

DISABILITY OVERSIGHT PANEL

MONDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2024 AT 5.00 PM
MEETING ROOM 3.1, CROWDALE CENTRE, 218 EVERSOLT STREET, LONDON,
NW1 1BD

Enquiries to: Ben Lynn, Committee Services
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Telephone: 020 7974 5653 (Text phone prefix 18001)

MEMBERS

Councillor Lorraine Revah (Carers Champion and Older People's Champion) (Chair) (L)

Councillor Kemi Atolagbe (Learning Disability and Hidden Disability Champion) (Vice-Chair) (L)

Councillor Anna Burrage, Physical Disability Champion (L)

Councillor Richard Cotton, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Champion (L)

Councillor Judy Dixey, Blind & Visually Impaired Champion (LD)

Councillor Lorna Greenwood, Mental Health Champion (L)

L = Labour

Issued on: 19 November 2024

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DISABILITY OVERSIGHT PANEL

25 NOVEMBER 2024

AGENDA

Wards

1. APOLOGIES

To consider any apologies for absence

2. DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF STATUTORY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS, COMPULSORY REGISTERABLE NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND VOLUNTARY REGISTERABLE NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS IN MATTERS ON THIS AGENDA

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS

4. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DECIDES TO TAKE AS URGENT

5. MINUTES

To consider the minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2024.

(Pages 5 - 8)

6. UPDATE ON PROGRESS OF DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS ACROSS THE DIGITAL ESTATE

All Wards

Report of the Chief Experience and Information Officer.

(Pages 9 - 16)

The purpose of this report is to share the approach to making digital products accessible and the progress that has been made in the past twelve months.

7. UPDATE ON SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY OPPORTUNITIES FOR DISABLED CITIZENS IN CAMDEN

All Wards

Report of the Director of Recreation.

(Pages 17 - 30)

This report provides an update for the Disability Oversight Panel (DOP) Committee on the sport and physical activity provision for disabled citizens in Camden and the ongoing service developments and targeted initiatives.

AGENDA ENDS

The date of the next meeting will be Tuesday, 4 February 2025 at 5.00 pm.

THE LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN

At a meeting of **DISABILITY OVERSIGHT PANEL** held on **TUESDAY, 15TH OCTOBER, 2024** at 5.00 pm in Crowndale Centre, 218 Eversholt Street, London, NW1 1BD

MEMBERS OF THE PANEL PRESENT

Councillors Lorraine Revah (Chair), Kemi Atolagbe (Vice-Chair), Anna Burrage and Lorna Greenwood

MEMBERS OF THE PANEL ABSENT

Councillors Richard Cotton and Judy Dixey

ALSO PRESENT

Councillor Marcus Boyland

The minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda for the meeting. They are subject to approval and signature at the next meeting of Disability Oversight Panel and any corrections approved at that meeting will be recorded in those minutes.

MINUTES

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Judy Dixey.

Apologies were also received from Cllr Anna Wright.

2. DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF STATUTORY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS, COMPULSORY REGISTERABLE NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND VOLUNTARY REGISTERABLE NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS IN MATTERS ON THIS AGENDA

No declarations were made.

3. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

4. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DECIDES TO TAKE AS URGENT

There was no such business.

5. MINUTES

RESOLVED –

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 21 February 2024 be agreed.

6. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

Consideration was given to the report of the Director of Education Commissioning and Inclusion who, along with the Head of SEND and Inclusion and the Principal Policy and Projects Officer, introduced the report.

Members highlighted the importance of schools understanding that some children had additional needs, what these needs could be and what support was available. The Director of Education Commissioning and Inclusion said that this was an issue nationally and locally, there was going to be a curriculum review which would make sure that children with special educational needs (SEN) had their needs met. The curriculum review would be a way of highlighting best and good practice.

The Panel then spoke about the support available to children with additional needs. Some children, through assessment, who were not eligible for certain support streams might be eligible for others. It was important that people were made aware of all funding and support available to them.

Members discussed with Officers the importance of providing support and information to parents as a way of reducing social and cultural stigma around SEN.

In response to questions from the Panel about health partner organisation involvement in providing support, the Director said that there was investment from partners, most notably around the child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS).

In their discussion of the report the Panel made the following comments:

- Methods introduced into classrooms to support children with autism and ADHD would also be beneficial for neurotypical children.
- Children with additional needs who were not in schools would have a home tuition package.
- The Panel spoke with officers about the provision for young people with additional needs and the post-16 years offer available to them.

Disability Oversight Panel - Tuesday, 15th October, 2024

The Panel requested that an update on the work happening around SEND be brought to a future meeting.

RESOLVED –

THAT The report be noted.

The meeting ended at 6.00 pm.

CHAIR

Contact Officer: Ben Lynn

Telephone No: 020 7974 5653

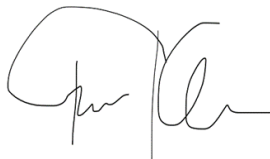
E-Mail: ben.lynn@camden.gov.uk

MINUTES END

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LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS:
REPORT TITLE Update on progress of digital accessibility improvements across the digital estate	
REPORT OF Chief Experience and Information Officer	
FOR SUBMISSION TO Disability Oversight Panel	DATE 25/11/2024
SUMMARY OF REPORT The purpose of this report is to share the approach to making digital products accessible and the progress that has been made in the past twelve months. Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information 'No documents that require listing have been used in the preparation of this report. Contact Officer: Louise Brown Head of Digital Products and Services London Borough of Camden 5 Pancras Square, London, N1C 4AG Email: louise.brown@camden.gov.uk	
RECOMMENDATION That the Committee notes the report.	

Signed:



Date: 19th Nov 24

1. Purpose of Report (and Reason for Urgency)

1.1 An update on progress of the digital accessibility and inclusion strategies following up on a report last year which outlined our approach to digital accessibility and the plans that were in place for 2024.

1.2 If the report is being considered as a late urgent item, then you must also set out clearly here why the report is late and why it cannot wait for a future meeting of the Committee.

Background to the report

Last year the Camden.gov.uk redesign plans were presented to the Disability Oversight Panel showing progress made in digital accessibility, specifically in content design and the new templates that would change the look and feel of the website in 2024.

This year the legal digital accessibility compliance standards were raised so that from October 2024, any public sector website needs to comply with WCAG 2.2 guidance apart from in exceptional circumstances. Appendix 1 gives more explanation and detail of what digital accessibility means with links to the guidance.

This report details the progress we have made to date and where we hope to make further progress in the coming year both from the Digital Products team and the Digital Inclusion team, as well as some notes about further assistance given to staff which we hope will benefit residents in future.

2. Progress made to date – major milestones

2.1 April 2024 camden.gov.uk April 2024 camden.gov.uk design launched with accessibility improvements to templates and improved instructions for residents in how they can use tools built into their own devices and phones.

We used automated and manual tests to ensure that the site was compliant with accessibility law (see Appendix 1) and an external accessibility expert to review the code used to create the pages to ensure we were aware of the detail of compliance.

<http://www.camden.gov.uk>

<https://www.camden.gov.uk/using-our-website>

2.2 June 2024, following a cabinet office notification in May, the Adult Community Learning booking site relaunched with improved accessibility and an updated accessibility statement. This involved providing an audit for the external company who build the site, and further guidance to them on how to improve the code with which the site was written

<https://www.webenrol.com/camden/?page=home>

2.3 We have engaged with Digital procurement teams and are now providing contractual guidance to ensure that all renewed and new contracts with external providers are aware of their obligations to make their digital services accessible.

2.4 June 2024 we reorganised our digital design team – in order to better support digital accessibility and more ongoing research with citizens (including disabled citizens) we have reorganised the team and created new roles of UX Designers which incorporate both of these skills. These roles are now being hired (ads in October and November 2024) after consultation.

2.5 July 2024 we sent out a brief to three expert agencies for their help in three areas:

- research on testing the new website with disabled residents which requires specific skills e.g. with non-verbal users
- guidelines and training for teams
- assistance with auditing

Those companies responded in August and September. As we have not had the team members on board to manage the work it is currently on hold whilst we hire these roles.

We have also been in touch with Camden Disability Action (CDA) and discussed how we might use their contacts for this research.

2.6 September 2024 we relaunched a redesigned Local Offer website and further updates were made to the Families website both of which significantly improved their digital accessibility.

<https://localoffer.camden.gov.uk>

<https://families.camden.gov.uk>

2.7 Many other areas of the site have had their content improved in line with best practice, for example, Leaseholder Services. As well as improvements on the webpages, guidance has been produced for how to write clear and more inclusive letters (Appendix 2).

<https://www.camden.gov.uk/leaseholders-and-freeholders>

2.8 In October 2024 the team completed manual accessibility tests of Unpaid Carers site Mobilise which will feed into the renewal of its contract.

2.9 In October 2024 the accessibility statement on Camden.gov.uk was updated to reflect an evaluation of the sites under the WCAG 2.2 guidelines.

<https://www.camden.gov.uk/accessibility-statement>

3. Future plans

3.1 By the end of 2024, we plan to launch two forms that are part of the Camden Accessible Transport System (CATS) as online forms as well as paper forms: Apply for a Green Badge and Apply for a Substitute Badge.

Apply for Disabled Person Freedom Pass will be the one following this early in 2025. Content on Camden.gov.uk for this whole area is also being updated to ensure plain language and clear signposting.

3.2 **Research** – once our Lead UX Designer is hired (interviews in the next two weeks), we hope to get our external agency chosen and started with specific training for our team, likely working with Camden Disability Action (CDA) to recruit Camden

residents as part of our testing

3.3 Public design system for external companies

We have also been developing, as part of our design system, guidance on shared standards for how digital content can be made accessible on a public website that we will be able to share with all partners. This will be shared more widely in late 2024/early 2025.

For example:

Making documents accessible - <https://zeroheight.com/4c170debc/p/24f096-making-documents-accessible>

Making tables accessible - <https://zeroheight.com/4c170debc/p/322a30-making-tables-accessible>

3.4 Strategic priority for next two years

Accessibility is a part of our Citizen Experience priority for our Customer, Technology and Digital Data teams and will become part of our shared strategy.

4. Technology adoption team work

Tope Owolabi and Sareena Hasmat of the Technology Adoption team launched an accessibility process with their Digital IQ team in March. This process was specifically developed to assist our staff in their digital roles, utilising thorough research and case studies to ensure we were addressing their needs effectively.

Over the past nine months, the team have supported 37 members of staff. Each individual has presented us with a unique set of challenges, which has required further research and expansion of the team's knowledge on digital accessibility. This ongoing learning has been crucial in refining support and ensuring that the team continues to meet the diverse needs of our teams.

The knowledge they have will support future disabled people joining our teams (for the benefit of the council and our communities) and can also feed into the support for our Digital Accessibility and Inclusion strategies.

5. Resource implications

All additional roles and budget for accessibility support is covered within existing budgets. The new roles we are hiring mean that we would need fewer external auditing experts to be used.

6. Equalities impact assessment

The aim of this strategy is to improve the availability and usage of Camden's digital services for people with disabilities.

7. Environmental impact

None.

8. Risks and challenges

There are a number of sites across the digital estate created by external providers that do not meet the Public Sector Accessibility regulations. We believe we have the skills to audit and amend these to timeframes appropriate to the Cabinet Office team who are responsible for monitoring whilst we work through them to fix and update them either by rebuilding ourselves, removing the sites, or getting providers to fix the issues we discover.

9. Finance Comments of the Executive Director of Corporate Services and Legal Comments of the Borough Solicitor

The Executive Director Corporate Services has been consulted and has no comments to add. The Borough Solicitor has been consulted and has no comments to add.

10. Appendices

Appendix 1: Explanation of digital accessibility and what it means for a local authority

Digital accessibility means making sure that websites, apps, and other online tools are easy to use for everyone, including people with disabilities. This could mean making colours more clearly contrasted so people can read it more easily, adding captions to videos so people who can't hear can still understand, or making sure webpages can be navigated with a keyboard instead of a mouse. The goal is to help everyone use our websites and online services without problems, no matter what their abilities are.

It's important for local councils to understand digital accessibility because we provide services and information that everyone in the community needs, like paying bills or getting help with important issues. If our websites and online tools aren't accessible, some people—like those who are blind, hard of hearing, or have other disabilities—might not be able to use them. This could stop them from accessing important services or information. By understanding digital accessibility, we can make sure everyone in our community is included and treated fairly. Most accessibility improvements also benefit everyone in the community - a lowered reading age also means text tends to translate more easily, and most people have been in a situation where it's been easier to read captions than listen to a video.

In the UK, there are several laws and regulations that govern digital accessibility for local councils, ensuring websites and online services are accessible to everyone, including people with disabilities. The key laws are:

1. **The Equality Act 2010**

What it says: This law makes it unlawful to discriminate against people based on their disability. This applies to digital services, meaning local councils must ensure their websites and online tools are accessible.

Impact on teams: Councils need to actively consider how to make their services accessible to people with disabilities. This includes training staff and ensuring both them and citizens are able to use tools to do their jobs and receive support.

2. **The Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) Accessibility Regulations 2018**

What it says: These regulations require all public sector websites and apps (including those run by local councils and charities who are largely funded by them) to meet certain accessibility standards. This means websites must be designed in a way that works for people with disabilities, such as screen reader compatibility, keyboard navigation, and easy-to-read text. Since October 2024, the minimum standard is now WCAG 2.2 and our teams are growing in their knowledge and expertise of how to monitor and implement these.

Impact on teams: Councils must check and improve their digital services to meet these standards. This includes regular accessibility audits, fixing any problems found, and providing an Accessibility Statement on our websites explaining how accessible their content is and what users can do if they have difficulties.

3. **The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**

What it says: While primarily about data privacy, GDPR has some overlap with accessibility. It requires councils to ensure that individuals, including those with disabilities, can access their data.

Impact on teams: Teams need to ensure that people with disabilities can request, view, or edit their personal data without barriers, potentially affecting the design and functionality of data request processes.

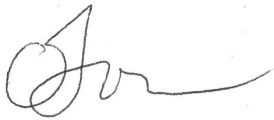
Impact on Services

- Digital and Data Services: Our focus is on technical and content compliance, such as ensuring websites meet the accessibility standards outlined in the law, carrying out accessibility testing, and fixing any issues either in code or content (such as heading structure, reading age of text, alt tags for images).
- Comms Team: These teams are responsible for making sure that the content we share across other digital channels such as email and social media is easy to understand, readable, and inclusive. They must make adjustments like using plain language, providing alternative text for images, and ensuring that media is accessible (e.g., subtitles on videos).
- Contact Camden and other front door teams: CROs are trained to assist users with disabilities in navigating online services and provide alternative ways to access services if needed.
- Technology adoption teams: need to ensure that all employees can access and use the tools they need to do their work whatever their accessibility needs.

By understanding and applying these laws, we can avoid legal consequences, serve our communities better, and ensure that no one is excluded from accessing public services.

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Agenda Item 7

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: All
REPORT TITLE Update on Sport and Physical Activity Opportunities for Disabled Citizens in Camden	
REPORT OF Director of Recreation	
FOR SUBMISSION TO Disability Oversight Panel	DATE November 2024
SUMMARY OF REPORT This report provides an update for the Disability Oversight Panel (DOP) Committee on the sport and physical activity provision for disabled citizens in Camden and the ongoing service developments and targeted initiatives. Contact Officer: Stephan von Schilling Active Living Manager London Borough of Camden Telephone: 020 7974 1518 4 th Floor 5 Pancras Square London N1C 4AG Email: stephan.vonschilling@camden.gov.uk	
RECOMMENDATION That the Disability Oversight Panel notes and comments on the update.	
SIGNED: 	

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report responds directly to the chair of DOP who requested the following key themes were investigated:
 - a. General update – What is the offer for people with disabilities
 - b. Carers' offer at Leisure Centres – Are carers given the best offer to encourage them to be more physically active?
 - c. Deaf and Hard of Hearing provision - What does the offer look like in Camden Leisure centres – specifically deaf yoga provision and more how much of the universal offer is appropriate and attractive?
 - d. Welcome at Leisure Centres - Could the welcome at leisure centres in Camden be better geared towards disabled people.
 - e. Recent developments at Camden's Leisure Centres
- 1.2 The CDSPAN (Camden Disability Sports and Physical Activity Network) is the borough's strategic forum for sport and physical activity for disabled people and is linked to PAC (Pro Active Camden, the overall strategic partners for sport and physical activity in Camden). Information from CDSPAN members has been used to compile this report.
- 1.3 Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) operate and manage Camden's six leisure centres and offers 10 targeted disability sessions. Camden has a strong network of community organisations representing the disability community. GLL has active relationships with 6 of these and see it as their responsibility to work with them as well as their own Learning and Development team to better understand the requirements and reasonable adjustments which need to be made for disabled citizens.
- 1.4 Camden's Sport and Physical Activity (SPA) department provides classes or activities (where other providers cannot) either directly or with partners.
- 1.5 The Borough Solicitor has been consulted and has no comments to add.

2. GENERAL UPDATE

- 2.1 There is a broad and varied offer of physical activities for disabled people in Camden with over 60 sessions per week delivered by the sport and physical

activity service, GLL and camden-wide disability partners: [Activities for disabled people - Camden Council](#)

- 2.2 GLL are committed to providing targeted activities, including interventions to encourage residents that are less likely to exercise for a range of reasons including support for those who face financial barriers, confidence issues, as well as new routes into physical activity for deaf and disabled people, those living with poor mental health and those with long-term health conditions. GLL's activities and memberships for deaf and disabled people can be found here:
<https://www.camden.gov.uk/documents/20142/1271010/Camden+Accessible+Activity+Guide+FINAL+JULY+2023.pdf/a067f4d5-75ba-cfd4-d892-e9a13097ca85?t=1689761783409>
- 2.3 As a charitable social enterprise, GLL see it as their 'purpose' to improve the physical, mental, and social wellbeing of all Camden citizens, and one of GLL's values which shapes their 5-year plan is 'Tackling Health Inequalities'. Their equality, diversity and inclusion policy aims to ensure that their purpose is delivered by their workforce across all the leisure centres in Camden (and in the community) in a vibrant, equitable and inclusive way.
- 2.4 Camden GLL's Community Team, along with a lead member of staff from each leisure centre, attended a workshop in Disability Equality Training in November 2023 led by Purple Tuesday which is a global social movement and brand for improving the customer experience for disabled people and their families. The staff who attended have become Champions in their work teams with a view to rolling out coaching sessions with colleagues. The training will also feature in an annual refresher training package available to other staff.
- 2.5 In Spring 2024, Kentish Town Sports Centre launched SEND swimming lessons on Thursdays. This followed the success of these sessions at Swiss Cottage Leisure Centre. Both sessions are incredibly popular which has led to an additional SEND swimming lesson being added on a Sunday at Kentish Town and there are also plans for an additional class at Swiss Cottage.
- 2.6 Disability training – GLL's Community team have attended three different training sessions based around disability equality. These sessions covered language, stereotypes and how the world can be made more accessible to disabled people. Two of these sessions had a focus on recruitment and the benefits of recruiting disabled people into the workplace, and the support available both for the employee and the employer. The community team achieved Propel Mentor status in partnership with the Mason Foundation, an organisation with whom GLL is now working on a national level to support Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion objectives for employing disabled people.
- 2.7 London Inclusion Sports Academy (LISA) has increased HAF (Holiday Activities and Food) (see Appendix 1) capacity by 10 children per day. It has launched two SEND after school clubs and doubled the capacity of Go! Go! Ninja!

- 2.8 LISA's comparison of Camden with other local boroughs (Islington, Lambeth, Haringey, or Brent) shows that: - Camden has good quality (but not enough) SEND CYP provision, on the ground, and evidenced through attendance at sports centres, the London Youth Games, Special Olympics, and Royal Parks. They believe CDSPAN is a best practice example of community development in Council sports and health services. It enables member organisations to be able to hear from leaders across public health, education, leisure, and competition frameworks in one place and supports positioning, impact, sustainability, and efficiency. LISA have recognised that Camden is the easiest borough for them to work in, so they pilot all their complex provision there.
- 2.9 SPA are working with Health and Wellbeing to ensure that Camden has the right opportunities for adults with learning disabilities to maintain a healthy weight. This will look to promote appropriate existing activities which are local and at a convenient time.

3. CARERS' OFFER AT LEISURE CENTRES

- 3.1 Carers in Camden can currently attend GLL's local leisure centres at no cost when they are with the person they are caring for and supporting them undertake their activity. They are not permitted to do their own work-out.
- 3.2 Those who receive Carer's Allowance (a small proportion due to the eligibility criteria) can access their own workouts at the concessionary rate. Carer's Allowance is the main carer's benefit and is £76.75 per week (2023/24) for a minimum of 35 hours. It is the lowest benefit of its kind. In the UK, 977,506 carers were in receipt of Carer's Allowance in 2022. It is not paid to older carers.
- 3.3 There are an estimated 15,600 carers in Camden of whom 4,000 are registered with Camden Carers. About 500 of those receive Carer's allowance. 170 per year receive a health assessment (with Camden Carers) where a recommendation to be more physically active is often given. Camden SPA have worked with Camden Carers over the last nine months to explore the best opportunities for carers in Camden to be more active. We know this is a priority group who have poorer health outcomes. They face many barriers to being physically active. These include lack of time, motivation and financial barriers which have been intensified by the cost-of-living crisis. Camden Sports and Physical Activity have worked with them to provide resources (to inform their members of local opportunities) and links to GLL.
- 3.4 Camden Carers believe that there needs to be an easy and attractive way to entice their members to join and use leisure centres. They have pointed out that in Hackney, where leisure centres are also managed by GLL, carers can access swimming for free. There is a different contractual agreement in Hackney, and this could be possible in Camden but would need to be funded. SPA worked hard to get a good contract for Camden, for example Camden has concessionary member and activity options which unlike other authorities are not time restricted.

- 3.5 In addition, GLL offer free swimming for Camden residents over 60s Monday to Friday before midday with a concessionary pay and play membership. Some carers may not be able to make that time due to their duties.
- 3.6 GLL have an ongoing national partnership with Carers UK, and in dedicated periods during the last year have offered a Carers membership at a rate of £30 per month to support Carers UK campaigns. The membership was first offered until 15th January 2024, and then again in April 2024 for 'Active April'.
- 3.7 GLL offered welcome sessions across all the centres in Camden and neighbouring boroughs for carers to pop in and have a centre tour and try out an activity for free. They would be happy to do this again and would welcome support from the carers network to encourage take-up of this welcome offer.
- 3.8 There is an opportunity for better marketing and communication about the offer and GLL will be working with Camden Carers to achieve that.

4. DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING PROVISION

- 4.1 Tackling health inequalities in one of GLL's values and therefore we are committed to supporting future targeted initiatives for deaf and hard of hearing citizens.
- 4.2 GLL has undertaken a programme of BSL training for swimming teachers working with deaf and SEN schools in the borough for their school swimming lessons. This programme will be refreshed and offered to all staff in 2024.
- 4.3 There are currently no sessions in specific deaf and hard of hearing sessions. This type of session is not well-established in the industry. It is worth investigating what aspects of the universal offer are most attractive and suitable. However, in-line with GLL's programme of BSL training, they are interested in working with partners across the borough in establishing if this type of session is requested by deaf and hard of hearing and then building a suitable and sustainable programme which could include deaf yoga if there was demand.
- 4.4 GLL in Reigate and Banstead are currently working with an organisation for deaf people to provide sports for the deaf community. They currently have some funding and are hoping to use this funding to roll out their sports programme across the country by working in partnership with GLL centres.

- 4.5 GLL will consult with Camden residents who are deaf and hard of hearing to better understand the needs of this community and what activities and programmes they recommend we consider.
- 4.6 To help inform the provision they propose a consultation event similar to the Visual Impairment engagement which they carried out in March information about the event can be found here: www.sightlosscouncils.org.uk/events/access-gyms-making-vi-fitness-better/
- 4.9 The proposed engagement event for deaf and hard of hearing would be similar and inform what provision is needed and how best to promote it. The event would also allow those deaf citizens who simply want to have a look around the opportunity to do so in a friendly and supportive way.
- 4.11 Asif Iqbal (Camden Technical and Rehabilitation Officer – Deaf) has given insight into a perceived lack of opportunities and how activity is promoted and ran a series of training sessions with leisure centre management and front-line teams to educate the teams on this insight.
- 4.12 GLL does not currently have any entry-level staff who are fluent in BSL and able to undertake activity-specific sessions utilising BSL, but are interested in this as a training opportunity, particularly if there is sufficient demand from the Deaf community for this type of session. GLL will also put out an expression of interest to staff in neighbouring boroughs who may be BSL fluent.

5. WELCOME AT LEISURE CENTRES

- 5.1 The welcome at Camden Leisure Centres is important for all users but disabled users often need extra support and a 'trusted' person to whom they can refer.
- 5.2 GLL have operated a 'concierge' system since 2020 which takes staff out from behind a desk and allows them to connect with people more readily.

- 5.3 The concierge role responds to enquiries and are often a customer's first port of call; they deal with transactions, handle any queries, and even go out into the community on outreach projects. By moving telephone calls to a dedicated Customer Service Centre, Concierge staff in centres are now able to immediately respond to customers in front of them and provide a welcoming introduction. From providing team support to the warmest of welcomes, the focus is on ensuring that customer service level is always at the highest level.
- 5.4 There is hearing loop provision in the leisure centre receptions at all leisure centres except for Oasis Sports Centre and the new King's Cross Fitness – GLL are investigating installations at these two centres.
- 5.5 GLL has a suite of induction and ongoing training both online and face-to-face for their workforce. Training includes Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Disability Awareness, Customer Service, and Making Every Contact Count. Additional training is provided for activity specific roles, such as group ex-instructors delivering disability sessions will have Exercise for Disabled People Level 3.
- 5.6 GLL's established Learning & Development guidance and processes for their workforce includes regular refreshes and there will be further disability awareness training in 2024 and annually. Workforce communication on the many initiatives and schemes which they support throughout the borough undergoes continuous improvement to ensure that GLL staff are conversant with the breadth of disability provision to signpost users to.
- 5.7 GLL have created user guides for disabled users (Appendix 5)
- 5.8 GLL recognise that this is an area which can be improved even further. It has been a useful exercise to look at this (including the information in Appendix 4) and there is work to do, as outlined above. They also welcome suggestions from residents and the panel.

6. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS – SWISS COTTAGE LEISURE CENTRE REFURBISHMENT

- 6.1 GLL are investing £600k into Swiss Cottage Leisure Centre as their commitment to improving services for the local community and making the leisure experience even better.
- 6.2 The first phase started late last year and included improvements to gym areas; the overall layout of the gym to allow an expansion of both functional and strength zones while replacing all the gym equipment with brand-new Technogym kit suitable for disabled users and making the space a more comfortable and motivating place for all. The works were completed in January 2024. See Appendix 2.

7. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS – PANCRAS SQUARE LEISURE REFURBISHMENT

- 7.1 The objective of these works is to modernise the look and feel and introduce a functional zone which is in keeping with latest fitness trends.
- 7.2 The gym improvements have been co-designed with Pancras Square Leisure members. Data from annual user survey, reviews and feedback have all highlighted the need and demand for a dedicated functional training space and a modernised product, which allows for improved programming. See Appendix 3

8. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS – TALACRE SPORTS CENTRE

- 8.1 A 'Changing Places' toilet/ changing facility is planned for Talacre Sports Centre. This will bring the total number in Camden to six, making it one of the highest densities in inner London.
- 8.2 In 2024, 16 Camden staff have been trained to deliver Rebound Therapy (a fun way to improve coordination and spacial awareness) The idea was to provide new, bespoke trampoline classes for SEND children. Initially, there were two classes every Sunday with 12 places in each class. This has now grown to three due to increased demand.

Appendix 1

In 2023 LISA (London Inclusion Sports Academy) looked at CYP SEND provision in Camden, speaking to three groups: commissioners and funders, sports providers, and parents & educators.

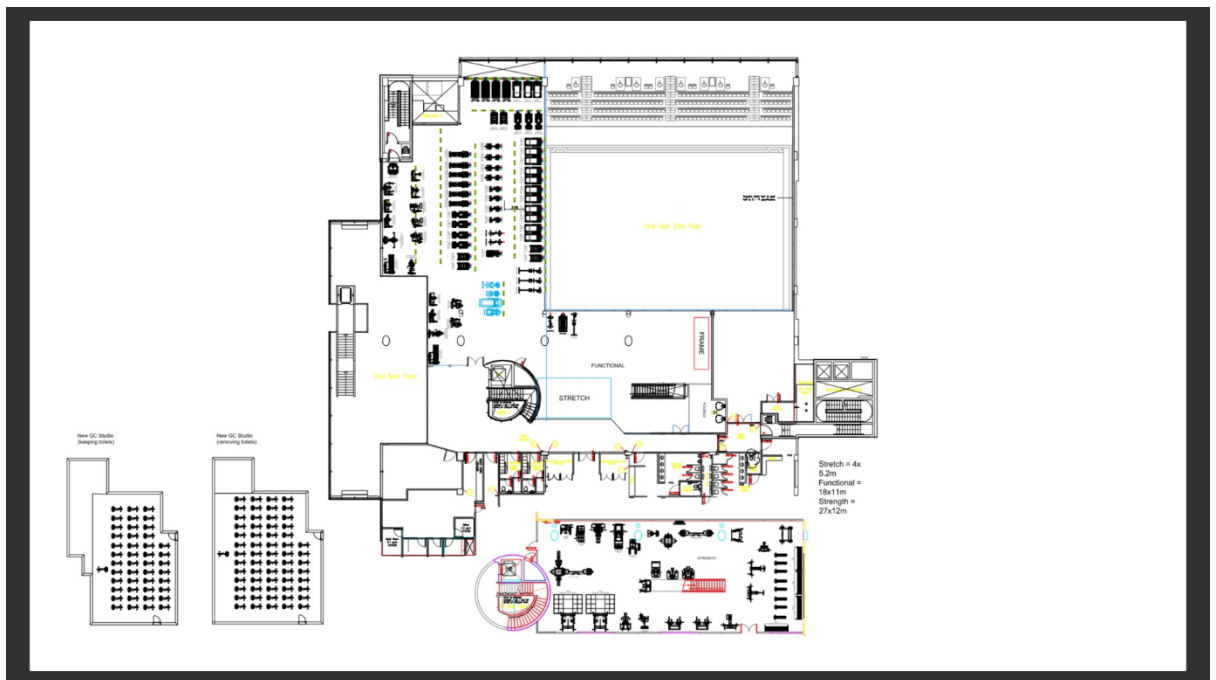
Broadly, the discussions confirmed that: - commissioners were somewhat unclear about CYP SEND provision capacity, and impact - sports providers felt that there are not enough SEND holiday schemes and after school clubs - parents felt that there was a significant lack of accessible, SEND specific provision generally .This echoes LISA's experience of delivering CYP SEND services in Camden.

Key themes emergent from the conversations have been - tensions with Short Breaks commissioning - SEND HAF capacity - Lack of SEND after school clubs - Shortage of Inclusion Sports Supported Internships available

LISA SEND HAF Programme:
[LISA SEND HAF - DfE best practice case study](#)

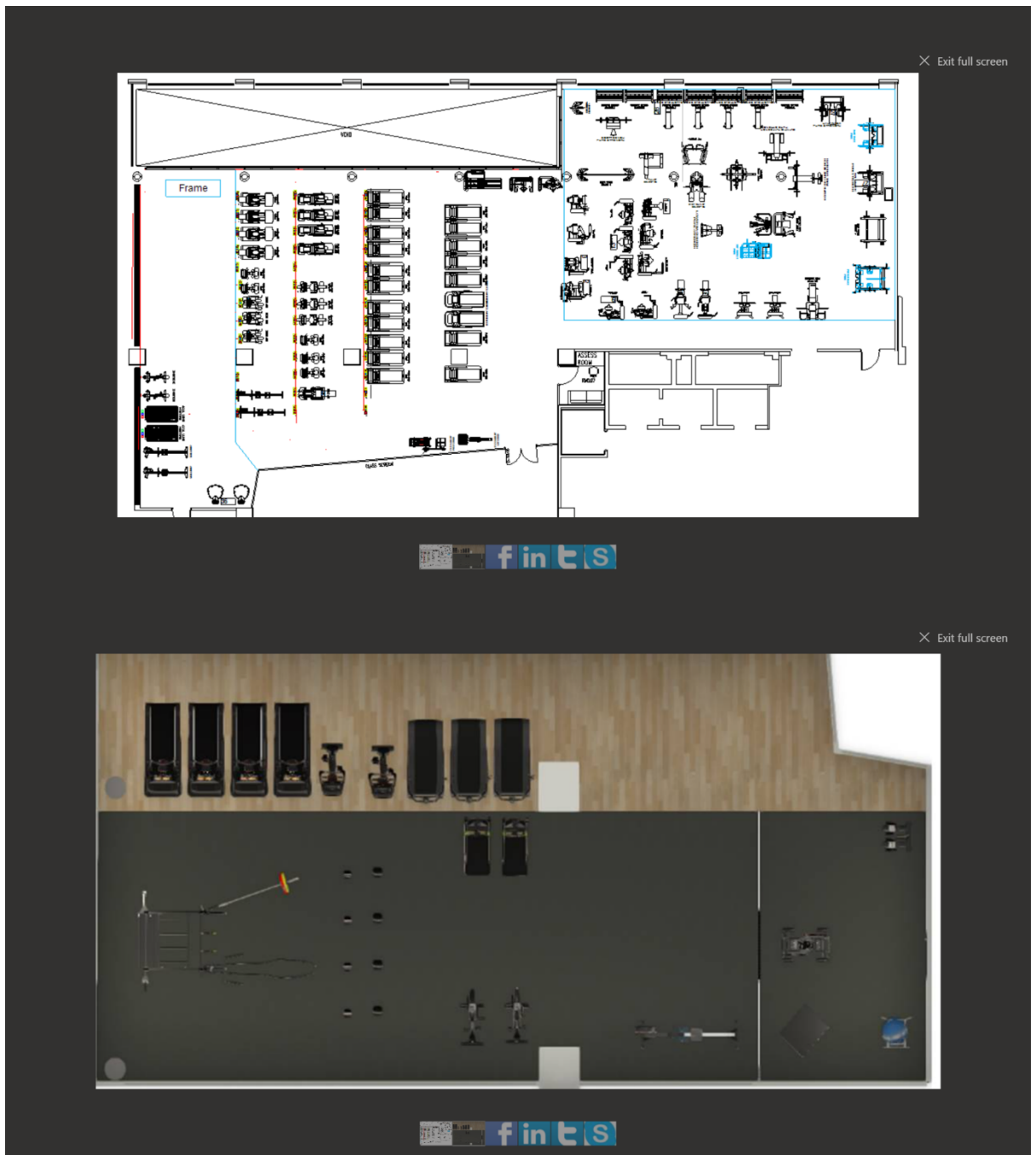
Appendix 2

Swiss Cottage Leisure Centre



Appendix 3

Pancras Square Leisure



Appendix 4

Supporting information

Sport England Active Lives data shows disabled people are consistently twice as likely to be inactive compared to non-disabled people (20.7% vs 40.8%). And yet the Activity Alliance report that Three-quarters (76%) of

disabled people express a desire to be more active.

In September 2022 Camden Public Health in conjunction with Pro Active Camden (PAC) hosted a physical activity symposium (which looked to ensure that the offer was representative) and concluded that the offer for disabled children and young people was underrepresented. As a result, this has become a priority work area for PAC.

Apprenticeships- Out of the three entry-level apprentices at GLL in Camden, one has declared a disability.

Supported internships at GLL – During 2023, there were 2 supported interns.

Camden workforce – in 2023 3.03% of Camden staff have declared to have a disability.

Appendix 5

User Guides

First Time User Guide to make the entire process of accessing and using a leisure centre less daunting: [Camden First Time User Guide \(better.org.uk\)](https://www.better.org.uk/camden-first-time-user-guide)

There is also a guide to using the Pool Pods which give independent and comfortable access to our pools. [What Is A Poolpod? | Better](https://www.better.org.uk/what-is-a-poolpod)

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