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# HEAR OUR VOICE

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Sheffield's Learning Disabilities Strategy 2023-2030



## Introduction

A strategy is a plan for a long period of time. It will help us make the lives of people with a learning disability better.

This strategy is about what we think are the most important things to do, who will do them, and when.

The [Sheffield Learning Disabilities Partnership Board](#) will check the strategy every year to make sure we are doing what we said we would do. We'll work with our communities to figure out how we can share what we've done in the best way.

Everything in this strategy is from people with learning disabilities, their families, and unpaid carers.

The most difficult words in the strategy have a line under them. There's a section below that explains what they mean. There is some text in blue, if you click on this it will take you to more information on a website.

This strategy is for everyone with a learning disability aged over 16. It includes transition to adult services.

Unpaid carers play a vital role in supporting people with a learning disability. For more information about how we support unpaid carers, please have a look at the [Carer's Delivery Plan](#).

Some people with learning disabilities also have extra health and support needs, such as

- People who have severe or multiple disabilities.
- People who communicate differently or show behaviours of distress.

- People who need extra support with other things, such as autism or mental health issues.

We also understand that people have different experiences because of their identity.

This strategy includes everyone and makes sure no one is left out.

To write this strategy, we spoke with about 500 people with learning disabilities, as well as their families and support staff and organisations that pay for services for people with a learning disability in Sheffield.

There were some key events.

- We Speak, You Listen
- Festival of Involvement
- Chance to Choose
- Provider Marketplace
- Big Voice Conference
- Learning Disability Service review

You can find more information about this strategy in some other documents. Appendix 1 – Our Plan, Appendix 2 - How our strategy was developed, Appendix 3 - What we know about learning disabilities in Sheffield, and Appendix 4 – How we'll check our plan is working.

## **What the most difficult words in this strategy mean**

### Advocacy

Help to get the care and support you need that is independent of services. Advocacy can help you tell others about your needs and wishes and weigh up and take decisions about the options you have. Self-advocacy is about helping you to be able to do this for yourself. Peer advocacy is how you can help other people in similar situations to you.

### Apprenticeship

Where someone (an apprentice) is learning a trade from a skilled employer. They are still paid, but usually at a lower rate while they are learning.

### CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services treat children and young people with a range of difficulties that seriously impact on their mental and emotional wellbeing. They support people up to 18 who have learning difficulties who also experience mental health problems, behaviour seen as challenging by others, or both.

### Co-production

A way of working that involves people who use health and care services, unpaid carers, and communities in equal partnership.

### Framework

A tool used by the organisations that pay for services to describe the set of rules and good practice for how the service should work.

### Identity

The qualities, beliefs, feelings, and personality traits that make someone different to other people. People are sometimes treated unfairly because of

parts of their identity, such as their age, disability, gender identity, sex, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation.

### Innovation

Doing things in a new and different way, aiming to make things better.

### LeDeR programme

The Learning Disabilities Mortality Review (LeDeR) programme was set up in May 2015 to support local areas across England. It reviews the deaths of people with a learning disability to make sure we learn from those deaths and to put that learning into practice.

### Person-centred

Many health and social care services want everything they do to make things better for the person they are helping. We want to put the person at the centre of all we do making sure all our work is to help them.

### Provider

An organisation that provides services, such as care and support services.

### Psychotropic medicines and STOMP

Psychotropic medicines work in the brain. They affect behaviour, mood, consciousness, thoughts, or perception. They are used to treat mental illness. Sometimes they are given to people to restrain or to control behaviour seen as challenging by others.

STOMP stands for stopping overmedication of people with a learning disability and autistic people. STOMP is a national project to reduce the use of these medicines. It is about helping people to stay well and have a good quality of life.

### Specification

A tool used by the organisations that pay for services to describe how the service should work.

### Strategy

A plan to achieve a long-term aim.

### Transition

The way young people with health or social care needs move from children's services to adult services.

## **Our Goal**

Our Goal is what we all want to achieve together through this strategy. This is the same goal as the Adult Social Care Strategy, [Living the life you want to live.](#)

‘Everyone in Sheffield lives in a place they can call home, in communities that care, doing things that matter to them, celebrated for who they are – and when they need it, they receive care and support that prioritises independence, choice, and recovery.’

We’ve grouped our plan into five themes. These are the things people told us needed to get better for people with learning disabilities in Sheffield.

It will take time to achieve our goal. That is why the Sheffield Learning Disabilities Partnership Board will check our progress towards our goal every year. We’ll work together with organisations in health and care to do this.

When we check the plan, we will make sure it is updated with what we want to focus on for the coming year. We’ll work with our communities to share what we’ve done and agree what we should work on next.

We’ll also tell the Adult Health and Social Care Policy Committee at the Council and the Integrated Care Board’s Mental Health, Learning Disability, Dementia and Autism Delivery Group what we’ve done and what we plan to do for the next year.

## Theme 1 – Safe and Well

We want everyone to be safe and well.

People told us what ‘Safe and Well’ meant for them.

- A. Disability awareness in public and when using services.
- B. Good quality overnight short breaks (respite care) that keeps people safe.
- C. Understanding our needs across healthcare, such as when visiting the GP and in hospital.
- D. Support to prevent people needing to stay in hospital when they don’t feel mentally well.

We’ve already started working on some actions.

- Working with providers to make sure there are lots of options in overnight short breaks for different needs.
- Exploring the need for emergency overnight short breaks.
- Checking advocacy training for professionals as part of the new advocacy contract starting April 2024.
- Continuing to support GP surgeries (doctors) to deliver Annual Health Checks, vaccinations, and national screening.
- Close working with the LeDeR programme, including to support STOMP (stopping over medication of people with a learning disability, autism, or both, with psychotropic medicines).
- Looking at new ways of running the Sheffield Health and Social Care Trust’s Learning Disability Service
  - preventing people from needing to stay in hospital when they don’t feel mentally well.
  - helping people to live in their community with the right support and close to home.



We agreed our plans for 2024 through our Learning Disabilities Partnership Board. We want to:

- Look at the information available on overnight short breaks and make it more useful. This should include what money is available.
- Work on plans to increase staff training for people with behaviours of distress and high needs in overnight short breaks.
- Support the promotion and development of Safe Places, helping everyone feel able to access them.
- Support training for health workers in learning disability awareness and communication skills including:
  - using the accessible information standard (for example, easy read).
  - how to improve referrals for people with a learning disability.
  - promoting the Oliver McGowan training.
- Promote the use of Health Passports and the Red Bag scheme.
- Explore how we make sure that everyone with a learning disability has better access and support at doctor's surgeries (for example, seeing the same doctor or nurse).

## **Story of difference - Learning Disability health checks**

More people with learning disabilities have accessed annual health checks. Annual health checks mean life-threatening illness and other health problems can be found earlier.

Health agencies, Social Care providers and Sheffield Mencap and Gateway, have worked together to support people to access their annual health check.

Between March 2022 to Apr 2023, 3,382 people with a learning disability had their annual health check.

Only 1,440 people had their health check in 2018/19. This is an increase of 1,978 people.

## **Theme 2 – Active and Independent**

We want people to have choices about their support and how they live.

People told us what ‘Active and Independent’ meant for them.

- A. Skills to support people to be active and independent, including phones, technology, and social media.
- B. Good quality supported living.
- C. A variety of exciting day opportunities.
- D. Choice, especially when people have higher needs.
- E. Being able to travel around the city.
- F. Accessible spaces in the community.

We’ve already started working on some actions:

- Supporting the Individual Service Funds pilot and having more opportunities for co-production wherever possible.
- Using checking tools to make sure that Day Services are doing what they have agreed to do.
- Making sure that activities are meaningful, and as part of individuals’ support plans.
- Asking different providers to join the framework and why they haven’t joined.
- Continuing to work on the Learning Disabilities Accommodation strategy, working with people with a learning disability to make a plan.
- Reviewing the separate framework for ‘Enhanced’ supported living and checking outcomes, involving people in this.

We agreed our plans for 2024 through our Learning Disabilities Partnership Board. We want to:

- Make sure staff know what's available in the community, where to look and who to ask.
- Check if people take part in interviews for their staff team.
- Support people with lived experience to work together with services as quality checkers.
- Support providers to share their facilities and remove barriers to this where possible.
- Help people to get disability bus passes.

## **Story of difference – Stothard Court**

Stothard Court is a supported living setting where people live in individual flats. There's also some shared space. Everyone who lives there wrote their creative support plans with a dedicated social worker, based on their strengths and interests.

Everyone at Stothard Court has individual Direct Payments packages of support. Now they pool some of their personal budgets to use for extra activities such as film nights in the community room, growing flowers and vegetables in accessible planters, game evenings, crafts and sewing sessions, drumming sessions, chair aerobics, going swimming.

They can spend more time together and are doing things that keep them active and healthy. Each person decides which activity they are interested in. If anyone does not want a group activity, they can still use their budget to do what they want to do instead.

The people who live at Stothard Court and their supported living provider know that their Direct Payments give them more choice and control over how they want to be supported. They can choose and try out different support and activities that meet their needs.

### **Theme 3 – Connected and Engaged**

We want people to be a part of their community.

People told us what ‘Connected and Engaged’ meant for them.

- A. Opportunities to meet up with friends.
- B. Better transition to adults’ services.
- C. More support and opportunity for peer advocacy and self-advocacy and support to tackle issues that were important to them.

We’ve already started working on some actions.

- Adults’ and Childrens’ teams jointly buying services for younger people.
- Making the move better for young people between Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to the Community Learning Disability Team (CLDT).
- Looking at the one-to-one advocacy service and make changes from April 2024.

We agreed our plans for 2024 through our Learning Disabilities Partnership Board. We want to:

- Look into more socialising activities (just) for adults with learning disabilities such as nightclubs or bars.
- Look at how organisations could join up to run weekend or evening activities.
- Explore ways to support people and unpaid carers when they move between children’s and adults’ services, for example having a peer buddy to support in work, groups and going to places.

- Explore a community volunteers plan to introduce 'what's on' in people's areas.
- Develop a peer advocacy and support network for people with a learning disability with the right networks that support everyone's identity.

## **Story of difference - Sheffield Voices**

Sheffield Voices is a self-advocacy group made up of adults with learning disabilities and Autistic adults in Sheffield.

The group regularly host large community engagement events on different topics, as well as visiting different day opportunities in Sheffield to run outreach sessions with community members.

The group has done work over recent years to improve the lives of people with a learning disability in Sheffield. Some examples are below.

- Used a SPEAK UP grant to talk about people's experiences of the Coronavirus pandemic.
- Worked on the 'Prioritise Me' campaign to help people with a learning disability and carers understand more about how to save money on household bills.
- Made their hate crime training accessible online and have delivered it to different groups and organizations.
- Worked with the Council and Healthwatch on the Chance to Choose project, delivering art and drama workshops to find out how people want to live their lives.
- Set up community sharing hubs called 'We speak, you listen' to bring people and services together each month to talk about issues affecting the learning disability community.



## **Theme 4 – Aspire and Achieve**

We want everyone to have a good life doing what they want to do, with the support they need to make their choices.

People told us what ‘Aspire and Achieve’ meant for them.

- A. Meaningful work, including the right kinds of volunteering opportunities.
- B. Support to job search and apply.

We’ve already started working on some actions.

- Encouraging the provider to incorporate volunteers in the future advocacy contract that is starting in April 2024.
- Exploring an apprenticeship scheme in Adults Future Options.
- Planning the pre-apprenticeship programme for young people with SEND within the Council’s SEND Department, launching in September 2024.
- Working with the Supported Employment Forum in developing the 3-year action plan to increase supported internship places and supported employment opportunities.

We agreed our plans for 2024 through our Learning Disabilities Partnership Board. We want to:

- Engage with and support a wider variety of businesses to provide volunteering opportunities, ensuring they provide the right accessibility support.
- Check how well organisations that support people with a learning disability have staff that represents the community they support.
- Work with the job centre to identify and promote job centre support.

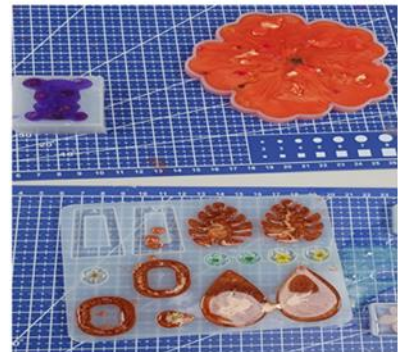
## Story of difference – Real Life Options

Real Life Options is a Day Activities service at the Old Library in Attercliffe. Real Life Options support people to build on their own strengths and abilities and become active members of their community.

Walking groups collected nature items to share with others and create products that were sold at the fundraising day.

Individuals and their support team made everything on sale. The handmade items included bookmarks, Christmas decorations, keyrings, Halloween decorations, jewellery, and coasters.

The funds raised will go towards further development of the sensory room, trips & outings, and into the development and activities based at the centre.



## **Theme 5 – Efficient and Effective: choices and support for people and staff**

Our workers and the people we support can be creative, choosing the best way to arrange support to fit around different lives.

People told us what ‘Efficient and Effective’ meant for them.

- A. Getting the right staff with the right skills and the right number of staff.
- B. Being involved in developing policy and processes.
- C. Flexibility and doing things in new and better ways.
- D. Hearing more from people who communicate differently.
- E. Easy to access information, including accessing it in person.

We’ve already started working on some actions.

- Reviewing how well the new Adult Future Options team works and the impact of this change has on people with a learning disability.
- Developing the role of link reps from the Sheffield Learning Disabilities Partnership Board to gather feedback from the community and share progress on this plan.
- Developing accessible ways of sharing the progress of this plan with our community.
- Launching the Learning Disabilities Services Transformation programme.
- Developing a toolkit for professionals to better gather feedback from people who communicate differently.
- Supporting the ‘You Speak, We Listen’ programme, making sure everyone in the community knows about the strategy, our plans, and can share their views.
- Reviewing and improving how organisations that pay for services communicate with providers.

We agreed our plans for 2024 through our Learning Disabilities Partnership Board. We want to:

- Explore ways people with a learning disability work with organisations to write job specifications or sit on interview panels.
- Explore ways people with a learning disability work with organisations to write processes/policies in supported living and day opportunities.
- Review how accessible complaints processes are for residents, their families, and staff.
- Work with Social Workers, the Technology Enabled Care (TEC) programme, providers, and people with lived experience to understand barriers to using technology in plans and support.
- Develop a Communications Plan that could include things like:
  - Making sure things like the online directory are correct and up to date.
  - Including individuals' and residents' reviews in marketplace type events for day services and supported living.
  - Making sure that people who communicate differently are supported to have a voice.
  - Making sure that information is produced in community languages.

## **Story of difference – AutonoMe**

AutonoMe uses mobile technology to support neurodiverse people and people with learning disabilities to develop skills for independent living and employment.

The AutonoMe app has videos that help people learn how to do certain tasks that are important to them. A Development Coordinator, who has experience supporting neurodiverse people and people with learning disabilities, supports the learner to progress. They personalise their support to exactly what's right for the learner.

Development Coordinators also provide training to support staff and employers to make sure everyone involved is working together to support the learner.

Sheffield's project supporting young people started in July 2023. 4 out of 5 learners are practising skills and individuals are already progressing, meaning that they can complete a certain task well and independently. For example, one young person is now able to make their own sandwich and lunch without any assistance when they couldn't before.

## Thank you

Hear Our Voice has been written with help and support from:

- Disability Sheffield – Sheffield Voices
- Healthwatch Sheffield
- Integrated Care Board (ICB)
- Sheffield Health & Social Care Trust
- Sheffield Teaching Hospitals
- Sheffield City Council
- Our supported living, day service and residential/respite providers
- The Carers Centre
- Sheffield Learning Disability Partnership Board
- And all the people who took part in the Chance to Choose project and We Speak, You Listen events.

With grateful thanks.

## Where to find support

To find out what support is currently available for people with a learning disability and unpaid carers and families in Sheffield please visit

<https://www.sheffielddirectory.org.uk/adults/>

Or call Sheffield City Council First Contact Team on **0114 273 4908**

## About this document

Hear Our Voice - Sheffield's Learning Disabilities Strategy, 2023-2030.

This version was produced in October 2023.

Available in different formats and languages. Contact us about this.

Sheffield City Council Strategy and Commissioning Service.

Telephone (0114) 273 4119. Email [information@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:information@sheffield.gov.uk).

For more information about Adult Social Care, visit our website

[www.sheffield.gov.uk](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk).

Thank you to Disability Sheffield, Sheffield Voices, and everyone in the learning disability community in writing this strategy.