

autism  
together



# Supported Living

# About us

For over 50 years, Autism Together has been providing support to autistic people, offering a wide range of residential services, supported living, day services and community support from our base in Wirral, UK.

Research has shown that structured support can really make a difference to the life of an autistic person. Every person on the autism spectrum is unique, so we work with each individual to help them overcome any difficulties autism may present them with, enabling them to lead a more fulfilling life.

As a specialist autism provider, our organisation recognises that each person has a right to live their life as they choose.

We create a shared understanding of each person's strengths and needs, ensuring their preferred way of communicating these is respected and implemented by all our staff.

Our support approaches and strategies are focused on developing lifelong learning, helping to develop people's skills by considering their communication needs, thinking patterns, social understanding and sensory differences.

## OUR SUPPORT SERVICES:

- We support people of all ages and abilities.
- The people we support have a diagnosis of autism spectrum condition and/or additional needs.
- We believe in providing a person-centred approach to support.
- We will not treat you any differently because of your race, sexuality or cultural beliefs.
- We will always respect your individuality.

## OUR VALUES



Positive communication



Promote learning



To be person-centred

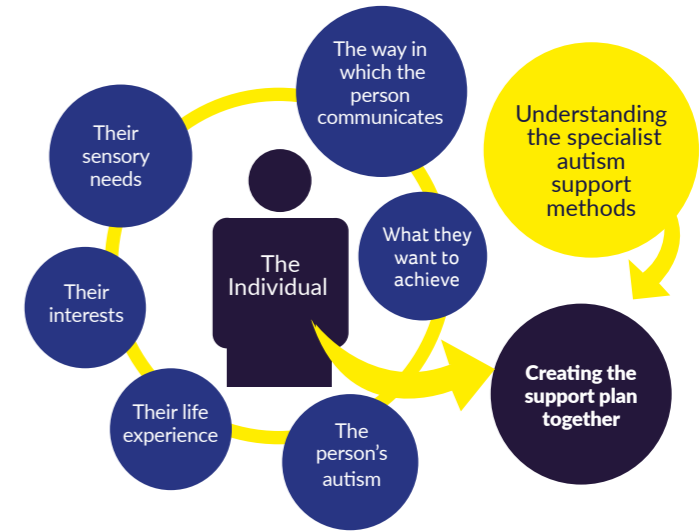


To be respectful

# Creating a support plan together



**THE FIRST STEP** is to have a team of staff who are knowledgeable, experienced and ready to support autistic people right through their journey with Autism Together. Our staff receive specialist training so they are able to understand the challenges experienced by autistic people. Having a diversely-skilled staff team enables us to match people we support with staff who have common interests and the right skills to create a positive working environment in which each can learn and thrive.



**THE SECOND STEP** is to get to know the person we are supporting, using a functional and ongoing assessment of their needs and technology, to give detailed information as to how their autism presents, their skills profile, sensory sensitivities and the triggers for any crisis behaviour. Quality assessments, such as a functional behaviour assessment, give detailed information to inform person-centred support plans.

**THE THIRD STEP** is involving the families and professionals around the people we support. Having a multi-skilled and dedicated circle of support, which includes staff, families and professionals, gives the individual the best support to achieve their outcomes.

**THE FOURTH STEP** is to put in place

individually-tailored autism approaches. Such approaches include consistency in supporting the individual to gain those skills and routines which promote independency and quality of life.

We consider specialist approaches in our methodology, available as resources which staff can call upon in order to tailor their approach to each individual. Detailed support documentation maps this support plan and ensures consistency of approach within staff.

**THE FIFTH STEP** will be achieving and celebrating positive outcomes with the people we support and their circle of support. Through reviews and celebration events, we are encouraging people to reach beyond their current achievements and aim for the extraordinary.

# About Supported living



**A**utism Together's Supported Living Service provides individualised support in a community setting for adults with autism.

Working with registered social landlords, we offer bespoke homes for autistic adults in a variety of housing models, from single flats to shared accommodation. We currently support almost 90 adults, aged from 18 years to late 60s, with around 150 staff members, including support workers, managers and relief staff.

Our Admissions team look after those coming into our services. A person-centred and comprehensive assessment of each individual is completed, taking the person's support needs, likes and dislikes, accommodation and staffing preferences into account to ensure the service we provide is suitable for them.

Detailed transition plans are created so that any person moving into a new home with Autism Together will feel comfortable and have a good understanding of what is happening throughout.

We have 25 supported living locations across Wirral and West Cheshire. The vast majority are houses and flats within

typical residential areas and range from single-occupancy flats to shared houses and flat schemes, from one-person bungalows through to 15 people living in their own flats at our Weatherstones Court scheme.

It is so important the people we support feel the place they are living in is their home, so we involve them in choosing their furniture and decoration to create truly personalised accommodation.

We have very close working relationships with the specialist housing associations who manage the properties and we support people living there to maintain and manage their own tenancies, as far as they are able.

We do this by offering easy-read versions of the tenancy agreement so people can understand and sign it themselves, and by creating visual social stories to communicate the rules within the agreements.

The support service offers everything from shared support through to comprehensive two-to-one, 24-hour, seven-days-a-week support, with the security and experience of a highly-trained staff team to rely on.

# How we support You

## ASSESSING YOUR NEEDS

This will be done by an experienced manager or team leader, and during the assessment we will gather a lot of information about you. We also make sure we observe any health and safety concerns which might be relevant. From this we will be able to put together a Service Plan.

### This will include:

- A personal profile, including an individual's likes and dislikes/routines/dietary info, etc.
- Medication profile.
- Independent living skills assessment.
- Risk assessments.
- Positive behaviour support plans.
- Health management plans.
- Leisure activities/special interests, etc.
- Skill-specific support plans.
- Sensory profile.

These assessments will form a detailed individual support plan, which will include details of how you would like to be supported in a person-centred way, to meet your assessed needs.

A house manager or senior support

worker will be allocated to you. You will also have a key worker, who will support you with all your everyday needs. Each individual's Service Plan will be reviewed every six months by the manager, house manager, senior support worker, key worker and yourself or your representative.

## HOW WILL THE SERVICE BE FUNDED?

**Support costs** are the costs for the support from Autism Together. Your support fee level will be based on your individual assessment of how many hours of support are required. Each fee will be based on an individual assessment of the person's needs, at the hourly-rate agreed with the funding authority.

**Your fees** cover staff support costs and may, in certain circumstances, include the cost of specified and agreed extras such as leisure activities.

Fees go up each year, in line with inflation. Your support service fee will normally be paid for by a combination of some of your benefits and social services funding.

All support fees are paid into Autism Together's Finance Department, who then deal with all financial issues.

**Leisure activities**, unless otherwise specified, will have to be paid for by you. In addition to this, if you require a support worker to accompany you on any leisure activities, you would have to pay the cost of entry for the support worker. The hours that the support worker spends with you on the activity will already be paid as part of your funding package.

**Clothing** will need to be bought by you.

**Transport** - you may be entitled to a free travel pass to use on public transport, however, if you require support on public transport, you may also have to pay for your support worker's travel costs. There is also the possibility you may be entitled to a Mobility benefit. This comes at either a higher or lower rate. Depending on what you receive, you could get your own car or you can contribute towards the organisation's pooled fleet transport.

**Support with finances** - Autism Together will always ensure you are given as much support as you need to understand your financial commitments. The level of support required will be established in your financial assessment, and you will be

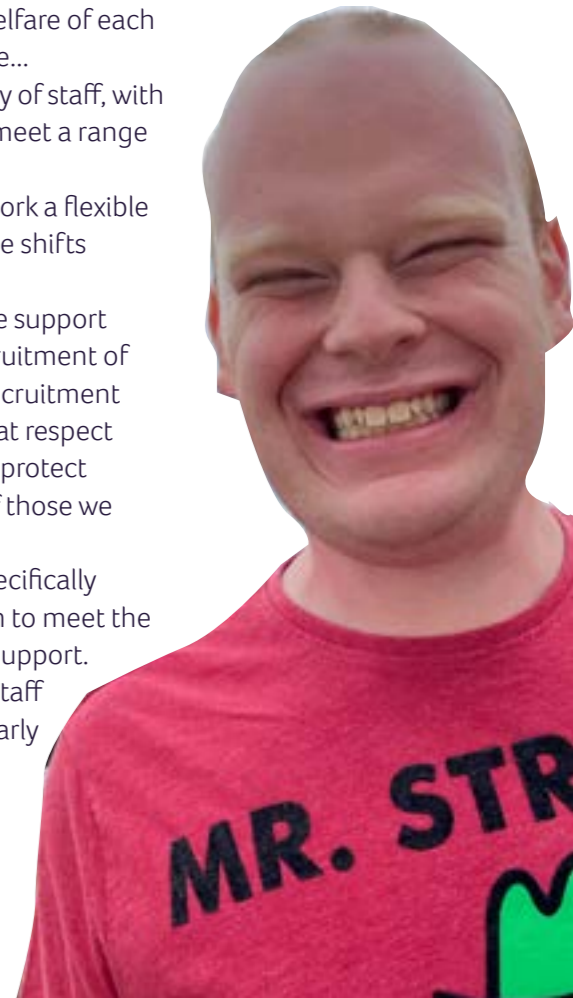
given an individual financial support plan. We will work with you or your appointee to manage your finances.

## OUR STAFF AND MANAGERS

### What you can expect from us

At Autism Together we are aware that staff play a vital role in the welfare of each person we support. Therefore...

- We employ a wide variety of staff, with many different skills, to meet a range of needs.
- Staff are contracted to work a flexible rota, set in advance of the shifts required to be covered.
- We encourage people we support to be involved in the recruitment of support staff. We have recruitment policies and practices that respect equal opportunities and protect the safety and welfare of those we support.
- Staff receive training, specifically designed to enable them to meet the needs of the people we support.
- This training is given to staff at induction and is regularly refreshed and updated throughout their career with Autism Together.



# Accessing Autism Together's services

**W**e accept enquiries for support from individuals, their family member or carer. Prior to making enquiries for support you should contact your local authority to ask

them to complete a Care Act Assessment so that they can see what kind of support you need and if they will help to fund it. Once you have a care act assessment, the following steps take place:

## PATHWAY TO ACCESS OUR SERVICES

- 1** The prospective individual and their family/ carers will be invited to visit the Autism Together service that is most relevant to them.
- 2** They will be given a tour of our facilities, relevant to their needs, conducted by a member of the Admissions team and/or a service manager, and given any further information they might need.
- 3** If, following the initial meeting, all parties feel that Autism Together's services might be the right setting for the autistic person, a full assessment will take place and a recommendation made to the purchaser (usually the local authority). If Autism Together feel a

- placement would not be appropriate, we will feedback the reasons for our decision.
- 4** If a suitable placement is available in the relevant service, a formal offer is made in writing to the local authority.
- 5** If a placement with Autism Together is recommended but currently unavailable, the option exists for the individual to be placed on a waiting list or choose to explore other service providers external to Autism Together.
- 6** Once a start date has been agreed, Autism Together will begin to put a person-centred support package and care plan in place.





## For further enquiries please contact:

**Admissions Team:** ☎ 0151 482 3126

✉ [admissions@autismtogether.co.uk](mailto:admissions@autismtogether.co.uk)

*Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm*

**For general enquiries** ☎ 0151 334 7510

✉ [envelope.enquiries@autismtogether.co.uk](mailto:envelope.enquiries@autismtogether.co.uk)

[www.autismtogether.co.uk](http://www.autismtogether.co.uk)

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