

Islington LINK

Islington LINK (Local Involvement Network) is an independent organisation, led by a network of elected volunteers from the local community (both individuals and representatives of community and voluntary organisations). LINKs were set up in every local authority area in England in 2008, under the 'Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act' 2007 (see appendix A). They act as a **channel for the community voice on health and social care services**, collecting local people's views and experiences and reporting these to the people responsible for these services.

Enter and View

Under Section 225 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, LINKs have a right to 'Enter and View' publicly funded services. This is a way for LINKs to assess service standards and gather the views of service users. Team members hold a current, enhanced level CRB check and have undertaken a full programme of training, including guided visits, in Enter and View. LINKs have also developed their own local protocols for visits: www.islingtonlink.org.

Why visit day centres

With reductions in council budgets, Islington LINK was keen to collect the views of service users on their experiences of local day centres. Day centres are likely to be affected by changes caused by the spending review and by changes in funding brought about by personalisation and replacing block contracts for services with spot purchases. The aim of this is to give service users more flexibility but could impact on organisations' ability to continue providing services.

Methodology

The Enter and View team selected three day centres to visit from six within Islington. These were chosen to represent different client groups (older people and people with disabilities) and locations. Background information on the centres was sourced from Islington Council's web-site and from information leaflets.

Visits were carried out between 15 and 25 November 2010 by trained LINK members working in a team of three. One-to-one interviews were conducted with at least 25 service users in each day centre.

The team drafted a template questionnaire, including an introduction of the LINK and its purpose for visiting day centres to talk to service users about their needs and experiences (Appendix B). The information collected offers a "snapshot" of views – the service users that responded were those who were available on the day and willing to participate.

Questions were also sent to the day centre managers in advance and the team spent some time with the manager on the day of the visit. Managers' responses were used to provide contextual information for the report. (Appendix C).

This report draws together the findings for the three centres visited - Alsen, Drovers and Outlook.

Overall conclusions

- It is clear that each of the centres visited plays an important and necessary part in helping the people the LINK interviewed to maintain their independence.
- Many of those interviewed at all three centres expressed concern about what they would do if their centre was not there.
- Centres were used as somewhere to come to socialise as well as for services such as lunch, hairdressing, activities or for trips. Their centre was a regular and fixed part of their lives. The range of activities on offer was highly rated and valued both for the positive contribution to mental health and agility, and the social aspects as a focus for meeting and communicating with other users
- At the Outlook Centre the gym received ratings of excellent and good from most users – a number identified the positive benefit that attending the gym had on their physical mobility and strength, including those who had suffered strokes.
- At the Outlook centre, the facility for example in the photography class and opportunities for ice skating at the Sobell Centre were welcomed as added value to attending the centre.
- Some of those at Drovers thought they might be able to travel to another centre if necessary but the majority said they would not have anything to replace this centre and would find the quality of their lives reduced if it was no longer there.
- There were a number of long term members at the centres which suggests that users were comfortable and familiar with those centres.
- The activities provided reflect members' interests and some were led by service users.
- Overall, the centres would benefit from more publicity and a positive drive to recruit new members and so widen what the centre can offer.
- Demand for accessible transport services exceeds the supply of places to and from the centres. A number of clients interviewed would like to attend on more days but lack of available places on transport meant this was not possible. Although it is acknowledged that there is a significant cost involved in providing accessible transport, options for alternative transport should be explored.
- Staff and management were commonly described as approachable, listened to users and wanting to meet their needs in the best way possible.

- Users felt that they did have opportunities to contribute to decision-making and a number had attended the user forums where they were asked to give their views.

Recommendations:

- There needs to be greater publicity and a positive drive to recruit new members and so widen what the centre can offer.
- The demand for accessible transport services exceeds the supply of places to and from Islington Outlook. A number of clients interviewed would like to attend on more days but cannot. Although it is acknowledged that there is a significant cost involved in providing accessible transport, options for alternative transport should be explored.

Alsen Day Centre, 71 Durham Road, London N7 7DS

Alsen Day Centre's building is owned by Islington Council. The centre has been in operation since 1975 and the building was refurbished two years ago. The Centre opens at 9am for breakfast although we observed that most of the service users arrived on the Islington Transport buses later on.

The visiting team comprised three members of the LINK core group and one LINK host member (who assisted a LINK member). The visit lasted approximately two hours. The team was greeted by the manager, who had previously completed the managers' questionnaire and made himself available to describe the centre's activities, constituency and policies, and answer questions. There were three Islington patient transport buses bringing service users during that initial period and we observed other members of the staff greeting the users and helping them remove outdoor clothing and get settled.

General impressions

Rooms were painted in light bright colours and the walls were decorated with pictures made by the service users. The rooms appeared clean and tidy.

There were at least six "activity" rooms. The room where we met with the Manager contained a television. Later it was noticed that one person sat in there knitting and was then joined by friends for chatting. Sitting and just watching TV was not a major activity at the Centre.

In the morning hours, we noticed several defined activities: a group doing cake decorating with flour, a group planning their second film project, the goals of these films were to introduce to a wider public the notion that older people are the sum of many years of experiences and events. There were people in the dining hall socialising, doing word search puzzles, and colouring pictures. The equipment for the

cake decorating was provided by the individual participants except for the templates used. The word puzzles and pictures for colouring were provided by the centre.

The activities available differed throughout the week. Other activities included: exercises, reminiscences, quizzes, hairdressing and manicuring, arts and crafts, film and drama, outings.

There were at least two other activity rooms, both conservatory style (ie with glass roofs and long windows) which looked out onto the garden. One allocated for religious activities with religious pictures on the wall. Three of 23 respondents said that they had no religion or beliefs. Of the remaining, six were Greek Orthodox, three were Church of England, three were Roman Catholic, one Methodist, one Pentecostal, two unspecified Christians, two Jehovah's Witnesses, and two Muslims. All these religions were considered in the programmes at the centre.

The garden which was quite large and interestingly landscaped was gated at the street end and enclosed by the centre and neighbouring residential home. We were told that people use the garden regularly in the warmer months. It is also sometimes used at other times for smoking.

Interviews with service users

Twenty four service users were interviewed. Most of the interviews were conducted in the dining hall. The interviews were on a one-to-one basis except where the LINK host member assisted a LINK interviewer. Each interview took only a few minutes.

Nineteen interviewees were female; five were male. Five identified themselves as of Greek or Greek Cypriot origin. This was reflected in their praise for the team leader who also speaks Greek, and in their praise and choice of activities (see below). In addition, the team leader assisted in some of the interviews by translating the questions and answers.

Nineteen of the 24 interviewed were 76 years of age or older; the remaining 5 were between 61 and 75 years old. Although some of those interviewed specified their actual age, we did not get that data from all of them.

Only seven people had been attending for less than two years. Seventeen people had been attending for more than two years (the questionnaire did not ask for a specific time beyond this) although some of the users noted actual length of their attendance which in a few cases was more than 20 years.

Four people came about once a week, seven twice a week, six three times a week, four came four times a week, and three came five times a week. This, in some cases,

reflected their interest in particular activities, and time spent with family or doing local chores such as shopping.

Table 1 below outlines what activities service users are involved in at the centre and how they rate them. 7 said they took part in days out, 6 in keep fit, 4 in body care (including hairdressing and massage) and faith-related activities. 3 took part in quizzes and film club, 2 in singing and advice and support sessions and 1 in Bingo, in socialising, reminiscing and parties.

4 service users rated days out as excellent, 4 as good and one as fair. Four rated keep fit as good and two did not answer. Body care was rated good by two people and excellent by 2. Faith-related activities, the quiz and the film club were rated as good by two people and excellent by one. Singing was rated as good by the two interviewees who took part. Advice and support was rated as excellent by one interviewee and not rated by the other who had used it. Bingo, Socialising, Reminiscence and parties were all rated as good by the interviewee that mentioned taking part in the activity.

Table 1: Activities undertaken by interviewees and how they rate those activities (at Alsen Day Centre)

Activity	Number of interviewees	Rated Fair	Rated Good	Rated Excellent	Not rated
Days Out	9	1	4	4	
Keep Fit	6		4		2
Body Care	4		2	2	
Faith-related	4		2	1	1
Quiz	3		2	1	
Film Club	3		2	1	
Singing	2		2		
Advice and Support	2			1	1
Bingo	1		1		
Socialising	1		1		
Reminiscence	1		1		
Parties	1		1		

All but one of the users came by the Islington Patient Transport buses. A number of these people used wheelchairs. One person lived nearby and walked to the centre.

All 24 said that they ate at the centre on the days that they attended. Questions were asked about the variety, cost and quality of food. For the most part, the answers were favourable. The Greek people were particularly pleased with the menus when Greek foods were prepared. One person mentioned that the staff were very careful to accommodate allergy requirements. One person who was not very happy with the food said that a sandwich would suffice till arriving home. The one other person who was dissatisfied with the food saying it was “terrible and too costly”, but mentioned taking the food home and re-heating it for dinner!

The activities in which the interviewees participated were also rated. Most frequently cited were the outings which rated highly. At least six people mentioned that they would like more outings and two would like to have opportunities for more physical exercise programmes suited for older people.

Several centre users were of Greek Cypriot origin and appreciated there being a permanent staff member who spoke Greek and Greek food being offered on the menu. Greek Orthodox religious saints’ days were observed, and there were trips to a local Greek Orthodox church as well as visits by a priest.

Most of the users (20 of the 24) considered they had a disability. Four were blind or visually impaired. At least ten interviewees mentioned various sorts of mobility problems. Four mentioned diabetes and one mentioned severe allergies; these problems were considered by the staff when preparing food. A few mentioned problems with memory and mental health issues like depression or dementia.

Decision making

Most respondents said that the staff members were easy to talk to and very friendly if they had a comment on the services offered. They mentioned that staff would help them find appropriate assistance if needed.

Importance of the centre

Two of the questions attempted to ascertain the significance of the centre in these peoples’ lives – “How has coming to the Centre affected you?” and “If this centre wasn’t here, what do you think you would do instead?”

It was clear that the centre played an important role in people’s lives. In answer to how the centre has affected the individual person, some of the responses were as follows:

“Good for company and for memory. On Friday we do exercises with an instructor.”

“I’m not really a mixer but my daughter suggested it [coming to the centre]. I live with her. It makes a change and I get my hair done every Wednesday.”

“I come out of the house - I was very lonely and isolated. I live in sheltered housing but they are all English and not Greek speaking - I see my friends here and feel all the better for that.”

“Because I used to be so active, this is difficult for me - the social contact is good and without it I would be depressed. And the food here is better than having just bread.”

In response to what life would be like without the availability of the centre:

“I would look after my husband at home - he is ill. I'd be isolated and depressed”

“I'd just be at home, I'm in too much pain for anything else. Unless I'm at the doctor or the hospitals.”

“The centre is very important to me. Otherwise I'd be sitting down watching TV. I like socialising here. I'm glad to get up in morning, tidy myself, come here. I look forward to it.”

Staff interview

The manager works part-time at Alsen and also manages Highbury New Park Day Centre. He has a full-time team leader, a vacancy for a senior day centre worker, five other staff members, a kitchen assistant and a cook. Several staff members had worked at Alsen for more than 10 years. There are also a number of volunteers on any given day. The centre also hosts placements from a nursing agency and other educational authorities. On the day of the LINK visit, there was a trainee observer/apprentice.

The manager also noted that it costs approximately £50 per day (excluding transport) for the centre per individual whereas it would cost about £28 per *hour* to provide home care.

Drovers Day Centre, North Road, London N7 9EY

The centre was bright and well maintained in purpose-built premises. It had a room where people could sit and chat. People were going about activities with a sense of purpose. There were lots of relevant information leaflets in reception and a suggestion box. The centre had an outdoor terrace with flower beds. It also has a hairdressing service and a large accessible toilet with a shower.

Interviews with service users

One-to-one interviews were held with 26 service users. Of these, 21 had been attending the centre for more than two years with some attending for much longer. Eighteen members used the centre more than three times a week and a number of them came every day. Three of the interviewees said that they usually walked to the centre. The other 23 used some form of transport, including accessible transport services or public transport.

Lunch

Twelve of the 26 interviewees took lunch and commented on quality and value.

"Sometimes good, sometimes not. But good value for money"

"Good value for money. No washing up. Improved over years. Enjoy hot plates, hot dinners. Different every day - good variety. Plenty of food."

Activities

Of the wide range of activities offered, the most popular among the interviewees were bingo (11), craft (17), days out (9) art and cookery (5 each). Some activities were maintained by the members themselves.

"Originally had a teacher for sugar craft - no longer due to funding. But everyone helps one another. No materials provided, have to buy them yourself."

The majority of interviewees attending Drovers – 21 out of 26 - have been going for more than two years, one had attended for up to two months, one for 2-6 months and one for six months to a year. Two members had been attending for between one and two years.

Of the 26 people interviewed, nine attended three times per week, five attended once per week and five attended five times per week with the rest attending twice, four times or five times. Table 2 below shows that the most popular activities at Drovers are craft, bingo and days out, with art, cookery and dancing also popular. 17 people interviewed took part in crafts, 11 in Bingo and 9 in days out, with 5 taking part in art, in cooking and in dancing. It shows that of 5 people interviewed 4 rated art as excellent and 1 rated it as good. Bingo was rated by 6 people as excellent and 5 as good, body care was rated excellent by all four interviewees that took part.

Computing was rated good by the interviewee that took part. Cookery was rated excellent by 4 interviewees and good by one. Craft was rated fair by 4 people, good by 6 and excellent by 7. Dancing was rated good by 2 people and excellent by 3, days out were rated good by two and excellent by four interviewees. Drama was rated good by the interview who took part. Flower-arranging and film club were rated excellent by the two interviewees who took part in each. Keep fit was rated fair by one interviewee and good by two. Lottery, quiz, raffles, reminiscence, singing and socialising were each rated excellent by the interviewee that took part in the activity.

Table 2: Activities interviewees participate in at the day centre and how they rated those activities (at Drovers Day Centre)

Activity	Number of interviewees	Rated Fair	Rated Good	Rated Excellent	Not rated
Advice and support	2				2
Art	5		1	4	
Bingo	11		5	6	
Body care	4			4	
Computing	1		1		
Cookery	5		1	4	
Craft	17	4	6	7	
Dancing	5		2	3	
Days out	9		2	4	3
Drama	1		1		
Faith-related	2				2
Film Club	2			2	
Flower making	1			2	
Keep Fit	4	1	3		
Lottery - bonus ball	1			1	
Quiz	3			1	
Raffles	1			1	
Reminiscence	4			1	
Singing	1			1	
Socialising	4			1	

Decision making

There had been a members committee which was disbanded but members still felt they could make suggestions.

“Easy to speak with staff. Used to have a committee, but there was trouble amongst members, so the committee was disbanded. Now go direct to manager - seems to work well.”

Impact of the centre on members’ lives.

Service user comments showed that they felt the centre had a positive impact on their lives.

“Gets me out. Make friends. Have a laugh. Enjoy ourselves”

"Godsend for elderly people. Instead of looking at four walls. Make friends, chat. Look forward to coming",

"Incentive to get up, get dressed and go out."

"Don't know what I'd do. I hope it stays. Had a breakdown two years ago - Drovers has brought me out of myself"

"I hope they don't close it - there's nothing else for older people.

Staff interview

From an interview with the manager, the team learned that an average of 40 - 50 people attend the centre each day with some days busier than others. Users are all over 60 and the majority live in N7 and N19 although some live in N1. Around 10 – 12 users each day arrive by Islington's accessible vehicle, some are driven by their carers, some use public transport, a taxi card, or walk. Staffing comprised the centre manager, two centre workers, two kitchen assistants and one escorts, plus a number of volunteers.

The manager believed that lack of transport was a major issue affecting access for people with higher dependency needs. With only one accessible vehicle for both Sotheby Mews and Drovers Day Centres, the time for picking people up was limited and even though collection now starts at 08:30, there is insufficient time to get people to both centres for 10:00am.

Drovers provides a wide range of activities and services including outings, parties for every festival, gallery visits, tai chi, keep fit, pottery, painting, crafts, bingo, cookery, reminiscence. Staff are available for problem-solving and aim to resolve people's problems on the same day. Membership of Drovers is free but as funding for tutors has reduced, the centre now charges users £1 – £2 per class. The tutors have also taken a reduction in their fee. There is a charge of £3 for a two-course lunch.

Summary –

In addition to the common themes raised, the team noted the following

- Many service users had used the centre for a long time and had developed good relationships with other service users and staff.
- It is also difficult to assess the preventative nature of centres such as the Drovers. If Drovers was not there we do not know what effects it might have on the health of its present members and therefore what calls they might make on other health and social care services.

Islington Outlook, 133 St John's Way, London N19 3RQ

Observations

The reception area was bright and clean with comfortable seats. Staff at reception were welcoming to the LINK team as were service users. The building was well lit, well maintained and accessible. The toilets were clean and accessible. The dining area was clean, and there was no smell of cooking during the morning. A member of the LINK team commented that some key function rooms (such as toilets, computer and dining) could benefit from colour coding or large pictogram signs on the door.

Staff throughout were helpful and friendly. Staff seemed keen to ensure that activities matched user needs and abilities. Staff appeared to encourage involvement and feedback and this was confirmed in the interviews with users. It seems clear that activities are allocated on the basis of assessment, users were given the responsibility for actually attending.

The range of lunches available was limited services users stated that the quality of the food was good. The dining hall was accessible and the staff helpful. Meals are priced at £3.50 for users and £4.50 for non-users.

All service users were enthusiastic about all aspects of the services provided. There were concerns that the service may be cut as part of wider cuts. They spoke of the benefits of interaction with others and isolation without the Centre.

Interviews with service users

During the visit, one-to-one interviews were held with 24 service users. The LINK spoke to 14 male users and ten female users, 17 of whom were White British, nearly a third from a range of ethnic groups including Black African, Black Caribbean, Turkish, Cypriot and white interviewees from Ireland and Scotland. All service users had a disability. 20 described themselves as heterosexual, one as gay and one as bisexual.

12 of the service users were aged 61 to 75 years, eight from 46-60, three from 31 to 45 and one from 18-30. 10 service users stated that they did not have a religion. Of the 14 that stated that they did have a religion, three were Christian, seven were Church of England or Anglican, two were Roman Catholic, one Muslim and one described themselves as a lapsed Methodist.

The majority of users (sixteen) had been attending Outlook for at least one year with 10 of those attending for more than two years. Some users have used it for many years – one person for nearly 30 years following a stroke.

Over half of the users (14) that we interviewed only attended once a week, nine attended twice a week and one attended three times a week. In later questions some users said that they would like to attend more than once to participate in a particular activity but were not able to because there was no capacity for more users on the

accessible bus. Some days were busier than others. 19 of the users LINK spoke to came by specialist accessible transport services, three by public transport and two walked. The centre could take more users if transport was available. Among the comments received:

“I would like to come to the centre more often and to take part in more activities but I cannot get on the accessible transport - it is full”

The majority of users said that the quality and choice of food for the lunches was good or very good – there were some complementary comments about the chef. For most users the cost of £3.50 was described as OK. 17 of those interviewed ate lunch at the centre and seven did not.

What activities were used and how were they rated?

As specific activities were delivered on different days, the day of the visits would influence the type of activities that were accessed by users.

Table 3 below shows the activities undertaken by those interviewed at the Outlook centre and how they rated them. 21 people used the gym, 2 rated it as fair, 6 as good and 13 as excellent. 9 interviewees took part in massage and physiotherapy, one rated it as good and 8 rated it as excellent, six attended IT classes, one rated them as fair, one as good and three as excellent. 5 interviewees took part in digital photography, two rated this as good and three rated it excellent. Four attended drama classes, one rated them as fair, one as good and two as excellent. Three interviewees attended art class and rated the class one each as fair, good and excellent. The interviewee that attended creative writing, and the ones who attended gardening and ice-skating rated these activities as excellent. Four people took part in outings, two rated this as good and two rated this as excellent.

Table 3: Activities interviewees participate in at the day centre and how they rated those activities (at Outlook Day Centre)

Activity	Number of interviewees	Rated Fair	Rated Good	Rated Excellent	Not rated
Gym	21	2	6	13	
Massage/ Physio	9		1	8	
IT/ Computer Class	6	1	1	3	1
Digital Photography	5		2	3	
Drama Class	4	1	1	2	
Art Class	3	1	1	1	
Creative Writing	1			1	
Gardening	1			1	

Ice-skating	1			1	
Outings	4		2	2	

Most of those interviewed attended two activities – almost all attended the accessible gym. Satisfaction was high and many of the comments were complimentary about the classes and the teachers.

“Gym - everybody looks after each other which I feel is very good. There is never a queue to use the equipment. There is space to enjoy it....Computer lesson - the tutor is very good at working with beginners. Been to other lessons and have felt confused but here I feel confident”

“I love the drama class, it is excellent. We are doing a hospital drama at the moment - same as on TV but we call it Emergency Ward 9 and a half. It is a comedy and we all get to play two characters - a nurse or doctor and a patient”

Only very few negative comments were made:

"Not enough support in the gym. You do get (more) support in the drama and art"

“I started computer training here but I wanted to do more ... he was teaching us how to make cards etc but I wanted to learn how to send and receive emails and how to search the internet”

Anything else you would like the centre to provide?

Users did identify other activities that they would like the Day Centre to provide including:

- More facilities/ a rowing machine in the gym
- Yoga
- First aid course
- Vocational Nursery Nurse training
- Have a library including on foreign languages and classical music

Three interviewees identified that they would like to access other facilities by being able to attend the Day Centre on more than one day a week. This included one interviewee who described:

“There used to be photography in the morning and creative writing in the afternoon on the same day but the tutor changed the day for creative writing and they do not have room on the transport for me to attend on the Friday when creative writing is now held. Friday is the most popular day at the centre and I can't get on the bus. I did creative writing for 2 or 3 years”

Any activities would like more of?

One interviewee identified their need for more outings. There were other comments from a minority of users who would like to access other activities:

“Would love to be able to do the gym two or three times a week and I would like to do photography but there's a waiting list so more classes would be good”

“There is an art class and a IT class that I would like to join but space restricts the numbers and you cannot always get on the classes that you want to”

“10-pin bowling on computer (Wii) - Available but more use could be made”

“Has asked for a projector for the computer class”

Decision making

All those interviewed felt that they could get involved – staff and manager were described as friendly, approachable and listened – anyone could go to them with a suggestion. There are also regular users' forums where they are asked for their views and suggestions – a number of those interviewed had attended these.

Impact of Outlook on members' lives

Very positive comments from users that – two main impacts on health and mobility but also the importance of social contact and meeting people

Positive comments included:

“Mixing with others and supporting them to improve their self-esteem. Helping to empathise with others...You can talk about your issues with others”

“It has had a very good impact on my quality of life. It has meant that I can now use a frame rather than a wheelchair all the time. The woman who runs the gym is very good and knows what I can and can't do. This week I managed 40 minutes on the bike and I am getting stronger and better”

“The gym is marvellous and it has got my muscles moving again. The computer classes keep my brain going. Also people talk through things here, which is good. I see the same users every week and I can see that people are doing better by coming here”

“... I have a lovely two bedroom flat and a very good carer. She comes in the morning but after she has gone I am on my own all day until she comes back in the evening - I do not really have much in common with the other people living in the sheltered housing”

What would you do if the centre was not here?

Almost all of those interviewed said that their health and quality of life would suffer severely – most would have to stay in their home without the Centre and be isolated. Examples of the comments received included:

“I would be very isolated - I don't remember the words that people say because of the stroke and so it is difficult for me to talk to people but here people understand that and listen carefully”

“I would be stuck at home and this is the only place like this that I know - it would affect my health as my muscles would seize up. Before I came here I was starting to feel depressed”

“An awful thought - the centre is so well used. The gym close to me has nothing as good for disabled people - no bikes at all for wheelchair users, nothing for disabled people”

Other comments

There were additional comments that were complimentary about the staff and manager at the Centre.

Another comment was -

“There is an age restriction ... I do not think there should be any age restriction”

From an interview with the manager and an internet search prior to the visit, the team learned that five years ago, Islington Outlook was remodelled and rebuilt to replace the former St John's Day Centre that had been established in 1978. Outlook was set up to support physically disabled people as well as people with visual and hearing impairments, to pursue their interests and improve their prospects of gaining employment.

Users

Outlook is open Monday to Friday. 160 users are registered. On average about 32 users attend each day with actual numbers varying from day to day. Most users have set days when they attend, although a small minority (making their own way to the Centre) do occasionally call in on other days as well. Users come from across the borough from EC1 to N19.

Getting there

Eighty seven users travel by accessible transport and the rest make their own way there (mostly those using the accessible gym facilities). The centre has uses two accessible buses and the drivers were described as very good and supportive.

Activities

Islington Outlook provides a wide range of activities. The accessible gym is available each morning and there is also access to massage and relaxation. Other activities include art and craft classes, performance art, digital photography, drama, creative writing, gardening group, various IT courses including those for visually impaired and blind people, personal development and employment classes, confidence building; and swimming. There is also a deaf and hard of hearing group that meets once a month and users attend a social group for Deaf residents held at Islington Town Hall. Visually impaired users also attend a Horizon peer group at the Town Hall. Islington Outlook works in partnership with City and Islington College to deliver classes at the centre including those referred to above for accessible IT, drama, creative writing, and literacy and numeracy. Workshops and training are also provided in partnership with Disability Action Islington, and includes advice and support for users to maintain individual budgets. There are also partnerships for the delivery of advice and support by Action for Blind People and the Association for the Deaf. The Day Centre also provides for users attendance at events in the community and for trips out.

There is a register for every class to monitor attendance and numbers. The most popular activities are the accessible gym (said to be the most popular), massage, IT courses and digital photography. Usually there is a maximum of eight per class but this may vary according to the client group and space restrictions.

Changes for the future

It is not currently anticipated that there will be any changes to the range of activities on offer. The centre is currently estimating a notional cost for the sessions, averaging about £25 a session, although this is only notional as local authorities are not legally able to charge those attending. Outlook currently running three pilot projects with

- London Wildlife Trust
- Arsenal Red Zone (for access to IT)
- Sobell Centre (including ice skating, swimming and use of other facilities)

The centre is also looking at its transport provision – accessible bus transport has a comparatively high cost and a cost analysis is being conducted to see whether use of accessible taxis would be more cost effective.

Staffing

To November 2010, Outlook has had two posts cut from its budget – one was a vacancy at the time. There are ten members of staff – the manager, two deputies,

three support workers, one kitchen assistant and two part time cleaners. There are also twenty tutors who attend on a sessional basis

User involvement

There are two yearly forums for users to give their views on the running of the centre. As most clients attend one or two days a week, the forums are held over a full week to ensure that everyone gets an opportunity to give their views. There was a users committee but attendance was low.

There are also survey forms (hardcopy and on line) for users to give regular feedback. The results from the surveys and forums are made available to all through a regular newsletter.

Staff and management encourage users to be involved and give their views informally and staff will work to resolve any issues and will act on any complaints and provide a response.

Appendix A: Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, sections 221 and 225

221 Health services and social services: local involvement networks

- (2) (a) promoting, and supporting, the involvement of people in the commissioning, provision and scrutiny of local care services;
- (b) enabling people to monitor for the purposes of their consideration of matters mentioned in subsection (3), and to review for those purposes, the commissioning and provision of local care services;
- (c) obtaining the views of people about their needs for, and their experiences of, local care services; and
- (d) making—
- (i) views such as are mentioned in paragraph (c) known, and
- (ii) reports and recommendations about how local care services could or ought to be improved, to persons responsible for commissioning, providing, managing or scrutinising local care services.
- (3) The matters referred to in subsection (2)(b) are—
- (a) the standard of provision of local care services;
- (b) whether, and how, local care services could be improved;
- (c) whether, and how, local care services ought to be improved.

225 Duties of services-providers to allow entry by local involvement networks

- (1) The Secretary of State shall by regulations make provision for the purpose of imposing, on a services-provider, a duty to allow authorised representatives to enter and view, and observe the carrying-on of activities on, premises owned or controlled by the services-provider.
- (2) The provision that may be made by regulations under subsection (1) includes (in particular)—
- (a) providing for a duty to apply in relation to premises owned or controlled by a services-provider only if, or not to apply in relation to any such premises if, the premises are of a particular description;
- (b) providing for a duty, so far as applying in relation to any premises, to apply in relation to activities carried on on the premises only if, or not to apply in relation to any such activities if, the activities are of a particular description;
- (c) conditions to be satisfied before a duty arises in a particular case;
- (d) provision limiting the extent of a duty, whether generally or in particular cases;
- (e) provision imposing, or authorising the imposition of, conditions and restrictions for the purposes of subsection (4)(b);
- (f) provision as respects the authorisation of individuals for the purposes of this section by a local involvement network.

Appendix B: LINK introductory statement and questionnaire for service users

Introductory statement

Hi. My name is

We're from the Islington LINK which collects community views on local health and social care services.

This month we are visiting day centres to see how they meet the needs and expectations of their service users.

Could you spare us 10 minutes to talk to us about this day centre? Everything you tell us is confidential.

We will be telling Islington Council what we find out but everything will be anonymous.

Would you like to answer some questions?

If you want to stop the discussion at any point, just let me know.

Questions

1. How long have you been using this day centre?

First day / first visit

6 months to 1 year

Up to 2 months

1 to 2 years

2 to 6 months

More than 2 years

2. How many times a week do you come to this centre?

3. How do you normally travel to the centre?

4. Do you have lunch here?

5. What do you think about the lunches provided here?

6. Which activities do you take part in here? How would rate these (poor, fair, good excellent)?

7. Can you tell me why you rated these as you have?

8. Is there anything else you would like the centre to provide?

9. Are there any activities that you would like the centre to provide more of?

10. Can users get involved in making decisions about centre? For example, about the activity programme?
11. How has coming to the centre affected you?
12. If this centre wasn't here, what do you think you would do instead?
13. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

Appendix C: LINK questionnaire for day centre managers

Hi. My name is

We're from the Islington LINK, which collects community views on local health and social care services. This month we are visiting day centres to see how they meet the needs of their service users. We will let you have feedback on our visit but will not disclose the names of the people we interview.

Thank you for letting us visit today. We would like to ask you a few questions then talk to some users if they are willing.

1. Are there any issues that we need to be aware of today to ensure our visit is carried out safely and that we are sensitive to your users needs?
2. Roughly how many people come to this centre each day? Does this vary between days of the week?
3. Where in Islington do most of your users come from?
4. How do users reach the centre?
5. Are there any transport issues that affect the centre?
6. Can you tell us about the activities and services that you provide?
7. Which would you say are the most popular?
8. Are there any charges for the services?
9. How do you monitor the take up of activities?
10. How do you get feedback from your users? How do you use this information?
11. What other arrangements do you have for user involvement?
12. How do you think things might change in the future? What impact could this have on your users?
13. Is there anything else that you would like to tell us?