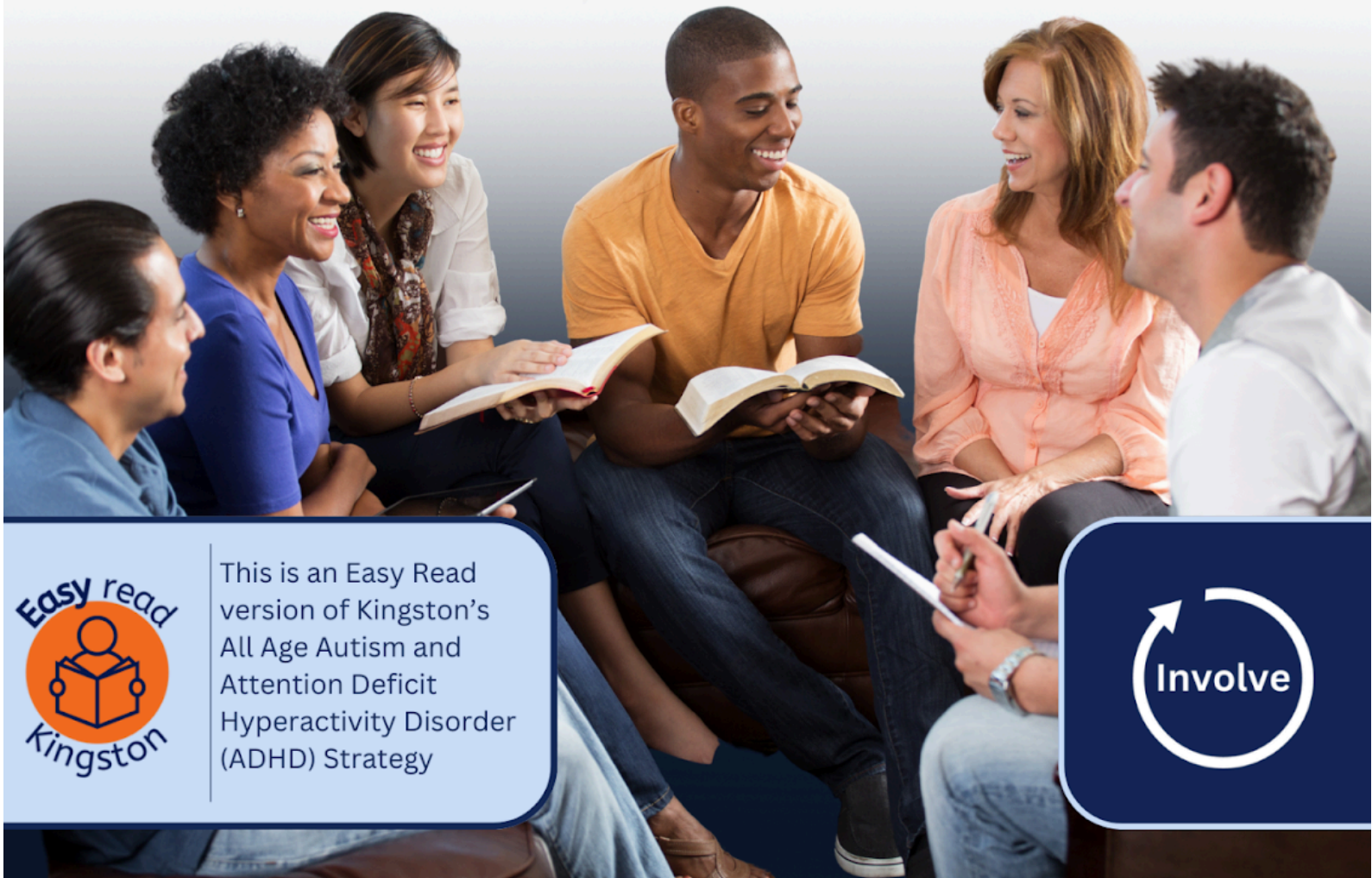


All Age Autism and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) Strategy

Adult Social Care and Health



This is an Easy Read version of Kingston's All Age Autism and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) Strategy





1. Introduction



- This document is Kingston's **Autism and ADHD Strategy**.
- A strategy is a document like a plan that shows what we want to do and how we are going to do it.
- This strategy sets out Kingston upon Thames vision for a whole life view for autistic people and people with ADHD.



- We worked together as a partnership with professionals and Experts by Experience (EbEs) to write this strategy.
- An **expert by experience** is an autistic person and/or someone who has ADHD. It also includes someone who might give support, like a family member.



- This report uses the terms 'autistic people' and 'people with ADHD'.
- However we understand language around neurodiversity is changing, and people may use different words to describe themselves or others.



2. Our Vision



- Our vision is for Kingston to be a place where autistic people and people with ADHD have the right opportunities and support to live their lives well.



- The Council, health services, education, preparing for adulthood, employment, independent living, the criminal justice system and other partners are working together to make sure we can deliver our aims.



3. What is Autism?

AUTISM



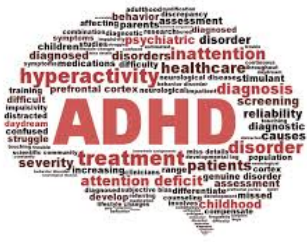
- Autism is a lifelong condition that affects how people communicate and interact with others.
- Autism is diagnosed by challenges in how a person communicates with others.

- However, autistic individuals may experience the world slightly differently.
- This can be a very good thing but also make things difficult sometimes.

- For example, autistic people may:
 - Be good at focusing on details when working on a project
 - Have very good creative skills
 - Be loyal and honest to those around them
 - Find it challenging to understand others' thoughts or feelings
 - May have sensory challenges, for example, feel stressed or overwhelmed by bright lights, new textures and noise.



4. What is ADHD?



- ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) is a neurological disorder that impacts the parts of the brain that help people plan, focus on, and do tasks.
- ADHD is often more difficult to diagnose in girls and adults.



People with ADHD can;

- have trouble staying focused or get distracted easily.
- find it hard to stay still.
- do things without thinking and interrupt others.
- have strong creative thinking, often having unique ideas.
- Find projects that they really care about and put a lot of work into.



75%

- It is thought that 75% of adults who have ADHD do not know that they have it.



5. Autism and ADHD



40%

- Autistic people and people with ADHD may have sensory issues and issues with memory, attention, and thinking. This can make daily tasks challenging.
- People with ADHD are more likely to be autistic compared to those who do not have ADHD (between 20 and 50%).
- 40% of autistic people have ADHD.



6. Mental Health



- The National Autistic Society suggests that 70% of autistic people have a mental health condition.



- Autistic people are up to four times more likely to have anxiety disorder, and twice as likely to have depression.



- Research indicates that suicide is a major cause of early death in autistic people and people with ADHD.
- It has shown that autistic people and people with ADHD are more likely to face negative life experiences, which may also impact mental health.



7. Autism and ADHD in Kingston



- The population of Kingston is 170,000 people.



- We can estimate that there are:
 - ★ **1,700** autistic children and adults
 - ★ **8,500** children and adults with ADHD

yourhealthcare

- Between 2023 and 2024 **Your Healthcare** neurodevelopmental services received:
 - Autism - 427 referrals (across the 2 Boroughs of Kingston and Richmond), 71 which were for assessments
 - ADHD - 798 referral, of which 150 were assessments
- The true number of autistic people and people with ADHD in Kingston is likely to be higher as not everyone has a diagnosis.



Education

- An Educational Health Care plan (EHCP) is support for young people in school if they need it.



In Kingston there were;

- 2,798 children with an EHCP in the 2023 academic year who had a primary need of Autism.
- 2,742 autistic children and young people are receiving Special Educational Needs (SEN) support.



8. Why do we need a strategy?



- The Autism Act 2009 says that local boroughs must have a plan to improve services for adults with autism.



- Over the last year we have worked with Experts by Experience in Kingston to identify what is important to the residents of Kingston.



- Autistic people and people with ADHD, have told us that there are examples of things working well in Kingston, but to make sure more people live their best lives **we need to make changes.**



- We need to learn more about the challenges that autistic people and those with ADHD face so we can improve their lives.



- The strategy will help us work with local groups and the community to find out what people with Autism and ADHD need.



- This strategy includes an action plan that focuses on the changes that are important to the people of Kingston.



- The action plan has been developed from our engagement work over the last 12 months and will involve working across Health, Housing, Social care, Education, Voluntary organisations and other services.



9. Results of speaking with residents



- In May/June 2024, we asked people what they thought about the draft priorities for the strategy and life in Kingston.



- We spoke to around **140 people**
- **92 online surveys.**
- **6 focus groups.**



- Most people who gave feedback were Autistic people and/ or people with ADHD.
- **17 organisations** also gave their feedback.



- We used this feedback to help us write the strategy.

If you would like to read more about the first part of the engagement [click here](#).



10. Our Plan



- Our plan aims to address the needs of people with autism and ADHD across the areas that have been highlighted.
- Below are the priorities:

Autistic people and/or people with ADHD:



Will be involved in planning and developing services



Will be supported into employment



Will easily find information and support



Will feel safe and included in their community



Will be given the right support at the right time, including diagnosis.

Kingston Council and partners:



Will support young people as they move to adulthood



Will increase the awareness of Autism & ADHD



- People who engaged in focus groups and surveys told us about the challenges in education, healthcare, access to services, employment, mental health and housing.



- By having an action plan that covers all ages, we will work towards becoming a better community for people with autism, people who have ADHD.



11. Our principles

Our principles are important ideas we should always think about.



1. Advocacy and Awareness

- Make sure information on Autism and ADHD is easy to find and understand.
- Increase the awareness of neurodivergent conditions.

*Neurodivergent – People who have brains which are organised in a different way. Sometimes these people may have a diagnosis like Autism, Learning Disability, ADHD, Dyslexia etc.



Accessible

2. Accessibility and Service Coordination

- Make sure there are easy ways for residents to contact and use services.
- Make booking appointments more accessible. This may include appointment reminders and giving people lots of options and how to apply and access services.
- Training and awareness raising for health, social care and educators.



3. Community (feeling safe) and transport

- Affordable and accessible transport options including promotion of the blue-badge scheme.
- Consider the needs of autistic and ADHD people when making improvements to the borough.
- Making sure there are quiet spaces like parks and libraries in Kingston.



4. Digital and Data

- We need better data about autistic people and people with ADHD in Kingston.
- Find ways to share data across services.



12. Areas of work



- Over the next five years we will be working across the four areas below to make positive changes.
- We will be working as a partnership across Health, Education, Social care, Voluntary Community Sector Enterprise's (VCSE) and other organisations.



1. Diagnosis and Support

Working with: Health, Education, Social care, voluntary sector partners

- Timely access to assessments
- Finding the available resources and support whilst waiting for a diagnosis, and after diagnosis
- Ensuring we have the right services in place to meet the needs of our local population



2. Healthcare and Wellbeing

Working with: Health, Education, Voluntary sector partners

- Ensure there are accessible ways to make appointments
- Focus on well designed spaces



3. Education and Training

Working with: Health, Education, Voluntary sector partners, Local business networks

- Early identification of autism and ADHD
- Creating and sharing resources with parents
- Help with changes between stages such as primary to secondary and critical periods such as GCSE's.



4. Adult Support and Employment

Working with: Education, Voluntary sector partners, Local business networks

- Help finding a job
- Support to fill in forms
- Promotion of how workplaces can support with ADHD and Autism
- Encourage businesses to offer real work opportunities and internships.



13. How will we know if it is working?



- We will work in partnership with local services including health services, education, preparing for adulthood, employment, independent living, and the criminal justice system.
- This will make sure Kingston is welcoming, supportive and inclusive for everyone.

The Autism and ADHD Partnership Board will be making sure the aims of the strategy are met, this could include:

Tell us what you think

1. Do you think the idea is a good one?

☐ Yes

☒ No

☐ Not sure

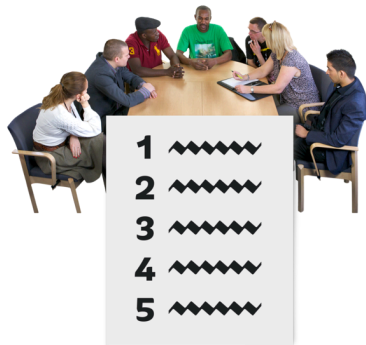
1. Quality of life surveys for people with ADHD and Autism. Making sure improvements are being made based on what is in the action plan.



2. Annual reporting. Looking at waiting list times and how many people are accessing services, to see if there are improvements.



3. **Tracking employment rates** and how long people with ADHD and autism stay in their jobs.



4. **Establishing a community of practice;** this means a group that will share information on what's going well, what is not and how everyone can do better.



5. **Developing better local data** gathering on the number of children, young people and adults with autism and/or ADHD in Kingston.



6. **Providing regular updates** on the work of the Autism and ADHD Partnership Board including progress of the action plans.

(The Board is a group of Experts by Experience and professionals who work together to make the lives of autistic people and people with ADHD in Kingston better. They are making the strategy and doing the action plan.)