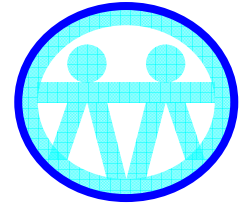
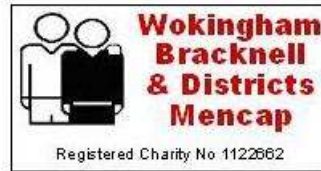




**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**



Wokingham
Learning Disability
Partnership Board

A strategy for Adults with an Autism Spectrum Disorder living in Wokingham Borough



This is a report
about people with
autism in the
Wokingham
Borough and the
services they get.

Easy Read Version



**Inside this report, there are 5 different sections.
They are:**

What is autism?

What is the Autism Project?

What did we find out?

What do we think should happen now?

Where can you find out more about autism?

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Easy Read Version written by:

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Jennie Grieve

Supported by CLASP





What is Autism?

Autism is something people are born with. For people with autism, the world is a mixed up place that doesn't make much sense to them.



What is ASD? (Autism Spectrum Disorder)

If there was a line (or "spectrum"), some people with autism might be at one end of the line with not very much difficulty in fitting in with the world. At the other end of the line, there are some people who can't make any sense of the world at all.



Can autism be cured?

No, but some people with autism learn how to get round the things they find difficult and their autism doesn't have to stop them leading a full life.



What is Asperger Syndrome?

People with Asperger Syndrome still have autism, but often they don't have a learning disability. With the right support they can learn ways to fit in with the rest of the world.



People look for a “triad of impairment” in people with autism. What does that mean?

It is the 3 main things that people with autism find difficult:

1. **Social** – People with autism find it difficult to make friends, find partners and work with other people.
2. **Communication** – It can be difficult to understand how someone else feels, and that makes it difficult to know what to do or to say to the person. They may need someone else to explain.
3. **Imagination** – Some people with autism find it hard to imagine change and like to stick to routines and things they understand.



“This might mean that when they grow up, they still like the same things they liked when they were children.”

“This lady’s got something to say!”



A woman with autism, **Therese Joliffe**, tried to tell people what it feels like to have autism. She talked about how hard life is with too many things going on.....

“There seem to be no clear boundaries, order or meaning to anything. A large part of my life is spent trying to work out the pattern behind everything. Set routines, times, particular routes and rituals all help to get order into...chaotic life. Trying to keep everything the same reduces some of the terrible fear.”

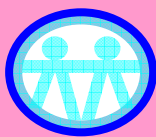
What is the Autism Project all about?



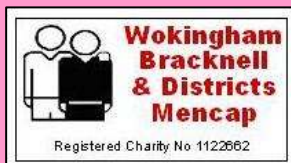
There are lots more people (30% more) with autism in the Wokingham area than in other areas of the country. Wokingham Borough Council saw that people with autism weren't always given a good service. In the future there will be even more people with autism needing a service. The Council wants to find a way to support them to have better lives but without spending any more money, so they need to find out:

- ✓ What is happening now?
- ✓ What are other places doing?
- ✓ What should Wokingham do next?

How did they do it?



Wokingham
Learning Disability
Partnership Board



The Social Care department of
Wokingham Borough Council asked ...

... **Wokingham Learning Disability
Partnership Board** to find someone who could
find out what there is for people with autism in
this area. They asked ...

... **Wokingham, Bracknell & Districts
MENCAP**
They gave the job to

Robert Pasterfield!



What did Robert find out?



1. Not many people understand what it is like to have autism. Even the people who are paid to support people who have autism don't always understand - so they don't give the right sort of help.



2. People who need a lot of support for their autism usually have a learning disability as well. Because of this, they will usually get most of the support they need.



3. If someone with autism **doesn't** have a learning disability and **doesn't** get any services for their mental health, people don't always think that they might need support for their autism.

“This is unfair. They still need support for their autism.”



4. People with Asperger Syndrome and people with autism who don't have a learning disability might get themselves into difficulties (for example with their mental health - like depression - or get in trouble with the police). Support Services (sometimes called Prevention Services) could save money and upset by stopping these problems before they happen.



5. There will be twice as many people with autism needing a support service in the next few years. When they become adults, only half of them will get support from Social Care.



6. A lot of people with autism in Wokingham have to move to another county to get the right support. In local care homes it is hard to find good staff. Not many staff understand about autism.



College

7. There are no colleges for people with autism in Wokingham Borough. There is a big change when children leave school, and lots of the support for their autism stops.



“My son has left college and I wish there had been more information and support about local services before he left.”



“This is unfair!”

Pauline (Steven’s mum) says: “Too right!”



- 8.** There are problems with:
- Support with work
 - Support for good health
 - Social care
- And there isn’t enough:
- Advocacy
 - Befriending
 - Counselling
 - Or things to do for fun



Council

9. Some other councils have started to set up good services for people with autism and they can be used by people who wouldn’t usually get support from Social Services.



So, what new things did Robert and the people he spoke to think should happen?



1. An Autism Spectrum Disorder Team:

There should be a special team of people in the Wokingham Community Care Department who just work on making things better for people with autism.



2. More Prevention Services:

Prevention Services have been set up to prevent (stop) people who don't get support from Social Services getting into difficulties. If these services understand autism and can support people with autism properly, they could save money. They help with things like:

- more information for people
- more chances to go out
- more advocacy
- more counselling
- more support for parents and carers



3. Health Services:

It needs to be easier for people to find out from the health service if they have got autism. Then they can get the right support.



4. Training:

Everyone whose job is to support people with services like housing, social care and so on, needs to be trained to understand what autism is - and to make sure they try and meet the needs of people with autism.



5. Housing:

There should be more choices of where to live, and staff should be trained to support people with autism to have a good home life and to live as independently as possible.



6. Education:

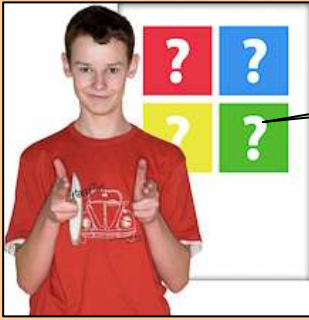
Proper support at school and at college is needed for young people with autism. They might want special courses. When young people with autism are getting ready for life as an adult (between 14yrs and 25yrs), it is called "transition". This is an important time when all the services (that people in transition need) must work together.



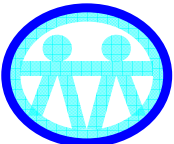
7. Employment:

All the different services that help people with jobs need to work together. This means:

- support with benefits
- support with interviews
- support with relationships at work
- support to set up a business
- education for employers



Where can I find out more?



Wokingham
Learning Disability
Partnership Board

You can get a copy of the full report from the [Wokingham Learning Disability Partnership Board](#). Call Jennie Grieve on tel: 0118 974 6832. Jennie can also give you information about local events.



[Berkshire Autistic Society](#) can give you more information about autism and about local support groups and activities. They have a helpline you can call on tel: [0118 959 4594](tel:01189594594).



The [National Autistic Society](#) is a charity that speaks up for people with autism. It has information on the internet: www.nas.org.uk



For more information about local groups and places to go visit www.WOW4Me.org.uk CLASP can support you with this. Call [CLASP](#) on tel: [07780 747453](tel:07780747453).



Robert Pasterfield supports the [Friday Night Alternative](#) social group for young adults with autism. He works at [MENCAP](#). Their number is tel: [0118 979 8539](tel:01189798539).



[ASD Family Help](#) is a local organisation that offers free advice and support to parents, carers and professionals. You can email them on: contact@asdfamilyhelp.org or go to their website: www.asdfamilyhelp.org.