



## **Enter and View Report**

**Ambler Way Support Services**  
**19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> May 2016**

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### **Key Findings**

- Excellent care and support provided to service users
- Well balanced levels of support and independent living
- Evidence of service users supported to make choices
- Supportive and caring staff and good relationships with service users
- Good interactions and support networks with other residents
- Clean homely environment
- Good leadership and support from manager
- Evidence of service user involvement in decision making



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## Visit details

### *Visit 1*

<b>Date:</b>	Thursday 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2016
<b>Authorised Representatives:</b>	Debbie Robinson and Kath Shorey
<b>Healthwatch Staff:</b>	Sharanjit Boughan
<b>Service visited:</b>	Ambler Way Support Services, Heberstone, Ruth Street, Crossroads, BD22 9DN
<b>Provider Staff:</b>	Joanne Currie, Manager and Support Staff

### *Visit 2*

<b>Date:</b>	Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> May 2016
<b>Authorised Representatives:</b>	Garry McGlinchey and Barbara Kirwan
<b>Healthwatch Staff:</b>	Sharanjit Boughan
<b>Service visited:</b>	Ambler Way Support Services, Rough Nook, West Lane, Haworth, BD22 0EN
<b>Provider Staff:</b>	Joanne Currie, Manager



## **Why Healthwatch volunteers visited this service**

These Enter and View visits were organised as an opportunity to get the views and experiences of service users and their families about this service. It was also an opportunity for Healthwatch to go in and observe how this service is provided and run on a day to day basis.

## **Background**

Healthwatch Bradford and District were approached by Bradford Metropolitan District Council with a request to carry out some quality checking on learning disability services in Bradford, as people using these services can be vulnerable and often their voices are not heard. We negotiated and agreed to visit Ambler Way Support Services with the commissioning team of Adult and Community Services, Bradford Council.

These visits provided an opportunity to independently gather the views of the people using the services and their families and carers and find out how the service worked for them.

This also allowed Healthwatch to further develop the work already started to train and use people with learning disabilities to carry out enter and view visits to learning disability services.

## **Purpose of the Enter and View visits**

The key purpose of these visits was to find out what people using the service have to say about it. It provided an opportunity to highlight areas of good practice as well as identifying any issues and concerns to feed back to the service provider and commissioner. The visits also allowed Healthwatch to go in and check if the service was meeting the needs of those people that it was set up to support.



## How were the visits prepared and conducted?

We carried out two Enter and View visits. One was at the main house Rough Nook and the other was at one of the properties where people receiving support are living. The visits provided a snap shot of service user experience on that day.

During the first visit we were able to speak to a number of service users living at the property called “Heberstone” that we visited as well as others who lived in nearby properties and had been invited to come and speak to us and give their views about the support that they received.

During the second visit we were able to speak to people living at “Rough Nook” who were available on the day of the visit and wanted to tell us about their experiences. This was combined with observational tools and methods to give an overall picture of the service that is provided.

Two representatives and a member of the Healthwatch team carried out each visit. Volunteers spoke to 13 service users during the visits and we spent some time at both properties observing the environment and talking to staff.

Everyone we spoke to was informed of our volunteer role with Healthwatch and the aim of Enter and View. All participants provided verbal permission for the interviews to proceed and were assured of confidentiality. The enter and view team were aware of and took into consideration the varying levels of communication and understanding of the service users when gaining consent to carry out the interviews.

This report was drafted by Healthwatch staff based on volunteers’ notes and feedback. Factual details about the service have been checked with the service provider.



Ambler Way Support Services was originally established in 1984 as a care home for people with learning disabilities under the name Rough Nook. The service provides a holistic care and support service to people with learning disabilities and is tailored to meet individual needs and support people to be as independent as possible. The service currently supports approximately 54 adults with learning disabilities aged between 19 and 79 in various accommodation throughout the Keighley area, including the main house, Rough Nook. They also support approximately 15 adults on outreach services throughout the Keighley area.

The first visit was focused on speaking to service users who are living in rented properties in the community with support from Ambler Way Support Services. Many of the people that we spoke to had lived at the main house Rough Nook first and had moved into the community once they were ready to live more independently. The property that we visited had 3 adults with learning disabilities living in the property, however we also spoke to 3 service users living in other properties. This service currently supports 42 people living in the community in 13 properties. These can range from single lets to groups of two, three or four people living together. The residents are supported by a team of 44 staff on a rotational basis who will cover 2 or 3 properties, so they are well known to the service users. The level of staffing for each property is dependant on the needs of people living there and some require sleepovers while others will only need staff available during the day or evening to help with specific tasks.

The second visit was focused on speaking to service users living at Rough Nook which is the main house where support is provided by Ambler Way Support Services. Many of the residents at Rough Nook have come from living at home and are supported to become more independent and eventually move out into the community with support. Rough Nook supports 14 adults with learning disabilities and the house is split into 3 areas. Rough Nook one and Rough Nook two and each have 6 people living there. Each side has its own kitchen and dining area and a communal lounge. There is an additional 2 bedroom flat where two service users are currently living. The service users living at Rough Nook receive support from a team of 12 staff on a rotational basis with four staff on during the evening, two that sleep over and daytime cover is flexible depending on what service users are doing.



## Key Findings

- All service users that we spoke to reported being well supported
- We saw evidence of supportive and caring staff and positive and friendly interactions with the service users
- Both properties were clean and homely and the service users were welcoming
- There was a friendly and informal atmosphere in the communal areas on both visits
- The support provided was flexible and tailored to each person's needs and allowed them to get involved in a wide range of activities and outings
- There was evidence of service users involvement in decision making through the two service user representatives
- There was evidence of service user choice in the range of things people were involved in and the different holiday options available each year to the service users.
- The hands on approach of the manager allowed for a good relationship with and knowledge of service users needs and positive interactions with the staff
- Many of the service users were supported to be involved in voluntary and paid work
- The larger house provided an opportunity for friendships to be formed which then led to service users moving out into the community together, allowing for support and continuity.
- There were good links and relationships with local organisations such as the bus station which gave additional support and reassurance to service users.



## Daily Life

All the service users spoke very positively about their daily life. They felt involved in choosing where to live and were happy to live where they were. There were a couple of people on both visits who said they didn't get to choose where they wanted to live as this was the only option or the only place they came to see, but they had no issue or concern with living there. Many of the service users that we spoke to at Rough Nook talked about the friendships that they had made as one of the key things that they liked.

There was praise for the staff and the support that they give from all the service users that we spoke to and we observed positive interactions between staff and residents at the property that we visited on the first day. The staff were knowledgeable about the residents and there was a friendly and informal atmosphere in the house. We did not observe many interactions between staff and residents at Rough Nook, however many service users told us that they were out and about during the day and staff were around in the evenings to help with cooking and any other times that they needed them.

Service users were involved in a range of activities and many had part time jobs and volunteering roles. There was flexibility for people to come and go as they wanted, but this was sometimes determined by the level of support that they needed from staff. Some of the service users at Rough Nook recognised that they had to be back at a certain time and while some were ok with this and felt it was fair, one did comment that they would like to stay out later.

All of the people that we spoke to said they were supported to do the things that they wanted to do and there were lots of opportunities for holidays and social events that they could get involved in. Some commented that they did not like socialising too much and preferred spending time on their own watching television or playing on the computer, this was also ok and they never felt compelled to join in with everything.

*“I have lots of support and get on with the other residents”*

*“It is like a big family”*

*“Friendship among residents are really good”*



## Support

The support needs of the service users that we spoke to varied from needing help with domestic chores to being taken out for appointments and help with budgeting. Everyone said that someone was there to help them when they needed help. Once again there was high praise for the staff, with people commenting that staff were always around or available to support them. All the service users that we spoke to said that staff take time out to talk to them and they can approach the staff if they have any problems. One person commented that sometimes they have to ask more than once to speak to staff but they recognised that is only because they are sometimes very busy.

All the service users felt their privacy was respected by the staff and they knock before coming into their room and would not come in if they asked them not to. There were however a couple of comments from those living in the community setting about other residents not always respecting privacy and coming into people's rooms without asking or knocking and one service user commented that this was something that they did not like. However they said they could approach staff about this and they would deal with it.

All the service users we spoke to said they would know who to speak to if they were not happy about anything and this was usually any staff member, the house leader or someone in the main office. One person also commented that if they were not happy with the staff they would talk to their family and another said they would speak to management about this. However one service user said they would not know who to speak to if they weren't happy about the staff.

*“Staff are always helpful”*

*“If there are any problems I can ask staff”*

*“Staff give time to talk”*



## Activities and Socialising

All the service users enjoyed a range of activities and socialising both on an individual basis and with others who shared their interests. There were also holidays arranged twice a year that service users could choose to be involved in. These ranged from a few days in the Lake District or at the seaside, to holidays abroad. Many of the service users also had regular breaks and holidays with their families and were given support to enable them to take part in these. All felt they had a choice in what they wanted to do and were supported in doing this.

There were also regular trips and outings organised, such as bowling and going to the cinema. Everyone we spoke to felt they had a choice to get involved in the activities but never felt they had to be involved in everything.

Most of the people we spoke to expressed complete satisfaction with everything that they are able to do and did not feel there was anything else they wanted to take part in. A couple of the service users mentioned other things they would like to do and these included trips to the theatre, being able to go to concerts and visiting historic places and museums.

*“Can go to activities but can choose not to”*

*“Would love to be able to go to concerts particularly Justin Timberlake”*

*“My time is really full”*

*“They teach you how to live independently so all life skills taught”*



## General feedback

Everyone we spoke to was happy with the service and very few people had any further comments to make. One service user did mention some problems at her work place but said she could speak to staff about this and they gave her the support she needed.

Another person commented that it would be good to get together as a bigger group so that they could get to know each other.

Two of the service users that we spoke to were the designated “service user representatives” whose role is to ensure that all service users could talk to them about any issues, preferences and choices; this would be shared with the management, through regular meetings. Some of the things that have changed as a result of the service user involvement are listed below:

- *Some people did not want the staff to knock and wait they wanted them to knock and then come in and shout hello, so an individual enter procedure was done for each house and where applicable each service user bedroom which is revisited annually.*
- *Two service users complained about people playing football outside their window so some negotiating was done with the footballers to play away from the windows - this has resolved the problem.*

This is an excellent example of involving service users in the day to day running of the service and giving them the opportunity to have a say in what happens.

Many of the service users at Rough Nook especially commented on how happy they were there and how much they enjoyed living there. Some of the service users we spoke to at Rough Nook were due to move out in the next few days and while there were some anxieties they were also excited to be going to their own place and felt well supported to enable them to make a smooth transition into living in the community.

*“It’s a good place to learn new skills.”*

*“I have loved it here.”*

*“I really wanted to live here as I knew another resident.”*



The Enter and View team would like to thank Joanne Currie and the staff for the warm welcome given to the Enter and View team on both visits and for providing all the information that was requested.

We would especially like to thank all the service users who spent time talking to us, and allowing us to ask questions about their experience.

These visits give a snapshot of the service from the point of view of the 13 service users that we spoke to at Rough Nook and out in the community. Based upon this sample of views and from what we saw and experienced on the visits, representatives were impressed by the commitment of the manager and staff, the warm welcome at both properties that we visited and the confidence and levels of independence we saw in the service users.

Service users were happy and well supported and had positive and friendly relationships with the staff supporting them. They talked about the range of activities, volunteering, paid jobs and outings that they were involved in and were supported by staff to enable them to take part in these.

The staff were highly regarded and were knowledgeable about the needs of the service users. This level of knowledge and involvement allowed the staff to provide an individual and flexible service that catered to the needs of each person.

The service is well run and service users are supported to make their own choices and lead as independent lives as possible. Service users are fully involved in decisions about what they do individually and collectively and lead happy and fulfilling lives.

## Enter and View team's recommendations

Based on our findings from both visits we do not have any recommendations to make to the service provider. However we saw many examples of good practice during the visits which could be used and shared with other providers and service commissioners. These are listed below:

- The level and type of support offered in the main house setting at Rough Nook worked well as a stepping stone to more independent living. This enabled service users to move out into the community with confidence and resulted in fewer issues once they were living independently.
- Giving everyone the opportunity to get involved in the group activities, regardless of whether they lived in the main house or out in the community is a good way to reduce isolation and continue to nurture friendships and supportive relationships.
- Having service user representatives who liaise with the service users and feed their views into meetings with management who then act on them is an excellent example of good service user involvement in the planning and delivery of services.
- Making links and developing good relationships with local organisations such as the bus station and local restaurants and pubs adds to the support network for service users and increases safety and awareness.
- The hands on approach of the manager allows her to have a good overview of what is happening in the service and helps to build positive relationships with service users and staff.

*We would again like to thank Ambler Way Support Services for assisting to arrange this visit at short notice and making arrangements for us to speak to service users. We would also like to thank the service users for talking to us in an open and honest way about their daily lives and experiences.*

*Debbie Robinson, Kath Shorey, Garry McGlinchey, Barbara Kirwan*

*Healthwatch Enter and View Representatives*

## What is Enter and View?

- Members of the public volunteer to become authorised representatives, carrying out visits on behalf of Healthwatch. They receive training to deal with sensitive situations and confidential information, and are checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service
- Training was also held for people with learning disabilities who were interested in becoming authorised representatives, to allow them to carry out enter and view visits.
- Briefing sessions are held for authorised representatives prior to enter and view visits to provide information and further training specific to the service user group that they will be working with.
- Healthwatch authorised representatives carry out visits to health and social care services in our district, to see how a service is being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement.
- Visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service, but they can also happen when services have a good reputation - so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well.
- Any publicly funded service can be visited like care homes, hospitals, GPs and dentists.

## Disclaimer

- Our report relates to two specific visits to the service at a particular point in time, and is not representative of all service users, only those who contributed. This report is written by Healthwatch staff in collaboration with authorised representatives who carried out the visit on behalf of Healthwatch Bradford and District.

### Get in touch:

Phone: 01535 665258

Email: [info@healthwatchbradford.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchbradford.co.uk)

Web: [www.healthwatchbradford.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchbradford.co.uk)

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