



Bristol Disabled People's Manifesto 2016

Bristol Disability Equality Forum

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Disabled People's Manifesto for Bristol 2016

Message from the Chair

I am delighted to be able to recommend this Disabled People's Manifesto for the city to you.

The Manifesto represents a great deal of work and deliberation; based on several years of consultation and research with Deaf and Disabled people in Bristol, their friends and families.

I hope you find this manifesto brings all this together into a clear, easily understood, and achievable agenda for change; and that you find this as exciting as we do.

The aim of the Manifesto is to help the city be all that it can be – the best place in the country to live, work and study. A city loved by its residents that thrives by including all its communities.

This Manifesto does not represent all that needs to be done, rather it proposes some of the changes to systems, practices and services that would improve the lives of all Disabled people, whatever their impairment or cultural identity.

I would particularly like to thank our staff for all their hard work in researching and producing this Manifesto.

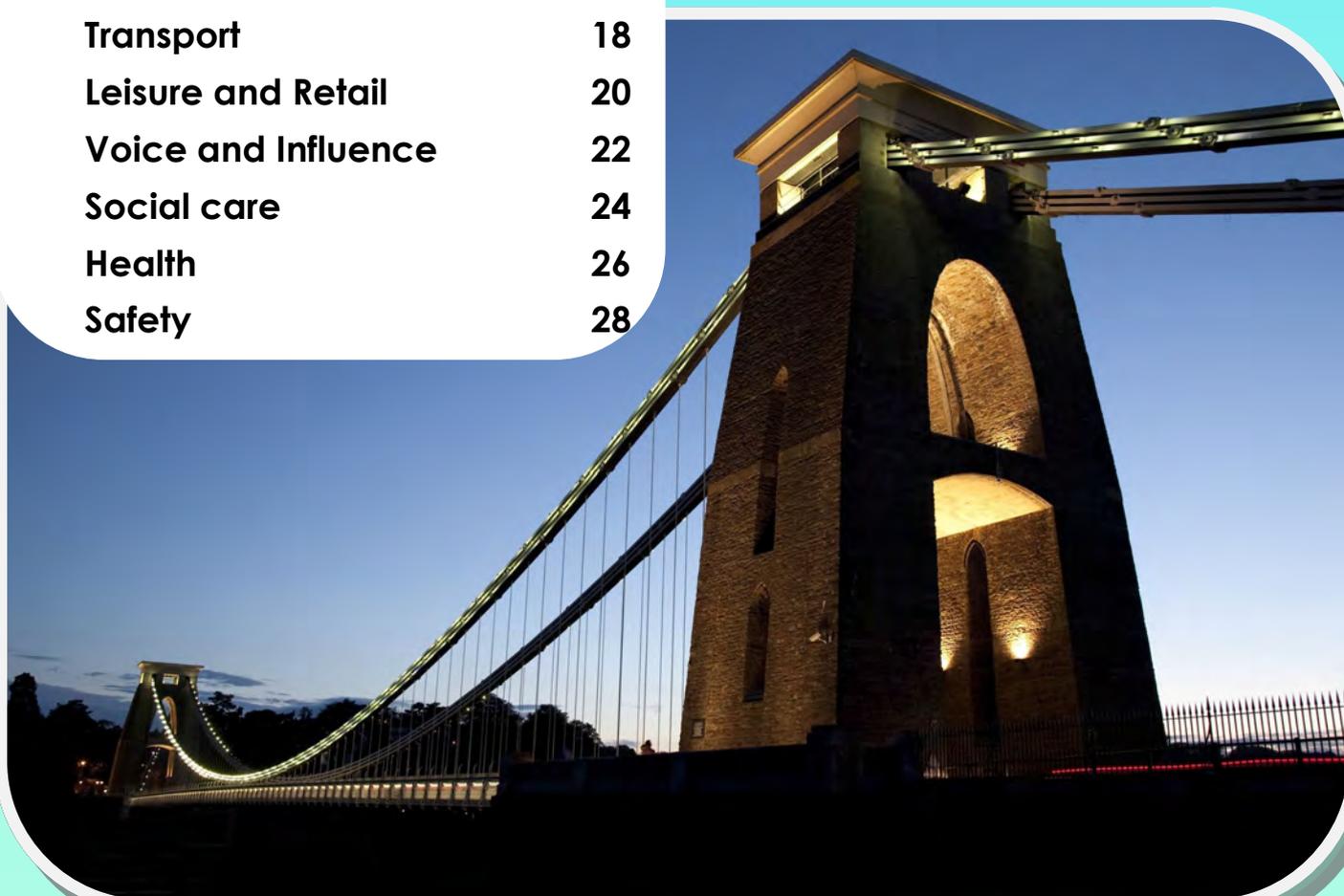
Mark Williams



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Preface

In this Manifesto, when we use the phrase Disabled person or Disabled people we include those who may not identify as Disabled people, but may face shared disadvantages and barriers, such as Deaf people and older people needing social care support.

This approach is based upon the Social Model of Disability (SMD), which is central to understanding both the barriers Disabled people experience and the potential solutions.

The Social Model states that whilst Disabled people's impairments and difference can make life difficult, the biggest barriers we experience are due to the way society is constructed. In other words it is society, through its built environment, systems, policies and attitudes that 'disable' us, not our bodies or minds.

Therefore Disabled people are disabled by such things as inaccessible housing, a reluctance to offer them employment, the poor education many receive and the negative attitudes of others, not their physical, sensory, learning, mental and neurological difference. A simple example of this is that having impairments doesn't stop us using a kitchen, but how the kitchen is designed does.

This doesn't mean Disabled people's difference has no impact upon them, only that we make a distinction between what is involved in managing impairments and what prevents Disabled people engaging with the wider world.

Laura J Welti

Forum Manager and editor

Manifesto Vision

This Manifesto sets out Disabled people's vision for Bristol.

A vision of:

an inclusive and equal city free from economic, social, and attitudinal barriers;

a city that understands Disabled people are an asset, not a liability;

a city where everyone benefits from Disabled people's involvement.

Introduction

The starting point for the Manifesto was the concerns and issues Disabled people had made us aware of over several years of contact with them. We then added the findings of research into the lives of, and consultations with, Disabled people, their friends and families.

In December 2015 we held a public meeting and asked of Disabled people what should be in a Disabled People's Manifesto for Bristol. We presented our findings and asked them to tell us what else should be included, what might have changed and what their priorities were.

Consequently, this Manifesto is based on sound research and the experience, contributions and priorities of Disabled people.

Bristol Disability Equality Forum is an organisation run by and for Disabled people committed to working with, and supporting, others to ensure Bristol is the best place for Disabled and non-Disabled people to live.

In order to achieve this, we call on the city to adopt this Disabled People's Manifesto for Bristol and to work with us to make Bristol a truly inclusive city that provides opportunities for, and belongs to, all who live, work, study and holiday in it, regardless of their differences.

This Manifesto highlights key areas where inequalities persist and where the gaps are widening. We ask that all organisations within the public, business and voluntary sectors :

- a. commit to positive change in key areas;
- b. review progress on a regular basis; and
- c. work with us;

to keep the Manifesto alive.



Why a Disabled People's Manifesto for Bristol?

Bristol is a great place to live, work, rest and play – so great it was voted the best place to live in the UK as recently as 2014, in a survey by the Times newspaper. Bristol's geography, architecture, culture, educational and business leadership, diversity and social life are the envy of much of the country.

So why do Disabled people consistently report the lowest 'quality of life' satisfaction rates of all communities within the city? The short answer is that there are still too many barriers excluding many Disabled people from sharing in Bristol's aspirations, health, wealth and wellbeing.

Currently, Bristol is one of the most unequal cities in the country with an increasing gap between the most advantaged and the most disadvantaged. Many of her citizens, are struggling on many different fronts – income, housing, employment, transport etc.



Consequently, our businesses, communities, services and service providers are also losing out; they are less effective, have a smaller economy with a less skilled workforce, and face higher health and social care costs than they could be.

The quantity of evidence for this is overwhelming. For reasons of space we have not included it here, but an Evidence Appendix is available, on request.

This evidence tells us that a Disabled People's Manifesto needs to cover nine main areas of life, but the over-arching theme is that it's time to redress the balance between income - generation, the needs of our most 'advantaged' and disadvantaged residents, including Disabled people.



(continued from Page 7)

Why a Disabled People's Manifesto for Bristol?



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In seeking to do this, the Manifesto calls for education to be inclusive; public transport, shops, workplaces and venues to be accessible; all areas of local power (including senior management and politicians) to reflect the diversity of the city; social care to be genuinely person-centred; many more health services to be based in the community and delivered the way that meets people's, rather than institutions', needs best; and Disabled people not to be criminalised for being a member of an equalities community.

Real change involves turning our current practices on their head and creating long-term solutions, rather than sticking-plasters, for the current system, alongside changing attitudes and approaches. This includes:

- valuing Disabled people as a resource, and a source of new income, rather than an expense;
- using more of the Local Enterprise Partnership money to work with employers to address the barriers to employing more Disabled people, and train them in the advantages of being genuinely inclusive. Bristol needs its employers to change even more than it needs to better educate its Disabled people ;
- finding a mechanism for affordable housing to remain affordable rather than becoming unaffordable (and in some cases leaving the social housing sector completely) as soon as the first owner sells up.

We need to get creative about changing the systems and attitudes that cause disadvantage, rather than primarily focusing on changing the people it disadvantages, and start valuing them as a solution to increasing and sustaining Bristol's success; making it a great city for all.

Evidence Base

The evidence we have used to identify what the issues and potential solutions are has come from a range of sources, including the Office for National Statistics, Bristol City Council, the West of England Partnership, local support services such as advice centres, and a range of charities and other research organisations. This is in addition to consulting Disabled people in Bristol.

In 2014 Bristol had a population of 442,500, which is expected to rise to 528,200 by 2037. Of these, at least 16.2% identify as a Disabled person, according to the 2011 Census. However, we know that many people do not say they are a Disabled person when completing forms. We also know that NHS research found that approximately 20% of the population experience mental and emotional distress. That substantially more than 71,724 of Bristol's residents are Disabled people is also supported by the 2011 Census finding that 24.8% of households in Bristol include at least one Disabled child or adult.

Disabled people therefore represent a substantial proportion of the city's potential spending power – or would do if employers were more willing to select them as staff and if the majority of Bristol's shops, entertainment, leisure and transport were accessible.

Most of the information and evidence we used to inform this Manifesto is contained in a separate Annex. The reason for this is that, to include it here would make the Manifesto hard to digest and too long, putting many off reading it. This Annex is available on request.

However, here are a few pieces of evidence that you might not have come across before:

- a) Disabled people don't 'cost' as much as people think e.g. social care spending in the UK is less than the EU average and 2.5million homes in the UK, could be made accessible by carrying out minor works (English Housing Survey 2012-13) ;
- b) According to the DWP Disabled people's spending power is estimated at over £80 billion, yet three-quarters of businesses have at least one barrier to access (DWP, 2014);

Evidence

c) Around a fifth of Disabled people report having impairment- related difficulties accessing transport (ONS Opinions Survey 2011);

d) Disabled pupils are three times more likely than other pupils to experience bullying and harassment (Contact a Family 2012);

e) Disabled people in Bristol who need their home adapted are having to wait 6 months or more for an initial Occupational Therapist (OT) visit to assess their needs - even when they live in a council home, where a grant isn't needed;

f) In 2014 only 46.3% of working-age Disabled people are in employment compared to 76.4% of working-age non-Disabled people (Labour Force Survey 2014);

g) 91% of people with learning difficulties that could work are unemployed;

h) 29% of Disabled people experience impairment-related difficulties accessing public, commercial and leisure goods and services, whilst adults in the South West report the joint highest number of life areas (for example, education or leisure) in which participation is restricted (DWP, Disability Facts and Figures, Jan. 2014);

i) 27% of young Disabled people have a substantial mobility difficulty - significantly higher than among Disabled adults of working age - suggesting more working age people will have mobility difficulties in the near future, as well as an increasing number of our aging population;

j) 27% of 16-19 yr year olds are not in education, employment or training (NEET) compared with



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Where Next?

This is an ambitious Manifesto. It is not all that needs to be done for Bristol to thrive on the contributions of its Disabled citizens but it is, we believe, one Bristol is more than capable of making a reality. We have the resources, the creativity, and the commitment to equality - all that is required now is the will.

We want all in the city to sign up to making this Manifesto a reality. Are you ready to pledge your commitment?

Although we are a small organisation we will be here to support all sectors to meet our aspiration for an accessible city that values and is inclusive of all.

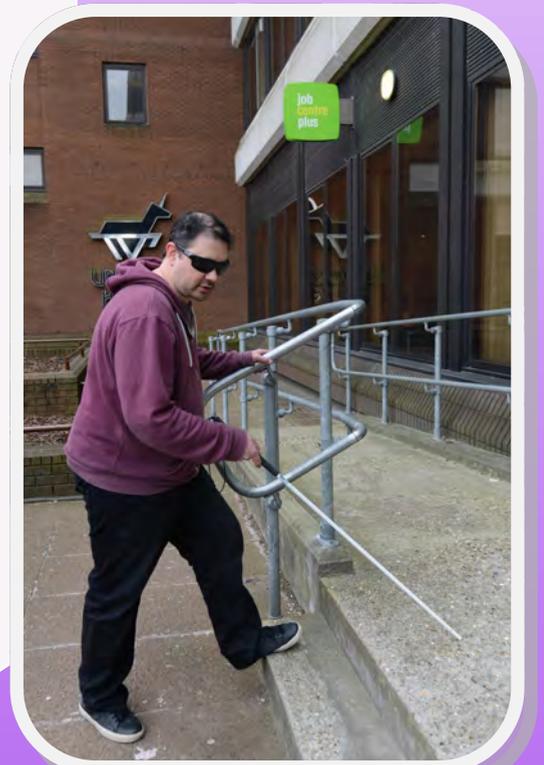
If you would like to discuss the section of this Manifesto that most relates to your sphere of influence, do get in touch. We offer a small consultancy and training service that can help with all your needs.

Finally, this is a live document. We will monitor its implementation, based on the evidence we have access to, and refresh it on an annual basis. So, if you achieve solutions to some of the barriers outlined here, or implement any of the suggested 'solutions' do let us know.

We would also like to celebrate all those that help make it a reality.

Employment Barriers

- * **Unemployment among all Disabled people, with and without qualifications, is more than twice that for non-Disabled people i.e. unemployment is 48% (on average) among Disabled people compared to an average of 22% among non-Disabled people.**
- * **For some Disabled people the situation is much worse. Overall only 7% of people with Learning Difficulties are in work and, if you discount the 35% who would struggle with it, this figure rises only slightly – to 9.3%.**
- * **Research tells us that these low figures are largely due to employers' fears that staff and/or customers 'won't like it', not that applicants with Learning Difficulties are unable to do the jobs they apply for.**
- * **Disabled people in work are more than twice as likely as their non-Disabled colleagues to be in low paid work. Gross under-representation of Disabled people in all sectors' workforces and leadership teams including: service industries, health trusts, schools, retail outlets, head offices, leisure facilities, and local authorities.**



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- 1. Disability awareness training for all staff, to dispel myths and misconceptions about Disabled people.**
- 2. 'Disability equality in recruitment' and Access To Work training for all managers and directors;**
- 3. HR to review all job descriptions to:**
 - re-phrase or eliminate requirements that pre-date current assistive technology and Access To Work funding;**
 - assess which job descriptions could be reconfigured in ways that benefit both the organisation and Disabled people seeking employment.**
- 4. Greater awareness of the value of employing Disabled people for the unique perspective, enhanced creative problem-solving and lateral thinking skills many have.**
- 5. Greater flexibility in working hours/days/times etc to accommodate a wider range of needs (beneficial to all employees).**
- 6. All medium to large employers to develop and implement a leadership programme for current and potential Disabled staff.**



- * Severe shortage of accessible housing;
- * Severe shortage of affordable housing;
- * Too many planning applications approved that don't include enough of this type of housing;
- * Housing benefit and 'Bedroom Tax' rules substantially, and disproportionately, disadvantage Disabled people;
- * Time taken for adaptations to be completed;
- * Uneven spread of accessible social housing, leaving people isolated;
- * Lack of supported housing;
- * Lack of safety on some social housing estates;
- * Discrimination by private landlords;
- * Lack of facilities in social housing blocks and private sector multiple-occupancy housing.

1. Developers to include more accessible and affordable homes in their building projects;
2. Council to include a requirement for all development plans to include a percentage of accessible and affordable housing that is directly proportionate to need;
3. Council to reject any calls (post planning consent) to reduce the number of accessible and/or affordable homes built;
4. Developers to provide, and Council enforce, space requirements for accessible housing that recognises increasing obesity and use of electric wheelchairs;
5. Council to increase the minimum size for a bedroom;
6. Council to use every discretion possible to ensure Disabled people who need an additional 'bedroom' aren't charged Bedroom Tax;
7. New housing wired to be 'ready' for flashing alarms to be installed;
8. Improved Blue Badge parking provision in housing developments and multi-occupancy, housing and abuse addressed;
9. Mobility scooter parking provided on each floor of large, multi-occupancy buildings.



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- * **Lack of progress in perceptions of Deaf and Disabled people's ability to thrive educationally;**
- * **Despite a small increase, attainment levels have slipped further behind those of non-Disabled young people;**
- * **'Special needs' (rather than inclusive) education has led to significant social isolation, fewer interpersonal skills and exclusion from local youth communities, except for Deaf pupils;**
- * **More likely to be excluded from school, significantly reducing life chances;**
- * **Inadequate learning support for those who do attend inclusive schools;**
- * **Increased ability of schools to deny Disabled children and young people a mainstream place;**
- * **Bullying and harassment three times higher than for non-Disabled pupils;**
- * **Lack of accessible (statutory and higher) education buildings;**
- * **Lack of reasonable adjustment, support and assistive technology, particularly in further and higher education;**
- * **Lack of accessible accommodation for Disabled students.**



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1. Include a lot more Deaf and Disabled people in the curriculum (across all subject areas) through the teaching materials used;
2. Action to improve levels of attainment - overall and in relation to their peers;
3. Better monitoring of, and action to address, the exclusion of Deaf and Disabled pupils;
4. More/faster progress by mainstream schools in moving from 'integrated' to inclusive education;
5. A mainstream place, with adequate support, for every pupil that wants one;
6. Non-Disabled parents of Disabled children better informed about the value of mainstream schools and the disadvantages of 'special' schools (and vice versa regarding Deaf pupils);
7. Adequate learning support in classes;
8. Significantly more action to address disablist bullying and harassment in (and immediately outside) schools.

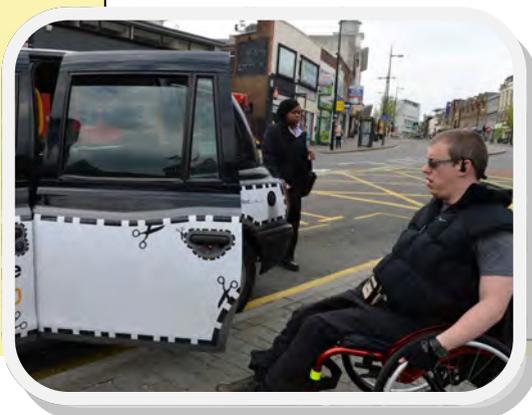


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- * **Lack of access to public transport across the city trains, stations/platforms, ferries etc., and difficulty accessing wheelchair spaces on buses;**
- * **Lack of accessible transport is the second largest barrier to getting jobs;**
- * **The attitudes of public transport staff and the regular poor service to Disabled passengers e.g. not asking passengers on buses to vacate the wheelchair space, resenting parking by the kerb;**
- * **Lack of hackney cab drivers willing to transport Disabled passengers;**
- * **Lack of monitoring to enforce the requirement that they do so;**
- * **Scale of Blue Badge parking violations;**
- * **Much reduced Blue Badge parking in Resident Parking Zones;**
- * **Parking on pavements;**
- * **Parking across dropped kerbs;**
- * **The danger to Disabled people posed by Shared pathways.**

1. Bus companies and the Council to jointly lobby for regulations enabling operators to prioritise the use of wheelchair spaces by wheelchair users;
2. Council to introduce a by-law or other action, that enables them to penalise obstructive pavement parking;
3. Council or police to start enforcing the law against parking over dropped kerbs;
4. More public education and enforcement action on Blue Badge abuse;
5. Reinstate national Blue Badge parking options in Resident Parking Zones;
6. All refurbishment, upgrade and development of local rail stations and platforms to include making them fully accessible;
7. More accessible ferries generally and all ferry landing points around the harbour made accessible;
8. An audit of all taxi ranks and transport stops, to ensure there's CCTV that can clearly identify drivers, for when a complaint is lodged;
9. Better disability awareness training for public transport staff, by those with 'lived experience', and firmer management of staff who ignore it;
10. Council's Taxi Forum to develop an effective monitoring system that identifies drivers who persistently ignore calls for accessible hackney cabs;
11. Require drivers hiring a cab to ensure all accessibility features are in working order and be able to use them.



- * The majority of Bristol venues are still not physically accessible and too few have hearing loops, despite art and culture having a central role in the city's economy;
- * Too many accessible venues 'herd' Disabled people into one area, or the least popular area e.g. in the front row of cinemas, stopping them sitting with friends and family;
- * Too few audio-described and subtitled/BSL interpreted performances;
- * Little or no action taken to enforce 'Access to Goods and Services' legislation;
- * A great deal of inaccessible publicity and information;
- * Very little progress on accessibility of local shops and venues.

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1. Council to use all means available to enforce accessibility e.g. through Health and Safety duty and building regulations, when venues/shops refurbished;

2. Premises' licences to require accessible toilets with accessible routes from the entrance to the toilets and the counter;

3. Arts/culture grants to require exhibitions and installations are accessible, other than when it's intrinsic to a specific space;

4. Cinemas and theatres over an agreed size to provide audio description/subtitling/BSL interpretation at least once per film or production;

5. Removal of all businesses' 'street furniture' anywhere other than on their premises' land;

6. Licenses for events to include requirement to maintain an accessible route throughout e.g. wide enough section of road or pavement kept clear;

7. Stop businesses placing recycling bins etc. on pavements or require that bins etc. are attached to the front of the premises;

8. Stop shops 'spilling onto' the pavement unless at least 2 metres remains clear;

9. Business organisations and networks to raise their members' awareness of access responsibilities.

- * **Accessibility of consultations has got worse since the introduction of the Equality Act (2010), not better;**
- * **Council has ignored its own British Sign Language (BSL) Charter;**
- * **Information in BSL has been taken off Council website;**
- * **Easy-read versions not readily available;**
- * **Little or no action to address the problem of digitally excluded people;**

Extensive cuts in the amount of non-digital information previously provided, preventing many having a say in what the Council and Health Services do;

* **Disabled people excluded from positions of influence by conscious and unconscious discrimination e.g. no job-sharing of political office or of the most senior posts (in all sectors), and the lack of Disabled non-Executive Board members.**

* **Far too many statutory decisions made without any, or any meaningful, consultation with Disabled people;**

* **Failure to accept job-sharing requests for positions of power as a 'reasonable adjustment', on a variety of boards, committees and appointments, as well as in political office.**



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1. Council to implement its BSL Charter;
2. Revising roles so that job-sharing is possible at senior management and Board levels in all organisations, and as elected representatives e.g. councillors;
3. Implement positive action mentoring and 'shadowing' opportunities for Disabled people within senior management and politics;
4. All statutory service providers to provide online BSL and Easy-Read descriptions of their services, whoever runs them;
5. All consultations to clearly state (in a highly visible part of screen) where and from whom to get information in alternative formats;
6. Promote all consultations, in paper format, at libraries and community centres, indicating where digitally excluded people can access documents;
7. All consultation events held with sufficient notice (min. 1 month) for Disabled people to re-arrange their PA support, if they want to attend;
8. All consultation events to start at, or after, 10.30am and be held in venues accessible to those with physical and sensory access needs;
9. Statutory sector to use accessible fonts, font size and design in all of its corporate communications and marketing.



By Experience

Social Care Barriers

- * Increasing demand for social care due to more Disabled children surviving their early years and older people living longer;
- * Increasing demand due to cuts in benefits and support;
- * Cost of buying aids, equipment and overcoming barriers – the ‘disability premium’;
- * Costs of maintaining aids and equipment;
- * Too many Disabled people not having all their actual impairment-related costs taken into consideration in financial assessments;
- * Financial assessment process not accessible to many e.g. those with autism;
- * Insufficient support to enable Disabled people to live independently, especially those with learning difficulties, autism or mental ill health;
- * ‘Cap in hand’ approach to how people can use Direct Payments;
- * Inadequate advocacy provision;
- * Inadequate levels of prevention work and rehabilitation support;
- * Inadequate support for those experiencing mental health difficulties or with autism;
- * Too few people confident enough to take up Direct Payments;
- * Record-keeping demanded of, and reserves permitted for, those on Direct Payments is disproportionate to need;
- * Far too many parents with learning difficulties having their children taken away from them.



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1. Information on how to avoid 'disability premiums' when paying for essentials to independent living;
2. Actual cost of maintaining essential aids and adaptations added to social care package and/or Council to negotiate a low cost maintenance package where all equipment is on one policy;
3. Training of workers who do financial assessments and provision of detailed information (for Disabled people) on what a disability-related expense is;
4. New arrangements to: better support, make fewer demands of, and to reduce the risks for those on Direct Payments, so as to increase take up;
5. Increased funding for advocacy;
6. Increased prevention work, using 'new money', to reduce a worsening of conditions and health;
7. Partnership working to ensure adequate rehabilitation support for those who acquire impairments through non-critical events;
8. Adequate support to be in place before people are discharged from hospital;
9. More support to enable autistic people and those with mental health difficulties to live independently and to use Direct Payments;
10. Fewer record-keeping demands of people on Direct Payments;
12. Less frequent reviews of those whose conditions/ impairments won't improve;
13. Better support to enable inclusive independent living;
14. More support for people with learning difficulties to bring up their own children.

Health

Barriers

- * Proportion of Disabled people in England reporting bad or very bad health increased between 2008 and 2012, whilst it reduced for non-Disabled people;
- * Gap between Disabled and non-Disabled people's health has increased;
- * Higher proportion of Pakistani/Bangladeshi (22.9%) and African/Caribbean/Black (19.9%) people at risk of poor mental than White people (14.6%);
- * Too many are experiencing problems accessing mental health crisis support;
- * Inappropriate use of anti-psychotic and anti-depressant drugs in 'treating' people with learning difficulties;
- * Too much of what can and does reduce NHS costs is funded by social care.



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1. Continue to expand the choice of alternatives to medication e.g. massage, peer support etc funded by NHS;
2. Increase support available to those in mental health crisis;
3. Reduce and stop use of anti-psychotics and anti-depressants to 'manage' the behaviour of those with learning difficulties;
4. Phase out all residential care for people with learning difficulties in all but exceptional cases;
5. All those needing residential care to be provided for locally;
6. All people with learning difficulties to be given annual health-checks (funding is available for this but often not used);
7. Action to ensure much earlier diagnosis of Autism and Learning Difficulties among children;
8. Substantially improve care of those needing support and/or accessible communication when in hospital;
9. Widen range of options in prescribing, including better balance of CBT and psychotherapy provision, more use of 'alternative' treatments and peer support;
10. Make it a requirement of funding that medical, pharmacy and dental services are accessible;
11. Provide Personal Budgets for a wider range of impairments;
12. Implement, and monitor, personal health budgets for all who want one;
13. Local NHS to fund more of the provision resulting from working with the Council.

***Disablist Hate Crime, bullying and harassment considerably higher than in 2009;**

***90% of people with learning difficulties have experienced disablist bullying, harassment, abuse and/or violence;**

***Disabled people, on average, 4.6 times more likely to experience domestic, care worker and 'friendship' abuse;**

***Too many people needing an 'appropriate' adult present when interviewed are not given one, especially when not being treated as a 'perpetrator';**

***What is a Hate crime is too often recorded as a Safeguarding issue when Disabled people are targeted;**

***Far too little promotion of the 'Appropriate Adult' (AA) scheme;**

***Too many are accused of, and penalised for, ASB that is actually impairment-related behaviour or reacting to being bullied.**



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TATION

- *Awareness-raising campaign about Appropriate Adult (AA) scheme(s);
- *More training of police officers in identifying who needs to be offered an AA;
- *No more use of inappropriate people as AAs (completely untrained strangers have been used);
- *Increased provision for Disabled people experiencing domestic, care worker and 'friendship' abuse;
- *Creation of a peer-led provision for Disabled people;
- *Police and schools take action to reduce current levels of disablist bullying and abuse across our communities;
- *Significantly more Hate Crime prevention work with the wider population, not just amongst those targeted;
- *Action to raise awareness and understanding, of police and communities, about impairments mistaken for an Anti-Social Behaviour offence.

Notes

Notes

