



# Producing better information for disabled people

**A toolkit for local authorities**

# Contents

<b>Forewords</b>	<b>2</b>				
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>				
<b>Getting started</b>	<b>10</b>				
<b>1 Involve</b>					
Five principles for good practice	14				
Why involve disabled people?	15				
How should you involve disabled people?	17				
Who should you involve?	17				
What skills should they have?	18				
The barriers to involvement	19				
Case study: North Tyneside Council	20				
Involving disabled people checklist	21				
		<b>2 Inform</b>			
		Five principles for good practice	28		
		Planning	29		
		The right information	29		
		Plain English	30		
		Promoting information	30		
		Channels and formats	32		
		Public offices	37		
		Information for people with visual impairments	38		
		Information for people with learning difficulties	38		
		Case study: Surrey County Council	39		
		Information for deaf people	40		
		<b>3 Embed</b>			
		Five principles for good practice	42		
		Define responsibility	43		
		Case study: London Borough of Croydon	44		
		Case study: Cheshire County Council	45		
		Support staff	46		
		Procuring goods and services	47		
		Monitor accessibility	49		
		<b>4 Appendix</b>			
		Surrey County Council	51		
		Cheshire County Council	54		
		London Borough of Croydon	57		
		North Tyneside Council	60		
		Useful contacts	64		
		Acknowledgements	68		

# Foreword by Jonathan Shaw, MP Minister for Disabled People

I know that many local authorities provide excellent innovative services that meet the needs of disabled people in their area. But, providing high-quality services is not enough if disabled people don't know that services are available or how they can access them. Evidence suggests that too often, disabled people cannot get the information they need to get the most out of public services – and this means that we are failing an important part of the population, and not fulfilling our legal obligation to promote equality.

In February 2007, the Office for Disability Issues (ODI) launched five principles for producing better information for disabled people. Since then, we have worked with four local authorities – Cheshire, Croydon, North Tyneside and Surrey – who have tested the application of these principles through their own projects. This toolkit has been developed to share their findings and provide practical guidance for other local authorities. I hope that their experiences will help to inform your own work and deliver our shared goal of further improving the life chances of disabled people.



**Jonathan Shaw, MP**  
Minister for Disabled People



# Foreword by Margaret Eaton OBE Chairman Local Government Association

The aim of any local authority must be to provide excellent services to the people that it serves. A key element of this is giving people information in a way that allows them to be able to access and fully utilise it.

There are more than 10 million people covered by the Disability Discrimination Act in Britain – a sizable part of any community and a considerable portion of our client base. If we are serious about providing information about our services, we must be serious about communicating with this large and important group. As we do this, we must recognise that disabled people have a wide range of information needs. Understanding this range of needs, along with some of the main barriers faced by particular groups, is essential if we are going to reach all segments of the disabled community.

I believe that effectively engaging disabled people as partners in decision making and service design pays huge dividends – leading to better services and outcomes for everyone. I hope you find this toolkit useful and that it will make a difference in the work that you do to make your communities better places to live.

*Margaret Eaton*

**Councillor Margaret Eaton OBE**  
Chairman, Local Government Association





# Introduction

## What is this toolkit for?

Many local authorities are doing excellent work to provide effective information about their services to disabled people. This toolkit aims to build on and support this work by sharing practical guidance that can help your organisation to:

- improve its engagement with all sections of the community
- meet your legal obligations under the Disability Equality Duty and aid your attainment of the Equality Framework for Local Government
- improve the information you provide to all service users, not just disabled people
- be more responsive to your local community and develop citizen-centred services.

This toolkit will equip you with the tools you need to provide leadership in the area of disability equality, enabling you to stay ahead of the game and to present a professional approach to disabled people.

## Who are disabled people?

The Disability Equality Duty applies to those people who are covered by the definition of a disabled person laid down in the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended in 2005. There are four main groups:

- 1 those with a current, limiting long-standing illness or disability
- 2 those with a long-standing illness or disability which would be limiting without medication or treatment
- 3 those who have had a limiting long-standing illness or disability in the past
- 4 those diagnosed with some types of progressive illnesses.

When seeking to improve information provision to disabled people, it is important to consider a wide range of access needs:

- physical or sensory impairments
- learning disabilities
- developmental disabilities
- communication impairments
- mental health support needs
- long-term and/or progressive illness
- people experiencing frailty and conditions associated with old age.

There are many local and national organisations that have the necessary expertise to assist you. They are an invaluable resource in ensuring that your information is accessible to all, thereby fulfilling your Disability Equality Duty.



## Who is this toolkit for?

This toolkit has been designed for staff working in local authorities or in organisations that provide services on behalf of local authorities. It should be particularly useful for:

- operational or project managers who are responsible for developing, delivering or improving services
- communications managers and staff who are responsible for developing campaigns, publications and information for the public
- managers working in customer services
- staff working in diversity or disability roles.



## Background

Research by the ODI has shown that inadequate information can prevent disabled people from accessing the services they need and this can affect their life chances<sup>1</sup>. Making sure that disabled people have access to good information is as important as providing effective services – and part of every public body’s responsibility under the Disability Equality Duty.

To support local authorities, ODI launched five principles of good practice guidance for information provision for public sector bodies in February 2007.

Since then, partnership pilots with Cheshire, Croydon, North Tyneside and Surrey councils have tested the principles through a range of different information projects. The partnership pilots worked together to share best practice and learn from each other’s experiences. Their findings have been used to develop the practical guidance in this toolkit.

**1 Five principles for producing better information for disabled people.**  
Office for Disability Issues. February 2007. ISBN 978-1-84695-776-5

# The five principles for producing better information for disabled people

- 1** Ensure that disabled people are involved from the start
- 2** Provide information through a range of channels and formats
- 3** Ensure your information meets users' needs
- 4** Clearly signpost other services
- 5** Always define responsibility for information provision

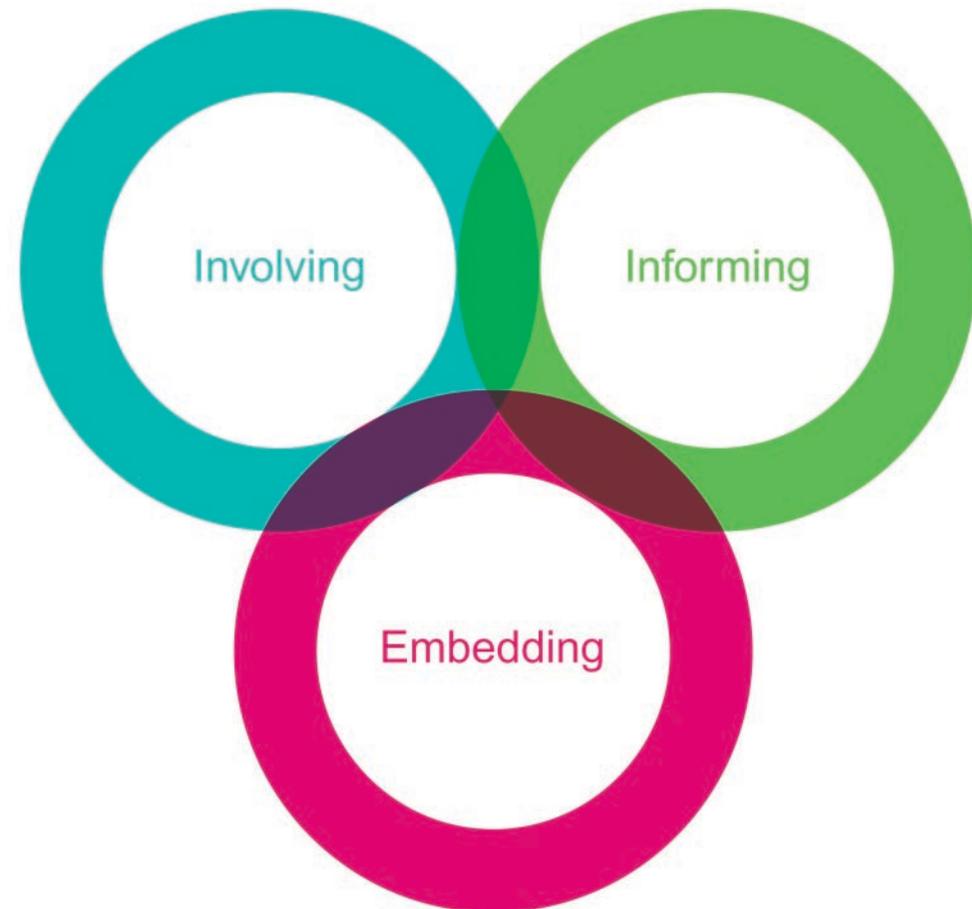
# How is this toolkit structured?

The partnership pilots identified **three core themes** that are key to providing better information for disabled people. These are:

- **Involving** disabled people and/or organisations who represent them on an ongoing basis if you are to produce information that meets disabled people's needs
- **Informing** disabled people about services through the accessible formats and channels that disabled people tell you they want to use
- **Embedding** this approach within an organisation.

In this toolkit, these three themes have been used as a framework to show how you can apply the five good practice principles to developing information provision and delivering it. These themes will overlap with each other – for example, you need to involve disabled people when you are informing them about services and when you are embedding good practice principles in your organisation. The relationship between the themes is shown in the diagram opposite.

**More detailed information about each of the partnership pilots is available in the document 'Improving provision of information to disabled people' found at [www.odi.gov.uk/working/improvinginformation.asp](http://www.odi.gov.uk/working/improvinginformation.asp)**





# Getting started

# Theme 1: Getting started

Before you can improve information provision, it is helpful to assess how effectively your organisation communicates with disabled people now.

This will give you an idea of what you are doing well and what you are doing not so well. It enables you to prioritise and to measure progress.

An important starting point is to recognise that disabled people's own organisations (often called user-led organisations) are well placed, both to assist you to ensure that your information is accessible to all and to be effective information providers themselves.

## Establish where you are now

Here are some ways to evaluate your current performance:

### Carry out research with:

- disabled people who use your services
- disabled people who don't use your services
- family carers
- staff who work in customer services, communications and in frontline services
- disabled staff within your organisation through disabled staff networks or trade unions' self-organised groups.

## Getting started

### Evaluate performance indicators, including:

- customer satisfaction rates
- the take up of public services by disabled people, analysed by impairment, age and ethnicity – this will enable you to assess whether you meet the requirement of a segmented market with different needs
- knowledge of local population baseline data
- review all templates and existing information materials including HTML and web-based data for compliance to accessibility guidelines (for example, see the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) ‘See it Right’ guidelines and W3C WAI)
- involve disabled people’s organisations in providing feedback on the information you provide
- ensure that your evaluation covers all groups of disabled people and seek specialist advice where necessary (for example, from national or local organisations representing specific groups).



# 1 Involve



# Theme 1: Involve

Involving disabled people means more than consultation. Instead, your aim should be to enable them to participate in the planning and decision making around services that affect their lives.

By involving disabled people throughout the process, you will be able to develop information that both meets their needs and promotes your organisation's services in a more effective way.

This theme gives guidance on how to involve disabled people in the design, development and delivery of information about services. The table below shows how you can use the five principles for good practice to involve disabled people effectively.

## Five principles for good practice

## Involve disabled people

**Ensure that disabled people are involved from the start**

Identify individuals, organisations, networks and stakeholders who you can involve on an ongoing basis.

**Provide information through a range of channels and formats**

Involve disabled people in deciding which channels and formats are most effective.

**Ensure your information meets users' needs**

Test information with disabled people and incorporate their feedback.

**Clearly signpost other services**

Find out about disabled people's user journeys and signpost services around them. Reduce the number of portals disabled people have to go through to get access to services.

**Always define responsibility for information provision**

Make sure there is an identified board/senior management team champion and resources for involving disabled people.

## Theme 1: Involve

### Why involve disabled people?

The only way that local authorities can provide responsive services is by engaging with disabled people and other key stakeholders so that they can understand their experiences of services at the frontline.

Involvement is not the same as consultation. Proper involvement empowers disabled people by giving them a voice that is listened to. This process should lead to changes to services or strategies that make them more responsive to users' needs.

Equally, involving disabled people can make your information provision more effective and cost efficient. It enables you to provide information in the way that disabled people really want, using channels and formats that they are able to access and use.

Make sure your organisation identifies a budget to support real involvement. Some disabled people will expect a payment for their advice and all will expect to be recompensed for reasonable expenses, including the use of personal assistants, British Sign Language interpreters, and so on.

When inviting disabled people to a meeting or event, make sure your invitation and venue are accessible. Accessible venues and events are about much more than step-free access, and you will need to consider, for example, the access needs of people with autistic spectrum disorder, visual impairment, or mental health support needs.

Try to ensure that your publicity materials are accessible to all and ask those you invite to tell you about their access needs, as well as needs such as dietary requirements.



“User involvement leads to improved outcomes for service delivery and is therefore an economical and efficient activity for any organisation in the long term.”

**Customer Service Director**



## Theme 1: Involve

### How should you involve disabled people?

How you involve disabled people will depend on what you do and what you are trying to achieve. For example:

- if you are developing a new service then you might want to set up a specific project team that includes disabled people who will be involved in designing the service
- if you want to find out about the issues that your organisation needs to address, you might engage disabled people through surveys, focus groups and events
- if you are testing a publicity campaign then you may want to set up a virtual team (a team of people who don't meet in person but correspond by email) to view materials and comment on them.

There are also less formal ways of involving service users on a day-to-day basis – for example, acting on feedback given to frontline staff, although informal feedback on its own is not enough to be considered true involvement.

### Who should you involve?

You should try to involve disabled people with a wide range of impairments. You cannot be expected to include people with every kind of impairment but you should be talking to as broad a group as possible.

You shouldn't exclude people because they have impairments that make involvement more difficult or more expensive. You need to be prepared to provide the support they need to contribute.

Disabled people's own organisations can be an invaluable resource to help you ensure that you involve as wide a range of people as possible.

## What skills should they have?

Disabled people should be encouraged to give their views about a wide range of issues – they don't have to 'represent' their disability. You should seek to involve disabled people who are of different ages and from different social backgrounds. You should also include disabled people from black and minority ethnic communities.

Ideally, you should look to involve disabled people who have expertise in the particular area you are working on. For example, it would make sense to involve people who use social care services in the development of information about social services.

Individuals who are representing an organisation should consult and report back to the organisation or members that they represent. You should agree together how this will be done at the start of your project and build into your project plan the time that this requires.



## Theme 1: Involve

### The barriers to involvement

#### Disabled people may not want or be able to get involved because:

- they don't believe their involvement will make a difference
- they have had poor experiences of being involved in the past
- they don't know what they are signing up to
- they are worried about the consequences of saying what they think, particularly if they are current service users and have negative comments to make
- they need specific responses to their access needs – for example, if they experience communication barriers, if travelling to meetings is difficult, or if they find meetings tiring because of a long-term health condition
- there are financial barriers – for example, they might need reimbursements for travel costs. It is unreasonable to expect disabled people to provide consultancy advice at their own expense
- they think it is unfair that they don't get paid for giving their time and expertise.

#### Organisational barriers to getting disabled people involved include:

- staff not being sure how to approach and involve disabled people
- staff being concerned that people might complain about services or them personally
- staff not understanding how it can be of benefit to the organisation
- not having enough time or financial resources
- relying on a small group of disabled people who have limited knowledge of the range of access needs amongst the disabled population.

We hope that this resource will address some of these issues.



## Case Study:

### North Tyneside Council

North Tyneside Council carried out a project to involve residents through a general customer service survey, with an emphasis on involving the full range of residents, including disabled people.

The project actively sought to go out to residents and engage with them directly. This involved:

- visiting disabled people in their homes, workplaces, shopping centres and leisure venues
- using a range of channels to gather views including telephone, the internet, events, face-to-face communications and direct mail.

As a result, the project received an exceptionally high response rate from disabled people, including the involvement of previously disengaged disabled people.

## Theme 1: Involve

### Involving disabled people checklist

#### 1 Organisational support

- Get senior buy-in and support for your project.
- Plan effectively and make sure you have enough time to involve disabled people properly.
- Make sure you have enough funding to enable disabled people's participation.
- Get staff support and buy-in.
- Provide training if necessary.



“I sometimes find the meetings hard to understand, because when they try and talk about things I’m sitting there trying to listen. I do try and get my PA to explain things, but when my PA is explaining things to me, I’m missing another bit.”

**Project Steering Group Representative**

## 2 Setting objectives

The partnership pilots found that involvement was more effective when disabled people were involved in establishing project objectives. Establish:

- why you want to involve disabled people
- what it is you want to achieve through disabled people's involvement.

Establishing these things should help disabled people play a meaningful role in your overall project planning (setting milestones, deliverables, responsibilities, etc).

## 3 Finding disabled people to get involved

- Speak to your diversity officer or communications champions to find out if groups and networks already exist.
- Involve existing service users through projects, schemes and contacts within your local authority.
- Advertise in local newspapers or go out to people who don't use council services.
- Talk to disability groups and organisations in your area, in particular by seeking out organisations run by disabled people themselves.
- Ensure you cover as wide a range of groups as possible, and seek advice and information from relevant national organisations if required (see **Useful Organisations** on the ODI website).

[www.odi.gov.uk/contact/links-contacts.asp](http://www.odi.gov.uk/contact/links-contacts.asp)

## Theme 1: Involve

### 4 What people need to know

When you recruit people, you need to be clear about exactly what is expected of them. Be realistic about the extent of their commitment and address any concerns about confidentiality or speaking out about the council. People will also want to know:

- what the project is about and how they can support it
- how much time they will be expected to commit
- what their role is, what the limits are (for example, what's already been decided, what the financial constraints are) and what decisions they will and will not be able to make
- the kind of support that you will be able to provide them – for example, support with travel, support in meetings
- whether they will receive payment for taking part and how this will be provided (and you should discuss whether this will affect benefit payments). Offer signposting to organisations who can advise on whether such payments would affect benefits
- whether they will receive payment for travel or other costs (for example, costs incurred for personal assistants or child care) and how this will be provided
- what the authority hopes to achieve as a result of their involvement
- an assurance that they will be informed about how their contribution has made a difference
- whether post-project, they will be involved in continuous improvement.



## 5 Meetings

There are many different ways of involving disabled people, but meetings are particularly important as a mechanism for involvement.

- Meetings need to be booked as far in advance as possible, and the time and agendas should take into account disabled people's needs. For example, don't book meetings too early in the morning (some disabled people require extra time to get ready in the morning), build in enough breaks (some disabled people such as those with learning disabilities find it easier to work for short concentrated periods of time) and make sure that there is enough time to cover all items on the agenda at a reasonable pace.
- Venues must be fully accessible. It is best to send someone in person to assess the level of accessibility.
- Make sure that all project members are fully supported and that meeting agendas take into account individual needs.
- Check in advance and on the day that communication equipment, such as hearing loops, are working.
- Provide Plain English versions of all documents associated with the meeting, and ensure that the RNIB's 'See it Right' guidelines are followed in terms of font size, colour combinations, etc. If people with learning disabilities are involved, provide Easy Read versions, which have been produced by an organisation with the relevant expertise.
- Ask people if they have any specific requirements to enable them to access any information presented using, for example, PowerPoint presentations, graphics, or other visual aids. As a matter of course, PowerPoint presentations should use strongly-contrasting colours and large fonts. Refer to RNIB's 'See it Right' guidelines for more on this. Presenters should read the actual text on the slides, taking time to describe and explain graphs and diagrams.

## Theme 1: Involve

### 6 Regular updates

- Any information that you provide throughout the involvement process should be clear and available in accessible formats where necessary. Make sure that technical language or acronyms are explained. Jargon should be avoided at all costs because it has the effect of excluding those not routinely involved with the project.
- Provide regular feedback about what you have agreed and how this will be taken forward.



## 2 Inform



## Theme 2: Inform

Informing disabled people about services isn't just about providing information in different channels and formats. It is about providing the right information at the right time and ensuring that people know where and how they can get the information they need.

Evaluation enables you to determine whether the information you are providing is effective.

The partnership pilots found that improving information for disabled people benefited other service users, as information about services was clearer and easier to understand.

This theme gives guidance on some of the ways that you can make information more accessible and effective. However, the only way that you can ensure that information is really meeting disabled people's needs is by asking them.

The table overleaf shows how you can use the five principles for good practice to inform disabled people about services using accessible formats and channels.



## Five principles for good practice

## Inform disabled people about services

**Ensure that disabled people are involved from the start**

Find out what information disabled people want and how they want it to be provided.

**Provide information through a range of channels and formats**

Make sure disabled people are aware that information is available, where it is available and in which formats.

**Ensure your information meets users' needs**

Test new materials with different groups of disabled people. Actively seek feedback and act on it.

**Clearly signpost other services**

Make sure that users have all the information they need about other services.

**Always define responsibility for information provision**

Make sure you have enough time and resources to produce materials in a range of formats and channels. Check out its accessibility with the intended users.

## Planning

You should think about disabled people's needs at the start of all communications projects.

- Ask disabled people what their needs are in relation to the information being provided.
- Make sure that materials for the public are as accessible as possible as standard (for example, use Plain English and follow RNIB's 'See it Right' guidelines) and provide information about the availability of alternative formats.
- Make sure you have enough time and resources to provide information in a range of formats and channels at the same time as standard information, and/or for speedy provision of particular formats on demand – it is not acceptable to produce standard material and follow up with accessible versions weeks after. Producing alternative formats such as Braille or audio can add time onto production schedules (see Useful contacts on page 60 for further information)

- Make sure you have enough time and resources to involve disabled people in developing, testing, monitoring and reviewing materials.
- Build response and feedback mechanisms into the information you produce. Review this feedback regularly and plan how you are going to use it when producing future communications materials.

## The right information

Getting the content right is as important as providing information in accessible formats.

- Ask disabled people what information they want and how they want it laid out to ensure it is clear and logical.
- Focus on how people want to use your services, not how you organise your services.
- Think about organising content around life events, such as the onset of disability, the transition from childhood to adulthood, leaving school, advice on independent or supported living, employment, parenthood, leisure, social activities, growing old, etc.

## Theme 2: Inform

- Get the right balance between signposting users to information about other services. Users don't want to be overloaded with information, but equally they don't want to be continually referred elsewhere to get the information they want.
- Work with partners to make sure that information is up to date (and is kept so in the future through identified leads) and that they are signposting people to your services as well.

### Plain English

All communications, no matter who they are for, should use simple, clear language:

- keep your sentences short
- use active verbs
- use 'you' and 'we'
- avoid jargon and use words that the reader is likely to understand. Ask disabled people if you are not sure they will understand certain words or terminology
- use lists where appropriate.

For more information, go to: [www.plainenglish.co.uk](http://www.plainenglish.co.uk) and consider getting your material Crystal marked and your staff trained in the production of Plain English.

### Promoting information

Make sure that people know information exists and how they can get hold of it.

- Ask disabled people where they get their information from.
- Make information available in public places throughout your community, for example, one-stop shops, information kiosks, stations, bus stops, schools, colleges, community centres, notice boards, places of worship, leisure centres, supermarkets, post offices, bingo halls, sport and other leisure venues, further, higher and adult education colleges, etc.

- Use members of the community to provide information about services; for example, GPs, practice nurses, GP receptionists, employers, social workers, police officers, bus drivers, refuse collectors, postal delivery workers, call centre staff, home helps, housing association staff, primary care trust (PCT) staff (such as community nurses), teachers, etc.
- Target communications to people's homes through face-to-face visits and direct mail.
- Work in partnership with disabled people's own organisations to provide information to the different groups of disabled people.
- Promote information through key partners; for example, information providers, voluntary sector organisations and public sector bodies such as PCTs, the police, the fire service, housing associations, etc.
- Provide disability equality training for staff to help them promote information to disabled people.
- Use local authority or free newspapers.



## Theme 2: Inform

### Channels and formats

Finding out how disabled people want information to be provided means that you can decide which are the most cost-effective channels and formats. The main channels for communicating with disabled people are described below, with specific guidance on the types of accessible formats that can be used to support people with different impairments.

#### The internet

- Assistive technology such as screen readers enable people with visual impairments to use computers and access websites. However, not all disabled people have access to these technologies so you should also think about providing additional features that can help disabled users – for example, allowing users to customise the appearance of the site.
- Don't assume everyone has access to the internet at home. As part of any information campaign, you should promote where the internet can be accessed for free – for example, in local libraries, and provide information about public transport, Dial-A-Ride/community transport so that people know how to get to the library. Consider widening access to the internet through placing free internet access in services such as community and day centres, residential homes, etc.
- Promote your website through partners and stakeholders, targeting disabled people's own organisations in particular.
- Keep web pages up to date to ensure people aren't given the wrong information.
- Make sure your information is consistent with partner providers.

## Web accessibility guidelines

Anyone who commissions a website needs to ensure that the website upholds agreed W3C WAI guidelines and specifications. You should also think about additional features that will help disabled people, including:

- allowing users to change the appearance of the site according to their needs (for example, background colour, text size) without damaging the layout
- making printable pages available with clear instructions for printing
- keeping the design as simple and clear as possible
- avoiding the use of tables for page layout
- considering British Sign Language and Easy Read content
- making sure all PDF files are accessible (for example, tagged and book marked) and that an alternative is provided (for example, a rich text or word format)
- making sure navigation is logical
- asking your users for feedback on the site.

There is also guidance available from the British Standards Institute, PAS78, which provides detail on commissioning and developing accessible websites.

**[www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publicationsandresources/disability/pages/websiteaccessibilityguidance.aspx](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publicationsandresources/disability/pages/websiteaccessibilityguidance.aspx)**





## Theme 2: Inform

“There is an over-reliance on e-communications to inform the public and our staff. According to our 2007 Media Survey, residents want to receive information about the council through newsletters (52%), leaflets through the door (46%), in local newspapers (36%) and in public places (16%). Only two-thirds of residents use the Internet and just 12% want to receive council information from the website.”

**Local authority project member**

## Print

There are some basic rules for making printed publications more accessible:

- print on matt paper that is thick enough so that print does not show through
- do not underline words or use italics or large blocks of capitals
- use a clear sans serif typeface, for example Arial, that is at least 12pt for standard copy
- align text to the left but not to the right – text should not be centred, or justified
- make sure that you use colours that are easy to read. It is easier to read black on white than red on yellow
- make sure that there is enough space between paragraphs and columns (see RNIB's 'See it Right' guidelines for more information on how to do this)
- do not split words between lines
- use simple illustrations, images or diagrams to help explain text but always include explanatory text as well.

Further guidance is available from the RNIB's 'See it Right' guidelines ([www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk)).

It is important that all staff understand your organisation's communications guidelines.

## Theme 2: Inform



“They need to improve the environment — provide appointment times, widen the working hours, give help on form filling, better seating, make it less stark, more user-friendly and welcoming.”

**40+, parent of disabled child**

### Public offices

As well as making sure that disabled people can get into buildings, it is important that public offices are comfortable, safe and welcoming.

- Work in partnership with disabled people's own organisations to carry out audits of access to public offices.
- Manage displays of information and make sure that materials are up to date and easy to reach.
- Make some alternative formats available as a matter of course in displays of information (for example, large print, Easy Read) and provide information about what other alternative formats are available and how to get them.
- Make queuing systems accessible with audio and visual prompts.
- Ensure staff are disability equality trained and can communicate effectively with disabled people.
- Make sure that people are asked about any access needs when they wish to use a public service and that staff are well informed about how to meet such needs.
- Make sure there is good lighting but avoid glare.
- Ensure that an induction loop system is installed and that staff are aware of how it works.
- Provide seating at different heights in waiting areas.
- Make sure that there is enough space for wheelchairs and scooters to get around and make sure desks are at a comfortable height for wheelchair users.
- Use contrasting colours on signage and ensure non-reflective material is used.
- Avoid using hanging signs.
- Install tactile flooring that warns people when they are approaching a change in level.
- Provide private areas to discuss sensitive issues.

## Theme 2: Inform

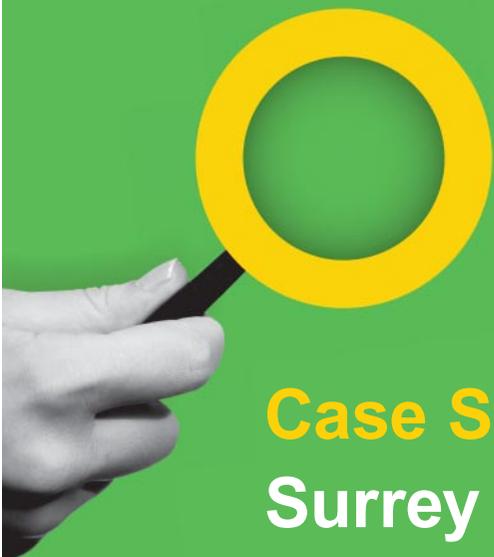
### Information for people with visual impairments

- Braille is the preferred reading medium for 20,000 people in the UK and many more use it for labelling or signs. The RNIB provides a transcription service for Braille, large print and audio and there are often local transcription services available, often run by disabled people.
- Many younger people with visual impairments do not use Braille and instead favour audio formats such as mp3 or CD.
- Large print is usually considered to be 16pt or more. RNIB's 'See it Right' guidelines have information about developing large print publications.
- Audio information can be produced through converter software packages. Digital recordings are better quality and can be amended more easily. Where possible, use professional scripting and voices as low-quality recordings are difficult to listen to. Also, ensure that PDF documents are tagged and bookmarked.

For further guidance on all of the above, go to [www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk)

### Information for people with learning difficulties

- Easy Read versions use simple language and images to illustrate points made in the text. A guide called 'How to use easy words and pictures' is available from the Equality and Human Rights Commission. For more information go to: [www.equalityhumanrights.com/Documents/Disability/General\\_advice/How\\_to\\_use\\_Easy\\_Words\\_and\\_Pictures.pdf](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/Documents/Disability/General_advice/How_to_use_Easy_Words_and_Pictures.pdf)
- A number of organisations can produce Easy Read versions of information. See Useful contacts (page 60) but also check out whether there is a local organisation which can provide this service for you.
- Symbols or signs from programmes such as Makaton or Widgit use everyday images to communicate. For more information, go to [www.makaton.org](http://www.makaton.org) or [www.widgit.com](http://www.widgit.com)



## Case Study: Surrey County Council

“You cannot underestimate the importance of promoting the existence of the information in the first place – make sure disabled people know that the information is there.”

Some of the outcomes of the Surrey partnership pilot were:

- working to make the website more accessible
- changing the contact answer machine to make it easier to hear
- changing the Contact Centre resident feedback form by increasing the point size and reducing the amount of text on the form. This has led to ten times as many forms being returned.

### Information for deaf people

British Sign Language (BSL) is recognised as an official language in the UK. There are between 70,000 and 250,000 users of BSL. Here are some examples of how to communicate with people with hearing loss.

- Textphones, also known as minicomms, are phones that have a small screen and keyboard attached to them. This means that people who have a hearing loss or who are deaf can type messages instead of talking. Typetalk connects people who cannot speak or hear on the phone with other people using a telephone, by providing a text-to-voice and voice-to-text relay service. You should promote textphone/text services where possible and make sure that staff are trained on how to use them. Go to **[www.typetalk.org](http://www.typetalk.org)** for more information.
- The Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID) has developed a piece of software called TalkByText. It allows two people to write text to each other in real time on their computers, or between a computer and a minicom. For more information go to **[www.ictrnid.org.uk/talkbytext.html](http://www.ictrnid.org.uk/talkbytext.html)**
- There is often a shortage of BSL interpreters in a particular area and it is important that you have

arrangements in place to ensure that a BSL interpreter can be booked when required. (See Useful contacts on page 61 for further information).

- There are a number of companies who provide remote interpreting services using videophones and webcams. They have the advantage of being available as and when they are needed. This makes them very cost effective for short meetings. However, they require access to technology and they lack the same degree of expression or emotion that is felt by having an interpreter in the room.
- You can use BSL downloads on your website or sign video-interpreting services which allow telephone conversations to be interpreted over a video/phone webcam.
- Other methods of communication include lip reading and using palantypists (a touch type method translating verbal dialogue onto a computer-projected screen for the user to read).

For more information, go to **[www.rnid.org.uk/information\\_resources/factsheets/communication/factsheets\\_leaflets/working\\_with\\_a\\_bsl\\_english\\_interpreter.htm](http://www.rnid.org.uk/information_resources/factsheets/communication/factsheets_leaflets/working_with_a_bsl_english_interpreter.htm)**

# 3 Embed



# Theme 3: Embed

The partnership pilots found that providing better information to disabled people cannot be achieved through one-off projects or initiatives.

Organisations need to embed a focus on disabled people if they are truly committed to promoting equality, in particular, how to involve them into everyday working practices. Many of the principles go beyond information provision and can be applied to other work the

organisation does. This theme outlines some of the different ways that embedding improvement can be achieved. The table below summarises how you can use the five principles for good practice to embed a focus on disabled people within your organisation.

## Five principles for good practice

## Involve disabled people

**Ensure that disabled people are involved from the start**

Make user involvement part of service design, development and delivery. Build up good working relationships with local organisations of disabled people.

**Provide information through a range of channels and formats**

Regularly audit and review how your organisation provides information.

**Ensure your information meets users' needs**

Routinely test the information you provide with the people who use it and act on their feedback.

**Clearly signpost other services**

Build and sustain relationships with other organisations across the voluntary, statutory and private sectors, and work together to provide information for service users.

**Always define responsibility for information provision**

Make sure there is corporate commitment, resources and accountability to improve information for disabled people.

## Theme 3: Embed

### Define responsibility

You should make sure that there is ongoing corporate senior level leadership commitment, coherent resources and clear accountability before you can start to improve information for disabled people.

- Have a designated senior manager with responsibility for ensuring that information is accessible for disabled people.
- Establish communications champions who are responsible for reviewing and monitoring information within their service or work area.
- Make it clear that communications champions are expected to involve disabled people and their organisations in these tasks, and provide them with the necessary information, support and resources to enable them to do this.
- Build a network of champions across an organisation who report into a single manager. As well as monitoring information provision in their service or work area, they will be able to share best practice, test new ideas and raise issues that need to be addressed.
- Ensure that communications champions and their managers have the necessary training to increase and keep up to date their knowledge of the range of access needs within the local population and how best to meet these needs. Involve disabled people's own organisations in the design and provision of such training.
- Include accessible information provision in managers' competencies and performance objectives.
- Make sure appropriate training is provided to senior managers on how to incorporate the needs of disabled people into strategy development. Involve disabled people's organisations in the design and provision of such training.



## Case Study: London Borough of Croydon

“I think in Croydon there is the potential for information to be very good – they’re going in the right direction.”

The main aim of the Croydon project was to improve information for disabled people. By involving disabled people from the start the council could ensure it was producing information that was useful and fully accessible.

The project:

- championed partnerships – showing the council, local voluntary organisations of disabled people, local public sector health and social care organisations that through working together they could achieve the best results
- gave disabled people the power to make decisions – planning, testing, developing and maintaining material
- promoted engagement – looking at how to reach out and engage with stakeholders who were important to the success of the project.



## Case Study: Cheshire County Council

“The project has brought lots of people together. It’s been a catalyst for organisations to work together more closely.”

The main aim of the Cheshire project was to create a fully integrated directory for disabled people. This would give details of a wide range of public services across Cheshire and how to access them.

The project:

- involved representatives from six voluntary organisations and consulted disabled people
- considered the different access needs of disabled people
- led to increased awareness and uptake of the services promoted in the directory.

## Support staff

Staff need to be aware of your organisation's responsibilities under the Disability Equality Duty.

- Provide inductions or signpost new staff to information about your organisation's Disability Equality Scheme and the role that they can play in supporting the scheme.
  - Run internal promotion campaigns that raise awareness of why accessibility is important.
  - Make sure staff use communications teams when developing information for service users. Never allow information into the public domain, until it has received sign-off from a member of the communications team.
  - Provide them with a copy of this document and encourage them to read it. Also refer to the 'Images of Disability' guidance for government communications which is set out on ODI's website [www.odi.gov.uk/imagesofdisability](http://www.odi.gov.uk/imagesofdisability)
- Promote and reward good examples of accessible information. Share feedback about how effective your communications are and how you are working to improve them.
  - Make sure that software and applications enable staff to produce information in accessible formats. Remove all forms, fonts and templates that are inaccessible. Develop and promote a catalogue of accessible hardware and software.
  - Provide appropriate training – for example, staff who are responsible for updating web pages should be given guidance about writing Plain English for the web and be kept informed about developments and best practice in this area.
  - Ensure staff know how to respond to requests for alternative formats – and resources available locally for translation, converting to large print/audio/Braille, etc.

## Theme 3: Embed

### Procuring goods and services

Make sure that your procurement agencies or contractors are committed to promoting equality.

Although equality considerations go beyond information provision, the organisations you have contact with are key to you providing information in an accessible way.

All tenders should ensure that goods and services meet equality legislation in a detailed way. Simple statements agreeing to adhere to a piece of legislation are not adequate – detail how your partners should comply, as both employer and service provider.

Consider drafting a framework, set out clauses for all tenders and contracts, and then significantly weigh your scoring on equality issues. Then develop key performance indicators to enable you to monitor performance – use your purchasing power!

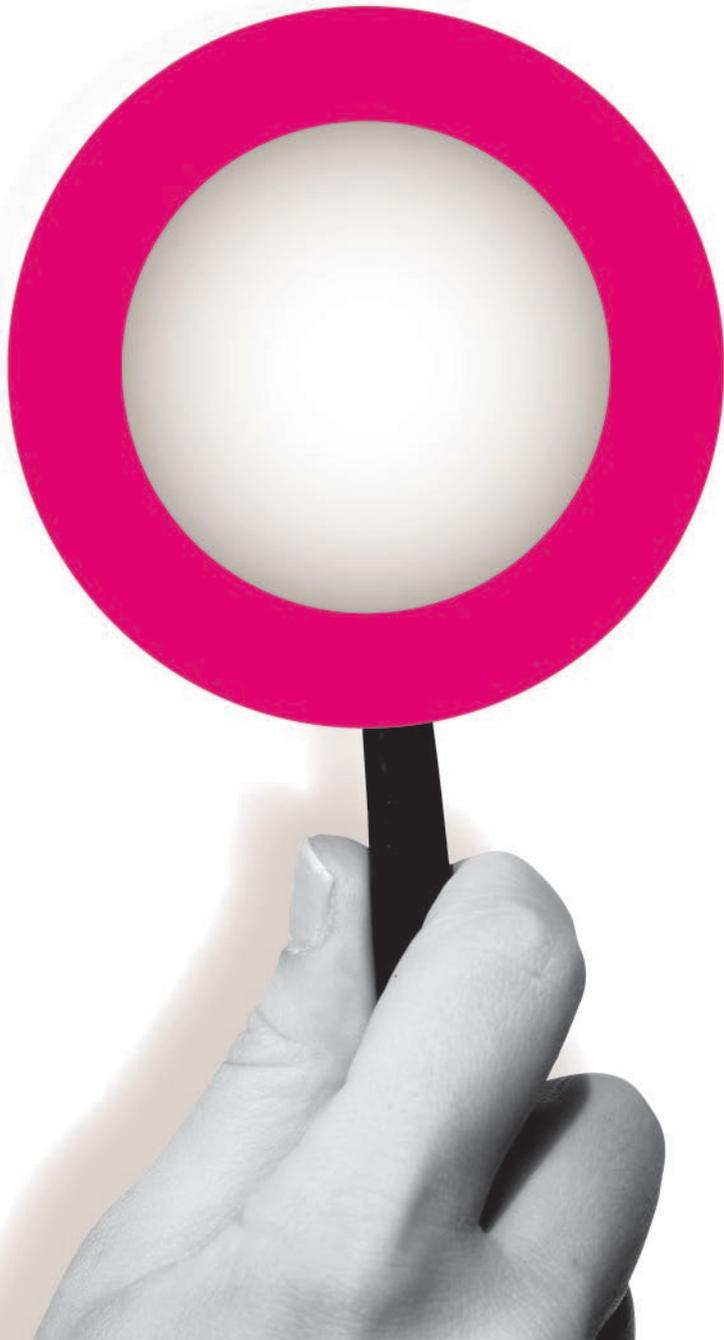
Develop or signpost to communication guidelines for voluntary organisations and public sector partners.

Contract individuals or organisations that are experts in equality legislation to help you review contracted organisations' adherence to equality standards.



“Whilst our council has very good communication guidelines, staff awareness of them is poor and their application is therefore inconsistent. Consequently, we provide information to the public and our staff that is either inaccessible or inappropriate.”

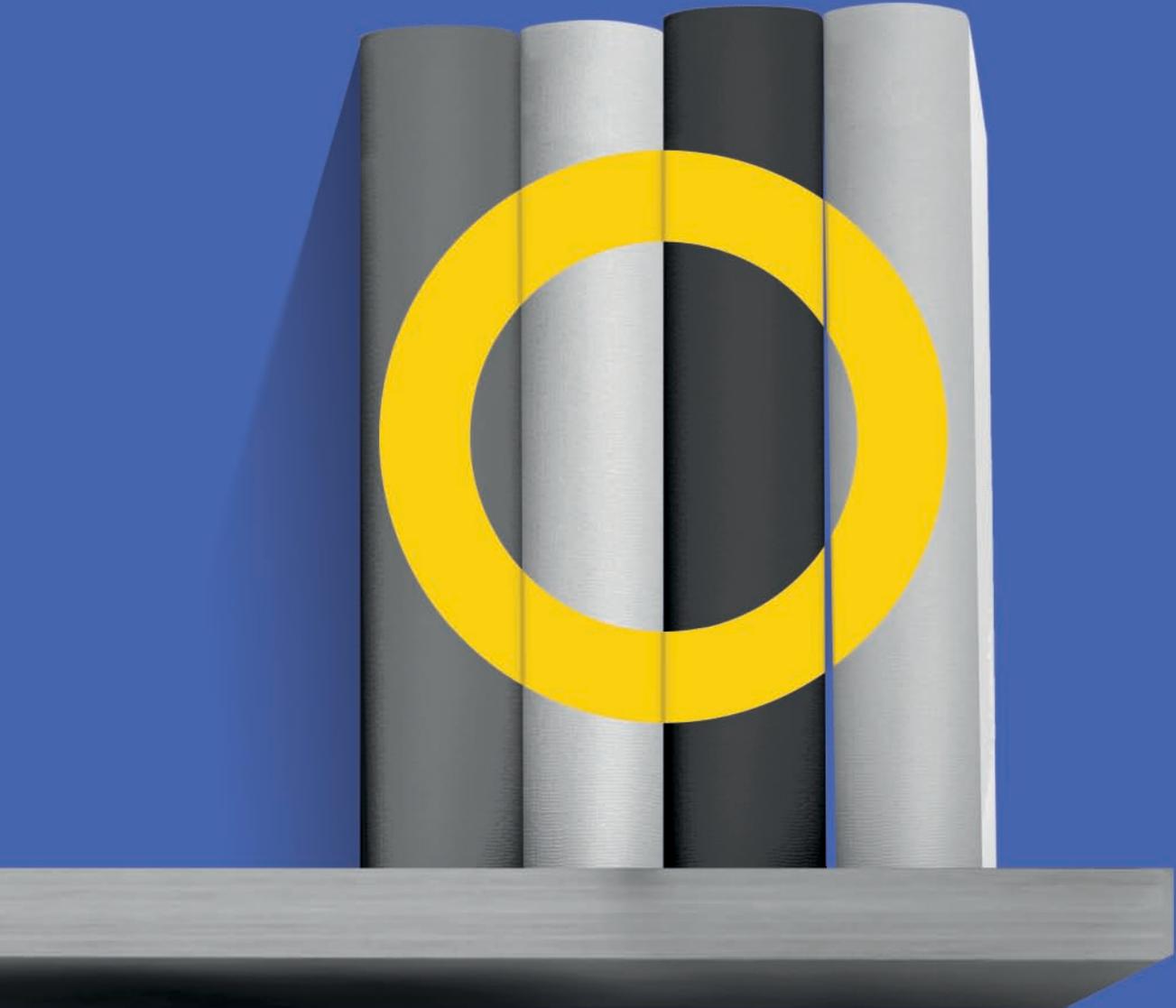
Local authority project report



### Monitor accessibility

Regularly audit and review how your organisation provides information.

- Make communications champions responsible for regular monitoring.
- Establish a formal annual audit of information to make sure that information is targeted, accessible and improved where possible. Regularly review templates, forms and documents.
- Involve disabled people's own organisations in auditing information provision.
- Establish systems for collecting and acting upon user feedback. Make sure that formal or informal feedback from disabled people and other service users is fed back to service providers and communications teams.
- Develop a central process for managing the production of information in different formats.
- Capture all of this information in your Disability Equality Scheme, thus making the monitoring a corporate requirement that then gets published.



# 4 Appendix

# Appendix

Four partnership pilots tested the five principles for providing better information for disabled people. How each of the projects applied the principles is described here.

## Surrey County Council

### What was the aim of the project?

To develop recommendations that would ensure that the council provides accessible information to disabled people, in a cost-effective and targeted manner. This would:

- take forward the requirements for information provision in the council's Disability Equality Scheme
- share existing good practice across the council
- embed the information needs of disabled people in the council's broader communications strategy
- develop user-led information services.

### How did the project apply the five principles for providing better information for disabled people?

#### Principle 1: Involve disabled people from the start

- An initial event involving disabled people, staff responsible for providing information and other key stakeholders was held before the project objectives were agreed.
- An Advisory Reference Group (ARG) was created, which included representatives from voluntary organisations, pan-impairment organisations and partnership boards.
- The disabled people also consulted with members of the organisations they represented to get a broader range of views.
- Disabled people from groups not initially represented were consulted separately.
- External disabled consultants were also involved in the project.

### **Principle 2: Provide information through a range of channels and formats**

- This project was about developing a business case for how future information is provided. Therefore, no external-facing information was actually developed within the time limits of the project. However, the project used this principle to think about how information should be provided in the future – for example, the ARG stressed the need to take account of users who are unable or do not want to use technology.
- The project team made sure that information produced as part of the project was accessible, including a regular Easy Read update.

### **Principle 3: Make sure information meets users' needs**

- The ARG and disabled consultants assessed the accessibility of the council's information and put forward suggestions for improving it.
- The council has clear standards set out in its communication guidelines.

### **Principle 4: Clearly signpost other services**

- The team found that partnership working was essential to making sure that disabled people could get effective information about other services. To achieve this, it invited partners, including voluntary organisations, public authorities and Primary Care Trusts (PCT) to get involved in the initial stakeholder day and other events.

### **Principle 5: Always define responsibility for information provision**

- The project board included key staff across services to increase awareness of the project and develop links with existing council work.
- The council's head of communications was the project sponsor.
- The executive member for adults and community care was involved in the project from the start.

### What were the outcomes of the project?

An action plan was agreed by the county council management team. Actions included:

- an awareness campaign and surgeries on how Surrey communicates and why the use of communications guidelines are important
- development of a network of representatives from each of the council's services to give advice to colleagues on producing accessible information and to ensure that the communications guidelines are applied
- an increase in the council's capacity to produce alternative formats by training designers to produce Easy Read and trialling software that produces large print, audio and Braille formats at the touch of a button
- improvement in how the council communicates with deaf residents and staff, for example, by providing deaf staff with videophones and access to a remote sign language interpreting service.

### What were the key successes?

- The working relationship between the council team and the ARG was positive, constructive and respectful.
- The ARG felt that their input had been properly considered throughout the project. Many wanted to continue being involved to make sure that the action plan was implemented.
- The ARG focused on the broad nature of the objectives from the start of the project, not just on their own impairment specific issues.
- Awareness of providing accessible information has been raised across the council.



### Cheshire County Council

#### What was the aim of the project?

To create a fully integrated and accessible Information Directory for all users of council services, but particularly meeting the needs of disabled users. This would describe services provided by a wide range of public authorities in Cheshire and give information about how to access these. Working to a steering group on which a varied range of stakeholders were represented, the project worked with a number of voluntary organisations, disabled people and public authorities to:

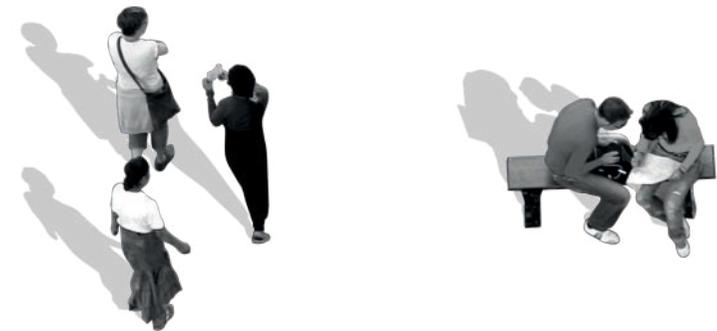
- map current information provision and identify and agree gaps in provision
- agree quality of life indicators
- identify innovative communications practice
- test information methods with user groups and disabled people, which would inform how the directory was delivered.

#### How did the project apply the five principles for better information provision?

##### Principle 1: Involve disabled people from the start

- An accessible information survey was used to get residents' views on existing local information directories and information provided by the borough and district councils. It also asked residents what they wanted from a fully-integrated directory.
- A disabled person was included in the steering group.

Cheshire recognised that to do even more in this area, they would seek to engage disabled people even earlier than they did on this occasion to achieve the right level of engagement.



**Principle 2: Provide information through a range of channels and formats**

- The findings from the accessible information survey showed that people wanted a printed version of the directory.
- The directory would also be available online. This would also be used by customer services staff who could direct customers to the right information and print off tailored information for them.
- A number of Braille and Easy Read versions of the directory were produced.
- There was a focus on Easy Read within the directory.

**Principle 3: Make sure information meets users' needs**

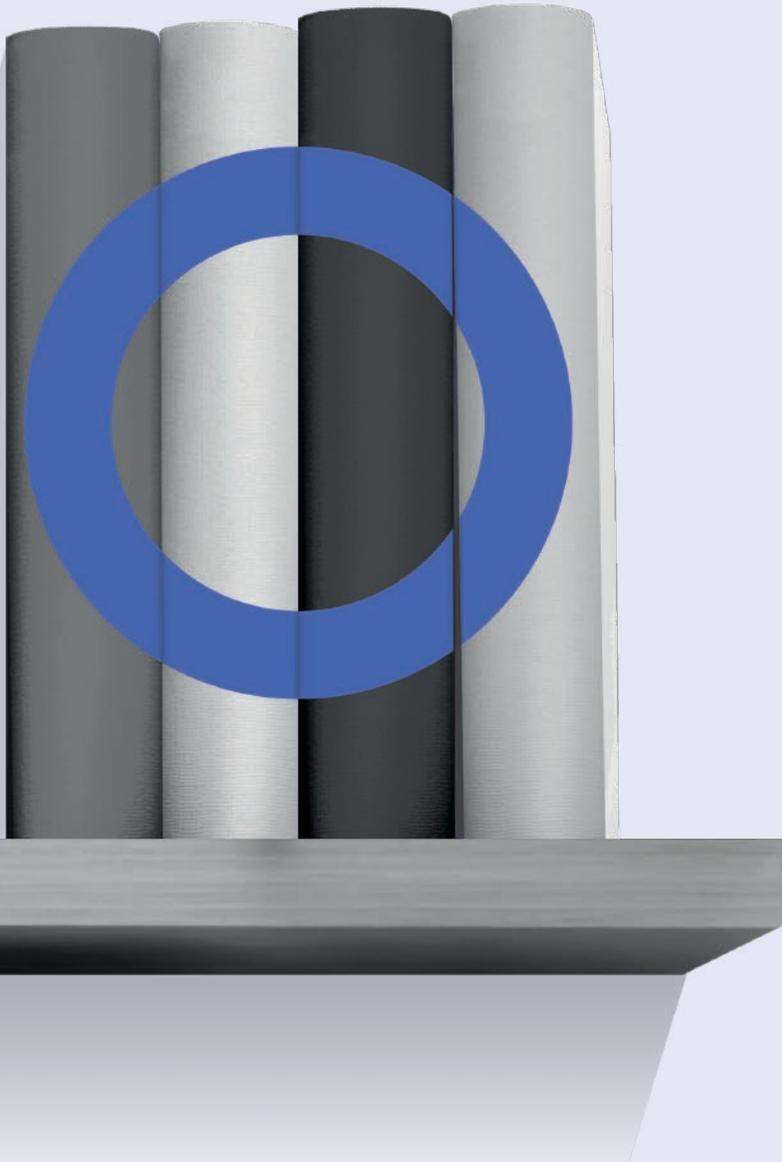
- The accessible information survey asked users what they wanted from a directory. As a result of feedback, information was structured as an A to Z of local and national services provided by local authorities, PCTs, police, fire and third sector bodies. It was highlighted in the directory when boroughs offered individual services.

**Principle 4: Clearly signpost other services**

- This principle was at the centre of the Cheshire project and the project team felt that the directory had vastly improved signposting for residents.
- The process of the project also improved partnership working with other stakeholders.

**Principle 5: Always define responsibility for information provision**

- Specific resources were allocated to remunerate the steering group. This meant more resources could be committed to the project.



### **What were the key outcomes?**

- The directory was launched in May 2008 via third sector partners across Cheshire. Copies were distributed to council offices (and call centres), libraries, police stations, fires stations, PCT offices and voluntary sector partners.

### **What were the key successes?**

- The leadership and the facilitation of the group by the council had helped to develop consensus within the group and provided a channel for feeding views back to the wider council.
- The project had provided a chance to develop partnership working, as the directory had become a catalyst for making contact and creating/improving relationships.
- The project had given momentum to the issue of accessible information within the council.
- The accessible engagement survey had engaged users who had not previously had a relationship with the council.
- Research evaluation showed that residents liked the finished directory and they felt that the approach taken would improve information provision in the future.

## London Borough of Croydon

### What was the aim of the project?

To look at ways that various organisations across the borough could jointly make information for health and social care, housing, learning and leisure easily accessible to people with disabilities. There were three strands of work:

- to develop a brief for a new independent living centre website
- to involve users in the development of a communications strategy for disabled people in Croydon
- to develop cross-partnership information in a range of formats for Croydon Council/PCT/SLAM/Mayday/Voluntary sector for signposting for health and social care, housing, transport, learning and leisure, and for independent living.

### How did the project apply the five principles for better information provision?

#### Principle 1: Involve disabled people from the start

- Three core members of the steering group were disabled. This included the Chair and Vice Chair.
- Clarity of the scope of the project from the outset could have been improved and this has been taken forward as a learning point.

#### Principle 2: Provide information through a range of channels and formats

- The original remit of the project related to looking at the website within the wider context of information provision. The initial outline for the website was shown to a small number of disabled residents who found it extremely accessible, simple and written in Plain English.

### Principle 3: Make sure information meets users' needs

- The project's aim was that the website would evolve on an ongoing basis as the result of user feedback. Both steering group members and disabled residents wanted disabled people who were not already using the site to test and develop it too.
- They also endorsed the involvement of disabled people in planning, testing, developing and maintaining the site. This is now being implemented.

### Principle 4: Clearly signpost other services

- The project looked at how the council, voluntary organisations and others could work together in partnership and produce an independent living centre website.
- The steering group looked at how they could work together to pool their information sources and identify strengths, weaknesses, gaps and opportunities.

### Principle 5: Always define responsibility for information provision

- The authority identified that the buy-in of a senior sponsor is key to ensuring good progress in this area.

### What were the key outcomes?

- The website is in development and will be launched soon.



### What were the key successes?

- The project was successful in formally engaging disabled people through the steering group and was structured to give them full autonomy to take the project forward.
- The project raised the issue of how best to promote engagement: how to reach out proactively to stakeholders who may be interested in or important to the success of the project, rather than expecting that they will find out about projects.
- Residents were very positive about the website brief developed by the steering group and they believed that it would remove some significant barriers to access to information that they had identified through their mystery shop exercise.
- They were particularly positive about the accessibility, content and plans for supporting access to the website. Key benefits of the website consistently highlighted:
  - less time, hassle and stress involved with accessing information
  - greater sense of control, choice and independence in relation to accessing information
  - provision of a clear single point of responsibility for provision of information to disabled people.



### North Tyneside Council

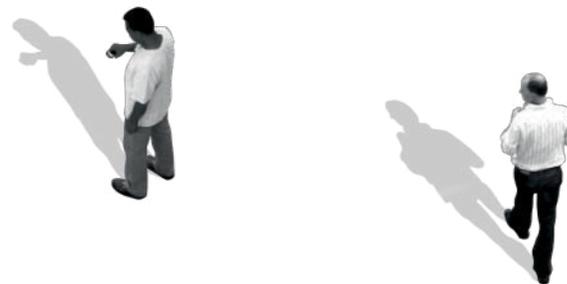
#### What was the aim of the project?

- North Tyneside council wanted to find new ways of engaging with residents and service users, and using their feedback to shape how services are managed, monitored, delivered and evaluated. The principles North Tyneside wanted to use to engage residents and service users were:
  - go to people rather than summon them
  - recognise the importance of, and seek the views of existing groups, such as tenants' representatives, disabled people's groups, black and minority ethnic groups, older people's groups and voluntary groups
  - develop creative and innovative solutions to engage with the community to ensure that not only service users have an opportunity to provide their views, but also people who rarely use council services
  - empower, where appropriate, local people to carry out research in their own community or community of interest. This would include training volunteers to consult and gather information.

#### How did the project apply the five principles for providing better information for disabled people?

##### Principle 1: Involve disabled people from the start

- The council successfully engaged disabled people by using established resident panels and existing relationships with pan-impairment and impairment specific organisations. It also reached out to residents, rather than expecting them to come to the council.
- The team listened to feedback during the course of the project. For example, they ran some additional engagement events when external stakeholders pointed out that service users from services that were at risk of closure had not been included in the consultation.



**Principle 2: Provide information through a range of channels and formats**

- The consultation involved the use of a series of short questionnaires designed to establish information access needs/preferences among people in North Tyneside. They asked what kind of channels people wanted to use to access different types of information, as well as preferred opening times for council offices.
- Traditional channels were used to collect data, including customer service centres, libraries and other council offices, the contact centre and the internet.
- A wide range of alternative methods were also used to distribute and administer the survey including:
  - local beaches
  - metro stations
  - supermarkets
  - learning disability centres
  - night clubs for disabled people

- third parties/external agencies visiting users in the home as part of their daily visits, for example, carers and social workers
- black and minority ethnic group representatives within their own communities
- coalition of disabled people.

The questionnaire was available in alternative languages and could also be requested in audio and Braille.

**Principle 3: Make sure information meets users' needs**

- The main focus of this project was to find out about users' needs to make sure that future information was relevant.

**Principle 4: Clearly signpost other services**

- This principle was not felt to be explicitly relevant for the North Tyneside project although there had been evidence of successful partnership working during the course of the project.

### **Principle 5: Always define responsibility for information provision**

- The council has recently ensured that contact centre staff are trained to be able to deal with any information enquiry through enhanced Information Technology (IT) systems.
- Adult social care, for example, demonstrated that when a business area adopted this principle it met with favourable responses from its customers.

### **What were the key outcomes?**

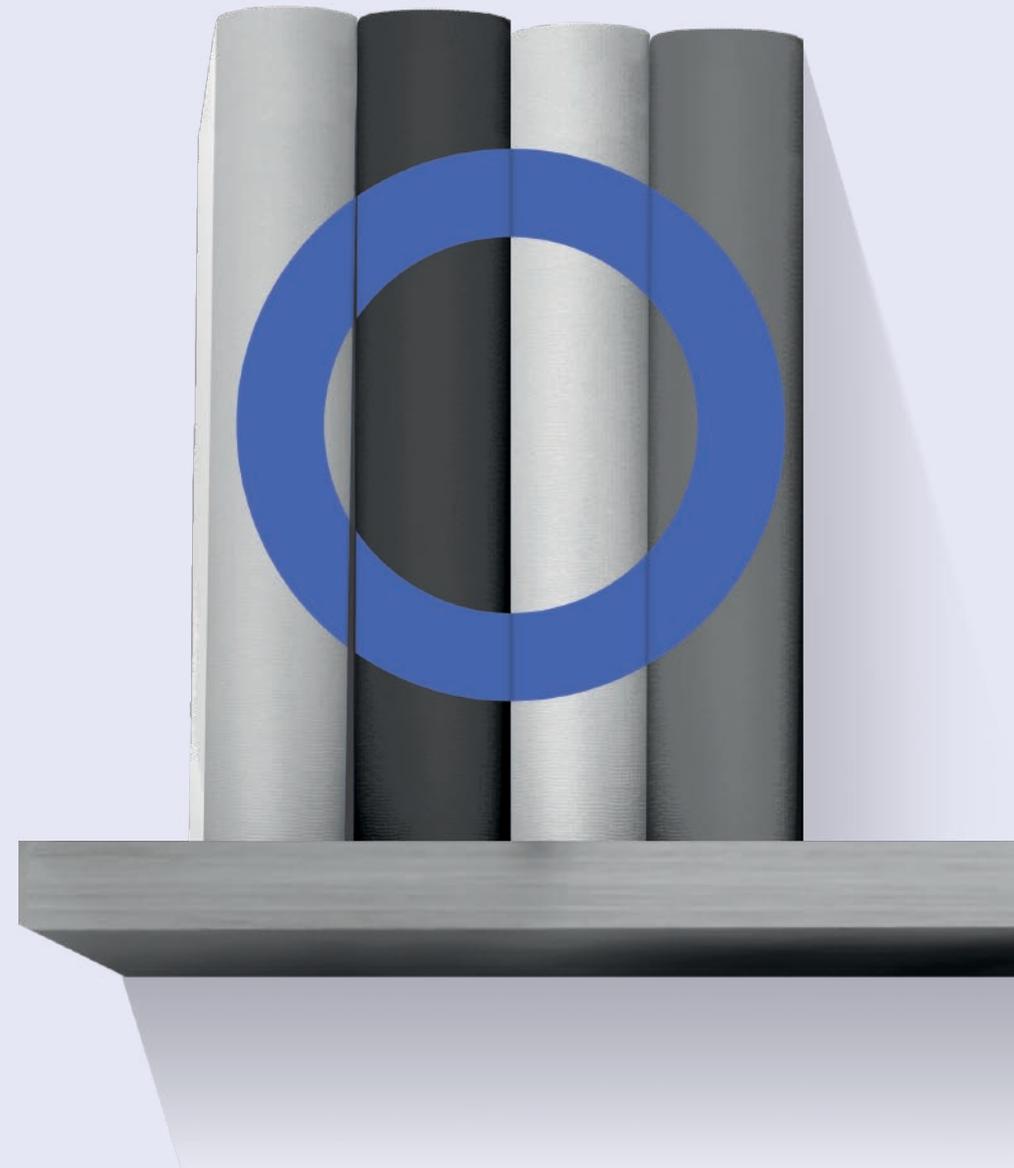
- The views gathered through the engagement were used to shape the opening times and operating model for new customer service centres being brought into operation.
- The engagement had a much higher response than previously.
- The adult social care literature has been improved.
- The council engaged with residents who had not been involved with the council before. The proportion of 'seldom heard' citizens, including disabled people,

was extremely well represented in the survey. Given the more acute issues this group experiences in accessing services, the quantity of this information has enabled the council to really take notice of this issue and not ignore it as a 'small percentage'.

### **What were the key successes?**

- There was a positive, constructive relationship between council staff, external stakeholders and residents due to the project team's hard work over time to develop strong, ongoing and equal relationships with a range of stakeholder and resident groups.
- The project successfully managed to leverage these established relationships to drive the project forward rather than creating a specific steering group/ARG.
- Other council staff were positive about, and interested in, the success of the project and the approaches used. It was imagined that these approaches would be used in the future for both mainstream information provision and information provision for specific groups, such as disabled people.

- External stakeholders felt that relationships with the council had been further strengthened and improved by the methods used.
- Residents who already had a relationship with the council generally reported that their attitudes towards the council had improved.
- Residents who had never had a relationship with the council before spontaneously reported positive reactions to involvement in the customer service consultation (and had often passed these on by word of mouth).





### Useful contacts for improving information for disabled people

#### Office for Disability Issues (ODI)

[www.odi.gov.uk](http://www.odi.gov.uk)

The ODI was set up to help the Government deliver its vision that by 2025 disabled people should have the same opportunities and choices as non-disabled people and be respected and included as equal members of society.

ODI also manages 'Images of disability', which gives guidance to central government departments on communicating effectively with disabled people.

For more details, go to [www.odi.gov.uk/imagesofdisability](http://www.odi.gov.uk/imagesofdisability)

**Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)**  
**[www.rnib.org.uk](http://www.rnib.org.uk)**

The RNIB is a voluntary organisation that offers information, support and advice to people with sight problems.

For more details on RNIB's 'See it Right' guidelines go to: [www.rnib.org.uk/xpedio/groups/public/documents/publicWebsite/public\\_seeitright.hcsp](http://www.rnib.org.uk/xpedio/groups/public/documents/publicWebsite/public_seeitright.hcsp)

**The Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID)**  
**[www.rnid.org.uk](http://www.rnid.org.uk)**

The RNID is a voluntary organisation that helps deaf people by campaigning and lobbying and raising awareness of deafness and hearing loss.

**CHANGE**  
**[www.changepeople.co.uk](http://www.changepeople.co.uk)**

The Words to Pictures team at CHANGE is made up of people with learning disabilities who work with an illustrator to produce information in an Easy Read format using easy words and pictures. The team produces CD-Roms (picture banks) of hundreds of pictures for organisations working with people with learning disabilities. Illustrators in CHANGE can also draw additional pictures as and when necessary.

CHANGE turns other organisations' documents, posters, flyers, leaflets and Annual Reports into accessible formats. People with learning disabilities provide training around how to make information accessible and how to use the picture bank CD-Roms.

## Contacts

### Directgov

[www.direct.gov.uk/disability](http://www.direct.gov.uk/disability)

Directgov is the Government's citizen-facing website, offering information and services all in one place. The 'Disabled people' section has comprehensive information about a range of subjects including benefits, employment, transport, rights and more. There are also contact details of organisations for disabled people in government and the voluntary sector.

### Mencap

[www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)

Mencap is a voluntary organisation that supports people with a learning disability and their families and carers.

Mencap's Accessibility Unit publishes a guide on writing accessible documents: 'Make it clear'. Go to [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk) and search for 'Make it clear'.

Mencap can edit documents or write accessible documents. This involves writing in plain language, adding pictures and images to support the text and looking at layout and design. They also produce scripts,

record audio tapes and offer training on producing accessible documents.

For more information go to:

[accessibility@mencap.org.uk](mailto:accessibility@mencap.org.uk)

### Equality and Human Rights Commission

[www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)

The Equality and Human Rights Commission champions equality and human rights for all. It works to eliminate discrimination ensuring that everyone has a fair chance to participate in society.

### AbilityNet

[www.abilitynet.org.uk](http://www.abilitynet.org.uk)

AbilityNet is a national charity helping disabled adults and children use computers and the internet by adapting and adjusting their technology.

### **Plain English Campaign** **[www.plainenglish.co.uk](http://www.plainenglish.co.uk)**

The Plain English Campaign helps organisations to make their public information as clear as possible.

### **Improvement and Development Agency for local government (IDeA)** **[www.idea.gov.uk](http://www.idea.gov.uk)**

IDeA works for local government improvement so that councils can better serve people and places.

### **SignVideo Interpreting Service** **[www.signvideo.me.uk](http://www.signvideo.me.uk)**

SignVideo provides instant and high-quality sign language interpreting via videophone.

### **British Dyslexia Association (BDA)** **[www.bdadyslexia.org.uk](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk)**

The BDA is the voice of dyslexic people that encourages dyslexic people to reach their potential.

### **SENSE** **[www.sense.org.uk](http://www.sense.org.uk)**

SENSE is the world's largest organisation working with and campaigning for deafblind people, their families and professionals who work with them. The site has links to regional services.

**A full list of national and regional  
disability organisations is available  
at ODI's website  
[www.odi.gov.uk/contact/links-  
contacts.asp](http://www.odi.gov.uk/contact/links-contacts.asp)**

## Acknowledgements

# Acknowledgements

Thank you to the following members of the partnership pilots for sharing their experiences and learning.

**Cheshire County Council** – Jane Stanley-McCrave, Gill Allen

**London Borough of Croydon** – Pam Bennett, Sue Whithorn, Jeanette Davis

**North Tyneside Council** – Neil Ranade, Angela Gent

**Surrey County Council** – Christopher Williams, Nick Danagher, Camilla Thrush





**We would like to thank all those members of our advisory group and others who have contributed to the production of this document.**

Betty Blatt – Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA)  
Christopher Williams/Nick Danagher – Surrey County Council  
Darren Cryer – The Planning Inspectorate (PI)  
Geoff Ashton – Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)  
Gill Allen/Jane Stanley-McCrave – Cheshire County Council  
Hugh Huddy – Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)  
Helen Whetley – National Children's Bureau (NCB)  
Jenny Morris – Independent Consultant  
Lucy Harmer – Age Concern England (ACE)  
Mark Shrimpton – RADAR – The Disability Network  
Mandy Wright – Improvement and Development Agency for local government (IDeA)  
Nasa Begum – Department of Health (DH)  
Neil Richardson – Communities and Local Government  
Pam Bennett – London Borough of Croydon  
Rory Heap – The Home Office  
Sally Robinson – COI Communications (COI)  
Steve Strong – Care Services Improvement Partnership (CSIP)

This publication is also available in audio, Braille and large print formats. If you would like a copy in any of these formats, please contact us at [www.officefordisability.gov.uk](http://www.officefordisability.gov.uk)

**Post: Office for Disability Issues,  
6th Floor, The Adelphi,  
1-11 John Adam Street, London, WC2N 6HT**

**Email: [office-for-disability-issues@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:office-for-disability-issues@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)**

**Telephone: 020 7962 8799**

**Textphone: 020 7712 2032**

We welcome feedback on this report.  
Please use the contact details above if  
you wish to do so.

ISBN 978-1-84763-719-2

Produced by the Office for Disability Issues

© Crown copyright

Printed in the UK, November 2008