

Bucks Safe Haven

High Wycombe

Enter and View Report



October 2024

Table of Contents

Visit details	2
Summary of findings.....	3
Recommendations.....	4
Service response to recommendations	4
What is Enter and View?	6
Methodology	6
Background	7
Tour of premises.....	7
Service Space.....	8
Signposting and creative displays.....	9
Staff feedback.....	10
Service provision	10
New service users.....	10
Triage support.....	10
Peer support	11
Main challenges	11
Acknowledgements.....	12
Disclaimer	12

Visit details

Details of visit	
Service Provider	Buckinghamshire Mind and Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
Service Address	260 Desborough Road High Wycombe, Bucks. HP11 2QR
Date and Time	3rd October: 6.15pm – 8.00pm

Authorised Representatives	Oonagh Browne and Heena Thaker
-----------------------------------	--------------------------------

Summary of findings

During our visit to High Wycombe Safe Haven, we heard from four members of staff including the Operations Manager. The service is open 7 nights a week and is supported by three staff members while the Operations Manager works between both Safe Haven sites (Aylesbury and High Wycombe).

These findings represent an account of what we observed and heard **on the evening** that we visited. Demand for this support service varies from evening to evening.

- + More people access the service through 30-minute telephone or video support than face-to-face. High Wycombe Safe Haven accept both professional referrals, and self-referrals from individuals in need. Referrals can be made over the phone by calling the team or via email
- + Staff at High Wycombe Safe Haven will sometimes take support calls from Aylesbury Safe Haven if they have enough staff resources to cover additional support
- + During quieter periods when demand for support services is not as high, staff will distribute leaflets to nearby health services and public areas such as High Wycombe train station. They had not heard about [Health on the High Street](#) in Aylesbury
- + Safe Haven operates within a triage network of mental health support with Oxford Health Foundation NHS Trust, Connection Support, Citizens Advice Buckinghamshire and The Oasis Partnership. This network offers advice around employment, housing, debt or substance misuse
- + Staff told us that there has been an increase in men looking for support services (before it was mostly young women)
- + There was nowhere for people accessing support services in-person to leave feedback/suggestions e.g. a suggestion box. We were told that people can leave feedback by getting in touch with the team via phone or email. The Operations Manager will contact people directly when this happens

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been suggested based on our conversations and observations during the visit. Safe Haven should:

- Connect with Health on the High Street to promote their support services in Aylesbury and High Wycombe. Health on the high street enables healthcare services to be delivered alongside public health and wellbeing initiatives, as well as social support services, from unit 33 in Friars Square shopping centre, Aylesbury.
- Place a suggestion box in a visible and accessible area for support users to leave feedback (named or anonymous)
- Look into adding a service user feedback form on the Bucks Safe Haven [webpage](#)

Service response to recommendations

The following response was received by email on 22nd November 2024.



**Buckinghamshire Mental Health
Management Team**

The Whiteleaf Centre
Bierton Road
Aylesbury
Bucks, HP20 1EG

Dear Oonagh,

Enter and View Visit – Safe Haven High Wycombe 3rd October 2024

Thank you for your recent Enter and View visit of the Safe Haven service at High Wycombe and sharing the subsequent report. We welcome the feedback and recommendations you have provided to enable us to be more responsive to the needs of our patients.

These findings have been shared across the service and an action plan has been developed with the leads of the area. In response to your specific recommendations, we would like to provide you with our plans see the table below which identifies the

Healthwatch recommendation, the action/update identified by the service and the timescale identified for this to be completed within.

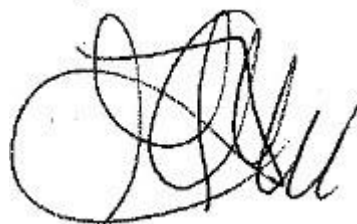
RECOMMENDATION	TRUST UPDATE/ACTION	DUE DATE
Connect with Health on the High Street to promote their support services in Aylesbury and High Wycombe. Health on the high street enables healthcare services to be delivered alongside public health and wellbeing initiatives, as well as social support services, from unit 33 in Friars Square shopping centre, Aylesbury.	We will connect with Health on the High Street. Crisis Services Manager will visit Friars Square on Saturday 23rd November. The teams will be available that day, allowing the service to drop off leaflets and discuss potential future collaborations. We hope that they will be able to provide contact details for the clinic teams to facilitate direct signposting links and additional support.	December 2024
Place a suggestion box in a visible and accessible area for support users to leave feedback (named or anonymous)	We will place a suggestion box in a prominent and easily accessible area, allowing support users to leave feedback either anonymously or with their names.	January 2025
Look into adding a service user feedback form on the Bucks Safe Haven webpage	We are exploring the addition of a feedback form specifically for service users on the Bucks Safe Haven webpage.	March 2025

We appreciate the findings identified through this Enter and View visit and welcome the opportunity to develop our partnership with Healthwatch through future visits.

Yours sincerely,



Donna Clarke
Service Director



Julie Fulea
Associate Director of Nursing and Head of Inpatient Services

What is Enter and View?

Enter and View visits are carried out by local Healthwatch to find out how health and social care services are being run. They make recommendations where there are areas for improvement.

The law allows local Healthwatch to see how a service is delivered. We can visit hospitals, care homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies. We talk to the people who use the service and their families and carers. In care homes we also talk to visitors and often staff too. We talk to these people to help us understand what is done well and what could be done better. We then share this learning with others.

We do not look for issues around the safety of people (safeguarding) during our Enter and View visits. We report any concerns as set out in our policy. We tell members of staff who want to raise an issue about where they work to talk to the CQC. This way they are protected by legislation if they raise a concern.

Methodology

We announced our Enter and View visit to Safe Haven by email on 19th August 2024. This visit was scheduled to take place on Monday 16th September at 6.30pm. Due to staff sickness at Safe Haven on that day, our visit was rescheduled to Thursday 3rd October. An updated notification letter announcing our visit was sent by email to the Operations Manager at Safe Haven and Oxford Health Foundation NHS Trust on 16th September.

As planned, we visited Safe Haven at the beginning of their after-hours service on Thursday 3rd October. We prepared semi-structured sets of questionnaires and observation templates ahead of our visit. We also did a risk assessment in line with Healthwatch Bucks internal policies and procedures.

We spoke to four members of staff, including the Operations Manager. Usually, service users make an appointment to visit the premises in-person or book a 30-minute online support consultation. There were no bookings for in-person consultations on the evening that we visited. While we were there, a member of staff was giving a video support call in a confidential meeting room.

Background

Bucks Safe Haven is part of Buckinghamshire Mind, the mental health charity, initially in partnership with Oxford Health Foundation NHS Trust. The service is now joined by new partners Connection Support, Citizens Advice Buckinghamshire and The Oasis Partnership.

High Wycombe Safe Haven works closely with its sister site, Aylesbury Safe Haven.

It offers short-term intervention to people while they are in a mental health crisis, as an alternative to A&E. This service is available 7 nights a week – 6.30pm to 12am.

People needing the service can join face-face groups with the option of a 1-2-1 discussion with a trained crisis worker.

There is also the option of a 30-minute telephone or video support calls for people who cannot access the service face-to-face.

Safe Haven encourages self-referrals where possible. Professionals can also make referrals by phone or by email: buckssafehaven@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk

The email address is accessed from 6pm – midnight daily. There is no limit to how many nights that people can call the service, but they can only offer one call per evening.

Tour of premises

Safe Haven shares facilities with Bucks Mind. The Operations Manager gave us a tour around the building to see its facilities.

There is a lift located at the back of the building for people with mobility needs. They can access the building via the rear entrance where will be met by staff. An accessible toilet is located near the lift.

The main entrance is at the front of the building. There are stairs leading to the service area. For health and safety reasons, there is an evacuation chair at the top of the stairs. We were told that this chair is heavy but in excellent working condition. Staff rehearse the process of using the chair on a regular basis.



Picture 1: Evacuation chairs and escape route

Service Space

There are three main areas within the space occupied by Safe Haven:

- The reception and communal area. This has comfortable sofas, music speakers and selection of creative materials e.g. felt tip markers. There is a CCTV display screen in this area which monitors the external front entrance
- A meeting room for confidential 1-2-1 support
- A larger meeting room with a boardroom table and chairs for group activities



Picture 2: Space for group activities

Signposting and creative displays

All spaces were clean and tidy. There was a free-standing leaflet holder in the communal area with information about different services.

The walls were decorated with colourful artwork from people that have used the service.



Picture 3: Leaflet display and artwork

Staff feedback

We had an open discussion with staff about how the service operates, triage working, peer support amongst colleagues and the main challenges to the service.

Service provision

Safe Haven offers nonclinical support to people who are experiencing a mental health crisis. It is not a drop-in service, usually people are referred through healthcare services or self-refer. We heard that demand for face-to-face support has dropped since the Covid-19 pandemic. People mainly request telephone or video support calls. These are restricted to 30 minutes. If the demand for support calls is higher in Aylesbury and there is enough staff capacity at High Wycombe, they will take the calls. Equally the same is done in reverse.

We also asked about financial assistance for people who might need face-to-face support but could not afford to get to the service in Desborough Road. We heard that in these rare cases, a collection could be arranged via a taxi service.

During periods of low demand, staff will take opportunities to deliver leaflets to local health and social care services as well as distributing information in public places such as High Wycombe train station and other public places. We asked about other locations such as local retailers and Health on the High Street, Unit 33, Friars Shopping Centre, Aylesbury. They had not heard about the provision of services at Health on the High Street but said they would look into it.

New service users

We heard that around 30 new people access Safe Haven support services every month. There has been an increase in males accessing the service. Usually, demand has been higher amongst young females.

Triage support

We heard that the service works effectively in partnership with Connection Support, Citizens Advice Buckinghamshire and The Oasis Partnership. This partnership offers mental health support and advice around employment, housing, debt, or substance misuse. For example, Safe Haven could prioritise a referral to Citizens Advice Buckinghamshire for service users who need urgent support/advice with debt or housing.

Peer support

We asked staff if they felt safe working after office hours (6.30pm – midnight). They said that they stay in touch via a team WhatsApp group. When working together, they park beside each other so that they enter and leave the building at the same time. They also have good connections with a nearby pizza takeaway shop, the drivers are usually around when they leave the premises at night which makes them feel safer.

Once inside the building staff have access to a smartphone app that provides personal safety. This device allows alerts to be sent to emergency contacts by holding down a hexagon button on the phone.

The team has monthly peer/group supervision. They also debrief with each other at the end of service delivery.

Main challenges

We asked staff to tell us about some of the challenges at Safe Haven. These included:

- Staff moving into different roles. The role of support worker is an entry level post, and the hours are outside traditional office hours i.e. they are not morning to evening. However, all staff are on permanent contracts. Two new roles have been recruited, A&E Link workers, to help adults access alternative mental health crisis support. These roles will be based in Stoke Mandeville A&E, the working hours for these Link Workers will be 1.30pm – 9pm
- Dealing with complex service users who are on waiting lists for onward care. This can emotionally be difficult for staff as they cannot influence waiting times in wider mental health and social care systems.
- Occasional safeguarding challenges although these are not too frequent

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Bucks would like to thank Buckinghamshire Mind, Oxford Health NHS Trust and their partners for contributing to the Enter and View Programme. We would especially like to thank the staff who spoke to us at Safe Haven in High Wycombe.

Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on a specific date. 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.

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

Address:

Healthwatch Bucks
PO Box 958
OX1 9ZP

Phone number: 01494 324832

Email: info@healthwatchbucks.co.uk

Website URL: www.healthwatchbucks.co.uk

X: @HW_Bucks

Facebook: HealthWatchBucks

Governance: Healthwatch Bucks Ltd. is a company (Registration number 08426201)

We confirm that we are using the Healthwatch Trademark (which covers the logo and Healthwatch brand) when undertaking work on our statutory activities as covered by the licence agreement.

© Copyright Healthwatch Bucks 2024