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**Wandsworth Borough Council
Adult Social Services**

**Transport Assistance Policy
April 2019**



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document sets out the policy for the provision of assistance with transport by Wandsworth Council in line with the Council's aims and objectives for Adult Social Services and its powers and duties under the [Care Act 2014](#). Travel assistance can be provided under the Care Act 2014 to enable an adult in need, or a carer, to make use of necessary facilities or services in the local community. This policy applies to adults aged 18 years and over who are ordinarily resident in Wandsworth with assessed eligible care and support needs under the Care Act 2014.
- 1.2 Travel is a part of everyday life. The aim of this policy is:
- a. To support people to live and travel as independently and safely as possible; and
 - b. To ensure a fair and consistent approach to the identification and provision of commissioned transport and travel assistance. This will include considering the most cost effective and sustainable travel arrangements available.
- 1.3 The Council will do this by considering people's own strengths and capabilities and what support might be available from their wider support network or their local community to help meet their needs in the first place. This will include considering training and support to enable people to make best use of available support.
- 1.4 The Care Act introduced a shift from providing and fitting people into services to meeting eligible care and support needs with a focus on prevention and supporting people to stay as independent as possible. In this context, transport is not a service people can be eligible for on its own. Access to transport support is through assessment under the Care Act as detailed in this policy.
- 1.5 Taking a strengths-based approach can support people to understand their own needs and capabilities better to help them make the most of their own resources and support networks. This can enable people to improve their overall wellbeing and stay independent for longer. Strengths refer to different elements that enable the person to deal with challenges in life in general and that can help in meeting their needs and achieving their desired outcomes, such as:
- Social networks and related resources and skills;
 - Personal resources, abilities, skills, knowledge and potential; and
 - Community resources, such as the voluntary sector and universal services.
- 1.6 The Council is committed to making best use of people's strengths and available local community resources including supporting them to regain skills that may have been lost before considering statutory services exploring all possible options.
- 1.7 The provision of transport to open access day centres in the borough, where transport is included in the services commissioned by the Council, is excluded from this policy.

2. Legal and policy context

- 1.8 The Care Act 2014 places a duty on the Council to arrange care and support to meet the needs of adults who have been assessed as having eligible needs. The assessment is the means by which any need for assistance with transport to meet an assessed eligible need is identified. Where the Council has assessed a person as eligible for care and support and one of the person's support needs is to make use of necessary facilities or services in the

local community, such as going shopping, going to the GP or attending a day centre, the Council must ensure this need is met and address the issue of travel in the support plan.

- 1.9 While the provision of transport can be a means to support people to access valuable community services, the Council's policy is to support people to travel independently wherever possible. For some people, this will involve a period of specific support and training to build their confidence and skills in this area. Supporting people in this way is key to maximising people's independence and supporting them to live the life they want.
- 1.10 When a need for assistance with transport is identified, the Council will consider first with the person and/or the carer the following:
- Supporting people to make their own arrangements
 - Working with families and carers to support people
 - Motability vehicles
 - Public transport
 - Voluntary sector support
 - Enabling people to have the skills and confidence to travel independently.
- 2.1 The Council recognises that independent travel may not be an option for everyone. It is important to note that some people will be required to pay for or contribute towards the cost of any transport, or assistance with transport, arranged by the Council in exercise of their Care Act responsibilities. The amount will be determined following a financial assessment in line with the Council's [Adult Social Services Contributions Policy](#).

3. Principles

- The general assumption and expectation is that wherever possible, people will be expected to meet their own needs for transport.
- A decision to provide support with travel is based on individual circumstances and assessed care and support needs, risks and the outcomes to be achieved in line with the Council's aim to promoting people's independence as far as possible.
- Council funded transport will only be provided if necessary to meet assessed eligible care and support needs. Any transport provided must be appropriate for those needs and offer value for money and be cost-effective.
- Any assistance with transport to be provided must be included in the person's care and support plan. The costs will be part of the personal budget and are subject to the Council's [Adult Social Services Contributions Policy](#).
- The Council will always explore whether it is safe and reasonable to expect the person to make their own arrangements and consider all available transport options before making a final decision.

4. Assessment and the provision of assistance with Transport

- 4.1 The Care Act 2014 places a statutory duty on Councils to carry out a person-centred assessment for any adult who appears to have needs for care and support. The assessment will consider eligibility for care and support using the national eligibility criteria set out in the Act. For more information, please see [appendix 1](#).

- 4.2 Where the assessment (or reassessment if already in receipt of services), has established a need for care and support and one of the support needs is to make use of necessary facilities or services in the local community, the Council must ensure that this need is met and identify whether support with travel is required in the care and support plan.
- 4.3 The assessment will consider the suitability and feasibility of different transport options and take into account:
- The availability of existing transport
 - The person's physical mobility
 - The person's ability to travel independently
 - Access to a Motability vehicle and whether it is reasonable to use to travel to the relevant location
 - Availability and willingness of family and carers to assist with transport
 - Any factors that may pose an unreasonable demand or risk to health and safety when travelling.
- 4.4 The Council has a discretionary power under the Care Act 2014 to meet needs that have been assessed as not eligible. The Council will consider any request to provide transport assistance which has been deemed not an eligible need on a case by case basis.

5. Care and Support Planning

- 5.1 The Care Act 2014 requires that a care and support plan is provided for anyone who has been assessed as having eligible care and support needs. Planning is the process of working with the person or carer to establish how their eligible needs will be met, rather than offering people services or solutions without considering their individual needs and wishes. It should put people in control of their care and support, aim to enhance their wellbeing and improve connections with family, friends and their local community.
- 5.2 For everyone whose eligible needs are met by the Council, a personal budget must be included in the care and support plan. The personal budget represents the public money that the Council would have to spend to meet the person's assessed, eligible needs.
- 5.3 During care and support planning, information and advice about available transport options will be provided and the aim will be to identify the most appropriate and best value option that is available to meet any transport needs. Discussions will also include the availability of any mobility benefits, concessionary travel, informal support provided by family and friends and any other options available to provide further assistance.
- 5.4 In the first instance, the Council will always consider how people's independence can be promoted and support people to make their own arrangements and travel independently. This will include discussing with the person what they feel confident to do themselves and what help they may need to do things for themselves in future.
- 5.5 The Council will not support any travel needs not included in the person's care and support plan. This means that the person may contribute to the cost of any transport services arranged as part of their care and support plan in line with the Council's [Adult Social Services Contributions Policy](#). Eligibility for care and support and any provision of transport services or assistance will be reviewed regularly as part of the person's planned review or earlier if there are any unexpected changes in circumstances.

5.6 Determining ability to travel independently

5.6.1 The purpose of this part of the assessment is to establish whether independent travel is an option without an unreasonable level of risk to the person. There is no single definition of what is reasonable. The assessment must therefore consider individual ability and skills to determine what is reasonable (or unreasonable) in the circumstances.

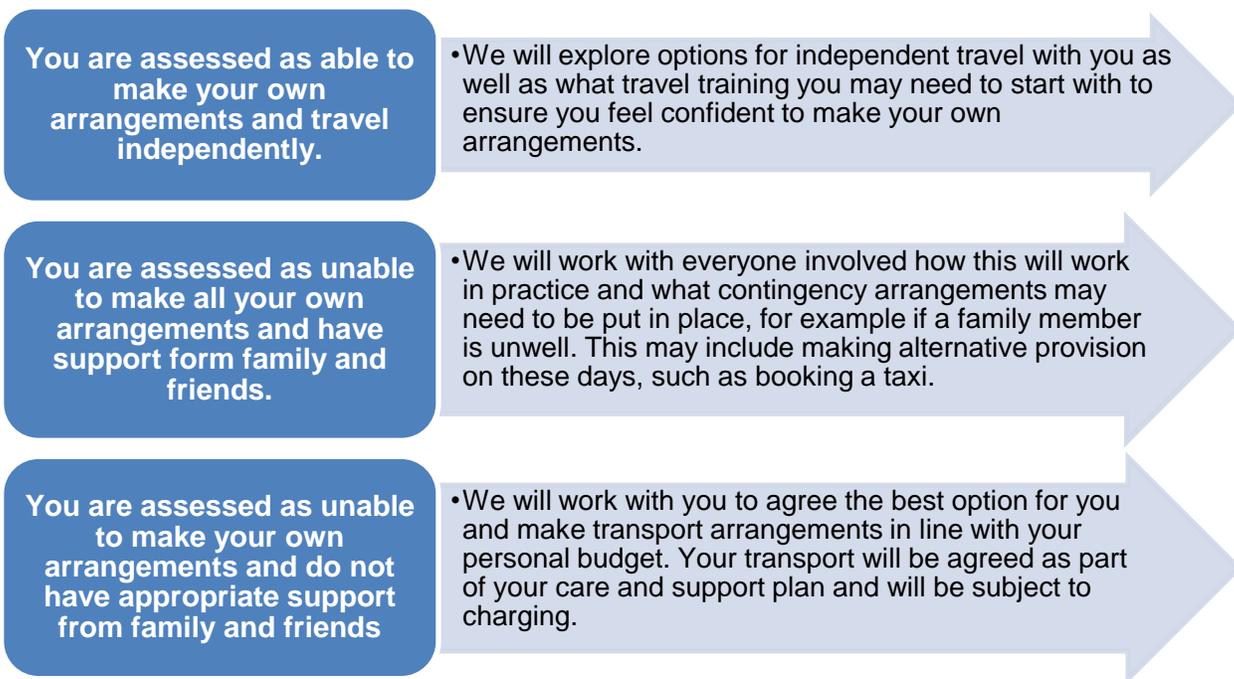
5.6.2 This assessment should consider:

- Mental capacity
- Any communication difficulties
- Psychological factors and mental health issues including any diagnosis, such as dementia, or behavioural difficulties
- Any previous experiences that might affect confidence or vulnerability
- Any other factors that may affect health and safety when travelling.

5.6.3 The assessment should also consider any issues in terms of mobility, such as:

- Ability to walk outside
- Any requirement for a wheelchair or other walking aid
- Ability to enter and leave a property
- Ability to get in and out of a vehicle
- Ability to bear weight to transfer
- Any history and risk of falling
- Ability to use stairs and manage gradients.

5.6.4 The outcome of the assessment will determine the next steps:



6. Travel Assistance Options

- 6.1 Our aim is to support people to remain as independent as possible, and support them to access a range of travel options, including but not limited to:

Method of travel	Information
Buses	<p>All public transport buses are now wheelchair accessible. Most buses can accommodate two wheelchairs. Most routes have visual and audible announcements for passengers.</p> <p>Travel is free anytime in Greater London for residents with a Freedom Pass.</p>
London Underground (the 'tube'), London Overground, TfL rail and DLR	<p>London has an extensive underground and overground rail network. Transport for London has a programme to install step free access in all stations across the capital. However, at the present time, most stations do not have step-free access, and few have lifts. Step-free access means an alternative to stairs, i.e. an escalator, lift or both, through to street level.</p> <p>Travel is free anytime in Greater London for residents with a Freedom Pass.</p>
Freedom Pass and Older People's Freedom Pass	<p>A Freedom Pass allows free travel on public transport in London, including most National Rail services.</p> <p>To be eligible for a Freedom Pass, a person must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live in a London borough • Meet the specific age criteria; or • Have an eligible disability. <p>More information is available from the Freedom Pass website.</p>
Bus & Tram Discount photocard	<p>People in receipt of Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance, Jobseeker's Allowance or Universal Credit, may be eligible for a Bus & Tram Discount photocard, which allows people to pay half the adult rate on buses and trams.</p> <p>To be eligible for a Bus & Tram Discount photocard, a person must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Living in a London borough ▪ Aged between 18 and 60; and ▪ Getting no other free or discounted travel. <p>People must also be receiving one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Income Support or Employment and Support Allowance; or ▪ Jobseekers Allowance for at least 13 weeks; or ▪ Universal Credit for at least 13 weeks and not earning more than the earnings threshold defined by the Department for Work and Pensions.
Driving and the Blue Badge scheme	<p>Disabled drivers or passengers can apply for a Blue Badge for a private vehicle or a rented Motability vehicle. Blue Badge holders can park for free on most roads. However, in some places (for example on red routes) you can only park in designated bays. All public car parks in London have designated disabled parking bays.</p>

Method of travel	Information
	<p>Blue badge holders can claim exemption from the Congestion Charge (registration is required, and a fee is payable). Disabled drivers can also claim exemption from road tax.</p>
<p>Motability vehicles</p>	<p>Higher rate mobility allowance can be exchanged for a Motability vehicle from any participating dealership. Insurance, breakdown cover, service, maintenance and repairs are covered by this agreement but people pay for their own petrol.</p> <p>An agreement for a Motability vehicle is for three years, and if people choose this option they cannot claim any other travel assistance costs for the period of agreement. People can apply for a Blue Badge for a Motability vehicle.</p> <p>More information is available from the Motability website.</p>
<p>Motability scooters and powered wheelchairs</p>	<p>People in receipt of mobility allowance can use some of it to rent a Motability scooter or powered wheelchair.</p> <p>Full details can be found here.</p>
<p>Dial-a-Ride</p>	<p>Dial-a-Ride is available to people with a permanent or long-term disability which means they cannot use public travel assistance some or all of the time.</p> <p>People are automatically eligible for Dial-a-Ride membership if they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A Taxicard member ▪ Getting the Higher Rate Mobility Component of Disability Living Allowance ▪ Getting the Standard or Enhanced Mobility Rate of the Personal Independence Payment (PIP) ▪ Registered blind or partially sighted ▪ Aged 85 or over ▪ Getting a Higher Rate Attendance Allowance ▪ Getting a War Pension Mobility Supplement. <p>Where none of the above applies, people can apply by completing a mobility assessment form to establish eligibility for the service.</p> <p>Dial-a-Ride <u>will not</u> provide travel to and from day care centres. More information is available from the TFL website.</p>
<p>London Taxicard Scheme</p>	<p>The London Taxicard Scheme provides subsidised travel assistance in taxis and private hire vehicles for people with mobility problems or a visual impairment.</p> <p>To be eligible for a Taxicard, a person must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive the higher rate mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance • Be awarded 8 points or more under the "moving around" activity of the mobility component of Personal Independent Payment (PIP) • Be registered as severely sight impaired/blind (being partially sighted does not allow automatic entry) • Receive a war pension Mobility Supplement.

Method of travel	Information
	<p>People may also qualify if they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a permanent and substantial disability, which causes an inability to walk or very considerable difficulty in walking. <p>Find out more about the Taxicard Scheme in Wandsworth.</p>
<p>London Travel Mentoring Scheme</p>	<p>The free travel mentoring service helps people to start using public transport. Transport for London can offer advice on planning a journey using an accessible route and they can provide a mentor to help people on their first few journeys to help gain confidence and become an independent traveller.</p> <p>They can also provide assistance if people wish to use mobility scooters and other mobility aids on London's bus services.</p> <p>Find out more about the mobility aid recognition scheme.</p>
<p>Voluntary sector support including travel training and travel buddies</p>	<p>There are a number of voluntary schemes locally and some day care providers have a transport option.</p> <p>Wandsworth Community Transport (WCT) is a registered charity and provides specialist transport services across the Borough of Wandsworth for Community Groups and individuals with mobility problems. They can be contacted on 020 8675 7460 (Minicom available) or email w.c.t@btconnect.com.</p> <p>More information can be found on the Wandsworth Community Transport website.</p> <p>HAIL is a registered charity and provides travel training for people with learning disabilities and/or autism.</p> <p>Training is personalised to the individual using a range of communication and training techniques, and may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning a route • Using different forms of transport • Recognising risks and danger on the road • Using technology to manager travel. <p>Contact on 020 8874 7279 or email hailhub@hailtld.org. More information can be found on the Hail website.</p> <p>Share is a registered charity working with disabled people who need extra help and support in order to achieve their potential.</p> <p>Share's Independent Living Skills programme teaches students the fundamentals of how to live independently, including how to use public transport safely.</p> <p>Contact on 020 7924 2949 or email info@sharecommunity.org.uk.</p> <p>More information can be found on the Share Community website.</p>
<p>Sharing travel with others</p>	<p>People who are attending a service or activity regularly may meet other people in a similar situation. They may want to consider sharing a taxi. This will also help keep the cost down.</p> <p>If people are using public transport, they may want to arrange to travel together so they are not on their own.</p>

7. Transport for Young Adults transitioning from Children's Services

- 7.1 This policy covers adults aged 18 years and over and only applies once a young adult has been assessed as eligible for care and support using the national eligibility framework in line with the [Care and Support \(Eligibility Criteria\) Regulations](#) issued under the [Care Act 2014](#).
- 7.2 Young people may receive support with transport from Children's Services in line with the Council's [Special Educational Needs Transport Assistance Policy](#). However, this does not mean that Adult Social Services is required to continue making these arrangements. Any provision of transport to adults will be subject to eligibility for adult care and support as set out above.
- 7.3 The Council does not have a duty to provide transport to students who are over 16 years. Where an individual student aged 18 or over has assessed eligible care and support needs under the Care Act and attends residential education and they request for assistance with their travel, the Council will consider each request on a case by case basis to see whether assistance is necessary to facilitate the student's attendance.
- 7.4 For more information about the local offer in Children's Services, please see the local offer for [Wandsworth](#).

8. Attendance at Meetings

- 8.1 Home visits will be arranged when carrying out an assessment or review/ reassessment unless people choose to visit Council offices by appointment. Assistance with travel to this appointment will not be provided unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- 8.2 Assistance with travel to Council offices to attend meetings or events, such as a partnership group or consultation meetings, unrelated to care and support needs, will not be provided except in exceptional circumstances.

9. Paying for Travel Assistance

- 9.1 Where a person has been assessed as being unable to make their own travel arrangements and assistance with transport is required in order to meet an eligible need, the costs of any transport arrangements will be set out in the care and support plan. How much the person must contribute towards the cost of their care and support will be determined during the financial assessment.
- 9.2 When assessing someone financially, the Council will disregard fully the mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP). For more information about the financial assessment process, please see Council [factsheet](#).

10. Challenges and Disputes

- 10.1 If a person is unhappy with the outcome of their assessment and the Council's decision in relation to transport or other services provided, they should contact their assessor in the first instance to discuss their concerns and try to find a resolution. If they are still dissatisfied after this discussion, they have the right to appeal. Any appeal should be made in writing clearly outlining the issues and why the person thinks that the process has been unfair or the outcome inaccurate.

- 10.2 Decision will be made within 15 working days of the appeal being lodged. The outcome will be communicated in writing with the decision and the reasons for the decision clearly explained. If the person is still not satisfied with the outcome they have recourse to the [Adult Social Care complaints procedure](#).

Appendix 1: Eligibility for Care and Support

The national eligibility criteria set a minimum threshold for adult care and support needs and carer support needs which local authorities must meet. All local authorities must comply with this national threshold. Authorities can also decide to meet needs that are not deemed to be eligible if they chose to do so.

What is the national eligibility threshold for adults needing care?

The eligibility threshold for adults with care and support needs is set out in the [Care and Support \(Eligibility Criteria\) Regulations 2015](#) (the 'Eligibility Regulations'). The threshold is based on identifying how a person's needs affect their ability to achieve relevant outcomes, and how this impacts on their wellbeing.

In considering whether an adult with care and support needs has eligible needs, local authorities must consider whether the adult meets the following three conditions:

CONDITION 1: The adult's needs arise from or are related to a physical or mental impairment or illness

This includes conditions such as physical, mental, sensory, learning or cognitive disabilities or illnesses, brain injuries and substance misuse.

CONDITION 2: As a result of the adult's needs, the adult is unable to achieve 2 or more of the outcomes set out in the regulations

The Eligibility Regulations set out the following outcomes:

- a. **Managing and maintaining nutrition** - local authorities should consider whether the adult has access to food and drink to maintain nutrition, and that the adult is able to prepare and consume the food and drink.
- b. **Maintaining personal hygiene** - local authorities should, for example, consider the adult's ability to wash themselves and launder their clothes.
- c. **Managing toilet needs** - local authorities should consider the adult's ability to access and use a toilet and manage their toilet needs.
- d. **Being appropriately clothed** - local authorities should consider the adult's ability to dress themselves and to be appropriately dressed, for instance in relation to the weather to maintain their health.
- e. **Being able to make use of the home safely** - local authorities should consider the adult's ability to move around the home safely, which could for example include getting up steps, using kitchen facilities or accessing the bathroom. This should also include the immediate environment around the home such as access to the property, for example steps leading up to the home.
- f. **Maintaining a habitable home environment** - local authorities should consider whether the condition of the adult's home is sufficiently clean and maintained to be safe. A habitable home is safe and has essential amenities. An adult may require support to sustain their occupancy of the home and to maintain amenities, such as water, electricity and gas.

- g. **Developing and maintaining family or other personal relationships** - local authorities should consider whether the adult is lonely or isolated, either because their needs prevent them from maintaining the personal relationships they have or because their needs prevent them from developing new relationships.
- h. **Accessing and engaging in work, training, education or volunteering** - local authorities should consider whether the adult has an opportunity to apply themselves and contribute to society through work, training, education or volunteering, subject to their own wishes in this regard. This includes the physical access to any facility and support with the participation in the relevant activity.
- i. **Making use of necessary facilities or services in the local community including public transport and recreational facilities or services** - local authorities should consider the adult's ability to get around in the community safely and consider their ability to use such facilities as public transport, shops or recreational facilities when considering the impact on their wellbeing. Local authorities do not have responsibility for the provision of NHS services such as patient transport, however they should consider needs for support when the adult is attending healthcare appointments.
- j. **Carrying out any caring responsibilities the adult has for a child** - local authorities should consider any parenting or other caring responsibilities the person has. The adult may for example be a step-parent with caring responsibilities for their spouse's children.

What does being “unable” to achieve mean?

- **Being unable to achieve the outcome without assistance.** This would include where an adult would be unable to do so even when assistance is provided. It also includes where the adult may need prompting for example, some adults may be physically able to wash but need reminding of the importance of personal hygiene.
- **Being able to achieve the outcome without assistance but doing so causes the adult significant pain, distress or anxiety.** For example, an older person with severe arthritis may be able to prepare a meal but doing so will leave them in severe pain and unable to eat the meal.
- **Being able to achieve the outcome without assistance but doing so endangers or is likely to endanger the health or safety of the adult, or of others.** For example, if the health or safety of another member of the family, including any child, could be endangered when an adult attempts to complete a task or an activity without relevant support.
- **Being able to achieve the outcome without assistance but takes significantly longer than would normally be expected.** For example, an adult with a physical disability is able to dress themselves in the morning, but it takes them a long time to do this, leaves them exhausted and prevents them from achieving other outcomes.

CONDITION 3: As a consequence, there is, or there is likely to be, a significant impact on the adult's wellbeing.

Local authorities must consider whether the adult's needs and their inability to achieve the outcomes above cause or risk causing a significant impact on their wellbeing. Wellbeing is seen as a broad concept covering the following areas:

- personal dignity (including treatment of the person with respect)
- physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing
- protection from abuse and neglect
- control by the person over day-to-day life (including over care and support provided and the way it is provided)
- participation in work, education, training or recreation
- social and economic wellbeing
- domestic, family and personal relationships
- suitability of living accommodation
- the person's contribution to society.