

## Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Template

### Section 1 - 'Scoping' the assessment

Service, policy or function being assessed: Learning Disability Day Care Services- implementation of “Better Days” Strategy for people with a learning disability. The large scale day-centres are considered to be unfit for purpose as they lend themselves to institutionalisation, segregate people from their communities and lend themselves to “warehousing” rather than person centred practice. Better Days’ constitutes the closure of three existing large scale day-centres, Battersea Social Education Centre (Closed in 2009), Atheldene Resource Centre and Burntwood Lane Social Education Centre. Furthermore the existing buildings are ageing and not considered fit for purpose specifically in terms of providing appropriate facilities for people with complex needs. The aim of ‘Better Days’ is to create four community bases, geographically situated close to the most dense population of current service users. The bases having a nominal capacity of between 20 and 30 people, providing a more intimate and person centred approach. The bases are situated in buildings that offer access to other community groups and are bases where people can get support and plan their days. Whilst certain aspects of people’s day will be undertaken at the bases, much of what people will engage in will take place elsewhere, particularly within mainstream resources. As well as the four bases, the ‘Better Days’ proposal includes the creation of a high specification Hub. This will be a resource for people with the most complex physical and profound learning disabilities. This resource will house specialist equipment and resources not readily available elsewhere, such as tracking hoists, sensory rooms and physiotherapy equipment.

#### **Officers responsible for conducting the EIA**

**Lead Officer:** Alistair Rush

**Officers:** Will Olmi

#### **Organisations who will have the opportunity to feedback on the EIA?**

Consultation with service users, carers, staff.

**Key dates for the assessment**

**Date for start of EIA:** 26<sup>th</sup> September 2011

**Completion date for draft EIA:** 19<sup>th</sup> December 2011

**Start and end date of consultation:** November 2007 - ongoing

**Completion date for finalised EIA:** 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2012

## Section Two – Developing an initial view.

### **What are the aims of the policy/service?**

It is proposed that a decision should be made, in principle, to close the Atheldene Centre (Earlsfield) when alternative service bases become available in identified areas of the Borough. This is in order to implement the Better Days Strategy. Currently the Better Days Strategy is in the latter stages of implementation. This EIA specifically relates to the proposed Mary Magdalen Base. In order to successfully close the Atheldene Resource Centre, four social bases are required as stipulated by a geographical mapping exercise highlighting the homes of those using the service at the time of the research. Subsequently a base at the Wilditch Community Centre was populated in 2009 following a successful pilot period. In early 2011 a further base was populated in Putney at the Putney embankment Scout Hut, again this followed a successful period of piloting the new venue. In October 2011, a further two pilots commenced at the Mary Magdalen, Wandsworth site and the Derinton Road Community Centre, Tooting site. It has been concluded that the trial period at the Mary Magdalen site has been a success. In keeping with previous capital investment agreements for the Putney and Battersea bases, it is clear that the Wandsworth base can be made fit for purpose, providing suitable access and toilet facilities for all potential users. Whilst the pilot has been successful at Derinton Road in most areas, there is a question mark regarding the level of capital investment that will be required to make this facility fit for purpose and accessible to all. This will be reviewed at a later date. A new opportunity in Tooting has surfaced that may prove superior. It is likely that this will be determined in January 2012. In order to successfully close Atheldene Resource Centre and re-provide the service currently at Burntwood Lane S.E.C., a high specification complex needs hub is required. Negotiations for a new build resource in Wandsworth are nearing a conclusion, with a back up of a renovated space in Tooting. The Tooting Base and complex needs hubs should be ready to populate by September 2012 at the latest.

The Better Days Strategy was based on the conclusions of an independent strategic review of Learning Disability Services in the Borough, conducted by Paradigm, which was commissioned jointly by the Council and the Wandsworth Teaching Primary Care Trust (WTPCT) in the autumn of 2005. The main purpose of the review was to clarify the support and opportunities that people with learning disabilities in Wandsworth want, and identify what systems and services are needed to deliver these. The report highlighted that the day services provided directly by the Council are largely buildings-based with little rationale for people being together, apart from the fact they have the same label of learning disability. Such a model is not consistent with both the philosophy and the targets set by the Government White Papers “Valuing People” and “Our health, Our Care, Our Say”. “Valuing People” set an objective “to enable people with learning disabilities to lead full and purposeful lives within their communities and to develop a range of friendships, activities and relationships”.

It is in this context of service improvement and delivery of personalised services that the closure of Atheldene and the provision of alternative smaller social bases is proposed.

**What evidence could you use to verify if the service/policy offers equality of access?**

Current usage of Atheldene.

Existing service resources/ infrastructure versus comparable/ improved alternatives.

Geographical mapping exercise to ensure new bases are situated close to the largest concentrations of service users in terms of where people live.

Comparisons with alternative service provision within the private and voluntary sectors.

Evaluation of impact of changes on individuals.

It is important to measure the impact of these changes on the lives of potentially vulnerable users and their families. Therefore the lead officer with specific responsibility for user and carer development will be working through the Community Partners Scheme and directly with users, carers and the project team to develop a systematic way of measuring the outcome for service users of the changes which are taking place. In terms of St Mary Magdalen, which is a church hall resource, used by other community groups and an important community resource in Wandsworth the following measures will be scrutinised. These are consistent with scrutiny undertaken at the Wilditch Community Centre, Battersea, Derinton Road Community Centre, Battersea and the Putney Scout Hut.

- Personal feedback from staff and service users and carers ascertained from regular forum meetings.
- Measurable changes in client responses and behaviour patterns (for example, no increase in the level of reported incidents)
- Number of excursions taken to community activities and amenities
- Travel time spent getting to/from activities and amenities
- Variety, suitability and cost of lunches taken by clients
- Impact of the new location on risk assessments in place for each client.
- People's ability to access the building and make good use of the spaces provided.
- Engagement with the wider community.
- Feedback from annual reviews detailing the meeting of personal outcomes and general satisfaction with the service.

**Evidence of this included as appendix 1 within the committee report.**

**Will further data or information be required for carrying out the assessment?**

No

**What do you think are the main issues relating to equality within the service/policy area?**

The overall aim of the proposed service changes is to improve services for residents with learning disabilities by providing a service that is more flexible, supports personal choices, is close to where people live and integrates users into their communities.

Need to deliver a more personalised service that supports greater independent and integration.

The new bases need to be fully accessible to wheelchair users with ramped access to the building and house facilities to undertake personal care. The facilities would need to be fit for purpose, such as a tracking hoist, changing bed and wet-room shower.

As identified in the Paradigm report and supported by national policy and good practice guidelines, the day services provided directly by the Borough are out dated in terms of service design. The service is buildings based and segregated. It is more difficult to provide community integration and a truly personalised service within this model. In recent years the number of service users attending the Council's Learning Disability Day Service for five days a week has fallen and it is now more common for service users who previously attended five days a week to receive some or all of their services from the independent sector. This has been positively encouraged as a first step towards people achieving 'Better Days' and in response to service users' choice.

Longer term risk to individuals development and safety if service is not adapted.

The day service units provide services to people with a wide range of needs though predominantly service users are those with more complex physical care needs and profound learning disabilities. A number of service users also exhibit behaviours that challenge. Some people currently have, and in the future will need, access to specialist equipment – tracking systems and hoists wet-rooms and changing beds. All service users should have opportunities to be part of their communities and enjoy a range of services and activities. If appropriate, accessible, fit for purpose bases are not provided, then some of the most vulnerable, complex individuals will remain segregated and unable to capitalise on mainstream resources and the support of their communities. This will lend itself to dependence and the emotional impact and associated high costs of this sort of provision. It is likely that service users unable to access and integrate with their communities are likely to express dissatisfaction and as a consequence may require more support. Safeguarding referrals are also likely to increase if appropriate services are not provided.

Service user involvement in design of new provision.

From the outset, services users and carers have been consulted in conjunction with the 'Better Days' agenda. The message from person centred planning meetings has overwhelmingly been that people would like more choice, more opportunities to be out and about with scope to become more independent, this is mirrored by national feedback. In addition to this, carers and service users have expressed the need for a building base and support from paid staff as and when they need it.

### Evaluation of impact of changes on individuals.

It is important to measure the impact of these changes on the lives of potentially vulnerable users and their families. Therefore the lead officer with specific responsibility for user and carer development, will be working through the Community Partners Scheme and directly with users, carers and the project team to develop a systematic way of measuring the outcome for service users of the changes which are taking place. In terms of St Mary Magdalen, which is a church hall resource, used by other community groups and an important community resource in Wandsworth the following measures will be scrutinised. These are consistent with scrutiny undertaken at the Wilditch Community Centre, Battersea, Derinton Road Community Centre, Battersea and the Putney Scout Hut.

- Personal feedback from staff and service users and carers ascertained from regular forum meetings.
- Measurable changes in client responses and behaviour patterns (for example, no increase in the level of reported incidents)
- Number of excursions taken to community activities and amenities
- Travel time spent getting to/from activities and amenities
- Variety, suitability and cost of lunches taken by clients
- Impact of the new location on risk assessments in place for each client.
- People's ability to access the building and make good use of the spaces provided.
- Engagement with the wider community.
- Feedback from annual reviews detailing the meeting of personal outcomes and general satisfaction with the service.

**Evidence of this included as appendix 1 within the committee report.**

### Support with identifying other resources.

A community mapping exercise will be undertaken by the staff team based at St Mary Magdalen's and a directory of accessible and local resources for people using the facility compiled. It will identify organisations and leisure facilities within the Borough that are deemed of interest to the service user group.

### Providing new services to meet individuals needs and allow greater flexibility and choice

The development of the St Mary Magdalen social base will create capacity for approximately 20 – 25 people and 10 staff at any one time and be somewhere for service users to meet with friends and to access support from staff if they need it. The amount of time each user will spend at the bases will vary according to their needs and their individual personalised plan. The bases will

also be available if for some reason an element of a individual programme is not available e.g. building or service unavailability, user wants to change activities.

**Are there any criteria/requirements or aspects that could contribute to inequality?**

- Whilst the St Mary Magdalen site is suitable and considered fit for purpose in most aspects and indeed an improvement on the existing services accommodation because it is a smaller more intimate environment, has stronger links with the local community and provides good transport links and access to local amenities, there are currently limitations in terms of accommodating wheelchair users. The facility will need to be upgraded in terms of ramped access to the building and also a hoisted, lay down, wet-room toilet facility.
- Carers/parents of long term service users are used to current provision and will need support adapting to the change.
- Transport and travel arrangements will need to be re-routed and independent travellers supported to learn new routes
- Existing service users, will require some support adapting to the closure of Atheldene, this will include more consideration in terms of enabling people to maintain contact with long-term peers. Certain individuals will take time to orientate themselves to the new layout of the bases, particularly people with ASD who will require some time to establish a revised routine. For a small handful of service users, particularly those who have used Atheldene for many years, there will be a period of adjustment in terms of losing a familiar setting that was the venue for important memories and experiences. In essence, some people may find it difficult to leave behind the security of Atheldene/ Burtwood Lane S.E.C the institution.

### Section Three – Assessment of Impact.

**What does available data/results of consultation show for take up/usage and other outcomes?  
What is the impact on different groups?**

People accessing the Atheldene Centre have wide ranging support needs and travel from all across Wandsworth.  
For many it has been the only choice available to them within the in-house day service provision.

Total service users	116
Wheelchair users	18
Mobility difficulties/ sensory impairment	15
Learning disability	116
Male	68
Female	58
20s	6
30s	25
40s	46
50s	22
60s	15
70s	1
80s	1
Asian British	15
Afro Caribbean British	25
African British	10
White British	66
SW17	27
SW12	23
SW15	23
SW11	11
SW18	17
SW16	10
SW19	2
SW4	1

CR	1
SW9	1

The user group of the Atheldene Resource is very diverse as would be expected in an inner London Borough. The Atheldene resource could be deemed as a one size fits all model, as the service supports the full spectrum of learning and physical disability. Similarly the service supports adults of all ages, genders, ethnicity and sexual orientation. Sexual orientation is not included in the data above as this is normally disclosed in confidential forums such as reviews and network meetings.

The new model of service will continue to support this diverse group of individuals, with emphasis on a more tailored approach. The more intimate nature of the bases means that more time and focus can be delivered in meeting each individual's aspirations. As can be seen by the geographical spread, the largest clusters of service users live in SW17, SW12, SW15, SW11 and SW18. When Atheldene was the only resource, people would have to travel from SW17, SW15, SW11 and SW12, to SW18 each day. The new model of service sees a service footprint in SW17, SW11 and SW15, meaning people have to travel short distances and can access a resource that in their local community. Similarly, those living in SW16 and SW19 have a shorter journey to make contact with the service.

In terms of Ethnicity, age, gender and other equality variables, the new model of service will have no significant bearing on how these are addressed and it is hoped the more intimate nature of the service will realise a more personalised approach.

The main equalities issue associated with the new model of service will be how the new model can address the needs of wheelchair users and those who are frail and/or have mobility difficulties. The Atheldene resource is accessible to these groups, however specialist resources such as changing facilities are considered dated and not fit for purpose long-term. The new social bases present obstacles in terms of accessibility and that is why capital funds are being sought to adapt the accessibility and toilet facilities in order to make the spaces fit for purpose and inclusive. A precedent has been established with the capital investment made in the Wilditch Battersea Base. This resource is fully accessible and has state of the art hoisted changing facilities.

Profile of current service users.

The current user group expressing an interest in Wandsworth are assessed as substantial under the FACs criterion. Many have what are considered to be complex needs. A move to the smaller St Mary Magdalen base will create a much more intimate and person centred approach, which in turn will lead to better quality of individual experience. Many of the people identified as interested in the St Mary Magdalen base live close to the site, which will in turn lead to reduced travel time and may result in more people feeling confident to travel independently. The new base is a community facility and not specialist, consequently

people may not feel segregated and may feel more connected with their local communities.

**Do the results show that there is an adverse impact?**

No, The location of the bases was undertaken in conjunction with a community mapping exercise. As with the Mary Magdalen Wandsworth base. The base in Derinton Road, , the Wilditch Community Centre Battersea and Putney Embankment Scout Hut were chosen as they are situated within the most densely populated areas based on where existing service users live. The bases model in many cases realises a reduced journey each day as people tend to populate the base that is closest to where they live. The closure of Atheldene has no impact on the space available to people using the service as the 4 bases and the proposed specialist hub represents sufficient accommodation to meet the needs of services users and is comparable with that provided by the Atheldene resource and Burntwood Lane Social Education Centre. In terms of age, gender and ethnicity, no adverse impact is anticipated. The new model of service will continue to cater for the needs of each individual. Arguably, the more intimate person centred nature of the new model will enable the service to address more positively the diversity of the user group. The only foreseeable obstacle to equality would be the accessibility of the new bases to wheelchair users and those with profound mobility difficulties. The committee report seeks to secure the capital investment to create suitable accessibility to overcome this obstacle. Capital investment is being sought to create wheelchair access and suitable hoisted changing facilities.

## Section Four- Improving the service delivered.

**If the EIA has shown that there is an Adverse Impact what changes or practical measures would reduce adverse impact on particular groups?**

Ramped disabled access, and the installation of a specialist changing room.

**What can be done proactively to improve access to/take up of the service?**

- Ramped disabled access, and the installation of a specialist changing room.
- Carers/parents of long term service users are used to current provision and will need support adapting to the change.
- Develop more flexible transport provision that is able to cater for a range or requirements. DTS, WCT, TB, Taxi and independent travel.
- Travel buddies supporting people to learn new routes to the bases.
- Supported taster sessions and gradual transition to the new bases.
- Coffee mornings and regular monthly forums to discuss changes and developments with carers.
- Feedback questionnaire to gain insight into what is going well and not going well to inform decision making.

**What is the justification for taking these measures?**

The Better Days strategy fulfils national policy objectives of increasing social inclusion for people with learning and/or physical disabilities, and extending choice and control. Working in smaller groups assists the personalisation process, and makes the service more responsive to the needs and wishes of service users and carers. Additionally, providers and users of mainstream community facilities will become more aware of people with learning disabilities and the issues they face, which should improve social integration. The Better Days strategy towards usage of premises helps future-proof the service, ensuring that vulnerable

people will have the support they need in the longer term.

The new model of provision will enable the in-house provider to engage better with adults with learning disabilities. This will enable us to have an improved scope for addressing the needs of people with profound learning disability, complex physical disability, autistic spectrum disorder, dual diagnosis, frail elderly and challenging behaviour.

**What future monitoring and evaluation tools will be appropriate and effective?**

Service users and carers will be surveyed within three months of any change to the location or nature of the service they receive. An EIA review will be added to the annual care review received by all service users.

- Personal feedback from staff and service users and carers ascertained from regular forum meetings.
- Measurable changes in client responses and behaviour patterns (for example, no increase in the level of reported incidents)
- Number of excursions taken to community activities and amenities
- Travel time spent getting to/from activities and amenities
- Variety, suitability and cost of lunches taken by clients
- Impact of the new location on risk assessments in place for each client

## Section Five – Summary

### **What are the key findings of this EIA**

The major proposed changes are that service users will receive a service as near as possible to the communities in which they live and that service users should have more choice and be able to shape the service so that it meets their individual needs, including cultural and religious needs. This will be advantageous for members of all communities, but particularly for users from minority ethnic groups who will have an opportunity to tailor a service more closely to their own particular requirements.

The discussions with service users, carers and staff have not revealed any particular issues specifically related to racial equality, gender or sexuality. The overall aim of the proposal is to ensure that as individual's, values, beliefs and cultural needs and expectation are met through the way in which the personalised service is delivered. As the Better Days Strategy is implemented equalities issues will be kept under review and any adjustments which are required will be reported to a future Committee.

Use of the St Mary Magdalen site is considered in every way to be in keeping with the local and national strategy related to learning disabilities provision. The only drawback to this proposal is wheelchair accessibility, which will need to be addressed through proposed capital investment.

### **Are the aims of the service/policy consistent with wider Council policies on Equality and Diversity?**

The Council's equality statement says, "It is our policy that no service user is discriminated against because of their disability, gender, race/ethnicity and other dimensions of disadvantage and discrimination including age, sexuality and religion or belief." The Better Days strategy supports this by increasing social inclusion for people with learning and/or physical disabilities, and extending choice and control. Working in smaller groups assists the personalisation process, and makes the service more responsive to the needs and wishes of service users and carers. Providers and users of mainstream community facilities will become more aware of people with learning disabilities and the issues they face, which should improve social integration. The Better Days strategy towards usage of premises helps future-proof the service, ensuring that vulnerable people will have the support they need in the longer term.

Again the use of St Mary Magdalen's would be subject to capital investment to create accessibility and toilet facilities for wheelchair users.

### **What are the priority recommendations and actions?**

- The St Mary Magdalen social base will be required as part of the 'Better Days' program. Facilities at the base will need to be upgraded as identified by our surveyor to create ramped wheelchair access to the building and a hoisted, changing/

wet-room facility.

- Carers/parents of long term service users are used to current provision and will need support adapting to the change. Carers/parents will be regularly informed and consulted about developments, via ongoing regular carer's forums coffee mornings and other consultation mechanisms.
- Regular surveying of service users will be undertaken to determine what is going well, what is not going well. This to inform decision making.
- Service users to be identified and supported with learning new travel routes and arrangements.
- Taster sessions and phased transition to ensure alternative outcomes are introduced in a meaningful and sensitive way.
- Pilot period of three months to be monitored and review to determine the success, suitability of the new model of service.

**How can these recommendations be built into wider planning and review processes?**

These actions will be included in the Corporate Equality Plan and progress against them will be monitored annually.

Monitor experiences of service users and carers in terms of new provision, qualitative and quantitative information mentioned earlier, ensuring attention is paid to all equality strands.

Record the number of service users with wheelchairs access the base and accessing the community and compare with current activity data.

**What indicators of effectiveness or targets are recommended for future use?**

Impact on service users: service users and carers will be surveyed within three months of any change to the location or nature of the service they receive. An EIA review will be added to the annual care review received by all service users.

Financial Impact: Ongoing monitoring of the day care budget will be undertaken. The impact of efficiencies will be evidenced in the level of the unit cost that will need to be levied in order to run the day care service.

**Which of the following does the service/policy relate to? (you can select more than one)**

1. Eliminating discrimination (Y/
2. Promoting equal opportunities (Y/
3. Promoting good relations (Y/

**How would you rank the service/policy in relation to relevance to equality? (select one level only)**

High

**Why did you allocate this ranking?**

A core objective of the Day Care Service is to protect and extend the rights, choices and independence of the vulnerable people

in its care.

**Section Six – Action Plan.**  
**These actions will be added to the Corporate Equality Plan.**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Who will be responsible?</b>	<b>Resources and training required</b>	<b>Targets and milestones (give three year target and milestones)</b>
The experiences of those attending the Wandsworth Base to be monitored regularly during the pilot phase and any issues recorded, and recommendations implemented as and when they arise to achieve the service objectives.	Will Olmi Mark Honan	Project Team to be established, including day care staff, carers and service users	Wandsworth Base to be fully operational following a pilot phase by May 2012.
Carers/parents of long term service users are used to current provision and will need support adapting to the change. Carers/parents will be regularly informed and consulted about developments, via ongoing support via ongoing Carers forums and other methods	Will Olmi Mark Honan	Regular forums, coffee mornings, reviews.	Ongoing throughout service changes
Adaptations of the Wandsworth base following committee approval, which will address wheelchair accessibility and personal care facilities.	Will Olmi Mark Honan	Capital funds to improve the facility in line with surveyors report.	Building work to be complete by May 2012

## Section Seven – Feedback on the findings of the EIA

### What did external organisations say about your findings when you shared this EIA with them?

Service users and carers/parents have been consulted throughout the planning and development process. Feedback has mostly been positive, particularly from the service users.

Service Users have been present at Forum meetings conducted since 2007. Those present have been from a range of ethnic backgrounds and with different physical/cognitive ability levels. The minutes taken at those meetings include the following recorded responses:

- Will asked the client group in general if they liked the idea of moving out of Atheldene, and visiting possible new centres. Several people said 'yes' enthusiastically (there were no 'no' responses).
- Will asked everybody if they were feeling nervous about these plans. Nobody said they were. Several people answered that they were not nervous, and would like to move out of the Atheldene.
- Will asked generally: 'How do you feel about this?' All service users present said they were fine about it, with [some] saying they were 'happy'.
- Will asked for thumbs up or thumbs down to the proposals. There were thumbs up all around the room.
- Since the commencement of the pilot phase, feedback from a number of service users and staff has been that they like the new venue. This is included within appendix 1 of the committee report.

Some carers have been fearful of change, and have expressed worries about how integration can be achieved, and the challenges of managing an individual budget. However, the majority are fully supportive of what is proposed and understand the reasons why the proposals have been made.

There have been ongoing discussions with external service providers in the borough who work on behalf of people with learning disabilities. Organisations such as Thrive, Mencap, Hail, Southside, Workshop 305, O.I.P. and Generate have been supportive of the proposed changes and are interested in working in partnership with the in-house Day Care Provider Services to ensure that the needs of local people are fully met.

