

## **Provision for adults with autistic spectrum conditions**

Autism is a serious, lifelong and disabling condition which effects how a person communicates with, and relates to, other people. It is a spectrum condition, so whilst all people with autism share certain difficulties, it will affect each individual in different ways. Some people with autism are able to live relatively independent lives whilst others may need a lifetime of specialist support. Autism affects around 1 in 100 people – that is over 5,000 people in Cambridgeshire.

The Autism Bill recently passed its Third Reading in the House of Lords and becomes the first Act to be disability specific. The Autism Act places a legal obligation on local authorities and health bodies to provide services for adults with autism.

Together with NAS (National Autistic Society), Red2Green were recently awarded funding for a 2 year development project to work in partnership with Cambridgeshire County Council and NHS Cambridgeshire. The key purpose of the project is to bring about positive change in outcomes for people on the Autistic Spectrum and champion the cause, identify best practice, map and document existing provision across the county and highlight gaps in provision. The project also covers those young people going through transition from children's to adult services, the post links to Aspirations and is a key member of the Multi-agency Adult ASD Consortium.

The Development Officer is Maria Cooper. Maria is working at Red2Green under the auspices of our Aspirations service. Maria has experience of the issues and difficulties faced by those on the spectrum and their parent/carers. Through participation, she would like to gain the views and experiences of service users, carers/parents and service providers. Sadly because of time restraints she is unable to become an advocate for any one person or family, but sharing their views will be the first step to implement positive change.

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