



# Support Planning

## Case Studies: Experiences and insights

The support planning service focuses on providing increased support for adults known to learning disability teams, making sure they have the planning, guidance and resources needed to access opportunities and activities in their local community. The service also maintains capacity to assess and plan for young people with learning disabilities so that their transition into adult services is smooth and well supported. As a result, adults with learning disabilities in the Vale of Glamorgan have the skills, confidence and support to take part in meaningful activities, build independence and lead fulfilling lives within their communities.

*During the year, we conducted semi-structured interviews with people associated with the project and thematically analysed the responses to summarise people's experiences and the impact of the service.*

### Feeling listened to, respected and understood

- **Valuing individual voice and preferences:** People feel heard and respected because support planners listen to what matters most to them and shape plans around their preferences.
- **Choice and autonomy in decision making:** Individuals appreciate being able to make their own choices and change plans when needed, knowing the team will adapt with them.
- **Clear communication that builds understanding:** People value having things explained in a way that makes sense and helps them feel confident about what is expected.

*"Both people I am working with keep me informed and explain things when I'm unsure."*

*"It is good to be listened to and working with people who accept my views and how I want to work towards reaching my goals."*

### Building confidence, wellbeing and social connection

- **Rebuilding confidence after isolation:** Many people have been at home for long periods and feel the service helps them reconnect with their community, build confidence and find purpose again.
- **Supporting social activity and routine:** Groups and activities provide structure, social contact and enjoyable ways to fill the week.
- **Reduced anxiety through consistent support:** Ongoing reassurance from support planners and mentors helps individuals and families feel less anxious and more supported.

*"Group is friendly and fun to be with."*

*"Support planner and mentor helped with guidance and support, reassuring me and my dad."*

*"I've been at home for a long time since covid and lost confidence. Now I'm becoming more involved, going out more and meeting people."*

## Independence, goals and meaningful progress

- **Developing independence in daily life:** People gain confidence using community resources, equipment and travel planning which helps them do things on their own.
- **Working towards personal goals:** Support planning helps individuals break down bigger aspirations into small, achievable steps that build motivation and pride.
- **Feeling supported and cared for:** People and families describe feeling more positive, less stuck and more connected to opportunities.

*"I can go out on my own if I want to as equipment is given to clear streets around my home."*

*"It is making a difference because I'm no longer stuck at home with nothing to do."*

## Relationships, collaboration and practical support

- **Strong relationships with planners and mentors:** Trusting, consistent relationships help people feel supported without feeling pressured, with the planner staying involved until the person is ready to take more control.
- **Collaborative support that adapts:** Support planners work closely with families, mentors and other workers to offer joined up help and adjust plans as needs change.
- **Practical help to build real life skills:** Travel planning, confidence building and learning routes help people gain independence in a safe and supported way.

*"Support planner stays involved until you feel ready for her to step back."*

*"She drove me following the bus routes so I could see how I would need to travel."*

## Learning from challenges

- **Safeguarding and informal care risks:** Arrangements involving friends or informal helpers can create blurred boundaries which impact choice, safety and feeling in control.
- **Travel and access barriers:** Getting to activities can be difficult for some, requiring extra planning and support to build confidence.
- **Initial anxiety about meeting new professionals:** Some individuals feel unsure at first but become more comfortable as they understand the support on offer.

*"The assistant's approach was overly controlling, leading to the young person feeling disempowered and unheard."*

*"Transport getting to some of the activities... but the litter picking group is easier to get to on my own."*