

**Project name:** Accessible Information Training Pilot

**Name of the organisation:** Brighton & Hove City Council Community  
Learning Disability Service (CLDT)

**LDDF monies awarded:** £4000

**Is your project complete?:** Yes

**Expected project completion date\*:**

**Contact details for the project:** Lucy Westcott, Total Communication  
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**Please provide a short (no longer than one page) description of project progress to date:**

The aim was to increase the production and use of effective accessible information. Due to the short timescale of the project we concentrated on effectiveness.

The training sessions were built on a frame of 5 guidelines (based on the Mencap Make It Clear booklet) to help build a consistent level of competence in the production of accessible information.

Services completed pre-training questionnaires to identify specific learning needs and the sessions were tailored to these.

I linked in with Speak Out throughout the project.

I targeted Learning Disability Services first. 1 session for the Community Learning Disability Team and 2 sessions for Day Options staff. We need to role model a consistent level of accessible information production across our services.

I also targeted BHCC Communications team who produce much of the Council information available in services and across the city. This session was joint delivered with Speak Out trainer Mathew Hellett and Ingrid Ashberry to highlight the direct experience of people with a learning disability

I delivered 4 training sessions in total.

**What I learned**

Due to the short timescale of project I was not able to identify specific pieces of accessible information from each service and quality check the

progress.

The BHCC Communications team suggested that other BHCC services who commission them to produce information would benefit from this training.

BHCC Communications Team were keen to identify an appropriate image bank for accessible information. We have given them a copy of Photosymbols3.

The training identified a lack of consistency in production of AI across Day Options. Not everyone shares computer skills to produce the information. Each service has different needs.

### **Feedback on the sessions**

Common themes in the feedback from Day Options were that the 5 guidelines were useful, especially Plain English and making difficult concepts accessible. Learning how images and symbols support text was also valuable.

The Communications team said that it was very useful having Mathew as a trainer and hearing his experiences accessing information in the city. They said the guidelines were useful but that they will find it difficult to use them all the time in mainstream focussed design. The team were pleased to be able to clarify the most appropriate image bank for making accessible information. They also said this training would be useful for other council teams who commission them to design and produce written information.

**With reference to one or more of the 6 priority areas in the Learning Disability Partnership Work Plan for 2012-13, please comment briefly on:**

**1. How has the project benefited people with learning disabilities?**

- Information – providing accessible information or working with others to make information more accessible

Making sure consistent effective accessible information is produced in Learning Disability services is essential for the people who use our services. Having access to information that people can understand supports their day to day activities and access to mainstream services.

The accessible guidelines support the regular production of accessible information like letters, posters, invitations and reports.

BHCC Communication team produce information for Council Services across the city. Raising awareness about the effect on people with a learning disability of not being able to access information and providing the team with clear guidance on how to produce accessible information will potentially make getting information a lot easier.

**2. What difference did the project make? (Something extra that was not happening already)**

We hope this pilot will improve consistency and raise awareness.

The sessions highlighted the challenges of producing accessible information in our services. Consistency is difficult within day services due to the high number of staff and movement across venues.

Delivering the training at team meetings to access maximum number of

staff was a good way to counter this. The continued use of the 5 guidelines for making accessible information will enable more consistent production.

Raising awareness in the Communications team is potentially of great benefit as they produce the majority of the written information for BHCC. The team will also now be using an appropriate image bank (Photosymbols3) for their accessible information.

### **3. How will this project benefit people with learning disabilities in the long term?**

The sessions focused on a set of 5 guidelines to be used when making accessible information.

Day Options will be using these guidelines for making their accessible information.

In addition BHCC Communications Team committed to a list of actions they intend to take forward as a result of the training session. They are also looking into signing up to the Thumbs Up scheme.

### **4. Will the project continue – NO & please explain why.**

This project was a pilot which has now ended. The training identified that there is room for an extension of AI training sessions for other council teams, specifically those who commission Communications. Further work with day services would also be helpful. They may benefit from forming a working group to develop an accessible information policy based on the 5 guidelines.

**Is there anything else you want us to know?**

**Many Thanks for your project and for making a difference to people with learning disabilities.**

**The Learning Disability Partnership may invite some projects to present at a future board meeting.**