

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: All
REPORT TITLE: Camden All-Age Autism Strategy 2025-2030	
REPORT OF: Director of Adult Social Care Strategy and Commissioning	
FOR SUBMISSION TO: Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee	
DATE: 10 February 2026	
SUMMARY OF REPORT <p>This report provides an overview and update of Camden's all-age Autism Strategy 2025-2030.</p> <p>Camden's new all-age Autism Strategy 2025-2030 was approved by Camden's Cabinet in September 2025. Co-production with autistic residents, parents and carers of autistic residents have informed the content and the themes of the strategy. Based on feedback from residents, the strategy is focused on a culture change – looking to make Camden a place where autistic residents are understood, respected and supported.</p>	
Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information No documents that require listing have been used in the preparation of this report.	
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RECOMMENDATIONS <p>Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee are asked to note the report on Camden's All-Age Autism Strategy and appendices.</p>	

Signed:



Chris Lehman, Director of ASC Strategy and Commissioning

Date: 28th January 2026

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report provides an overview and update of Camden's all-age Autism Strategy 2025-2030.
- 1.2 Camden's new all-age Autism Strategy 2025-2030 was approved by Camden's Cabinet in September 2025. Co-production with autistic residents, parents and carers of autistic residents have informed the content and the themes of the strategy. Based on feedback from residents, the strategy is focused on a culture change – looking to make Camden a place where autistic residents are understood, respected and supported.

2. Camden's all-age Autism Strategy 2025-2030

- 2.1 The strategy takes a life-course approach, in response to feedback from residents that autism is life-long and the support for it should be as well. The strategy themes have been taken from the Think Local Act Personal partnership - for each strategy theme, the strategy outlines what residents have told the Council, and what the service knows and the key areas that it will focus on during the 5-year period for starting well and living and ageing well. The seven themes are:
 - Theme 1: Information and advice: having the advice when I need it
 - Theme 2: Health, wellbeing and independence – living the life I want, staying safe and well
 - Theme 3: Active and supportive communities – keeping families, friends and connections
 - Theme 4: Flexible and integrated care and support – my support, my own way
 - Theme 5: Transition, when things need to change – staying in control
 - Theme 6: Workforce
 - Theme 7: Access, inclusion and equity across diverse identities
- 2.2 The strategy also takes inspiration from the National Autistic Taskforce's independent guide for quality care for autistic people and taken feedback from Camden's autistic residents to inform what officers mean by a culture change in Camden:

Proactively seek to better understand autism and celebrate autistic identities. Through:

- ongoing practical, autism-specific staff training
- accepting difference and supporting positive autistic identity fighting stigma and discrimination
- recognition of some behaviour as distress

Taking steps to make services and spaces autism-informed, person-centred, predictable, clearly communicated and visible. Through:

- Communicating effectively throughout the lifespan.

- Seeking to offer a variety of ways to communicate and keeping information up to date
- Ensuring better transitions

Continuously reviewing and addressing potential barriers to Autism inclusion through:

- considering and removing potential barriers to access - tackling environmental and other stressors

2.3 A strategy consultation took place in summer 2025, before the strategy was approved by Cabinet, reaching over 75 stakeholders through a combination of online and in person sessions. The Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee was consulted as part of the strategy. Key themes from the consultation were:

- There was positive feedback about the quality of the co-production process through-out the strategy development, and the inclusion of and intersectional groups and trauma-informed principles. There was also positive feedback on the empathic tone of the document, and that the document covers the right themes. There was feedback that there is some overlap between different themes
- There was interest in the implementation plan – the actions that will go alongside the strategy, and how the Council will measure success. There was also feedback that the strategy could say more about how the implementation will be autistic-led and include lived experience voice, including the voice of children and young people.
- Education, health, advocacy, benefits and housing could be drawn out more strongly, as key areas that are significant for autistic residents
- Making sure it was clear how the strategy links to other strategies
- Wanting to ensure that Camden residents can access wider Camden offer and thriving businesses and culture (London Zoo, Google) is available to autistic residents.
- The strategy talks about culture change – there was feedback in the consultation about wanting to be clearer on what the Council means by culture change, and be clear about what it means by autistic themes

2.4 In response to the consultation, before publication:

- Added in a key concept list, and a separate key concepts appendix to ensure there are definitions of autism
- Amended the co-production section to make this stronger
- Amended how the Council has talked about autism-led leadership for strategy implementation
- Continued to develop the implementation plan, to provide clarity about how the impact of the strategy will be measured
- Added reference to other strategies and links to this – including Education and SEND, and ensured work on this is joined up

3. Implementation Plan and governance

3.1 The strategy itself outlines the key areas of focus under each theme. The strategy is also supported by an implementation plan which breaks down by

theme, the key commitments the Council is making across the partnership, and some activities and leads. A progress report on the implementation plan will be published once a year, along with the implementation plan. The implementation plan will be refreshed every 6 months and can be found at Appendix 2.

3.2 The Council are in the process of developing governance arrangements to monitor progress and ensure the voices of those with lived experience of autism are at the heart of the strategy's implementation. Ongoing work around commissioning and co-production across Adult Social Care will also incorporate autism and link to the strategy. To ensure that the new governance arrangements meet the needs of those with lived experience of autism while making the best use of resources, they will be introduced on a test and learn basis and will be kept under review. The Council are in the process of identifying resource to support the governance, and are aiming to establish the new governance arrangements in Spring 2026.

4. Headline progress so far

4.1 The strategy is a 5-year strategy and outlines an ambitious vision to create a culture change in Camden across partners in Camden. It is early in the term of the strategy. An officers' group has met to discuss the implementation plan and actions related to this for each area of the life-course, and below is a list of actions underway as part of the implementation plan. The below table represents only a high-level overview of one key area of progress for each of the strategy themes and some key achievements – further updates will be included as part of the broader progress update later in 2026:

Strategy theme	Strategy Commitment and actions	Progress
1 - Information and advice	<p>Make it easier for families and autistic young people to find useful information.</p> <p>5. (All age) Improve and promote our websites – including Integrated Care Board (ICB) microsite, Local Offer</p>	<p>6. A range of work has been ongoing to improve websites across the partnership. Camden's Local Offer, Camden Care Choices and Families websites also contain dedicated information about Autism.</p> <p>7. A dedicated ICB Microsite has also been developed. All of these websites are continually reviewed to ensure they contain up to date and relevant information to support autistic residents and families.</p>
2 – Health, wellbeing and independence	<p>Improve school support for autistic pupils.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support autistic pupils to thrive through reviewing and improving the outreach and advisory support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A meeting predictable needs toolkit has been developed. This toolkit is for all pupils with specialist needs and disabilities – including autistic pupils. The toolkit has been developed following consultation and feedback with schools. Activities are planned to review the content of the toolkit, embed the toolkit in mainstream schools and

	<p>available to schools and developing a Meeting Predictable Needs Toolkit over the next 12 months to provide practical information and advice in mainstream settings.</p>	<p>develop early years predictable needs toolkit by July 2026.</p>
3 – Active and supportive communities	<p>Make spaces, activities and services inclusive for autistic children and young people through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (All-Age) - Ensure Council buildings are autism-friendly – including our Libraries, Family Hubs and Youth Hubs. • (All-Age) - Create guidance on sensory needs for Council buildings, and guidance on preparation notes for council staff. • (All-Age) - Provide sensory packs in our Libraries and Family Hubs 	<p>Camden Libraries are committed to being safe spaces for those with special educational needs and differences. There has been a range of work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through the refurbishment of library branches, sensory areas are included within children's libraries • Libraries also provide baskets of stim toys and ear defenders for those who need them. • Training is being rolled out to staff to provide interactive and sensory Storytimes. Libraries have also purchased a collated range of accessible and easy read literature for all to enjoy, included lived experience narratives and neurodiverse representation. • Relaxed information literacy and library inductions are also being developed alongside opportunities for work experience and co-created community events. <p>There has been a range of work within our Family Hubs including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autism Education Trust (AET) training has been delivered to 65 Family Hub staff and partners) • Family Hubs are offering quiet stay and play sessions, providing sensory rooms, and have piloted and implemented sensory support bags in family hubs. • Further work is planned to embed training on neurodiversity and autism into induction, expand sensory resource pilots and create walkthrough videos to demonstrate what family hubs look like, to reduce anxiety

4 – Flexible and integrated care & support	Upskill staff across children's services to identify the needs of autistic children and young people to ensure their plans reflect the support they need	The Children and Learning Directorate is developing internally run training to ensure Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs) reflect the needs of autistic children and young people. This will be launched in September 2026.
5 – When things need to change (transitions)	When autistic adults experience challenge, transition, or crisis, promote collaborative working between autistic adults, social care, health, housing and other community services to implement autism and trauma-informed Team Around Me approaches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult Social Care are convening regular meetings with partners across the health and social care system to work on the collective response to autistic peoples' mental health needs, especially to support people earlier and prevent crises. Work also continues to embed the trauma informed Team Around Me approach as an option for autistic people who are experiencing challenge, change or crisis.
6 – Workforce	Ensure all Camden staff, including leaders, non-specialist staff and frontline practitioners have awareness of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Autism-informed practice Trauma-informed practice Reasonable adjustments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Children and Learning Directorate has reviewed its autism learning offer and found that while many sessions include information about autism, there was a gap in covering this specifically. In response, the directorate is commissioning Autism-informed Practice training, which will start in April 2025. This will include an autistic member of staff sharing their lived experience, as recommended by the strategy. Camden are also monitoring and publishing the uptake of Oliver McGowan training, which trains around autism awareness, and considering whether this should become required training for key staff.
7 – Access, inclusion and equity across diverse identities	(All Age) - Partner with Gender Identity Research & Education Society (GIRES) and other projects and research initiatives to develop our practice in relation to sexuality, gender-identity and intimate lives as they relate to autistic people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colleagues in Camden were interviewed as stakeholders for a Gender Identity Research and Education Society (GIRES) project, commissioned by NHS England to create an online resource directory for autistic trans and gender diverse people and professionals who support them. Colleagues in Camden originally linked with the National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) funded Supporting Autistic Adults' Intimate Lives (SAAIL) research

		<p>project which reviewed Autism Strategies and provided a menu of support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Now the Adult Social Care Autism Lead Practitioner is a member of the advisory group for a new national research project about intimate lives in Care Acts assessments, funded by NIHR: Intimate Lives Matter: Sex, relationships and the Care Act. Learning will be shared with frontline services in 2026.
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5. Comments of the Director of Finance

The Director of Finance has been consulted on the contents of the report and has no comments to add to the report

6. Legal Comments of the Borough Solicitor

The Borough Solicitor has been consulted on the contents of this report and has no comment to make at this time.

7. Environmental Implications

There are no environmental implications for this report.

8. Appendices

Appendix 1 Camden All-Age Autism Strategy

Appendix 2 Camden All-Age Autism Strategy Implementation Plan

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