



***Making services accessible:
Guide for providers working in Barnet***

Introduction

This guide has been written by **residents in Barnet** who are part of the People Bank and Barnet Mencap.

The People Bank is the group who are involved in improving and shaping health and social care services. They include **people with experience of different disabilities**, carers and others affected by health and social care.

The aim of this guide is to make sure that social care services in Barnet are accessible to everyone.

The Guide covers:

Section 1: Access to the service—information

Section 2: Access to the service—buildings and venues

Section 3: Staff

You should aim to **engage with people who use your services and carers** about your specific service and how to make it accessible.

Contact Barnet Council Adults and Communities for guidance on engagement: **020 8359 4712** or **engage.adults@barnet.gov.uk**.

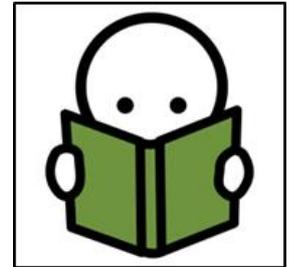


Section 1: Access to the service - information

How can you make sure that information about your service is easy to access?

For printed or written information, make sure:

- text is **large enough** to read
- information is **simple and clear** with no jargon
- to use strong **colour contrast** where required
- **easy read** information is available where required



For good access to information, make sure:

- there are **different ways** to access the service, including website, face to face, phone and printed materials
- staff have a good understanding of the service
- there are **interactive options** where possible, for example online chat
- people are able to **get through to a person** as quickly as possible
- people can access **British Sign Language** and Makaton where required
- people can **access other languages** where possible (for example, translation tools on websites)
- you have **up to date information** about other relevant services and contacts
- information is accurate and **up to date**

Resources and further information:

- [NHS Accessible Information Standards](#)
- [Home Office Accessibility Posters](#)
- [Barnet guide to creating Easy Read documents](#)

Section 2: Access to the service - buildings and venues

How can the providers make sure that their service is physically accessible?

Providers should comply with the Equality Act laws and regulations. Important issues for people in Barnet are:

For **autism** and some **mental health conditions**:

- subdued **lighting** and low background **noise** levels where required
- consideration of **colours, surfaces and layout** for people with dementia

For **hearing loss**

- hearing loops and other technology **tested and working**
- water for guide dogs

For **sight loss**:

- marking **glass doors** and providing **colour contrast** on stairs

For **physical disabilities** or **mobility issues**

- clear signage for **accessible entrances** to building
- have more than one lift if possible

For **general accessibility**

- information on **transport availability** if not provided as part of the service, including parking
- consider **timings of activities** so they avoid busy transport times where possible
- **clear display** of what support is available, for example symbols for hearing impairment or sight impairment, and an explanation
- making sure support is always **available when signposted**
- **accessible toilets** and clear signage to toilets



Resources and further information:

- [Guide to Accessible Environments \(Disability Scotland\)](#)
- [Citizens Advice Bureau: Guidance on reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities](#)

Section 3: Staff

What do members of staff need to know when providing the service?

How should the staff act and treat people?

Staff should treat people with respect and as individuals

- treat people as individuals, not making assumptions and **ask people about their specific needs**
- make sure to not treat people differently if they have made a complaint

Staff should know about all different disabilities

- be trained across **different impairments**, not just those specific to that service
- be aware of **hidden impairments** such as hearing loss
- have good knowledge of accessibility across the organisation, from senior managers to cleaners, receptionists and other staff

Staff should be visible, supportive and open

- be **visible and available** as appropriate
- be **clearly identifiable**, for example with uniform or name badges
- **support people to be independent** and achieve what they want, in any setting
- follow care plans, and **explain the reasons** if something can't be done

Staff should have good training, knowledge and rights

- have **appropriate training** for the role
- have **local knowledge** of **health and safety** and fire safety in different settings
- take into account **religious or cultural restrictions** and important dates
- **maintain confidentiality** in accordance with Data Protection Laws, with consequences for breaching this
- safeguards and monitoring in place to protect clients
- have a **way to call for help** if feeling unsafe
- have **clear rights**, good internal policies and a way to **raise issues**



Resources and further information:

- [Guide to Good Engagement – written by Barnet residents with detailed guidance on how to engage with people with different disabilities](#)
- [Equality and Human Rights Commission – guidance on disability discrimination](#)
- [Disability Rights: Guidance on making a complaint where there have been problems with accessibility](#)