

Learning Disability Day Services – Advocacy Reports

How we engaged with POhWER advocacy for the day support service consultation.

Lisa Smart - Community Manager, POhWER advocacy

Dawn Myers, Bella Tomsett and Ferda Erdemir – POhWER advocates

Beverly Scott – Operations Manager – ESCC, Learning Disability Services

Brian Clifford – Client Involvement Lead - ESCC, Learning Disability Services

Abbie Robson – Community Development Worker - ESCC, Learning Disability Services

Stage 1 of the consultation

Our engagement with POhWER advocacy service began on 7th June 2021.

Brian contacted Lisa Smart to request the support of POhWER advocacy at client meetings for the week commencing 21st June 2021. The proposal of changes to day support services was to be discussed during these meetings with clients in Lewes, Crowborough, Eastbourne and Bexhill.

A copy of an Easy Read letter that had been sent to clients was shared with POhWER that outlined the main points of the consultation. Before the meetings took place POhWER were provided with the Easy Read survey questions for clients that ESCC had written.

Brian liaised with the managers of the day support services and Lisa to set dates and times for the meetings. The meetings were planned to take place in services in each support bubble.

Brian let POhWER know that visitors to services are required to have their temperature taken on arrival and if crossing bubbles need to wear full Personal Protective Equipment. We also offered the option of a rapid flow COVID test.

In response Lisa confirmed that advocates would be available for meetings at St Nicholas, Linden Court and Beeching Park. There was no advocate available for the Hookstead meetings and it was agreed that an advocate would visit the following week to speak with clients.

The advocates (Dawn Myers, Bella Tomsett and Ferda Erdemir) contacted service managers directly to make final arrangements and supplied information posters about their visits.

The following meetings were chaired by the service manager or a team leader who showed clients a presentation on screen to explain the ideas they wanted them to think about.

23/6/21 – St Nicholas Day Service attended by Dawn Myers & Bella Tomsett from POhWER – Brian Clifford also attended these meetings (3 meetings between 11am and 3pm)

23/6/21 - Linden Court Day Service attended Ferda Erdemir from POhWER (3 meetings as follows: Bubble 1 - 10:00, Bubble 3 - 10:45, Bubble 2 - 11.30)

24/6/21 - Beeching Park Day Service attended by Ferda Erdemir from POhWER (4 meetings as follows: Dining Room 9:30 am, Art Room 10:30 am, Dining Room 1:00 pm, Octagon 2:00 pm)

25/6/21 Hookstead Brian Clifford attended these meetings. (3 meetings as follows: 3 meetings between 11am and 2pm). POhWER were not able to attend but Dawn Myers visited Hookstead on Friday 2nd July to talk through the consultation with clients.

8/7/21 – Lisa Smart emailed report of findings from Stage 1 through to Beverly Scott, Operations Manager

Stage 2 of the consultation

Beverly Scott contacted Lisa Smart on 8th July 2021 advising that the consultation is now moving to stage 2 and requested further advocacy support for clients from POhWER. Bev shared updated client information for the next stage of the consultation.

Abbie Robson worked with service managers and Lisa to set the dates and times of meetings. The turnaround time for the meetings was tight and the availability of advocates to be matched with the client meetings was a challenge.

Abbie and Lisa exchanged emails and phone calls and worked through to a solution. It was agreed that client meetings would go ahead in day support services, and where the advocates were not available to attend, they would visit on different days to talk with clients. Abbie requested information posters from POhWER about these visits. A poster was supplied by Dawn for the Hookstead visit but no other posters were received.

Service managers let clients know the dates and times that POhWER advocates would be visiting.

The following visits took place from advocates:

27/7/21 – St Nicholas Day Service attended by Bella Tomsett from POhWER at 1pm. Some client meetings had taken place in the morning. Bella visited all 3 bubbles in the afternoon.

3/8/21 – Hookstead attended by Dawn Myers from POhWER at 1pm. Dawn visited all 3 bubbles.

5/8/21 – Beeching Park attended by Ferda Erdemir at 10am. Ferda spoke to 10 clients.

6/8/21 – Linden Court attended by Ferda Erdemir at 10am. Ferda spoke to 5 clients.

16/8/21 – Lisa Smart emailed report of findings from Stage 2 through to Brian Clifford, Client Involvement Lead



Pohwer Community Advocacy Consultation support

As requested, the community advocacy team visited the four main centres in East Sussex during June and July.

Ferda Erdemir	23/06/2021	Linden Court
	24/06/2021	Beeching Park
Dawn Myers	02/07/2021	Hookstead
Dawn Myers & Bella Tomsett	24/06/2021	St Nicholas

They worked with the service users using a variety of methods making sure all communication was accessible as possible. Staff supported them with the more complex communication needs. The original feedback notes on following pages. The main points made were as follows.

- The lack of variety in the activities in the centres was an issue with people stating they were bored a lot of the time.
- Most people wanted more community activities especially those who used sports facilities and the Brighton and Hove football activities.
- People were also worried at what would happen to the community activities during the winter.
- One of the most popular sessions was the twilight session especially the supper and take away sessions although the music and film session was also very popular.
- There were mixed views about the bubbles. Most people could see why they were needed but they missed their friends, and it appears there needs to be more thought and planning into letting them spend time with their friends who may be in different bubbles. For example, most of the centres have outside space where socially distanced meetings could be arranged with their friends.
- The advocates were concerned that service users with more complex needs were not being supported to access the community for activities as much as they had been before COVID. The transport is still available, and it did not appear that they were being treated to the same level of inclusion as other more able service users.
- Staff fed back that they felt they had got to know better their clients and felt it was a more person-centred way of working. However, some staff also felt that the clients with more complex needs were being disadvantaged.
- “How can we know our comments and feedbacks are taken into consideration, will they let us know”?

Linden Court- 23 June

One service user in the first bubble asked during presentation “How can we know our comments and feedbacks are taken into consideration, will they let us know”?

I supported 9 service users to complete the forms- 8 of them answered “happy” to the question “How happy are you with our plans for your day service”.

One pointed “unhappy” then “very unhappy” emoji. However she was unable to tell why she was unhappy.

My observation was only two service users (1 in the first bubble and 1 in the third Bubble) appear to understand the majority of the questions but other 7 service users were just saying yes to all the questions and pointing happy face.

All 9 service users stated they like support bubbles, some of them provided following reasons:

- Activities in bubbles are good
- Like smaller groups
- Bubbles are for our safety
- More one to one support in bubbles
- Friends

Some of the service users stated they would like to be able to say “hello” to their friends in different bubbles.

Out of 9, only 3 service users join the Twilight session-

Feedback from them:

This session keeps me out for extra a few hours, I love it

I enjoy it but it would be nice to see more activities

I love them to carry on, specially Fridays

Like seeing staff and clients, like movie nights and Fish and chips

I want the twilight sessions to continue

There was not a community session in Linden court therefore no feedback for community sessions. As service users did not have experience for meeting everyone in the community sessions and not going to day service first, any response to this question did not appear to be a true reflection of service user’s feelings and thoughts.

More sign language, more Makaton needed

More activities in the twilight sessions, bowling, table tennis, boccia. Cinema

Sports, more movie nights

Beeching Park – 24 June

I thought presentation in Beeching Park was very good- it was not rushed.

Feedback and Questions during presentations in bubbles:

“Why are the sessions I chose not happening?”

“When am I going to be able to do the activities that I want to do”

“It was hard to choose the sessions”

“Activities in the bubble are not structured “

“Miss friends in other bubbles “

“Get tired in twilight sessions”

“Will there be any cookery?”

“Are we going to be allowed to go to park and bowling?”

“Will we be going out on mini buses on a Tuesday and Friday?”

“Twilight sessions- I love it”

“Support bubbles- small groups a lot better, less clients”

“Missing cooking”

“Missing music”

“Missing textile”

“Activities that they want to do: going out for coffee and ice-cream, afternoon team, BBQ, Xmas parties, various parties and celebrations, games and puzzles, putting on a show, social clubs”

“I missed bowling”

“Want to do archery”

Q2- 3 service users chose “happy” emoji only one of them appears to understand the question

1 service user pointed “very unhappy” then changed to “unhappy” but could not tell me why he was unhappy.

1 service user chose “neither happy nor unhappy” she sated “I am sometimes happy, sometimes unhappy” .

1 service user chose “very happy”

“I like going out in the garden and doing sports”

“I got used to it but took too long to get used to it”

“I like doing arts in bubbles”

“I like staying with my friends in my bubble”

3 service users stated they want to keep the support bubbles, 4 were unable to answer.

3 service users stated they like Twilight sessions and want them to continue- 4 service users were not sure if they join twilight sessions could not answer the questions.

“Some of it I like it; like supper, depending on who is on duty, like quiz and disco”

“I get tired, Friday I come 9 am till 7 pm so it is okay but it is tiring sometimes”

“Good, would want it to continue”

“Sometimes it is a bit too long”

“Yes I would like to keep the twilight sessions”

Community sessions- 4 service users do not join, not sure about 3 service users could not answer the questions.

“Bowling, swimming, quiz, games, acting”

“Games, cooking, putting on a show”

“Going to library, going to De La Warr Pavilion”.

St Nicholas Day Centre 24/06/2021

Bubble A

Discussion about community activities and transport. What do we do if we can't access public transport and our families / careers can't take us? Transport won't be available and you will continue to have activities based at St Nicks.

Missing activities with Brighton and Hove Albion.

Miss seeing friends; staff have supported clients to write letters and face time and have waved when passing by door or window.

Like the bubbles, feel safe in the bubbles, happy to stay until told it's safe to be without them.

Enjoy the activities

Bubble B

Enjoy the supper club at the twilight session

Enjoy the Link community session

Would like to go rowing

Would like to go out on a train in the community, meet at a train station and travel to another, visit and café and return.

Would like to return to the football club, but is worried if it's safe

Would like to return to the community activities they did previously – Newhaven fort, Paradise Park, football, unable to do these due to COVID-19 restrictions closing the community.

Bubble C

Talked about transport and lack of transport for community activities, what to do if can't access public transport and need the day centre bus to attend?

Swapping between day sessions and twilight sessions are confusing

Having to get used to the new day centre times

Bored of the activities on offer at the day centre

Would like more people to attend the computer club

Enjoy the music evening at the twilight session

Miss friends, have talked to friends via FaceTime while at St Nicks

Attending the twilight sessions but am very tired as it makes it a late day for me

Hookstead 02/07/2021

Bubble A clients were supported by staff who expressed the views of the client group as well as those were not there on Friday:

Like the bubble as it's a smaller group

Missing friends

Missing girlfriends

Continue to be worried & upset about the new changes

What activities will run in the community on rainy days and the winter months

Can previous community activities return that the clients enjoy and can access (wheelchair users), bowling, pottery, let's do lunch group.

Clients who are wheelchair users as being unfairly treated due to transport....they cannot access community transport and rely on Hookstead transport to get them to and from the day centre. The proposal is that to access community activities you have to make your own way. This would mean that this client group will only have activities at the day centre.

Bubble B – I spoke with staff and on a 1:1 with some clients

Like their bubbles

Enjoy the music / disco evening with the Twilight session

Enjoying the twilight sessions because the client can get his chores and tasks completed in the morning or have a lay in before attending the day centre rather than rushing in the evening after the day centre.

Likes the supper club, take away night & music night as its more social

Got to know each other better due to being in smaller bubbles & more personal centred

Looking forward to the day centre returning to how it was pre covid

Miss friends who are in other bubbles

Don't like the fact that not everyone can be together

Are worried their carers don't know about the changes

Sad about not being able to hug or shake hands with friends when saying hello

Would like to return to sportivate (sports activity) & David Lloyd centre in the community

Would like different sessions offered to them in their bubbles, not much variety

Would like to return to Sheffield Park and the forest to work with the rangers

Would like to have the football tournament back with Brighton and Hove Albion, annoyed this has been cancelled

Staff: Worried that those who have been identified as having a building / sensory need will only be able to access the day centre and not the community. These clients also have a need to access the community and they were able to do this with the day centres support pre covid.

Those who live upstairs in the supported living may be able to get staff to support them to access community activities. But those who live with families / parents who work, can only do drop off and picks up at the start and end of the day due to work commitments.

Bubble C

I spoke to the group all together.

Like going out but not in the evenings when its dark so don't access the twilight sessions

Feel trapped downstairs

Bored of the activities at the day centre

Bubbles are ok to stay but would rather mix with everyone again

Miss friends who are upstairs in other bubbles

Would like to return to Sheffield Park, the forest and football tournaments with B&H Albion

Why can't we take part in community activities if we don't have transport, we used to arrive here and then go out on the bus (pre-Covid)

Why can't we see friends (from other bubbles) in the garden, socially distanced?



Pohwer Community Advocacy Consultation support 10th August 2021

As requested, the community advocacy team visited the four main centres again in East Sussex during July and August.

Ferda Erdemir	06/08/2021	Linden Court
	05/08/2021	Beeching Park
Dawn Myers	04/08/2021	Hookstead
Bella Tomsett	27/07/2021	St Nicholas

As before they worked with the service users using a variety of methods making sure all communication was accessible as possible. However it appears that in some groups this work was completed by staff before the advocate arrived. The original feedback notes are on the following pages.

I would draw your attention to a question that was asked at the last visit “How can we know our comments and feedbacks are taken into consideration, will they let us know”?

Two of the advocates were asked if they could support people individually with issues – they will be following up those referrals but this does underline the need for the team to be able to visit regularly to develop those trusting relationships.

One feedback “the other four wanted to speak to about their dogs, mum, and health conditions which was lovely, so they recognise me now after three visits.”

Bella Tomsett

St Nicholas Day Service

27 July 2021

I attended St Nicholas Day Service in Lewes during the afternoon session. Although I was expecting to attend the meeting with the clients and to support them to complete the consultation questionnaires, I was advised on my arrival that all the meeting had already taken place earlier that morning and most clients had an opportunity to fill out their questionnaires then. Client were all informed that I would be visiting in the afternoon, and were advised they will be able to talk to me about the proposed changes.

I attended the client meeting in Bubble 3, but this did not discuss the proposed changes. However, following the meeting, I was able to support some clients to fill out the questionnaires. After this I visited the other bubbles to offer clients an opportunity to talk to me. Clients in all of the bubbles appeared to be aware that I was visiting, and some wanted to speak to me.

Overall, clients expressed that they were happy with the service provision. Some clients were enjoying the twilight sessions, and others felt that these were too late for them to take part. One client commented that the activities currently on offer during the twilight session were the same as people could do at home (such as watching films), and she felt that it was not good value for money. Several clients said that they would like to do cooking or baking activities during these sessions.

Some clients wanted to engage with community session, while others reported to prefer coming into the centre. Lack of transport for community sessions remains a concerns for some clients. Some clients were looking forward to being able to go on days out from the centre on the minibuses.

Most clients said that they preferred the smaller groups (bubble). Some said that it made them feel safe, but others expressed that although they like that there is less people in each space, they were missing friends from other bubbles and wanted to have the opportunity to do things with them.

In Bubble 3, some clients expressed wanting to do more sports such as table tennis. They also currently cannot access their garden due to it requiring maintenance work. Staff advised that they are awaiting this to be done. In Bubble 1, clients discussed wanting to have drama activities.

Dawn Myers

Hookstead Day Services

3rd August 2021

I visited all three bubbles and I feel the same was said this time as my previous visits.

The clients want to see friends who are in other bubbles, in fact one lady would like to swap bubbles so she can be with her friend rather than waving at him through the door.

Many clients said how happy they were at the day centre and the times as they are. There may be issues about times the taxi's drop off clients.

The clients would like to return to community activities and meet at the day centre then go out on the day centres bus. They'd like to go: bowling, leisure centre, cinema, Sheffield Park, football, sports, and photography group.

In addition, some clients asked if the community session could start in Uckfield so they could attend and not worry about transport as that's where they live. They suggest: cinema, pub lunch, walk, leisure centre, the train station and maybe the library.

Lastly, a few clients asked why they are being restricted when they've had their vaccines. Why can't they go out while with the day centre?

Regarding the times of the sessions, no one had anything to say other than staff and that was to say there isn't enough time between the morning and afternoon sessions to support the morning clients with lunch and personal care. I shared that with the manger before I left and mentioned it was more of an in-house issue.

When I arrived I was told the clients had gone through the questionnaire with staff and their families/careers already and the feedback passed on. I therefore didn't go through each individual questions as I wasn't able to answer any counter questions they may have had.

Ferda Erdemir

Beeching Park and Linden Court

5/6th August 2021

I visited the Beeching Park for the consultation.

I spoke to 10 people all together, only two of them appeared to understand the questions. None of them attends the community sessions.

All stated they were happy about the 3 hourly sessions start and end time. Although it appeared most of them did not understand the concept of time.

I left the questionnaires with them to complete with staff if possible.

I have visited Linden Court, and spoke to 5 service users; only one of them was able to provide her views with regards to the sessions. The other 4 wanted to speak to about their dogs, mum, and health conditions, which was lovely, but not useful for the consultations.

One client stated she had started when bubbles and sessions started so she said “ I do not do anything different” and she said she was happy with sessions hours and start and end time. She only does morning and afternoon sessions and would like to be able to meet other people in the other bubbles. She said “it would be nice if I can see the other side of the building and people in different bubbles”. She told me she loves Linden Court and feels looked after there.

I am not sure if our views and observations count but still I will share mine. My observation is that community session question is confusing as there are no longer community sessions. One of the staff members told me that ‘community sessions’ means service users get on a mini bus which apparently many people loved to go to different places or activities. There is not such a thing now.

Answers to Q7 would be to make the sessions more accessible for people, and transport available again. The majority of the services users in Beeching Park and Linden Court are unable to formulate this response and actually unable to provide response to Q7 so I am just advocating for them. Support workers reported that service users loved going out before pandemic on a mini bus.

