

Norfolk Autism Partnership Buddy Scheme

The NAPB wants to recruit as diverse a group of volunteers as possible to support the work of the board through influencing the shape of services and support across Norfolk. A more diverse group of volunteers can offer a wider range of skills, experience and perspectives, bring in new ideas and reflect the autism community. It will also make the NAPB more sustainable into the future,

For some people, a lack of support can be a significant barrier to them volunteering. Providing this support in the form of an inclusive buddy programme can therefore dramatically increase the pool of potential volunteers.

Buddy Process

- Each member of the NAPB will create a short biography which will be held on file by the Norfolk Autism Partnership Coordinator. This biography will outline the member's professional interests and role on the board.
- Once an Expression of Interest has been completed, a potential volunteer will be introduced to the buddy scheme. They can decide if they would like to opt in or out of the scheme, with the understanding that if they choose not to participate they can still opt-in again at any point.
 - Opting out does not prevent any reasonable adjustments from being put into place, as these will be managed separately by the Autism Commissioner.
- After opting in to the scheme, the volunteer will be able to choose an NAPB member to be their Buddy based on their biographies and through the working groups they are involved with.
- The Norfolk Autism Partnership Coordinator will contact the NAPB Buddy to advise they have been selected. The Norfolk Autism Partnership Coordinator will also share with the NAPB buddy any reasonable adjustments identified at the expression of interest stage.

- The NAPB Buddy will contact the volunteer to arrange a meeting within 10 working days (exclusive of any leave or non-working days) and confirm this date with the Norfolk Autism Partnership Coordinator.
- The NAPB Buddy will share with the volunteer their role as a Buddy and agree on the support the volunteer will need.
- The NAPB Buddy will make sure that the volunteer understands they need to confirm with the Norfolk Autism Partnership Coordinator if they feel the Buddy is a good match or if they wish to select another Buddy. Feedback will be provided to the buddy to support them with successful matches and training offered where appropriate.
- On final acceptance, the Norfolk Autism Partnership Coordinator will write to confirm the match and assign the Buddy to the volunteer.
- The Buddy or Volunteer can terminate the match at any point. To ensure transparency, this must be put in writing to the buddy, volunteer and copied to the Norfolk Autism Partnership Coordinator.
- As the scheme develops, the NAPB aims to produce case studies of effective Buddy relationships to support the programme and its success. If selected, permission will be sought from both parties.

The Role of the NAPB Buddy

The NAPB Buddy will:

- Provide a point of contact for meetings to ensure the volunteer feels able to actively contribute and have their voice heard.
- Hold regular 'catch-ups' with the volunteer. This will help the Buddy to better understand the needs of the volunteer to enable them to actively contribute, by identifying specific support needs and personal development opportunities. This may also provide a chance for recognition of their individual personal development while volunteering for the NAPB. A record of the catch-up will be sent to the Norfolk Autism Partnership Coordinator and the reasonable adjustments record updated as appropriate. Regular means before or after a NAPB meeting to support the volunteer to understand the actions from the last meeting and how they can contribute during the meeting.
- The Buddy can only provide support to enable the volunteer to carry out their NAPB volunteering role and is not a personal support worker.
- Provide the volunteer with appropriate support, to assist and support them in their role within the NAPB.
- Work with the volunteer with a person-centred attitude. This means that they will consider the personal barriers faced by the volunteer and work through these with that person, putting in place reasonable adjustments to enable participation. For example, this could be achieved through an informal chat before a meeting about what experience the volunteer may wish to contribute, discussing ways and approaches they could achieve this.
- Enable experienced volunteers to become a Buddy themselves as a development opportunity.

The Role of the NAPB Volunteer


The NAPB Volunteer will:

- Contribute through their own experience and of others, about local needs, aspirations and community assets.
- Be involved in decision making about what things are needed to make sure autistic people and their parents/carers have better lives and how to make these things happen
- Be involved in deciding which providers are chosen to provide service and support.
- Check and feedback about how well providers are doing and how they could do better.
- Confirm to the Norfolk Autism Partnership Coordinator a suitable buddy match.

NAPB Buddy Rules

- The Buddy and volunteer will comply with the NAPB Code of Conduct and all NAPB policies and procedures.
- The Buddy or volunteer can opt out of the scheme at any time.
- The Buddy will make sure the volunteer and Norfolk Autism Partnership Coordinator are notified in advance of any meetings where the volunteer will not be supported and what needs to be put in place ahead of time to help them.

Buddy Biography

<p>Photo</p> 	Name
	Organisation
	Current Position
	NAPB Member Role
What do you do? Please write your roles and responsibilities.	
Professional/Personal Accomplishments	
Training, transferable skills or lived experience relevant to autism	