

INDEPENDENT LIVING: A VISION
STATEMENT - HAMMERSMITH &
FULHAM COUNCIL.



Independent living means Disabled people living in the community with the same choices, control and freedom as any other citizen, with the removal of barriers to equality of opportunity, and where any practical assistance is based on Disabled residents' choices and aspirations. Independent Living is not just about 'social care' and it does not mean Disabled People¹ doing everything for themselves. The same principles extend to people who have long term health conditions and people of all ages, including children and young people as well as older people.

Independent Living' is an important part of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) (Article: 19). Article 19 also says that Disabled people should have choices equal to others to live in the community, including choice and control over things like who they live with and where.

The 'Nothing About Disabled People Without Disabled People' report, which was produced by Hammersmith & Fulham's Disabled People's Commission (DPC) and was approved by Cabinet in December 2017, offers an opportunity to develop an ambitious and innovative approach to social care as a key facilitator of Independent Living, working with Disabled residents in the borough.

The DPC report recommended the creation of an LBHF Independent Living strategy, to be developed by Disabled residents of all ages in Hammersmith & Fulham working together (Co-Production). This work is in its early stages.

Over the last thirty years or so, we have seen major improvements in Disabled people's life chances. Our society now expects Disabled people to be treated with respect, to have opportunities, to live in their own homes with their own families and make their own contributions to their local communities and to society generally.

The language traditionally, used in social care has been unhelpful in terms of facilitating Independent Living so a new more empowering language should be adopted which encourages real choice and control in their lives. The table below offers some alternatives:

Comparing social care & Independent Living	
Social care	Independent Living
Being looked after	Choice
Cared for	Control
Getting up	Autonomy
Being fed	Self determination
Put to bed	Freedom
Medication time	Human Rights
Task orientated	Participation
Doing to	Citizenship
The '15 minutes call'	Spontaneity
Care Agency	A family life
Living at home as it's cheaper	A lifestyle - choosing how to live
Being washed	Equality
Fitting into available services (time orientated).	Flexibility
Care plan	Creativity to resolve
Health & Safety procedure	Taking risks
John Kelly, April 2017	

The new LBHF Independent Living strategy will be coproduced with Disabled residents and will focus on a change of culture, by embedding the 12 Pillars to Independent Living as defined by Disabled people some 30 years ago but are still as relevant today. The 12 Pillars include:

1. Full **ACCESS** to our environment
2. A fully accessible **TRANSPORT** system
3. Appropriate **TECHNICAL AIDS/EQUIPMENT**
4. Accessible / adapted **HOUSING**
5. **PERSONAL ASSISTANCE** to enable an independent lifestyle
6. Inclusive **EDUCATION** and **TRAINING**
7. An adequate **INCOME**
8. Equal opportunities for **EMPLOYMENT**
9. Appropriate and accessible **INFORMATION**
10. **ADVOCACY** (towards self-advocacy)
11. Empowering **COUNSELLING** services
12. Appropriate and accessible **HEALTH CARE** provision.

Our work will seek to promote, protect, and fulfil the rights of Disabled residents to live independently in the community and to secure their full inclusion, contribution, and participation in all aspects of social and economic life. There is widespread support for public services which meet people's aspirations and the needs of modern society.

These aspirations rely on the removal of barriers in all aspects of Disabled people's lives. We all want a society which invests in the things that connect people to one another and to communities, the things that make us all feel part of society and not 'apart from' society.

This is a timely opportunity for Hammersmith & Fulham to address the discrimination that Disabled people and their families and supporters experience in their everyday lives and to pave the way, in a challenging financial climate, by creating better support and services with residents making Independent Living a reality.

1. We use the term Disabled people in this report to include all Disabled people with physical, cognitive, and sensory barriers, people with learning difficulties; Deaf people, deafened, hard of hearing people, mental health system users, and survivors, neuro-diverse people such as those with Autism, Dyspraxia, Attention Deficit Disorder (ADHD), Asperger Syndrome and Dyslexia, people with long term health conditions and people who self-identify. We mean Disabled people of all ages that experience barriers including Disabled children & young people with Special Educational Needs labels.

<https://www.lbhf.gov.uk/councillors-and-democracy/resident-led-commissions/disabled-people-s-commission/nothing-about-disabled-people-without-disabled-people>