

# Wirral Mencap Strategy 2016 – 2019

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## 1. Purpose

The following document sets out Wirral Mencap's planned activity for the next 3 years and the expected resource requirements. All planned activity reflects the organisation's recently refreshed Vision, Mission and Values.

### Vision

"In Wirral, people with a learning disability and their families are listened to, understood and valued. They are recognised as individuals and included within the community with access to support and opportunities that empower them to lead fulfilled lives."

### Mission

To provide services and opportunities that improve the quality of life of people with a learning disability and their families and which create a more accessible, inclusive and supportive community. We have identified four areas that we want to concentrate on over the next 3 years; they are

1. Improving the health and wellbeing of people with a learning disability living in Wirral
2. Supporting people with a learning disability to reach their full potential
3. Improving the quality of life of family carers in Wirral
4. Increasing resilience and knowledge amongst individuals and families to prevent future crises.

### Values

- **Courageous**  
We challenge attitudes, perceptions and ways of working to ensure that people with a learning disability and their families are treated with dignity and respect. We have a positive approach to risk and push the boundaries of what has been achieved before.
- **Open**  
We have open hearts, open minds and open doors. We do not judge or discriminate.
- **Honest**  
We are trustworthy and conduct our affairs with transparency.
- **Empowering**  
We equip people with the information and tools they need to succeed. We promote independence, encourage resilience and foster aspiration. We inspire people to reach their true potential, whatever that may be.

- **Collaborative**

We listen to, and work alongside, individuals and organisations to achieve maximum impact. Our approach is non-competitive; we share good practice, expertise and resources for the wider benefit of local people with a learning disability and their families.

## 2. Establishing our priorities

Our priorities for the next 3 years have been informed by a recent consultation involving our members and the wider learning disability community. Wirral Mencap has gathered data from over 160 people with a learning disability and/ or family carers to establish the main concerns and aspirations of people living in Wirral. The data includes information gathered via surveys, focus groups, accessible consultation exercises and statistical information from existing service provision.

The data has been analysed and themed, highlighting the prevalence of the following viewpoints:

- Concern about the future and the sustainability of current housing/ support arrangements (whether at home with aging carers or in supported living/ residential)
- Financial concerns including difficulty accessing entitlements and employment (for family carers and people with a learning disability)
- Concerns regarding weight, diet and fitness
- Inconsistent application of specific health initiatives such as the Health Passport Scheme
- Difficulties accessing preventative health services and lack of specialist knowledge amongst medical staff
- Good range of social and leisure opportunities delivered by the community sector but gaps during holiday times and in relation to more 'active' pastimes
- A strong desire to learn new skills amongst people with a learning disability but a lack of opportunities to 'maximise independence' and 'reach potential'
- Experiences of 'patchy' and 'shrinking' services contributing to feelings of dissatisfaction and feeling 'unsupported', amongst carers.

The consultation also highlights positive experiences of services and support, and suggestions for improvements. This information has also been themed, resulting in the following recommendations:

- Better forward planning for parents/ carers/ families including access to information and services *before* crisis
- Better 'matching' in supported living (people, place and provider)
- Greater exploration of 'shared ownership' opportunities
- Support for families in accessing the correct benefits and entitlements
- Greater employment support and opportunities for people with a learning disability *and* family carers (particularly where financial dependency is occurring)

- More personal development opportunities for people with a learning disability to maximise independence and potential (including travel training)
- Access to volunteering for every person with a learning disability that would like it
- More activities for adults during the daytime and holiday times (particularly for the over 25s)
- More opportunities for health education and physical activity (including things like sport, swimming and horse riding)
- Review of the Health Passport Scheme (including the training received by health professionals)
- Exploration of more targeted delivery of preventative health services.

Wirral Mencap's staff members and Trustees reviewed these recommendations at a Team Planning Day on 16 May 2016. They identified areas that they believe the organisation could have the greatest impact on over the next 3 years. These 'priority areas' have formed the basis of our strategic aims.

### **3. Strategic aims**

As outlined above in our Mission Statement, the organisation's strategic aims for this period are:

1. To improve the health and wellbeing of people with a learning disability living in Wirral
2. To support people with a learning disability to reach their full potential
3. To improve the quality of life of family carers in Wirral
4. To increase resilience and knowledge amongst individuals and families to reduce likelihood of future crises

## 4. Achieving our aims

### Priority 1: Improve the health and wellbeing of people with a learning disability living in Wirral

Outcome	How we will incorporate outcome into existing work	New areas of work for 2016-19
Increased awareness and uptake of specific health initiatives e.g. Health Checks, Health Passports, Health Action Plans etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Outreach Initial Assessment and Action Plan to include (optional) questions regarding health initiatives and planning</li> <li>- Newsletter and other media to regularly include information about health initiatives/ issues and important health messages</li> <li>- Induction and learning materials for health and social care students to include information about these schemes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Include health initiatives information within Schools Info Pack (more info under priority 4)</li> </ul>
People with a learning disability have healthier lifestyles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Limit use of minibus/ increase amount of walking/ use of public transport across services</li> <li>- Embed healthy living as constant message throughout Gateway Award</li> <li>- Build in 'health aspirations' as part of people's personal development plans</li> <li>- Introduce more sustainable physical activity (e.g. introducing people to gyms, walking groups with support to subscribe)</li> <li>- Include physical challenges as part of the Gateway Award programme</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fitness buddies (see priority 2 for more detail)</li> <li>- Courses for carers, care agencies, PAs and people with LD (involving health professionals/ dieticians etc)</li> <li>- Adopt a specific health initiative on site (e.g. Fit for Life)</li> </ul>
Reduced disparity in weight between people with a learning disability and people without	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduce health-related activity and optional weigh-ins/ health targets to lunch club/ Gateway Award</li> <li>- Become a healthy site (e.g. offer healthy options for meetings, activities and events)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduce health 'drop-in' sessions with guest speakers</li> </ul>
Improved access to mainstream health and leisure services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduce people to more mainstream leisure provision through Gateway Award and befriending projects</li> <li>- Influence the design and delivery of health and leisure services through existing partnerships and work streams (e.g. All Age Disability Partnership Board, Sex &amp; Relationships work etc)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conduct a health mapping exercise</li> <li>- Deliver LD awareness sessions to all leisure centres in Wirral by end of year 3</li> <li>- Negotiate special gym membership deals for Wirral Mencap members</li> </ul>

**Priority 2: Support people with a learning disability in Wirral to reach their full potential**

Outcomes	How we will incorporate outcome into existing work	New areas of work for 2016-19
People with a learning disability develop new and existing skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduce personal development plans for all people with ld accessing our services as part of the initial assessment process</li> <li>- Increase offering of specific courses through the Gateway Award e.g. greater focus on skills-based activities such as IT, Money skills, Travel Training (build-in opportunities for progression within these courses)</li> <li>- Expand the Gateway Award project (with more full-cost and subsidised places)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Deliver more stand-alone courses (i.e. not part of the Gateway Award) but long-term and intensive</li> <li>- Develop a new branch of the Befriending/ Buddying project with more specific ‘outcomes-based’ roles for volunteers which reflect the individual aspirations contained within an individual’s personal development plan e.g. IT buddy, Reading Buddy, Travel Buddy, Fitness Buddy etc</li> </ul>
People with a learning disability are as independent as they can be	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Incorporate more travel on public transport within Wirral Mencap activities</li> <li>- Introduce practical skills workshops to Gateway Award programme (e.g. Online searches, taking/ making calls, community safety)</li> <li>- Build more future planning activity into Gold level of Gateway Award (e.g. where to next, employability etc)</li> <li>- Ensure people have information about how to apply for bus passes as part of the initial assessments process (for Outreach and Gateway)</li> <li>- Introduce cyclical Mental Capacity Act training for staff and volunteers and include regular discussion within team meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Highlight barriers to independent travel through a Transport Treasure Hunt fundraising challenge</li> </ul>
The achievements of local people with a learning disability are acknowledged and celebrated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Annual celebration event as part of AGM</li> <li>- Submit more press releases to local press concerning the achievements of local people with a learning disability (see enabling priorities for more information)</li> </ul>	

<p>People with a learning disability develop skills for employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expand 'Volunteering for All' project to increase volunteering opportunities, work experience placements and internships</li> <li>- Solidify relationship and referral pathway to/ from Job Centre</li> <li>- Include 'skills for work' exercises within Gateway Award and Buddying projects (e.g. CV writing)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consider employment opportunities for people with a learning disability within Wirral Mencap</li> <li>- Work with relevant partners to advance the employment strand of Wirral's All Age Disability Strategy (First step -Pathways to Employment Event Nov 16)</li> </ul>
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**Priority 3: Improve the quality of life of family carers in Wirral**

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>How we will incorporate outcome into existing work</b>	<b>New areas of work for 2016-19</b>
Reduce the anxiety experienced by parents/carers of people with a learning disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Share good news stories and positive experiences of care and support via website, Facebook and newsletter</li> <li>- Introduce cyclical features in Newsletter and on Facebook on future planning topics i.e 'Highlight on Housing, Wills, Trusts' etc</li> <li>- Increase the capacity of the Outreach service through recruitment and training of volunteers</li> <li>- Actively participate in parent/ carer groups/ forums and continue to act as a vehicle for taking views to decision makers/ strategic bodies</li> <li>- Develop a more formalised referral pathway with social services (particularly for those that do not meet FACs criteria)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Partner with National Mencap to deliver local Wills and Trusts events</li> <li>- Work with partners across the voluntary and statutory sector to develop a better future planning procedure/ tool to be used across services</li> </ul>
Reduce isolation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify hard-to-reach families by engaging with more partners e.g Multicultural organisations, Schools, Day Centres etc</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create database of carers groups/ organisations and make available on website</li> </ul>
Parents/ carers have the opportunity to develop skills for work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop more volunteering opportunities specifically tailored to carers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work with partners and local employers to raise awareness of Carers employment needs and rights</li> </ul>

**Priority 4: Increase resilience and knowledge amongst individuals and families to reduce likelihood of future crises**

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>How we will incorporate outcome into existing work</b>	<b>New areas of work for 2016-19</b>
Individuals/ families are well informed at an early stage of services/ entitlements/ support available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase the number of Outreach appointment days in schools, including local primary schools</li> <li>- Re-develop Outreach initial assessment to have a much greater emphasis on preventative support as well as issue-based support (i.e. establishing whether individuals/ families have the range of available services/ entitlements in place e.g. benefits/ entitlements, care package, Emergency Action Plan, My Housing Plan, Health Passport etc)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pilot a ‘schools support package’ i.e. a more formal relationship with a local school (inc. regular appointment days, involvement in specific school campaigns such as anti-bullying week, volunteering opportunities, fundraising etc)</li> <li>- Develop and distribute an information pack to secondary school aged pupils</li> <li>- Develop more web-based resources i.e. FAQs, Information sheets etc</li> <li>- Deliver talks/ information sessions to school parent groups, and other relevant parent/ carer groups</li> </ul>
Greater awareness of support available from Wirral Mencap (particularly young families)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improved marketing of projects and organisation (see Enabling Strategy for further detail)</li> <li>- Formalise a referral pathway with Homestart Wirral</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop partnerships with mainstream youth services</li> </ul>

In addition to the priorities outlined above, we aim to influence the design and delivery of external provision by raising awareness of the research conducted with individuals and families, and by sharing our expertise. This will enable us to have a much greater impact than our resources allow.

## 5. Enabling Priorities

We need to ensure that we have the resources, both financial and human to achieve our strategic aims over the next 3 years. The following section sets out our ‘Enabling Priorities’ which will support us in achieving our aims.

### Priority 1: A highly skilled team of Staff, Trustees and Volunteers

Outcomes	How we will incorporate outcome into existing work	New areas of work for 2016-19
An increased number of active volunteers supporting existing and new activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regular recruitment drives (advertising via RMS website, Do-it.org, existing networks via email, Job Centre, Remploy, social media, local retirees.)</li> <li>- Regular training dates with more role specific training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop better volunteer tracking system to keep volunteers busy and engaged, as well as to monitor success stories/figures</li> </ul>
Improved staff and volunteer support and training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More role specific training for volunteers i.e. fundraising, member's committee</li> <li>- Bi-annual ‘get togethers’ for volunteers inc celebration event/awards each year (AGM)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recruit new project support officer</li> <li>- Bi-annual Team Building and Training Days (Staff, Trustees and Volunteers)</li> <li>- Regular supervisions in addition to quarterly review process</li> </ul>
Every person representing Wirral Mencap exhibits our Values and understands our Vision and Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Staff, Volunteer and Trustee inductions to include VMV</li> <li>- Team meetings to include regular discussion about ‘Our values in practice’</li> <li>- Staff, Trustee and volunteer recruitment packs to include VMV</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Incorporate messages about our VMV into our physical surroundings</li> </ul>
Diverse range of skills and experience maximised across the organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sharing of staff reports between staff members to improve knowledge of other work streams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conduct skills audits amongst teams to establish areas of expertise which can be shared, and skills gaps which can be developed through training</li> <li>- Introduce mentoring (utilising both internal and external mentors where skills gaps/ learning needs are identified)</li> </ul>
Staff, Trustees and volunteers are recognised for the contribution they make	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Annual Celebration Event (as outlined in Strategic Aim 2) to incorporate special achievements/ contributions</li> <li>- Salaries and other entitlements to be reviewed annually</li> <li>- Outcomes and achievements to be acknowledged as part of quarterly review process</li> </ul>	

**Priority 2: A well engaged, diverse membership**

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>How we will incorporate outcome into existing work</b>	<b>New areas of work for 2016-19</b>
An increase in new members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Crossbow club members to be encouraged to join through 'Membership days' at the club</li> <li>- All staff members to promote membership as part of their initial meetings/ assessments</li> <li>- Membership forms to be taken to all events/ meetings</li> <li>- Membership forms to be circulated to partners</li> <li>- Membership to be discussed with all new volunteers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Schedule membership talks at local day centres, residential establishments and other relevant venues, involving member's committee in delivery (4 per year).</li> </ul>
Member retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encourage payment via Direct Debit on membership form</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consider developing a welcome pack for new members (costs permitting)</li> </ul>
Increase diversity of membership (particularly in regards to younger members)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adapt membership form to create a version depicting younger people/ families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Consider introducing free membership for families including a child under 12 (costs permitting)</li> <li>- Pilot a membership event for young families e.g. a family activity day (costs permitting)</li> </ul>

**Priority 3: Increased financial stability and growth**

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>How we will incorporate outcome into existing work</b>	<b>New areas of work for 2016-19</b>
Eliminate deficit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Secure funding for all core projects/ work streams either via a fee-paying model or via grants/ contracts (long term where possible)</li> <li>- Work to a full-cost recovery model with all services</li> <li>- Regularly review service costs (i.e. utilities, telecoms, waste etc) to ensure we continue to get the best rates (at least annually)</li> <li>- Increase membership costs to £10/annum from Oct 2017 to ensure membership costs are fully covered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop a 3-year financial forecast</li> </ul>
More diverse income pattern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Annually review funding breakdown and consider targets for each income stream as part of funding strategy</li> <li>- Continue to explore contracting opportunities (where in-line with strategic aims only)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explore opportunities for organisations to ‘buy into’ services e.g. special schools and Outreach support, consultancy work and diversity training for corporations/public sector</li> </ul>
Increase fundraised income (to build reserves and allow for greater flexibility in provision)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase number of grant applications to Trusts and Foundations</li> <li>- Continue to develop corporate relationships through networking and events; pursue Charity of the Year Partnerships</li> <li>- Build upon tried and tested methods of fundraising i.e. raffles and bag packs</li> <li>- Repeat larger ‘flagship’ events annually/ bi-annually</li> <li>- Limit time spent on activities with low ROI e.g. distributing collection tins</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Advertise for volunteers/ interns to take up specific fundraising roles/ projects</li> <li>- Skill up volunteers/ staff through fundraising training</li> </ul>

**Priority 4: Marketing and Promotion of Wirral Mencap’s Services and Projects**

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>How we will incorporate outcome into existing work</b>	<b>New areas of work for 2016-19</b>
Greater awareness of Wirral Mencap and Learning Disability amongst general population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Submit at least 6 press releases per year to local press</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Deliver awareness talks to at least 4 local mainstream secondary schools per year</li> <li>- Deliver awareness talks to at least 4 faith groups per year</li> </ul>
Greater awareness of Wirral Mencap amongst target group (particularly younger families)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Submit press releases to special school for magazines/ newsletters</li> <li>- Deliver membership leaflets to all SEN secondary schools</li> <li>- Present at team meetings of partner agencies that support individuals with ld/ families</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Attend parents evenings at all SEN primary and secondary schools by end of year 2</li> </ul>
Greater social media presence and engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regular contributions from all project/ work areas</li> <li>- Increase cross posting, engagement with other organisations/ groups to support an increase in followers (aim: minimum 150 new per year)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recruit social media volunteer</li> </ul>