



Enter & View Report

Sees the Day

November 2021



What was the project about?

Healthwatch Bucks wanted to find out about people's experiences of attending Sees the Day community opportunities.

Why did we do the project?

In 2021-22 we are looking at Covid19 response and recovery in Health and Social Care. Together with our cross-cutting interest in lesser heard voices, we decided to visit locations where community opportunities are provided. These had to close in 2020 during the pandemic and then adapt to changing circumstances as they opened through 2020 and 2021.

We wanted to hear the from those who attend day care provision in Buckinghamshire. We wanted to hear what they gain from the experience and how it promotes well-being and self-reliance, one of the aims of [Our Ambition | Buckinghamshire Council \(buckscc.gov.uk\)](https://www.buckscc.gov.uk). In this, Buckinghamshire Council are looking to develop “meaningful and appropriate day and employment opportunities in the community to enable people to live fulfilling lives. We want to support a culture of choice for individuals rather than the current culture of dependency and having to fit in to services”.

We also wanted to identify good practice and ways to improve service delivery.

What did we do?

Our visit to the service on 16th September was planned with the provider in advance. We went to Stoke Mandeville Methodist Church, one of the three locations where Sees the Day operate. Here we carried out an Enter and View visit. For more details on Healthwatch Enter and View and full details of the visit, including the names of our authorised representatives, please see Appendix 1.

We talked to 4 members (clients), 1 carer and 4 members of staff. We also observed the interactions between these people, 8 other members and 4 other staff members. Some members are non-verbal, and others chose to not talk to us. Our authorised representatives used a set of questions to guide their conversation with members. It covered topics such as:

- what did they like doing at Sees the Day?
- what skills had they improved since attending the centre
- what would they like to change?
- how did they feel about the service?

What did we discover?

Sees the Day delivers a wide range of work experience, day trips, sport opportunities and training to adults with profound and multiple learning disabilities and those on the autistic spectrum. Different opportunities are available from different sites in Aylesbury, Stone and Stoke Mandeville from Monday to Friday. On the morning we visited the Stoke Mandeville location, members were given a choice of going out for a walk, gardening or music and movement.

How people were treated

We saw members welcomed as they arrived, and many were visibly pleased to see their key worker or other members of staff. A few members had one to one support and one had two to one support. Everyone seemed to know each other very well and were comfortable with how the morning evolved, including one member who had only joined a fortnight ago. Several members also had unprompted conversations amongst themselves. People were provided with drinks as they arrived and again at 11am or when they returned from their walk. We were told that people chose which activity they wanted to do when they arrived. Those we spoke to knew what they were doing during the day.

Some staff used sign language and closed questions offering a simple choice to those who found verbal communication more difficult. We heard one person asked, “what would you like to drink” and they signed and verbalised ‘tea’ then ‘sugar’. There was a lot of positive one to one verbal communication from most staff. Staff treated every member as an individual. We saw people have good eye contact with some individuals when asking questions such as “May I take your cup?” Another member was left to sort through some papers and find what they wanted in their own time before going out on a walk. One member also showed us the saying of the week on the noticeboard: ‘If you want the rainbow, you have to put up with the rain’.

However, some of the more able members seemed to spend a lot of time sitting down when they could potentially be developing further skills and getting involved in more than they currently do. We saw one member encourage another to sit down and explain they took turns. “Let everyone else have a choice, then you. Mickey [Mouse music] will be on again later.” The other member was happy with this. Another member helped carry newly planted pots outside but wasn’t asked if they’d like to help laminate the large labels for the plants; a member of staff did this. We saw staff, without help from the members, sweep the floor after the gardening had finished. Hot and cold drinks were made and served by staff although a staff member had already confirmed that at least one member present could make hot drinks.

What do you like doing?

We observed that staff were aware of when to engage with a person and when to leave them be. Some members clearly liked a lot of social interaction whilst others preferred to observe or choose themselves when to get involved and when to be on their own. One person had their own word search books whilst another was writing in a book. One person told us their favourite activities were the ones they were doing today: gardening and literacy. Another also picked literacy as their favourite. Others enjoyed talking with the staff: “The best bit for me is being with X”.

Gardening took place inside at the table. We were told by a carer that the family member they supported was very happy to come to Sees the Day. They had made friends with some of the other members and enjoyed the activities. We saw how they were supported to tip compost into

a pot and put a small plant in it. We did also see another staff member plant a plant themselves rather than engage with a member to help them do this together. When the gardening was over, staff got out felt tip pens and paper and encouraged people at the table to draw if they wanted to.

One person was spun gently in their wheelchair with others as they danced to music. They looked like they were enjoying this immensely. We saw in music and movement how residents were offered a box of shakers, bells, and ribbons to pick from. The staff member did not rush any of the members. They also knew who not to offer the box to but ensured that those who wanted to dance, and sing, were in the middle of the floor and not left to the side.

We were told that two residents were allowed to go out by themselves if they chose to. One might go to the park whilst the other would go to a local shop.

What have you got better at since coming here?

One person said they were learning to “be sensible, be polite”. Another told us they had learnt to sew and had improved their reading since coming to Sees the Day. They also said they enjoyed the healthy eating activity on a Tuesday.

What could make your experience better?

Most members we spoke to, could not think of anything they would like to change at Sees the Day. However, one member did say they would like to learn more skills to make them more independent. They requested transport training and said they had already had money skills training; “I have a bank card”.

How do you feel about the service?

One person said that attending Sees the Day “makes me feel good”. Another said, “people are lovely here; nice to chat to and they always talk to me about my feelings”.

Our recommendations

Based on what members told us and our observations, we recommend Sees the Day:

- give more responsibility, to help run the sessions, to some of the more able members e.g. sweep the floor, make tea/coffee/cold drinks, get the pens and paper out, help play the music on the laptop
- get more members involved more of the activities e.g. picking tomatoes, planting, laminating (all with assistance where necessary)
- review members’ aspirations regarding training on using public transport.

Service Provider Response

Sees the Day was very pleased to be included in one of Healthwatch Bucks Enter and View visits. This was very encouraging as very often day opportunities are forgotten and not in the public view.

Sees the Day thank you for your observations and recommendations. Regarding our members having more responsibility to run sessions, pre the pandemic this was the case. There was a need for us to reduce the risk of cross infection, so consequently we limited the number of people handling/sharing equipment, kitchen, cleaning equipment etc. It’s worth noting that many of

our members were very nervous returning to service after covid and have needed a lot of emotional support and time to talk about and express their fears. We are gradually encouraging our members to return to pre pandemic levels of participation at a rate which is responsible in line with government advice.

Travel training is part of our programme of activities. Again, during the pandemic this was put on hold, however, we are currently introducing this back into our programme. We are also pleased to announce that our work experience in a town coffee shop has also resumed.

Sees the Day would welcome another visit from Healthwatch Bucks in the future and look forward to introducing them to another one of our sites.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Bucks would like to thank Sees the Day members and staff for their contributions to this Enter and View visit.

Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific date set out above. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

Appendix 1: Enter and View Background and Visit Details

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to carry out Enter and View visits. Local Healthwatch representatives carry out these visits to health and social care services to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement.

The Health and Social Care Act allows local Healthwatch authorised representatives to watch how services are delivered and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, care homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies. Enter and View visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service but, equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation - so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand.

Healthwatch Enter and View visits are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues, however, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch safeguarding policies. In addition, if any member of staff wishes to raise a safeguarding issue about their employer they will be directed to the CQC where they are protected by legislation if they raise a concern.

Details of visit:	
Service Provider	Sees the Day
Service Address	Stoke Mandeville Methodist Church Eskdale Road Stoke Mandeville Buckinghamshire HP22 5UJ
Date and Time	16 th September 2021 9am - 12pm
Authorised Representatives	Alison Holloway Robert Nikiel

If you require this report in an alternative format, please contact us.

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