






Supporting Autistic Adults in Northumberland

... also in Sunderland, South Tyneside and North
Tyneside

Howard Kennedy – Preventative Support Lead

Diagnosis






-  **Demand for diagnosis is rising** - over 227,000 people waiting for assessment by September 2025¹
-  **Isolation and anxiety are common** - 89-97% of adults 40+ undiagnosed.²
-  **Early help changes outcomes** - Access to workplace accommodations. Improved wellbeing and self-understanding

1. <https://www.autism.org.uk/what-we-do/news/autism-assessment-waiting-times-november-2025#:~:text=Over%20227%2C000%20face%20waits%20for,dedicated%20funding%20for%20diagnosis%20services.>

2. <https://neurosciencenews.com/undiagnosed-autism-neuroscience-29643/#:~:text=Key%20Facts,less%20than%20non%2Dautistic%20peers.>



Autism, Adulthood and Place

-  Northumberland – Big and beautiful! But also rural.
-  Age – growing up in a time when autism wasn't recognised.
-  'Crisis' services become necessary but ill-suited to ongoing support.
-  Strong individuals make strong communities
-  Diagnosis gives context





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Who We Are



Community Interest Company (CIC) for autistic adults



Local services across:

- Sunderland
- South Tyneside
- North Tyneside
- Northumberland



Commissioned by Integrated Care Board and CNTW (Northumberland)





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AIM Northumberland







The AIM Northumberland Post-Diagnostic service is designed to help autistic adults understand and integrate their diagnosis, build self-awareness and manage everyday life with greater confidence and control.



Our support is delivered by experienced autism professionals - many of whom are autistic themselves - ensuring a person-centred and empathetic approach.



AIM Northumberland

-  A post-diagnostic service for autistic adults who do not have a learning disability.
-  A post-diagnostic service for autistic people who live in Northumberland.
-  We welcome self referrals, however, if you are a professional working with someone who could benefit from our services, we ask that you complete a professional referral form.
-  Referrals are made via the referrals page on our website: www.autisminmind.com

Low level preventative support

Practical support with things that autistic people might find difficult. This could include help with communication, building self-advocacy skills (speaking up for what you need), learning new things, or gaining confidence.

Emotional support from people who listen, understand, and take experiences seriously.

Our support is designed to help autistic people live the lives they want, feel more independent, and avoid needing more stressful or intensive types of support in the future.



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Low level preventative support

... in action

Emma's Story





Me, Myself & Autism

Our psychoeducational course 'Me, Myself & Autism' is a self-awareness course designed specifically for autistic individuals.

Over eight weekly sessions, we celebrate the unique characteristics of autism and address everyday challenges that autistic people may encounter.

At the end of the course we hold an online 'Me, Myself & Autism for Families' session where relatives/friends have an overview of the course content.



Co-production:

‘Nothing about us without us’





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Workshops

Our workshops are an extension of our wider psychoeducational offer, providing structured opportunities for autistic people to build knowledge, skills, and confidence.

By attending, participants gain practical strategies grounded in lived experience and practice-informed evidence, as well as a supportive space to explore questions and share experiences.



Wellbeing sessions

Our wellbeing sessions are for autistic adults who may be socially isolated or unable to access peer support in the community. The sessions provide a safe and welcoming space to meet and engage with other autistic people.

Sessions are group-based and focus on supporting emotional wellbeing through general discussion and opportunities to connect with and get to know others. Just having a space to be around other autistic people can prove really powerful.

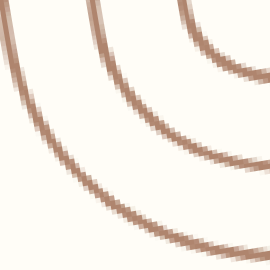


Support Strategies

Understanding

Acceptance

The Double Empathy Perspective





Thank you

Any questions?

autisminmind.com

