



**HAVE
YOUR
SAY!**

A guide to influencing Adults and Older People's Services in Greenwich



... we're *listening*

There are a number of ways in which you can tell us what you think about Adults and Older People's Services in Greenwich. This booklet aims to show what they are and how you can have your say.

▶▶ Complete a survey or questionnaire

From time to time Greenwich Council or your service provider will issue a questionnaire or survey to find out what you think about the service you are receiving.

You can tell us what you think by completing and returning them. We collect all the information from surveys and questionnaires and use it to find out where improvements can be made.

The information we collect is very valuable to us and we really appreciate the time you take to feed back. It helps us to make your services better for you.

Judy has been a volunteer for twenty years. She is involved with a variety of community groups, including: older people's groups; a pensioners' lunch club; and a young people's project. She also assists in managing community buildings. Judy has been active in responding to Council and Primary Care Trust (PCT) consultations.

“ The Council needs input from local people. Your voice is every bit as important as anybody else's. Input from local people gives service providers new ideas for different ways of working.

Greenwich hasn't been perfect in the past but over the last few years the Council has improved the way it has consulted with local people.

Whenever you can, speak up, speak out, have a view and take part in consultation. ”



Lillian became a resident at a Greenwich nursing home when both she and her husband became very unwell. Lillian contributes to the smooth running of the nursing home by sharing her views as a service user.

She attends residents' meetings where she is consulted about what is working well and where improvements need to be made. Staff are keen to hear her opinions on such issues as the food, laundry and the cleanliness of the building.

Lillian completes a questionnaire once a month to give her views on the service she receives. She also takes part in interviewing new members of staff.

The nursing home makes use of a feedback tree, which is pinned to the wall and gives residents the opportunity to post comments. Lillian left a note on the tree to express her thanks for the buffet provided following her husband's funeral. She has also made a request for more regular events.



▶▶ Join a group or forum

Another way that you can have your say is to take part in groups and forums. There are many groups already in place. If you would like to get involved, contact the Council to ask for more details about the groups available to you.

Manjit is the Greenwich Drug and Alcohol Team (DAAT) Service User and Carer Involvement Co-ordinator.

“ My role is to help and train service users to get involved in influencing services in Greenwich. I work with Greenwich Local Addicts Support Service (GLASS), which is a service user forum. If you would like to become involved with this group you can get in touch with the Council, or one of the members of the GLASS forum group.

The group discusses issues and problems relevant to people using our services. Greenwich DAAT uses GLASS as a mechanism to consult service users and to influence their planning and service delivery. The training provided equips you with knowledge of the bigger system, and includes drug awareness and treatment, advocacy and mentoring. Service users can directly influence services by getting involved with GLASS. ”



Wendy is an active member of the service user group GLASS. She is currently the lead development co-ordinator for the service user Council and also attends DAAT meetings.

She has taken part in training to enable her to support others. Wendy would encourage others to become involved with user groups. Her own experiences prove how beneficial this can be.

“ I needed some direction. Getting involved with GLASS has



Roy has worked with GLASS for six months. He has taken part in service user training and now attends DAAT meetings. Roy has also represented Greenwich at national conferences.

“ The issues we discuss in the GLASS meetings are shared with, and influence the decision making of the DAAT and other local groups. We have our own input and air our views. I've been made to feel very welcome. ”

Roy has helped to promote and advertise GLASS by distributing leaflets outlining the work of the group. He has also circulated questionnaires to gather the views and opinions of service users. As a result of the information collected the group are now working to support others to access a range of educational, therapeutic and leisure courses. Roy is also keen to promote the mentoring and buddying support service now offered by GLASS members:

“ We've been trained to support other service users and want to pass on the information and knowledge that we have gained. ”

Roy's involvement with GLASS has helped his own rehabilitation.

“ It keeps me busy and active and is something to look forward to. It's an incentive to get up in the morning and to keep going. I feel like I'm being listened to and that my opinions are valued and I have more self-esteem and confidence. ”

helped to signpost a way forward for me. It has opened doors and empowered me. I know that my opinions count. I get my voice heard and can be a spokesperson for other people. ”

Wendy has seen very positive changes in the user group over the past few years.

“ More service users are getting involved. The groups are well advertised. We are supporting people to make positive changes for themselves. The people

who commission and deliver our services are listening to what we have to say. I wanted to get involved and let commissioners know what is really happening.

“ We have helped to give Greenwich Local Authority more direction, to show them how they can support us and where money can be spent. They are now hearing from real people. ”



Graham is the chair of the service user group based at 68 The Heights, which is a community mental health centre in Greenwich and is part of Oxleas Foundation Trust. Oxleas Foundation Trust provides mental health services in Greenwich. Graham is also involved in a number of other groups.

“There are lots of ways of getting involved. If anyone does want to get involved I would suggest that they talk to the Council or Oxleas NHS Trust.

“I was involved in an incident in 1989 where I suffered a spinal injury. After eight years of trying to learn to live with it I gave up. I lost my family and my home.

Eventually I ended up in psychiatric services and with nowhere to live. After several months of treatment I was supported to find a home and to get the correct benefits. Once I'd settled down into my new life I found that I could give something back. Being on my own I didn't want to sit at home staring at four walls.

This is why I became involved in user groups. It got me out of the house and led to bigger things. You take each step at a time. Then you start reaping the benefits. I've met so many wonderful people. If you become a representative of other service users you meet other people and can represent the views of others. It's about improving services for everybody. You can have a real say about what services are provided in your local area.”

The Council works in Partnership with a group called Working with Words. This is an organisation which aims to tell people about the information needs of people with learning disabilities to help them take part in the community and make it easier for them to “have their say”.

Kathy is the manager of Working with Words

“Working with Words gives people with learning difficulties the opportunity to work with documents produced by the government and other agencies. They have an input into making documents accessible for themselves and for other people with learning disabilities.”



▶▶ Attend an event

There are a number of events during the year for you to attend. These are a great opportunity to meet lots of other people, to find out what they think and to have your say about your service. There are often outside speakers, so as well as meeting people and getting your views across you can find out more about the services and the providers and develop your own learning. You will hear from those leading and managing services and get a chance to speak to them directly.

Sue is the manager of the Greenwich Carers' Centre, which was set up in 1991 by a group of carers and now supports around 600 carers every year.

“One of the great benefits of having a Carers' Centre in Greenwich is that it's a wonderful opportunity for carers to become informed of consultation events and to have a voice if they don't feel confident to have a voice directly themselves. Over the last few years Greenwich Council has increased the number of consultation opportunities for carers.”



Jay is the Assistant Director of Older People's Services.

“What we try to do is listen to those issues that are brought to us directly from carers and service users and translate them into services that we can then offer so they actually influence the services that we purchase.”



Jean cares for her uncle. She has attended the Carer's Meeting at Charlton House, and has taken part in Greenwich Carers' Meetings. She has contributed to the Council's five-year strategy for carers.

“Our views were taken on board and put into the strategy. I would encourage other carers to go along to the meetings. You can put your views forward, say what you like and meet other carers.”



▶▶ Talk to your care manager or service provider

If you have a problem with the service you are receiving talk to your care manager or service provider. Unless they hear from you they may not realise that there is a problem. You can give them the opportunity to improve your service for you.

Care managers and service providers are keen to hear from service users and their carers. They want to know how they can provide the best possible service for you. You can help them by saying what isn't working and what you need. The same applies when you are really happy with the care you are receiving. Tell someone so that they know to keep doing it in the same way.



Linda is the service manager of the Contracts Unit for Adults and Older Peoples Services. She is responsible for monitoring the quality and performance of the services provided through contracts in the voluntary, independent and private sectors.

Linda and her team use a variety of methods to monitor services. These include spot checks on providers, questionnaires, visits and phone calls to service users as well as a system called 'Quality Alerts'. When a service user, or relative, contacts a care manager to highlight a problem with the service they are receiving, the care manager will complete a Quality Alert form, which is passed to Linda and her team. One of the team will then work closely with the service provider to improve the service.

“ Greenwich Council wishes to ensure that services are of a consistently high quality for service users.

“We use feedback from service users to improve our services. This feedback is important to us. It helps us to maintain and improve the level of service that we deliver to the people of Greenwich. ”

▶▶ Make a comment or complaint

If you, or your carer, have not been able to resolve a problem by talking to your care manager or service provider you can use the Council's complaints system. This has been put in place to help you. There is a team of people waiting to hear from you.

You can contact us by telephone, by letter, by email, or through the Council website.

Adults and older people's services complaints:

Complaints Manager
Greenwich Council
2nd Floor
Riverside House East
Woolwich High Street
London SE18 6BU

Tel: 020 8921 2385
Fax: 020 8921 3039

Email: adults-complaints@greenwich.gov.uk



David is the Customer Care & Complaints manager for Adults and Older Peoples' Services.

“ The care and complaints department welcomes meetings with service users, and hopes that resolution can be quick and effective through this route. ”

The Council website address is:
www.greenwich.gov.uk

Just click on the complaints or compliments button to find how to make a complaint or to comment by using the website.

There are three stages to the complaints system. The Council aims to resolve any issues at stage one so that problems are resolved as quickly as possible.

Stage one

The Complaints Manager will investigate the issues raised in your complaint. He will speak with relevant managers in order to attempt to resolve the complaint at this stage. The Complaints Manager will provide you with a response, usually within ten working days of receiving your complaint. Complicated investigations can take up to 20 working days to complete.

Stage two

If you are not happy with the outcome after Stage One, you can contact the Complaints Manager within 20 days of the Stage One response, and request a review. The Complaints Manager will then appoint an investigating officer to review the complaint and provide you with a considered response, usually within 25 to 65 working days.

Stage three

In the event that you are still unhappy with the outcome of your complaint at Stage Two, you can request further consideration of your complaint by an independent panel. The panel would not reinvestigate your complaint, but would review the findings at Stage Two.

You can also contact your local Councillor, Member of Parliament (MP) or the Local Government Ombudsman. The Complaints Manager can advise you of the contact details for your Councillor or MP, and the Ombudsman’s contact details are:

The Oaks
2 Westwood Way
Westwood Business Park
Coventry
CV4 8JB

Oxleas NHS Trust provides the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), which assists in-patients accessing mental health services to talk about any problems they might be experiencing and to assist with making complaints.

▶▶ We also collect your feedback in other ways:

Safeguarding

■ Greenwich Council, along with its partners, has devised policy, procedures and guidelines to protect vulnerable adults from abuse. These link closely with the Council’s Complaints and Quality Alerts systems. Monitoring and reviewing these give us important information, which we use to reshape and improve outcomes for service users.

File audits

We regularly audit our files to look for information that may help us to improve your services.

Simon is the Assistant Director of Adult Services.

“The information is reviewed in a consistent and transparent way. We aim to ensure that service users agree with the documents that are being kept about them.”



Quality Advisory Board

The Quality Advisory Board is a new group. The group receives and processes information from all sources covered in this booklet. After the Board has made its recommendations, the information goes to senior managers so they can ensure that the system is working effectively and the information is having an appropriate impact on future commissioning. The Board is made up of service managers, care managers and – most importantly – service users and carers. This gives another opportunity for service users to be involved in the process and acts as a proxy for direct involvement in commissioning groups.

Greenwich Council

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www.greenwich.gov.uk

**Adults & Older
People's Services**

