

## Day centre and transport - background info

London Borough of Hounslow provides day services from Sandbanks Day Centre, based in Bedfont.

The day service is for adults from the age of 18 with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and older people living with the experience of dementia. The day centre can accommodate up to 40 residents a day.

At present there are 35 residents on the register who attend the day centre on various days. There are currently 10-12 vacancies available each day.

From the current 35 residents attending, they travel to/from the centre using the following modes of transport:

27 use borough-provided minibuses (77%).

2 travel using a private taxi (6%)

6 travel with family members (17%)

Sandbanks Day Centre currently provides three minibuses. The minibuses hold space for the driver plus 1 escort, leaving a total of 15 seats available per minibus, 45 seats in total. It is important to highlight how the provision works in reality:

For residents who are wheelchair users, seats on the minibus need to be removed to accommodate their wheelchair. One wheelchair, depending on its size, removes on average 4 seats from the vehicle.

For example:

- 1 wheelchair user on the bus there are 11 spaces available for non-wheelchair users
- 2 wheelchair users on the bus there are 7 spaces available for non-wheelchair users
- 3 wheelchair users on the bus there are 3 spaces available for non-wheelchair users

There are currently 10 residents who are wheelchair users using borough transport.

We want to gather views on the eligibility criteria to ensure that:

- Transport is being provided in a way that promotes independence and choice
- Transport is being provided in the most efficient way to meet a person's need
- There is a clear and transparent eligibility criteria to receive assisted transport from Adult Social Care to day services.

### **Opening hours at the day centre**

The opening hours of the centre are not being fully utilised due to the restrictions of travel time on the bus and the volume of drop off and pick-ups. For example, someone travelling in a taxi can attend the day centre from 8am-5pm whereas someone on the minibus attends from 10am-3pm. Some residents are spending a long time travelling in and out of the centre on borough transport - when travelling by private car and/or taxi would be more direct.

### **The proposed new policy recommends the following changes:**

1. Transport for residents attending Sandbanks Day Centre will be considered as part of a broader assessment of needs when residents are confirmed to be eligible for day service provision and/or at the time of their Annual Social Care Review.

2. Assessment of transport need is recommended to be based on the following considerations

- **Whether the existing transport arrangements are the most appropriate to meet their needs:** Residents might have the skills and ability to travel via a different form of transport.
- **Residents' existing access to transport:** For example, whether a resident has access to a mobility vehicle that they drive or that is driven by others on their behalf.
- **Residents' ability to travel independently with support** or following training provided by the Travel Buddy Service.
- **Proximity and availability of public transport to the day centre:** For example, how far and convenient it is to get to the centre on foot, or by public transport
- **Availability of, and entitlement to, support:** For example, entitlement to a free bus pass, taxi card or mobility related benefit. Availability of a personal carer to support travel.

3. Under the proposed new policy, after the residents' transport needs have been assessed, a variety of appropriate travel options will be considered. These could include:

- Using public transport either independently or with support

- Using a mobility vehicle or a private car either independently or with support
- Attending an intensive travel training programme provided by the Travel Buddy Service.
- Local authority provided assisted transport (minibus).
- Taxi service – included a shared taxi
- Direct payment

4. Under the proposed policy, new and existing service users of Sandbanks Day Centre will be assessed for transport against the set eligibility criteria of the Adult Social Care Transport Policy.

5. Any resident who is not satisfied with the outcome of the council's decision in relation to their assessment, should raise their concerns with their assessor. Should the resident remain dissatisfied with the assessor's response they should be referred to the council's Adult Social Care Statutory Complaints Process.

6. Residents currently getting to Sandbanks Day Centre using borough-provided transport might have to make alternative transport arrangements under the proposed Adult Social Care Transport Policy.

For those residents who are assessed as no longer eligible for assisted transport (borough-provided minibuses), a transitional period of up to six months might be offered to support them through the change process. These cases will be considered on an individual basis, which will be related to the type of alternative arrangements that need to be implemented.

Residents who are not currently using borough-provided transport might become eligible for assisted transport support under the proposed policy.