



Hampshire
Autistic Society

STRATEGIC PLAN

2003 - 2008

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FOREWORD

This document sets out the strategic direction of the Hampshire Autistic Society for the next five years. The direction and strategic objectives have been formed through a consultation process that has engaged users, parents, carers, staff and partner organisations.

I am aware that the Society will have many changes and influences on service development and delivery over the five year period of the Strategy. I therefore present this strategic plan to you as a broad direction for the Society, the specific aims of which will be updated on an annual basis to ensure that the development of the Society remains “live”.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the development of the plan and hope that the engagement process has only just begun.



Andrew Monaghan
Chief Executive Officer

THE HAMPSHIRE AUTISTIC SOCIETY

BRIEF HISTORY

The Society was formed in the mid 1960's by a group of parents with autistic children who were unhappy with the lack of services available for their children. The parents managed through concerted fundraising efforts to buy a large house in Southampton, and with the support of the National Autistic Society who purchased an adjoining building, the combined premises became the first school and residential accommodation for children with autism. These premises were called Hope Lodge School, and were formally opened in 1971.

This combined resource continued to provide both specialist education and residential care from 1971 until 1992 when it became clear that a new school site would be required. It was at this juncture that the Society obtained its current school site at Midanbury Lane and the school component moved to the new site, which allowed the "old" school/residential accommodation to be used to meet the growing demand for residential support for students attending the school. We then changed the name of the accommodation from Hope Lodge School to The Lodge and took the school title to the new site.

The Society recognised that it would also need to develop complementary services for young adults in the 16-19 age range and to start the development of a residential provision for adults. The starting point for the Society was the purchase of a large property in Gosport (Anglesey Lodge) in 1976, which initially provided services for 16-25 year olds. This service continued until the late 1980's when the Society decided to devote Anglesey Lodge to adult residential and day care services and started to look at developing a separate 16-19 resource.

In the mid 1990's the Society appointed its Chief Executive Officer with a brief to form a central team of staff to co-ordinate the activities of the Society, which at that point had reached an annual turnover of approximately £2 million. This led to the establishment of the Society's Head Office base at Whiteley in 1997, which now accommodates the central team of staff (Chief Executive Officer, Finance Team, Human Resources, Fundraising Team, Outreach Services, lending library, central administration and resource centre).

The Society has now further developed both its 16-19 services, providing a specialist educational and residential service for young adults with Aspergers Syndrome and more recently a discreet service for young adults with autism, learning disabilities and more complex needs. The developments within the adult services have also continued and currently the range of services provided encompasses five residential homes, a separate day service (based in the original Anglesey Lodge building) and an outreach and advisory service.

The Society has reached a point where the organisation's turnover is nearing £5 million a year and is looking how, over the next five years, to both consolidate the excellent practice within all of the facets of service delivery and further develop the range of services to meet the demand of students, young adults, parents and carers.

SUMMARY OF HAMPSHIRE AUTISTIC SOCIETY SERVICES

SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

HOPE LODGE SCHOOL

Hope Lodge School is an independent special needs school for students aged 4-19 with a primary disability of autism, whose educational needs cannot be adequately met in mainstream schools. The school is based in Bitterne Park, Southampton. It is spacious with a large secure well equipped playground and has excellent facilities including a technology room, library and teaching kitchen.

THE LODGE

The Lodge, situated in Portswood, is a large pre-war style house and is the main boarding facility with currently twenty two students. The rooms are designed to be as bright, comfortable and personalised as possible. There are three lounge/play room areas each accommodating a small group of children as well as an art room, soft room and playground.

THE COTTAGE

The Cottage is based in Bitterne and is a large family sized house in a residential road. Six students reside at the Cottage where a 'home from home' feeling is created, which is enhanced by a good-sized garden.

ASPIN HOUSE

Aspin House is a further education unit based in Shirley, Southampton. Eight students currently reside and we offer two additional day placements within the Edwardian style house. The unit offers placements for students with a diagnosis of Aspergers Syndrome or high functioning autism between the ages of 16-19 years. Aspin House students are supported in mainstream sector colleges where they have access to nationally accredited courses.

OUTREACH

The Outreach service is dedicated to sharing skills and knowledge within the wider community. The service gives talks and lectures to both professionals and the general public and holds special events and open days (these are supported by the fundraising and development team based within the Society's central team). Outreach support is also provided to other schools and nursery groups. The Outreach provision is based within the Central Team, with a library that is open to the general public and an Outreach Officer available for advice.

PARENT SUPPORT GROUPS

This network was created to support parents and carers of children with special needs in Hampshire, enabling them to share advice and information about services and facilities available for children with autism, and together influence attitudes about autism. It is also somewhere for parents and carers to go and relax, meet other people and make new friends.

EARLY BIRD PROGRAMME

The Early Bird programme is designed for parents of pre-school children with a diagnosis of an autistic spectrum disorder. It is a three month programme working with a maximum of six families at a time and aims to bring parents together for group training sessions, enabling them to understand their child's disorder and developing their child's communication, thus applying practical strategies to manage their child's behaviour. The programme also involves families being visited regularly in their own homes.

SERVICES FOR ADULTS

ANGLESEY LODGE & DAY SERVICES

Anglesey Lodge is a large Grade 2 listed property having spacious grounds and situated in Alverstoke. Until April 2002 there were six service users residing at the Lodge. Following the opening of two new homes at Brockhurst Road, these residents moved into their new accommodation (1-2-8 project). Anglesey Lodge now remains the administrative centre for adult service provision and also offers a day services centre. This offers individual tailored day placements although the core client group for adult services continue to receive residential services. The aims and objectives of the provision are based on adult orientated developmental programmes including an extensive range of courses, subject matter, and activities.

102A & 102B BROCKHURST ROAD

Following the completion of the 1-2-8 project in the April of 2002, these large semi-detached homes in Gosport now provide accommodation for two groups of four residents. Both of these homes are registered with the National Care Standards Commission (NCSC) as registered care homes.

FORD ROAD

Ford Road is a community home, which offers a residential provision for five adults with autism. It is situated in central Gosport. Each service user is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of their own bedroom. Ford Road is registered with the NCSC as a registered care home.

THE HOLT

The Holt is a home for six adults with autism and is situated in Alverstoke village. It is within walking distance of the local amenities. The service users are encouraged to make full use of the facilities offered locally and take an active part in the life of local community. The Holt is registered with the NCSC as a registered care home.

THE BUNGALOW

The Bungalow is a purpose built home situated in the grounds of Anglesey Lodge. It is designed for five people with autism who have complex support needs and/or exhibit severe challenging behaviours. The home has high staffing levels enabling the provision of a full community based activity programme. The Bungalow is registered with the NCSC as a registered care home.

GENERAL

Service users take an active part in the running of their homes, are involved in a variety of tasks and are encouraged to entertain their family and friends within their home. Behavioural strategies are designed jointly with Day Service staff, all behaviours are recorded and monitored carefully, and the focus of any programme is the elimination or reduction of anti-social behaviour.

THE ASSESSMENT SERVICE

Assessment is offered on either a one or two day basis and can be carried out either at Anglesey Lodge or at the clients home or work place. Community facilities are often used during and as part of the assessment.

OUTREACH AND ADVISORY SERVICES

The Society provides individual tailored packages of support and advice to service users and organisations either in their own home or in conjunction with other providers.

CENTRAL TEAM

The Central team is based within the Solent Business Park in Whiteley. The team is led by the Chief Executive Officer who is directly responsible for all the services the Society provides. Supporting both the child and adult services, the central team comprises of five departments; Fundraising and Development, Finance, Human Resources, Outreach (already mentioned) and the newest addition, Support Services.

INTRODUCTION

The Society has always been progressive in its development of services across all aspects of service provision. This has seen the Society expand its range of provisions in the past six years by opening two new purpose built homes each for four adults within the autistic spectrum, an eight bedded unit for young adults with Aspergers Syndrome or high functioning autism, the development of an Earlybird provision and more recently a day placement project for six young adults with autism and more complex needs.

We have recognised that the need for autism specific services across the Hampshire area is greater than that currently provided by the Society and all other service providers. To ensure that services are developed in a planned and coherent manner all of the Society's future developments will be co-ordinated in partnership with the appropriate funding bodies. This is the only way that the Society can ensure that we are matching provision against identified need. However the challenge for the Society and funding bodies alike is how we join the different funding responsibility areas together with the range of service providers to form a range of options and a "seamless" continuum of provision to ensure that students and adults alike have both real choices and options open to them. We are acutely aware that currently, service users and their families too often fall off of the "service provision cliff" and this is something that the funding bodies and the Society need to work together to address.

I present the Society's strategic plan to you as the first step to developing our services and taking a lead role in bringing together providers and funding bodies to work jointly to plan and develop services for children and adults across the autistic spectrum.

OUR MISSION

To become a Centre of excellence

- **Offering choice and opportunities**
- **Providing expert advice, education, support and care**
- **Enabling people with autism to achieve their full potential**

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

SOCIETY

- ***To become a Centre of excellence in the field of autism.***

Desired Outcome: To achieve recognition of high quality service provision from recognised inspecting and accreditation bodies e.g. OFFSTED, National Care Standards Commission, Investors in People and either National Autistic Society (NAS) or the British Institute of Learning Disabilities (BILD) and National Development Team (NDT) Quality Network accreditation bodies.

- ***To enable service users to actively shape the service around them in response to individual needs thus participating in the development of future services.***

Desired Outcome: To have an integrated service delivery approach to engaging service users in the decisions that affects their lives. This will operate on different levels from person centred planning to the development of service users groups that leads to direct involvement in the planning and development of all the Society's services.

- ***To give direction for the development of autism specific services, within a partnership arena.***

Desired Outcome: To establish partnership forums that facilitate the identification of need and development of services. We will facilitate the establishment of locality based forums that brings together representatives from local bodies (both statutory, voluntary and consumers) to discuss and agree approaches, identify needs and jointly plan service developments.

- ***To deliver a corporate model of service delivery that facilitates local decision-making.***

Desired Outcome: The Society will deliver its services in a consistent manner that supports the ability of staff closest to the service user to be informed and enabled to make decisions. To achieve this the Society will review its management arrangements and working practices.

- ***To provide advice, support and training to parents, families, and carers.***

Desired Outcome: To develop the range of outreach services the Society provides to reflect the needs of parents, carers and families. We will expand our support and outreach services across the county in partnership with local commissioners. These developments will be based on local identification of needs through questionnaires etc.

- ***To develop the training and information services for local professionals and external organisations.***

Desired outcome: To provide outreach training and information packs to local professionals and organisations that are working with people within the autistic spectrum.

- ***To positively promote the service provided by the Society using the full range of media opportunities.***

Desired Outcome: The Society will develop a wide range of literature and information that will be available to all interested parties. We will also develop a web site that will enable parents and professionals to access the full range of information, support and services that the Society provides.

CHILDREN'S SERVICE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- ***To develop the current level of Early Bird services.***

Desired outcome: To link the Society Early Bird programme into the other schemes within Hampshire and where appropriate look to run further schemes.

- ***To develop assessment and support services in conjunction with local professions.***

Desired outcome: That a full range of screening, assessment, diagnosis and support options are available to all families within Hampshire. The Society will work with local Health, Social Service and Education colleagues to develop this provision across the County.

- ***To provide a 4-16 educational base that has excellent teaching and physical resources.***

Desired outcome: To develop a new school site that has been purpose designed to meet the needs of children within the Autistic spectrum.

- ***To extend the range of services to meet the needs of students, where appropriate across the 52-week year.***

Desired outcome: To enable the Society to respond in a flexible manner to meet the needs of students, we will, where appropriate, develop our residential facilities to operate on a 52 week basis. This will allow students to access the appropriate level of support to maintain their home and educational placement.

- ***To develop the range of respite and support services for parents, carers, families and external organisations.***

Desired outcome: A comprehensive range of outreach and support options are developed to meet the needs of service users and their families. This will include respite services on both an outreach and residential basis. We will explore the utilisation of our residential settings that are used on a weekly term time basis to offer weekend and school holiday respite.

YOUNG ADULT/ADULT STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- ***To provide separate education and residential areas of service provision.***

Desired outcome: To develop a separate tutorial resource for the 16+ service provision areas.

- ***To provide a range of 16-25 specialist services to meet the needs of students/young adults.***

Desired outcome: To expand the current 16-19 range of service provision to enable, where appropriate, young adults up to the age of 25 to receive a specialist educational and life skills development service.

- ***To enable young adults to access appropriate services as they move into adulthood.***

Desired Outcome: To facilitate the provision of “seamless” services for service users. To achieve this, the Society will develop its young adult and adult services to allow for, where appropriate, service users to access either continued educational services or specialist occupational and leisure service according to their individual needs. We will develop these services in conjunction with local commissioners.

- ***To develop individual services to allow choice for young adults (18+) and to enable service users to be able to access appropriate support within a range of service delivery options e.g. residential, supported living and individual occupational/leisure packages.***

Desired outcome: To work with commissioners to enable the funding to follow the service user. This would enable young adults to receive adult services from Social Services that would follow on in a seamless manner to those received as a young adult that were funded from the Local Education Authorities/ Learning Skills Council.

- ***To develop a flexible range of accommodation and support packages to meet the needs of adult service users e.g. residential, supported living and individual packages of support.***

Desired outcome: To develop a range of support services that will enable the service user to have a choice about where they live, who they live with and who supports them. This will see the Society developing Supported Living services and a comprehensive Domiciliary care service to facilitate choice.

- ***To provide a range of flexible respite, occupational and leisure activities.***

Desired Outcome: To develop a comprehensive range of occupational and leisure services that are either building based or centred on focused activities within the local community. These services will be delivered across the County, initially building on services in both the Portsmouth and Southampton localities.

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

The Strategic plan takes into account the historical experience of the Society and current influences that are likely to affect the delivery and development of services. The arena is now set for partnership working and this is evident within the government's recent legislation (NHS Plan, Valuing People, Working Partnerships and Care Standards Act).

I firmly believe that the Society has to operate within this partnership arena and has the potential to develop its range of services and also become a "sign poster" to other areas of service provision for parents and statutory bodies alike.

The following areas have been taken into account in the development of this plan:

- There has been an increase in the awareness of autism across the country.
- There has been an increase in the demand for HAS services in the past two years.
- The demand for flexible models of residential provision has increased both from a service user and service purchaser perspective.
- A need to drive up the consistency of the quality of services provided.
- A need to "bridge" current service areas to ensure that our service users can access appropriate services to meet their needs near to their existing networks.
- A need to plan service development to meet need.
- The Society's ability to act as the conduit between the range of existing provision (all providers – statutory, private and voluntary) to develop a seamless body of service provision offering choice for service users of all ages.

THE WAY FORWARD

The Society has a huge task ahead to move forward with the areas of service development whilst at the same time ensuring that the foundations of the Society are firm. The first task will be to consolidate the areas of good practice across the Society, ensuring that we have a unified and consistent approach to our service delivery. This will then support the Society in its planned developments over the forthcoming years.

I have referred to the need for the services to be developed in a planned manner and within a partnership arena. To this end I propose to facilitate the establishment of joint planning groups that span the funding bodies, involved stakeholders (career services, employment services and Local Authority housing departments to name a few) and ourselves, to ensure that service developments are congruent with the needs that we are aware of and fit within the developments and strategic thinking of our partner bodies.

We have already held one joint workshop that embraced representatives from Local Education Authorities, Learning Skills Council, Sector Colleges, Health Commissioners, Social Services, Connexions and Career advisors. This event was extremely successful in bringing together a range of stakeholders to start talking about how we could deliver services in a “joined up” manner. We intend to echo this event to engage all agencies connected to both the services for children and adults. This will then set the scene for joint working and position the Society as a sign poster for autism specific service provision within Hampshire.

All of the above can only be achieved by the continued efforts of our staff, who I would like to thank for assisting in the development of this plan and for their continued commitment to improve the Society’s services.