

Autism Residents Advisory Group

Emma Kofie, ARAG Co-chair



10:00- 10:05

WE ARE NEWHAM.

AGENDA

Emma Kofie



1	Welcome & Introductions - Facilitators / Agenda	Emma Kofie, ARAG Co-chair	10.00	5min
2	Meeting Rules	Emma Kofie, ARAG Co-chair	10.05	5min
3	Theme: Autistic & Homeless and Vaccinations Guest Speakers NEL & LBN - Homeless Project Public Health – Barriers to Vaccinations	David Bryce, NEL & Paul Evans, LBN Elizabeth Owen & Matt Bury, LBN	10.10 10.30	20min 15min
	BREAK	BREAK	10.45	15min
4	Minutes & Matters Arising 07 July 2025	Linda Wan, Council Co-Chair	11.00	5min
5	Governance Board Updates	Linda Wan, Council Co-Chair	11.05	5min

AGENDA

Emma Kofie



6	Autism Action Plan – progress on actions - Council Lead – EbE Role Nomination & Funding & AccessAble - NHS Snr Peer Support Worker	Linda Wan, Council Co-Chair	11.10	30min
		Aisha Ahmed, Peer Support	11.40	5min
7	AOB - Information sharing - Peer support Leads update	ALL Christina, Sue, Adam, Aisha	11.45	10min
8	Meeting Rules review	Emma Kofie, ARAG Co-chair	11.55	5min
9	Next Meeting Monday 26 January 2025 Topic: Supported Accommodation Strategy	Emma Kofie, ARAG Co-chair	12.00	0min Meeting ends
10	Adults Autism Peer Support Group: open session Refreshments available	Christina Pillai, ASDB Co-chair	12.00	60min
11	Close		13.00	0min

Meeting Rules

Meeting Rules

Emma Kofie



Please speak slowly with easy words



No jargon to be used



Stop if people show they don't understand



Use you communication cards if you want to speak

10:05- 10:10

WE ARE NEWHAM.

Meeting Rules

Emma Kofie



please give us a chance to ask questions



make sure everyone has time to understand what is Being said



Don't speak over each other

Autism and Homelessness

David Bryce, NEL

Paul Evans, Newham Council

Autism and Homelessness

David Bryce & Paul Evans



Barriers to Vaccination

Elizabeth Owen & Matt Bury, Public Health LBN

Barriers to Vaccinations

Elizabeth Owen & Matt Bury



BREAK

15 minutes, back at **11:00am**

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Emma Kofie



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Minutes & Matters Arising

ARAG January 2025

Minutes & Matters Arising

Emma Kofie

Autism Residents' Advisory Group (ARAG) Meeting

Stratford Library 07/07/2025 10:00am – 12:00am

Attendees:

Emma Akosua – 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
Christina Pillau – ASDB Co-Chair, Resident Rep
Jay Gee – P4 Lead, Expert by Experience

Guest Speakers

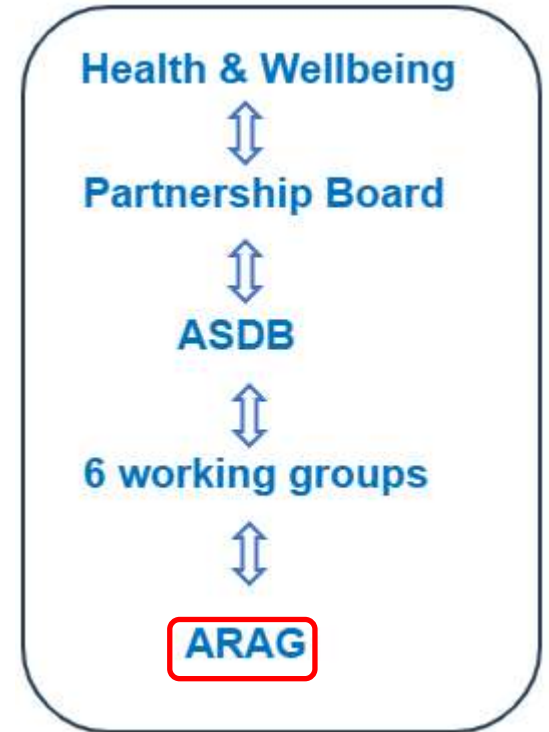
+3 online Residents/Guests
+15 in-person Residents/Participants

•Anna Kasmir – LBN, Resident Engagement
•Mavis Wenham - ANKH Place, Board Director

Previous ARAG Minutes & Slides:

[Newham's Autism Resident Advisory Group \(ARAG\) – Autism – Newham Council](#)

newham.gov.uk



11:00- 11:05

WE ARE NEWHAM.

Minutes & Matters Arising

Emma Kofie



People Powered Places Funding

- ☐ £1.6 million to allocate
- ☐ They have been running since 2018, and have funded over 300 projects.
- ☐ Each of the eight neighbourhoods in Newham are allocated around £200,000.
- ☐ Residents choose local priorities to shape the types of projects which can receive funding.
- ☐ Applications will open on **Friday 18 July** and close on **Sunday 14 September**.
- ☐ There are lots of different ways to get involved. Find out more at [People Powered Places](#)

11:00- 11:05

Minutes & Matters Arising

Emma Kofie



ANKH Place CIC (Community Interest Company)

- ☐ organisation currently delivers a range of activities (such as walking and gardening) from community venues across the borough
- ☐ open to arrange activities for autistic people in Newham.
- ☐ They can also fund one off events and
- ☐ help other groups to bid for funding.

Minutes & Matters Arising

Emma Kofie

Autism Residents' Advisory Group (ARAG) Meeting

Stratford Library 07/07/2025 10:00am – 12:00am

ACTIONS from last meeting

ACTION 1: Linda to find out when the consultation session for autistic people is being organised for.

ACTION 2: Linda to circulate information on the “Right to Choose”.

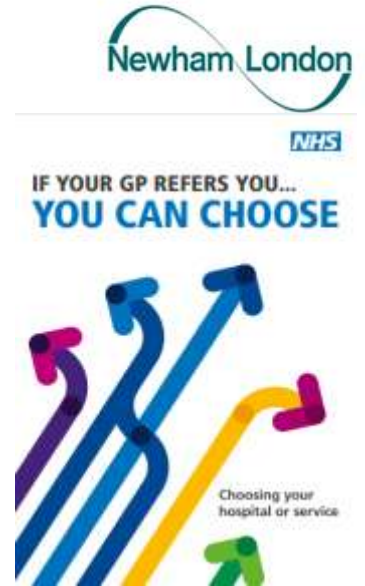
ACTION 3: Linda to look seek out opportunities to collaborate with autism support services in neighbouring boroughs.

ACTION 4: All to complete the newsletter survey at <https://forms.office.com/e/aT4X1YLBf1>

ACTION 5: All to send any feedback on the 2025/26 prioritise document [Autism Action Plan 2025 26.docx](#) to autism.commissioning@newham.gov.uk

ACTION 6: Linda to share slides from the UEL speaker at the October 2024 meeting and info on a “Going Back to Studies” ☒

ACTION 7: Natalia to share information on “Uniting Friends” Talking Therapies.



☒ [patient-leaflet-digital.pdf](#)

11:00- 11:05

newham.gov.uk

Previous ARAG Minutes & Slides:

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WE ARE NEWHAM.

Minutes & Matters Arising

Emma Kofie



Governance Board Updates

Linda Wan

Governance Board Updates

Christina Pillai



Autism Strategic Delivery Board

(30 September)

- Papyrus Suicide & Autism Professionals Training – additional SPEAK training 23 Oct & 2 Dec 2025. 2-day ASIST training held 25/26 Sept.
- Autism Working Groups to restart shortly with newly appointed Resident Experts
- The Trust are currently looking at merging the services of the three boroughs in their patch (Newham, City & Hackney and Tower Hamlets) into one, the Newham service will remain open until April.
- Newham's Supported Accommodation Strategy
 - The strategy looks at the next 10 years.
 - Gaps in provision identified for: Autism-specific services; Complex needs; and Floating support.
 - Newham is working on a more enabling approach to transitions and looking at the 14+ and 16+ cohorts.



Governance Board Updates

Linda Wan

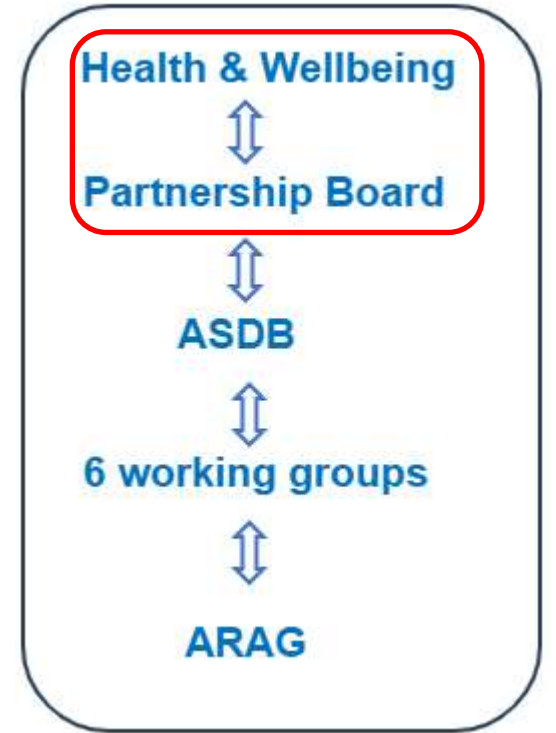
Health & Care Partnership Board (-- --)

No updates

Health & Wellbeing Board (-- --)

No updates

Due to changes in board memberships and reporting criteria there is currently no upward reporting to these boards. We are currently in the process of identifying representatives on these boards to provide feedback on the Autism Programme.*



11:05- 11:10

WE ARE NEWHAM.

Governance Board Updates

Emma Kofie



newham.gov.uk

11:05- 11:10

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Autism Action Plan – progress on actions

Various speakers

Autism Action Plan – progress on actions

Linda Wan



New Expert Resident Appointments 2025/6

1	ASDB Co-chair	Christina Pillai
2	ARAG Co-chair	Emma Akousa / Vacancy
3	Carers Rep	Sue Sinton Smith / Vacancy
4	YP Rep (18-25)	vacant
5	P1	Sarha Heba (New)
6	P2	vacant
7	P3	Catarina Horta Bargao
8	P4	Jay Gee
9	P5	vacant
10	P6	vacant

11:25- 11:45

Autism Action Plan – progress on actions

Linda Wan

Sarha Heba: Priority 1 Improving acceptance and understanding of autism in society

I'm a late-diagnosed autistic woman, and while I'm incredibly grateful I was able to access a diagnosis, I also know that had there been more awareness, I could have received support & understanding a lot sooner.

I'm interested in working to create solutions to how to create community awareness & acceptance, and ways to connect autistic individuals to practical ways to shape what we would like to share with the wider non-autistic public to help them understand us & our experiences, to make interacting & communicating with non autistic people less labour-intensive & strained.

I worked at a school for autistic children, so I have a lot of experience working directly with fellow autistic people. I received a lot of training in autism awareness, understanding, & acceptance. I worked to understand ways to shape learning & activities in accessible & innovative ways.

I have a background in graphic design, so I feel I could help in creating infographics or posters, or whatever information we would need to share autism awareness information.

I'm passionate about autism, understanding myself, & fellow autistic people better, and also making sure non-autistics understand us better. Both for the betterment of the lives of autistic people, but also, because I truly believe wider accessibility makes society a better, more inclusive space for everyone.

Autism Action Plan – progress on actions

Linda Wan



VOTING: Priority 3 Supporting more autistic people into employment

CANDIDATE A

CANDIDATE B

CANDIDATE C

One vote per ARAG member

- online voting to be sent to Autism.Commissioning@newham.gov.uk by **8am Monday 6 October**
- In-person voting permitted on the day (Your name and A or B or C)

11:25- 11:45

Autism Action Plan – progress on actions

Linda Wan



Autistic Resident Applications for expert roles

1	ASDB Co-chair	Christina Pillai
2	ARAG Co-chair	vacancy
3	Carers Rep	vacancy
4	Young Person Rep (18-25)	vacant
5	P1	Sarha Heba
6	P2	vacant
7	P3	vote required
8	P4	Jay Gee
9	P5	vacant
10	P6	vacant

APPLY NOW!
Vacancies open
until filled
[expert-resident-
role-descriptions-
2025](#)

11:25- 11:45

WE ARE NEWHAM.

Autism Action Plan – progress on actions

Linda Wan



Newham Autism Small Grants Funding

The Autism Small Grants will enable local autistic residents to build community resilience by applying for one-off funding of up to £1,000 to:

- support the costs of running activities on a regular basis, and enabling new activities to set up;
- support the costs of running groups meeting on a regular basis, and enabling new groups to set up

Newham Autism Small Grants

[Small Grants Guidance \(PDF\)](#)

[Small Grants Funding Application \(PDF\)](#)

APPLY NOW!

Grant funding available until all funds allocated
Newham Autism Action Plan: Let's Talk Autism –
Autism – Newham Council

11:25- 11:45

Autism Action Plan – progress on actions

Linda Wan



[Home](#) | [AccessAble](#)

Accessibility Symbols



Level Access and Automatic Doors (or No Doors)



Mobility Impaired Walker



Ambulant Toilet



Baby Changing Facility



Assistive Listening



Large Print



Companion/Carer Discount



Ramped/Sloped Access, and/or Manual Doors



Accessible Toilet



Step Free Standard Toilet



Seat(s) Available



Audio Format Information



Home Visit

For more information about what these symbols mean, view our [Accessibility Symbols Guide](#).

Autism Action Plan – progress on actions

Linda Wan

 Parking >

Outside

 Access (Main Entrance) >

 Reception >

 Inside Access >

 Library >

 Other Floors >

 Lift >

 Toilet with Adaptations (Left Hand Transfer)

 Photos



Toilet with Adaptations (Left Hand Transfer)

- Accessible toilet facilities are available.

Location and Access

View 

Features and Dimensions

View 

Autism Action Plan – progress on actions

Linda Wan

AccessAble Contract

Accessible environments:

- **Have a designated quiet space-** sensory friendly
- **Autism hour-** less busy period
- **Bright lights** -dim lights/sunglasses available
- **Noise-** reduce/no background music/use headphones
- **Crowds and queues-** fast track entry to bypass queues
- **Temperature-** adaptable temperatures
- **Maps-** travel to the destination/within the building itself
- **Prepare a sensory/social story** (A Social Story's aim is to improve the child or adult's understanding by simply sharing social information. With improved social understanding clarity and predictability is established and anxiety is diminished).
- **Relaxed performances:** Theatres, cinema and other venues that offer live entertainment could offer specific performances or screenings that are autism-friendly.

Sensory Environment

- Smells:** Avoid strong, overwhelming scents from air fresheners or cleaning products.
- Visuals:** Minimize clutter, distracting patterns, and overwhelming visual information. Use calm, consistent colours and clear imagery.

Autism Action Plan – progress on actions

Linda Wan

AccessAble Contract

Information & Navigation

- **Pre-visit Information:** Provide clear, accessible maps and pre-visit guides online so people can prepare and reduce anxiety.
- **Clear Signage:** Use simple, direct language and visual cues on prominent signs for key areas like toilets, exits, and quiet spaces. Poster, we welcome and celebrate neurodiversity (more welcoming feel for autistic people)
- **Sensory Kits:** Offer sensory kits for borrowing, containing items like noise-cancelling headphones, fidget toys, or social stories.
- **Staff Training:** Train staff to communicate clearly and patiently, using simple language and allowing processing time.
- **Accessible Facilities:**
 - Ensure access to accessible toilets, with considerations for features like adult changing benches and hoists where appropriate.
 - Paper towels instead of hand dryers

- Communication & Social Interaction

- **Communication Preferences:**

- Be flexible and understanding of different communication styles, offering options for verbal or written communication.

- **Physical Contact:** Be mindful of personal space and avoid unsolicited physical contact like handshakes or hugs without clear consent.

Autism Action Plan – progress on actions

Aisha Ahmed



Peer Support Worker update

- Video – how to set up a support group

Autism Action Plan – progress on actions

Emma Kofie



AOB

Sharing Information

All welcome to share

ARAG Members – anything to share?



Meeting Rules Review

Meeting Rules

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11:50- 12:00

Dates of next meeting

Emma Kofie



Monday 28 th April 2025	10am-12pm	Stratford Advice Arcade
Monday 7 th July 2025	10am-12pm	John Hopkins Room, Stratford Library
Monday 6 th October 2025	10am-12pm	Stratford Advice Arcade
Monday 26th January 2026 Supported Accommodation Strategy	10am-12pm	John Hopkins Room, Stratford Library

Adults Open Session: Peer Support Group

Christina Pillai



newham.gov.uk

12:00 –13.00

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