

Short Breaks Consultation Autumn 2021

Report of findings

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1. Introduction

The Council's Short Breaks Statement that sets out the Short Breaks offer, was out of date and needed refreshing. As a Council it's really important we listen to our local families and involve them in planning for the future, hence the Short Breaks consultation.

We wanted to engage with local families about the Targeted Short Breaks statement to check if it provides useful information about the service offer. We also wanted to know whether the current targeted activities are things that were needed and valued, and to discuss the associated eligibility criteria and charging policy.

What are Short Breaks?

The Short Breaks Regulations 2011 place a duty for all local authorities to produce a statement explaining what 'short break services' are available to children with disabilities and their families, and how they could access them. The council has to publish the statement online, and review it regularly to ensure that information is up to date.

Short Breaks are for children with disabilities as a tiered offer of support:

1. Universal services accessible by all people
2. Targeted activities that are accessed by children and young people with a disability (aged 0-25). These are non-assessed, although a registration process is in place to undertake a check of suitability
3. Specialised provision for eligible needs. This is subject to a formal assessment

Consultation Methodology

The consultation was led by the Commissioning Specialist and Project Officer, overseen by the Short Breaks Project group, reporting to the Strategic Lead for Children's Services. The Cabinet member for Children's Services and Adult Social Care Services agreed for the consultation to proceed.

The Consultation process was conducted within the Council's public engagement process, including an Equality Impact Assessment.

The consultation was open to all residents, although targeted towards children and young people with disabilities and their families. The consultation covered the period 18th October to 10th December 2021, and feedback was received in a number of ways:

- An online with survey, with paper surveys issued to those who requested
- Various engagement meetings in venues across the borough
- Dedicated Short Breaks email enabling other formats of feedback.

2. Our Children with Disabilities

The latest ONS data puts Telford's population at 178,000

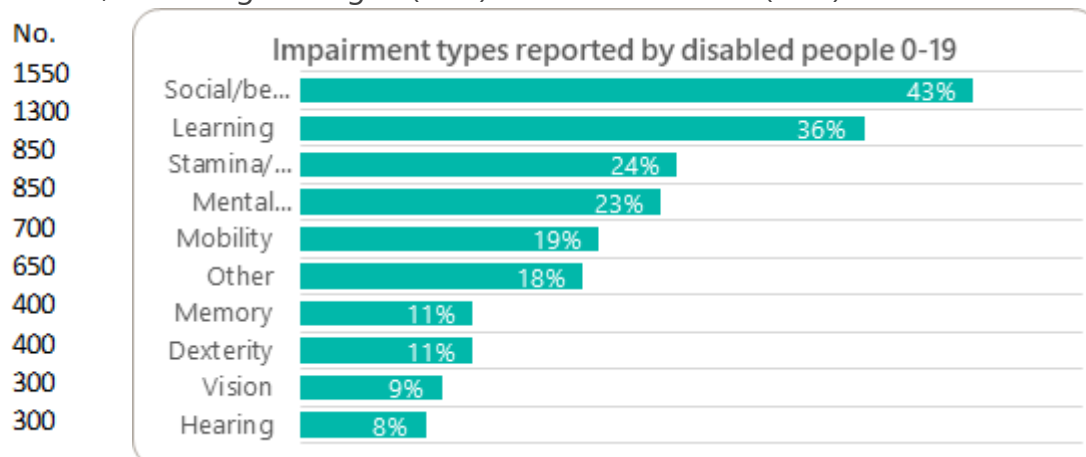
1 in 3 (58,200) are aged between 0 and 25

15% (27,500) are aged between 5 and 16



There are approximately 5,172 children with long-term illness, disability or medical condition living in Telford & Wrekin. Day to day activities were limited a lot for 1.8% (638) children and limited a little for 2.7% (924) children (ONS mid-2016)

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) family resources survey includes the types of impairment reported by disabled people aged 0-19. The chart is the potential numbers when applying this to the latest population estimates. The survey found that social or behavioural impairment (Autism, ADHD & Asperger's) accounts for 43% of impairment, followed by difficulties with learning (36%) and stamina, breathing or fatigue (24%) and mental health (23%).



As at Autumn 2021 **1,132** people aged 0-25 had an Education Health and Care Plan.

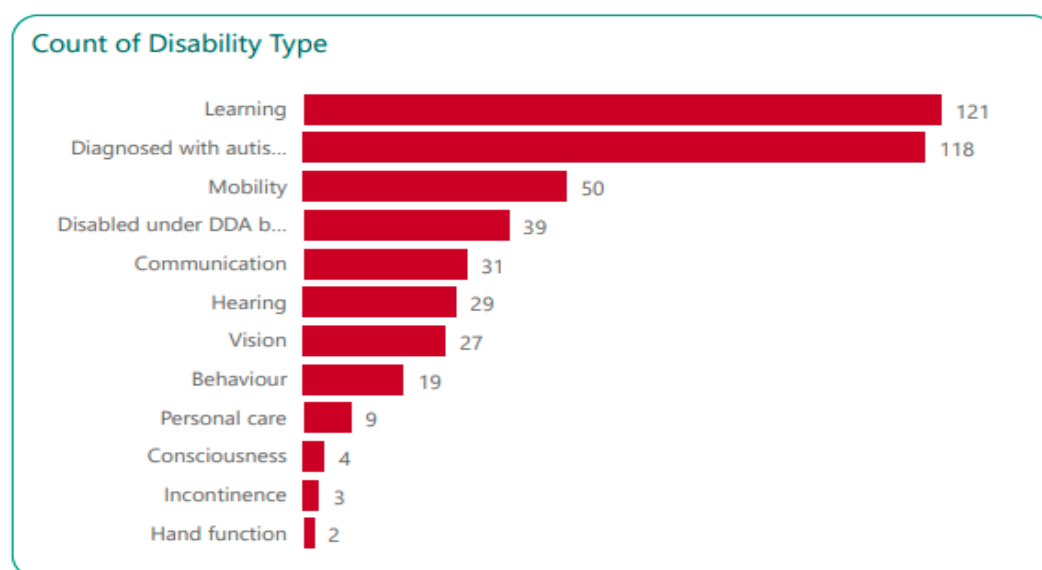
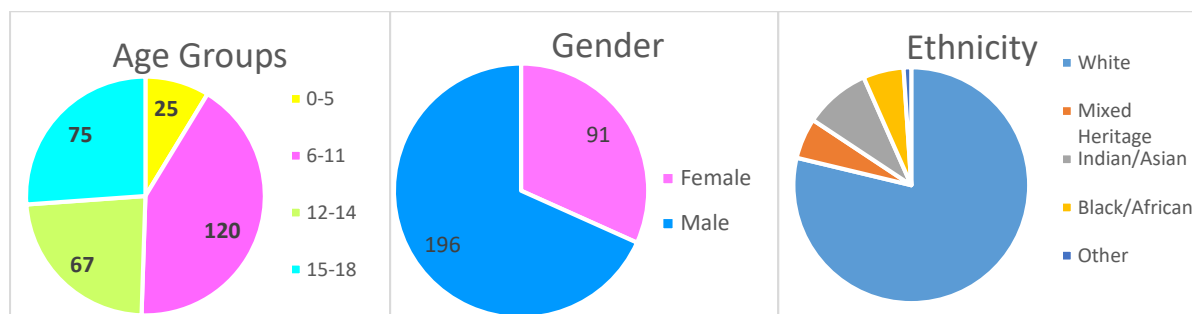
Approximately 28% of CYP with an EHCP are eligible for income related free school meals.

Special Schools and colleges in Telford and Wrekin

School/Centre	Age Group	No. Pupils
Bridge School	2-16	214
Haughton Primary school	4-11	172
Southall school	11-16	179
Queensway	9-16	116
Willow Tree Centre	16-19	

Social Care Services – Children with Disabilities Social Care Team

As at December 2021, the team held 287 children and young people.



My Options Young People's Services

162 children are registered to access the My Options Short Breaks Activities

During October 2021, the attendance at Targeted Activities are:

	No. of CYP	No. of attendances
Sports & Leisure	59	229
Arts & Crafts	8	14
Club 17	NK	NK

3. The Current Short Breaks Offer

Universal and Universal Plus Activities

Research shows there are many activities available to children and young people with disabilities in Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin.

They are too many to list in detail within this report, but span across:

<p>Sports and Leisure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Swimming• Football• Wheelchair basketball• Wheelchair tennis• Wheelchair football• Cricket and Table Cricket• Climbing• Martial Arts• Club 2000 (multi-activity)• SNAC (multi-activity)• Rugby• Sailing• Bikes• Trampolining• Ice Skating• Horse Riding• DISKS Sports club	<p>Clubs and Hobbies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coding club Southwater library• SNAC• Club 2020 Youth Club• Brownies, Cubs, Scouts, Guides <p>Arts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Silhouette Dance• SNAC music and arts• Creation Station• Rachel’s arts & crafts at Hoo Farm• Shropshire Inclusive Dance• PODS Arts & Crafts Sessions <p>Family Fun</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PODS Family Trips• Jungleland sessions• Pirates & Princesses• Funky Friday Disco <p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PODS Sensory Sessions 0-5’s• Childminders and Nanny’s• Shining Stars 0-5’s
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To support families with finding and accessing these activities, and others, a new ‘SEND Activities & Events’ webpage has been developed on the SEND Local Offer: [Activities & Events \(telfordsend.org.uk\)](http://telfordsend.org.uk)

Targeted Activities

The Short Breaks Targeted Activities are provided by the Local Authority via its My Options young people service. They are:

- Kreative Kids – arts and crafts club
- Club 17 – a targeted youth club
- Sports & Leisure – a range of sporting and physical activities
- A2A – provision of day and overnight trips (Covid restricted)

Specialist Support

A Social Work assessment establishes eligibility for specialist social care support, and calculates the personal budget using a resource allocation system (RAS).

Personal budgets are typically taken as a direct payment, enabling families to tailor the care and support they want in order to meet their personal outcomes established in their support plan.

The care and support may range across:

- Specialist equipment and assistive technology
- a personal assistant,
- overnight respite,
- personal care,
- support to access the community,
- independent living skills.

Use this link to find out more about the assessment and personal budget process and how to access it. [Short Breaks Personal Budget - SEND - Local offer \(telfordsend.org.uk\)](http://telfordsend.org.uk)

The Local Authority also offer a **Summer Play Scheme** to children with high and complex care needs.

Covid restrictions have affected the available places over the last two years, but for 2021, the scheme expanded its availability and also made use of the Arthog Outreach centre as well as The Bridge special school to provide to a wider range of children and young people.

4. Consultation Responses

4.1 Short Breaks Consultation Survey Responses

A copy of the Survey Consultation is found at Appendix 1





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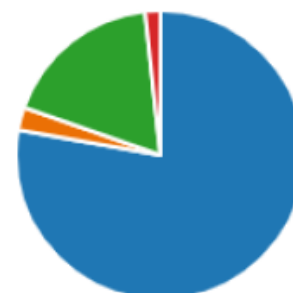
Responses were received

19:33

Average minutes taken to complete






1. I am responding as:

 A parent/ guardian/ carer	91
 A child/ on behalf of a child	3
 A member of educational / so...	21
 Other	2



The majority of respondents (78%) were from parent/guardian or carers

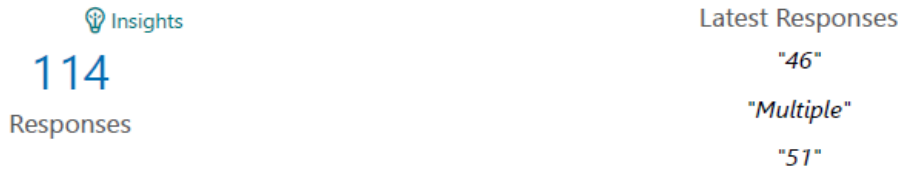
2. I am, or typically work with, or care for, children and young people aged:

 0-5	19
 6-11	58
 12-17	55
 18-21	26
 22-25	15

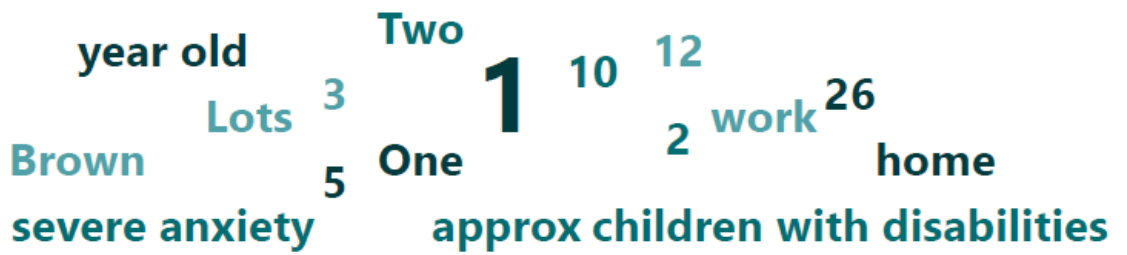


Most respondents work with, or care for children and young people aged 6-17.

3. How many children and young people with disabilities do you work with and/or care for?

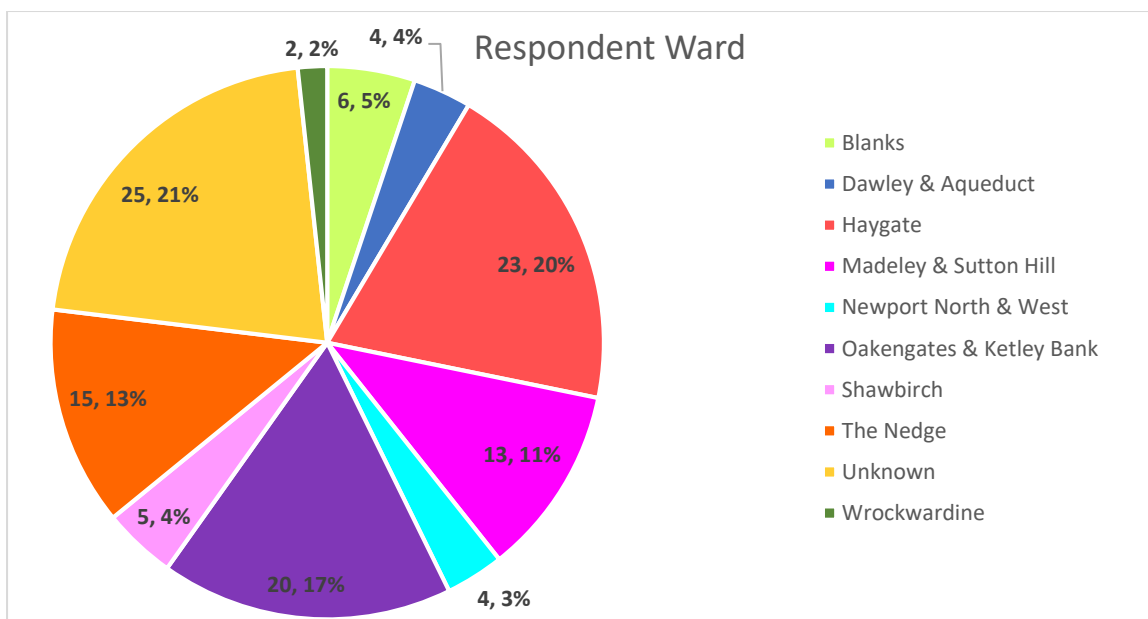


52 respondents (50%) answered 1 for this question.



- Of the 10 parent/carer/guardian responses, 8 care for 1 child/young person and 2 care for 2 children/young people
- Professional staff worked with a large number of children and young people as they usually hold a caseload

4. Please give the first four characters of your postcode



Most respondents are from Haygate, followed by Oakengates & Ketley Bank, the Nedge and Madeley & Sutton Hill.

5. How would you describe your ethnic group?



100

Responses

Of the responses:

- 7 respondents described themselves as from a BAME ethnic group
- 74 respondents described themselves as 'White'
- 18 respondents related to their country of residence rather than their ethnicity
- 1 respondent was 'Other'

6. With 1 star being 'difficult' and 5 stars being 'very easy', how easy to read and understand is the Updated Short Breaks Service Statement?



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Responses




3.51 Average Rating

Looking at the responses in more detail:

- Parent/guardian/carers gave an average rating of 3.66
 - Parent/carers of children under 18 gave an average rating of 3.77
 - Parent/carers of people over 18 gave an average rating of 3.13
- The 4 children/young people respondents gave an average rating of 2.0
- Professional colleagues gave an average rating of 2.9

7. Does the Updated Short Breaks Service Statement contain information that is helpful, and provides signposts relevant to your needs; for example information on funding, types of service?

 Yes	70
 No	40



Looking at the responses in more detail:

- Of the 85 Parent/guardian/carers responses – 55 said 'yes', and 30 'no'
 - Parent/carers of children under 18 – 47 said 'yes', and 23 'no'
 - Parent/carers of people over 18 – 8 said 'yes', and 7 'no'
- Of the 4 children/young people responses – all said 'no'
- Of the 21 Professional colleagues responses – 15 said 'yes', and 6 'no'

8. How could we improve the Updated Short Breaks Service Statement?

A summary of the 60 responses made to this question:

- Respondents require more detail on the activities, costs, accessibility, age range
- Respondents require more detail about the RAS and personal budget process
- Other comments related to wanting clarified criteria, registration process and access to information
- Respondents require Clarity on the 18-25 offer
- Respondents want a summarised statement, but with detailed list of activities
- Information is not easy to find or get hold of
- "The activities don't suit my child's needs"
- "Make the statement easier to read and use, it's too wordy"
- A young person with Autism does not find the statement easy to use
- "Ambiguous to identify where my child's needs are at", relating to understanding of eligibility
- Activities need to be longer
- Clearer information on finances and the processes to secure it
- Suggestion of a young person's version, with pictures and no jargon

9. What Targeted Short Breaks Activities do you currently engage in?

 Insights
105
Responses

Latest Responses

"I have children that engage in all of the above "

"The CYP access: Sports and Leisure (ican2) Arts and Crafts Club 17"

18 respondents (19%) answered **None** for this question.



ICan2 Jungleland
Arthog sessions Ican2 club day
Crafts sessions Arthog outreach activities Swimming
Arthog is perfect access Arts and crafts None Club child PA Support
Ican2 skiing sessions and ICan2 holiday club Sports and leisure

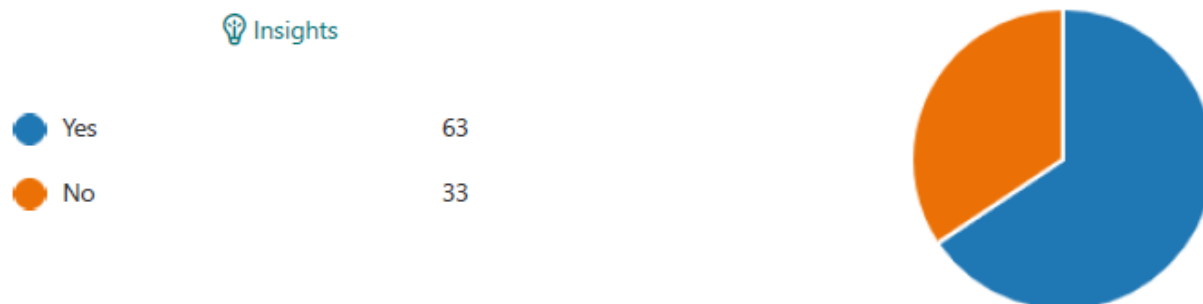
Of the responses from the 4 children and young people, they engage in: Club 17, use PA's, ICAN2 and one young adult engaged in a very wide range of activities

provided by the LA and privately within the community ie. Tag Rugby, Funky Friday disco.

Of the 91 responses from parent/carer/guardians:

- 40 list some activities they access, listing ICAN2, Sports & Leisure, Club 17, Arts & Crafts, Skiing, Swimming, Arthog
- 39 said they do not access any Short Breaks Activities and some of the reasons for this being:
 - "Never heard of them
 - On a waiting list
 - They are not suitable
 - Used to attend pre-Covid
 - The registration form is a barrier"

10. Are these activities accessible and easy to reach?



Looking at the responses in more detail:

- Of the 76 Parent/guardian/carers responses – 52 said 'yes', and 24 'no'
 - Parent/carers of children under 18 – 52 said 'yes', and 20 'no'
 - Parent/carers of people over 18 – all 4 responses said 'no'
- Of the 4 children/young people responses – 3 said 'yes', 1 said 'no'
- Of the 16 Professional colleagues responses – 8 said 'yes', and 8 'no'
- 20 'blank' responses not included in the above

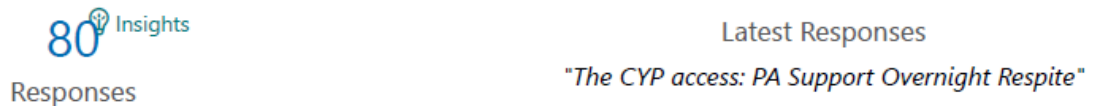
11. With 1 star being 'do not meet' and 5 stars being 'fully meet', do you feel the Targeted Short Breaks activities you currently attend are appropriate for you and your child's needs?



Looking at the responses in more detail:

- Parent/guardian/carers gave an average rating of 3.03
 - Parent/carers of children under 18 gave an average rating of 3.05
 - Parent/carers of people over 18 gave an average rating of 3.0
- The 4 children/young people respondents gave an average rating of 3.5
- Professional colleagues gave an average rating of 3.06

12. What other activities do you access outside of the Targeted Short Breaks Activities?



18 respondents (24%) answered **None** for this question.



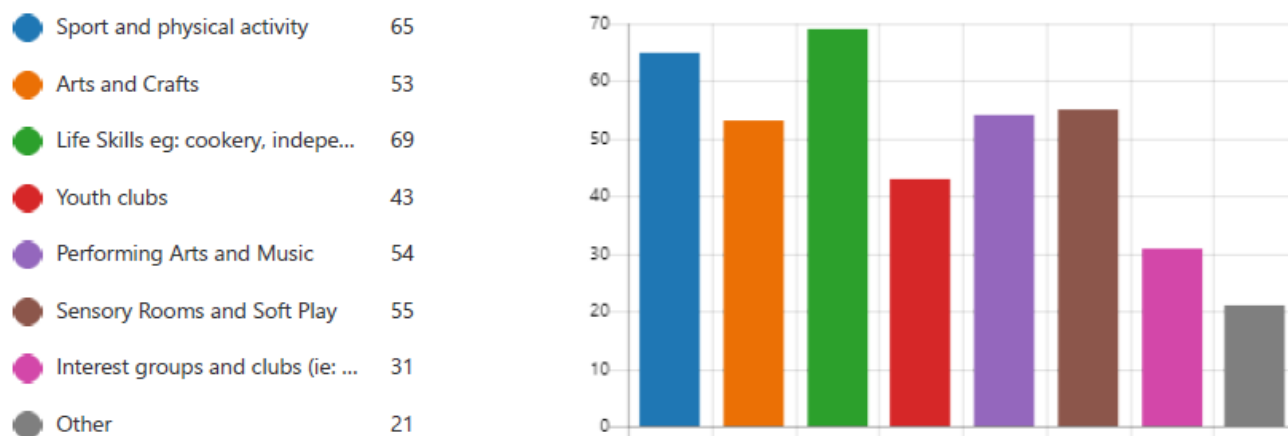
Only one young adult listed other activities they access: Bowring Park, Newport hub, Funky Friday disco, Tag Rugby, Swimming, Tennis. The other 3 children/young people either said 'none' or did not respond.

Parent/carer/guardians listed many other activities, in addition to the above:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hub on the Hill Club 2020 youth club • Airea 51 SEN sessions • SEN swimming sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Playbarn SEN sessions • PODS activities • Club 2021
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks, Waterparks • Pony Riding • Beavers, Boys Brigade, Scouts • Dance club, Performing Arts • Gymnastics • Football • Boxing Club, Wrestling • Cinema • Jungleland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrekin Forest School • Karate Club, Martial Arts Club • Bikes • Club 2000 • Albrighton Moat Project • Special Olympics • Cricket/Disability Cricket • High Ropes • Pirates & Princesses
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13. What other kinds of Targeted Short Breaks Activities would you like to access?



Life Skills is the activity most would like to access, followed by Sport & Physical Activity. Sensory Rooms and Soft play and Performing Arts & music are next, followed by Arts & Crafts and Youth Clubs.

For parents of those aged under 18, the most popular activity was Sports & Physical Activity, Life Skills and Sensory room.

For parents of those aged over 18, the most popular activity was Life Skills, followed by Sports & Physical Activity.

Of the 3 responses from children and young people, the most popular was Performing Arts and Music, followed by Life Skills and Youth Clubs.

14. If you had a 'magic wand', what other Short Break activity would you like, which would contribute to you and your child having a great family life, and why?

88 responses were received. As these were free text responses, they cannot be readily summarised, and it is useful to see the broad range, hence they are included below:

3 young people answered as:

"I would just like the clubs to cater more for the wheelchair user as theres not a lot out for there people who physically disabled with learning disabilities but have an active mind and want to be part of something"

"I wish we could pay family members or a council approved Childminder to give my family respite. This would make it more accessible for all SEN families !!!!!!"

"I thought that we could have mental health & Life Coaching games because it would be very helpful to change lives & chase after your big dreams as it's very important to believe in yourself & go into the future with motivation, confidence and positivity"

What do parent/carers/guardians say?

Drama clubs,

More like Club 17 - extremely high quality provision. Also the bikes at the track at Oakengates again please.

Arts and crafts/creative sessions weekly instead of fortnightly. Longer sessions

My son used to love the day trips out and also the sailing and bikes and karts so he would say those

Swimming - fun and floats at a pool with a deep end, SEN sessions at inflata nation,

Longer time slots, 2 hours not long to get anything done.

Day trips to the beach or after hours access to places like Lego discovery centre, blists hill (young person + parent/ carer, plus a few trained staff

Being able to access overnight respite care once a month as we both need a break from each other, and access to holiday activities but being sent an email or text to say we are able to access, as it is not always possible to access this information as i dont always go on their website or facebook page.

Outdoor or Forest school. Any activity that encourages children with difficulty regulating to be social, and mix with children the same age ranges. Climbing

Some small trips, e.g. to bowling, or a longer day trip in school holidays especially. We struggle mostly during the holidays and this is the hardest time to find support/ activities

A sensory play barn with better SEN session times

Swimming club, set up individual disability sport team clubs ie basketball, netball, cricket, table tennis, set up to teach and train to play proper game and possibly play teams from other areas. Would give children sense of achievement and meet new friends.

Drama and music. Activities for longer than 2 hours - by the time you have travelled to the activity and return travel it leaves little useable time to spend time with siblings.

More physical activities, gymnastics, trampolining, climbing etc. Something she would enjoy and we could participate, watch her do or even just a break and know she is having a fun time.

I would just like a park in the area to suit a disabled child as the closest one to us is Cannock.

Before and after school provision to allow parents the opportunity to work. I am lucky and have the option of working from home. Other families cannot work because of the lack of before and after school provision. I would like to see the return of half term and summer time trips.

We are looking for a dog so anything involving animals she would like.

Provision of a holiday club during summer for children who need routine and stimulation during the 6 week break. This is always a really difficult time for us as a family, and something we dread. Ad hoc activities don't provide the routine & stability, and being in unfamiliar environments can cause anxiety, so doesn't achieve the objective for either the child or carer.

More specially targeted options for children that have limited verbal skills and prefer smaller groups. My child was a little overwhelmed at iCan2, which meant it never really worked out for us.

Buddy scheme to encourage attendance at clubs where my young person can meet people he may share interests with.

We live in XX and there is no targeted provision within 10 miles of our home, so any activity our child engages in typically involves a 25 mile round trip and us, his parents, having to stay around the area where he is doing the activity. The activities do not last long enough for us to do anything else.

Our family, in particular our son, would want return of the previous Saturday I Can 2 sessions at Oakengates leisure centre, and the bikes on the track. That 2 hour session allowed all 3 members of our family to do individual activities - one attending the gym whilst son attending the session, whilst other did housework. Sessions now running at Arthog outreach do not allow this luxury.

Also ideally access to these activities, particularly skiing, should be made available to the young people after the age of 25. With the cessation of I Can 2 at age 25 the youngsters lose contact with a large group of their friends, peers and staff - all of whom they have a great, and long, appreciation for. They also lose the opportunity to continue with a skill they have developed and an excellent fitness opportunity in a same, secure environment.

Easier access to overnight respite + cheaper options also. At the minute I think the cost of overnight respite is disgustingly high

Days out as families that are more inclusive that also cater for profound disabilities as well as more functional children

confidence building sessions. anxiety reducing sessions

Longer activity times the two hour slot isn't enough by the time you factor in travel and if my child is having a bad day he wouldn't cope with just being somewhere he enjoyed for a couple of hours and wouldn't understand that there is a time limit

My son would love to do a Pokemon group and just make friends with kids that had same interests as him Personal assistant but every time we ask for a personal budget in an annual review we never hear anything back! So have given up asking. We also would like to know how to access respite funding as our childminder is registered to provide it.

Golf lessons, Swimming training at suitable times, Support to access voluntary work, Post 25 provision

Easy access. More family days out

Day out at different places we as family haven't explored

Camping, fishing,

Respite breaks . Holidays with other members. Day trips at discounted prices or taken from personal budget. Coffee & support meetings for Parents Carers. Chat forums with occupational therapist , phycologists ,health visitors legal team input.

Water activities. More soft play thats banned from the public so we don't get stared at or judge if the child is having a meltdown

A2a back kids missed it

a2a needs to return as does ican2 - it's discrimination

inclusion is important as my child is in a wheelchair but has sound mind so things she can access are very limited. I wish there was more my daughter could access socially.

Activities which allow for interaction with peers.

An activity that ensures young people are happy, safe, and making friends

Swimming,

Having regular hours weekly,

Accessible services

Holiday

Respite for our special needs son so we can spend time with our younger son. Our SEN child loves forest school but it is quite far and he requires a lot of supervision and again our younger son gets left out. We are lucky to have any resources but more support to enable us to spend time with our younger son is key for us as a family.

drayton manor, fun, and animals

lego club, writers classes

A platform where we could meet friends online, develop friendships and arrange meetups...would need to be monitored and supported appropriately

outdoor activities as my daughter has a very low attention span and loves the outdoors.

social club with likeminded young adults in a cafe environment like 'normal' teenagers do. Supervised pub visits for over 18s. We have got through the past 8 year by ourselves with no personal budget. we have accessed pods trips to alton towers, meerkat experience, blackpool. we would like support groups for young people with gender identity issues as this is a growing issue.

I would like to see more family trips as it is nice to travel with family and safer to travel as a family as you know child's needs. I wish every family had support without having to ask for support and help, some families don't go on trips as they worry about their level of support needs.

Zoo trips, London trips, Museum trips

Transport arranged to alleviate stress, something for children who are older (eg Coding), where they can join as little or as much as they like. Child doesn't want to attend alone so needs parent to be present.

More transport access to activities, and parenting get togethers

So we can have a bit more of a social life

Short breaks at themed holiday camps, ie Park Resorts\Butlins

More flexibility on dates accessing overnight stays

Swimming

local, large rooms, variety of activities with consistent venues, plenty of parking

Different kind of sports like Badminton, for the child to try a couple of times so that they may choose what kind of sports they would like.

(Daughter) loves Peppa pig so a short weekend there would be great for her. It gives the family a chance to bond without the stress of home life.

For my daughter a group like brownies that was adapted to her needs and gave a variety of different experiences. For my son some sort of physical activity like climbing the walls or tubing.

Zoos that are interactive

Return the A2A trips and Jungleland sessions. Provide swimming at Shortwoods

My son goes to Little Kickers and really enjoys it, however he struggles forming to their session and wants to do his own thing. Disability football for 0-5s would be nice.

SEN swimming sessions

Building skills

And education, health and care staff?

Just to support every Yp fully as they deserve this!
I think there needs to be one central location where all the groups operate together and everything is in one place it is a bit scattered.
Range of accessible options
Being able to socialise in a safe setting like Club17
Accessibility, information, good availability for others to attend to ensure a good social environment.
Social environment important
Some children are in a wheelchair and require personal care, which can impact accessibility of activities. Life skills. Young people socials in the community A building - a safe space- for all SEND children and families to go regardless of SEND or interest. An accessible bookable sensory room. More outside opportunities, not just building sessions. Summer clubs not to be ran in the same school a child attends as it is too confusing for them and not a meaningful break for them.
I think Arthog should have a race track.
More providers for respite within the local area that are accessible.
SEN training for childminders, giving a larger, more available network Summer holiday playschemes, outside of The Bridge School T&W owned respite facility- a house that can offer overnight respite, but also used through the day for life skills training/ sensory room/ arts & crafts/ families or services (ie schools or health) could 'hire' rooms for parties, training, appointments, etc, as familiar to the CYP but also equipped to meet their needs
Zoo Keeper. Helping to look after animals at a local attraction for a day.
Life skills, support around independence and self care needs. Cooking, cleaning and money handling. Access to youth clubs that teens can be dropped off at to socialise. Access to mainstream services simplified, clear pricing structures for carers.
horse riding, camping, reading/book group, online computer game group
Longer sessions that have more transport assistance/support. Return of varied holiday trips.
Transport to activities on the send page or a communal pa who could take a few children to access activities instead of parents so they can have a break.
Regular updates from providers of whats on offer

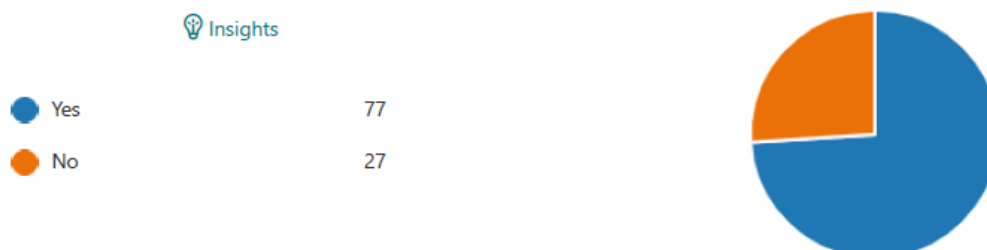
15. With 1 star being 'not helpful' and 5 stars being 'very helpful', do you find the eligibility criteria is helpful when informing you what options are available to you and your child?



Looking at the responses in more detail:

- Parent/guardian/carers gave an average rating of 3.10
 - Parent/carers of children under 18 gave an average rating of 3.18
 - Parent/carers of people over 18 gave an average rating of 2.73
- The 4 children/young people respondents gave an average rating of 1.5
- Professional colleagues gave an average rating of 2.89

16. Do you agree with the subsidised charging policy for Targeted Short Breaks Activities as summarised above?



Looking at the responses in more detail:

- Of the 83 Parent/guardian/carers responses – 65 said 'yes', and 18 'no'
 - Parent/carers of children under 18 – 54 said 'yes', and 15 'no'
 - Parent/carers of people over 18 – 11 said 'yes', and 3 'no'
- Of the 3 children/young people responses – 1 said 'yes', 2 said 'no'
- Of the 18 Professional colleagues responses – 11 said 'yes', and 7 'no'

4.2 Feedback from Engagement Events

Date: 27th October 2021

Venue: PODS Office

Points raised:

- Support for education, employment and skills training- allowing children with disabilities to access these, especially outside of school (ie: work experience, employment and volunteering) is important for 'having a meaningful life'.
- Strong concerns about post-18 provision, and the transition between services. Information being hard to navigate and find, and a sense 'people are hiding stuff from you'.
- Need for clarification on the difference between personal budget and direct payments, as these are unclear- Proposed Statement could include some examples of this, in relation to the charging policy?
- Access to EHCP and support in forming a plan, as without this access to many services is restricted.
- Club-17 is an essential information source for parents, especially those who are unsure on their entitlement- parents ask other parents for information on how to navigate services and which activities might be suitable for them.
- Linked to above, some parents do not understand the cohort of attendees at each group, and find that the service or activity does not suit their child's needs. Work needs to be done on a 'what it says on the tin' approach, or the registration process to ensure recommendations are suitable. Communications on choices and suitability? Stage not age approach- emotional understanding and play.
- Much like personal budgets, difference between target and specialist activities need to be made explicit- examples should be given in the Proposed Statement.
- Shared Lives services and overnight respite not accessible for wheelchairs- HOW.
- CWD Foster Care- more funding for a child who is resident with parents than for foster parents, so this is prohibitive.
- Hard to communicate with financial and ASC teams- feedback not received and calls not taken.

Proposed Statement- Thoughts:

- The clarity and concise wording is very positive- examples in practice appreciated, and larger font requested!
- Parents want to know- what is it, how can you do it, am I eligible, what is the cost?
- Parity of short breaks support offer- if a young person has 1:1 care, a parent cannot leave as there is a lack of staffing, which means the activity is not respite for the parent.
- Trust and relationships are key- staff know families, and know their child's needs are properly met. Ensuring sustainability will help these relationships.

- Desire for a balanced cost base (charging policy?)
- Forum offer very positively received- working towards this as a priority?
- Families want clear communication with less 'political veneer' in language, which the updated statement reflects.
- Reflective of a simple process with simple structure.
- Entitlement- reciprocal offer with Shropshire based on education placement (school friends!) rather than exclusively for Telford & Wrekin residents.
- Terminology- 'learning disabled' needs to be explicit, to ensure EHCP criteria is met and services can be accessed.
- Fair pricing within services- do not price anyone out. Donation system referred to.
- MyOptions – slow responses (up to three weeks waiting time), registration process too lengthy (18 pages, repeated), transport processes 'shambolic'. Awaiting PA- cannot retain same PA?

Date: 3rd November 2021

Venue: Southwater Library

- Adult team- concerns around 18-25 year old transition, and beyond. Request for a member of the team to be present?
- Facebook as a medium not appropriate for MyOptions activities, and may be missing many families, especially those of BAME and EFL backgrounds. Social media use in parents to be considered.
- Those young people in residential care do not get the same level of budget to access Short Breaks activities and therefore miss out. A figure of £58 referred to?
- Utilising community centres- a great resource in the community (eg: Brookside)
- Setting one reduced price activity, such as bowling, on one particular day. This would encourage families to mix and socialise, and would ensure the wider public are aware and can reduce instances of bullying from abled children. Visible and invisible disabilities affect public perception and reaction. A set date creates a safe space.
- Trained staff helpful at these sort of activities in case attendees need assistance or parents need additional support. Also helps with sense of trust and allows parents respite.
- Parent "they need to integrate with us" on public understanding and sharing spaces
- Inclusive provision at otherwise-generally accessible places; considering noise, lighting, space and bottlenecks
- Mainstream times also key- disabled young people are still at school for many of the offered times for activities.

- Film nights and movie/comic/Wii/meal/special interest clubs- lots of enthusiasm for this, especially as Telford Comic-Con is popular but could be overwhelming for some young people.
- I Can 2 organisation 'haphazard'.
- Inclusive supported gym offer at our leisure centres would be welcome
- Increase arts and crafts offer on Saturday
- Stage not age, again! The 18 year cut off isn't always appropriate.
- Adult provision for lower-level support, integration, personalisation- meal clubs at the Wakes, A2A trips. Further development at the Wakes would be useful.
- Larger coaches not suitable for many young people- changing spaces, overwhelming numbers and space.
- Club 17 "I don't see anyone otherwise"- this provision is a network for our families.
- SNAC needs development- the space is mouldy which may impact breathing issues, but could be an excellent space. Also requires changing spaces bathroom.
- Skills Hub was very useful. How can we split registration (18-30s, 30-50s, 50+?). Prep for adulthood and independence skills.
- Could an offer be developed at the Independence Centre- cooking in their kitchen, digital literacy, etc?
- Future Focus- improve a daytime offer. Promote this on LiveWell Telford.
- Clarity of wording in letters about finance- payments are not easy to understand.
- Eligibility Criteria in Proposed Statement felt to be fair, but the wide spectrum of needs can make access challenging.
- All-ability football club would be appreciated! Can we get an AFC Telford equivalent to the Shrewsbury FC offer?
- Meal Clubs at Jungleland- meal clubs a very popular idea and could be lunchtime, giving parents respite in daytime.
- SEND Performing arts activities should be explored.

Date: 12th November 2021

Venue: Oakengates Library

- Scouts offer in Arlestone/Admaston/Priorslee very positive.
- ICan2 Sport and Leisure 'ripped apart'- Parental feedback
- SEN newsletter circulation should be checked to ensure that all parents receive, as this is a valuable source of information beyond MyOptions Facebook page. DISKs could feed in, and a calendar of events formed in a way that is easy to read and understand.
- One parent had been waiting 2 years for information about their child's PA, which had been in progress prior to the first Lockdown (March '20), but no update or contact since.
- Direct payments confusion and information required urgently to parents.

- My Options communication considered very poor.
- Rumour, that “all kids are to be social worker referred” to activities and services.
- Parents very reassured by Short Breaks Parent Forum- great plan!
- Energise, a Shropshire Short Breaks provider, are allowing T and W families onto their activities (not subsidised, but unrestricted). Great support for those who have friends external to their school group, and can help with additional socialisation both for CYP and parents.
- MyOptions- council oversight and management valuable, concerns about checks and balances for services that might be contracted out. How would these be monitored? MyOptions being council provided gives confidence.
- MyOptions also however found to be ‘impregnable’ (parent feedback) in their communications and contact-ability. Clarity required.
- Charlie and Lou @ ICan2 ‘worth their weight in gold’. Sports and Leisure and A2A- very keen for return.
- Parental breaks key- if a parent cannot leave the space, it is not a break for them. Staffing, support, and sense of confidence to be considered. Two hours not long enough.
- Wheelchair access at Bike Hub very challenging- also challenging at respite centres.
- Club-17 requires a move-on process for young people who have attended for a length of time and therefore ‘block’ a space for another young person on the waiting list.
- Bright Lights and Shining Stars also have full waiting lists.
- Desperate need for respite for parents.
- Reputation of Telford & Wrekin special schools very good, growing population of residents with additional needs. To match this cohort, the available activities need expanded.
- How can we stitch Adult and Children’s provision together, as move-on is challenging and daunting. Seamless planning needed.
- Club-17 has skilled staff which help C&F feel safe and relaxed.
- Criteria for eligibility is very tricky; EHPC, DLA, inclusive school forum funding?
- Day trip from A2A appreciated, Taylor Support provision too expensive.
- Shrewsbury has Table Cricket, wheelchair rugby and basketball, tag rugby. Families would like more walking, golf, drama and dance, and development to arts and crafts (meaningful work).
- Charging policy is good but only if not alienating for other families; suggestion that payment be taken remotely. DIP/DLA informed? How can means testing be included?
- Family size to be considered especially when allocating a PA- younger mainstream children impacted by SB access.
- Access to information important.

Date: 17th November 2021

Venue: PODS Office

- The 18-page registration form is a barrier to accessing activities. Suggestion that the activity provider rarely check and understand these after hand-in, and this means they don't fully understand the child's needs.
- Effective communication and marketing is key- clear, accessible and 'does what it says on the tin' approach.
- Clarity of age required- we need what is children's' and what is adults' provision to be made clear.
- Bracket the definition of short breaks, to make sure the difference between the activities and respite care is clear, as people are confused by the term 'break'. The paragraph which defines this in the former statement is useful and could be condensed and included on the cover of the new statement.
- Trust in provider key- consistent staffing, strong relationships and understanding of child and their needs is indispensable. For example, Charlie at ICan2 knows the kids so well.
- Club17 waiting list is too long- *can we verify this?*
- A2A is good but does not allow for peer to peer socialisation as carers are often with the young people, and talk to them instead.
- Face to Face (socialising with monitoring) from online friendship groups and interest groups- meeting at cafes etc.
- GigBuddy or similar- for young people to match with volunteers/fellow interest-havers and go on visits etc
- Meaningful arts and crafts that last a series of sessions
- Star Jam in New Zealand a great offer which we could learn from
- The Way in Wolverhampton also a great offer
- Look at how to improve the SNAC at Hollinswood.
- Holiday activities- how can we create parity between mainstream and CWD, regarding free activities

Date: 19th November 2021

Venue: Oakengates Library

- Tiered offer to include 'Universal Plus'
- Summer activities were not well-advertised; sports and leisure offer for summer only noted in PODs newsletter, which meant numbers were low
- We need multiple communication channels, not just MyOptions facebook page
- Currently (parents) are undergoing a social care personal budget assessment. Their support network is smaller than many families and son X acclimatises to

new situations steadily, which means mom often has to stay. X is making friends at school and developing a local network, and is at Scouts. A young male PA would be good, as both carer and mentor, increasing X's confidence

- Direct payment support and info appreciated
- Bookending care before and after school- better school breakfast clubs etc. Parents really need this, especially if working or collecting mainstream children. Specialist childminders also.
- Attends lifeguard training and swimming, offer at Abraham Darby really good. Arthog outreach also great. Skyreach for high ropes and ladders. Kayaking at Scouts, and any outdoor education great.
- Antisocial hours however at gym, accessible sessions not ideal
- A2A trips to theme parks would be great!
- Independence is really important, especially for teenagers
- Mixing with mainstream kids in a supported way- performing arts, mixed ability groups?
- Code Club at the library is great
- Eligibility criteria is fair
- Charging policy should be tiered
- Trips and activities should be planned a while in advance to organise care, travel, work etc
- Playscheme and school clubs to be looked at

Date: 8th December 2021

Venue: Newport Hub café

- MyOptions and Children's Services need stronger differentiation and this to be made clear in the updated Statement. Confusion over how these services fit together.
- Parental network more significant in the communication of activity opportunities than council networks such as the Facebook page. Transport also challenging which impacts access and uptake.
- Young person feedback: Activities key to get out of the house, and mental health impacts are significant without them. Activities are also helpful for getting out of your 'comfort zone'.
- Young people's Statement required.
- Old statement far too wordy, more specific information required for young people.
- The SOS group to be involved, and possibly ScribbleInk, for the creation of a young person's Statement on a page.

- X has accessed Ican2 sports, A2A trips to the trampoline park, and his friends have also used Club17. Tag Rugby at college, swimming at Wellington, Oakengates Tennis Club. Set times for sessions can be challenging especially for young people with a routine. X would go anytime!
- X's son X has a higher level of need, and therefore has accessed Kreative Kids and A2A provision (day trips and a meal club). Links with groups have been difficult-communication outside the group between young people and parents doesn't exist. This means isolation in lockdown increased.
- Evening meal sessions at Meeting Point House would be welcome.
- Communication of when activities have returned after restrictions has been sporadic, again parental network more valuable. Wider comms (not web-based) required. Adult social workers also may not have the additional information required or awareness of activities.
- Activities where parents can leave and be separate from their children are important, as young people engage better this way.
- Eligibility feels somewhat harsh and sibling groups should be considered.
- Charging- direct payments taken into consideration. What an activity is classified as relates to what funding can be used.

4.3 Further Feedback

Date: 2nd November 2021
What: PODS Group Feedback

PODS Groups (half term) - some notes on conversations with individual families.

- 1) Learning to ride a pushbike at 11 years old through council scheme / Likes to attend to give child chance to interact with others / Mum attends to talk to other families / 1-1.5 hour activity works well, or with a break in between / Something that includes learning to be away from mum...
- 2) Family do not attend sessions through Ican2 due to not having a diagnosis. Wants to attend with families with similar experiences, so daughter does not feel threatened or unsafe in any way, and be with other children like her.
- 3) Mum had completed survey. Asking for timetable of what's on that is clear so can make plans / definitely need for a playscheme in 6 weeks holiday / HHAH was a great scheme but happy to pay for this offer / Don't feel comfortable attending mainstream activities / child didn't settle at Ican2 and didn't suit an introverted child / communication with other children is important to this parent / routine is really important so need to have something to attend same time every week.
- 4) Family had attended the Learning to ride a bike scheme - had spoken to the team who organised this and allowed siblings to attend together - big tick here! Also attended swimming lessons at Ab Dab - had to go on waiting list, but happy with the service offer.
- 5//6/7) Group of parents - thought that short breaks were 'overnights' so didn't think it was for them. Missing bikes at Oakengates / Arthog is good although climbing wall not in use because it needs specialist staff? / Need more arts and crafts groups, and also Rope Swings (town park) / Would like to see regular updates via information and newsletters / one family was attending Silhouette Dance (Chance to Dance) / Query around A2A and the trips - especially like these as they feel like a real break for families in the 6 weeks holidays and families know their children are safe / comments regarding new staff at Ican2 provision on a weekend (families would have liked to know who they are and to be introduced) / smaller groups are good and also quieter venues - like the Ice Cream Farm SEND session / ideas around local craft sessions using community centres / there is a waiting list for swimming lessons / cost of specialist provision for swimming is prohibitive - but an idea of asking hotels to open up their pools for SEND community (or to hire hotel pool) / SEN sessions are often too early or too late (begin or end of day - done as a tick box exercise) / issues

around Aria 51 trampoline - no staff available and they turn everything off - children have been hurt in SEN sessions?? / Inflatation - carers go free? / follow up what's happening with All Saints Church in Wellington - they used to do activity SEN sessions

All families are primary or very early secondary age. I gave information to those appropriate age about Club 17 - be good to know if any 'newbies' attending in next few weeks.

Date: 18th November 2021

What: Email from parent

...my son does love Arthog. They do some lovely things there like the wall climbing ...

Specialist Go carting - my son would love it, and biking, but I didn't think it was currently going on? Or the Drumming. Could this be put back on offer soon? Disabled football club. Wii games.

My son would love music. I will look around for some music dance classes. A lot is on offer wellington way or Oakengates, but we live in X. I have to get car lifts. For us on the bus it would take with walking from the bus stop to Arthog about an hour and a half, one way. Taxi is about 9 pounds one way. It is the cost of the groups. But X does go swimming and horse riding, he is doing well, but it would be nice certainly in holidays if he could do more short breaks.

Could Madeley leisure centre etc do more for disabled younger people? I heard they are opening/or have started SEN swimming again. I read about a disabled Key worker? This may be good getting out to the parents/carers too. A contact who knows what is going on.

Date: 2⁶th October 2021

What: SOS Group Feedback

One person thought that they may have accessed Short Breaks but wasn't sure, they mentioned iCAN2 but it was from a while ago and the other hadn't heard anything about them.

Clubs they already attend

- Funky Friday

- Tag Rugby

What they would like to do – we did have a conversation around what activities they would like to do and they were also thinking about what other young people might enjoy.

(It's a bit of a wish list, but I did say I couldn't make any promises!)

- Animal Club
- Play Clubs
- Cookery Clubs
- Arts and Crafts
- Sports, inc. bike riding, swimming, being accessible to all
- Confidence Building
- Motivational Speaking
- Wellbeing

One described activities as 'mood lifting, ability to change things that they are good at'

Date: 20th October 2021

What: Email from parent

I would just like to say that I think the services you offer are good and suit my child, maybe there could more, but I know money, budgets staffing hugely impact what's on offer.

But what you offer and what is available are two different things.

Waiting lists for some activities ie ski slope, some people have been waiting years! Whilst others have been attending for years.

There are so many children, especially younger ones that will never manage to access these as those young people currently using that service have been doing so for years.

Age ranges for the different groups/activities keep growing/stretching. For the young person then stays in that activity for years which is great, but due to being at capacity (pre and post covid) there is no room for new people to come through. If anything, age ranges need to shrink for these activities so there is a quicker turnover.

I think the Kreative kidsz used to start age 7, now i think it's 5.(just 1 example).

Maybe limiting families to say for example 3 out of 6 activities available instead of all of them gives everyone an opportunity to take part. Obviously if there are spaces

free then let them have them on the understanding that if people want to start then they may be asked to withdraw.

Some people are getting lots of services, while others are unable to access or not aware of them.

Maybe also giving a time limit of ? 2 years? for something to allow others a chance, a quicker turnover of kids!

Another example is 'bright lights' respite. A victim of their own success. No one else can access this due to being at capacity.

'Acorn way' why can't this be limited to T & W residents only, why should locals be penalised for other councils not providing their own services. It's not respite if it's dictated when you can take your child, then expecting the parent to collect them to take them to school.

I'm sure it is very difficult pleasing everybody and if a child enjoys an activity should this be taken away? Parents need to share and not be selfish. My situation fortunately, isn't as desperate as many families and maybe my thoughts on this would be different.

Date: 10th December 2021

What: Email from parent

I've contacted Heather, Headmistress of The Bridge School regarding contacting parents of children in wheelchairs but she hasn't gotten back to me yet. I will contact her again and see if we can organise something.

The other issue I realised is that we rarely get ethnic minorities join in with activities at The Bridge, Shining Stars or PODS. I do have an Indian lady with a child at The Bridge who is interesting in helping with the Parents Association, so I might contact her and ask her if there, are reasons for it.

Date: 10th December 2021

What: Email from LD&A Champion

Q8

There is a potential 4th tier of children and young people who are dependent on medical technology and need round the clock very specialist support either from qualified staff (Nursing) or from a specially trained wrap around team of staff that have been trained in invasive procedures such as

1. The administration of rectal anticonvulsants for the management of epilepsy
2. The management of baclofen implants for spasticity
3. Ventilators and tracheal suction for the management of respiratory disorders
4. The management of non oral feeding
5. The management of tracheotomies

Services for this cohort of children and young people should, I believe, be jointly funded by health and social care.

This cohort may include:

1. Premature babies
2. People who have been involved in Road Traffic Accidents or severe trauma incidents
- 3 People with congenital disorders

.....

Q 12

For children and young people dependant on medical technology much thought needs to be given to a person centred plan that identifies what activities are available/ possible for each individual with the appropriate safety measures and trained staff support.

.....

Q13

Person Centred activities

.....

Q14

Wrap around individualised support with an appropriate budget.

Date: October 2021

What: Extract from Report from 'Families of Learning Disabled Young People in Telford'

WHAT OUR FAMILIES WOULD LIKE?

Please note these are the exact words of the parents, carer and young people who attended.

They want openness and transparency

My Options have a trust issue in the eyes of the parents.

Many people feel MO hide behind bureaucracy and are less than clear.

A bank of PA's.

Clear and concise information.

Consistency – about availability and entitlement.

Clear sign posting, clarity and trustworthy. Reliable information.

Special school after breakfast and school clubs – why is this only an option for their mainstream peers?

Choice

Work opportunities and work experience.

Life skills

A buddy system – a befriender

Transparency in systems for referrals.

Consistency in social care assessments – RAS and Personal budgets. Clarity and transparency - why does this feel like you are playing a game but you don't know the rules?

Parents support group – also one for Dads

Parents coffee morning (at a time that suits parents).

EHCP annual review in year 9 – discuss personal budgets and learning disability diagnosis.

Primary EHCP annual reviews– discuss annual reviews and DLA advice.

Special school transport that is safe, reliable and is ran by a team that are capable and communicate effectively. (Transport is a consistent cause for concern for families, this year seems to have been the worse so far). It cause YP terrible stress and anxiety.

Real *short breaks* NOT just 2 hour provision, which by the time you travel to drop them off and pick them up you're lucky if you can squeeze in a cup of tea.

Quality residentials – this is huge *need* - IAC2 used to do such short breaks bring them back please.

Sessions at better times of the day (Not 8.30am in the morning).

Snooker and pool club (promote availability at Club17)

Weekday swimming and better timings

Support to do voluntary work

A Telford and Wrekin voluntary work register where employer/companies can register their interest in supporting a YP with LD

Cooking sessions

Holiday clubs for ALL LD young people (and not just for Bridge school young people).

Places and events to see friends.

Yoga, aqua aerobics, dance and drama, exercise classes.

Walking group

Computer and gaming club.

Sports activities post 16 (when no PE).

Treated equally to mainstream young people.

Something for parents while young people are in the club or event.

Golf

5. Summary Messages

A significant number of people responded to the consultation. Many issues and ideas of a similar nature were raised and the below is a summary of messages and actions to progress.

5.1 Continue to work in partnership with local families. Therefore a Short Breaks forum will be established that will also include guest speakers i.e. health services representatives.

5.2 Act on feedback regarding the draft Short Breaks statement, editing and expanding it to include:

- More detail regarding the activities – costs, age range
- Produce a clear and fair charging policy for targeted activities, including clarity regarding use of personal budget for these
- Clarify the personal budget process
- Clarify eligibility for targeted activities
- Improve the registration process
- Clarify the 18-25 offer
- Ensure terminology and document length remain appropriate
- Produce a version for children and young people and in different formats to suit a range of needs

5.3 Support the development of the Special Needs Activity centre (SNAC) hosted and run by Hollinswood & Randlay Parish Council

5.4 Implement a scheme to support empowerment of disabled people that also supports businesses and activities to be accessible – including council leisure and library services.

5.5 Promote SEND related activities already available in the community

5.6 Improve Local Authority communication using a range of methods and channels, particularly about the activities on offer

5.7 Promote the existing accredited childminders and nannies to local families

5.8 Implement a Life Skills offer that includes coaching and confidence building

5.9 Explore buddy schemes to support access to activities and events

5.10 Ensure parents have information regarding Transport options and consider a PA driver scheme (link to 'Dial a ride', 'Driving Miss Daisy')

5.11 Develop the targeted activities to:

- Have a waiting list policy to ensure fairness of access
- Meet the needs of wheelchair users and those with profound needs
- Are accessible to BAME children and young people
- Consider development of a sensory room
- Review arts & crafts to consider wider arts and performing arts provision
- Consider longer sessions to provide parents with a meaningful break
- Explore how to deliver trips – day and residential

- Consider further use of the Arthog site
 - Keep under review and explore new and different options
 - Have a reciprocal arrangement with Shropshire Council based on school attended
- 5.12 Council provided services are trusted, even when we have improvements to make - it provides reassurance to parents.
- 5.13 Some things you told us that are really positive locally:
- Learn to bike scheme
 - Some local brownies and scouts groups
 - Wrekin Forest school
 - Some leisure centres, swimming pools
 - Arthog, high ropes
 - Ice cream farm SEND sessions
 - SNAC development
- 5.14 However, there is clearly interest in improved access to leisure services and there appears to be a difference in offer between leisure centres
- 5.15 Work with special schools regarding before and after school clubs
- 5.16 Support the creation of small interest groups i.e. Pokémon, Lego, writers classes, coding, Comic-Con events, Wii sessions, movies, meal clubs
- 5.17 Encourage Community Centres to continue to, or improve, inclusion of people with additional needs, and consider opportunities to socialise and have meals together for example.
- 5.18 Explore use of the new Independent Living Centre
- 5.19 Follow up on comments regarding children and people in Foster Carer and residential services not having funding to pay for activities
- 5.20 Transition processes require improvement
- 5.21 Families want more information about Adult Social Care with regard to:
- their 18-25 targeted activities offer
 - Their personal budget and financial assessment process and clarity of information
- 5.21 Clarity regarding the EHCP process

6. CONCLUSIONS

There is a clear need for services for young adults coming out of the consultation. Their needs are different as they relate to independence and activities suitable for not only their age, but their stage of development. Parents of younger children felt by not having a throughput into adult services activities the resources that are available get blocked and are not shared out fairly.

The updated short break statement was not easy to read for young people or professionals. Parents of those under 18 found it easier to read.

The majority of parents of under 18s felt the statement was relevant to their needs but parents of over 18's did not

Two thirds of parents of under 18 young people found activities accessible but those with young people over 18 did not.

It was clear families' access many universal services within the community and some activities that were requested are available and being used by families. Providing this information and getting it out to the community is more of a barrier. There is a demand for different activities for children under 18 and those young people over 18 like life coaching.

Clarity is needed on who can be a PA and what less formal respite is available in terms of childminders.

It is clear families struggle during school holidays and playschemes are very important as are local trips and pre and post school clubs.

Parents want to have time to meet and share information. This enables good communication about the local offer to be shared.

On feedback from engagement events there are comments surrounding the SEND process and the need for more clarity

It is part of the feedback that waiting lists are not acceptable and resources have to be shared fairly across all families. There are some good suggestions to get community providers to offer a more inclusive approach in times SEND activities are available or where another provider is doing it well and can we ask local services to do the same.

Families also wanted activities they could all do as a family as well as individual activities for their young person

7. Next Steps

The Short Breaks consultation has been invaluable in providing a good review point of the short breaks offer in Telford & Wrekin, and thanks to all who participated in it.

The findings from the consultation will form an action plan and a Short Breaks Forum will start from January 2022 to continue to work together.

The findings will enable us to set out the future of Targeted Short Breaks Activities, and this will be a primary focus throughout 2022.

We will work with our adult colleagues to ensure services are in place for those young people who are 18 or older to enable younger children to have access to children services. This will also give clarity to those families with young people age 18 and over. These services need to be accessible.

To look at the language in the short breaks statement before publication and to develop a young person's guide with young people.

To look at accessibility when providers offer a service and any commissioned service to have this in the specification.

Develop the live well Telford page for activities for those aged 18 or over, develop the SEND activities page and promote it through our partnership with PODS.

We will share information about wrap around care with our education colleagues and work towards developing a wider playscheme offer.

We continue in our partnership with PODS to offer support to families in the borough. The Short Breaks parents forum will also offer opportunities for parents to gather information and advice from others as well as providing expert information through short talks as requested by parents. Services can be asked to attend the parents forum

We will share the individual comments with SEND services and team, with transport, with libraries and with leisure.

To re-evaluate our support planning process to ensure it is fair and resources are shared equally dependent on need.

We would encourage this consultation to be further developed by parents in the monthly forum and for a young peoples panel to be developed.