



ACCOMMODATION & SUPPORT:

WHAT DOES GOOD LOOK LIKE
FOR PEOPLE IN WILTSHIRE

VIEWS OF THOSE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES AND
MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

JANUARY - MARCH 2019



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Thank you to all of those who gave their time to meet with us and share their views and experiences. It has been a real pleasure to meet you all and spend time with you. Thanks also to staff who helped us to arrange visits and supported people to take part.

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Accommodation, Care and Support

3 Key Messages

It is more important to people that they can access their community than live in a certain type of accommodation. People want to engage in everyday activities and follow their interests.

People want choice and control about how they live and to be independent. Direct Payments can be a mechanism to enable this. Adult Social Care can support people to be informed about Direct Payments and the help available with them.

Some providers are not getting the views of people they support and service users' knowledge and ideas are not being used to effect change. Providers could adopt a 'You said, We did' model to show they are listening to people and acting on this.

1. Introduction

This report outlines the discussions with people living in a supported setting, or engaging with outreach support. This work focussed on support for people with Learning Disabilities or Mental Health issues.

It was carried out to support Wiltshire Council in their Adult Social Care Transformation Programme which is looking at a range of service types;

- residential care
- nursing care
- supported living
- outreach (non CQC registration)
- supported housing

Aim: The purpose of the work was to understand people's experiences of living in a supported or residential setting or receiving support through outreach services.

Between January and March 2019 Wiltshire CIL Engagement Workers met with over 70 people in 11 different settings including; Day Centres, Supported Living Schemes, Registered Care homes and outreach projects. We also received feedback by email from people receiving support.

Wiltshire People First collected survey forms from 25 people living in supported or residential settings. Some people were supported to complete these surveys.

2. How we engaged with people

We were given a broad remit of gaining people experiences and view of their support and accommodation and developed 6 open questions to base our discussions on.

What do you like about where you live?

Where would you like to live?

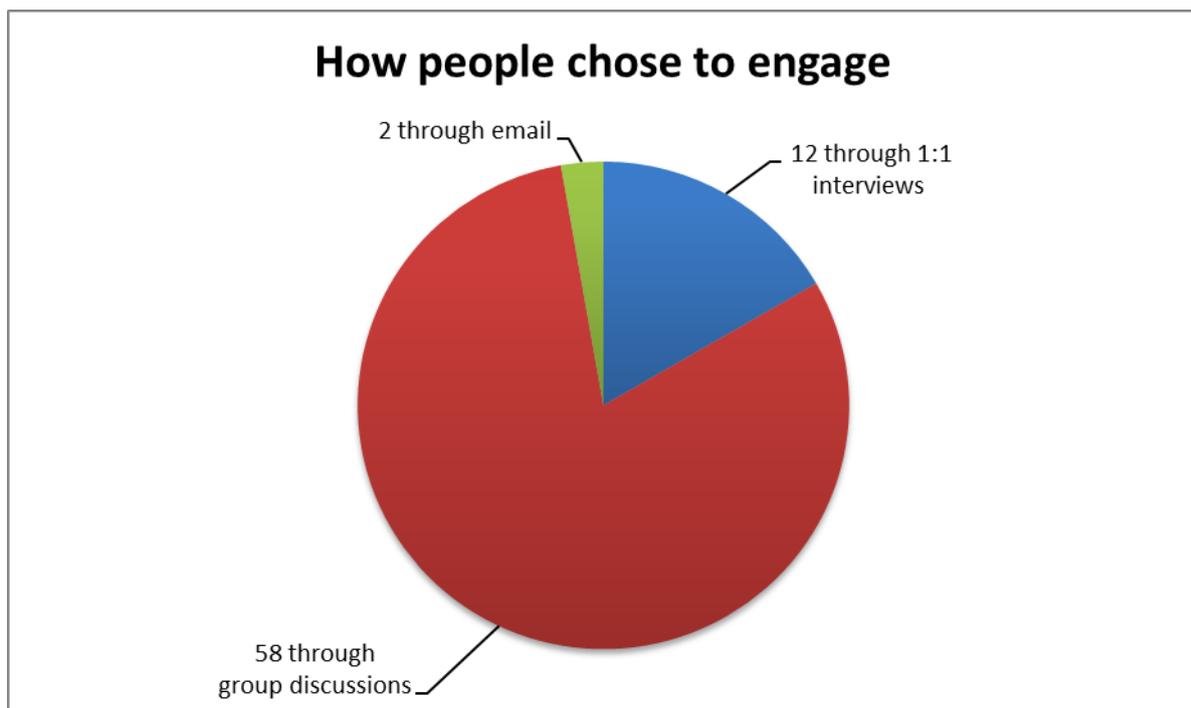
What do you do in your community?

What is good help / support?

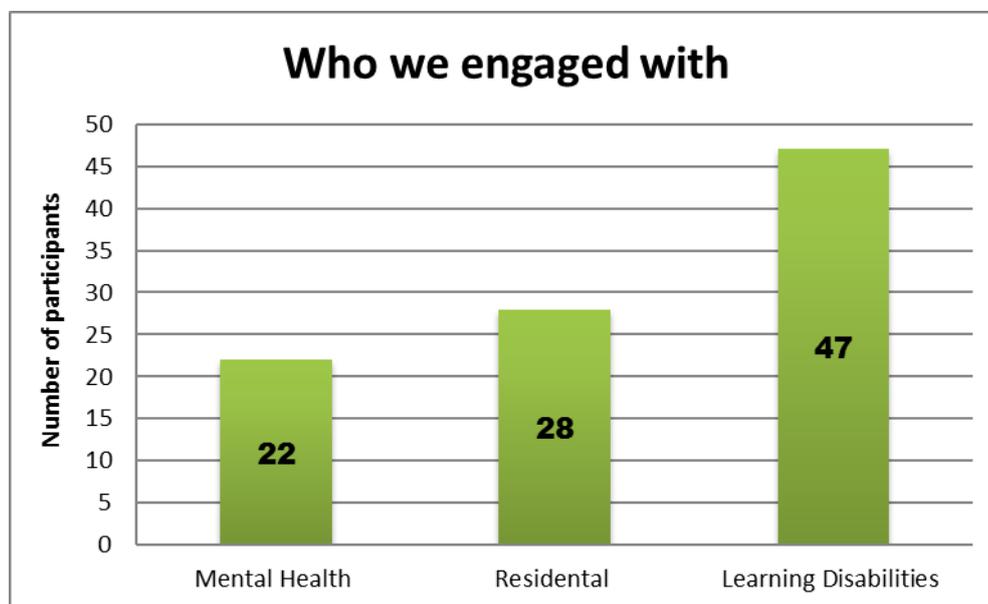
How do you like to have your say?

How much control do you want?

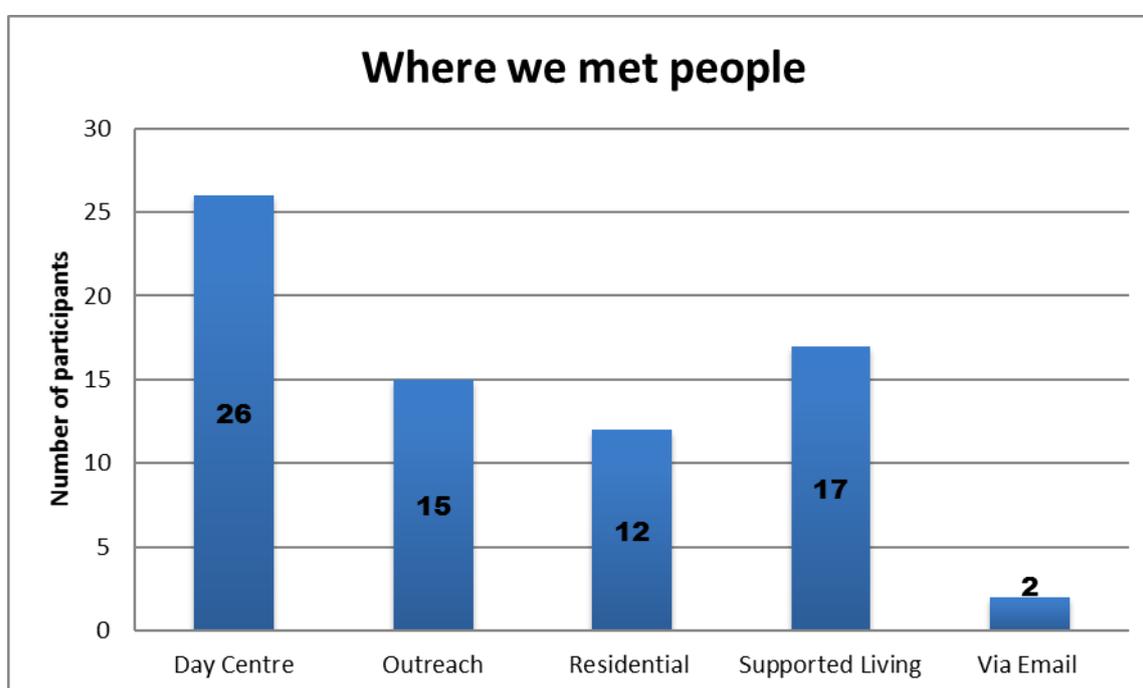
Early work with a small number of people resulted in slight changes to these questions to make them more meaningful. We met with most people in a small group setting or 1 to 1, depending on their preference.



We considered holding a larger group event but initial responses showed a preference for small group or 1 to 1 discussions. The preference for this way of engaging, as opposed to large meetings or survey forms, is evidenced later in this report in How Do You Like to Have Your Say?



We met with 97 people in total, including the 25 who completed survey forms. Individuals living in a residential setting included a combination of mental health, learning and physical disability.



We met people in the setting of their choice where they felt most comfortable to talk with us. For face to face work we used a semi structured interview schedule, asking open ended questions and encouraging participants to contribute their views. Points of interest, including verbatim quotes, were captured by the interviewers. Where appropriate we used pictures to facilitate discussion and so people could indicate their choices.

All data was analysed to identify key themes.

4. Where would you like to live?

People liked being close to town and shops. Accessibility and being able to get out in the community matter to people.

“I like to be by the bus stop with bus connections and close to train station”



*Text size is linked to numbers who made comment

There were comments about the difficulties people experience in the area where they live.

“Better wheelchair access (is needed) - path is not good for wheelchairs”

“Transport is a problem as I need special buses”

Rural Life

For some of those we met who used the mental health support outreach a more rural setting was preferred.

“Nice views over fields” “Countryside in walking distance” “accessible green spaces”

However, accessibility was again an issue:

“Nice to visit village but you can only live there if you’ve got your own car”

This highlighted the value of bus passes:

“I have a bus pass now – can get to better shops and save money”

Living in a group

People who lived in a group setting expressed that they liked this way of living.

“I like living with my friends but be close to family”

“You do become fond of people and people become fond of you.”

There were comments about some of the challenges of living in a group setting.

“I would like to live somewhere quiet. I don’t like arguing”

“It could make my life better to live on my own”

People wanted choice in who they share a home with:

“I think it is good to have a trial with new people in a house to see if it works for me and for them”

“I like being able to pick someone that I get on with. I prefer to live with someone with the same needs as me”

“Living independently with other people (is) fun – basically a learning curve for me to move forward on my own...want to get my own place (in future)”

Residential Care

A proportion of people we met living in residential care did not feel it was the right setting for them, or that it did not give them the choices they wanted:

“My condition doesn’t affect my brain and I don’t always have people I can have a conversation with, be good to be with similar people “

“Want to live independently in my own home, this is just an interim place”

“Rather live in town, near the shops but not with too busy roads”

“I would like to make more choices on places I would like to go out, try new places”

We talked about what support people had been given to explore other options and two individuals expressed that they had not had an opportunity to have these discussions. One person told us that they didn’t know if they would be able to live independently but would like to see if it was possible. Others expressed enjoyment of their home:

“There are lots of activities”

“The amount of outings we have are good”

“It’s comfortable and warm”



5. What do you like to do in your community?

Almost everybody we engaged with expressed the importance and enjoyment of going out and about in their community. Unsurprisingly shopping, pub visits, volunteering and being with friends were among the most popular activities.



“I like going out on my own. Having town close and easy to get to in my chair”

“Going on the bus and train - Bradford on Avon, Trowbridge & lots of places”

“I like going to Boswells with my friends”

“Skittles” “Pubs and eating out” “Volunteer at a club”

There was a cohort that had limited engagement in their community. For a small number of people this was due to their present health situation and they expected this to change in the future;

“Looking at joining writing group”

“At first I didn’t do anything but now looking into doing something with Wiltshire Wildlife Trust”

For others community access tended to be centred around support to access essential services such as the dentist or hairdresser, rather than connecting with community life. They wanted to spend more time in the community doing everyday things such as going for a coffee, buying a magazine or joining a singing group.

“I used to like singing lessons” (but that was where I lived before)

“I wouldn’t say I do much in my community”

Others responded that they would do more if they could find out what was going on in their community;

“Don’t know what’s round here really”

“Finding out about what is going on is an issue”

“Not always obvious where to find information”



6. What is good help / support?

We talked with people about what the best support means to them and about the qualities they value in those who have given them help or support. Common areas talked about among people in supported living were being independent, learning new skills and making own choices.

“not being less independent than you can be and not being pushed to do things you can’t”

“I like it when people teach me new skills, like looking for things with longer dates at the supermarket”

“Make your own decisions and do things you want to do”

“I want to make my own choices”

Support in practical everyday tasks was also talked about a lot. Help with aspects of personal care, medication, cooking and laundry were frequently mentioned, as was support in managing activities and appointments.

“Help to get ready in the morning”

“Someone to help me book appointments”

“Help with finances, letters, new recipes”

The personal qualities and skills of staff were mentioned a great deal. Being friendly and having as good sense of humour were important and valued by many people we met with. Knowing the people giving the support was also important to people.

“Friendly and helpful in what they do”

“Some to joke with - have banter”

“Caring in all aspects of the word”

“I don’t like it when different staff come in who don’t know me”

People gave this question about what makes good support a lot of thought and this was shown in the responses:

“The focus of supported activities should be on whatever the task is, thus providing a positive element (learning new skills, making a worthwhile contribution etc.) for those accessing the service instead of concentrating on the more negative aspects of having a diagnosis”

“Ask me how I would like to be helped - The ones that want to do it their own way don’t work”

“Imagination – someone who can come up with ideas- how about we do this today?”

“It’s personalised to meet my needs”

“They get to know you well and know when to give you a push”

“I was treated as an individual and was involved with my care plans”



Practical Help

Most people liked support with cooking, cleaning and managing finances.
Some people liked support with gardening, booking appointments and help keeping track of day to day activities

Personal Qualities

Most people liked someone who was kind, friendly and had a good sense of humour.
Some people liked someone they enjoy talking to.

Choice and control

Some people liked someone who will teach them new skills and will support them to make their own choices and decisions.

Changes to some support

People we met who have Outreach Support expressed their concerns and fears about how this is changing:

“Not be time limited, as not only does this impact negatively on the building of helpful relationships with those providing the support but for those accessing such services their diagnosis will, most likely, be a lifelong one which requires more consistent input than a set quota of support”

“Long term support is important. Even permanent support is needed by some”

“This can be a lifeline so being time limited now has a huge impact”

7. How do you like to have your say?

This question is about what works best for individuals to enable them to share their views and experiences. The findings about people's preferences in this can be used for future work of this kind.



FACE TO FACE

The majority of people said they preferred to share their opinions with people face to face. Two people we spoke with liked to share their views online via email or Facebook whereas seven people said they would not be able to access any feedback opportunities online.



FILLING OUT FORMS

Five individuals liked to fill out questionnaires and forms as part of sharing their opinion. However, most people preferred to speak to someone directly rather than through a form.

“Face to face meetings. 1-1 is usually best but small groups are good”

“Survey by post so I have time to think about what to say”

“Filling in forms does not give time to think”

“Don't bother with questionnaires”

A few people felt the Council could be more active in this:

“Wiltshire Council could come and ask me”

“Wiltshire Council should ask more questions”

“send letters to Council”



GROUPS VS 1:1

There was a greater preference for giving feedback in groups, however a large proportion of people also enjoyed talking on a 1:1 basis. Generally people preferred talking in small groups where questions were asked one at a time and everyone was given an opportunity to speak.



GIVE ENOUGH TIME

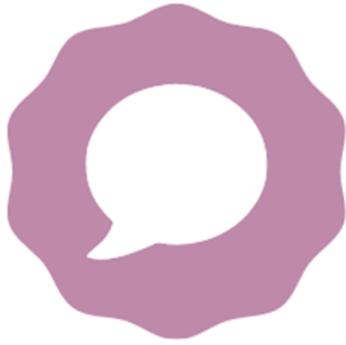
Some people said it was important to give enough time to gather people's thoughts. One suggestion was to gather feedback over 2 visits so people had time to think and reflect on the questions. People also asked that they are given enough time to explain their answers properly.

“Can’t go in big groups because people talk over each other - prefer small groups, asking questions one at a time”

“1:1 is better for me - easier to hear”

“Give me time, if I stop talking I am just thinking what to say. Don’t presume I have finished. You gave me time to speak”

“Thinking about today – would have worked better if you had arranged two visits, maybe two weeks apart, so we had time to think and reflect”



SHARE THE OUTCOMES

A few people expressed that when they share their opinions, any outcomes that come from the work would be shared with them afterwards.



"IT'S REALLY IMPORTANT THAT WHEN CHANGES HAPPEN PEOPLE ARE LISTENED TO BEFORE AND AFTER THE CHANGES ARE MADE"

People had many other ideas about giving their views and that they would like to be asked what they think.

"Parents or social workers being involved if relevant and if I want"

"Casual - in our own environment"

"Phone causes anxiety so prefer not to answer it"

"meetings between resident and management are useful to give feedback and make changes"

"Tell staff and they can write it down"

"It would be nice to be asked what I think and feedback to them - so that I could tell them what I think"

8. How much control do you want?

This question related to control over money and people's feelings about what level of control they would like over their own finances. People had a clear understanding of areas such as having an Appointee or Power of Attorney to look after their finances.

“POA (Power of Attorney) review is coming up and I want full control of my finances”

“I do a little bit on my own and also I get a little bit of help”

(I had) “support with change to Universal Credit. The guidance and language used is really difficult to understand”

“My money is looked after by staff but I have control over it it's always available if I need to buy something”

“direct payment so that I can control who supports me and when. I decide my own activities in my support time”

People expressed a preference for differing amounts of control over their finances:

“I prefer staff to make choices for me – it is easier”

“I would like support to have my own bank account and pay my own bills”

I WOULD LIKE COMPLETE CONTROL OVER MY MONEY

22% said they would like/ already have complete control of their money

"There is limited support for those who are Struggling"

32% said they would like equal amount of control and support to manage money



26% said they would like someone else to manage all of their money



"I like to look after my own cash tin and purse and count my own money to see if it is correct"

13% said they would like most control over their money but with some support

"I can't manage it on my own by I like some control over it"

7% said they would mostly like to have their money managed by someone else, but still have some control

I WOULD LIKE SOMEONE ELSE TO CONTROL MY MONEY

9. Conclusions

- There was almost no mention of the physical aspects of people's accommodation except brief comments on bedroom size by two people. What mattered most to people about their home was the ease with which they could access what they wanted in their community. For most people a town centre location was preferred, making community access easier and with a variety of activities close by.
- Those who preferred to live in a rural setting valued the scenery and peace this gave but did have issues with limited public transport.
- The majority of people we met had things going on in their life and knew what was about so could make choices about day to day activities. A small number of people did not do much outside of the arranged activities in their accommodation and expressed that they would like to be supported to go out and do more in the community.
- People talked widely about the support they received in practical and financial areas of their lives. The character of support staff was often spoken of, with humour, kindness and patience being frequently mentioned as important qualities.
- Independence and being supported to greater independence is valued by people and seen as good support.
- People want to share their views and experiences and told us they enjoyed talking with us. A few people told us they have 'house meetings' where they can give their views and ideas but for the majority of people this did not appear to be the case. There was almost no mention of changes being made to support following people being asked what they thought and for their ideas. This is an area that would need to be explored in greater depth.
- Good support is a combination of many factors – it's personalised, people have choice in how they are supported, people can make their own decisions, use support time flexibly, do what they want in their community and be independent. It's delivered with friendship, skill and humour. When done well it has a huge positive impact on people's lives.

“The best support I have had by far ... staff went out of their way to help and were very supportive. The 24 hour-care was invaluable, and I was treated as an individual and was very involved with my care plans”

Researched and compiled by Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living User Engagement Workers - Mary Meilton and Zoë Millington with additional input from Wiltshire People First.

A full data set is available. Please contact Wiltshire CIL.

