



Service Specification: Day Opportunities and Community Outreach

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Document ownership:

Document Owner:	George Bray
Document Author:	Ami Bestall

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This document sets out the service specification, outcomes and standards which apply to the provision of **Day Opportunities and Community Outreach** to individuals in receipt of services (**Individuals**) purchased by Somerset Council (**SC** or the **Council**) which are delivered to Individuals by the **Provider**.
- 1.2 This document should be read in conjunction with:
 - The contract and its appendices and schedules
 - The Generic Specification
 - The Council's Respite and Short Breaks Specification
- 1.3 This Service Specification reflects national policy advice and guidance and sets out the philosophy and standards to be adhered to by Providers in the provision of Day Time Support services.

2 Scope

- 2.1 Day Opportunities and Community Outreach is defined as the provision of care and/or support and activities during the day and/or evening and/or weekend for the purpose of delivering outcomes specified in the Individual's Care and Support Plan and/or to provide respite for an Individual's carer. This could include offering a safe environment for a vulnerable person and/or a means of providing personal care.
- 2.2 The level of support will vary depending on the need of the individual. This could include but is not limited to:
 - high level support for people with profound and multiple learning disabilities;
 - supporting people to reduce reliance on paid support by fully engaging with community resources;
 - supporting individuals newly reintroduced into the community following a hospital admission;
 - supporting people with independent tasks that are time limited and outcomes focussed. E. g. learning to cook a meal, manage own medication etc.
- 2.3 Day Opportunities and Community Outreach will normally take place away from the Individual's home environment including through community and/or buildings-based services. However, where providers are supporting individuals with specific independent tasks, these could take place in the person's home.
- 2.4 Unlike other services, providing personal care in buildings-based services (sometimes referred to as "day centres") is not currently regulated by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). However, the Provider must seek advice from the CQC if they are unsure as to whether any service they are providing

requires registration and be able to supply a copy of this advice to the Council on request.

- 2.5 Day Opportunities and Community Outreach providers are expected to uphold high levels of communication with the other support networks in an Individual's life. This includes daily feedback and summary as well as important events / issues.
- 2.6 Support provided through a Shared Lives Carer or as part of a Domiciliary Care service is not included within the scope of this specification.
- 2.7 The service will be available to adults in Somerset with assessed eligible needs that meet the National Minimum Eligibility Threshold and whose Care and Support Plan includes access day, evening and/or weekend activities.
- 2.8 The outcomes SC expects when commissioning Day Opportunities and Community Outreach includes:
 - **Social inclusion:** Including making friendships that are based on mutual interests and not based on a shared diagnosis (such as a learning disability). Friendships are real and not reliant on both people attending a paid service: while supporting people to maintain friendships may include facilitation through a paid service, this should be based on what people wish to do with friends.
 - **Cultural and creative opportunities:** This should include supporting Individuals to be accessing creative spaces that are not solely based on a diagnosis. Individuals should be encouraged and supported to maintain their own cultural beliefs or explore areas of cultures that the person expresses an interest in. This could include: art sessions, dance sessions, attending faith spaces, trying new things are specific to local areas.
 - **Supporting Health and wellbeing:** Including exercise, sport, diet/nutrition and access to appropriate therapies. This must also include supporting people to understand, maintain and enjoy healthy relationships that include sexual or romantic relationships. Individuals must be supported to know where they can access support and maintain their dignity around understanding or exploring appropriate adult relationships. Where Individuals have an ongoing need for community support providers should be willing and able to signpost and support to these services such as community mental health services.
 - **Building independence:** Including supporting Individuals to progress towards paid employment, skill development and/or maintenance, volunteering (this must never be offered as an alternative to paid employment but could be an experiential activity that helps an Individual to move towards achieving employment and/or self-employment), positive risk-taking, learning and education, leisure activities and trying new things. Individuals should be supported to maximise independence within their home lives where appropriate; this may mean supporting to achieve outcomes focussed, time sensitive pieces of work: cooking a meal for mum and dad.
 - **Day time respite care and/or support for Carers:** Carers can expect that they will have a clear and transparent timetable of support that allows them

to receive real respite from their caring role. This should be alongside a thorough carers assessment that gives the provider clear expectations of what is required from a respite package of support.

2.9 Out of scope activities include:

- Support that requires additional mileage and/or staffing to that stated on the Purchase Order, for which SC, or an organisation authorised to act on its behalf (the Referrer), is responsible for meeting the cost of, without their prior agreement.
- The provision of meals or refreshments. It will be the Individual's responsibility to provide and/or pay for any meals or refreshments they wish to consume unless it has been assessed as an eligible need by the Council and included in the Individual's Care and Support Plan, and on the Purchase Order for the Day Time Support service.
- Accessing any activities that do not relate to the outcomes identified by the Referrer in the Individual's Care and Support Plan without their prior agreement.
- Requiring all Individuals to receive day opportunity support as an arbitrary "gateway" or similar form of prerequisite to access other services, for example Employment Support, regardless of whether it relates to their individual needs and outcomes.

3 Service standards

3.1 The Service Standards that SC requires all Day opportunities and community Outreach Providers to achieve, are:

- Services are outward looking and engaged in their local communities, helping Individuals to be included when and how they wish to be.
- Services work in partnership with the health and other services that may include other providers within the market, to ensure needs are met.
- Services must show Individuals that they are responsive to comments and prepared to learn from both compliments and complaints to make improvements.
- Providers must be able to demonstrate a responsive service that can flex as needed by the Individual. Providers must be able to demonstrate clear communication with the authority when there is a change of need.

4 Service Outcomes

4.1 Providers will promote the independence of all Individuals. The Outcomes that SC requires all Day Opportunities and Community Outreach Services to achieve are that Individuals are, where appropriate, enabled to:

- Maintain their skills and develop new ones in the areas that they want to. Recognising that Individuals may be able to and should be encouraged to build independence via any and all aspects of tasks. Support should only be provided where it is necessary.
- Access transport that meets their needs **where it has been assessed as an eligible need** by the Council and included in the Individual's Care and

Support Plan, and on the Purchase Order for the Day Opportunities and Community Outreach.

- Have equality of opportunity to become part of their communities and do the things that they enjoy. Individuals should be supported to access opportunities based on their likes/wishes not a diagnosis.
- Exercise choice and control of their support and activities, to achieve their outcomes.
- Providers should be engaged in the authorities ongoing work around technology by promoting Individuals access to technology that will support meeting their outcomes.
- Try new things, pursue leisure interests, participate in physical and mental activity and access community resources in the same way as any other person, if they want to.
- Take part in social, leisure and further educational activities that meet their needs, including during the evening or at weekends. Individuals will be told how much they will have to pay before they are supported to take part.
- Choose what to wear, what to eat, where to go shopping, what to do and when to do it.
- Access a broad range of volunteering opportunities in the local community. Where volunteering is included in the persons care and support plan, this must be reviewed in line with the relevant section of this specification to ensure that ongoing volunteering is appropriate.
- Young people, Preparing for Adulthood are supported to develop new skills and move towards paid employment. Young people should from early stages of transition, be supported to understand what their local community has to offer in relation to meeting their needs and ensuring that Individuals can access these.

5 Accessing Services

- 5.1 Somerset Council, or an organisation authorised to act on its behalf (the **Referrer**) will make the initial referral to the Provider.
- 5.2 The start date for each individual Individual's service will be agreed with the Individual and the Referrer and, with the Individual's consent, their carer and/or representative(s) based on the Individual's needs and the urgency in which the service is required.
- 5.3 At least one introductory session will be arranged for each prospective Individual and, with their consent, their Carer and/or their representative(s) and/or Referrer in order to support planning and decision making.

6 Service Provision

- 6.1 The Provider will provide a person centred, flexible and responsive service that meets the assessed, eligible, needs of Individuals and Carers as detailed in the Individual's and/or Carer's Care and Support Plan.

- 6.2 Providers will ensure safe staffing levels are always adhered to and have effective and feasible risk assessment and contingency plans in situ. Providers will ensure safe staffing levels and risk assessments are reviewed at least quarterly.
- 6.3 The Provider will ensure that sufficient staff are available to provide care and/or support as detailed in the Individual's and/or Carer's Care and Support Plan and delivered through their Person-Centred Plan.
- 6.4 Where services are community based, there need not be a specified building from which the services are delivered so long as there is appropriate flexibility to respond to changes in weather conditions when delivering services, ensuring that there are sufficient community resources to meet the Individual's need, such as a changing place and appropriate and proportionate risk assessments have been completed.
- 6.5 The Provider will ensure that the environment in which the service is being provided meets the needs of all the Individuals being supported. This includes ensuring that Individuals have access to appropriate toileting and changing facilities that meet each Individual's needs.
- 6.6 Where a buildings-based service is provided, it will be of sufficient and flexible size to accommodate the number of Individuals using the service and have quiet space for people who wish to take a break. The provider will also ensure that the buildings and any grounds accessible to Individuals are maintained in good order and have suitable facilities/equipment to meet the assessed needs of the Individuals.
- 6.7 Where an Individual's physical needs require specialist facilities the provider will demonstrate that they are both available **and** that it has sufficient staff with appropriate training to enable their use to the Individual and/or their representative and the Referrer.
- 6.8 Where a building-based service is provided to Individuals with complex physical and/or health needs, there will always be staff on site who have the appropriate qualifications, skills, and experience to meet each Individual's individual needs, including personal care and challenging behaviours.

7 Reviews

- 7.1 The Referrer is responsible for arranging a 28-day Review with the Individual and the Provider and, with the Individual's consent, their carer(s) and/or representative(s) and/or independent advocate to ensure that the services provided are meeting their needs.
- 7.2 Providers will be expected to continually monitor and review how each individual engages and benefits from their service / support, relating to the individual's outcomes. Providers are expected to document every individual's progress and engagement to enable effective review and continual

development e.g. scrapbook, photo album, progress / goal tracker, individual newsletter.

- 7.3 **The Provider will notify the Referrer of any break in the Individual receiving the service lasting, or that is expected to last, for more than 14 consecutive** calendar days. On receipt of this notification the Referrer will arrange any review that is required which may result in the Individual's use of the service being suspended or ended.
- 7.4 Providers will monitor every individual's attendance and provide feedback to SC if consistent absence is noted. **Should an Individual have 3 occurrences of unplanned absence per 12-month period, the provider must inform SC so that a review can be carried out.** This review should aim to understand if the person continues to wish to receive the support, if they would like to change activity and identify areas for amendment to ensure support is attuned.
- 7.5 Providers must notify the Referrer of any periods of unplanned absence that exceed five consecutive days of their usual attendance and must only charge for keeping places open where this has been agreed in writing by the Council in advance.

8 Individual Choice

- 8.1 The Provider will work alongside the Individual and, with their consent, their representative(s) and the Referrer to agree a Person-Centred Plan for the service to be provided. Communication needs are to be taken into account and support requested where possible.
- 8.2 The Provider will ensure that Individuals are given every opportunity to make their own choices (using appropriate and effective communication methods) about the activities they wish to participate in, including through the use of "taster" activities to help facilitate choice. This should continually be implemented to promote diversity of activities.
- 8.3 Providers will hold a co-productive ethos and continually review this. The Provider will ensure that Individuals have informed choices in a range of opportunities and activities that enables them to choose what they do, when they do it and, wherever possible, which staff support them.
- 8.4 Providers are expected to evidence how and when each Individual has exercised choice in relation to their support, activities, and progress towards their goals / outcomes.
- 8.5 The Provider will understand and support that choice will look different for different people and instil the most effective communication tool to fully support the Individual to communicate their choices and wishes.
- 8.6 Individuals will be supported to participate in, and contribute to, voluntary and charitable sector work where they wish to, however the Provider **will not**

promote this as an alternative to paid employment where an Individual is seeking this.

9 Transport

- 9.1 Providers will enable Individuals who are able to do so to access public transport and use it to access the service (where building- based) and activities in the community.
- 9.2 Where Individuals cannot access public transport, and this has been assessed as an eligible need by Somerset Council, the Provider will arrange appropriate transport to enable Individuals to access their chosen opportunities and activities.
- 9.3 Where Individuals have a mobility vehicle in their name, they will not be eligible for commissioned transport. Should the Individual not wish to use the mobility vehicle, the Provider, the Individual and with their permission their representative, can discuss alternative arrangements. These will be a private arrangement that does not involve the Referrer.

10 Training

- 10.1 The provider will ensure that they are sufficiently trained to meet the needs of the service that they are providing.
- 10.2 Providers are expected to have a training matrix for all staff in situ to ensure safe and effective service delivery and promote attuned support for individuals who may require staff to have bespoke training.
- 10.3 The Generic Specification for this DPS outlines the minimum staff training and induction standards expected.