youth Justice Systems to improve support for autistic people
- Provide Safe Environments for Autistic People
- Facilitating Reasonable Adjustments and Promoting Equality
- Proactive assistance and protection measures.

*These aims will align with the following legislation:*

- Children Act 1989
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Transforming Care Programme
- Equality Act 2010
- Autism Act 2009
- The Care Act 2014

We aim to deliver this priority in line with what we have been told is important by autistic people, their carers, families, and organisations who support them, alongside [national strategy set out by the UK government](#) and [Wirral's All Age Disability Strategy 2024 – 2029](#).

## Priority Three: Autistic People are safe and protected

### Our Calls to Action

Aims	We will
<p>Work in partnership with the Criminal and Youth Justice Systems to improve support for autistic people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Ensure that the All Age Disability Board engages with representation from the Criminal Justice System to develop pathways to support autistic people who encounter the Criminal Justice System</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Continue to deliver autism awareness training, including reasonable adjustments, to all staff who work in the Criminal Justice System, to ensure that the correct support is offered to autistic people</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Explore an information sharing process with local police regarding autistic people and ensure appropriate police presence is available in the community to help autistic people feel safe and protected</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Identify an Autism Champion in the police to steer training, troubleshoot for colleagues and to be the key contact for autistic people in the criminal justice system</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Work with the Wirral Safeguarding Adults Board to ensure that any autistic person who encounters the criminal justice system is offered an assessment to ensure they receive the right support</li> </ul>
<p>Provide Safe Environments for Autistic People</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Work in partnership with Children, Families and Education Directorate to develop and promote a <a href="#">‘Safe Places’</a> scheme and ensure that autistic people know where and how to access it</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ To work in partnership with Children, Families and Education Directorate to continue to grow ‘autism friendly environments’ in schools, colleges and healthcare settings, e.g. respecting hypersensitivities, having flexible timetables and designated quiet places</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Continue to work to support autistic people in low secure mental health inpatient settings to have a safe, effective and timely transition back to the community</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Continue to improve the understanding of autism across the local criminal and youth justice system including the local police force, probation and prison in reach. This includes advice, and guidance in common offence areas such as radicalisation, arson, stalking, sexual-offending and on-line activity</li> </ul>

# Priority Three continued: Autistic People are safe and protected

## Our Calls to Action

Aims	We will
Facilitating Reasonable Adjustments and Promoting Equality	✓ Ensure that the requirement to make reasonable adjustments is included in all services that are commissioned with external providers
	✓ Promote the use of reasonable adjustment tools, such as the Hospital Passport or the <b><u>reasonable adjustment checklist</u></b> to support autistic people accessing any hospital and GP setting.
	✓ Work with employers to implement reasonable adjustments in the workplace for autistic people under the Equality Act 2010
	✓ Encourage autistic people to use the digital flag to identify what reasonable adjustments and support is required
Proactive assistance and protection measures	✓ Develop and deliver a training plan for staff across education, health and social care, particularly around safeguarding training and how it is everyone's responsibility to safeguard any child or anyone who is classed as vulnerable
	✓ Actively promote the way in which people can raise a safeguarding concern for a child or vulnerable adult in Wirral
	✓ Ensure that all children, young people and adults are taught about safeguarding including online safety in-particular with social media and online bullying, exploitation and an awareness of what activities may be illegal
	✓ Ensure that staff are aware of the statutory duty under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and extremism

## Monitoring and implementing this strategy

This **All Age Autism Strategy** will be monitored by the All Age Disability Partnership Board, and its associated subgroups. The Board reports to the Adults Social Care and Public Health Committee and the Wirral Place Partnership Board.

An implementation plan will be co-developed with Autistic people and a range of public, voluntary and community sector organisations to support this strategy. It will detail the how, who and what timeframes of each of the three priorities. This will allow us to monitor the delivery of this strategy.

## Accessibility

It is important that everyone has access to this strategy. This strategy is available in easy read and large print. You can also request a copy of this strategy in other formats and languages.

## Data and References

All data and references used in this document were correct at the time of publication.

## Thank You

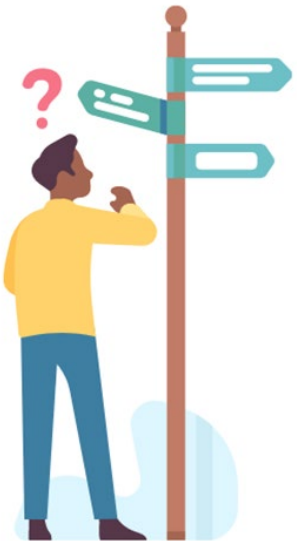
We would like to thank the autistic people, their families and carers, and our partner organisations who have contributed to the development of this strategy.



# Useful Documents and Links

## Services in Wirral

- [Autism Together](#) - Autism Together provides support to people on the autism spectrum in Wirral.
  - [Strategies and Intervention](#) (Autism Together)
- [Citizens Advice Wirral](#) - Wirral Information and Advice Service, Benefits, housing, finances, health
- CWP -
  - [Help with autism](#)
  - [Mental Health and Wellbeing for Young People](#)
- [Healthwatch Wirral](#) – Healthwatch is a statutory service that influences how Health & Social Care services work. Healthwatch Wirral listens to your experiences, offers signposting and supports people who live on Wirral.
- [Involve North West](#) - Involve Northwest are a non-profit organisation, based in Wirral, offering a wide range of services to help improve quality of life for local individuals and families.
- N-Compass - an independent and confidential single point of contact for adults who may be experiencing difficulties in having their voice heard when accessing and or dealing with adult health and social care services. The Hub provides immediate access to information and support tailored to your needs.
- [WIRED Carers Support](#)
- [Wirral Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board](#) – the Board’s primary responsibility is to ensure that adults in Wirral, who may be at risk, are able to live fulfilling lives, free from abuse and neglect.
- [Wirral Info Bank](#) – a directory of community groups, services and activities that can support residents’ health and wellbeing.





# Useful Documents and Links

## Children, Young People and Families

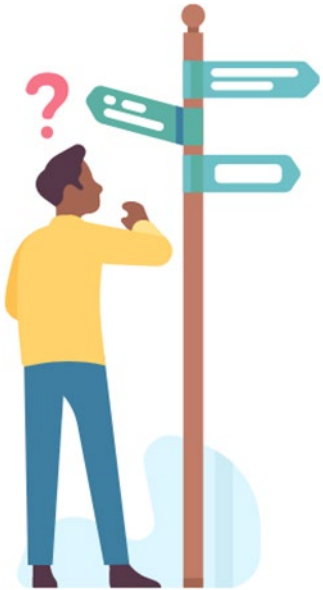
- [CWP My Mind](#) - Website for Children and Young People's mental Health & Wellbeing. CAMHS
- [Family Toolbox](#) - Family Toolbox is a new way of working, designed with and for Wirral's families. It is about making resources and support more readily available to all parents and carers, when they need it.
- [LD CAHMS](#) - Wirral Learning Disability Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) is a community based, specialist service offering support to children, young people and families/carers in Wirral.
- [PCPW](#) - PCPW for parents and carers for children and young people aged 0-25 with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities who live on or receive SEND services on the Wirral.
- [SENDLO](#) - SENDLO is your go-to website for all things related to SEND in Wirral, providing a one-stop shop for valuable information, resources, and support for children and young people from birth to 25 years. The website has guides, articles, a directory of local and national organisations to help you and your family to navigate and access support and activities.
- [WIRED SENDIASS](#) - Wirral SEND Partnership (SEND IASS) provides free and confidential impartial information, advice and support to disabled children and young people, and those with SEN, and their parents. Wirral SEND Partnership also covers other issues related to special educational needs/disability (SEND) such as health and social care issues.
- [Wirral Safeguarding Children's Board](#)
  - [Early Help](#)
- [Zillo](#) - a website for young people by young people.



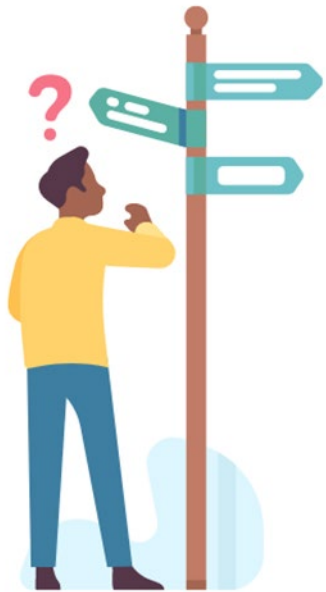
# Useful Documents and Links

## National Support

- [The Autism Education Trust](#)
- [Autism Information Links](#)
- [The Autism Research Centre](#)
- [Friend or Fake Booklet](#) – Easy Read guidance about Hate Crime and Mate Crime
- [The Hub of Hope](#) - a directory of mental health support and services across the UK.
- [National Autistic Society](#)
- [Online Safety Guidance for Parents](#)
- [Right to Choose](#) - A national framework to deliver improved outcomes in all-age autism assessment pathways
- [Social Stories for Autistic Children](#)



# Useful Documents and Links



## Policy and Strategy

- [The Autism Act 2009](#)
- [Autism Diagnosis in Children and Young People: Recognition, referral and diagnosis of children and young people on the autistic spectrum \(NICE Clinical Guideline 128, September 2011\).](#)
- [Autism: recognition, referral, diagnosis and management of adults on the autism spectrum \(NICE Guidance CG142 June 2012\)](#)
- [Benefits Information](#)
- [Building the Right Support: a national plan to develop community services and close inpatient facilities for people with learning disabilities and/or autism.](#)
- [Cheshire and Wirral Partnership, Autism Strategy, 2022 – 2027](#)
- [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- [Department of Health AUTISM INTERIM STRATEGY 2021-2022](#)
- [Fulfilling and rewarding lives: the strategy for adults with autism in England \(2010\)](#)
- [Guidance, National Autism Strategy Statutory guidance for Local Authorities and NHS organisations to support implementation of the Adult Autism Strategy](#)

# Useful Documents and Links

## Policy and Strategy (Continued)

- [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment \(JSNA\) - Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and joint health and wellbeing strategies explained.](#)
- [Learning from Life and Death Reviews of people with a learning disability and autistic people](#)
- [National service framework: children, young people and maternity services - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- [National strategy for autistic children, young people and adults: 2021 to 2026](#)
- [The National Strategy: Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives](#)
- [NHS-Living with Autism](#)
- [Recommendations | Autism spectrum disorder in under 19s: recognition, referral and diagnosis | Guidance | NICE](#)
- Referral of Children and Young People with possible Autism (NICE Pathway August 2013). [Autism spectrum disorder overview - NICE Pathways](#)
- [Wirral All Age Disability Strategy 2024-2029 – ‘Full and Active Lives’](#)
- [Wirral Working Together – A Council Plan for 2023-2027](#)



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In Partnership With

