

LOCAL ACCOUNT GROUP ANNUAL REPORT 2019



WELCOME



We are so pleased to welcome you to our very first Annual Report. We are very proud of this document which we think – and hope – reflects the work we have carried out over the last year. This is our first Annual Report, but certainly not our last. We have been excited to put it together, you will hear about the work we have been doing and also finding out a little more about us. We want it to be informative, but also fun and interesting to read.

Part 1

In the **first part**, we have asked Council colleagues to set a bit of context and background, and outline what happened before the Group was formed. This is the part of the report that sets the scene, provides information about the legislative background and reasons why we exist as a group and are producing this report.

Part 2

The **second part** and the core section of the document is written by us and sets out what we wanted to achieve at the beginning of last year and what we have achieved since then. You will also find out a bit more about us and what we have been up to since the Group was formed.

Part 3

The **third part** is also written by us and includes our expectations for the future – what we expect the two councils to do. We will be honest too, about the things that have not gone so well, or things we still need to do as well as the things that have improved. The two councils and the Group all acknowledge that there is still a long way to go, but this report showcases how far we have come together in the last year.

We do hope you enjoy reading the report, and you get a real sense of how vital we think our work has been. We'll start by asking Bernie Flaherty, Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health (and our chair) and the two Lead Members to contribute a few words and then council colleagues set the context for our work.

FOREWORD



Bernie Flaherty

Bi-borough Executive Director,
Adult Social Care and Health

I'm thrilled to be asked by the Local Account Group
to say a few words to introduce this report.

They have been the most inspiring and charming people to work with and our regular meetings – there is always a lively debate – are the highlight of my working month. I am determined that the voice and opinions of residents should be integral to everything we do, and that the group should be as representative, diverse and inclusive as possible. It has been an honour and a huge pleasure to work with such engaged, vibrant and dedicated residents. They challenge us in the best possible way. Working with these valued members of our community always grounds us and reminds us what is important about the work we do. We cannot do anything without ensuring that the voice of our residents is heard and integrated into the design of our services, not just in Adult Social Care but throughout the two Councils. I am looking forward greatly to working with them throughout 2020.



Councillor Sarah Addenbrooke

Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Health,
Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea

I am delighted to introduce this report. The Local Account Group has been such an invaluable and unique element of the last year and I am delighted by the way the group has developed and grown.

Integrating residents into the planning and design of everything we do is essential, and I am grateful that the structure and mechanism has been put into place for this to be enabled. I have enjoyed meeting the group and hearing their views and ideas and celebrate that they have been involved in integral parts of our organisation – even being part of interview panels for senior officers. This is very much the way the Council should be evolving and developing and we have made it very clear in our Council Plan that we should engage more deeply with residents and the Group has shown the way in doing so. I've also very much welcomed and enjoyed the sessions and events which I have attended.



Councillor Heather Acton

Previous Lead Member for Family Services and
Public Health, Westminster City Council

I've really enjoyed meeting and working with the Local Account Group over the last year to help get to the heart of what matters to our residents.

It's so important that the people who use our services have a voice and can influence what those services look like. The group members speak not only for themselves but also for people like them in the community. I commend them for this – it is not always easy to be a representative and reflect the views of the many. In Westminster we continue to try to make sure residents are at the heart of decision-making; this group has been an invaluable part of this last year's work and also great fun. I have enjoyed the various events we have participated in together and am so pleased their special contribution to the life of the community was recognised at the Westminster Staff Awards in July 2019. I look forward to a fruitful 2020.



Councillor Tim Mitchell

Newly Appointed Lead Member for Family Services
and Public Health, Westminster City Council

I am really looking forward to working with the Local Account Group in my new role and continue their hard work for the next year.

WHY HAVE A LOCAL ACCOUNT GROUP?

What is a Local Account Group?

Before 2011 the Care Quality Commission (CQC) who are the independent regulator for adult social care in England, reviewed the performance of all councils and published a statement advising the areas they could improve.

In 2011 this function changed and local authorities (not providing personal care) were no longer regulated in this way. Instead a recommendation came from the Department of Health that local authorities should do this themselves in partnership with Local Residents who understand first-hand the way social care is delivered. Since then, local authorities across the country have all developed and published their local account report in different ways that suit their local demographic.

In the Bi-borough we have decided to take this one step further in line with both councils strategic plans and set up a group that will not only evaluate how they feel social care is working but will also feed directly into the key decisions of the department. Rather than meeting once or twice a year this group decided they would meet monthly with the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Public Health as chair.

The meetings provide are a closed meeting which provide an opportunity to share concerns coming from the community, feedback on new initiatives and plan smaller more focused working groups aimed at improving the care delivered to the vulnerable people across the community.



Formation

Shortly after joining the Department, Bernie Flaherty created the group in July 2018.

At the first meeting at the National Gallery, Officers presented the plans for the Group and asked for ideas, suggestions and a commitment to work closely with the two councils. Monthly meetings were agreed.

The Group stabilised with a core membership and wrote Terms of Reference in October 2018, followed by their Ambition Plan in January 2019. The Plan focused on the Department's six priorities.

The nature and needs of the Group mean that the service-user base can change, with some people deciding they are not able to commit the time to engage or their own needs must take precedent for a time, meaning they are unable to attend for a long period of time. The Group is understanding of this and aims to keep membership at between 12 and 15 with flexibility and openness to new members all year round.

Members of the Group are trained to represent not only their own views on subjects, but also the views of people sharing similar characteristics to themselves.

This training was delivered by Healthwatch, who are the "governmental statutory body intended to strengthen the collective voice of users of health and social care services and members of the public, both nationally and locally." with follow up training provided around dementia. Training for the group is ongoing and responsive to their requests.

"I have been delighted to work with the Bi-borough Local Account Group. As a Healthwatch we welcome the initiative where local peoples voices are heard right at the heart of the Council who wants to listen."

**Olivia Clymer,
Healthwatch Central West London**

healthwatch
Central West London

Throughout this document we will frequently abbreviate the name of the group to 'the LAG'

Council Plans

The importance of the Local Account Group does not just come from the 2011 recommendations, but also from both Council's Plans which set out that:

The RBKC Plan states...

What is most important to our communities?

The Council needs to change - it needs to communicate better with residents, involve local people in decisions, be sensitive to local needs and differences and employ more local people

Most people feel Kensington and Chelsea is a great place to live and work. Residents want to see the borough's unique and attractive surroundings maintained and businesses supported.

Community spaces and public buildings are important as they bring people together. The Council needs to protect them.

There is concern about rising crime and anti-social behaviour in the borough, residents want to feel safe.

Getting a job and the right skills is important, especially for young people. People need support to address barriers to work and education.

Health and wellbeing are really important. Everyone should have access to sports and leisure facilities, including parks and open spaces.

The Council needs to change - it needs to communicate better with residents, involve local people in decisions, be sensitive to local needs and differences and employ more local people.

OUR COUNCIL PLAN 2019 to 2023

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Your Council is changing

The way we make decisions is becoming more open, transparent and accountable.

Scrutiny to undertake an independent review of our governance arrangements. They reported in March 2018 and we are now in the process of implementing their recommendations. Work to date has included:

- A series of public meetings to discuss both borough-wide and area governance
- A series of public meetings of a "Listening Forum", enabling members of the Leadership Team to hear directly from residents in an open format
- An internal review of processes for Forward Planning and Key Decisions
- The consultation and engagement on residents' priorities that informed this plan.

Following the Grenfell tragedy, we have listened to residents, engaged with communities and looked at how the world has changed around us, to understand what we need to do differently. Staff from across the Council have worked together to develop new values to underpin our new approach to public service and drive change through the organisation.

Our new People Strategy will include proposals to target recruitment of local residents, expand our apprenticeship programme, employ more people from backgrounds that represent the community throughout the organisation, including at a senior level.

We will put local people at the heart of decision making in everything we do. We will seek to include and involve: all voices matter

Putting communities first

- We put local people at the heart of decision making in everything we do
- We seek to include and involve all voices matter
- We provide quality services that are responsive, effective and efficient

Integrity

- We listen to everyone and value the personal experiences of people in our communities and of each other
- We adopt a fair, and involving approach regardless of any way in which an individual is different to us

Respect

- We act with openness, honesty, compassion, responsibility and humanity
- We let people know what we are doing and communicate why and how decisions have been made

Our new values

Working together

- We work together and in partnership with everyone that has an impact on the lives of our residents
- We want to understand, learn from each other and continually adapt

We are responding to the changing expectations of the modern, digital age

London is changing, society is changing. People want more flexibility and convenience in the services they use. They get it in the private sector and they expect it from public services. People want to be able to pay, apply and report anything online, seamlessly, and receive the same high standard of service no matter the issue.

We are cutting costs to meet the deepening financial challenge we face

All councils are facing economic and financial uncertainty. Nationally, there is a shift in local authority funding with less reliance on Government support and greater reliance on income generated locally, including council tax. There will be a significant cut in funding for local government from 2020/21 and there are concerns that London, especially central London, may lose out.

Due to these changes, the Council will be more financially challenged over the medium term. It is likely that the Council will have to make savings of £40m over the next three years, equating to a reduction of 25 per cent of our net revenue budget.

OUR COUNCIL PLAN 2019 to 2023

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OUR COUNCIL PLAN 2019 to 2023

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The Westminster Plan states...

Working with you to build a City for All

We believe that creating a City for All is everyone's business. Every single one of us – whether council, resident or business, voluntary group or visitor – has a part to play in contributing to our local community and improving the place where we live and work. Here are just a few ways in which you can do your bit.

Join Team Westminster and experience new opportunities, meet new people and support your neighbours. You can sign up at do-it.westminster.gov.uk

Apply for a Westminster Lion business accreditation to showcase your corporate social responsibility activity benefits. You can find out more at businesswestminster.co.uk

Apply for a #MyWestminster Fund grant to put your ideas into action and strengthen community identity. You can find out more at westminster.gov.uk/mywestminster-fund

Get involved in our regular Open Forums to speak to Cabinet and senior officers about the local issues that matter to you. You can find out more at westminster.gov.uk/open-forums

We believe that creating a City for All is everyone's business. Every single one of us – whether council, resident or business, voluntary group or visitor – has a part to play in contributing to our local community and improving the place where we live and work. Here are just a few ways in which you can do your bit

WORK
A CITY
FOR YOU

CITY FOR ALL 2018/19

CITY THAT CELEBRATES ITS COMMUNITIES

City that celebrates its communities

We are proud of Westminster's vibrant neighbourhoods and mixed communities. We want to make sure everybody has a stake in the city and can actively contribute to their community. Through our #MyWestminster programme, we celebrate the city's diversity and make sure local people are at the heart of every decision we make.

More than 3,000 people from all over Westminster celebrated the second #MyWestminster Day at Paddington Recreation Ground on 1 July, cementing it as a major annual event to celebrate the city's neighbourhoods.

We are consulting on a new markets strategy, listening to the views of residents, shoppers, visitors and traders on how we can keep the city's eight thriving local markets at the heart of local neighbourhoods. The new strategy will roll out in 2019.

We will continue the roll out of the #MyWestminster Fund, making up to £10,000 available to grassroots organisations across the city to help make a difference in their neighbourhoods.

We are reforming the planning system so that, for the first time, members of the public will be able to speak at planning meetings. This is one of a range of measures to make planning simpler.

We will work with local residents, businesses and EU residents to support the local economy as UK prepares to leave the EU.

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We will remove 1,000 payphone boxes by 2020.

THE CONTEXT OF OUR TWO BOROUGHS

This context is important, it helps to understand the profile of the boroughs the Local Account Group operates within. Every local area is different, has its own challenges and opportunities and this data helps to understand (in summary) the landscape the Group operates in.



ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA

ANNUAL NET CONTROLLABLE ASC BUDGET: £70.879M
AREA: 4.68 SQ.ML

POPULATION: 159,197



ADULT SOCIAL CARE SERVICE USERS – CLIENTS RECEIVING LONG TERM CARE



5th highest proportion of older adults aged 65+ in London based on the 2018 estimates



Black, Asian, Arabic and other minority ethnic groups comprise 36% of population

Half resident population born outside of the UK

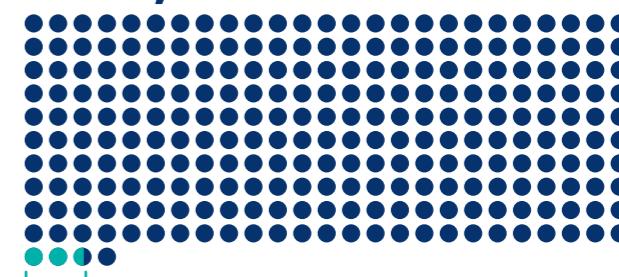
Source: Office for National Statistics Ethnic Groups by Borough, 2018

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

AREA: 8.29 SQ.ML

ANNUAL NET CONTROLLABLE ASC BUDGET: £125.483M

POPULATION: 255,234



ADULT SOCIAL CARE SERVICE USERS – CLIENTS RECEIVING LONG TERM CARE

High proportion of younger people, 47% of resident population aged between 18 and 44

Black, Asian, Arabic and other minority ethnic groups comprise 42% of population

Highest level of international migration in England. Just over half of resident population was born outside of the UK

% aged 65 years and over with a recorded diagnosis of dementia in RBKC (2018)

4.5% (LONDON)

4.0%



4.5% (LONDON)

4.7%



72.6% (LONDON)

Diagnosis rate in RBKC (2019)

67.7%



72.6% (LONDON)

77.2%



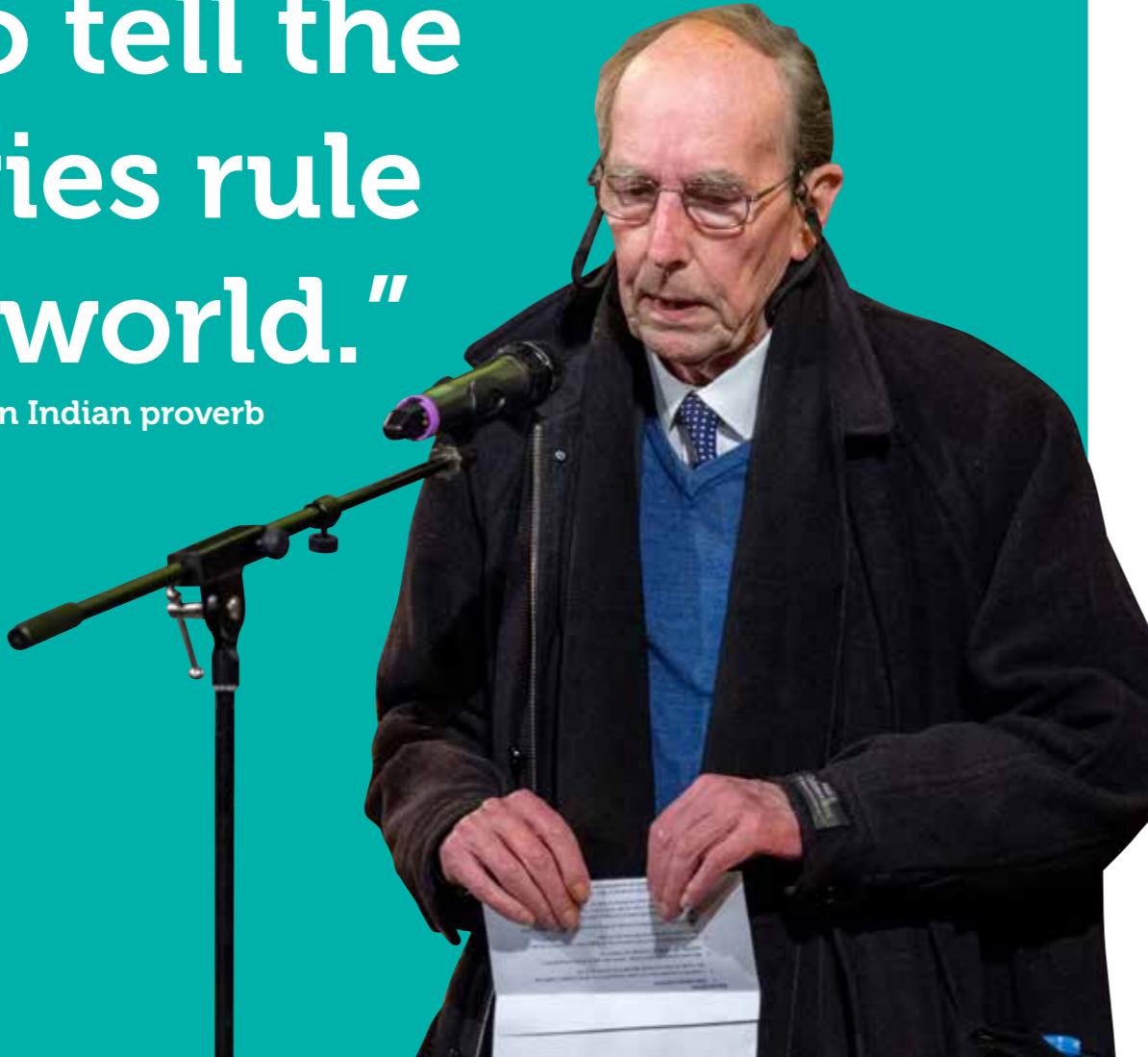
Diagnosis rate in the City of Westminster (2019)

Source: NHS Digital as reported on Public Health England Dementia Profile

OUR STORY SO FAR

"Those who tell the stories rule the world."

Hopi American Indian proverb



WHO ARE WE?

- ✓ We are a group of residents and service users who live in Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster.
- ✓ We represent people like us who live in the two boroughs.
- ✓ We are proactive in the community and many of us belong to a number of community groups and networks. We are focused on representation and participation.
- ✓ We have a lifetime of experience and bring a diverse range of backgrounds, faiths and cultural influences to the Group.
- ✓ We have a range of skills and professionalism learnt from our working lives and from our life experiences.
- ✓ We had 'representation' training from Healthwatch which was very useful, and means we have a clear understanding of our role as voices for those who are seldom heard.

WHO WE ARE NOT

- ✗ We are not single voices, behind us are whole sections of the community. We humbly act as their mouthpieces.
- ✗ We are not representative of any other voluntary organisation, charity or group but many of us are connected to services such as: Healthwatch, Age UK, Brent Wandsworth and Westminster Mind, Kensington and Chelsea Older People's forum, Westminster Senior Citizens forum and more.
- ✗ Not all of our members are featured in this report, some have moved onto other things, some do not wish to have their photographs taken and this group is focused on us.

"We want to understand more about the work of the councils, and your challenges, and we want you to listen to our experiences to help you make better decisions about people who are seldom heard"

I am Adam, I represent residents with Mental Health issues



"I am a mother in the local community, very invested in the recovery of our devastated North Kensington community, physically and mentally, particularly following Grenfell. I feel very involved with the LAG and my community knowledge and networks tie in with this."

I am Melanie. I represent people with 'Invisible Disabilities' to promote dignity



"At first I was nervous and apprehensive, I was not prepared to get involved with this programme if it was going to be a 'tick box' exercise, I was looking for genuine commitment to improve services for the better. My experience has been that there have been real changes and improvements made."

I am Shiv, I represent older people and people with long term health conditions



WHO ARE WE?

We are the authors of the report, the group is much larger than those featured here. We are all residents of Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster and represent people across the Bi-borough.



I am Elsie and I represent older people



I am Adam and I represent residents with Mental Health issues



I am Rose D and I represent people with a visual impairment and carers



I am Aysegul and I represent people with Mental Health needs, I chose not to have my photograph taken and instead use this image to represent me



I am Rose H and I represent carers, particularly carers for people in residential or nursing care



I am Michael and I represent people with Physical and Learning Disabilities



I am Htay and I represent carers, particularly those who care for people with Dementia



I am Shiv and I represent older people and people with long term health conditions



I am Fay and I represent Older Women



I am Melanie and I represent people with 'Invisible Disabilities' to promote dignity



I am Michael W and I represent Older People



I am Stephen and I represent people with Learning Disabilities

We represent people like us and sit on a number of other community groups. We bring knowledge and skills from our own personal experience but through participation in a range of local organisations we also have a wide-ranging understanding of the issues and experiences of people like us. We talk to people and use this to contribute to the LAG.



Why we chose to concentrate on our six priorities

When we first met, we had lots of ideas and things we wanted to achieve, but we knew we needed to work with the two councils as partners in a structured and managed way to be able to achieve them.

We already knew about the six priorities and we thought it was very important to tie in our work with them. We knew other residents had themselves chosen the priorities and we thought that it was the right thing to do to pick up on their work and hold the Department to account on how they are following through on them. It also gave a structure and focus to our work.

This Report

We know that a Local Account report is usually based around 'you said – we did' style layout. This report aims to blur this line, so that it is 'you said – we did together'. We have focused our efforts and work around the Adult Social Care six priorities in order to prioritise the work we are involved with, and ensure that the way the councils execute the priorities is in line with the views and wishes of the people who use the services they organise.

We have achieved a lot in the year but we know there is still much work to be done.



Personalisation

- ◆ People are actively involved in designing their own care
- ◆ Clear information enables people to make choices
- ◆ Services provide real choice
- ◆ Residents are supported to be independent and involved in the community



Prevention

- ◆ We promote independence and wellbeing
- ◆ We use robust data and evaluate interventions
- ◆ We promote involvement in the community, and work closely with community groups
- ◆ Look for innovative digital solutions



Safeguarding

- ◆ We make sure people feel safe and protect vulnerable residents
- ◆ We support people with dignity and respect
- ◆ Staff and residents are empowered to highlight concerns
- ◆ Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility



Integration

- ◆ Joint working across health, social care and other providers to create holistic services and meet people's needs
- ◆ Services appear joined up to users, and they can easily access what they need
- ◆ Information and data is shared between departments



Market Shaping

- ◆ We offer the right services for residents, that provide variety and capture unmet need
- ◆ We work closely with providers to raise quality and expectations
- ◆ Providers listen to and engage with service users



Quality Assurance

- ◆ We actively seek feedback from users, and use this to inform decision making
- ◆ We make sure that services are meeting people's needs
- ◆ We have clear systems and accountability for quality assurance

THAT WAS THEN...

The council felt out of touch

I didn't really understand what councils do, they don't bother to tell you

Decisions were made without discussion

There was a 'them and us' type attitude

I thought the whole thing might be quite fluffy

The council is interested in PR but not genuine consultation

We were brought in to 'rubber stamp' decisions they had already made

Listening to residents was an afterthought

They gave us 'lip service' and then did what they were going to do anyway

...THIS IS NOW

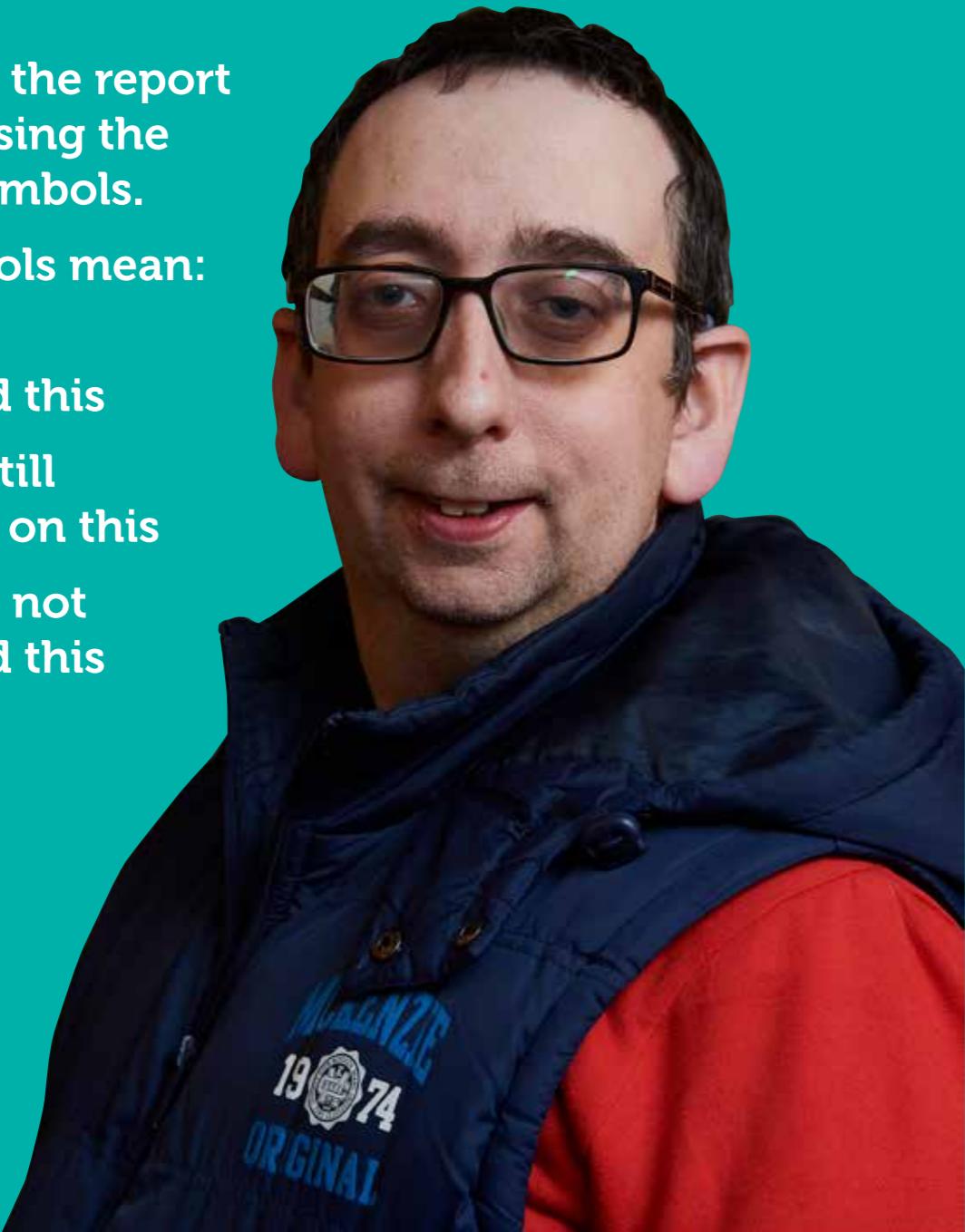
Tangible learning achievement jargon-busting intangible change representative valued and listened to involvement enjoyment creative having ideas an impact personal value as well as professional Progress recognition of who we are with professionals

OUR REPORT

Throughout the report we will be using the following symbols.

These symbols mean:

- ✓ We have achieved this
- We are still working on this
- ✗ We have not achieved this



Introduction from Htay

I am Htay and I represent carers, particularly those who care for people with dementia.

I am very pleased to be involved in this report and to have been with the Local account Group for the last year. In the report we go through each of the priorities and the outcomes we set last year that we wanted to achieve, and our progress so far in achieving those outcomes. You will also see information about other things the department is doing in that priority area as well, to give a bigger picture. We do hope that you can see that what we are doing is useful and valuable. We are very proud of what we have achieved so far, but also know we have a lot of work to do to help the two councils get to where they need to be and we all appreciate the opportunity to work with the councils to improve things.



Introduction from Rose H

I am Rose H and I represent carers, particularly carers for people in residential or nursing care.

This report documents our first year as a group, some of our challenges, our successes, things we'd like to follow up on and our plans for the future. It's very much our report but we appreciate the hard work of Council Officers, Directors and Councillors which has helped us to achieve so much within a year, and we look forward to working with you more over the next 12 months.





PERSONALISATION

Outcomes we set in our Ambition Plan:

OUTCOME 1

We will be involved with the Adult Social Care digital innovation programme.

We want to feed into how changes will look, feel and work in practice.

OUTCOME 2

We want to share our stories so that the councils can learn from our experiences and other residents can feed their views in too.



"It was great having LAG members involved. It grounded all the work we are doing with real-life issues and ideas. And they are such a lovely group of people – and not afraid to say what they think! Exactly what we want"

Sharon Grant, Head of Personalisation



"LAG members who attended the June meetings were really enthusiastic. I really valued their thoughts on the Market Development Strategy, particularly on perceptions of volunteering"

Phoebe Carpenter, Personalisation Project Officer

Our report for the year on our Personalisation work

OUTCOME 1:

Adult Social Care Digital Programme

- ✓ We fed our views and ideas into the Bi-borough digital strategy at a series of meetings with the project team and other stakeholders, from the start of the project and on an ongoing basis. We reviewed and gave input into the Market Development Strategy regarding choice and control in Adult Social Care and will continue our involvement as this large scale project continues.
- ✓ We reviewed and gave feedback on the People First website, from the perspective of people who would use the website.
- ✓ We have set up an intranet page, where we can share information about our events, photographs, documents and generally keep in touch!

Next Year we would like to use our page a lot more and would like to support all of our group members to become more confident with using IT.

Ongoing Council led Personalisation work

We have included some of the wider council work that we have been told about, and ask for regular updates about in relation to personalisation. Knowing about what else is going on in the two council helps us to decide where we can help, and helps us to check that work being undertaken includes residents just like us.

- ✓ The Department are reviewing the assessment tools and processes and develop a new tool to replace the current 'FACE' assessment.
- ✓ The Department is developing guidance and training for staff, service users and providers which will promote a more personalised approach across social care including Direct Payments.

Promoting the use of Assistive Technology – this is something we are very interested in, and at the recent staff conference we were lucky enough to share a stall with the equipment provider. We look forward to working with this side of the Department more and finding out more about the technological solutions they are working on and tracking the progress and developments made.



Elsie's Story

I AM ELSIE, I'D LIKE TO SHARE MY STORY.

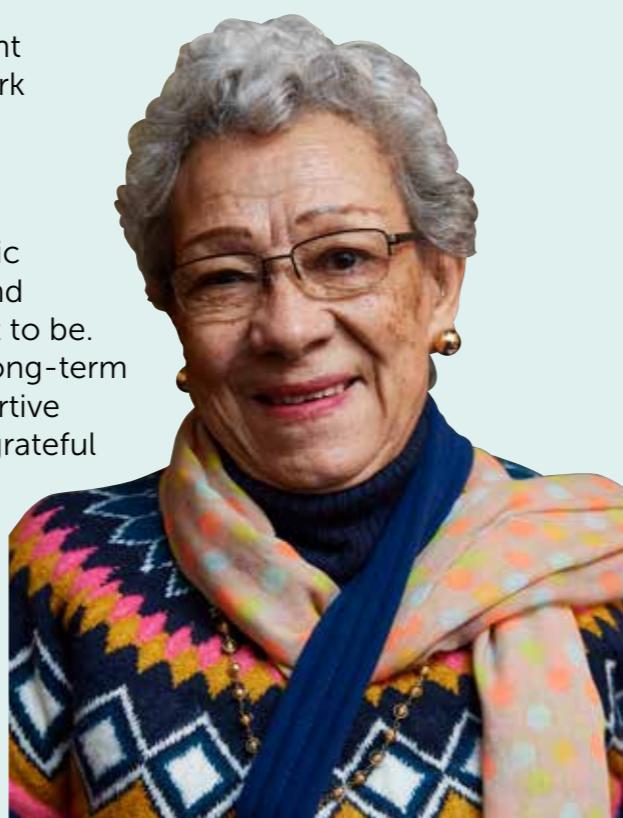
In September 2019 I had full right shoulder replacement surgery and my journey back to full health is still ongoing.

As a member of the Local Account Group i am committed to improving services for people in need. The surgery meant that I required support from Adult Social Care Providers after discharge. I had a range of experiences from the social care market, some of which were excellent but there were pockets of poor care and practice, which I brought to the attention of the Council.

This experience has spurred me on to continue the work of the Local Account Group, to celebrate the things that work well within the system and call out areas that clearly need improving.

I am still not back to my usual energetic self and I will need more operations and more time to get back to where I want to be. I am fortunate not to have any other long-term health conditions and to have a supportive family and friends network. I am very grateful for the support and quick action of the council officers and hope to be back on my feet very soon.

I am a very active person. Throughout this period, despite terrible pain, strong painkillers and stress I have still kept in touch with the Local Account Group who have been a source of support for me. I am confident that I will be back to full health soon and look forward to carrying on the work with the group with my new nickname 'The bionic woman!'



I am Elsie,
I represent older people



Dominic Stanton, Head of Quality Assurance



I am very familiar with Elsie and her story, she has bravely shared her experience with the Council and again in this report. I was disappointed by the less than adequate support Elsie received at home at a time when she most needed it.

When we were alerted to Elsie's difficulties we changed her agency with immediate effect and kept in regular contact with her and the agency to ensure her service improved. We have made it very clear to all of our contracted providers that the safety and wellbeing of our residents is our number one priority.

We are resolute in our determination to ensure our residents receive the best possible care that truly meets their needs. It is by collaborative working with residents like Elsie that we secure the quality of services both they and we expect. Our ongoing partnership with residents will include service users being meaningfully involved in the design, commissioning, delivery and quality monitoring of services.

We now use Elsie's story to drive continuous, sustained improvement with all of our Providers.



PREVENTION

Outcomes we set in our Ambition Plan:

OUTCOME 1

We would like to meet with Borough Commanders from the London Fire Brigade to talk about fire safety.

We would like to have some practical fire safety support from front line staff next year about direct fire safety in the home that we can share with our community groups.

OUTCOME 2

We will link with staff from both Boroughs and the 'Able network' to do a joint walk around of the two major council buildings together – City Hall and Kensington Town Hall – to feedback on negative experiences around signage and toilets. We would like to work with Front of House staff to raise awareness of accessibility issues.

We are very concerned about isolation and loneliness and the way it affects many people like us. We have attended a number of events and given our views about combatting this issue and keen to work on programmes that address this.



I am Stephen, I represent people with Learning Disabilities

Our report for the year on our Prevention work

OUTCOME 1:

Meet the Borough Commanders for Fire

- ✓ This year we met with Paul Kavanagh from the London Fire Brigade and had an interesting and useful meeting, talking about fire safety and learnt some interesting information about keeping safe at home and what to do in the event of a fire. There is some more about this on page 32.

Next Year we would like to meet with the LFB again and see if there are any projects relating to vulnerable people that we could get involved with. The Borough Commanders have changed roles, and we have had commitment from both of them that they will meet with us next year.

OUTCOME 2:

Walk-around of the two Council buildings

- ✓ This piece of work came after a series of negative experiences with the buildings at Westminster and Kensington Town Hall.

The issues included being unable to use bathrooms, being unable to sit down when waiting to be collected from meetings, and lift systems that are confusing. We asked if we could work with the two councils to identify issues around access that go beyond the basic disability requirements.

- We have agreed to partner with staff from both councils and the Westminster Able Staff Network, who we met at the 'All Staff Conference' in December 2019, we will then produce a report of our findings, along with some recommendations that we hope the two councils will consider making the buildings more accessible to residents who share our needs. This has been booked for January 2020.

Ongoing ASC Prevention work

Members of our group have had experience with the Link Alarm and Key Holding Service, which enables people to remain living at home alone, reduces hospital admissions and the need for a care package; and Home First aims to prevent hospital admission and supports people who are discharged from hospital. We are keen to be involved with initiatives relating to this in the coming year.

We are very interested in finding out more about the Self-Neglect and Hoarding initiatives that the two councils are leading on and part of.

Public Health Prevention work

Much of the work we have done so far is specifically targeted to Adult Social Care and we are interested in the work that Public Health do. We know that there are specific targeted initiatives around:

Sexual health (GUM and sexual and reproductive health), alcohol misuse, substance misuse, healthy lifestyles (includes smoking cessation and cardiovascular disease prevention), health checks, Community Champions, seasonal flu, mental health and wellbeing, suicide prevention, oral health, rough sleeping/homelessness and more.

We are keen to work with the Public Health Team to understand some of these initiatives and input into them where possible, or cascade their messages out to our wider networks.

Making a difference

When we were first approached to join the Local Account Group, many of us were apprehensive and resolute that we would only join the Group if it would genuinely make a difference, we did not want to be part of a tick-box exercise. We hope this report shows that even in a year there have been real changes made as a result of our hard work.

As a group, our priority is making sure that the views of service users are at the centre of decision making within the two Councils. We are now confident and engage with the Health and Wellbeing Board and other political and scrutiny panels. We have lots of contact with local councillors and know that our presence at these meetings makes a huge difference. Since Bernie joined the department she has ensured users have been involved in every one of her recruitments. We feel that we are seen as essential element in such important decisions, and feel valued because the Department demonstrates we are needed to make important decisions.

We feel empowered to raise our concerns in a way that is helpful and not combative but will see real change happen.



I am Rose D, I represent people with a visual impairment and carers

Being part of the Local Account Group is different to being part of a focus or general residents group.

Many of us attend formal Council meetings as observers and often write to Council Leaders. But in the LAG we know we can share how we feel and pass on the feedback correctly and to the right person including feedback on difficult and sensitive issues, this mechanism ensures that the grapevine into the community is more accurate.

We all bring unique skills and expertise to the table, but we also bring our own needs and difficulties too. It is crucial that this is respected at all times, and never lost sight of.

Michael's story...

RECRUITMENT LESSONS

Rachel approached the group about an opportunity to support a recruitment panel for the independent Safeguarding Chair, this is something I have done previously with the Advocacy Project so I thought this would be an exciting opportunity to get involved with. However, as we were walking out of another meeting, Rachel said she had never done one of these before and was nervous about how to run the session.

I told her not to worry, we had it all in hand all she had to do was write some suggested questions and we would work through them as a group in the pre meeting. Rachel's questions were terrible! So we laughed a lot and instead wrote the questions together as a group and she wrote them down. We led the session from start to finish and we are confident that we recommended the best person for the job! Since then we have been involved in the recruitment of other senior officers and directors and look forward to continuing this next year.



I am Michael, I represent people with Physical and Learning Disabilities

I AM AYSEGUL AND I REPRESENT PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS, I CHOSE NOT TO HAVE MY PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN AND INSTEAD USE THIS IMAGE TO REPRESENT ME



I was sceptical and hesitant to participate as a representative of mental health service users at first, as I assumed this was an 'exercise' to satisfy the council regulators or a PR exercise. I choose to participate as it was important to me to have the views of mental health service users expressed, and more importantly implemented.

After the first meeting with the Local Account Group I was surprised to find a diverse group of service users meeting with me to represent the diversity of the boroughs. I was also impressed by the sincerity of the Quality Assurance Team and the Executive Director to ensure our views directly influence the decision makers at the council. I felt appreciated, valued and treated with respect and dignity. I felt listened too. Being listened too is very important to me.



Rachel reads my words at a staff event

At the conference in November 2018 I suggested that the next event should be solely focused on mental health and wellbeing issues. I am very pleased to say the next conference in May 2019 was totally devoted to the subject. I felt I had been listened to.



SAFEGUARDING

Outcomes we set in our Ambition Plan:

OUTCOME 1

We will work with senior council officers to design a feedback questionnaire for service users following a Safeguarding Adults process, once the feedback has gathered, we will help to analyse the feedback and present it to the Safeguarding Adults Executive Board with identified learning from a service user perspective.

We will link with the chairs of the SAEB engagement and other connected groups and share collaborative working and best practice.

We will work with the SAEB user group to update their leaflets.

We will be part of the panel that will recruit the new Independent Chair for Safeguarding.

OUTCOME 2

We will be meaningfully involved in the Safeguarding Adults Peer review in March 2019.

We will attend the feedback session from the Peer Review and support the council in any way we can to embed the findings of the review.



"The contribution and support from both the Local Account Group and The Safeguarding Adults Reference Group has been invaluable. It is inspirational to work such a highly motivated and enthusiastic group"

Louise Butler – Head of Service, Safeguarding and Workforce Development Team

Our report for the year on our Safeguarding work

OUTCOME 1:

Safeguarding materials and engagement

- ✓ We commented and gave suggestions for the Safeguarding Adults (SGA) leaflet in partnership with the Safeguarding Adults Reference Group (SARG).
- ✓ We joined with the SARG to work on a video, focused on awareness raising around safeguarding and we helped design the content and appeared in the filming.
- ✓ We designed and featured in the SGA feedback forms, ensuring they were simple and easy to use in order to capture the true views of people subject to statutory safeguarding processes.
- ✓ We were part of the interview panel for the new, Independent Safeguarding Adults Chair, we also had a follow up meeting after she was appointed to give her some ideas about the ways the Safeguarding Adults Executive Board (SAEB) can run going forward.
- ✓ LAG member Michael H attended the Top 30 Managers Briefing in RBKC. Michael says "I wanted to get across that they shouldn't just pay lip service to our involvement in council work. What were they doing in their departments to involve residents? I think they got the message."

OUTCOME 2:

Involvement in the Safeguarding Adults Peer Review

- ✓ In March 2019 officers from other local authorities came along to review the safeguarding processes. During their week with the councils, we attended the Safeguarding Adults Executive Board meeting and spoke about our involvement in the department's work in front of the Peer reviewers and Multi Agency board.
- ✓ We met the peer reviewers in a specific face to face meeting and discussed our experiences of safeguarding and what was important to us, reflecting our personal experiences and our knowledge of safeguarding through other groups we have been involved in the community.
- ✓ We attended the peer reviewers feedback session and heard first-hand the recommendations; this was very important to us and allows us to help the two councils to put these into action.

Ongoing Safeguarding work

The Safeguarding team has told us that they have had an ambitious year in which they have combined their approaches to working with service users by having a 'service user by experience' group – the Reference Group – and working with the Local Account Group. A few of us attend both groups. The Reference Group is now focussed on co-producing safeguarding training and delivering events to raise awareness of safeguarding adults. Group members say "*our views are important, and our voices heard*".

Feedback from service users and carers groups is heard at every Board Meeting and through the subgroups. The team have committed to supporting the Local Account Group to analyse data from their feedback forms and present the findings to the Board, with identified learning from a service user perspective.

I am Fay,
I represent
Older
Women



Our Achievements

We know that fire safety is very important to the people in our communities. People that have been impacted by the Grenfell tragedy, people who have sensory impairments and people with physical and learning difficulties that make them more vulnerable to risk caused by fire. We were very keen to have a conversation with senior staff within the Fire Service to find out more about keeping safe.

This year we met with Paul Kavanagh, Borough Commander from the London Fire Brigade (LFB) who talked about the work they are doing to support people in their homes and in the community. We asked lots of questions about the plans for the future of the LFB and how to keep ourselves and our loved ones safe, including installing smoke alarms, evacuation procedures and simple ways to ensure our homes are safe (including not overloading plugs and closing doors).



**Darren Tulley,
RBKC Borough
Commander
and we look
forward to
working with
him next year**



We met the Grenfell Recovery Taskforce

In April 2019 we met the leads from the Grenfell Taskforce. The Grenfell Tower tragedy on 14 June 2017 had a devastating impact on many people and resulted in 72 people losing their lives. Many others have experienced trauma, loss and displacement.

When we received the invitation, we were keen to showcase the work we had done to date in partnership with officers from Adult Social Care. We had a fantastic meeting, and came away impressed with the commitment of the Task Force. Following this meeting we were so pleased to be referenced in the letter to the secretary of state in June.

"We have seen pockets of good practice in terms of fostering a good relationship with service users and the community. One of the best examples has been the Local Account Group, made up of residents, service users and people representing service users. Set up by Adult Social Care services to help them design service, specify new systems, review day-to-day work and hold them to account. We observed the group in action and were impressed by the excellent joint working, the positivity, and drive and ambition to make things better."

4th Grenfell Task Force report July 2019, page 6.



INTEGRATION

Outcomes we set in our Ambition Plan:

OUTCOME 1

We will support the two councils with the dementia agenda. We will have the opportunity to become 'Dementia Friends' in partnership with the Alzheimer's Society to help create dementia friendly communities, we will commit to dementia friendly actions and promote dementia friendly activities across the two Boroughs.

OUTCOME 2

We will present to the Health and Wellbeing Board about the work we have been involved in, and would like to hear their ideas for involving us more in the future. We are keen to work with and connect with many other agencies and organisations to improve the health and wellbeing of residents like us.

Our report for the year on our Personalisation work

OUTCOME 1: Dementia agenda

- ✓ Members of the group attended Dementia Friends training and information sessions.



We are really pleased the Bi-borough is now officially accredited by the Alzheimers Society as Working Towards a Dementia Friendly Community.

- ✓ Although many of us in the LAG have experience of relatives and friends living with dementia, we are now more aware of their behaviour and what is important for people with dementia, and pass on this knowledge.

- ✓ We have worked closely with dementia leads to create and design the Council's Dementia Plan, feeding into content, design, style and colours. We really feel it is a plan for the people, by the people. It is an exciting achievement and we look forward to it being distributed widely in both boroughs.

- ✓ We look forward to further raising awareness of dementia and supporting the Council on its 'dementia friendly' journey.

OUTCOME 2: Presentation

- ✓ We hope to present this report and all subsequent reports to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Other dementia initiatives in the Bi-borough area

We have been kept up to date on the dementia bikes initiative between Bi-borough, the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS), four residential homes in the Bi-borough area and Motitech, a Swedish tech company. Many age-related disorders are caused by physical inactivity rather than age itself.



Motitech created a product to motivate older people and people living with dementia to be more physically active. It is a video and cycling concept that allows participants to 'cycle' videos from familiar streets and roads to places of childhood memories, using a static exercise bike linked to a video screen. Competitions between residents and themed events are held to give prizes to those who cycle the furthest.

We think this is a great initiative and look forward to seeing the bikes in action in 2020.

✓ During Dementia Action Week we saw the Scarves campaign. In collaboration with the local Dementia Action Alliance the Council put scarves on famous statues around our boroughs, during Dementia Action Week and followed it up with a social media campaign.



✓ We have set up the Dementia Partnership Group to involve local people in the long-term. Made up of residents living with dementia and their carers, the group gives the two councils direct feedback on services, from adult social care to housing, leisure and transport.



✓ Andrew Carpenter, Bi-borough Dementia Lead says: "I've enjoyed getting to know so many lovely people and working with them to make our boroughs leading dementia-friendly communities. It's been amazing to see how keen people are to help make things better and do their part".

More of our achievements

SPECIAL RECOGNITION AT THE WESTMINSTER STAFF AWARDS

We were delighted to be invited to the Westminster Staff Awards on 3 July at Porchester Hall. It made us feel like we are really included in the business of the councils, including celebrating its staff. We enjoyed dressing up for the occasion and had a wonderful time – so much fun to see 'Every Voice Counts' the Westminster staff choir. We also enjoyed the buzz and atmosphere in the room and meeting some lovely staff.

We were amazed and surprised to be given our own award! A Special Achievement Award, which was given for our dedication, energy and enthusiasm, and our commitment to our fellow residents. We were delighted – as perhaps you can see from the photo.



**"Don't say you're going to listen,
listen properly and be prepared
to do things differently"**

Patricia

RBKC Top 30 – plus one

Bernie Flaherty was invited to speak about community engagement in Adult Social Care at the regular RBKC Senior Management Forum (known as the 'Top 30') on 4 April 2019.

Bernie was adamant that a member of the Local Account Group speak as well, and LAG member Michael H asked to attend. After an introduction by Bernie, she asked Michael to come on stage and speak.

You can see from the photos how engaged the senior managers were as Michael spoke. When he asked to use the microphone you could hear a pin drop, and he offered them a challenge – what are you doing in your departments to make sure the voice of residents are heard? And don't just give us lip-service, but concrete, practical ways of involving residents.

You could tell that they were not expecting such a direct call-to-action, but they were very responsive. At the end of the presentation, two Executive Directors made pledges about involving service users and residents in their work. We are very proud of Michael and his courage to speak in front of those Directors to get the message across about the purpose and importance of the Local Account Group.



MARKET SHAPING

Outcomes we set in our Ambition Plan:

OUTCOME 1

We want to ensure that the voices of service users are never forgotten when the two councils purchase or design new services.

We would like to work with the two councils to make this mandatory within Adult Social Care and beyond.



OUTCOME 2

We would like to be involved from the outset of the Statutory Advocacy tender; we want to support the councils with the important things that should be included with the tender; we want to evaluate tender submissions and once the contract is in place we want to review the quality of services delivered.



Our report for the year on our Market Shaping work

OUTCOME 1:

Council Change

With the help of officers, we prepared a report to be taken to the Commissioning Board for Adult Social Care. This report requested that the board change its terms and conditions to reflect the need to include service users (not always the Local Account Group) at every point of a commissioning process.

The Adult Social Care Contracts board committed to change their terms of reference to make it mandatory for all contracts. The design of new services to show evidence of service user engagement right from the outset.

We would like to see more people involved in this sort of activity to ensure that the voices of the people benefiting from the service are considered as part of the evaluation. This is an area the councils definitely need to do more work on, and we are very happy to be part of this next year.

We were invited by Adult Social Care commissioning, to be part of their programme of work to redesign day services. The Strategic commissioners invited us to a meeting at Westminster City Council to talk about some of their ideas and some of our own.

OUTCOME 2:

Advocacy and Day services tender

We were invited to be part of the design and tender of the statutory advocacy services.

We commented on all questions included within the tender documents and designed one of the questions. Once the tender is live, we will be evaluating the full tender response.

Other Market Shaping work

This is an area of the Council that we would like to work more closely on, we hear a lot in the news about the stability of the market in Adult Social Care and we would like to be more involved next year in the work Adult Social Care carry out.

We were invited by the Department to contribute to the consultation they were carrying out around day opportunities. We know that 16 events were held across the Bi-borough, seeking the feedback of older people and stakeholders. Surveys were also issued by day service providers to older people across the Bi-borough.

We are keen to find out what the plans will be on the back of this exercise.





QUALITY ASSURANCE

Outcomes we set in our Ambition Plan:

OUTCOME 1

We will design and implement a Quality Assurance (QA) Charter. A sub-group of the LAG will meet the QA Team on a monthly basis to define what 'quality' really means to the residents and service users of the Bi-borough.

We would like to get buy-in for the charter at all levels of the local authority to make the charter mandatory for all service providers in Adult Social Care and Health.

We will be publishing the Quality Charter booklet in hard-copy and online.

OUTCOME 2

We will be working with the QA Team to "mystery shop" services, asking pre-agreed questions and making observations as we go. Following a similar format to retail "mystery shopping" of:

- One residential home in each borough
- One nursing home in each borough
- One home care service used across the Bi-borough.

We will then be giving feedback on these visits to the Council and the providers.



Our report for the year on our Market Shaping work

OUTCOME 1:

Charter

- ✓ We are working closely with the Quality Assurance Team to develop a Quality Charter, this is a document that all providers across Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster will be expected to sign up to if they are to provide social care services.
- ✓ We are sharing our own experiences, being in receipt of care, to improve things for people like us.
- ✓ The Charter will go above and beyond the expectations of the regulator or any contract they may have in place and is about what matters to local residents, and we will be working with the two councils to implement this and make sure that people receiving care are treated fairly, with dignity and respect.
- We will be working with designers to make our charter exciting, inviting and user friendly and expect to see it clearly displayed in all services providing care across both Boroughs. This has not happened as quickly as we would have liked! But we do work very closely with members of the Quality Assurance Team, and representatives from the team attend all of our meetings!

OUTCOME 2: Mystery Shopping

✓ We are very involved with the QA Team, and have worked with the team to understand what they do to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of the residents is at the heart of everything we do.

✓ We will be joining some of the officers on their visits, to help them to spot things they may not! Using our experiences of caring for loved ones in receipt of care or receiving care ourselves we can be experts by experience to provide a different view. We are also excited to deliver this message to the providers and the CQC to help drive genuine improvement.

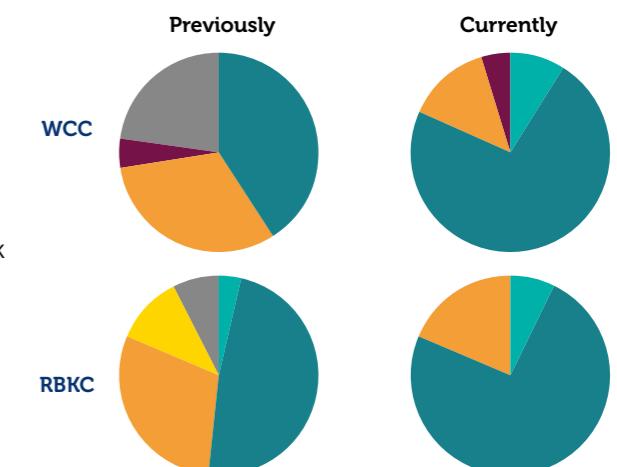
Other Quality Assurance Work

We know that the LAG has had a huge impact on the QA Team. The team are newly formed and are putting our views at the heart of everything they do.

The team are focusing on the improvements required in our residential and nursing homes and the QA officers as part of their regularly monitoring visits regularly speak to residents and families to get a full picture of the service. The team supported Elsie (see page 24 for Elsie's story) when she struggled with a care provider and continue to use this case study as a learning tool.

We are excited to work with the team next year to help define what 'quality' means to us!

● Outstanding
● Good
● Requires improvement
● Inadequate
● Inspection pending
● Not previously inspected



THE WAY FORWARD

In the third section of the report we want to focus on the way forwards, on culture change and how we have made a difference.

If you think of council mechanisms like an engine, then residents should be every cog and wheel in that engine, driving it and setting the direction. We have re-designed how the engine works, re-engineered it to be constructed by the voices, needs and experiences of us, the residents.

That's easy to say, but we feel we can demonstrate this in action.

We feel we are taken seriously by the two councils and that our work reaches beyond the boundaries of Adult Social Care.

We feel we have championed the voice of residents in the work of the two councils; departments are now actively understanding they need to routinely involve residents in the design and review of services.

We are proactive and take the initiative. We invited the two Chief Executives who came and spoke to us in February last year (Valentine's Day) and we did a presentation to them about our work and ambitions to be involved fully in the work of the councils. They listened and we had a great session. We were so pleased they stayed and chatted to us informally for over an hour after our presentation. we hope we can meet both Leaders shortly to share our successes and discuss how we can become even more involved.



This report details some of the work we have undertaken over the past year, some of the projects we have been involved with and the outcomes we have achieved. We acknowledge that the councils both have a long way to go but we feel there has been a change in the way we are viewed and that our voices and the voices of the people we represent are now being listened to and considered.

We have to continue our work to make sure we are listened to at every point.

WE SAID



PERSONALISATION

We want to be central to the digital innovation programme

We want to feed into changes to the department and the IT



PREVENTION

We want to meet with the Borough Commanders from the LFB

We want to see improvements in the Council Offices to make them more accessible to residents



SAFEGUARDING

We want to help gather feedback from people who have been subject to a safeguarding

We want to be part of the decision making around the Safeguarding Board

WE DID TOGETHER



PERSONALISATION

We were and continue to be highly **influential** in the digital development



PREVENTION

We **met** with the Borough Commander from the LFB

We were **influential** over the theme of the Adult Social Care staff conference



SAFEGUARDING

We **interviewed** the Independent Safeguarding Adults Chair

We **fed into** the Adult Safeguarding Adults peer review and designed feedback questionnaires



INTEGRATION

We want to support the councils in their dementia agenda

We want to present our report at the Health and Wellbeing board



MARKET SHAPING

We want to change the way the Department considers service users and carers when designing services

We want to be part of the design of specific services



QUALITY ASSURANCE

We want to be part of the workings of the Quality Assurance team and support their improvements

We want to give feedback on services



INTEGRATION

We had the **opportunity** to become 'Dementia Friends'

We helped **design** the councils Dementia Plan



MARKET SHAPING

We are **actively** involved with tender processes



QUALITY ASSURANCE

We work closely with the QA Team and have shared our stories with the team to help them **improve** services

As well as attending meetings, workshops and project sessions, we have also attended a number of events over the last year organised by the Adult Social Care Department and the two councils. We feel this is really valuable because it indicates that the councils value our contribution at every level, that we feel part of the fabric of the organisation. We have enjoyed them tremendously, but they are not just good fun they are ways of showing how the two boroughs feel that we are part of the 'engine' of local government here in Kensington and Chelsea and Westminster. It feels like we are breaking down the walls between officers and members – and us, the residents.

Here are some of the events we have been involved in:

October 2018

ASC Staff Conference - It Takes All of Us

This was an exciting and engaging conference focusing on the department's 6 priorities and we very much valued being part of this lively event, and some of us spoke at the event. Our thoughts seemed to be very well received.



December 2018

SMT Christmas Party

Bernie, her management team and the lead members invited us to celebrate the season at a festive party in the last management team before Christmas.



February 2019

Meeting the CEOs



March 2019

Carers Awards

LAG member Rose H was a judge on the panel.



April 2019

SMT Easter Party

Bernie invited us again to an Easter party with her management team and lead members. This was just after meeting the Grenfell Task Force.



April 2019

Peer Review



May 2019

ASC Staff Conference - With Health In Mind

We enjoyed being part of this conference which focused on mental health and wellbeing, a subject many of us know a lot about. There were inspiring stories and activities that break down stigma about the subject.



July 2019

Staff Awards



Summer 2019

Safeguarding events

October 2019

ASC Staff Conference - Extraordinary People, Extraordinary Lives

We were pleased to be asked to join this conference showcasing the rich and rewarding lives staff lead outside of work that informs the work they do. So important for all of us as well – we all bring so much from our lived experiences and the things that motivate and inspire us.



December 2019

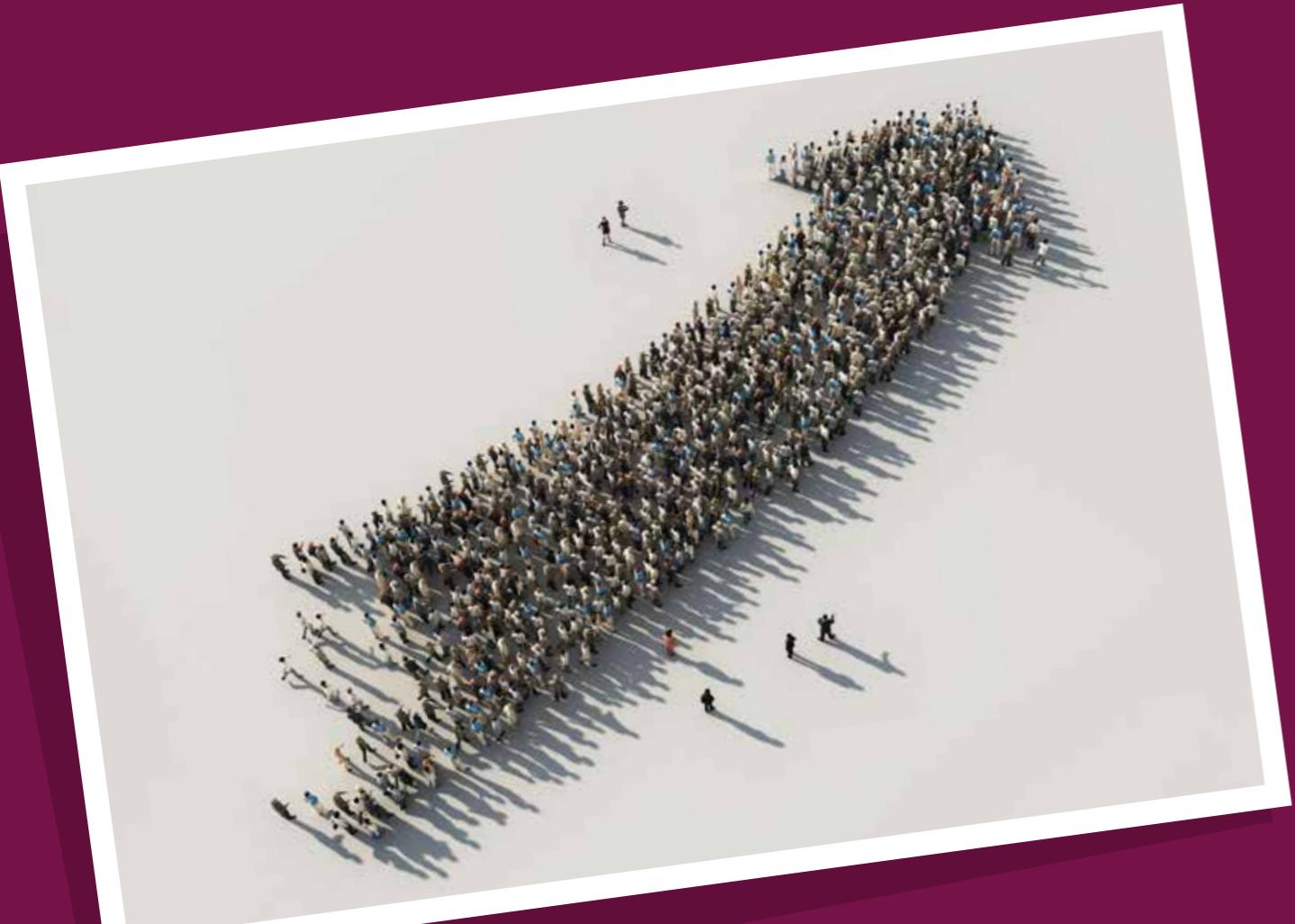
December to Remember



Events coming up...

- Continued monthly meetings chaired by the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Public Health
- Adult Social Care Staff Conference
- Wellbeing Event

THE FUTURE



We feel we have broken down the barriers. In the past, we felt like residents were only to be engaged when it suited the council. But we have changed things, not by writing manuals, or procedures or policy documents but in a much natural and organic way. We have used our instinct, knowledge and experience to cut through the red tape, to alter perceptions of officers and members in a constructively challenging way. We hope we have always done this with warmth and enthusiasm, we don't seek to be critical without offering suggestions and ideas for doing things in a better way. We think we make a virtue of straight-talking, but laughing as well.

The councils have made some mistakes but allowed us to challenge them, and the councils have acknowledged they need to take ownership and are committed to improve, we really welcome that honesty. We want to be the engine that drives the work of the councils – the councils exist to serve the community and we are that community. We put a value on the strength of our human experiences rather than procedure and protocol. That stuff is important in its own way, but the most important thing is that our voices are heard, our views and ideas acted upon, our stories listened to, and that we set the agenda and pace for change.

Next year's area of focus

We will be using our website a lot more.

We will publish a quarterly newsletter, once our training is completed.

We will be doing more work around dementia, and extending our work to include increased awareness around autism, diabetes, falls prevention and heart disease.

We would like the opportunity to work with Public Health around some of their community-based initiatives. We are keen to branch out work out to the wider councils and think this could be an exciting opportunity to set up some projects together.

We will be working closely with the Quality Assurance Team to finalise our Quality Charter and roll it out to all residential, nursing and domiciliary care providers.

We will be recruiting more members from both boroughs and will be holding recruitment events throughout the year to attract new members to our group.

We would like to focus on a programme related to loneliness and isolation, we know it is something that has a huge impact on our communities and we would like to work with the two councils to develop a solution together.

We would like to meet with more senior council officers and councillors, including those specialising in housing and homelessness, as we are aware that housing and the environment people live in is very connected to their overall mental and physical wellbeing.

Next year we would like to promote our message even more to make further meaningful changes to our communities.

We would like to invite representatives from the health services to discuss some concerns we have about the overall health of the two boroughs and to understand health related systems and processes better.

We have achieved a lot this year, and have lots of ideas for next year, we look forward to seeing more improvements as we continue our journey!

THANK YOU!



It's great to be involved with so many people working towards common goals. The councils can only improve by us all working together at all levels, not just from the top down. That means with us residents as the lead voices and officers and members working together to make real change happen. There is still much work to be done, and more understanding to be had, and we understand that our commitment as a LAG group is that everyone involved in the process understands the commitment. We've made great headway, and been delighted to meet some very talented people from the two councils, but there is room for many more improvements and a lot of work still to do. It's a balance, and about building on successes at the same time as identifying areas for improvement.

Some final words from the Chief Executives



Barry Quirk

Chief Executive, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea

I have thoroughly enjoyed reading the Annual Report of the Local Group and delighted to add this afterword.

We made it very clear in RBKC's 4 year Council Plan that we want to put residents at the heart of what we do and build on links in the community to ensure that we connect with what really matters to them. The Local Account Group is key to this approach. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting them last year in both formal and informal settings and was impressed by their enthusiasm, dedication and ability to express their opinions in a constructive way. It takes energy and resolve to be involved in representing others, and I want to thank them for their time, effort, and courage in doing this work so selflessly and with such enthusiasm.



Stuart Love

Chief Executive, Westminster City Council

It's been a real privilege to be involved with the Local Account Group over the last year.

I was delighted that the Group won a Special Recognition Award at the Westminster Awards in July 2019 because this was a tangible way of showing how the Council appreciates the work the group does. It also demonstrates the council is totally committed to involving the opinions and experiences of all members of our communities in a fundamental way. This Annual Report points the way forwards, and the ongoing work to be done to create a real change in the way we operate. I am delighted to thank all the members of the group for their hard work which this report amply demonstrates, and for being such stimulating, warm and engaging colleagues on our collective journey.

We'd like to say thank you to all the lovely people we have met over the last 18 months from all aspects of the community, the two councils and various voluntary and private organisations. We've also loved all the sandwiches and coffee we've had – and Shiv's regular supplies of fresh fruit. We have attended lots of meetings, but they have always had the personal touch and people have been warm and friendly.

Above all, we're looking forward to what the future brings.