

## Autism Residents Advisory Group (ARAG) Meeting Stratford Advice Arcade 26/01/2026 10:00am – 12:00pm

<p><b>Attendees:</b></p> <p>Daniel Findlay – Co-Chair, Resident Rep Linda Wan – Co-Chair, LBN Commissioner Daniel Nichols – LBN Commissioning Assistant (minutes) Patricia Moody – Support Facilitator, VoiceAbility Aisha Ahmed – Senior Peer Support Worker, ELFT Tia Barnes – LBN, SAIL Team</p> <p>+10 online Residents/Guests +8 in-person Residents/Participants</p>	<p><b>Guest Speakers:</b></p> <p>Sebastian Buser - IMPACT project, Birmingham University Jason McCulloch - LBN Senior Commissioner</p>
--	--

Item	Note / Action agreed	Action by
	These minutes should be read alongside the accompanying slides	
<b>1</b>	<p><b>Welcome, introductions/apologies and meeting rules</b></p> <p>Linda welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Daniel Findlay (New Resident Co-Chair) and Colin (New Youth Rep), guest speakers and facilitators for the day.</p> <p>Daniel F then set out the meeting rules.</p>	
<b>2</b>	<p><b>IMPACT project</b></p> <p>Sebastian presented. He is facilitating a 12-month project (ending in August) with IMPACT and Newham Council exploring how Adult Social Care can better support LGBTQ+ residents. He is working with residents and staff to understand their experiences with the goal of improving care, visibility and inclusion for LGBTQ+ people in Newham.</p> <p>He would like to hear about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGBTQ+ experiences of adult social care in Newham;</li> <li>• What works well and what could be improved;</li> <li>• Observations from family, friends or supporters of LGBTQ+ residents.</li> </ul> <p>He is aiming to have short 1-to-1 conversations to share experiences (in person or online) and work together to create an anonymised output, such as a resident persona or a short story. In particular, he is looking for up to three autistic residents to contribute their experiences. They will be paid <b>£27.50 per hour</b> for their time.</p> <p>Anyone interested in participating in the project should email Sebastian at <a href="mailto:s.j.buser@bham.ac.uk">s.j.buser@bham.ac.uk</a></p>	
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Supported Accommodation Strategy</b></p> <p>Jason presented. He introduced himself, saying that he is a senior commissioner at the London Borough of Newham and works primarily on care for autistic adults and adults with learning disabilities. He has worked in this area for a long time.</p>	

	<p>The Supported Accommodation strategy (which will be published soon) covers a lot of different groups of which autistic people are just one. It aims to gauge not just what is needed now in the borough but also what will be needed over the course of the next 10 years.</p> <p>At the moment there are approximately 385 autistic people known to adult social care. Most of these people also have a learning disability but some have other needs. The number of people being diagnosed with autism is growing fast (as it is across the nation) but there are no supported living services in Newham that are dedicated to support autistic people and no clear pathway for people to move into more independent housing. There is also no community-based (floating) support for people who are ready to move into their own homes. Community based support usually lasts for around 6 months but can “float” back if needed.</p> <p>The plan aims to reduce our use of care homes, reserving spaces at those settings for those with very high needs. More residents should be living in Supported Living to enable them to live in their own homes and extra care &amp; sheltered accommodation should be used for older residents with lower levels of need.</p> <p>There is very little provision in the borough for people with complex needs (something that the CQC also pointed out in their recent inspection report) so there is a plan to commission an in-borough complex needs service. A building has already been identified to house the provision. More use of technology enabled care is also planned, along with a service for people that have low level needs, but who are at risk of “mate” crimes such as cuckooing and thus need some extra support.</p> <p>In additions to the aforementioned complex needs accommodation, the next steps for the strategy will be to de-register at least 2 care homes (moving the residents to tenancy-based accommodation) and commission community based (floating) support).</p> <p>Questions were asked on the connections between education opportunities and crime and housing. Jason replied that, although they do have an effect on housing needs, they are not the focus of the strategy.</p> <p>The following points were also raised by the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The need for adjustable lighting;</li> <li>• The value of having concierges and/or cameras in accommodation blocks to increase security for residents;</li> <li>• How sound proofing can help autistic residents of properties.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>Minutes and matters arising</b></p> <p>The minutes of the last meeting were approved.</p> <p>All the actions were completed</p> <p>There are no updates from the governance boards, we need to ensure that they have agenda items to discuss autism.</p>	

	<p>Linda has met with AccessAble to discuss supporting autistic visitors in the access guides.</p> <p>Supt Singh of the Met Police will be attending the ARAG meeting in July.</p>	
<b>4</b>	<p><b>Round Table Discussions</b></p> <p>The meeting broke up into three groups to discuss what they thought needed to be prioritized for Year 3 of the Autism Action Plan.</p>	
<b>6</b>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>Aisha will be helping the Met Police to deliver their new Compassionate Policing strategy. Please email <a href="mailto:autism.commisssioning@newham.gov.uk">autism.commisssioning@newham.gov.uk</a> if you would also be interested in co-producing and or co-delivering training to the Met Police in the future.</p>	
<b>7</b>	<p><b>Dates of future meetings</b></p> <p><b>Monday 11th May 2026 10am-12pm</b> John Hopkins Room Stratford Library (in-person and online)</p> <p><b>Monday 6th July 2026 10am-12pm</b> John Hopkins Room Stratford Library (in-person and online)</p> <p><b>Monday 5th October 2026 10am-12pm</b> John Hopkins Room Stratford Library (in-person and online)</p> <p><b>Monday 25th January 2027 10am-12pm</b> John Hopkins Room Stratford Library (in-person and online)</p>	