

Caerdydd sy'n Deall  
Niwrowahaniaeth

Neurodivergent  
Friendly Cardiff



Neurodivergent  
Friendly Cardiff

Strategy  
2025-2030



Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg  
This document is available in Welsh

If you require this document in another language or format, including large print or braille, please contact us using the information below.

email: [neurodivergentfriendly@cardiff.gov.uk](mailto:neurodivergentfriendly@cardiff.gov.uk)  
tel: 029 2087 1083

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# Foreword

**Councillor Leonora Thomson**  
Cabinet Member for Adult Services



I am delighted to introduce this strategy outlining how we will work towards becoming a Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff. This city-wide strategy aims to deliver on our vision of Cardiff becoming a city that welcomes and supports everyone.

1 in 7 people in the UK are neurodivergent, meaning that they experience the world differently. Neurodivergent people often have unique strengths and abilities, however they can face a range of barriers across our society, including finding employment, increased likelihood of mental health diagnoses and social isolation.

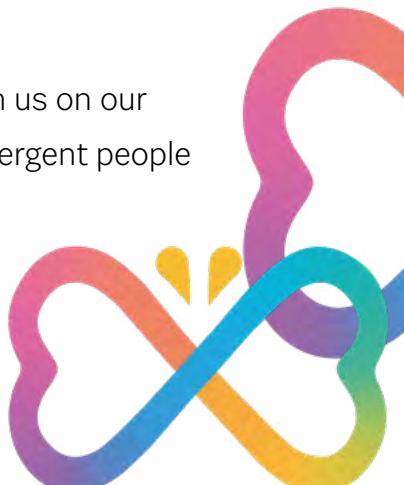
I want to work towards a Cardiff where neurodivergent individuals and families can thrive. To improve not only the understanding of what it means to be neurodivergent, but also to create a Cardiff which celebrates and supports differences.

This strategy has been shaped by engaging with our neurodivergent community and is the result of working together with our partners. I would like to thank everyone who has contributed and took part in the consultation. This is the first Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff strategy, and we understand that this is continuous journey that needs to be driven by the voices of those with lived experience.

There will be further engagement and consultation throughout our journey, and we look forward to hearing everyone's comments about how we can create a truly inclusive city.

I would invite every citizen, business and organisation in Cardiff to join us on our journey to work towards a neurodivergent friendly city where neurodivergent people are supported to live their best lives.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leonora Thomson".



# What is Neurodivergence?



**Neurodiversity** - All our brains are unique and we all have differences in skills, interests and styles.

**Neuro-typical** - Although we live in a neurodiverse society and there are many differences between us, **neuro-typical** people perceive the world in the same way.



**Neurodivergence** - For others there are more fundamental differences in social understanding, sensory processing, communication and information processing. This is 'neurodivergence'.

**Neurodivergent Umbrella** - The term 'neurodivergent' is an umbrella term for a range of neurological differences and conditions. People who are neurodivergent might have more than one form of neurodivergence.



While some neurodivergent individuals may also have learning disabilities, not all neurodivergent individuals experience learning difficulties.

It should be noted that many people who are neurodivergent may not have or wish to have a formal diagnosis. Although diagnosis can provide clarity and access to medical advice and support, this strategy will aim to increase awareness of services, activities and support for all who identify as neurodivergent and their families - whether they have a diagnosis or not. We are committed to using inclusive and respectful language throughout this strategy. We have actively sought to understand preferred language use from those with lived experience and from experts.

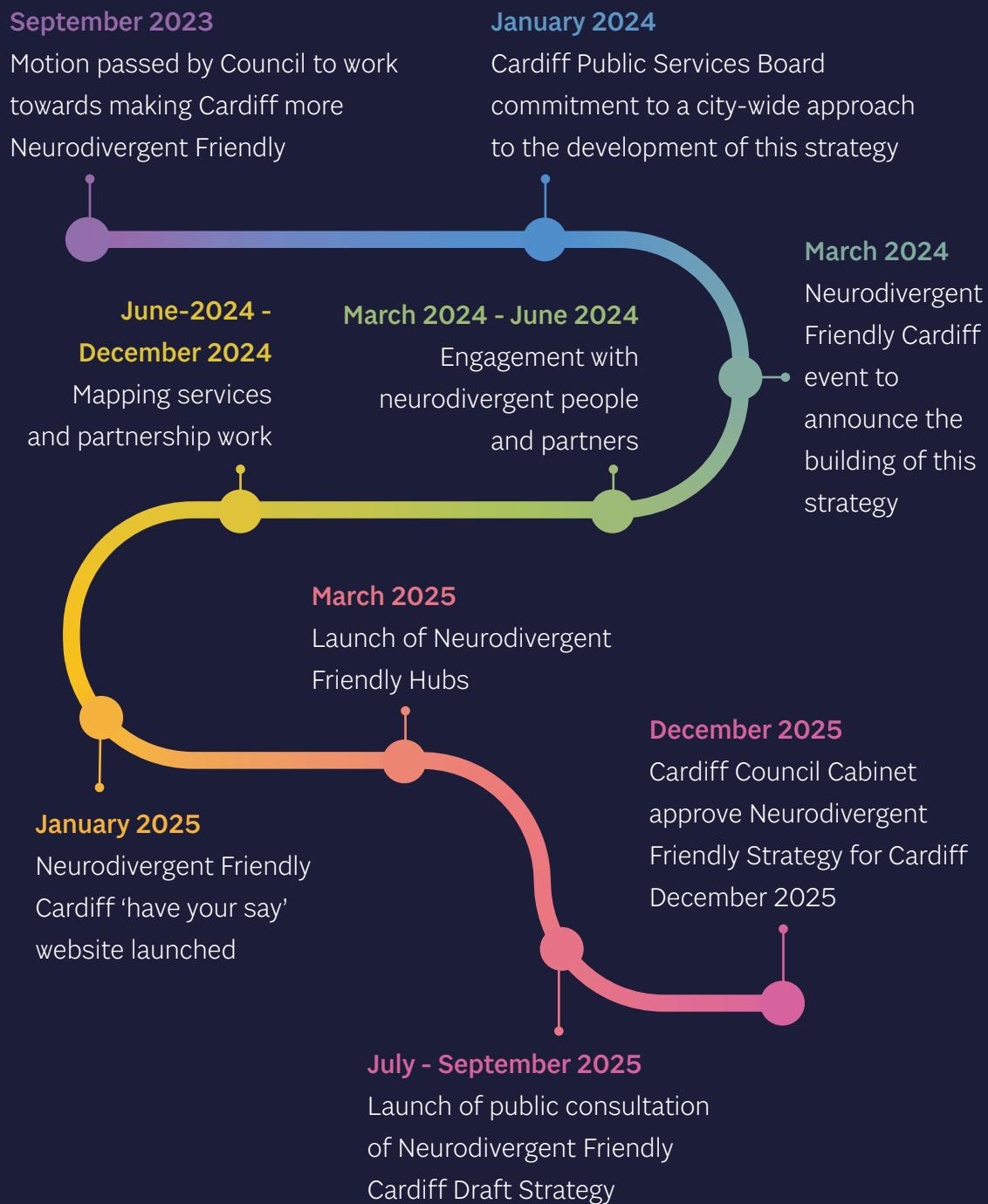
This strategy will frequently refer to the word 'neurodivergent' as an umbrella term. However, it is important to acknowledge that those who are neurodivergent and with different traits can have very different needs and experiences.

# About Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff

Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff is made up of a network of public service partners, including Cardiff Council, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (CAVUHB), South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, South Wales Police, and third sector as well as other organisations including businesses, shops, entertainment venues, community groups and neurodivergent people themselves aiming to create a more inclusive city.



# Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff Journey:



# Executive Summary

This strategy outlines Cardiff's commitment to the vision of:-

**"Increase awareness and understanding of neurodivergence and make Cardiff a place where neurodivergent people are supported to live well and thrive".**

The vision will be delivered through 6 key aims :-

- » **Key Aim 1:** Being included and part of your community
- » **Key Aim 2:** Reaching your goals in education and employment
- » **Key Aim 3:** Accessing information you can trust
- » **Key Aim 4:** Supporting the health and wellbeing of neurodivergent people and families
- » **Key Aim 5:** Being understood and celebrating difference
- » **Key Aim 6:** Improving environments for neurodivergent people

The key aims will be achieved by delivering the '**We Will**' commitments that are reflected throughout the strategy.



# Key Aim 1 (Page 30 - 40)

## Being included and part of your community



We aim to work towards a Cardiff where neurodivergent people and their families are able to participate in activities and events to improve wellbeing and enrich their lives.

### **Cardiff Council will**

- » work with older neurodivergent people to develop groups that support their wellbeing (Cardiff Wellbeing Support Service)
- » research, develop and deliver volunteer-led sessions aimed at creating a supportive space for those who are neurodivergent (Cardiff Wellbeing Support Service)
- » consult with young people to create needs-led inclusive groups and activities across each of our localities, expanding our offer for neurodivergent young people in Cardiff (Cardiff Youth Service)
- » provide the offer of 'relaxed sessions' for neurodivergent children and young people and families, who would prefer to attend quieter sessions (Inclusive Play Services)

### **British Dyslexia Association will**

- » work in partnership through the South Wales Dyslexia Hub project to provide opportunities for those with lived experience of dyslexia and dyscalculia to get together, form social connections and learn about practical strategies.

### **Action in Caerau & Ely (ACE) will**

- » raise awareness of the Umbrella Project 'Peer support for parents and families with suspected or diagnosed neurodivergence' by providing outreach support to schools and working in partnership.

### **Autism Spectrum Connections Cymru (ASC Cymru) will**

- » raise awareness of the social drop-in sessions for autistic adults and other activities they might be interested in by working with partners to share the information.

### **Cardiff Met Sport will**

- » offer dedicated sessions for neurodivergent young people and their families, providing opportunities to engage in physical activity together across Cardiff.

## **Key Aim 2** (Page 41 - 55)

### Reaching your goals in education and employment



We aim to work towards a Cardiff where there is improved understanding and support for neurodivergent people in education and to help them reach their goals by supporting them into employment and encouraging employers to create work environments that meet their needs.

### **Cardiff Council will**

- » work in partnership with all schools in Cardiff to roll out a framework that embeds best practices for neurodivergent learning (Education Inclusion Team)
- » work in partnership to raise awareness of the Local Supported Employment Scheme (LSE) to increase the number of referrals and number of people supported into employment (Cardiff Into Work)
- » offer a neurodivergent friendly Into Work service, making adjustments when needed such as easy read documents and incorporating 'quiet hours' into Job Fairs (Cardiff Into Work)
- » continue to engage and work closely with the Neurodivergent Employee Community to identify how we can meet the needs of neurodivergent staff (Cardiff Council)
- » develop a Cardiff Inclusion Framework setting out expectations for inclusive practice, building on initiatives like Rights Respecting Schools and Schools of Sanctuary (Education)
- » embed collaborative planning between Inclusion Services and schools so that school improvement and inclusion are fully integrated (Education)

- » ensure schools use screening tools for speech, language and communication needs and respond with strategies that support engagement and reduce challenging behaviour (Education)
- » make reading a priority by rolling out professional learning to strengthen teaching of reading for all ages and abilities (Education)
- » strengthen understanding and use of adaptive teaching methods so that educators can meet the needs of all learners, including those with Additional Learning Needs (Education)
- » roll out Trauma Informed Practice across all schools and embed whole-school approaches to create safe, nurturing environments (Education)

### **Child Friendly Cardiff will**

- » actively seek to listen to the voices of children and young people on inclusion within education and other important aspects of their lives, seeking their ideas and involvement, ensuring their voices are heard in conversations around neurodivergence.

### **Cardiff University Widening Participation Team will**

- » offer neurodivergent prospective students and their supporters the opportunity to visit the university on a 'Quiet Visit Day'.

### **Amgueddfa Cymru will**

- » work towards creating a more inclusive and accessible work environment for neurodivergent staff within the Museum.

### **Project SEARCH will**

- » increase the opportunities for people who are neurodivergent and have additional learning needs to access employment pathways.

### **Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will**

- » continue to work with partners who provide supported pathways to employment offering specialist advice for neurodivergent individuals looking for employment.

## Key Aim 3 (Page 56 - 63)

### Accessing information you can trust



We aim to work towards a Cardiff where neurodivergent people, parents, families and unpaid carers have improved access to information and advice relating to services and support available.

#### **Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff will**

- » set up 'Neurodivergent Information Points' across all Hubs and Libraries in Cardiff and across select healthcare settings.
- » develop a Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff website, with the aim of bringing local information together in a centralised location that is easy to navigate.
- » roll out social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram to expand the reach of engagement with the neurodivergent community in Cardiff and promote the work of Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff.
- » establish a Neurodivergent Friendly Forum that meets every quarter and be chaired by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff, Cllr Leonora Thomson.
- » develop a quarterly newsletter on information, advice and support available for neurodivergent people in Cardiff.
- » use the Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff platform to raise awareness about other events that have a focus on neurodivergence and make these events more visible.

#### **Cardiff Council will**

- » work to make information about key services more accessible to everyone by developing an easy-to-read Cardiff Council website.
- » develop an updated and more accessible website to provide information and advice to parents, carers and families in Cardiff (Cardiff Family Advice and Support Website and The Index)
- » explore ways to make the Index Bulletin more engaging and accessible for

families in Cardiff (the Index is a register for parents and carers of a child or young person to keep up-to-date with information) (Cardiff Family Advice and Support Website and The Index)

#### **Neurodivergence Wales will**

- » work in partnership to promote the resources available and encourage organisations across Cardiff to improve their understanding of neurodivergence.

## **Key Aim 4** (Page 64 - 73)

### Supporting the health and wellbeing of neurodivergent people and families



We aim to work towards a Cardiff where the health and wellbeing needs of neurodivergent people and their families are supported.

#### **Cardiff Third Sector Council (C3SC) will**

- » Establish and coordinate a Neurodivergence Action Group, enabling third sector organisations to share their experiences, develop joint advocacy positions and shape services that address unmet needs.

#### **Cardiff and Vale Recovery & Wellbeing College will**

- » share information about the 'Understanding Neurodiversity' course to those with lived experience and professionals to improve their understanding of neurodivergence and support that is available by promoting through our partnerships.

#### **Cardiff and Vale Regional Partnership Board (RPB) will**

- » support a strategic Neurodivergence Board to enable better partnership working across the region.

- » support a shift towards a system that better meets the needs of people who are neurodivergent.
- » deliver on the key priority areas of the Neurodivergence Delivery Plan.

#### **Cardiff and Vale University Health Board will:**

- » stay committed to a “No Wrong Door” approach to ensure most appropriate support regardless of the entry point into the system.
- » guide families towards the most appropriate support and resources to help ensure the best possible outcomes for each child.
- » continue to focus on reducing waiting lists in the face of increasing demand and the absence of additional capacity.
- » provide comprehensive assessments that identify strengths as well as challenges with tailored recommendations.
- » work hard despite high demand to keep people informed each step of the process.

#### **Cardiff and Vale Integrated Autism Service (IAS) will**

- » continue to streamline the diagnostic assessment process in the face of ongoing demand in the absence of additional capacity.
- » focus on training delivery within the Health Board, particularly across the Mental Health Directorate, and increase the offering of advice and consultation to partner organisations.

#### **Cardiff Council will**

- » work with Housing partners to increase access to accommodation with care and support on-site models of accommodation (Neurodiversity Team Adult Services)
- » engage with partners to embed the views of neurodivergent individuals at the centre of the services we develop (Neurodiversity Team Adult Services)
- » roll out ‘The Parent Factor’ which is a course to support the parents of children with ADHD, using schools, Hubs and community venues across Cardiff (Cardiff Parenting)

### **The Early Years Experience Team will**

- » work in partnership to increase awareness of the E-Pats programme (8-week programme for families raising a young child with a learning and/or developmental disability) so that more families are offered support and the ability to connect with other families with lived experience.

### **The Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust (WAST) will**

- » work with others across the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust to identify and test interventions that will improve experiences and outcomes for those with sensory difficulties and dementia.

## **Key Aim 5** (Page 74 - 81)

### **Being understood and celebrating difference**



We aim to raise awareness of the strengths and contribution of neurodivergent people in Cardiff and work towards a city where neurodivergent people are understood and valued.

#### **Cardiff Council will:**

- » Celebrate all neurodivergent people and improve public awareness and understanding of neurodivergence (Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff)
- » Engage with people with lived experience to help shape city-wide communications aiming to raise awareness of neurodivergence and tackle stigma (Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff)

#### **South Wales Fire & Rescue Service will**

- » evaluate processes to support accessibility, including recruitment, promotion and reasonable adjustments.
- » Support and promote the Neurodiversity Staff Network and work collaboratively with the network including during consultation exercises and procedures.

### **South Wales Police will**

- » work closely with the Neurodiversity Network to improve understanding of neurodivergence and adjustments that can be made across the force.
- » engage with the Neurodiversity Network and neurodivergent community members to explore what can be done to support neurodivergent individuals to access policing services and feel safe in Cardiff.

### **His Majesty's Prison & Probation Service (HMPPS) will**

- » work to create an inclusive and supportive environment for neurodivergent prisoners in Cardiff, offering a range of tailored services designed to meet their unique needs.

### **Disability Pride**

- » work in partnership to deliver Disability Pride events in Cardiff, raising awareness of disabilities and neurodivergence and celebrating difference.

### **Cardiff Hubs and Libraries will**

- » engage with neurodivergent customers to develop specialist collections that meet their needs.

### **Celebrating Neurodivergence in the Arts**

- » work in partnership to promote events that are accessible and celebrate neurodivergence and inclusion within Cardiff.

## Key Aim 6 (Page 82 - 96)

### Improving environments for neurodivergent people



We aim to promote inclusive environments across the city and work towards a Cardiff where public and community spaces are accessible for neurodivergent individuals and families.

#### **Cardiff Council will**

- » develop specialist supported housing provision for adults with autism and learning disabilities (Cardiff Council Housing)
- » create Neurodivergent Friendly Hubs and Libraries that meet the needs of our neurodivergent customers (Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff Hubs & Libraries)
- » ensure that all new developments in Cardiff are provided with the guidance relating to Strategic Policy 4 promoting inclusive and neurodivergent friendly buildings and spaces in Cardiff (Local Development Plan 2021-2036)

#### **Cardiff University Wales Autism Research Centre will**

- » conduct high quality research that makes a positive difference to autistic people, their families and the people that support them.

#### **St Davids Shopping Centre will**

- » develop a neurodivergent friendly accessibility guide, highlighting where guests can find the quiet space and resources available, improving signposting and awareness.

#### **Mermaid Quay will**

- » introduce new sensory resource backpacks that can be made available for neurodivergent individuals and families to borrow when visiting.

#### **Cardiff & Vale University Health Board (C&VUHB) will**

- » coordinate the roll out of communication boards to community venues across Cardiff & the Vale.

### **Wales Millennium Centre will**

- » engage with those who have lived experience of neurodivergence to understand the effectiveness of different initiatives and ensure they are making continuous progress.

### **The Principality Stadium will**

- » continue to provide a quiet room within the stadium and explore opportunities to create a sensory room.

### **Transport For Wales (TfW) will**

- » embed a neurodivergence policy and action plan designed to improve the experiences of our colleagues and customers who are neurodivergent.

# Strategic Context

This strategy is informed by the following legislation, plans and strategies.

## Welsh Government Neurodivergence Improvement Programme Wales



The Welsh Neurodivergence Improvement Programme was launched with the development of the Wales Autism Strategy which was published in 2008. Since then, a number of different policies and reports have been produced. The programme addresses key areas of concern identified by people involved and has established three workstreams to take forward as the priority areas:

- » Tackling urgent need
- » Building sustainable services
- » Neurodivergence infrastructure and workforce

## Autism Code of Practice/ Neurodivergence Code of Practice

The Code of Practice on the delivery of autism services came into effect on 1 September 2021. The code applies to social service functions of local authorities and health services provided by local health boards and NHS trusts. The code outlines a legal plan which organisations must adhere to.

It has been identified that there is a need to widen the code to include other neurodivergent conditions, which are often co-occurring with autism. The Neurodivergence Code of Practice is therefore currently being developed by Welsh Government.

## Cardiff and Vale University Health Board's 'Our Babies, Children & Young People Plan 2025- 2035'



Following the refresh of the 'Shaping our Future Wellbeing Strategy' Cardiff and Vale University Health Board have published a long-term plan for Babies, Children and

Young People 2025-2035. This plan outlines how they will deliver on their vision, ensuring that by 2035 every child receives equitable, high-quality care allowing them to thrive.

## **Cardiff and Vale Regional Partnership Board Joint Area Plan 2023-28**



Cardiff and Vales Regional Partnership Board includes representatives from Cardiff Council, Vale of Glamorgan Council, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust, housing, Third sector and carer representatives. The Joint Area Plan 2023-28 builds on what is already happening across the partnership and how they plan to overcome gaps and challenges identified.

## **Cardiff Council Corporate Plan 2025-2028**



Cardiff Council's Corporate Plan 2025-28 sets out how the Council will deliver its 'Stronger, Fairer and Greener' vision for Cardiff, to improve the lives of all its residents. The Corporate Plan lays out a commitment to develop a Neurodivergent Friendly Strategy to ensure services are inclusive and responsive. Support for people with learning disabilities will be strengthened, alongside a continued commitment to delivering high-quality, inclusive education for all children and young people.

## **Cardiff Council Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2024-28**

This strategy outlines Cardiff Council's plans for the next 4 years of how they will work to understand and meet the needs of diverse service users and uphold statutory duties relating to The Equality Act 2010. The Council is committed to establishing a plan to drive better outcomes for people who experience disadvantage, related to their protected characteristics or as a result of socio-economic inequality.

## **Child Friendly Cardiff Sustainability Plan**

Cardiff is proud to be recognised as the UK's first UNICEF Child Friendly City, and are determined that all children and young people are fully included in shaping and benefitting from our city.



This strategy is about making sure children and young people can enjoy all their rights, at home, in school, when accessing services, and across the city. It is not about asking children to change who they are. It is about changing the way Cardiff works to better include and celebrate everyone.

**“Inclusion isn’t optional – it’s a right.”**

## **Cardiff’s Living Well with a Learning Disability Strategy for Adults 2024-2029**



Recently, Cardiff’s “Living Well with a Learning Disability Strategy for Adults 2024-2029” was published. This strategy’s vision is to promote independence and improve the lives of people with learning disabilities in Cardiff. The strategy outlines Cardiff’s specific commitments and dedication to delivering quality services for people with learning disabilities, their families, and carers.

Its key principles are:

- » **Prevention:** Promoting prevention and early intervention.
- » **What matters to me:** Listening to and working with people jointly.
- » **To ensure high-quality care:** Developing quality services.
- » **Home first:** Supporting people to live locally.

Research has shown that people with learning disabilities may also be neurodivergent. Therefore, some key services outlined in Cardiff’s Learning Disability Strategy may be relevant for some neurodivergent individuals.

## **Corporate Parenting Strategy**

When a child or young person enters the care of the Council, the role of being a parent is taken on by the Local Authority. This is known as Corporate Parenting.

The Corporate Parenting Strategy is a three-year strategy that sets out what the Local Authority, staff and its partners all need to do as corporate parents to support our children



looked after and care leavers, to enable them to thrive and improve outcomes. It outlines a set of principles that underpin this work, and five key priorities that have been formed based on the views and experiences of some of our Children Looked After in Cardiff.

The five priorities are:

- » **Priority 1:** Improving emotional well-being and physical health
- » **Priority 2:** Better connections, improved relationships
- » **Priority 3:** A comfortable safe stable home whilst in care and after
- » **Priority 4:** Educational achievement, employment and training
- » **Priority 5:** Involving and celebrating our children and young people

The Corporate Parenting Annual Plan 2025-2026 outlines the priorities and delivery plan for the Corporate Parenting strategy for the 12 months ahead. The plan outlines specific actions, targets, and success indicators to ensure progress is made in each priority area, emphasising working together, support, and celebration of achievements.

The needs of children looked after who are neurodivergent will be captured and considered in the development and putting into action of the Corporate Parenting Strategy and Plan.

## Bilingual Cardiff

This strategy, developed in compliance with the requirements of the Welsh Language Standards (No. 1) Regulations 2015, outlines Cardiff Council's vision to develop a truly bilingual Cardiff, where bilingualism is promoted and where services are provided and delivered equally in both Welsh and English to our residents, service users and customers.

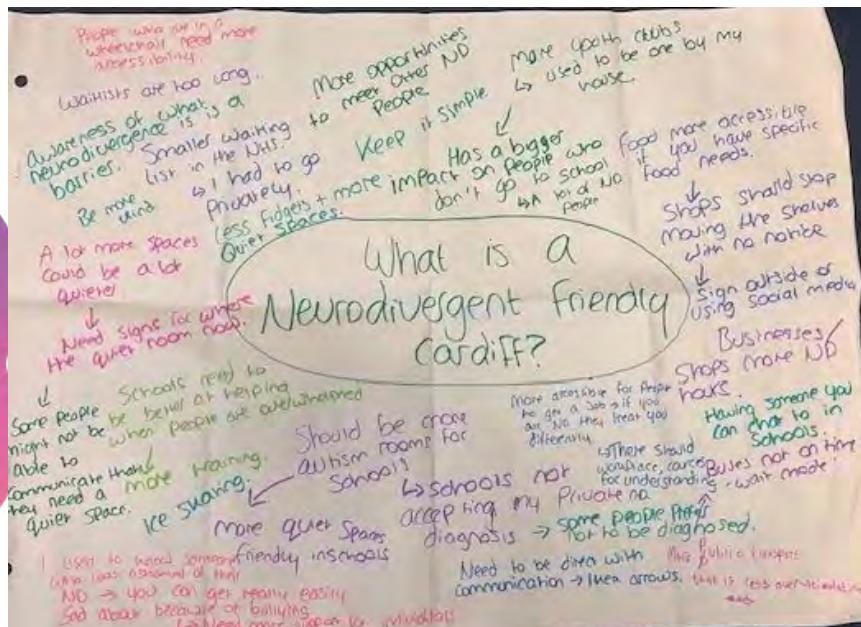


The public bodies who contributed to the Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff Strategy are also committed to meeting the requirements of the Welsh Language (Wales) Act 2011, and the Welsh Language Standards that are relevant to their own organisations.

## Listening to you:

### Consultation on the draft Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff Strategy

To help inform this strategy, every effort has been made to engage with the neurodivergent community from the very start. Between March 2024- June 2024 various activities took place to engage with people who have lived experience including; an event with over 200 citizens, a series of online focus groups targeted at neurodivergent individuals and in-person engagement with targeted groups such as NeuroRoots Youth Group, Parenting Groups and Age Friendly Cardiff Forum.



Following this initial engagement, a full consultation was launched on 18th July 2025 to get feedback on the draft Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff Strategy 2025-2030 and hear the voices of more residents in Cardiff.

Those over the age of 16 were asked to complete the 'Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff Draft Strategy Survey' (Adults survey), whilst those aged between 8 and 15 were asked to complete the 'Children's and Young Person's Survey'. To support more people to take part in the survey an Easy-Read version of the draft strategy was produced, as well as an 'Easy-Read Survey'.

Paper copies of all surveys with FREEPOST envelopes were made available at all Hubs and Libraries across Cardiff and online versions of the surveys were also available. In addition, a number of in-person and online focus groups were held during the consultation period to provide an alternative form of communication for individuals to share their views on the draft strategy.



A total of **809** responses to the public consultation surveys

**689** responses to the adult survey



**95** responses to the children & young persons survey



**25** responses to the easy read survey



Overall, **85.3%** participants agreed with the vision for a Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff.

## The Vision

**84%** of Adults told us they agreed with **the vision**



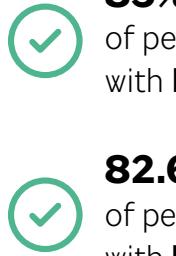
**92.5%** of children and young people told us they agreed with **the vision**



**95.2%** of people who completed the Easy Read survey told us they agreed with **the vision**

**“Sounds like a very nice idea that will make Cardiff an easier place to live for many people, and not just neurodivergent people”**

## Adult Survey:



**85%**  
of people agreed with **key aim 1**;



**84.6%**  
of people agreed with **key aim 2**;



**84.5%**  
of people agreed with **key aim 3**;

**82.6%**  
of people agreed with **key aim 4**;



**80.4%**  
of people agreed with **key aim 5**;



**81.5%**  
of people agreed with **key aim 6**;

## Children & Young Person's Survey



**94.7%**  
of young people agreed with **key aim 1**;



**88.3%**  
of young people agreed with **key aim 2**;



**87.2%**  
of young people agreed with **key aim 3**;

**89.2%**  
of young people agreed with **key aim 4**;



**89.5%**  
of young people agreed with **key aim 5**;



**86%**  
of young people agreed with **key aim 6**;

**“ It is crucial for any neurodivergent child to feel included rather than excluded which happens more often than not. ”**

**“ Neurodivergent people should not be disadvantaged and should have activities and events accessible with their needs in mind - such as quiet spaces etc. ”**

**“ I have a lot of neurodivergent friends and understand the problems they face so wish to help make their world a less confusing and noisy place ”**

**“ Celebrating neurodivergence will hopefully bring positive feedback. The more training the better for those supporting neurodivergent public ”**

**“ Managers and those in leadership roles could benefit from training as well as teachers to ensure a full understanding of the benefits of working with/for those who are neurodivergent ”**

**“ Good can this information also be displayed in community centres such as libraries and hubs so it's available to all and translated into some of the main 2nd languages spoken in Cardiff ”**

**“ Yes, but no “it's a super power” or other infantilising nonsense. We have strengths like pattern recognition, long term memory, creativity, innovation etc. Be realistic in communications. ”**

# You Said, We Did!



## Vision

**You said:** Some respondents felt that the vision of the strategy needed to go beyond 'living well'.

**We did:** The vision has been redrafted to highlight that we aim to work towards a Cardiff where neurodivergent people and families are able to live well and thrive.

## Key Aim 1

**You said:** There should be more focus on activities and support for neurodivergent adults, particularly older adults living in Cardiff.

**We did:** Work with the Cardiff Wellbeing Team to ensure that existing groups supporting older people in Cardiff are inclusive, understand neurodivergence, as well as establishing social groups for older adults who are neurodivergent.

**You said:** There needs to be more of a focus on activities for different interests, particularly in the arts.

**We did:** Bring in new partners and include commitments from The Aloud Charity, a choir group dedicated to inclusivity.

**You said:** There needed to be opportunities for children to access inclusive parks.

**We did:** Added a commitment from Cardiff Parks Service to address specific access requests where possible.

## Key Aim 2

**You said:** There needed to be improvements across school environments in Cardiff, making adjustments and creating more sensory friendly spaces.

**We did:** Include a commitment to progressing school environments across Cardiff that meet the needs of every learner.

**You said:** There should be better support and adjustments for neurodivergent people in the workplace.

**We did:** Added a commitment from Cardiff Council to create a 'Guide to Neurodivergence in the workplace' which provides clear guidance to all managers on adjustments and actions they should be taking to create a more inclusive and diverse workforce.

## Key Aim 3:

**You said:** Neurodivergent individuals, families and supporters need better access to health and wellbeing information.

**We did:** Commit to setting up Neurodivergent Wellbeing Information Points at Hubs & Libraries and Hospitals across Cardiff.

**You said:** Neurodivergent people living in Cardiff could benefit from more accessible information and advice on recycling and waste management.

**We did:** Added a commitment to develop Easy Read Waste and Recycling guides and to provide further support for those who need it.

## **Key Aim 4:**

**You said:** There needs to be more third sector involvement and recognition of the importance grassroots organisations play in supporting the neurodivergent community in Cardiff.

**We did:** Include commitments from Cardiff Third Sector Council (C3SC) to support the third sector in establishing a Neurodivergence Action Group and strengthening relationships between the third sector and statutory organisations.

## **Key Aim 6:**

**You said:** It would be good to hear about housing developments that consider Neurodivergent people.

**We did:** Added a commitment to develop a specialist supported housing provision for adults with autism and Learning Disabilities.

## **Monitoring Progress**

**You said:** There should be more transparency around how the strategy and its actions will be monitored.

**We did:** Added a section which is clear about actions we will take to monitor progress and work with partners over the 5 year period.

We are committed to working in partnership with the neurodivergent community and this strategy was developed with the ambition of being shaped by people with lived experience. We would like to thank everyone who has helped tell us what matters to them and the changes they would like to see in Cardiff. New content that has been added to the strategy following the comments made during the consultation is included at the beginning of each Key Aim and **highlighted**.

# Vision

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**“ Increase awareness and understanding of neurodivergence  
and make Cardiff a place where neurodivergent people are  
supported to live well and thrive ”**

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## Key Aim 1:

Being included and part of your community

The opportunity to form social connections is proven to improve wellbeing and help people feel a sense of purpose. Being included and part of your community helps individuals to make connections and gain emotional support. Those who are neurodivergent or with neurodivergent traits can find it difficult to make social connections due to differences in how they experience the world and a lack of understanding.

We aim to work towards a Cardiff where neurodivergent people and families are able to participate in activities and events to improve wellbeing and enrich their lives.



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**“We need to have more opportunities of bringing neurodivergent people together so people feel comfortable and that they are able to fully be themselves.”**

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**“We need to foster communities where individuals can connect with others who share similar experiences”**

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## Cardiff's Wellbeing Service

During the consultation several people raised the lack of groups to support older neurodivergent adults and spoke of their social isolation and the stigma that they had experienced as well as the impact that this has on their wellbeing. The Wellbeing Support Service are committed to working with communities to build peer groups that provide a safe space to connect and share experiences and will work to meet this need.

**We will** work with older neurodivergent people to develop groups that support their wellbeing.

## The Aloud Charity

The consultation identified that the strategy should be reflective of the different interests and include more partners in the arts. The Aloud Charity is a charity that transforms the lives of young people through song. In weekly community sessions they work with young people from school years 5-13 through a series of choirs and choral activities developing confidence, well-being and social connection. Their weekly sessions are run by highly trained music professionals alongside community volunteers who support the pastoral elements of their work, enabling them to create safe spaces where young people can be themselves without judgement.



Image provided by The Aloud Charity

**We will** offer a neurodivergent-friendly service, tailoring information and resources to suit the needs of our participants, staff and volunteers.

**We will** provide accessible information on our website to support awareness of the services we offer to neurodivergent individuals.

**We will** place information on our members portal to support those with neurodivergence to access additional advice and support beyond our services.

**We will** actively listen to young people and their families to make our work more accessible.

**We will** provide training to support staff and volunteers to develop confidence in providing safe and accessible spaces to those with neurodivergence.

## Cardiff Parks Service

Through the consultation many people said that to be a part of their community, more was needed to make spaces and environments more accessible for neurodivergent people to take part. Play is a fundamental element of personal development, supporting physical, social, and emotional growth. Cardiff Council is committed to providing accessible play opportunities to meet the needs and demands of our communities.



Accessible play opportunities contribute to the wellbeing of all children and benefit caregivers, older adults, and the wider community by fostering inclusive environments, whilst enhancing social inclusion and equitable access.

Cardiff Council Parks team is committed to continuous improvement of playgrounds and has already met several community requests to adapt play facilities to ensure that children with disabilities are able to access play opportunities. Adoptions to date have included inclusive swing seats and double width slides which are helpful for children with mobility challenges.

**We will** acknowledge the right of every child to play and remain committed to consulting with the community and addressing specific access requests wherever possible.

## Cardiff's Wellbeing Service

Cardiff Wellbeing Support Service aims to improve health and wellbeing by helping people to become more active and engaged in their community. The service provides short term, one-to-one mentoring to those that need it and help people to access the right support.

Cardiff's Wellbeing Service recruit volunteers to support the delivery of social and wellbeing groups within Hubs and Libraries across the city which are available to everyone.

An adult ADHD community group has recently been launched in partnership with the Neuronetwork, where people who have ADHD can build connections and try new activities. Dedicated officers will be engaging with neurodivergent people and unpaid carers to find out what other groups they would be interested in.



**We will** increase awareness and availability of inclusive activities that neurodivergent adults and families can engage with.

**We will** research, develop and deliver volunteer-led sessions aimed at creating a supportive space for those who are neurodivergent.

## Cardiff Youth Service

Cardiff Youth Service are committed to providing an offer of inclusive activities for neurodivergent children and young people. Cardiff Youth Service inclusive groups have been co-created with and for young people who do not feel comfortable in an open access youth club setting. This service provides young people with a safe space where they can relax, have fun, learn and socialise with young people they can relate to and have experiences in common with.



**We will** consult with young people to create needs-led inclusive groups and activities across each of our localities, expanding our offer for neurodivergent young people in Cardiff.

**We will** aim to recruit staff with lived experience and offer support and opportunities for staff personal development.

**We will** offer opportunities for neurodivergent young people and volunteers to build skills and gain experiences of work.

**We will** upskill the staff team and provide resources to support staff to provide an accessible city-wide Inclusive Youth provision offer.

## British Dyslexia Association



The British Dyslexia Association are the leading national dyslexia charity, championing a dyslexia-friendly society. A new project will bring Local Dyslexia Hubs (which will be a community and not a place) to Cardiff. The development of these communities will help people connect with others who have similar experiences in their local area.

The project aims to inform, support and empower children and adults with possible dyslexia or dyscalculia, or literacy and maths difficulties as they recognise that many people do not have a diagnosis. The project will also support those who care for those who have dyslexia or dyscalculia.

**“A Local Dyslexia Hub is all about the people! ”**

**We will** work in partnership through the South Wales Dyslexia Hub project to provide opportunities for those with lived experience of dyslexia and dyscalculia to get together, form social connections and learn about practical strategies.

**We will** provide local support to those living with dyslexia and dyscalculia in Cardiff through outreach work by South Wales Dyslexia Hub volunteers.

## ACE

The ACE Umbrella Project started in March 2023 and provides peer support for parents and families with suspected or diagnosed neurodivergence. The group meet every week and hold workshops on different topics around neurodivergence and get involved with sensory play for children.



**We will** raise awareness of the Umbrella Project by providing outreach support to schools and by working in partnership.

## Autism Spectrum Connections Cymru (ASC Cymru)

ASC Cymru provide support for diagnosed autistic individuals aged 16 and over within the Cardiff and Vale and Aneurin Bevan Health Boards. They offer support with welfare benefits, into work and limited in work support and run activity groups in Cardiff. A social drop-in session takes place every Tuesday between 1-5pm, where booking is not required. During this time, there are different activities people can get involved with depending on their mood and interests such as using their pool table, video game consoles, computers, board games, foosball table or they can just chill out and have a chat. Other groups include a creative writing group, arts and craft club and dungeon and dragons.

**We will** raise awareness of the social drop-in sessions for autistic adults and other activities they might be interested in by working with partners to share the information.

## Gig Buddies

Gig Buddies Cymru is a project provided by the charity Learning Disability Wales, dedicated to helping people with neurodivergence or learning disabilities overcome loneliness and live the lives they want. Gig Buddies Cymru pairs individuals with a volunteer who shares their interests, whether it's music, sports, culture, dining out, enjoying nature, or any other activity they choose.



## Inclusive Play Services



Cardiff Council's Children Play Services have introduced measures to ensure that play services are inclusive and the needs of neurodivergent children and families are being considered. They run 'Relaxed Play Sessions' which are aimed at catering for neurodivergent children and young people. The purpose is to widen the play opportunities for neurodivergent children.

The team are taking steps to make other sessions more inclusive, such as providing accurate information and images of the venues that sessions take place in across Cardiff.

**We will** provide the offer of 'relaxed sessions' for neurodivergent children and young people and families, who would prefer to attend quieter session.

**We will** provide dedicated sessions for children and young people with higher support needs.

**We will** adapt our open access sessions to better meet the needs of neurodivergent children attending.

**We will** work with parents and carers to identify which sessions are most suitable for their child's needs and interests and for us to provide the appropriate play support.

**We will** provide children and young people attending our relaxed sessions with more accurate information, including visuals of where the activities are taking place and what will be expected to improve accessibility.

## Single Parents Wellbeing

Single Parents Wellbeing are a peer-led group run by single parents for single parent families in Wales. They aim to reduce isolation and loneliness by hosting peer-led events, socials and workshops.



Single Parents Wellbeing are committed to creating neurodivergent friendly and welcoming environments. All of their Big Meet Up community events include a sensory space and quiet areas, they hold inclusive conversations which enable community members to talk about different diversity topics including neurodivergence and they are in the process of setting up a neurodivergent circle within the organisation, run by volunteers for neurodivergent adults and children.

**We will** always consider the accessibility of the venues that community events take place in, including for different sensory needs.

**We will** encourage active learning in our youth events and socials to suit alternative learning styles.

**We will** work with our neurodivergent volunteers at all ages to co-produce different activities for neurodivergent families in Cardiff.

**We will** explore opportunities to hold relaxed sessions which will be available for neurodivergent families.

## Cardiff Hubs and Libraries

Cardiff's Community Hubs are located across the city, providing a range of Council and partner services to local communities. There is a broad range of activities from social groups for older adults, art and craft groups, groups for people with long-term health conditions and children's groups. We want to ensure that all of these events are accessible for neurodivergent individuals, carers and family members. We recognise that opportunities are needed for people to engage with activities in a relaxed environment.

Feedback from those using our hubs & libraries services has led to the development of a 'Relaxed



Lego Group' Pilot which launched in Fairwater Hub. The aim of this group is to create a dedicated timeslot for neurodivergent families to access the Lego Club at a quieter time with a volunteer who has received training around neurodivergence.

**We will** roll out and evaluate the pilot 'Relaxed Lego Group' within Fairwater hub and explore how this could potentially be expanded across Hubs in Cardiff.

## Cardiff Met Sport

Cardiff Met Sport, working together with Cardiff and Vale Health Board, are leading the development of the Move More Physical Activity and Sport Strategy for Cardiff. The strategy envisions making Cardiff the most physically active city in the UK. They aim to make physical activity more accessible and inclusive throughout the city, with particular attention to areas of greatest need and communities that face barriers to participation. Cardiff Met Sport is especially committed to improving awareness and understanding of neurodivergence within our communities and among their staff.



**Chwaraeon Met Caerdydd**  
**Cardiff Met Sport**

**We will** signpost people to physical activity sessions and clubs identified as 'neurodivergent aware', meeting set criteria to help individuals find welcoming and inclusive environments

**We will** offer dedicated sessions for neurodivergent young people and their families, providing opportunities to engage in physical activity together across Cardiff.

**We will** enhance staff training to ensure all branding and promotional materials are inclusive, featuring appropriate imagery, language, and colour schemes.

## Disability Sport Wales (DSW)

Disability Sport Wales are working across Wales to make sport and physical activity more accessible for disabled and neurodivergent members of the community. They have created strong links with Disability Sport Wales in Cardiff to promote inclusive activities and encourage all sports clubs and activity providers in Cardiff to do more to support neurodivergent athletes. As part of their work, Disability Sport Wales have worked in partnership with Neurodivergence Wales to adapt a training workshop available for sports clubs and facilities across Wales to improve understanding and support for neurodivergent individuals accessing their services.



**We will** promote Disability Sport Wales neurodivergence resources and training to partner organisations and stakeholders.

**We will** work in partnership to consult with sport providers across Cardiff to understand current awareness of neurodivergence and work with them to address barriers.

**We will** continue to develop neurodivergence resources and training into the inclusive sport and physical activity opportunities (InSport) pathways.

**We will** raise awareness of the InSport accreditation scheme, encouraging clubs to sign up and signposting people in Cardiff to local inclusive clubs.

**We will** continue to work with educational partners to provide children with neurodivergence and disabilities opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity.

## Cardiff City Football Club Community Foundation

Cardiff City FC Community Foundation are committed to inclusion and creating opportunities for everyone through football. They provide inclusive football programmes designed to benefit neurodivergent individuals by strengthening social bonds, enhancing mental and physical wellbeing and promoting a sense of belonging within the community.



**We will** raise awareness of the inclusive kicks programme which is specifically designed for children and young people with disabilities to provide a supportive space to learn, grow and connect with peers.

**We will** provide training on neurodivergence to coaches, to enable them to create neuro-affirming and inclusive sessions.

**We will** promote and facilitate sensory-friendly matchdays with dedicated spaces for neurodivergent individuals to enjoy football in a comfortable and controlled environment.

**We will** provide opportunities for neurodivergent families to make use of the sensory room and facilities outside of matchdays.



## **Key Aim 2:**

Reaching your goals in education and employment

Educational and employment outcomes have a significant impact on wellbeing and sense of self. Our engagement highlighted the importance of everyone being given equal opportunities to thrive in education and employment to reach their full potential.



Embracing neurodivergence in education and employment attracts individuals with significant skills and talent.

We aim to work towards a Cardiff where there is improved understanding and support for neurodivergent people in education and to help them reach their goals by supporting them into employment and encouraging employers to create work environments that meet their needs.

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**“Formal education is not for everyone- for someone who is neurodivergent it can be like fitting a square peg into a round hole”**

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**“I did not feel understood or safe in School. They did not understand my differences”**

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**“It is about valuing all contributions and individuals strengths and skills”**

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**“I have left jobs because people don’t understand my communication styles, learning styles and body language”**

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## Inclusive School Design



Many comments from the consultation highlighted that there needed to be more focus on improving school environments to make them more accessible and to create inclusive learning spaces. Work is being done across Cardiff to improve school environments as part of the city's commitment to inclusive education, including a brand-new Specialist Resource Base (SRB) which has officially opened at Llanishen Fach Primary School in Rhiwbina, North Cardiff. The purpose-build facility delivered by Knox & Wells will provide much-needed places for children with severe and complex learning needs, helping Cardiff address the increasing demand for specialist provision.

Funded by the Welsh Government's Band B programme, with support from the Council's capital programme, the £4.4m development known as Dosbarth Enfys meaning Rainbow Class, offers a nurturing, fully integrated environment where diversity is celebrated and every child is supported to thrive. The new provision features custom-designed furniture, sensory rooms and physical-sensory apparatus offering safe and calming spaces for regulation. Cardiff Council is committed to meeting the increased demand for specialist placements for primary and secondary age learners. Through a range of comprehensive plans, places for learners with complex learning needs, autism spectrum conditions and emotional health and wellbeing needs continue to be expanded.

**We will** work to progress school environments that meet the needs of every learner.

## Embedding Cardiff's Inclusion Strategy in Neurodivergent Education

Cardiff's approach to creating a neurodivergent-friendly education system is fully aligned with the Cardiff Inclusion Strategy (2025), which sets out a clear vision:

**"All children and young people belong and succeed in education."**

This plan builds on the Inclusion Strategy's five areas for action, ensuring that neurodivergent learners benefit from the same commitment to belonging, equity, and success:

### » **Inclusive Practice and Belonging**

Our actions reflect the Inclusion Strategy's emphasis on embedding inclusive practice across all schools. The forthcoming Cardiff Inclusion Framework will provide a city-wide benchmark for inclusive pedagogy, incorporating initiatives such as Rights Respecting Schools, Schools of Sanctuary, and Whole School Approaches to Emotional and Mental Wellbeing. Neurodivergent-friendly practices will be integral to this framework.

### » **Adaptive Teaching and Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**

In line with Area for Action 4: Meeting the Needs of ALL Learners, we will strengthen adaptive teaching methods and promote UDL principles to ensure neurodivergent learners can access the curriculum and thrive in mainstream settings wherever possible.

### » **Continuum of Provision**

The Inclusion Strategy commits to expanding Specialist Resource Bases (SRBs) and improving pathways between mainstream and specialist provision. This plan complements that ambition by ensuring neurodivergent learners have timely access to appropriate support and environments, reducing reliance on Elective Home Education and long-term Pastoral Support Plans.

## » **Workforce Development**

Supporting neurodivergent learners requires skilled and confident staff. Our training programme will align with Area for Action 5: Supporting and Strengthening Our Workforce, embedding trauma-informed practice and inclusive approaches across all schools. Professional learning will include strategies for understanding neurodivergence and promoting positive behaviour as communication.

## » **Monitoring and Accountability**

Progress will be tracked through the mechanisms set out in the Inclusion Strategy, including the Cardiff Inclusion Board and the city-wide implementation plan. This ensures that neurodivergent inclusion is not a standalone initiative but part of Cardiff's collective responsibility for equity and belonging.

By explicitly linking this plan to the Inclusion Strategy, we ensure coherence, shared accountability, and a unified approach to making Cardiff's education system inclusive for all learners, including those who are neurodivergent.

**We will** develop a Cardiff Inclusion Framework setting out expectations for inclusive practice, building on initiatives like Rights Respecting Schools and Schools of Sanctuary.

**We will** embed collaborative planning between Inclusion Services and schools so that school improvement and inclusion are fully integrated.

**We will** ensure schools use screening tools for speech, language and communication needs and respond with strategies that support engagement and reduce challenging behaviour.

**We will** make reading a priority by rolling out professional learning to strengthen teaching of reading for all ages and abilities.

**We will** strengthen understanding and use of adaptive teaching methods so that educators can meet the needs of all learners, including those with Additional Learning Needs.

**We will** roll out Trauma Informed Practice across all schools and embed whole-school approaches to create safe, nurturing environments.

## Education Inclusion Team

The Inclusion Service aims to enable schools to identify and meet the needs of every neurodivergent learner, whether diagnosed or not, addressing any barriers to learning. The education inclusion team offers services, training and support for speech language and communication; sensory and emotional dysregulation.



They work with schools across Cardiff to offer advice and guidance on effective reasonable adjustments for learners with disabilities. The Inclusion Service strives to ensure that schools and settings are equipped to identify and support learners who may be neurodivergent, whether diagnosed or not.

**We will** work in partnership with all schools in Cardiff to roll out a framework that embeds best practices for neurodivergent learning.

**We will** offer training opportunities for teachers in Cardiff to improve understanding of neurodivergence and school environments.

**We will** hold conferences and forums with Cardiff Schools to raise awareness of inclusive school environments for neurodivergent learners.

**We will** work in partnership with the curriculum team to embed information about neurodivergence and disability inclusion across schools in Cardiff.

## Community Focused Schools

The Community Focused Schools Programme supports schools to build strong partnerships with families, respond to the needs of their community and collaborate effectively with other services. There is a strong focus on social, emotional and health needs of all learners as well as engagement with families and the wider community. Through the community focused schools model, we are able to share information about



**Our model for Community Focused Schools**

neurodivergent services for children and families directly to the school to share with young people and families across Cardiff.

**We will** share information about neurodivergent services and opportunities that young people and families can access through the schools.

**We will** support schools by working with partners to meet the needs of neurodivergent families.

**We will** pilot a parent champion programme which will aim to empower parents to share information with other members of the community about services the community can offer.

## Education Curriculum Team

The Cardiff Curriculum Team works with schools across the city to support the development of rich, broad, and inclusive learning experiences that align with the Curriculum for Wales. The Curriculum Team have actively developed, promoted, and supported enrichment opportunities tailored for neurodivergent (ND) and ALN learners across the local authority. For example, their annual Expressive Arts Theatre Festival has evolved to include specific provision for ND home-educated learners. The programme was carefully tailored to meet their sensory and communication needs while providing access to high-quality creative experiences.

The Curriculum team are committed to embedding neurodivergence awareness more explicitly within their support offer.

**We will** share resources and best practice on inclusive teaching to schools across Cardiff.

**We will** embed Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles in the curriculum that aim to create flexible learning environments.

**We will** explore on-going collaboration with partners and funding opportunities to create and deliver a specific neurodivergence awareness curriculum resource.

## Child Friendly City



Cardiff is the first city in the UK to be formally recognised as a UNICEF Child Friendly City. A child rights approach means putting the needs and experiences of neurodivergent children at the centre of everything we do. It means tackling barriers that prevent them from enjoying their rights equally, whether in schools, health services, public spaces, or in the design of services and decision-making processes. It also means making sure their voices are not just heard, but acted upon, as equal partners in change.

**“Children have the right to be heard and to see action from what they tell us”**



**We will** actively seek to listen to the voices of children and young people on inclusion within education and other important aspects of their lives, seeking their ideas and involvement, ensuring their voices are heard in conversations around neurodivergence.

## Community Adult Basic Skills:

Cardiff Hubs and Libraries now offer programmes for adults with learning disabilities, courtesy of community Adult Basic Skills (CABS-Cardiff). This was founded to help adults gain confidence and basic skills. They offer learning clubs where individuals can develop skills and confidence in a supportive environment. Various classes invite participation and contribution to a positive learning atmosphere.

**We will** roll out CABS-Cardiff to support people with neurodivergence and learning disabilities in finding and maintaining volunteer and work opportunities.

## Cardiff University Widening Participation Team



Cardiff University's Widening Participation Team work towards the vision that all students regardless of their background or personal experiences should be given the opportunity to thrive within further education. The team celebrate diversity and aim to create a truly inclusive community for students, ensuring that they address the barriers some individuals face in accessing university. They currently run the 'Discovery Programme' which offers autistic young people considering university the tools and confidence to experience university life.

**We will** continue to run the 'Discovery Programme', which offers autistic young people the chance to attend workshops designed to help them enhance their confidence and skills for their future.

**We will** offer neurodivergent prospective students and their supporters the opportunity to visit the university on a 'Quiet Visit Day'.

**We will** provide a quiet space at Open Days, and will be available to help neurodivergent visitors plan their days.

**We will** continue to explore avenues for improving access to Higher Education for neurodivergent people.

## Cardiff University Inclusive Education Framework

Cardiff University Inclusive Education Framework seeks to address inequalities in the experience and outcomes of their students due to their characteristics and backgrounds. Central to their approach is their commitment to furthering social justice through evidence-informed educational change, as well as the removal of systemic and cultural barriers and inequality. To achieve this the Inclusive Education team supports departments to embed inclusive education and offer a package of support and professional learning to develop inclusive education practices.

**We will** ensure Cardiff University staff have access to Inclusive education training and resources on neurodivergence to support their teaching.

**We will** we support Cardiff University staff through training in neurodivergence, incorporating the student view and experience of learning and studying.

## Cardiff Commitment

Cardiff Commitment is a partnership which brings together organisations and education providers, to connect children and young people to employment opportunities available.

Cardiff Commitment's work in developing flexible supported employment (FSE) pathways and training employers seeks to address barriers neurodivergent young people face in accessing employment.

Initiatives include providing work experience opportunities through the What's Next award scheme and raising employer awareness. Cardiff Commitment has a large network and provides partner training workshops for employers which encourage businesses across Cardiff to support neurodivergent people in the workplace.



**We will** work in partnership to raise awareness of the flexible supported pathways scheme (FSE) (which seeks to address barriers neurodivergent young people face in accessing employment) and encourage more businesses across Cardiff to offer this.

**We will** design and hold workshops for employers in Cardiff to improve understanding of neurodivergence in the workplace.

**We will** update the 'Whats Next' website to accurately reflect opportunities for neurodivergent young people to find employment in Cardiff and provide helpful signposting.

## Into Work

Cardiff Council Into Work Advice Service provides residents of Cardiff with a complete employment and skills package which supports people who are out of work or those wanting to upskill.

Into Work staff have received training on neurodivergence so they have an improved understanding and are better equipped to meet the needs of neurodivergent people who use their service.

In addition, there is a specific employment project to support those who are neurodivergent or have additional learning needs (ALN) into employment.

The Local Supported Employment Project (LSE) assists individuals who have additional learning needs access employment by providing one-to-one community-based support, helping to identify employment, education and training opportunities.



**We will** work in partnership to raise awareness of the Local Supported Employment scheme (LSE) to increase the number of referrals and number of people supported into employment.

**We will** offer a neurodivergent friendly Into Work service, making adjustments when needed such as easy-read documents and incorporating 'quiet hours' into Job Fairs.

## Amgueddfa Cymru

Amgueddfa Cymru, the National Museum for Wales, are committed to providing opportunities for neurodivergent people to thrive in work.

The Skills Development Placement scheme at Amgueddfa Cymru has developed to support neurodivergent individuals gain employability skills. The scheme provides a six month placement where the person will learn key skills needed for the workplace. There is a lot of flexibility within these placements and a person-centered approach is taken. Several of those who have accessed the placements have been employed at the Museum.

**AMGUEDDFA  
CYMRU**



**We will** work towards creating a more inclusive and accessible work environment for neurodivergent staff within the Museum.

**We will** create a sensory map of the building to support staff and visitors coming to the Museum, signposting to quieter areas.

**We will** roll out training on neurodivergence to staff across Amgueddfa Cymru to improve understanding of how to support neurodivergent individuals in the workplace.

## Project SEARCH

The Project SEARCH programme works in partnership with Cardiff City Council, Cardiff Commitment and Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (UHB) to offer young people with learning disabilities and / or are neurodivergent with supported internships across different departments including pharmacy, catering, switchboard and estates. This project equips those



taking part with the necessary knowledge and skills they need in order to thrive in the workplace.

**We will** increase awareness about Project SEARCH and the opportunities for people who are neurodivergent and have additional learning needs to access employment pathways.

## Careers Wales

Careers Wales are committed to improving services for neurodivergent customers and their goal is to ensure that they feel valued and well-supported. In January 2025 Careers Wales Cardiff hosted its first inclusive jobs fair event at their Careers Wales Cardiff office with the aim of celebrating neurodivergence. This event featured employers, support organisations and training providers dedicated to inclusivity. Through introducing these initiatives, Careers Wales aims to encourage and support neurodivergent individuals to pursue their career goals and increase awareness of the valuable support they can access.



**Gyra Cymru**  
**Careers Wales**



**We will** work towards creating a more accessible service for neurodivergent individuals, by making needed adjustments such as visual aids and providing an accessibility guide of the offices.

**We will** roll out initiatives to support neurodivergent people into work including inclusive jobs fairs which celebrate neurodivergence.

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

DWP are taking measures to create neurodivergent friendly job centres and improve training and understanding. As part of this, their autism friendly champions are currently working to improve signage across their centres, including desk numbering, building wayfinding and directory signs. The new signage will be more inclusive, ensuring that neurodivergent customers are able to locate and navigate their environments with ease, as well as everyone else.

In addition, DWP are also working to ensure that their events and job fairs are accessible. This includes providing quieter time slots, private rooms and offering the opportunity to meet with a member of staff to offer support during the event.

All Jobcentre staff are Autism Aware trained and are briefed before events to be conscious of and prepared to support individuals.



**We will** continue to work with partners who provide supported pathways to employment offering specialist advice for neurodivergent individuals looking for employment.

**We will** work towards creating neurodivergent friendly environments and making Jobcentres across Cardiff more inclusive for neurodivergent individuals.

**We will** take measures to create inclusive and accessible events for neurodivergent people including providing quieter time slots, private rooms and the opportunity to meet with a member of staff who can provide support during the event.

## Supporting neurodivergent people in work

Supporting neurodivergent people to reach their goals goes beyond education and supporting them to access employment. It is important that in Cardiff we create inclusive work environments and neurodivergent people are supported and given reasonable adjustments to help them to thrive within the workplace.

Employee staff networks are a great way to promote neurodivergence across an organisation and create a neurodivergent community to offer support, information and lobby for change where needed. Cardiff Council, South Wales Police, South Wales Fire and Rescue Service as well as private sector organisations such as the BBC have all set up Neurodivergent Employee networks and communities.

## Wales Ambulance Service; PurpleSpace Employee network

The Welsh Ambulance Service have developed the PurpleSpace People Network which offers a safe space for staff who are neurodivergent, and campaigns for better support for staff in terms of reasonable adjustments in the workplace. Their People Services Team are working to increase the capacity for flexible and hybrid working patterns to accommodate the needs of individuals.

Their Estates and Facilities Team are also reviewing the accessibility of our fleet and workspaces to improve workforce experience. The network also provides peer support and a platform for sharing lived experiences to help others feel seen, heard, and understood.



## Cardiff Council

Cardiff Council are committed to supporting neurodivergent staff and creating neuro-affirming work environments. Cardiff Council is creating a 'Guide to Neurodivergence in the Workplace' to provide information, support and practical advice about neurodiversity to managers and employees to ensure our workplace is inclusive for all. The guide outlines ways to make the recruitment process as inclusive as possible, a work adjustment process as well as ways to support colleagues.

Caerdydd sy'n Deall  
**Nirowahaniaeth**  
**Neurodivergent**  
Friendly Cardiff



Fy hoff ddulliau cyfathrebu yw e-bost, Microsoft Teams, cyfarfodydd sydd wedi'u trefnu ymlaen llaw / My preferred methods of communication are by Email, Microsoft Teams and pre-arranged meetings.

Mae'n well gen i wybod pwnc cyfarfodydd o flaen llaw / I prefer to know the subject of meetings in advance.

To help create a more neurodivergent-aware culture within Cardiff Council, we've created a new Neurodivergent Friendly email signature which can be added to an existing email signature, so that staff are able to share their communication preferences with those they're working with. The signature template is customisable and staff can use it in the best way for them.

**We will** continue to engage and work closely with the Neurodivergent Employee Community to identify how we can meet the needs of neurodivergent staff.

**We will** improve staff awareness of Neurodivergence by rolling out and promoting an 'Understanding Neurodiversity' e-learning module, which will be available for all Cardiff Council employees.

**We will** create a 'Neurodivergence in the Workplace Guide' outlining inclusive management practices, which will be shared widely across Cardiff Council staff and to all line managers.

**We will** proactively share useful resources about supporting neurodivergent people in the workplace to organisations and professionals across Cardiff, encouraging them to embed a neuro-affirming approach.

## Neurodivergent Employee Community

Cardiff Council's Neurodivergent Employee Community offers opportunities for employees who identify as Neurodivergent to meet and talk about issues that are important to them. They also raise awareness and provide community talks.



## Key Aim 3:

### Accessing information you can trust

A barrier for neurodivergent people and families getting the support they need is access to updated and accessible information about services in their local area. Access to relevant and correct information can help people make informed decisions about their health and wellbeing and support them to live fulfilling lives. Many people who are neurodivergent may not have or wish to have a diagnosis. Therefore, it is important that information is available for everyone, on all forms of neurodivergence, regardless of whether or not they have a diagnosis.

We aim to work towards ensuring that neurodivergent people, parents, family members and unpaid carers have improved access to information and advice relating to services and support available.



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**“Accessing information can be challenging and difficult to navigate”**

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**“We need to think about sharing information in a more proactive way”**

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not overwhelming			
current research	professional experience		
lived experience	reasonable adjustments		
quality research	peer reviewed	inclusive	
different formats	broaden opportunities		
patience	easy to find	different learning styles	
no jargon	inclusion	clear	
show care	easy read	its easy to understand	
centralised	good formats	not patronising	
clarity	specificity	coproduced	
easy to use	Inclusive	ensure its person-centred	
			different communication n

## Neurodivergent Information Points

Through the consultation many people highlighted that there was a need for more information about wellbeing services to support neurodivergent adults and families. Whilst there was support for the website, some people stated that the information needed to be more visible and available in different formats. In response to this, we will create 'Neurodivergent Information Points' which will be visible dedicated areas people can go to find various information relating to neurodivergence, wellbeing and support services. These information points will be made available in all Hubs and Libraries in Cardiff, as well as in healthcare settings in Cardiff such as Hospitals. This is an effective non-digital means for the distribution of information, and will be closely monitored and reviewed to understand the types of information people are picking up, so that information can be tailored.



**We will** set up 'Neurodivergent Information Points' across all Hubs and Libraries in Cardiff and across select healthcare settings.

## Recycling Strategy and Engagement Team

Some neurodivergent people can experience unique challenges with recycling waste. These difficulties don't come from a lack of care about the environment, but from how neurodivergent brains process information, sensory input, and executive tasks. During engagement that took place during the development of this Strategy some citizens told us that they experienced anxiety and confusion regarding recycling rules.

Cardiff Council recognises these challenges and is committed to making Waste Collections and the



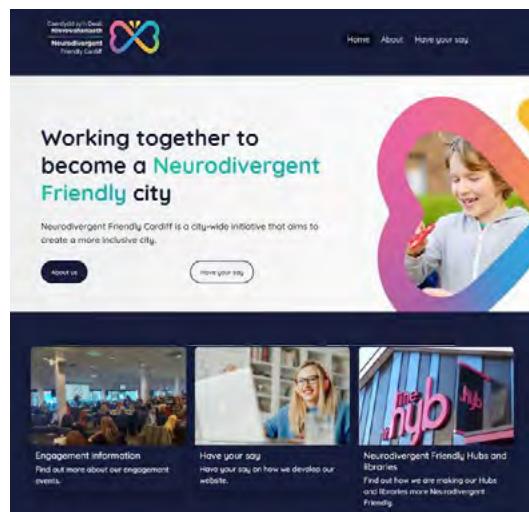
recycling process accessible to everyone. The Waste team are able to provide face to face visits to people at home, phone support and will also liaise with family members or friends to help citizens with any challenges.

Following the comments received in the consultation the team will now be working on the development of Easy Read guides to support neurodivergent people to manage their household Waste.

**We will** increase the accessibility of Waste collections through the development and launch of Easy Read Waste and Recycling guides.

## Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff Website

Our aim is to bring together information that is relevant to neurodivergent people and their families, in one centralised location, making it easier to navigate and find information about services that can help. Our website will be designed in collaboration with neurodivergent adults, young people and families within Cardiff, through consultation and targeted engagement, ensuring that it reflects the needs of the community.



**We will** develop a Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff website, with the aim of bringing local information together in a centralised location that is easy to navigate.

**We will** engage with neurodivergent adults, children and young people, as well as parents, unpaid carers and family members, in Cardiff on the development of a Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff website.

**We will** carry out user testing on the website to ensure that it is accessible and easy to navigate.

**We will** work with partners to provide accurate and up to date information about services, inclusive groups and support available for neurodivergent individuals and families in Cardiff.

**We will** include information about services for different forms of neurodivergence, particularly where there are information gaps, including dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, dyspraxia, Tourettes Syndrome and acquired neurodivergence.

### Cardiff Council easy-to-read website:

Cardiff Council is currently working with key stakeholders to develop a new easy-to-read website. To learn from best practices, background research into other local authority areas has been conducted. Videos have also been developed to enhance accessibility and help people learn about key services.

**We will** work to make information about key services more accessible to everyone by developing an easy-to-read Cardiff Council Website.

### Cardiff Family Advice and Support Website and The Index



Cardiff Family Advice and Support are working to update their website to ensure that families across the city have quick and easy access to a broad range of information for those seeking support.

The website hosts 'The Index' which is Cardiff's voluntary register for children and young people with disabilities, neurodivergence or additional needs. Families can sign up to the register via the site to receive regular e-bulletins about services, events and activities. Work will continue to take place with partners to ensure that the families of babies, children and young people with disabilities, neurodivergence or additional needs are able to access the most up to date and relevant information for them.

**We will** develop an updated and more accessible website to provide information and advice to parents, carers and families in Cardiff.

**We will** explore ways to make the Index Bulletin more engaging and accessible for families in Cardiff.

## Dewis Cymru



DEWIS is a website that aims to help people access local support services in Wales and find the information and advice they need to improve their wellbeing. Cardiff Council and Vale of Glamorgan Council are working collaboratively to improve the sustainability, ongoing development and maintenance of DEWIS as an information portal for the region.

**We will** work in partnership to make it easier to search for services and inclusive activities for neurodivergent adults and young people in Cardiff.

## Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff Social Media

Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff social media platform on X was launched in 2024 to share information about events and key updates on the progress of Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff. As Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff grows, we aim to expand our reach through social media and use it as an additional form of communication with the neurodivergent community and partner organisations.

**We will** roll out social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram to expand the reach of engagement with the neurodivergent community in Cardiff and promote the work of Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff.

## Neurodivergent Friendly Forum

We intend to launch a Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff Forum with representation from neurodivergent community members, parents and carer groups, third sector organisations and key stakeholders. This will provide an opportunity for those from the community to contribute to Cardiff Council and partner initiatives, consultations and campaigns. This forum will also serve as an opportunity to share key information relating to neurodivergent services, activities and events with representatives from the community directly. The forum will alternate between meeting in-person and online, providing different opportunities for those with lived experience to be involved.

**We will** establish a Neurodivergent Friendly Forum that meets every quarter and be chaired by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff, Cllr Leonora Thomson.



## Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff Newsletter

A Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff Newsletter will be launched which will be a quarterly publication designed to inform, support, and empower neurodivergent individuals and their families. Each issue will feature positive news stories, highlighting achievements and inclusive initiatives that celebrate neurodivergence. The newsletter will also provide practical information and advice, offering guidance on navigating education, employment, and daily life with neurodivergent needs in mind. A core focus will be on tackling stigma and raising awareness of neurodivergence, fostering a more inclusive and understanding society. By amplifying neurodivergent voices and sharing resources, this newsletter will serve as a valuable tool for connection and improving understanding.

**We will** develop a quarterly newsletter on information, advice and support available for neurodivergent people in Cardiff.

**We will** work in partnership to roll out Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff newsletter to community venues across Cardiff.

**We will** use the newsletter to highlight the experiences of people with different lived experiences that reflect our diverse communities in Cardiff.

## Digital Screens in Hubs

Cardiff Hubs and Libraries have installed 17 digital screens which replicate the GP surgery screen model and promote messaging ensuring people can access health information from trusted sources. Flat screens have been placed in prominent positions within Hubs where visitors can view public health and other important public messages whilst they are in the buildings using the Hub services.



**We will** ensure we are sharing information and advice relating to neurodivergence services in Cardiff and the Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff initiative on the digital screens.

## Events

On 19th March 2024, Cardiff Council held an event, bringing together professionals, partners and the neurodivergent community to start the journey of working towards a Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff. The event had lots of positive feedback that it was a great way to find out information about local services available. We invited organisations to set up stalls to provide helpful information about services they provide for neurodivergent individuals and families.

The event also showcased expert speakers, many with lived experiences of neurodivergence highlighting some of the progress we need to be working towards. By holding events we are able to shine a light on the work Cardiff is doing in working towards becoming a neurodivergent friendly city.



**We will** work in partnership to put on more events within Cardiff to raise awareness and celebrate neurodivergence and share information.

**We will** use the Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff platform to raise awareness about other events that have a focus on neurodivergence and make these events more visible.

**We will** ensure these events are as neurodivergent friendly and accessible as possible.

## Neurodivergence Wales

Neurodivergence Wales are the national team for Neurodivergence across Wales. Their website provides an array of helpful resources and information for neurodivergent individuals, parents and carers, families and professionals.

Previously Autism Wales, they are aiming to update and review their resources and provide more information and training on neurodivergence more broadly. They are currently working on a project to create a film explaining what is meant by neurodivergence and explain different terminology.

Whilst Neurodivergence Wales are a national team, they work closely with partners in Cardiff to improve understanding and awareness of neurodivergence and how organisations can become more inclusive. All resources the Neurodivergence Wales Team produce are co-produced with those who have lived experience.

**We will** work in partnership to promote the resources available and encourage organisations across Cardiff to improve their understanding of neurodivergence.



**We will** signpost those with lived experience of neurodivergence to helpful resources and information which might improve their own understanding of neurodivergence and the support available.

## Key Aim 4:

Supporting the health and wellbeing of neurodivergent people and families

Neurodivergent individuals can face a wide variety of challenges in day-to-day life relating to communication, sensory processing and executive functioning.

Neurodivergent individuals often have different needs and experiences, and the challenges that some people face aren't necessarily faced by others.

We aim to work towards a Cardiff where the health and wellbeing needs of neurodivergent people and their families are supported.



**“Accessing support is extremely difficult”**

**“Having to have a diagnosis is a barrier to support”**

**“Neurotypicals think we are all in a box and we all need the same support”**



## Cardiff Third Sector Council (C3SC)



The consultation identified that there needed to be more third sector involvement and recognition of the importance grassroots organisations play in supporting the neurodivergent community in Cardiff. C3SC are committed to supporting third sector organisations to better meet diverse needs, including the needs of neurodivergent people who face barriers to accessing mainstream services by fostering and developing community-led solutions. This will be achieved by:

- » Increasing the resilience and effectiveness of local provision through training, advice and guidance in good governance, sustainable funding, and inclusive volunteer recruitment.
- » Sharing expertise and understanding across the sector by facilitating peer learning.
- » Placing service users' voices at the centre of design and delivery through effective engagement and involvement.

C3SC also play a vital role in strengthening relationships between third sector organisations and statutory services to support the development of integrated service pathways.

**We will** establish and coordinate a Neurodivergence Action Group, enabling third sector organisations to share experiences, develop joint advocacy positions, and shape services that address unmet needs.

**We will** collate evidence from across the sector to ensure neurodivergent voices inform strategy and service development.

**We will** support organisations to design and secure funding for initiatives that remove barriers and empower neurodivergent people to thrive.

**We will** advocate with Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, Cardiff Council, Welsh Government, and other partners for investment in preventative, community-based, recovery-oriented services—co-produced with people who have lived experience.

## Public Health Wales: Breast Screening Project

Through our consultation it was highlighted that many neurodivergent people face barriers accessing healthcare services due to a lack of information, fear of what to expect and inaccessible healthcare environments. In Wales, some work is ongoing to address these barriers and Public Health Wales are working with Health Board Public Health teams and screening and inequalities group to ensure that information about screening is accessible. 'What to expect' videos provide an inclusive and supportive way to show people what screening involves and to break down barriers to participation. This work has started with Breast Test Wales, with a video being launched on their website and shared through social media.



This short video helps people understand what breast screening is and why it is important. It guides you through the screening journey, showing how a breast X-ray (mammogram) is taken and tells you about the range of support that is available.

## Cardiff and Vale Recovery & Wellbeing College

Cardiff and Vale Recovery & Wellbeing College is the first NHS peer-led and co-produced service within the Cardiff and Vale University Health Board. They provide free educational and wellbeing courses around mental health and physical health conditions, which are available to everyone. All courses are co-designed and facilitated by health professionals and peer trainers (individuals with lived experience), providing a balance of lived and learnt knowledge.

The Recovery and Wellbeing College currently provides a course called



'Understanding Neurodiversity'. This course provides the opportunity to explore understanding, knowledge and experiences of neurodiversity. This course introduces subjects such as identity, sensory processing, executive function, communication, as well as exploring the possible impacts on an individual's mental health.

**We will** share information about the 'Understanding Neurodiversity' course to those with lived experience and professionals to improve their understanding of neurodivergence and the support that is available by promoting through our partnerships.

**We will** provide all course participants with information and advice on support that is available for neurodivergent individuals and families.

## Cardiff and Vale Regional Partnership Board (RPB)

The Regional Partnership Board includes representatives from Cardiff Council, Vale of Glamorgan Council, Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust, housing, third and independent sectors and carer representatives.



One of the programmes of work outlines the commitment to ensure people who are neurodivergent receive the right support at the right time. This work will build on existing service provision by strengthening support, improving provision as well as monitoring the implementation of the Autism Code of Practice, and implementing the anticipated new Neurodivergence Code of Practice.

An annual Delivery Plan is overseen by a newly created strategic Neurodivergence board which will be responsible for improving services and support for neurodivergent people and their families in Cardiff and the Vale.

**We will** support a strategic Neurodivergence Board to enable better partnership working across the region.

**We will** support a shift towards a system that better meets the needs of people who are neurodivergent.

**We will** deliver on the key priority areas of the Neurodivergence Delivery Plan.

## Cardiff & Vale University Health Board Neurodevelopmental Service



Cardiff and Vale University Health Board's Neurodevelopmental Service supports children and young people (0-18 years olds) with neurodevelopmental needs and specialises in the delivery of comprehensive assessments to identify individual strengths and challenges, with the aim of providing accurate diagnoses and tailored recommendations. Specialist assessments are provided for children and young people who may present with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), and Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD). They are a multidisciplinary team that includes paediatricians, psychiatrists, pharmacists, specialist nurses, psychologists, occupational therapists, and speech and language therapists and this service is based at St David's Hospital Children's Centre and Llandough Hospital Children's Centre.

This service can be vital in the early stages of support as they:

- » Deliver expert diagnostic input for neurodevelopmental conditions
- » Offer practical advice and strategies to support children at home, in school, and in the community
- » Collaborate closely with families, schools, healthcare professionals, and other services to ensure a holistic and integrated approach to care

Where ongoing or specialist support is needed, they guide families toward the most appropriate services and resources to promote continuity of care and best possible outcomes for each child. This includes:

- » Emotional Explorers, a psychoeducation workshop series for families following an ASD diagnosis
- » Occupational Therapist-led psychoeducation sessions for parents, focusing on sensory and functional needs
- » A planned webinar to provide information and guidance around ADHD and if appropriate, they start medication and follow up

Support is based on individual circumstances, for example those attending special schools or those aged 17 and over may follow adapted assessment pathways. They also provide consultation and liaison support to other services such as Enfys and the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health team.

Referrals are accepted from schools, nurseries, other clinical professionals and GPs and are triaged through a Single Point of Access (SPOA) team to make sure each child, or young person is directed to the most appropriate pathway for assessment or support. The service will contact the parent, or carer and the forms gather information about the home and school setting. A referral pack is available that includes all the information required.

Unfortunately, due to significant increase in demand over the last few years, there are long waiting lists for the service. The team is working hard to provide support as early as possible, and this might include signposting to different services whilst waiting. It is not possible to give an exact time to anyone on how long they will be waiting, and they know how difficult this can be to everyone involved and understanding of this situation is valued. You will find all the information on the CAV Young Neuro Development - Children, Young People and Families website explaining what is required and every effort will be made to ensure that parents and carers are kept informed.

**We will** stay committed to a “No Wrong Door” approach to ensure most appropriate support regardless of the entry point into the system.

**We will** guide families towards the most appropriate support and resources to help ensure the best possible outcomes for each child.

**We will** continue to focus on reducing waiting lists in the face of increasing demand and the absence of additional capacity.

**We will** provide comprehensive assessments that identify strengths as well as challenges with tailored recommendations.

**We will** work hard despite high demand to keep people informed each step of the process.

## Cardiff and Vale Integrated Autism Service (IAS)

The Cardiff and Vale Integrated Autism Service is a specialist multi-disciplinary adult autism service. The IAS provide diagnostic assessments of autism for adults; individual and group interventions; group and individual support to parents and carers of autistic adults; and autism training, consultation, and advice to professionals working with autistic people. The IAS is an NHS service that works closely with partner organisations.

The demand for diagnostic assessments continues to increase and outweigh capacity. The service has introduced a triage assessment process, which they successfully piloted for a year from September 2022. The service is now able to divert those who do not need a full assessment, but also to offer a 'fast track' process to those who have needs which require their assessment to be expedited.



Over the past few years the IAS have focussed on improving the range of groups and workshops they offer based on feedback from autistic adults and carers and now run a full group and workshop programme. The groups include: Autism Post-diagnostic Course; Emotion Regulation; Autism & Sleep, Social Communication; and Understanding Behaviour (for carers). The workshops include: Understanding Autism and the Senses; Executive Functioning; Living a Balanced Life; Energy Accounting; and Introduction to Autism (for carers). They also offer an Autism Hub once a month at Cardiff Central Library Hub.

**We will** continue to streamline the diagnostic assessment process in the face of ongoing demand in the absence of additional capacity.

**We will** focus on training delivery within the Health Board, particularly across the Mental Health Directorate, and increase the offering of advice and consultation to partner organisations.

**We will** work collaboratively with people with lived experience to help shape our services.

## Cardiff Council – Neurodiversity Team Adult Services

The Neurodiversity Team was set up in Adult Social Services in September 2023 with the aim of undertaking assessments of individuals with neurodivergent diagnoses. This includes autism, ADHD and Tourettes and/or Tic disorder who have care and support needs related to their neurodivergence. The team also work with those on the autism diagnostic pathway where it is evident that their care and support needs relate to neurodivergence. They provide advice and support in partnership with individuals and their families to meet their identified needs.



Since setting up they have developed positive working relationships with a number of services enabling them to provide appropriate packages of care and support for individuals. This has included identifying and commissioning residential placements, supported living placements and domiciliary care. The team are committed to supporting neurodivergent individuals to live as independently as possible in their communities and to engage with local activities.

**We will** work to increase staffing with recruitment of a new social worker role to reduce waiting times for assessment.

**We will** work in partnership to create links with more specially trained domiciliary care agency staff.

**We will** work with housing partners to increase access to accommodation with care and support on-site models of accommodation.

**We will** engage with partners to embed the views of neurodivergent individuals at the centre of the services we develop.

## Llygad E-Pats Programme

Llygad is the Early Years Experience Team for children with emerging learning disability or atypical development, within Cardiff and the Vale Health Board. Early Positive Approaches to Support (E-PATS) is an 8-week programme for families raising a young child (five years and under) with a learning



and/ or developmental disability. Developed and delivered by both professionals and carers working together, it provides an opportunity for families to connect with other families who have lived experience.

**We will** work in partnership to increase awareness of the E-Pats programme so that more families are offered support and the ability to connect with other families with lived experience.

## Cygnet Parenting Programme & The Parent Factor Project



Cardiff Parenting services have been awarded Autism Understanding and Accepting Organisation status by Neurodivergence Wales and will be working towards the National Autistic Society (NAS) Inclusion Award. Cardiff Parenting run a Cygnet Parenting programme which is for parents or carers of children on the autistic spectrum aged from 5 years to 18 years old. The programme is designed to increase parents' understanding of autistic spectrum conditions, provide ideas and practical solutions to some of the challenges that may be faced by parents and give parents the opportunity to meet with other parents who have had similar experiences, to gain support and learn from each other.

Cardiff Parenting will also be rolling out The Parent Factor (ADHD) which is an 8-week course, for parents or carers of children aged 5-16 with ADHD. Delivered by fully trained and experienced facilitators who provide support, advice and skills, the project aims to empower parents to increase knowledge and understanding of ADHD and have the opportunity to share experiences with other parents and carers.

**We will** continue to provide the Cygnet parenting programme for parents of children who are autistic, using schools, Hubs and community venues across Cardiff.

**We will** roll out 'The Parent Factor' which is a course to support the parents of children with ADHD, using schools, Hubs and community venues across Cardiff.

**We will** work towards achievement of the National Autistic Society (NAS) Community Programmes Inclusion Award.

## Sensory Ambulances

The Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust have undertaken work to further their understanding of how ambulance environments impact on people with sensory difficulties, dementia and other cognitive disabilities. Findings from research undertaken have identified that creating more optimal environments for different patient groups including improving elements such as lighting, noise and colours, accompanied with further training for staff, will provide a more person-centered service. Following this research there is scope for testing and implementing some of these initiatives, including:

- » Testing of pictures on vehicles for distraction
- » A review of noises inside the vehicle to explore changes
- » Changes to flooring, colours, lighting options and other design features inside the vehicle

**We will** work with others across the Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust to identify and test interventions that will improve experiences and outcomes for those with sensory difficulties and dementia.



## Key Aim 5:

Being understood and celebrating difference

We know that neurodivergent people have many strengths and unique ways of thinking that benefit our communities and workplaces. However, due to a lack of understanding and misinformation, neurodivergent individuals and families are often met with stigma and assumptions being made. This lack of understanding can have a direct impact on personal well-being. In order to create a successful and thriving city, it is essential that we do more to celebrate the neurodivergent community, raise awareness and improve understanding.

We will raise awareness of the strengths and contribution of neurodivergent people in Cardiff, challenging stigma and working towards a city where all neurodivergent people are understood and valued.



**“Every neurodivergent person is different”**

**“There is a lack of awareness of neurodivergence and pre-conceived ideas”**

**“I struggle with mainstream spaces due to the attitudes of other people so this is what needs to change”**

**“People treat you differently, based on stereotypes”**



## Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff

Many people highlighted the importance of working directly with the neurodivergent community and those with lived experience to help shape the public communications.

To raise awareness of neurodivergence and tackle misinformation, we will participate in awareness campaigns, community engagement, and partner initiatives. Through events and outreach, we will encourage open conversations and promote understanding among individuals and organisations. By collaborating with those with lived experience we can work to address misinformation, encourage inclusive practices and create a more informed and supportive society in Cardiff.

**We will** celebrate all neurodivergent people and improve public awareness and understanding of neurodivergence.

**We will** engage with people with lived experience to help shape city-wide communications aiming to raise awareness of neurodivergence and tackle stigma.

**We will** develop and share accurate, accessible resources that highlight the diversity of neurodivergent experiences, challenging stereotypes and misconceptions.

**We will** work with partners to raise awareness of different forms of neurodivergence.



## South Wales Fire & Rescue Service

South Wales Fire & Rescue Service are committed to acknowledging and catering for the diverse needs within the community, so they can access the services they need. Their Strategic Equality Plan 2023-2026 references measures they will take to ensure that their staff have the right policies, tools and processes to ensure equity within the workplace. By capturing data from Neurodiversity Assessments and Work with Me Passports, they have identified that there has been an increase in reasonable adjustment requests, highlighting the need to ensure they are meeting the needs of neurodivergent individuals within the workforce and community.

South Wales Fire and Rescue Service have introduced their 'Step Forward Transformation Programme' which includes an area of work around Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion and Equality (DICE) with a specific focus on neurodivergence.

**We will** evaluate processes to support accessibility, including recruitment, promotion and reasonable adjustments.

**We will** support and promote the Neurodiversity Staff Network and work collaboratively with the network including during consultation exercises and procedures.

**We will** share positive messaging about neurodivergence across the Fire Service and raise awareness of the support available for staff during Neurodiversity Celebration Month.

## South Wales Police

South Wales Police have a strong commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and want to ensure that all staff, officers and volunteers are represented and feel supported. They have a range of staff associations and networks to support not only those who work for South Wales Police but also supporting them as an organisation in the decisions they make.



Gwasanaeth Tân ac Achub  
De Cymru  
South Wales  
Fire and Rescue Service



SOUTH WALES  
**POLICE**  
HEDDLU  
DE CYMRU

The Neurodiversity Network was formed to raise awareness of neurodivergence within South Wales Police and to be a point of support for neurodivergent colleagues or those who may be supporting people with neurodivergence. They aim to increase awareness of neurodivergence across the Police Force by carrying out a range of webinars, catch-ups and inputs for other teams and departments around neurodivergence. Additionally, South Wales Police trained a number of staff as Neurodiversity Advocates to improve understanding and support colleagues across the police force.

**We will** work closely with the Neurodiversity Network to improve understanding of neurodivergence and adjustments that can be made across the force.

**We will** roll out targeted training on neurodivergence to teams who are public facing within South Wales Police.

**We will** raise awareness about schemes that can support neurodivergent individuals accessing policing services such as the Keep Cymru Safe Card scheme.

**We will** engage with the Neurodiversity Network and neurodivergent community members to explore what can be done to support neurodivergent individuals to access policing services and feel safe in Cardiff.

## Cardiff Youth Justice Service

Cardiff Youth Justice Service are a partnership made up of key staff from partner agencies including South Wales Police, Wales Probation Trust, Children's Services, Careers Wales and Health, to provide intervention and support for young people and their families. The aim of the partnership is to prevent anti-social behaviour, offending and re-offending by young people aged 10-17. They also offer support to victims of youth crime and anti-social behaviour.

70% of the young people they support have additional learning needs and have needs relating to neurodivergence. All young people who are referred are assessed by a speech and language therapist, who has specialist knowledge to be able to identify the individual needs of the young person and the family. They work with

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SERVICES

the young person directly, provide support to the family and when needed they will provide assessments back to the school.

Cardiff Youth Justice Service has identified that children may be criminalised due to their neurodivergence and differences in how they interact with the world around them. They take a preventative approach to support these young people. They work closely with young people with high needs in residential homes, providing restorative support. They also work closely with schools to identify children who are at risk of exclusion by providing needs assessments for young people and specialist interventions through their speech and language therapist.

A wider Youth Justice Service Management Board have oversight of Cardiff Youth Justice Service, creating close links with other public services. A new memorandum of understanding has been created to improve partnership working with health, which includes reference to working with young people who are neurodivergent. Additionally, a health worker provides a single point of contact for young people and families that have health needs and concerns.

**We will** upskill staff understanding of neurodivergence by working with the speech and language therapist to deliver training to the wider team.

**We will** work in partnership with a focus on prevention and supporting children and young people with additional learning needs and neurodivergence.

**We will** provide specialist interventions and needs-based support for all young people who are referred to Cardiff Youth Justice Service.

## His Majesty's Prison & Probation Service (HMPPS)

His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) Wales are committed to fostering an inclusive environment for neurodivergent prisoners and people on probation which supports rehabilitation, and equity of outcomes.



HMP Cardiff ensures that neurodivergent individuals are equipped with the tools and support they need to thrive, both within HMP Cardiff and beyond. This includes providing practical tools such as overlays, reader pens and offering direct 1-1

support to assist with reading and comprehension, as well as the introduction of a dedicated Neurodiversity Support Manager.

**We will** work to create an inclusive and supportive environment for neurodivergent prisoners in Cardiff, offering a range of tailored services designed to meet their unique needs.

### **Cardiff Probation Delivery Unit (PDU)**

The Probation team in Cardiff recognise the importance of creating a welcoming environment and tailoring provision to meet the needs of neurodivergent people on probation, so have introduced several resources at the Cardiff Office which provides a calming environment for people on probation whilst they wait for their appointment.

**We will** continue to work with 3SC to offer mentoring for neurodivergent people on probation, and training to staff to improve their understanding and skills.

**We will** work with the nominated Single Point of Contact (SPOC) who attends the Cardiff Neurodiversity Sub-Group to improve understanding and share good practice.

### Disability Pride

Whilst not every neurodivergent person will identify as disabled, Disability Pride is an important aspect of celebrating those in Cardiff who are neurodivergent and those who have other disabilities. Disability Pride Month happens every July and has been celebrated in the UK since 2015. Disability Pride gives us the opportunity to raise awareness of disabilities and neurodivergence and start positive conversations about diversity. In 2024 and 2025, Scope, working with other disability organisations, have led the way by hosting multiple events to celebrate Disability Pride in Cardiff, including an event in the



Senedd, a disability art exhibition in Central Library Hub and an inclusive cycle ride in partnership with Pedal Power.

**We will** work in partnership to deliver Disability Pride events in Cardiff, raising awareness of disabilities and neurodivergence and celebrating difference.

## Cardiff Hubs and Libraries

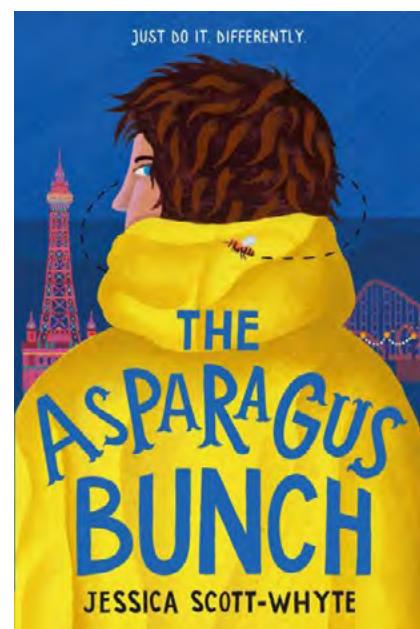
The Hubs & Libraries strategy identified through consultation that books that support neurodivergent adults and children are needed across the city. Although there are currently some resources available, a full review and new approach to collection development will be carried out, celebrating neurodivergent authors and stories.

**We will** engage with neurodivergent customers to develop specialist library collections that meet their needs.



## Celebrating Neurodivergence in the Arts

For the first time in Cardiff the Millennium Centre BBC Hoddinott Hall held a concert for the National Open Youth Orchestra in May 2025. The Orchestra is made up of sixteen brilliant disabled and non-disabled musicians who performed contemporary classical music. This was designed to be a relaxed performance that is suitable for all including neurodivergent and disabled audiences, and families. This has been designed to welcome neurodivergent and disabled audiences in a more informal atmosphere, where members are free to



come and go from the concert hall as needed. This includes relaxed seating with bean bags and a Chill Out area outside the concert hall.

**We will** work in partnership to promote events that are accessible and celebrate neurodivergence and inclusion within Cardiff.



## Key Aim 6:

### Improving environments for neurodivergent people

Our engagement identified that many neurodivergent people and families face difficulties accessing buildings and environments across Cardiff due to multi-sensory differences and lack of adjustments being made. We want to work towards a Cardiff where the needs of neurodivergent individuals and families are taken into consideration across all aspects of society, including how we can make spaces across the city more friendly and accessible.

We aim to promote inclusive environments across the city and work towards a Cardiff that seeks to improve accessibility of public spaces for neurodivergent individuals and families.



**“There aren’t enough venues that provide an accessible environment”**

**“We need to provide reassurance that there are safe and quiet spaces available”**

**“The main barrier in public buildings is noise and crowds”**

## Cardiff Council Housing

Through the consultation, some people highlighted the importance of including housing within the strategy and the challenges neurodivergent people face in supported accommodation. Cardiff Council are committed to reviewing their Specialist Housing Services through a neurodivergent lens to ensure that services are inclusive, accessible and in supportive environments. Cardiff Council will work with partners and those who have lived experience to assess the sensory accessibility, spatial design and the integration of neurodivergent friendly features, such as quiet zones, clear signage and adaptable communal areas. This approach will help Cardiff lead by example in creating accommodation that is not only a place to live but that will actively empower neurodivergent residents.



**We will** work with partners and people with lived experience to review the accessibility of our existing Support and Temporary Accommodation.

**We will** develop a specialist supported housing provision for adults with autism and learning disabilities.

**We will** work with contractors to incorporate spaces for neurodivergent individuals in refurbishments of our current housing provisions.

**We will** incorporate our learnings from working with neurodivergent individuals and partners into future plans and developments for young person's services.

## End Youth Homelessness Cymru (EYHC)

End Youth Homelessness Cymru are a charity working to end youth homelessness in Wales. They do this through trying to gain a better understanding of both the causes of youth homelessness and the experiences of those young people who've come into contact with the system. This is coupled with a focus on championing the importance of prevention, campaigning to create a system that



prevents as few a young people as possible from ever coming into contact with the homelessness system.

After conversations with practitioners, and young people themselves, it became apparent that there was an over representation of neurodivergent young people, coming into contact with the homelessness system, who were then further disadvantaged, as the system is designed with the neurotypical brain in mind. The research explored young people's pathways into the homelessness system, their experiences of the system and what they believe should be done to improve the system going forward. EYHC have turned the research into a workshop for practitioners working with young people for both local authorities and the third sector and continue to run these workshops. Similarly, they continue to look to influence change around this to ensure that our systems work for all young people and do not prevent neurodivergent young people from being able to access them.

**We will** continue to work in partnership to share the findings of the research by delivering workshops to organisations and practitioners.

## Cardiff Council Young People Housing Service

Young People's housing services in Cardiff are provided through a range of supported accommodation, homelessness prevention and mediation services. 220 units of accommodation for young people are currently provided across Cardiff. These services are commissioned by the Council and are currently delivered by Llamau and the Salvation Army.

The Impossible to Navigate Ending Youth Homelessness Cymru (EYHC) report made several recommendations in relation to young people who are neurodivergent and homeless. The service is currently working towards delivering on the recommendations of the report and embedding them in the current service model.

**Llamau**

Imagine a World Without Homelessness



The recommendations include:-

- » Accessibility – including information and physical environments
- » Staff training on Neurodivergence
- » Focus on early prevention to prevent young people reaching crisis
- » Support individual communication needs and understand sensory sensitivities

There are also plans to look at alternative models of accommodation to better meet the needs of Neurodivergent Young People.

**We will** embed the recommendations of the Ending Youth Homelessness Cymru report into the current service model with the aim of supporting neurodivergent young people.

**We will** explore alternative delivery models of accommodation to support neurodivergent young people.



## Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff Hubs & Libraries

As part of working towards a Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff, we have received Shared Prosperity Funding and have been working with our Hubs and Libraries to make them more accessible and inclusive for people who are neurodivergent.

### **Neurodivergence Training**

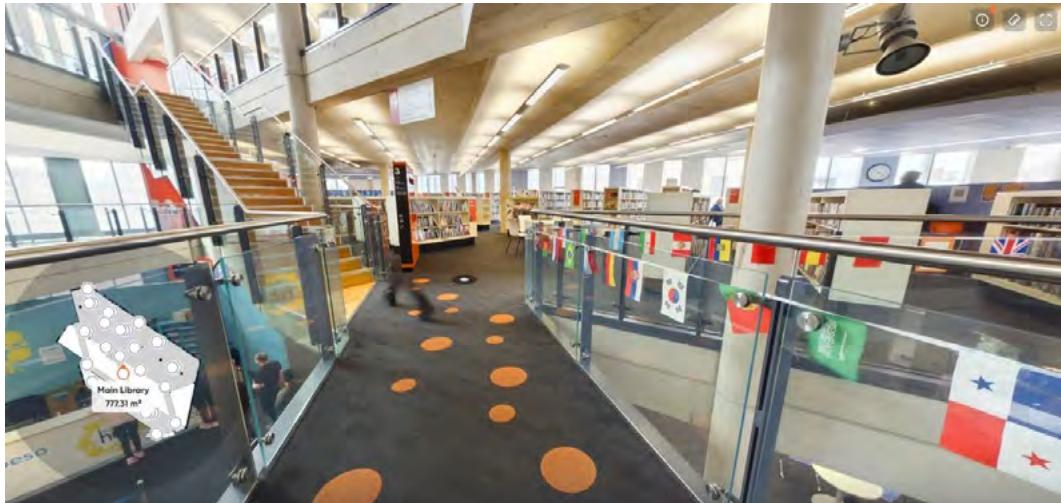
We have Neurodiversity Workplace Champions trained by Dolt Solutions and they can support colleagues to promote and develop neurodivergent resources in their workplace.

Hub staff have also attended training delivered by Autentic to better understand communication needs, neuro-affirming language, and inclusive spaces that support neurodivergent people.



## Virtual Tours

As part of this project Kajima helped develop 20 virtual tours of our Hubs and Libraries so visitors can pre-plan their visit and familiarise themselves with the space. The tours include floor maps and sensory maps, and audio tours that have been developed with Sight Life.



## Sensory Resources

Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff worked with Scope Youth Group and Neuro Roots Youth group to co-produce a collection of sensory resources to make study spaces more accessible for those with additional sensory needs. The youth groups chose a clear plastic bag so that visitors can see the contents and feel confident that they have resources they want to use before borrowing them during their visit. Larger items such as desk mats, space dividers and back rests are also available to help to improve the environment.

The sensory resource packs include:

- » Fidget toys,
- » Sandtimers and colour overlays
- » Desk lamps and fans,
- » Mindfulness colouring activities,
- » Ear defenders



Early Years Sensory backpacks have also been produced by working in partnership with Cardiff Council's Early Help and consulting with families from the Parent Nurture Programme.



## Sensory Calming Spaces

Sensory nooks and quieter areas are available in many of our Hubs and Libraries for people to use if they are feeling overwhelmed or anxious. Interactive sensory nooks contain sensory technology such as twinkle carpets and ultraviolet lighting that can be altered.

Other hubs and libraries will include specialist furniture for young children including sensory light tables and spinning chairs, ensuring that every hub is equipped to improve the sensory environment.

Additionally, Cardiff Central Library Hub will be developing a dedicated quiet space and study area on floor 4.

**We will** create Neurodivergent Friendly Hubs and Libraries that meet the needs of our neurodivergent customers.



**We will** promote the use of these resources across Hubs & Libraries, ensuring staff have knowledge of how to signpost visitors to access resources available.

**We will** gather feedback about customer experiences of the environment and the resources available to understand needs and measure impact.

**We will** support the Neurodiversity Workplace Champions to share the messages and best practice to all staff in Hubs & Libraries.

## Cardiff University Autism Research Centre

The Wales Autism Research Centre is based in Cardiff University and conducts research that helps to make a positive difference to autistic people and their families. They work in collaboration with autistic people and their families so that their research is shaped by what matters to the autism community. Their research helps to improve understanding of neurodivergence. They are particularly focused on characterising and understanding the autistic experience, as well as developing and enhancing support for autistic people.



**We will** conduct high quality research that makes a positive difference to autistic people, their families and the people that support them.

**We will** include autistic people and their families in our research processes, enabling autistic people to have a meaningful voice in our research.

**We will** share our findings and knowledge with neurodivergent communities, as well as the people that support them.

**We will** ensure we are an inclusive centre that supports both neurotypical and neurodivergent researchers to flourish.

## Neurodivergent Friendly Shopping - St David's Shopping Centre

St David's Shopping Centre is committed to making improvements and delivering a more inclusive retail experience for their guests, tackling some of the barriers faced by neurodivergent people and their families. A quiet room is available on Floor 2 of the centre where visitors have access to sensory equipment and a calming space.



The Guest Services desk located on the Upper Level by Stradivarius and Bershka, provides free Hidden Disability lanyards to guests that may require additional assistance while visiting the centre, stores and restaurants. Additionally, they have introduced sensory backpacks which are available for hire free of charge from their Guest services desk.

St Davids Shopping Centre are looking at other ways they can make the environment more accessible such as neurodiversity staff training, and creating an updated Neurodivergent accessibility guide.

**We will** develop a neurodivergent friendly accessibility guide, highlighting where guests can find the quiet space and resources available, improving signposting and awareness.

## Mermaid Quay

Mermaid Quay Cardiff Bay are exploring how they can support neurodivergent customers and create more sensory friendly environments. Mermaid Quay will be looking to introduce sensory resource backpacks that can be available for loan when using their facilities, which can be picked up from the information desk.

Mermaid Quay have also received the Neurodivergence Wales 'Autism Friendly'



status by encouraging staff to complete autism awareness training. Mermaid Quay are committed to further exploring training opportunities for staff so they have more awareness of how they can support neurodivergent customers and create a welcoming environment.

**We will** introduce new sensory resource backpacks that can be made available for neurodivergent individuals and families to borrow when visiting.

**We will** encourage all staff to undertake training on neurodivergence that is available through Neurodivergence Wales.

## Cardiff & Vale University Health Board (C&VUHB) Communication Boards

Welsh Government have funded and commissioned communication boards with the support of Cardiff and Vale UHB Children's Speech and Language Therapy Service.

The communication boards help adults and children with communication difficulties to communicate with others. Cardiff & Vale University Health Board have supported the roll out of the boards to community settings including Cardiff Hubs and Libraries, Leisure Centres, Parks and Schools.



**We will** coordinate the roll out of Communication Boards to community venues across Cardiff & the Vale.

## Wales Millennium Centre

Wales Millennium Centre want as many people as possible to enjoy live theatre and entertainment and are committed to introducing changes to the environment and initiatives that will make it a more accessible and welcoming space for those who are neurodivergent.



The Millennium Centre has a quiet room which is located on the ground floor in the main Glanfa area.

Where possible they put on specific accessible and relaxed performances which are designed for children, young people or adults who may be neurodivergent or have disabilities and additional needs. These tailored performances allow them to make several sensory adjustments such as lower sound levels, changes to special effects and lighting and allow people the freedom to move around during the performance.

The Wales Millennium Centre are also committed to being an inclusive employer and doing more to support awareness of neurodivergence across the organisation.

**We will** explore training opportunities to improve staff understanding of neurodivergence and how to create inclusive environments.

**We will** engage with those who have lived experience of neurodivergence to understand the effectiveness of different initiatives and ensure we are making continuous progress.



## The Principality Stadium



The Principality Stadium has recently launched new accessible guides for fans with disabilities and neurodivergence. This is the first-of-its kind resource for sporting venues and incorporates features like ADHD-friendly filters, screen reader compatibility and seizure filters, ensuring all fans can access the information they need. These guides, which were developed in collaboration with Access Card and created by Different Breed, provide comprehensive event information that is tailored to individual accessibility needs. Alongside these accessibility guides, The Principality Stadium are committed to taking measures to create a more inclusive environment and remove barriers for neurodivergent families being able to access the venue.

**We will** raise awareness of the Accessibility Guides and how people can access them through their ticketing application.

**We will** continue to provide a quiet room within the stadium and explore opportunities to create a sensory room.

**We will** introduce training to both community and performance coaches on neurodivergence and cultural awareness.

## Cardiff Parks

Cardiff Parks are taking steps to improve accessibility and provide accurate information for neurodivergent individuals and their families. The Outdoor Cardiff website provides accessibility information for each park, including images, maps, and facility descriptions, helping visitors plan their visits with confidence.



Additionally, there are various initiatives that aim to make parks and outdoor spaces in Cardiff more inclusive, enjoyable and accessible for all.

There are sensory gardens available in Cardiff which offer calming, interactive environments with a variety of textures, scents, and sounds designed to support sensory regulation.

In the summer Victoria Park Splash Pad hosts relaxed sessions specifically for neurodivergent individuals and those with additional learning needs, offering a quieter, less stimulating setting to enjoy water play.

In selected playgrounds across Cardiff Parks there will be communication boards aimed at supporting children and young people who have communication differences.

**We will** engage with those who have lived experience of neurodivergence to see what helpful accessibility information we could include on the Outdoor Cardiff website.

**We will** continue to provide a relaxed session for Victoria Park Splash pad and explore how we can make other events and activities in the parks more inclusive.

**We will** support the roll out of further communication boards across Parks and Playgrounds in Cardiff, subject to available funding.

## Transport For Wales (TfW)



Transport for Wales work closely with the Access & Inclusion Panel to ensure that they are providing the highest standard of accessibility and customer service for all customers and stakeholders. Transport for Wales are committed to improving understanding and awareness of neurodivergence across the organisation and listening to the voices of neurodivergent individuals to help shape new initiatives and ways they can support neurodivergent individuals and families access travel across Wales.

**We will** embed a neurodiversity policy and action plan designed to improve the experiences of our colleagues and customers who are neurodivergent.

**We will** expand our Access & Inclusion Panel to include engagement with those who have lived experience of neurodivergence.

**We will** roll out training around neurodivergence across TfW, including increasing awareness of the orange wallet scheme and sunflower lanyard.

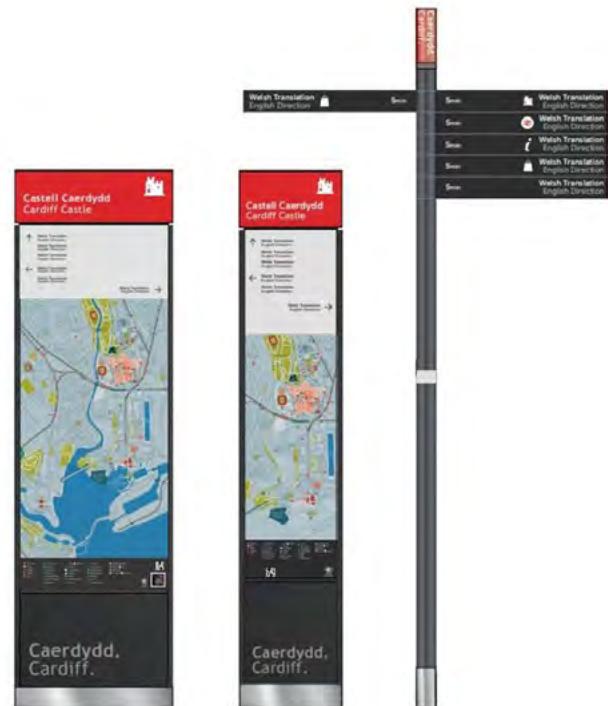
**We will** ensure that the Access and Inclusion Policy embrace the experiences of those with lived experience of neurodivergence and develop customer services accordingly.



## City Centre and Cardiff Bay Wayfinding Project

Cardiff City Centre and Cardiff Bay currently contain a mix of different types of pedestrian wayfinding (fingerposts and totems) that have been installed at various stages between the late 1980s and early 2000s. This incremental growth has contributed towards a lack of cohesive guidance for pedestrians, which is made worse by some of the signs being worn-out and others containing out of date information.

This project will see the removal of existing pedestrian wayfinding infrastructure and its replacement with a streamlined system of map-based totems and supporting fingerposts to help guide people through the area. The new wayfinding items will include bilingual text, make use of icons and pictograms, provide walking distances and incorporate maps of the city centre/ bay to help citizens, including neurodivergent people understand the layout of the area and find their way around.



**We will** complete the wayfinding project in 2025 improving signage in the city centre.

## Cardiff Council's Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP) 2021-2036

Cardiff Council is preparing the new Replacement Local Development Plan for Cardiff which will help shape Cardiff by 2036, ensuring the right development happens in the right place at the right time, benefiting communities and the economy.

The full draft deposit plan went out for consultation, where a range of policies have been consulted on, helping to ensure that development proposals assist in the delivery of cohesive communities and address the issues of inclusivity and accessibility. Strategic Policy 4 (Securing Good Quality and Sustainable Design) makes direct reference to inclusive design of buildings and environments and that we need to consider future changes in health and social, economic, technological and environmental requirements. These guidelines will work to ensure that the future development within Cardiff is inclusive and caters to the needs of neurodivergent and disabled users.

**We will** ensure that all new developments in Cardiff are provided with the guidance relating to Strategic Policy 4 promoting inclusive and neurodivergent friendly buildings and spaces in Cardiff.



### Welcome to Cardiff Council's Replacement Local Development Plan 2021 to 2036

We are preparing a new Local Development Plan (LDP) for Cardiff to replace the existing LDP. The new plan will be called the Cardiff Replacement Local Development Plan (LDP).

It's really important we get the plan right.

The Replacement LDP will help shape Cardiff for the next 15 years to 2036 ensuring the right development happens in the right place at the right time, benefitting communities and the economy and setting out which areas need to be protected.



# Monitoring Progress

Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff is a city-wide initiative, where we aim to work in partnership and take collective action to improve services and create a more inclusive city. Each partner in the strategy is responsible for their own commitments to this work, with recognition that funding the commitments will not be the sole responsibility of the Council. However, to ensure that we are able to monitor progress and evaluate the actions taken a Cardiff Council Cabinet Review Group will be formed with reporting arrangements to the Public Services Board.

The 'we will' statements listed throughout the strategy will form the basis of a five-year action plan, which will be monitored by the Review Group. Over the course of the 5 years an annual review will be published, providing updates and transparency on changes that have been made and how we will measure the impact of these actions.

**We will** create an action plan and monitor progress by engaging with partners and publishing an annual review.

# Conclusion and Next Steps

**“We need to bring everyone on board”**

This Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff strategy has been developed with 6 clear key aims and a vision for a more inclusive city. These key aims provide a framework of steps we will take to start our journey of working towards a neurodivergent friendly city. However, we recognise that as we continue to explore barriers facing neurodivergent people and families in Cardiff there may be more priorities that need to be considered.

Our ambition is for the progression of Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff to be shaped by the neurodivergent community where there are continuous opportunities for engagement. We hope to set up an intergenerational Neurodivergent Friendly Cardiff forum, where people with lived experience can have their say on changes we are making across the city.

The Council cannot deliver our vision in isolation and partnership working will be essential to deliver the best outcomes for neurodivergent people and families across Cardiff. By working in partnership with organisations across Cardiff and continuing to listen and engage the neurodivergent community, we aim to remove barriers and create supportive environments for neurodivergent people across Cardiff.

## Helpful Definitions

**Neurodiversity (neurodiverse):** The concept that everyone's brains are unique and we all think differently.

**Neurodivergence (neurodivergent):** Refers to individuals who have fundamental differences in how they perceive and interact with the world, including differences in social understanding, sensory processing, communication and information processing.

**Neurotypical:** Refers to individuals whose brain functioning aligns with societal norms and expectations.

**Acquired neurological condition:** A disorder affecting the nervous system that develops after birth due to injury, illness, or other external factors.

**Autism:** A form of neurodivergence characterised by differences in social interaction, communication, and how individuals interact with the world.

**Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD):** A form of neurodivergence characterised by persistent patterns of inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsiveness that can affect day to day life.

**Dyscalculia:** A specific learning difference that affects an individual's ability to understand and perform mathematical tasks.

**Dyslexia:** A specific learning difference that affects an individual's ability to read, spell, and process written language.

**Dyspraxia:** Also known as Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD). A type of neurodivergence that can affect physical coordination and motor skills.

**Tourettes Syndrome:** This syndrome is characterised by repetitive, involuntary sounds or movements called tics.

**Executive Function:** Refers to the set of cognitive processes that enable individuals to plan, focus attention, remember instructions, and manage multiple tasks effectively.

**Additional Learning Needs (ALN):** The extra support required by people who have difficulties or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn compared to those who do not have additional learning needs.

**Learning Disability:** A reduced ability to understand new or complex information, learn new skills, and cope independently, which starts before adulthood.

**High support needs:** Refer to the higher levels of assistance required by individuals with physical, cognitive, or emotional challenges to perform daily activities and achieve a good quality of life.

**Low support needs:** Refers to individuals who require minimal assistance to perform daily activities and achieve their goals.

**Co-occurrence/Co-occurring conditions:** Two or more forms of neurodivergence in the same individual.

**Neuro-affirming:** Embraces the uniqueness and strengths of neurodivergent people including encouraging environments that they can thrive in.

**Masking:** Refers to the practice of hiding your true self or suppressing certain traits to appear neurotypical.

**Sensory and emotional dysregulation:** Refers to difficulties in managing sensory input and emotional responses, often resulting in heightened sensitivity or intense reactions.

**Stimming:** Repetitive movements or sounds made by individuals, often as a way to self-soothe or manage sensory input.

**Traits or Characteristics:** Distinguishing qualities or attributes that define an individual's personality or behaviour.

**Ableism:** Discrimination or prejudice against people with disabilities, favouring able-bodied individuals.

**Stigma:** The negative attitudes, beliefs, and discrimination directed towards individuals or groups based on perceived differences or characteristics.

**Neurodiversity Workplace Champion:** An representative within an organisation who promotes and supports the inclusion and well-being of neurodivergent employees.

**Co-produced:** Refers to something that is created collaboratively by multiple parties usually between those with lived experience and service providers.

**Peer-led:** Refers to initiatives or activities that are coordinated by people who share similar lived experiences.

**Person Centered:** Refers to an approach that prioritises the individual's preferences, needs, and values.

**Sustainability:** The practice of meeting current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

**Whole-systems approach:** A method of problem-solving that considers all interconnected parts of a system.

**Accessible:** Information or spaces that are free from unnecessary barriers, whether physical, sensory, cognitive, cultural or language related.

**Inclusive:** Ensuring everyone feels valued, respected and able to participate.

