Climate change – so what? Implications for disabled Londoners and those with mental health needs

Initial thoughts from Workshop 1 *(and steering group)*

Driver 1: Rising Temperatures
- Warmer winters
- Hotter summers with more heatwaves

So what are the implications?	
Beneficiaries/Members	Your organisation
Warmer days good news for eg arthritis/rheumatoid?; - Some conditions exacerbated by heat eg lupus, eczema, asthma, hayfever; heart problems *Some people like the heat but London not pleasant in high temps;* *Air conditioning expensive and spreads viruses;* - Lack of awareness re dangers of over-heating and dehydration; *Heat can cause panic attacks, hyperventilation, anxiety, fear.* *London's physical env not conducive to keeping cool (cost of adaptation/updating homes/buildings) exacerbate already rising costs of living – fear of expense;* - Many service users in poor quality housing - heat problems exacerbated; - Open windows = noise (music, traffic, planes) and security problems *Lack of sleep;* - Low energy levels/lethargy - Increased heat related hospital admissions and deaths *Heat in hospitals (air con cost and spread of disease;* - Insects and bugs surviving warmer temperatures – infestations and illnesses, food poisoning - Lower heating bills in winter - Fewer deaths from cold temperatures - Trench foot from inappropriate	- Cooling essential to maintain IT systems - Increased energy bills (and carbon emissions) for summer air conditioning – growing carbon footprint would affect organisation's env performance/ranking - Cost of building adaptation work - Lower heating bills in winter - Staff stress due to heat – loss of productivity, problems getting to work eg overheated tube

footwear in heat – fungal infections [plus: see droughts]	
Now what could we do in response?	
•	• Create shaded spaces outside premises • Change work patterns – avoid midday heat • Train staff to support service users to deal with the heat

Driver 2: More Seasonal Rainfall
• More rain in winter
• Less rain in summer
• Heavier showers

So what are the implications?	
Beneficiaries/Members	Your organisation
• *Damp = some conditions flare up;* • *Summer = dust–dehydration/respiratory problems?* • *More pollution/poor air quality in hot weather;* • Negative affects of dry, sunny weather for some eg alcoholics risk dehydration and sun stroke • Areas of deprivation (often where service users are based) likely to miss out on greening adaptation to combat drier, hotter summers (and floods)? • Less/more expensive local fresh food during hot weather? • Green spaces less attractive/usable in dry, hot weather and heavy rain • Mobility difficulties in heavy rain • People less likely to ride bikes in wet weather – affects fitness/wellbeing • Wheelchair self-users struggle in heavy rain and motability scooters not designed for extreme wet weather • Heavy rainfall - transport interruptions; • Community-based services eg home care delayed or not arriving • Less inclination/ability to go out in heavy rain – isolation, missed appointments, less opportunity to enjoy the outdoors;	• Transport problems for staff and vols in heavy rain – cycle users discouraged • Rain damage to buildings • Food supply costs affecting service costs • Difficulties delivering community services • Need for more indoor activities during wet weather

• Heavy rain very difficult for rough sleepers and street users – need waterproof clothing, limited dry places • Hotter summer weather encourages more rough sleeping • Rain damage to property – *insurance;* [plus: see floods]	
Now what could we do in response?	
• Online communications to reduce isolation	• Wet weather gear for outreach workers

(Driver 3: Rising Sea Levels – low likely impact on London so included as potential knock-on effect in Driver 6)

Driver 4: Floods
• Surface water and sewer flooding
• Fresh water river flooding
• Coastal and tidal river flooding (but low risk for London)

So what are the implications?	
Beneficiaries/Members	Your organisation
• *Flash floods – lack of mobility hard to escape from buildings = extra risk – especially those in basement/ground floor accommodation.* • Increased homelessness – temporary and longer term • *Relocation challenges;* • Insurance issues – buildings and contents – some areas become uninsurable • Some service users not insured - cost of repairs/replacement possessions • Stress/trauma of experience eg loss of energy (no appetite); • *Sense of loss;* • Fear of repeat event/non recovery; • *Extra reliance on service providers/carers, GP services/transport/emergency (access);* • *Emergency services under pressure;* • Lack of supplies eg fresh water • Electricity issues – aids and adaptations may fail – phone system failure causes communications problems • Difficult to get to medical	• *Extra load on service managers and budgets;* • *Communications (service providers will need to identify gaps in service provision/explain alternatives)* – risk of phone/IT system breakdown • *Need for improvisation (lack of policy/procedures in place?)* • Staff and volunteers may be affected themselves eg travel to/from work; • *All service provision affected eg home care stopped/reduced;* • Difficulties setting up governance meetings • Possible temporary closure of org • Missed targets due to interruption – funding problems? • Contaminated/damaged premises • Insurance issues – claims/rising premiums, covering immediate costs of repairs

appointments • Increased isolation – stuck at home • Home care interrupted – workers unable to get to clients • Health risks from sewer floods	
Now what could we do in response?	
	• Build awareness of flood risk areas • Develop flood warning system for service users • Identify service users most at risk and develop personalised support plans • Review emergency plans and ensure there's a contingency budget to cover immediate costs • Invest in preventative and coping measures eg protective gear eg boots • Develop education programme for service users on flood risk and response • Help service users with their own insurance issues

Driver 5: Drought
• Decreased water supplies
• Increased demand for water in hotter temperatures

So what are the implications?	
Beneficiaries/Members	Your organisation
• Water rationing could cause individual/community panic • Metering – more expensive for some, potential savings for others (especially if water conservation devices used) • *Tube – panic attacks/anxiety if no bottled water available;* • Service users unaware of risks of dehydration • Isolated service users could be more at risk from dehydration – not encouraged/reminded to make effort to drink water if it's not readily available • Bottled water seen as too expensive for poorer service users • Dehydration could affect impact of medication (eg weight gain); • Emergency/health care systems under pressure due to increased	• Increased water bills • Particular need to keep buildings cool in hot weather (to avoid exacerbating dehydration) • Need back up plan in case of technology breakdown eg air conditioning systems • Duty of care: need to supply water to service users, staff, volunteers, visitors etc • Possible building damage eg foundations affected – repair costs

• dehydration problems/mortalities – knock on effect on regular/other care provision • Some service users need more water to maintain personal hygiene • Local fresh food supplies affected • Parks and open spaces less attractive – wellbeing affected • Gardening more difficult – loss of wellbeing • Possible damage to homes eg foundations affected – repair costs	
Now what could we do in response?	
• Use water saving devices	• Develop education programme for service users on risks of dehydration, other water shortage risks, water conservation, metering, planning for water shortages, coping techniques • Introduce water conservation devices eg toilet hippos across the org's facilities

Driver 6: Climate Effects Elsewhere

Scarcity of resources and habitable land (eg through rising sea levels) causing:
• Migration
• Disruption of supplies
• Decreased world security

So what are the implications?	
Beneficiaries/Members	Your organisation
• *Manufacture and supply of meds affected;* • *Anxiety about a doomed future;* • *Some BME service users may think of emigrating 'back home' 'grass is greener' mentality – pros and cons;* • Some BME service users become anxious about friends/family experiencing severe climate impacts elsewhere – may need to send more money home = money worries • Energy price rises - heating and cooling costs – risks of fuel poverty • Service users may struggle if cost of living rises dramatically due to lack of availability of goods – service users' diets could deteriorate eg no 5 a day • Anxiety about food supplies/availability of goods.	• *Potential increased immigration = more population churn esp in London = more service users?;* • *Impacts on care workforce (many from other parts of the world) – supply of/concerns of/pay and standards.* • May experience requests from service users for help with day-to-day cost of living

Now what could we do in response?	
• Grow your own	• Help service users understand the global dimensions of climate change by talking through the implications.

Driver 7: Pressure for a Low Carbon Society
- Obligations to reduce carbon emissions to avoid runaway climate change (mitigation)
- Need to cope with rising costs and limited availability of resources affected by climate change

So what are the implications?	
Beneficiaries/Members	Your organisation
• *Beneficiaries unlikely to be able to plan, invest in and prioritise mitigation actions;* • Some service users create a lot of certain types of waste eg alcoholics' cans/bottles • Worry about making changes eg some service users may hoard rather than recycle • Non-participation = stigma, fines, anxiety • Difficulties taking action individually – need group support • Disaffection – why bother? • Financial implications of increased cost of goods • *Poor quality housing – lack of insulation.* • *Recycling – sharps, meds, medical waste;* • Opportunities to build self-esteem through participation 'doing your bit'/taking responsibility	• Procurement changes – the green factor • Pressure to increase green credentials – and financial cost of taking action • Lack of grants to help make changes • As low carbon technology develops, existing IT/equipment becomes obsolete – expensive to replace • Need to shop around for energy deals as prices rise • Increasing service delivery unit costs • Travel restrictions could affect staff/vol travel patterns • Risk of under-estimating that service users care – could alienate them/miss out on opps
Now what could we do in response?	
• Grow your own fruit and veg	• Culture changes eg turning off monitors/lights, water efficiency measures, changes to waste management • Investing in low energy technology eg sensor lights • Education programme for service users/support to help them take advantage of eg Green Deal • Grow your own fruit and veg schemes for service users

	- Include in existing life skills programmes - Bike facilities/showers; minibus transport for staff; car shares - Sign up for an eco audit - Invest in in-house renewable energy eg solar panels – could provide income – involve service users in micro social enterprise - Join existing environmental campaigns - Embed the green agenda into every aspect of organisational life *HAs/LAs to help facilitate participation in mitigation activities;*