

## **Review of internal and external Day Opportunities - Appendix 3**

### **Consultation feedback from external building based day opportunity providers**

1. Consultation was through discussions at the regular fortnightly provider forums and through a targeted questionnaire. All of these responses are from building-based providers but many also offer outreach, community activities and digital/ online options.
2. There are 26 providers who provide this type of support to current adult social care customers. The providers range across community and voluntary organisations, community interest companies and private companies. They vary considerably in their organisation size and the number of people that they support. Their locations also differ from being based in their own buildings to sharing space in community centres and local facilities. Of these organisations 14 completed the questionnaire.
3. The pandemic has required providers to review and modify their service delivery particularly during the period of lockdown and as they have gradually reopened their building based services. The external providers in Walsall have shown innovation and many of their “new” offers have been well-received. There are of course some people including customers and carers who want to return to things as they were before Covid, however there are others that welcome the change and the variety of options that are now more readily available.
4. The return to building based and community services has been stepped up gradually as lockdown restrictions have eased. For some services they have seen a reduction in numbers as sadly some of their members have deteriorated physically and mentally or in some cases very sadly died during the pandemic. Unfortunately for some providers their numbers have remained

below pre pandemic levels as new referrals have not been forthcoming for a variety of reasons including people still being uncomfortable and anxious returning to group sessions.

5. Providers have reported that many of their customers and carers have welcomed a return to their service albeit for some it was with some anxiety. The providers have all produced Covid risk assessments and put measures in place to manage risk and reassure their customers and their carers.
6. The providers of building based day services and social clubs have been actively engaged with commissioners throughout the pandemic. They have adapted and changed their services to meet the needs and aspirations of their customers by developing new types of support and adapting their existing offer. Since restrictions have eased we have seen many providers choosing to offer a wider menu of provision for those customers who have liked support being offered in a different way. Particularly evident is the use of more digital and social media for those who prefer to remain in their own homes or to mix and match between this and face to face support.
7. One of the greatest challenges for providers has been transport. For some customers who had previously used public transport this is no longer considered a safe and viable option. There have also been changes to the availability of community transport and ring and ride. Customers who has previously shared transport whether in mini buses or taxis have experienced changes and for some this was not something they initially felt safe doing. Providers have responded and made alternatives available where possible and have encouraged carers to offer transport. Some providers have had additional costs due to the changes to their arrangements, which could be claimed through the Covid additional expenses process before this ended on the 31 September.
8. Feedback was given about their future plans and aspirations:

- Greater collaboration between providers, useful links have been made through the pandemic
- More use of community facilities and these need to be fully accessible
- Continuing with their more varied offer e.g. face to face, online, outdoors
- To consider opening their services to the wider community to encourage greater community engagement and participation
- Developing their digital and social media offer
- Encouraging more outdoor activities
- More targeted 1 to 1 support that could be time limited to develop peoples independent living skills or focus on health and well-being
- More group activities focussing on well-being and health e.g. nutrition, weight management. These may be existing community resources where access needs to be improved.
- More accessible leisure activities e.g. football teams, walking groups
- Life skills training and development – possibly following a national or local syllabus
- More opportunities to access and support people into volunteering
- Expanding their service to weekends and evenings
- More collaboration with existing community groups
- More blended approach both community and centre based
- Developing a more one stop offer particularly to those with mental ill Health
- To expand offer to shopping, cleaning, meals, escorting to appointments, gardening to older and more vulnerable people in the community
- Well-being sessions on exercise, health eating, and weight management may involve engaging with someone like slimming world
- Making their community centre more accessible with personal care suites and improving physical access to the indoor and outdoor space
- Partner with a Counselling provider
- Pooling Direct Payments for those with shared interest

9. The providers also detailed what they saw as services and support that is missing from the current offer in Walsall for people that may require additional support:

- Swimming
- Fishing
- Horse riding
- More art, flower arranging and pottery classes
- Holistic therapies and treatments
- Drop in sessions for carers
- Reminiscence groups
- Closer links with schools for inter-generational contact and shared activities
- Improved transport links and community transport including ring and ride
- More leisure activities in the evenings and weekends both specialist and mainstream community that people feel welcomed into
- Use of more technology and to make it accessible such as loans of equipment and apps for people to try
- Sensory rooms
- Hydrotherapy to be open to people with PAs
- Opportunities for people to pool their Direct Payments to do activities together where there is a shared interest