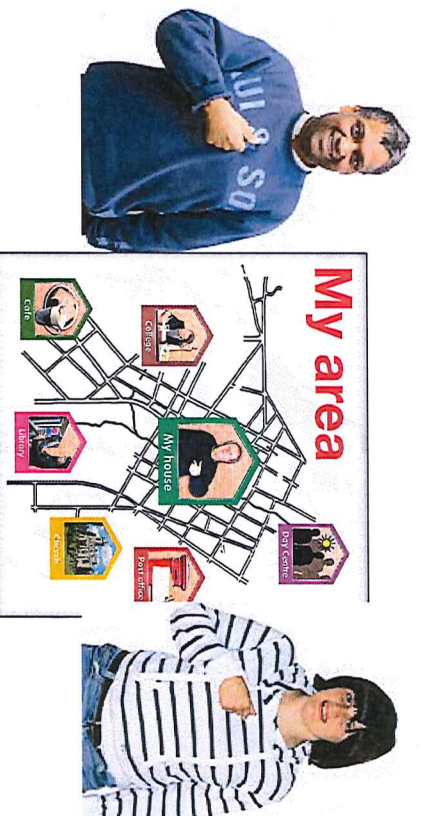




# **Our plan for better services to help people with autism in Birmingham 2013 to 2016**



**An Easy Read version of: Helping people with autism to achieve fulfilling and rewarding lives - Raising awareness to inform, implement and improve (Birmingham City Council, 2013)**

## **THIS IS WHAT IS IN THIS PLAN:**

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## A MESSAGE FROM COUNCILLOR STEVE BEDSER



**My name is Steve Bedser.**

**I am the Councillor who is in charge of services for people with autism.**



**This booklet will tell you about Birmingham's first Autism Strategy. This is a plan for adults with autism aged 18 and over.**



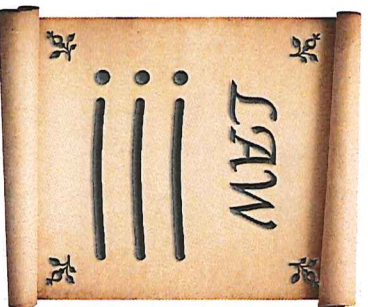
**This plan tells you about the support for people with autism and their families in Birmingham.**



**We want to make services better for people with autism so that they have better chances in life.**



## WHY WE HAVE WRITTEN THIS PLAN



The Autism Act 2009 said the government had to make a plan for people with autism in England.



The Autism Strategy for England was a national plan to improve services for people with autism.



Before this national plan, some people with autism did not always have the same chances as other people.



We want to make big changes in Birmingham to make things better for people with autism.

This is why we are making our own plan.



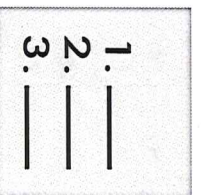


## WHAT IS AUTISM?

Autism is a disability. Someone with autism will have it for all of their life. Autism affects the way you understand the world around you.

People with autism have difficulties with:

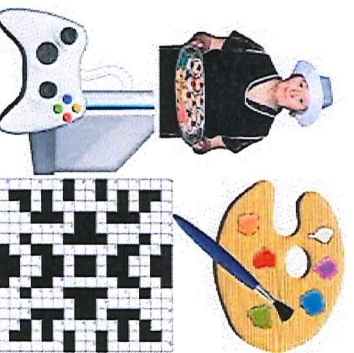
- Talking with other people, telling them how you feel and what you need.
- Meeting new people, making new friends and relationships.
  - Understanding what other people are thinking.



If you have autism, you might like to do things in the same order.

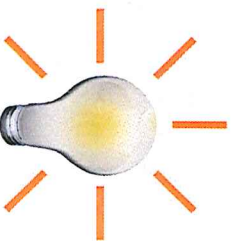


You might find it very hard when things change.



You may always be interested in one thing or very good at one thing.

Some people with autism might have difficulties with:



**Sight.** Not like bright lights or colours.



**Sound.** Not like very loud or sudden noises.



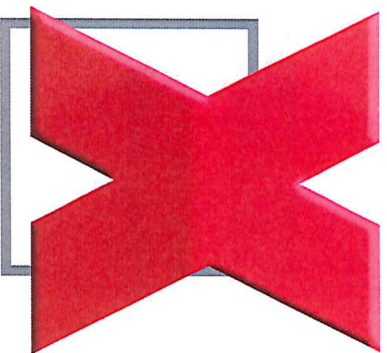
**Smell.** Not like some smells.



**Touch.** Not like being touched.



**Taste.** Not like to eat some types of food.



Autism is **not** a learning disability.

Autism is **not** a mental health condition.



People with autism may **also** have other difficulties like a learning difficulty, a mental health problem or Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).



When we use the word 'autism' in this plan we are covering all of these words:

- Asperger Syndrome.
- Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).
- Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC).

- Autistic Spectrum Difference.
- Neuro-diversity.



Adults with autism are all different and good at doing different things. We want to make a plan to help them make the most of their abilities and live a full life.





## WHO HAS WRITTEN THIS PLAN?

This plan has been written by the Birmingham Autism Partnership Board.

Members of the Birmingham Autism Partnership Board are:



- People with autism, their parents and carers.



- People from health services like doctors and nurses.

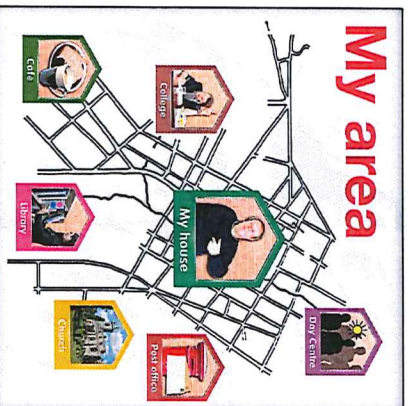


- People from social care, like social workers.
- Staff who work for charities.

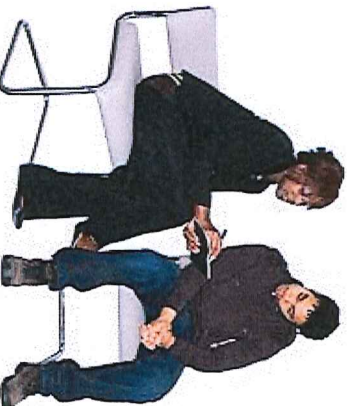
## WHAT WE WANT THIS PLAN TO DO



**My name is Dr Ashok Roy, I organise the Birmingham Autism Partnership Board.**



**We want all people with autism in Birmingham to have the same chances as other people to live a full life and make the most of their abilities.**



**We want people with autism to be better supported in communicating with other people.**

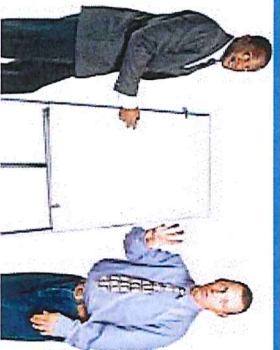


**We want them to be better included in the community.**

**We want them to be better understood by other people in Birmingham.**



## HOW WE WILL HELP STAFF TO UNDERSTAND AUTISM



We want to make better services for people with autism. To do this, we will help the staff who support you to understand autism better.

We will let all staff who work with you take our online lessons about understanding autism.



We will also give special lessons to teach staff working in these areas to better understand autism:

- Health.
- Social care.
- Community organisations, like charities.



- Staff who give housing support.



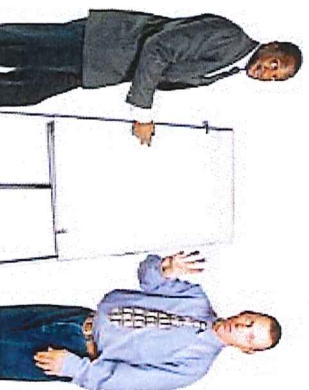
- Staff working in shops.







Sometimes people with autism do not know that they have it.



We will teach some staff what to do if they think someone has autism. For example:

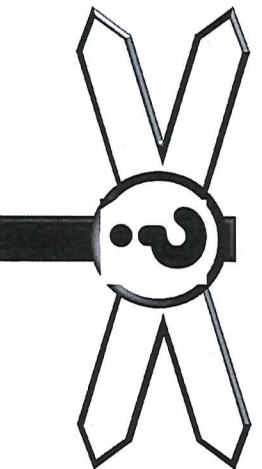
- GPs.
- Social Workers.
- Health professionals.



We will teach them the signs that the person may have autism.



We will teach them how to help the person find out if they do have autism.



If you have autism, you might need more support.



To find out what support you need, someone from Birmingham City Council should have a meeting with you.



This is usually a social worker.

We want to make sure that this staff member knows how to ask you questions in a way that is easy for you to understand.



We also want them to understand your answers better.

We will teach staff how to do this by 2014.



We will make our teaching really good by

asking people with autism, their parents and carers about their ideas.



We will tell staff working in health and social care about the lessons they can take on understanding autism.



## HOW TO FIND OUT IF YOU HAVE AUTISM IF YOU LIVE IN BIRMINGHAM

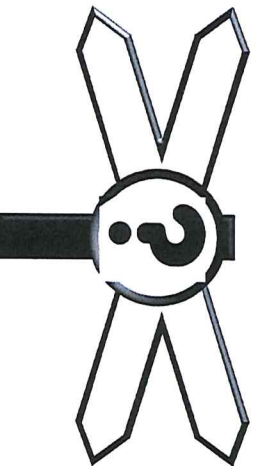


Sometimes people with autism do not know that they have it.

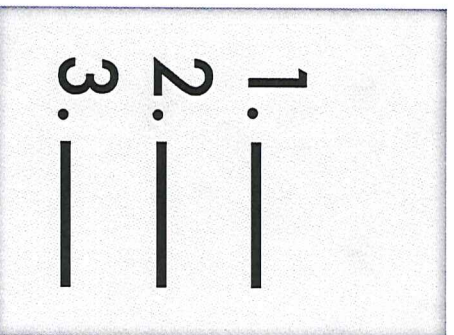
Sometimes people may have heard about autism and think that they may have it.



Finding out if you have autism is called a diagnosis.



We want to make sure people know what to do to find out if they have autism.



We will put in place 3 steps to help you find out if you have autism.



**Step 1 –** When you meet staff working in these areas, they should know the signs that you may have autism:

- Health services, like your GP.



- Social care services, like a social worker.



- The Police.



These people should then arrange for you to have a meeting with someone from the Mental Health or Learning Disability Team.

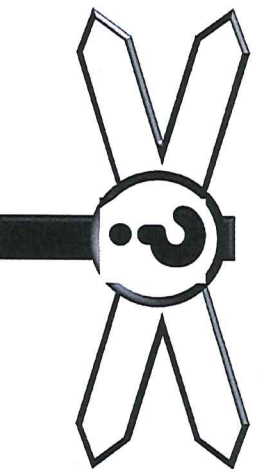
### Step 2 –



- A psychologist or psychiatrist will have a meeting with you.
- They will ask you questions.



- They may want to ask your parents or carers questions.



- The psychologist or psychiatrist will then tell you whether you have autism.
- They should then give you advice about what to do next.





**Step 3** – Sometimes it is hard to tell if the person has autism or another health problem.

If this happens you can go to the Specialist Adult Autism Assessment and Resource Centre (SPARC).



Here you will have 3 meetings to better understand your autism.



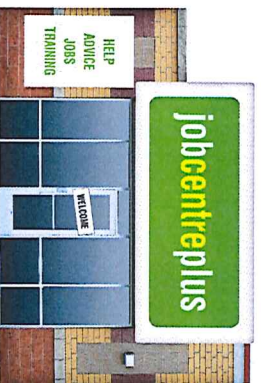
You will be given your own autism plan. This personal autism plan will:

- Give information about your autism.
  - Tell you about things that will help you.
  - Tell you about who can support you.



At each of these steps an autism advisor will give you support if you need it.





## TELLING YOU ABOUT SUPPORT IN WORK AND EDUCATION

Sometimes people with autism find it difficult to get a job.



We want to help people with autism have the same chances to get work and education as other people.



Sometimes people with autism who have a job can find it difficult and need extra help. Like changing the hours they work.

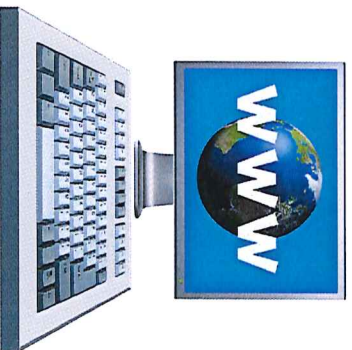


We want to give support to people with autism to stay in their job.



In our plan to improve the chances of people with autism to get work we will give employers:

Online lessons about autism.



Advice about understanding autism and supporting someone with autism.

Tell employers about the sorts of jobs people with autism can do.



Tell employers about the things people with autism are very good at.

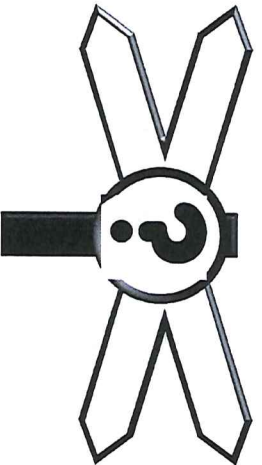


We will put in place 3 Steps to help you to get a job:





**Step 1 – Tell you where to get advice about finding a job.**



**Step 2 – Tell you where you can get advice about being given a job, like how to apply for a job.**

An illustration of a document titled 'Application Form'. It has four main sections, each with a small icon and a label: 'Name' (with a person icon), 'Address' (with a house icon), 'Education' (with a person at a desk icon), and 'Work Experience' (with a group of people icon). Each section has a corresponding input field.

**Step 3 –Tell you what support you can get when you find a job.**



We will also tell your family and carers where they can get advice about helping you to get a job.



In our plan to support you to stay in your job, we will:



Help you to cope with the tasks you are given.



Help you to cope with your worries about your job.



Help you to talk to the people you work with.

Help the people you work with to understand you better.



Help you to do your job well.

Help you to think about what job you may like to do next.



## HELPING YOU TO GET BETTER SUPPORT FROM OUR SERVICES

In our plan we want to help you to choose what support you get.



We want you to have a say in all decisions about your support.



We want all our services to treat you the same as other people.



We want it to be easier for you to use these services.





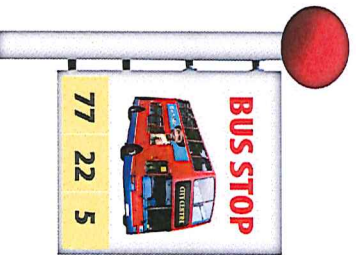


**In our plan to make it easier to use our services we will:**

**Tell our Mental Health and Learning Disability services to write down the changes they will make for people with autism.**



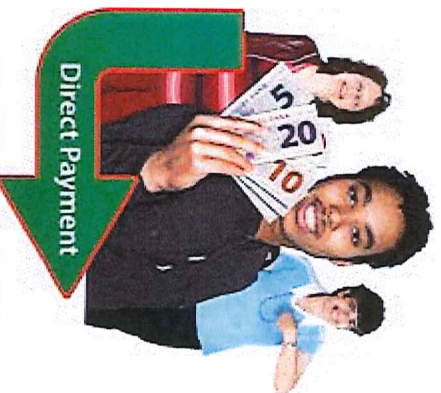
**Help you to get more advice about your health, the things you eat and how to get exercise.**



**Teach you how to use trains and buses so that you can get around more easily.**



**Help you to find out how to get an advocate.**



In our plan, we also want to help you find out if you can get a personal budget.



A personal budget is an amount of money we could give to you to help you get better support.

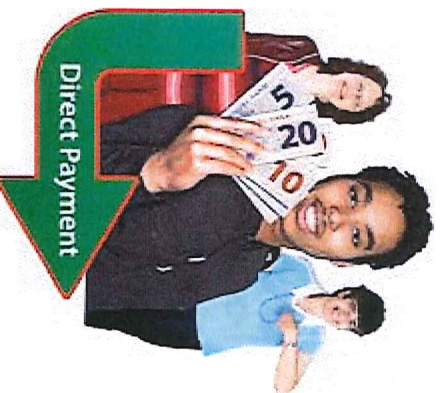


To find out if you can get a personal budget, you will need to have a meeting with a social worker. They will:

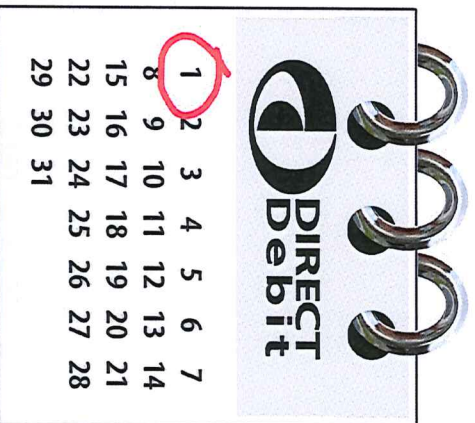
Ask you about the things you find difficult.

Ask you about the things that will help you.

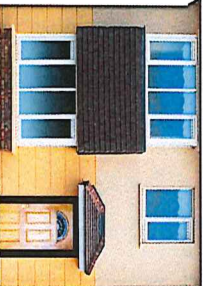
They will then tell you if you can get a personal budget.



If you tell you that you can get a personal budget, you will be given an amount of money to help you pay for your support.



This money can be paid into your bank account.  
This is called a direct payment.



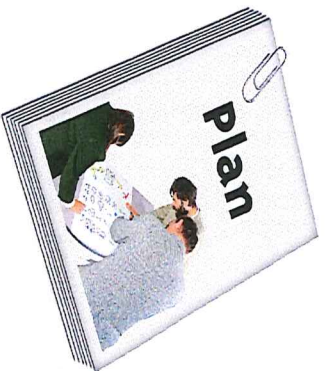
Or you can choose for this money to be looked  
after by someone else.

If someone else looks after your money, this  
money should only be used for you.



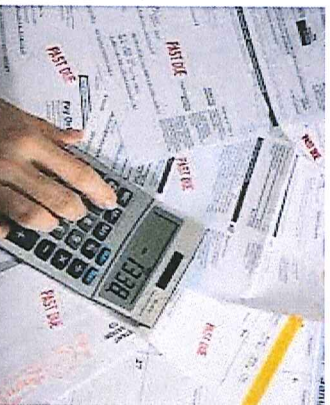
We want to help people with autism to live  
independently if they want to.





Some people with autism find it difficult to know how to look after their house, like knowing what to do to keep it tidy.

Some people with autism find it difficult to know when to pay their mortgage or rent and their bills.



Your will have to follow some rules in your tenancy agreement.

## Tenancy Agreement



\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
A Smith

In our plan we will:

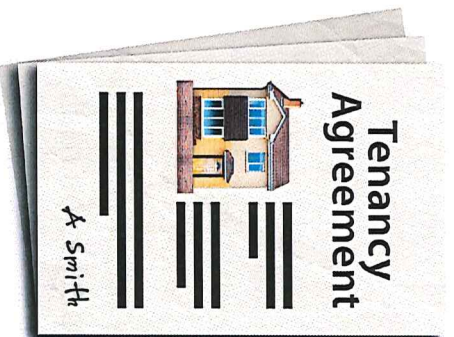


Give you support to know how to pay your mortgage or rent and your bills.

Give you support to know how to look after the place where you live.



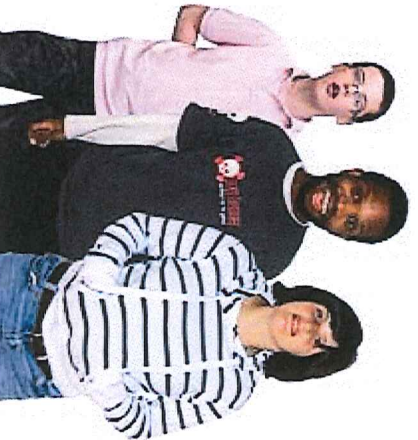
Give you support to know how to follow to rules made by your landlord.



## HOW WE WILL SUPPORT PEOPLE WHEN THEY START TO BE AN ADULT

People go through big changes in their life when they start to be an adult:

- Changes to your body.
- Changes to your school.
- Changes to your friends.



Some people with autism can find these changes difficult.



Some people with autism might need extra support to cope with these changes.



We give support when people with autism change from being a child to an adult. We support you when you are 17 years until you are 25 years old. We want this support to be really good.







In our plan to support you better when you start to be an adult we:

We will ask you to give us your ideas to make things better for young people with autism.

Want you to have a say in all decisions about your support.



Want you and your family to help write a plan about the things you need.



Tell you about the support you can get when you are an adult, like how to get a job or getting an advocate if you need one.



Teach all the staff who work with young people with autism to understand autism better.



Some young people with autism can feel sad or worry about things changing when they start to be an adult, like making friends.



In our plan to support you better when you start to be an adult we will tell your GP what they can do to help you with these problems.

We will make it easier for children who also have mental health needs to move to adult services.



**In 2016** we will support people with autism when they change from being a child much earlier. We will start to support you when you are 14 years old until you are 25 years old.

## HELPING THE POLICE AND THE COURTS TO UNDERSTAND AUTISM BETTER



Sometimes people with autism get into trouble with the police.

Sometimes the police do not know the person has autism or how to talk to them.

Sometimes when people with autism get into trouble with the police, they have not done anything wrong.



This can happen when a person with autism feels frightened.

This can happen when the police do not understand how the person with autism is feeling.



If someone with autism has to go to court, they may find it difficult to understand what is going on.



Sometimes people who work for the court do not know how to help someone with autism.



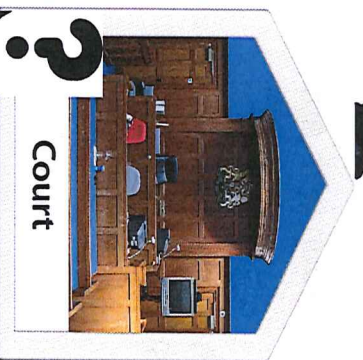


In December 2012 we wrote a booklet about adults with autism who get into trouble with the police and go to court.

This booklet said that:



The police do not know how many people with autism get into trouble.



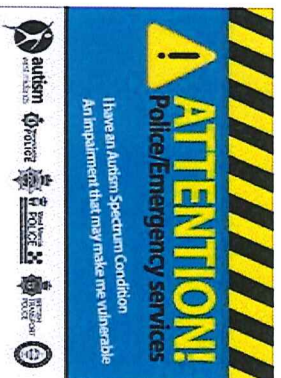
Nobody knows how many people with autism go to court.



There is not much support to help people with autism when they get in trouble with the police or go to court.



We need better support for people with autism who get into trouble with the police and have to go to court. This will help the person with autism have better chances in life and save money.



In our plan to help people with autism who get into trouble with the police and go to court we will:



Tell people with autism that it is a good idea to get an Autism West Midlands Attention Card and take it everywhere they go.



Teach people with autism who have been in trouble the best way to talk and listen to new people



Teach Police Officers to understand autism better.

Give a list of rules about how to help people with autism to staff working in Accident and Emergency.



That is the end of our autism plan for Birmingham.

Words by Birmingham Autism Partnership Board and Marie Tidball. Pictures by Photosymbols. We used some words from *Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives* – Easy Read (DH, 2010) to help us to explain autism on pages 5 to 7.