

Autism Resident Co-Chair Role Description

About the Newham Autism Strategy

The purpose of the all-age Newham Autism Strategy is to deliver the six priority areas outlined in the National Autism Strategy in Newham:

1. improving understanding and acceptance of autism within society
2. improving autistic children and young people's access to education, and supporting positive transitions into adulthood
3. supporting more autistic people into employment
4. tackling health and care inequalities for autistic people
5. building the right support in the community and supporting people in inpatient care
6. improving support within the criminal and youth justice systems

We are looking to appoint two resident Co-Chairs, one for the Autism Delivery Board and one for the Autism Residents Advisory Group (ARAG).

What is the Autism Strategy Delivery Board (ASDB)?

The Autism Delivery Board includes representatives from the Council, NHS and local community organisations. Its role is to:

- oversee the delivery of the Strategy's Action Plans;
- ensure appropriate resident and stakeholder contribution across the delivery of the Action Plans;
- identify synergies between the Strategy, its Action Plans and wider programmes across the Council, its partners and north east London footprint;
- identify and address obstacles, dependencies and risks to the delivery of the Action Plans;
- identify and incorporate further related areas of work into the Action Plans, as appropriate.

What is the Autism Resident Advisory Group (ARAG)?

The ARAG includes local Newham resident representatives; 18+ years old who have been diagnosed with autism or on a waiting list to be diagnosed. Its role is to:

- Share ideas and give views on the issues affecting autistic people
- Advise the Autism team and take part in shaping future actions
- Share information about services, activities and events

- Take part in consultation exercises
- Participate in the co-design of services and products
- Support the design and delivery of Autism Strategy and Action Plan

Why become a Co-Chair?

As the resident Co-Chair you will have the opportunity to:

- Gain experiences and skills from chairing the Group;
- Shape and improve services for autistic residents and improve their health and wellbeing;
- Help make Newham a place where autistic residents are empowered and supported;

The Council will acknowledge and respect you in this role as an 'Expert by Experience'.

Note: the Co-Chair of the ARAG & ADB cannot be the same person.

Who can be a co-chair?

To apply you must be:

- A Newham Resident, aged 18+ with an autism diagnosis;
- A member of the ARAG;
- Able to commit to the role for twelve months, must attend an ARAG or ADB meeting every three months (usually four meetings in 12 months);

You **do not** need any previous experience of chairing a group or any qualifications. We will support you in the role.

What will I have to do as co-chair?

As Resident Co-chair, you will work with Newham Council staff to plan and run the ARAG or Autism Delivery Board for 12 months. After 12 months, a new resident co-chair will take over to give others the opportunity.

As co-chair, you will:

- ensure the meetings cover the aspects of the Autism Strategy that are most important to the Autism Delivery Board or ARAG members. This will involve, at least, a one hour-long online meeting every three months;
- Attend the Autism Delivery Board or ARAG meetings (online or in-person). There will be a minimum of four meetings a year;
- Read the documents for each Autism Delivery Board or ARAG meeting before the meeting;
- Help lead discussions at the Autism Delivery Board or ARAG meetings, making sure all members are heard, helping the group to make decisions and providing constructive challenge where necessary;
- Where necessary, attend other meetings to provide updates. You will receive extra payment for attending additional meetings;

- Communicate with a wide range of people including other residents and Council staff;
- Treat all members and colleagues with respect and dignity and work positively to make change.

What support will I get to help me in the role?

You and the Council Co Chair will support each other in preparing for and chairing the Autism Delivery Board or ARAG meetings by meeting in advance of the meeting.

Before your first Autism Delivery Board or ARAG meeting, the Council's Autism Team will meet with you to talk to you about the Autism Strategy and answer your questions. We will also agree the meeting dates and times with you for the year at this first meeting.

Do I get paid?

Yes.

In line with the Council's Co-Production Reward and Recognition Policy, you will receive a payment of £11.95 an hour (London Living Wage) in exchange for your time. This will ordinarily be 6 hours per quarter to cover six hours of input as follows:

- 1 x hour to review ARAG papers and prepare for meetings.
- 3 x hours to attend the ARAG meeting itself including travel time.
- 1 x hour follow up / preparation time.
- 1 x meet with Autism Team for a minimum of one hour every three months

Where a resident may need longer to process information (due to English as a second language, a Learning Disability or a Learning Difficulty such as Dyslexia) – additional time will be considered.

You will be able to claim at the end of each quarter (four times a year).

How do I apply?

Please email us at Autism.Commissioning@newham.gov.uk telling us a little about yourself: your experiences and skills and what you could bring to the role. (maximum of 600 words). If you need help to do this, please call Saira on 020 3373 8325 (Mon – Fri 9am – 4pm). Deadline to submit your application is Monday 31st July 2023. Applications received after this date will not be considered.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Applications will be shared with the ARAG and, if there are more than two applying for the same role, members will be asked to vote.