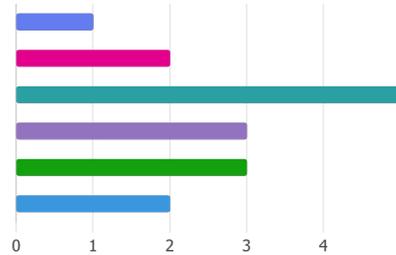


Improving services for people who use Personal Assistants (PAs)

In February and March 2026, KCIL and Kingston Council conducted a survey looking at the experiences of people in the borough of Kingston in recruiting and employing Personal Assistants (PAs).

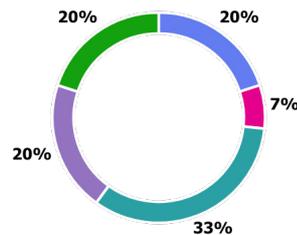
1. When looking for a new Personal Assistant, how easy or difficult was it to find support or advice?

- Very easy 1
- Easy 2
- Neither easy nor difficult 5
- Difficult 3
- Very difficult 3
- I did not look for help 2



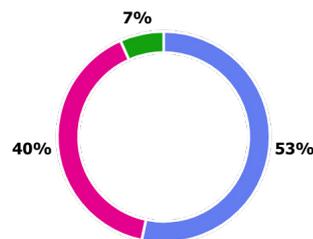
2. How long did it take to find a suitable Personal Assistant?

- Less than 2 weeks 3
- 2-4 weeks 1
- 1-3 months 5
- More than 3 months 3
- I don't remember 3



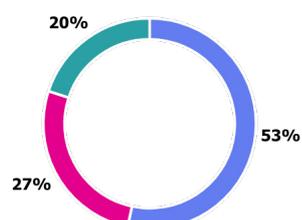
3. How well did the Personal Assistant(s) meet your specific needs?

- Very well 8
- Fairly well 6
- Not very well 0
- Not at all well 0
- I don't know 1



4. Did you feel supported with interviews and paperwork?

- Yes 8
- No 4
- I don't know 3



5. If you could change one thing to make finding a Personal Assistant easier, what would it be?

There were five clear themes in the responses:

Availability of Personal Assistants

“For there to be more workers available.”

Need for a centralised list or directory

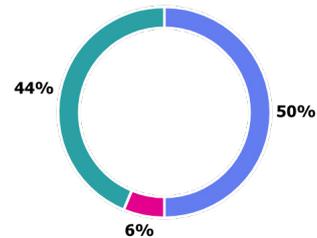
“A searchable list of PAs”

More support with recruitment

I was left completely on my own to figure out what to say when first interviewing a potential PA.

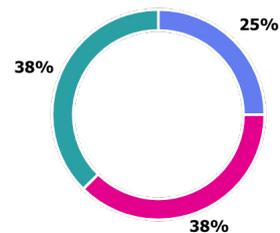
6. Understanding your needs: Did the social worker who helped you know what was important to you?

- Yes 8
- No 1
- Not sure 7



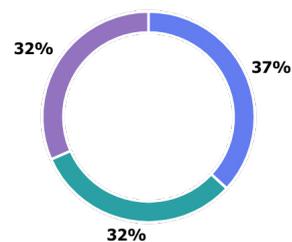
7. Did your social worker explain clearly how to find a Personal Assistant?

- Yes 4
- No 6
- Not sure 6



8. When you had a problem about finding a Personal Assistant, who did you speak to?

- Kingston Centre for Independent Living (KCIL) 7
- Self Directed Support/Direct Payments Team 0
- Social worker 6
- Family or friends 6



9. Is there anything else you want to tell us about finding a Personal Assistant?

Nine people responded, responses were mixed, with some participants reporting that they currently have sufficient support. However, several key themes emerged:

Lack of awareness of available support

“You don’t know what you don’t know”

Need for contingency support

“I need cover for when my PA is on holiday...”

Support with employment responsibilities

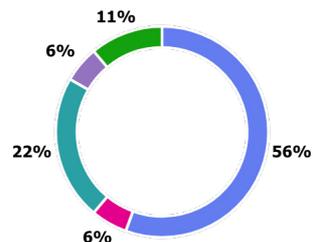
“Help with all the forms, pay and tax issues...”

Wider information needs

“I would like to know where to find information about places that are accessible...”

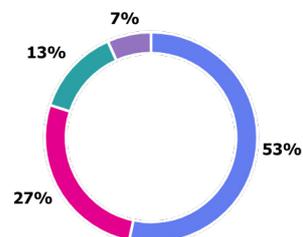
10. If you employ a Personal Assistant, how did you find them? (Click all that apply)

- With help from KCIL 10
- Online (for example Gumtree or social media) 1
- Word of mouth (friends or family) 4
- Shop window or noticeboard 1
- Other 2



11. How would you rate the support your Personal Assistant provides?

- Excellent 8
- Very good 4
- Good 2
- Satisfactory 1
- Poor 0



12. Why did you choose this answer?

Two key themes emerged:

Flexibility

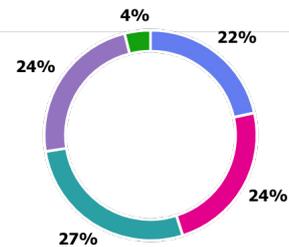
"are able to change the days they work (if necessary) to suit my and my daughter's needs at short notice"

Personal and trusted relationships with Personal Assistants

"Relationship is very personal, known me for a long time and understands all of my needs"

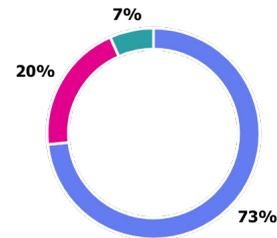
13. What are the main benefit for you of having a Personal Assistant? (Click all that apply)

- Having choice over who supports you 11
- Being in control of your life 12
- Doing things that are important to you 14
- Staying as independent as you want to be 12
- Other 2



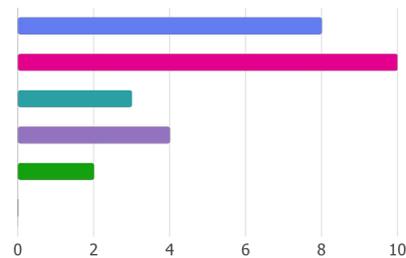
14. Have you received support from Kingston Centre for Independent Living (KCIL)?

- Yes 11
- No 3
- Not sure 1



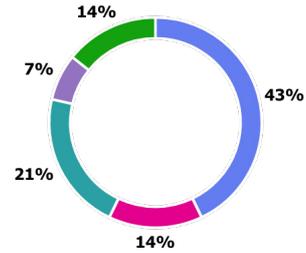
15. What support have you received from KCIL? (Click all that apply)

- Help to recruit a Personal Assistant 8
- Help with payroll or paperwork 10
- Advice about employing staff 3
- Training or events 4
- I have not received support from KCIL 2
- Other 0



16. How would you rate the support you received from KCIL?

● Excellent	6
● Very good	2
● Good	3
● Satisfactory	1
● Poor	2



17. What is the best thing about KCIL's support?

Two key themes emerged:

Support with being an employer

"They cover everything that one needs in my circumstances such as employment, payrolls, recruitment of PA"

Friendly staff

"I look forward to my conversations!"

18. What could KCIL do better?

Understanding more about Learning Disability

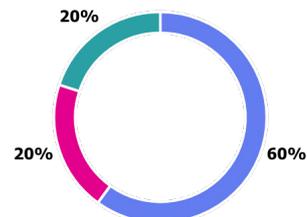
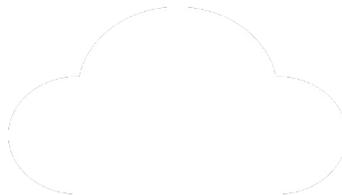
Help with paperwork

Outreach

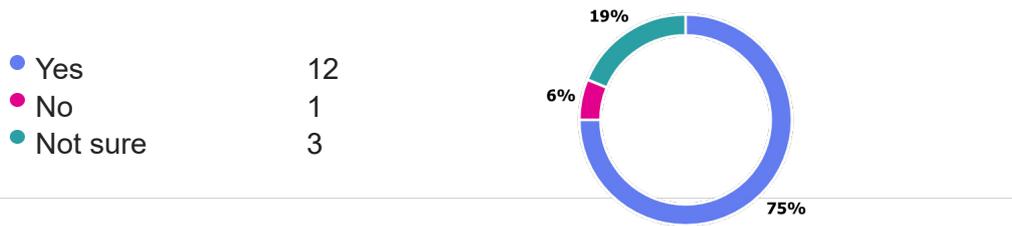
"More outreach? Carers meetings?"

19. Do you feel confident about employing a Personal Assistant and knowing where to get help if you need it?

● Yes	9
● No	3
● Not sure	3



20. Do you feel you get the advice and information you need about Direct Payments when you need it?



21. Is there any support or information you would like but do not currently get?

"Not at the moment. Perhaps not again if I need to replace my current PA I've now been through the process and have a better idea of what to do next time."

"I am my daughter's main carer. If she were to take over all the paperwork I don't think she would manage, so help with all the forms, pay and tax issues would help her if I am not able to."

"I would like to know where to find information about places that are accessible by wheelchair eg holiday cottages, local restaurants, local toilets,"

Who has completed this form?

