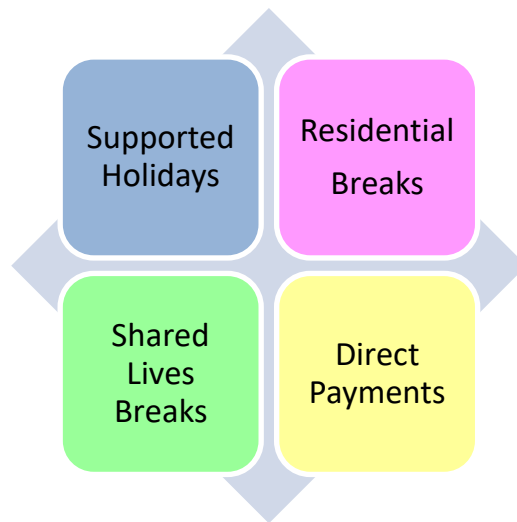


THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RESPITE OPPORTUNITIES SERVICE FOR ADULTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES IN MONMOUTHSHIRE



Review Report
Updated June 2023

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1. INTRODUCTION

In 2011 the Monmouthshire Respite Opportunities Service was created. The service offers a range of respite options for adults with learning disabilities, which includes supported holidays, shared lives, direct payments and residential respite. This range of support ensures that people and their families have access to a suite of flexible options which best meet their needs and wishes. It allows a bespoke and person-centred approach to providing respite support.

The Respite Opportunities Service has been successfully delivering this model of support for some years now. The demand and type of services being used has changed considerably so a review has been undertaken to understand how best the service can be developed for the future.

This report sets out the background, scope, findings and conclusions of the review and makes recommendations for the future development of the service.

2. STRATEGIC DRIVERS

Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014

The Act drives the overall strategic direction for all adult and children's social care services; it provides the legal framework for improving the well-being of people who need care and support, and carers who need support, and for transforming social services in Wales.

The White Paper, Sustainable Social Services for Wales, published in 2011, highlighted a number of challenges faced by public services in Wales. These included demographic changes, increased expectations from those who access care and support as well as continuing hard economic realities.

The Act aims to address these issues and in doing so will give people greater freedom to decide which services they need while promoting consistent, high-quality services across the country. The Act seeks to transform the way social services are delivered, promoting people's independence to give them stronger voice and control.

The Act's fundamental principles are:

Voice and Control - putting the individual and their needs, at the centre of their care, and giving them a voice in, and control overreaching the outcomes that help them achieve well-being.

Prevention and early intervention – increasing preventative services within the community to minimise the escalation of critical need.

Well-being - supporting people to achieve their own well-being and measuring the success of care and support.

Co-production - encouraging individuals to become more involved in the design and delivery of services.

Learning Disability Strategic Action Plan 2022 to 2026

The Welsh Government's plan sets out its overarching strategic agenda for the development and implementation of learning disability policy for the remainder of the current term of government. An accompanying delivery plan is being developed which contains specific actions with timelines for each commitment. Co-produced with Welsh Government policy leads, the Learning Disability Ministerial Advisory Group (LDMAG) and key stakeholder partners during a targeted stakeholder engagement exercise in early 2022, this action plan identifies and prioritises the key areas, actions and outcomes that will be pursued over this period. The strategic priority areas within the plan which relate to the Respite Opportunities Service are:

3.1 Implement recommendations from the 2020 review of Adult Specialised Services "Improving Care, Improving Lives, National Collaborative Unit" – Reduced admissions through increased community-based crisis prevention/early intervention support.

3.8 Loneliness and Isolation: Promote the importance of maintaining friendships and relationships to reduce loneliness and isolation.

3.9 Promote recovery and new approaches to day services, respite care and short breaks: Improved access to flexible respite and short break options that promote inclusion and well-being.

3.15 Carers and Carers Policy: The needs of carers of people with learning disabilities and carers with learning disabilities are understood and accessible support is available.

4.1 To promote voice choice and control for people with learning disabilities and their carers. To include advocacy and self-advocacy: People with learning disabilities have their voices heard, are listened to and are supported to make choices and control their own lives.

Monmouthshire County Council's Social Care and Health Directorate

Over the last decade Monmouthshire County Council's Social Services has transformed the way it delivers support and services. There is a clear vision and direction of travel, put simply the aim is to help people to live their lives, making sure everything we do starts with the person.

There is a clear focus on people, place, and community. It is a way of working which combines the resources we have as a council, builds networks, which in turn help people to remain connected to the things which matter to them, supporting their health and well-being.

We are working in partnership, with a range of agencies, with a shared purpose to support people's well-being. This enables us to share skills, expertise, time and increase the opportunities for people to access support in the community whilst reducing the need for formal services.

Where people do need services, we ensure services are of the highest quality and are focussed on meeting people's outcomes and improving quality of life.

3. THE DEVELOPMENT OF SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH A LEARNING DISABILITY IN MONMOUTHSHIRE

As with all social services, support services to people with a learning disability have changed considerably over the last 10 years or so. The emphasis has been on transforming services, so they are person-centred, strengths based and afford people the opportunity to be involved and engaged citizen in their communities and the opportunities they afford.

Previously services had been very traditional and were aimed at meeting need, usually within exclusive learning disability settings. The emergence of the Respite Opportunities Service, My Day My Life and My Mates have been as a response to this new approach; seeking to support people to make friends, engage in their communities and have equal access to mainstream opportunities. Underpinning each are the principles of person-centred support, a strengths-based approach, what matters to people and supporting people to live their lives.

Prior to 2011 respite for people with a learning disability was provided through the provision of residential respite care at Budden Crescent, a small home operated by the Council. Following a review, the Respite Opportunities Service was created which expanded the range of respite options available to people and their families.

4. ELIGIBILITY AND ACCESS TO RESPITE SUPPORT

In accordance with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, any person with a care and support need has a right to an assessment based on their need and the assessment undertaken should be proportionate to the request and/or the presenting need. Effective assessments are the catalyst for ensuring that people receive appropriate care and support based on their identified needs and their personal outcomes.

People who are receiving respite support through any of the four options would each have received a holistic assessment to identify the most appropriate approach to address their individual circumstances and to establish a plan of how they will achieve their personal outcomes.

Traditionally, people using respite services were given an allocation of nights to use across the year. These allocations ranged up to a maximum of 6 weeks. Following the introduction of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act and the need to deliver more outcome focussed care and support, the Community Learning Disabilities Team determined that they needed to change their approach to allocating respite care to reflect the principles of the new Act.

From 2018, a more flexible approach was adopted based on needs, desired outcomes and individual circumstances. At the heart of this was the recognition that no two families' circumstances are the same and therefore, a more bespoke approach was developed.

Families were asked to contact the CLDT when they needed a break from their caring role and respite was provided on this basis rather than a pre-determined allocation. Some families received substantially more than their previous 6-week allocation whilst other families identified they needed much less.

5. DEVELOPMENT OF THE SERVICE SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN 2011

Prior to the new service model beginning in 2011, approximately 42 people were receiving residential respite at Budden Crescent. This was the sole option available to people with a learning disability who needed respite support. The Respite Opportunities Service began operating from April 2011 offering 4 types of support. The new model enabled people to access the right sort of respite option which best suited their needs and aspirations. The service enables people to use one or more of these types of support. People's eligibility and access to respite services would be agreed with their social worker.

A brief description of each of the options of support overleaf:

Supported holidays

- People can access short and longer term respite breaks via a range of supported holiday providers
- A variety of holidays are available including traditional seaside breaks, activity breaks and themed holidays such as Football, Railways or 70s weekends.
- Provides great opportunities for people to expand their horizons, experience new opportunities and meet new people. People can choose to go alone or as part of groups who choose to access supported holidays together.

Residential Respite

- People can receive residential respite Budden Crescent in Caldicot, a dedicated respite care home operated by Monmouthshire County Council or in other homes in other regional counties including Blaenau Gwent and Newport.
- These offer high levels of care and support and people who use the services regularly have built up trusted relationships with the teams.
- As registered care homes, these services are skilled and equipped to support people with high level support needs.

Shared Lives

- Support is provided by the South East Wales Adult Placement Service, a Gwent wide service that offers respite to people within a family setting.
- Shared Lives carers and the person receiving support get to build trusted relationships and people have their respite with familiar people in a familiar place. This provides a type of “home from home” respite.
- Offers a range of support e.g., short breaks, long breaks, and emergency respite.

Direct Payments

- This option enables people to receive funding directly to arrange and organise their own respite support.
- It gives greater choice and voice to people to determine how they receive support and offers the greatest potential for individualised/bespoke options.
- The responsibility and management of the respite supports remains with the person in receipt of the Direct Payment.

When the new model was introduced, the expectation was always that there would be a movement away from the more traditional form of residential respite and towards the other options; once people and their families became more familiar with them and gained confidence. The realisation of this expectation is clearly seen when considering the changes between 2011 and the onset of the Covid pandemic in March 2020.

The key change highlights are shown below:

Supported Holidays

- In the early years demand was smaller but as people began to take holidays and reported positive experiences, word of mouth spread, and more people began exploring this option.
- A consistent steady demand for respite through supported holidays with a growing number of people accessing supported holidays.
- Supported holiday providers who specialise in working with people with a learning disability are relatively niche. The availability of holidays is constrained by this but work with providers to develop bespoke holiday options has been successful and prior to the pandemic there appeared to be some growth in the number of providers and types of holidays on offers.
- Supported holidays for people with high level support needs, including those who use wheelchair permanently, has been a challenge due to very limited availability.

Residential Respite

- Demand slowly reduced as people began to tentatively explore other respite options, this is seen particularly from 2017 onwards.
- Several people who received this support no longer required respite as they either moved into a supported living setting, care home, out of county or passed away.
- Younger adults coming through transition required or desired residential respite and preferred other forms of respite support.
- Residential respite remained a key support for a smaller cohort of people, especially those with complex or higher-level need.

Shared Lives

- Interest and demand for Shared Lives support has consistently grown.
- People have built trusted relationships with their Shared Lives carers and receive support in a homely, family setting.
- The Gwent wide scheme provides access to carers across the region and people are matched with carers from all LA authority areas and are not restricted to those living in Monmouthshire.
- Finding Shared Lives placements for people who are permanent wheelchair users or require specialist equipment has been challenging; the lack of availability of carers with appropriate accommodation, adapted to meet high level support needs has been an issue.

Direct Payments

- Interest in and uptake of Direct Payments has remained low. For many people /families the responsibility of taking on and managing their own support is something they feel unable to do.
- It is an option that appears to be welcomed by a small number of people and often those who are younger.
- There is considerable potential to promote this option as it would enable people to have greater voice, choice and control over how their respite needs are met.

Overall

- Overall individual demand for respite has reduced.
- Demand for both Shared Lives and Supported Holidays has grown consistently.
- Some people receive more than one respite support option e.g. Shared Lives and Supported Holidays while other access one option only.
- A shift away from residential respite to other forms of support.
- As numbers of people seeking residential respite has decreased, there has been an increasing ability to tailor respite opportunities to individual circumstances and preferences.
- Limited take up of Direct Payments.
- Residential respite at Budden Crescent had become the preferred respite option for a small number of people only.

The charts overleaf show the number of people accessing the different respite support options between 2017/18 and 2019/20:

Table 1. No. of People Using Respite Options
2017/18

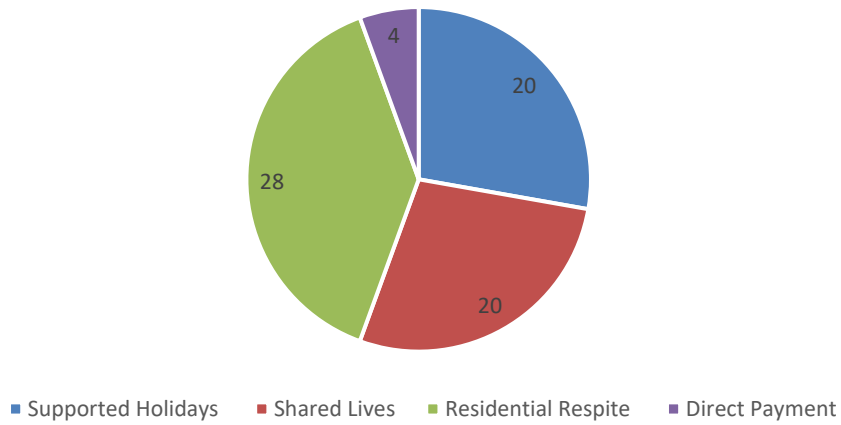


Table 2. No. of People Using Respite Options
2018/19

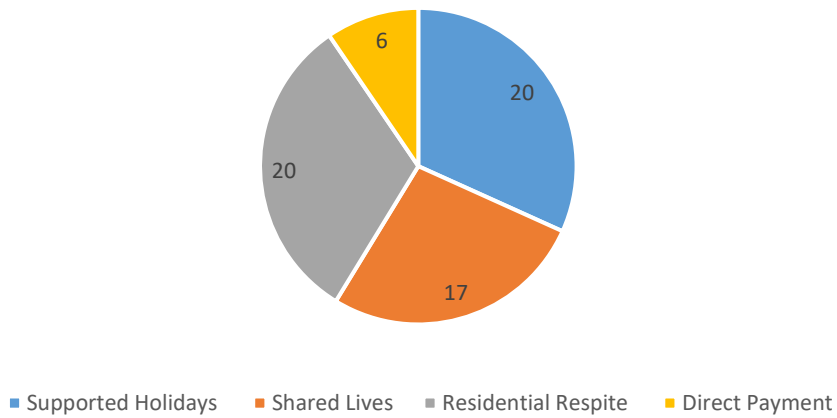
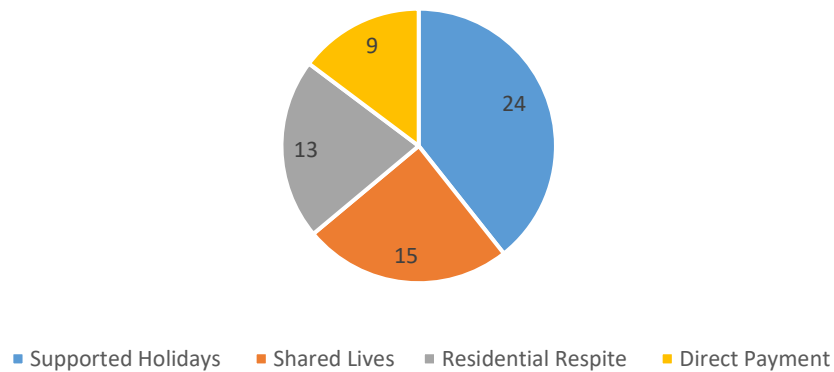
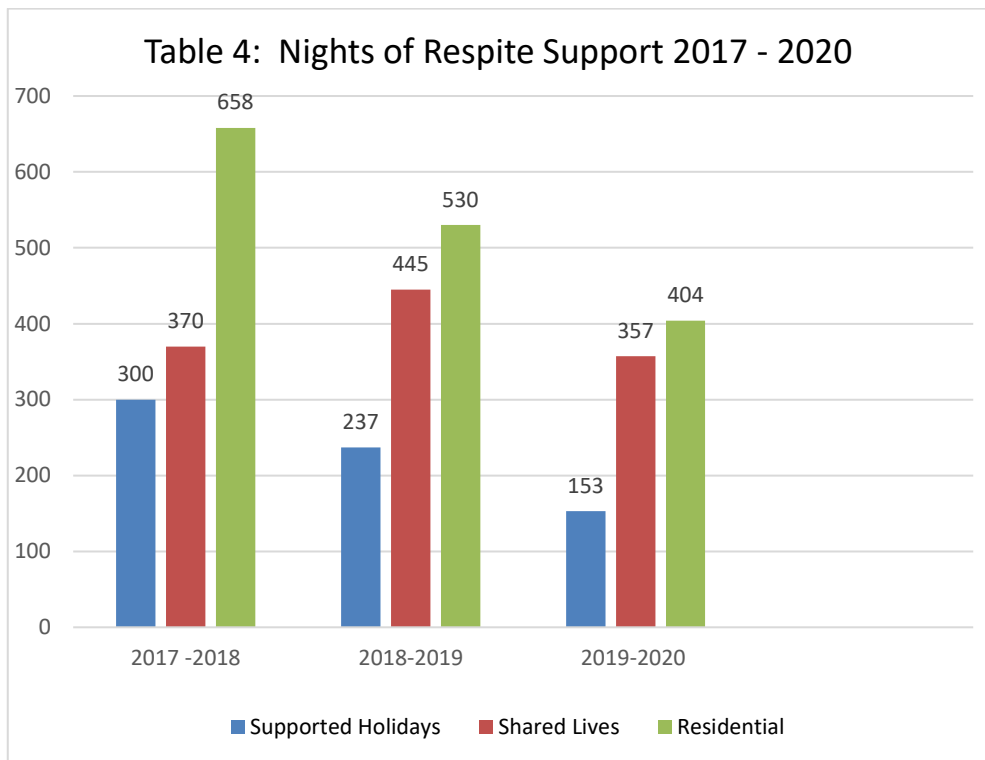


Table 3 No. of People Using Respite Options
2019/20



** Please note data has been updated since March 2023 Report following further validation.



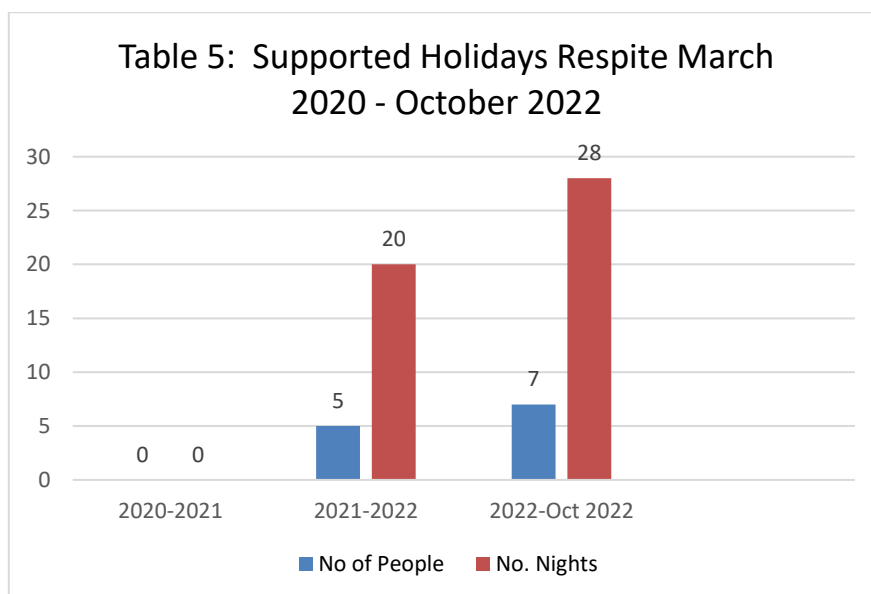
*** Please note data not available for Direct Payment nights

6. RESPIRE ARRANGEMENTS DURING COVID

The onset of the Covid 19 pandemic in March 2020 brought significant changes to the demand for respite and the availability of support services. People understandably were only seeking respite where there was an urgent need. This reduced demand was seen across all the four respite options; however, the least impact is seen in Shared Lives support.

Supported Holidays

Unsurprisingly supported holidays were not operating during 2020/21 due to lock downs and restrictions being in place around social gatherings etc. Since April 2021 there has been an increase in the availability of supported holidays and the number of people choosing to take one. However, this has yet to return to pre-pandemic levels. It is anticipated that there will be greater availability of holidays in 2023 as operators are able to resume their normal activity.



Residential Respite

From the outset of the pandemic, given Budden Crescent’s status as a care home and its relatively low occupancy, an early decision was made not to keep it open and instead seek alternative interim forms of respite. It was felt that this might be challenging given that many other operators, e.g., holiday providers, would also not be operating in the circumstances.

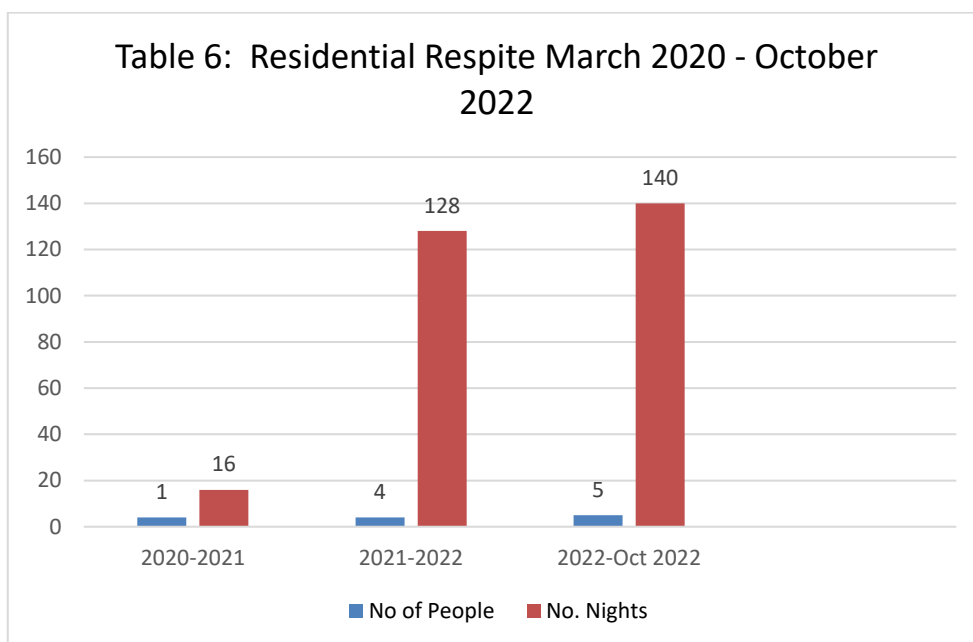
In reality, the story of the pandemic built upon the evolving narrative of demand for respite over previous years: with a reduced demand for all respite options.

Where residential respite was deemed as urgent alternative options were sourced by accessing support at respite care homes in neighbouring local authority areas which remained open. An interim arrangement was entered into with Newport City Council in June 2021 to provide residential respite for those who needed it. There was a clear increase in support provided from 2021, the majority of support was provided via the interim arrangement with Newport City Council; this arrangement remains in place while the review is undertaken.

As demand was reduced it afforded the ability to tailor bespoke respite options to need, working with the person and their family to explore options to meet the particular need at that instance. Respite support was provided in some instances in people’s homes, supported by colleagues from Budden Crescent.

Budden Crescent remained closed throughout the pandemic and colleagues were temporarily redeployed elsewhere to other social care services or delivered other respite options, such as respite at home. There was limited demand to use Budden Crescent, 3 – 4 people who were offered alternative residential. 2 of those people choose to access the alternative and the others not. See table 6 below.

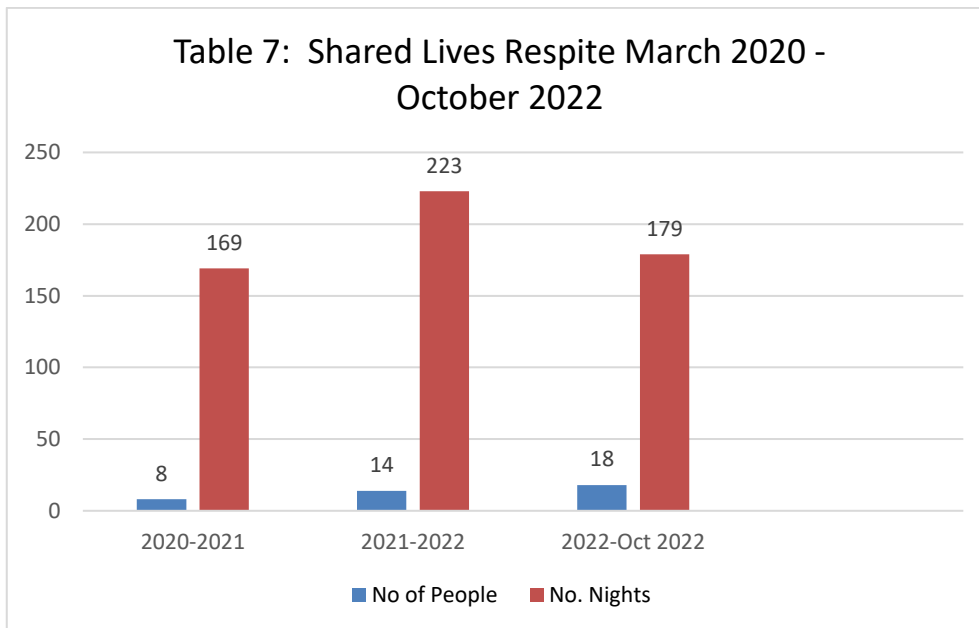
From the beginning of September 2021 to June 2022, the Budden Crescent building was used temporarily for an emergency Children’s Services placement. Since June 2022 the service has remained temporarily closed while the review of respite support is undertaken and the future need for support confirmed.



Shared Lives

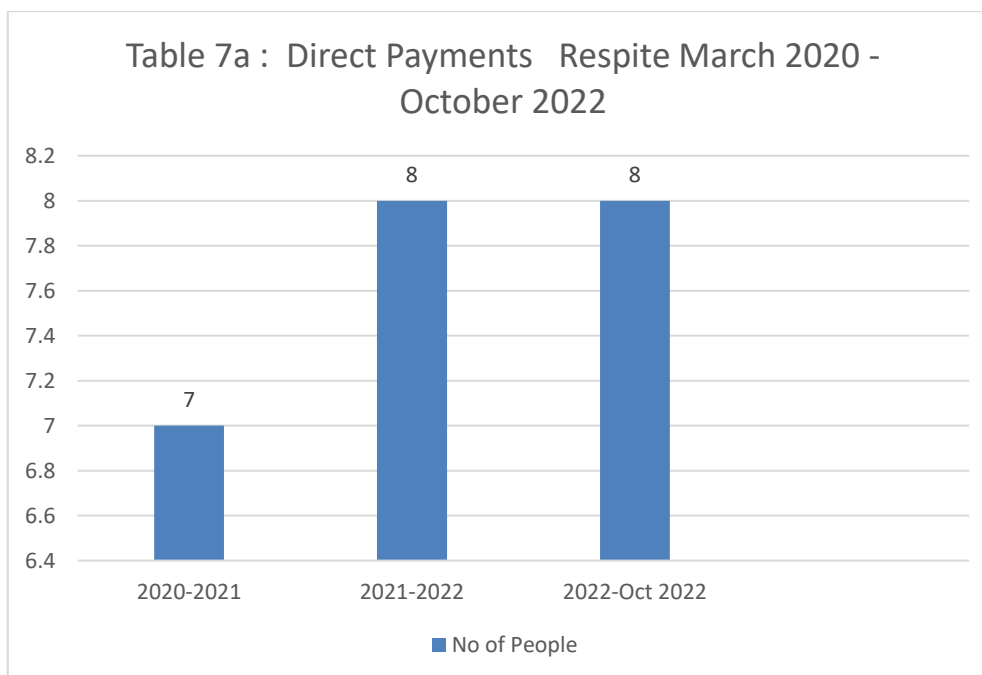
People accessing Shared Lives during 2020/21 was reduced in relation to previous years but overall, this is the one option which appears to be least impacted by the pandemic. As the setting

is a domestic one, the restrictions and guidelines in place in terms of residential support did not apply. This may have contributed to the continued availability of support and people’s ability to access it. Demand rose from April 2021.



Direct Payments

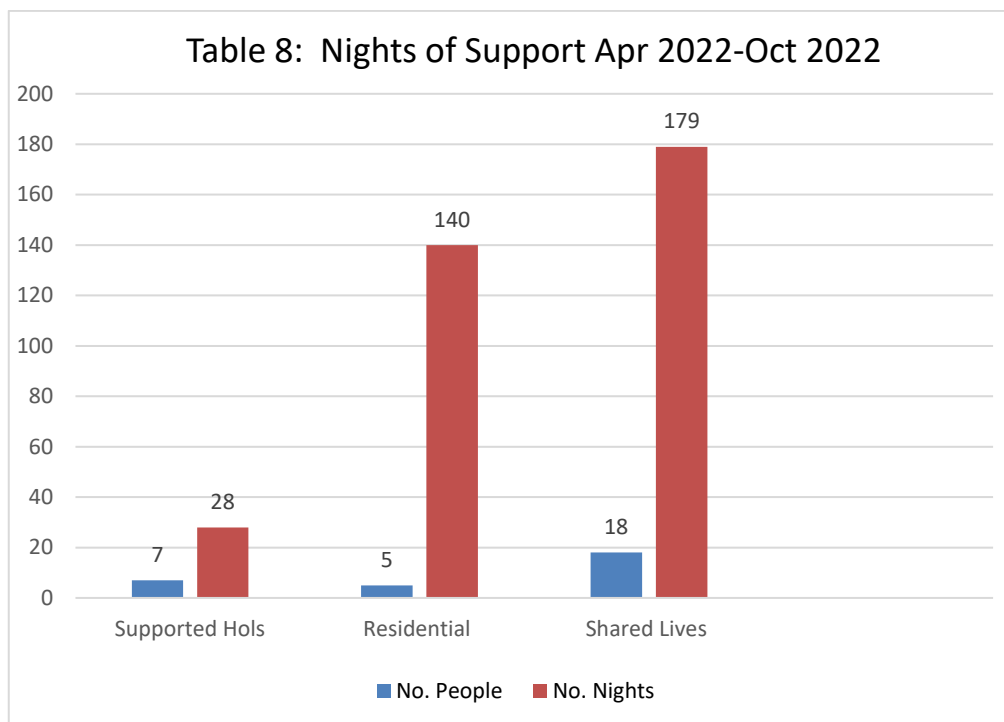
People continued to receive Direct Payments throughout this period and were able to determine how best to meet their needs within the constraints of the prevailing restrictions. There appears to be an increase in the number of people using this option although improvements in data collection may account for the higher numbers noted from 2020; see Table 7a below



7. CURRENT POSITION DECEMBER 2022

As restrictions lifted and normal society began to resume, overall demand for respite has increased but has not returned to its pre- pandemic level. Although there has been a marked

increase in the uptake of Shared Lives support in the first half of 2022/23. People accessing supported holidays is beginning to increase with more opportunities becoming available and people feeling more confident.



At December 2022 the Community Learning Disabilities Team were supporting 246 people with a learning disability in Monmouthshire. 30 of whom were identified as being eligible for the Respite Opportunities Service. A further 12 young people were identified as coming through transition and maybe eligible for respite support, through the Respite Opportunities Service, when they are 18.

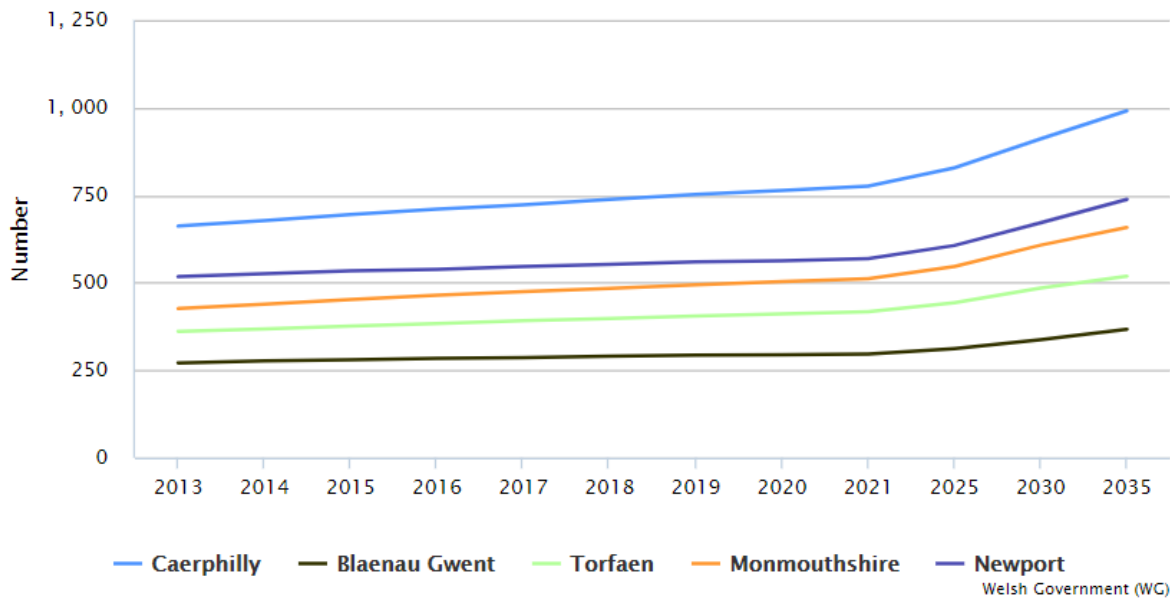
The number of people needing residential respite decreased earlier this year when 2 people moved from their family homes into a supported living setting and no longer require respite support. These 2 people previously received a high level of the respite support shown in tables 6 and 8 above: 102 nights in 2021/22 and 91 nights in 2022/23. There are 8 out of the 30 people eligible for respite support who require the higher level of support offered through residential respite. Of these, 5, are currently receiving residential support in respite care homes in Newport and Blaenau-Gwent. Not everyone is currently accessing residential support, 3 people have advised they only wish to receive residential support at Budden Crescent and have chosen not to use any alternative.

Future Demand Projections

The number of people with a learning disability who are supported by social services has remained fairly level for some time. Future projections suggest that this should increase from 2025 to 2035. The Gwent Regional Partnership Board Population Needs Assessment predicts all local authority areas across the region will see an increase in the number. The predicted increases range from 35.4% in Blaenau Gwent to 54.5% in Monmouthshire. The data is taken from the Register of persons with learning disabilities (SSDA901). The data may be an underestimate of the total number of people with learning disabilities as registration is voluntary. Local authorities submit numbers of those identified as having a learning disability currently known to the authority and included in a register for the purpose of planning or providing services.

Table 9:

Predicted number of people aged 65+ that will have a learning disability ☰



It is anticipated that a further 12 young people are coming through transition who may be eligible for respite support over the next 4 years. The current number of people receiving respite support, 30, is likely to change slightly as people either move into a supported living setting, care home, out of county or pass away. If the number of people needing respite support increases in line with the Gwent Needs Assessment predictions it is possible that numbers could increase to 45 plus by 2035 needing respite support.

8. INITIAL FINDINGS

The Respite Opportunities Services has been successful in providing a greater range of respite options for people with a learning disability in Monmouthshire. Changes in demand and the type of support people require has changed since its inception in 2011. In looking to the future there are number of key areas for future development to ensure that high quality support is available which supports people to live a good life. Clearly the impact of the pandemic was significant on demand but there has been an increase in people accessing respite support and we need to ensure that future support is available and appropriate to people's needs and aspirations, with a variety of options in place. The greater change seen has been that to the demand and need for residential respite and the consequent implications for the Council's residential respite service operated at Budden Crescent.

There were several aspects which were initially identified as needing further exploration and development. These included:

- Expanding the range of supported holiday opportunities available to people. Although there are several different holiday organisations which offer a range of holidays, we believe that greater choice would enable people to find the right sort of holiday for their interests and needs.
- Creating holiday opportunities for people who are wheelchair users or who have higher level care needs; currently these opportunities are very limited.
- Refocussing residential respite options to ensure that people are able to access residential support in a range of different homes and to cease providing residential respite at Budden Crescent.
- Extending the availability of Shared Lives support to specifically enable people who are wheelchair users or who have higher level care needs; currently these opportunities are very limited.

- Developing a respite at home option for people who would prefer to remain at home when their family are away.
- Promoting the use of Direct Payments for people who need respite so they have greater choice and control in how their respite support is provided.

9. **ENGAGEMENT WITH PEOPLE WHO USE THE SERVICE AND THEIR FAMILIES**

Engagement Process

We recognise how important respite is to the people who receive it and their families; it provides an opportunity for people to experience different things and meet new people and a much-needed break for everyone as well. Therefore, seeking the views of people who use the Respite Opportunities Service, and their families is critical in shaping the service for the future.

In October and November 2022 and an Engagement exercise was undertaken to seek the views of people and their families on what they had enjoyed so far, what they thought could have been done better or differently and what people would like to see in the future. All 30 people identified as receiving support and the 12 young people likely to be eligible for support in the future, were contacted by letter (Appendix 1 and 1a) asking if they would like to take part. People were offered a variety of routes to take part including individual meetings, questionnaires, or drop-in sessions, and were asked to let us know their preferences. Responses to this initial letter were very limited with only 6 people replying, all of whom requested individual meetings.

To stimulate greater engagement, all 36 people (adults and young people) who didn't reply to the initial request were written to again (appendix 2); they were provided with an Engagement Summary (Appendix 3) and questionnaire (Appendix 4) so people could provide their views if they wished. The summary included details regarding the areas for further consideration identified in the initial findings. Easy read versions (Appendix 5 and 6) of both the Engagement Summary and the questionnaire were also provided as well as a link to the questionnaire for those who wished to complete it online.

People were again offered the opportunity to have an individual meeting to share their views. Some families were contacted by telephone so they could discuss their thoughts and provide feedback.

A follow up telephone call was made to all 12 families of young people in transition and their families as there were no engagement responses received from this group. 6/12 families were spoken with, their reasons for not engaging included:

- they didn't remember receiving the report and question
- they were happy with their current support
- didn't think it was relevant

5 families indicated they would complete a questionnaire if they had another opportunity to do so. This will be undertaken as part of the 2nd phase engagement process.

Engagement Response

Overall, there was a limited response from people and families (26% response rate), 11 people and families took part and shared their views through the following methods:

- 7 questionnaire and or written responses
- 5 individual meetings were held with people and their families.
- All 11 people and families who responded are current users of the respite service. No responses were received from younger people in transition.

Consultation responses are summarised below:

- 4 (37%) of respondents currently receive or had recently received respite via Shared Lives. Feedback was universally very positive with one family keen to increase their hours.

- 5 individuals (45% of respondents) currently receive or had recently received respite via Supported Holidays. All were really satisfied with this option; it was reported that some providers were able to provide a door-to-door service and photos were provided throughout the trips which was really appreciated with comments made on enjoying music holidays and the opportunity to meet new people. Respondents were keen to receive more holidays and one asked for more investment in this area to increase opportunities.
- 3 (27%) were very keen to see the reopening of Budden Crescent, comments included:
 - if criteria was broadened the service would be used more.
 - that the number of people who used it was small, and that it wasn't as popular amongst 'younger people' however Budden was a 'trusted model' that they would use if it reopened.
 - Budden as providing a 'lifeline' and the 'freedom' and 'peace of mind' that the individual was in 'safe hands' while they had a break
- 1 respondent raised concerns about other residential respite options, particularly in relation to availability of dates, reduction in availability and the compatibility and mix of needs in other settings. It was evident they had confidence in Budden's focus on compatibility and learning disability.
- 2 respondents (18%) currently use residential services,
- In the future respondents said:
 - 2 (18%) wanted to try or have more supported holidays.
 - 3 (27%) wanted to try or have more Shared Lives.
 - 3 (27%) were keen to explore residential options, such as residential options in the local area (e.g. Augusta House) for emergency situations.
 - 3 (27%) were keen to explore a respite at home option to allow their family member to stay in a familiar environment whilst they, their family went elsewhere.
 - 2 (18%) were interested in more information on direct payments.

This first engagement process was not effective in generating sufficient levels of participation from people and their families and the intention is to refine the way in which we engage with people prior to seeking approval for implementation of any review recommendations brought forward to achieve a much greater level of engagement.

A second phase of engagement is planned for April 2023. All people and families who use the respite service or who may use it in the future will be telephoned initially by member of the Community Learning Disability Service. This initial telephone contact will provide the opportunity to share the purpose of the engagement process, advise they will be receiving the report and discuss the various ways they can participate and offer support i.e.:

- Face to face meetings
- Telephone conversations
- Written feedback
- Use of the questionnaire.

The 2nd engagement process will run for a longer time and people will have a 5 week period to feedback their views. At the end of the 3rd week a follow up telephone call will be made to people and families who have not yet participated to check if there is anything that would be helpful for them and enable them to take part.

10. **CONCLUSIONS**

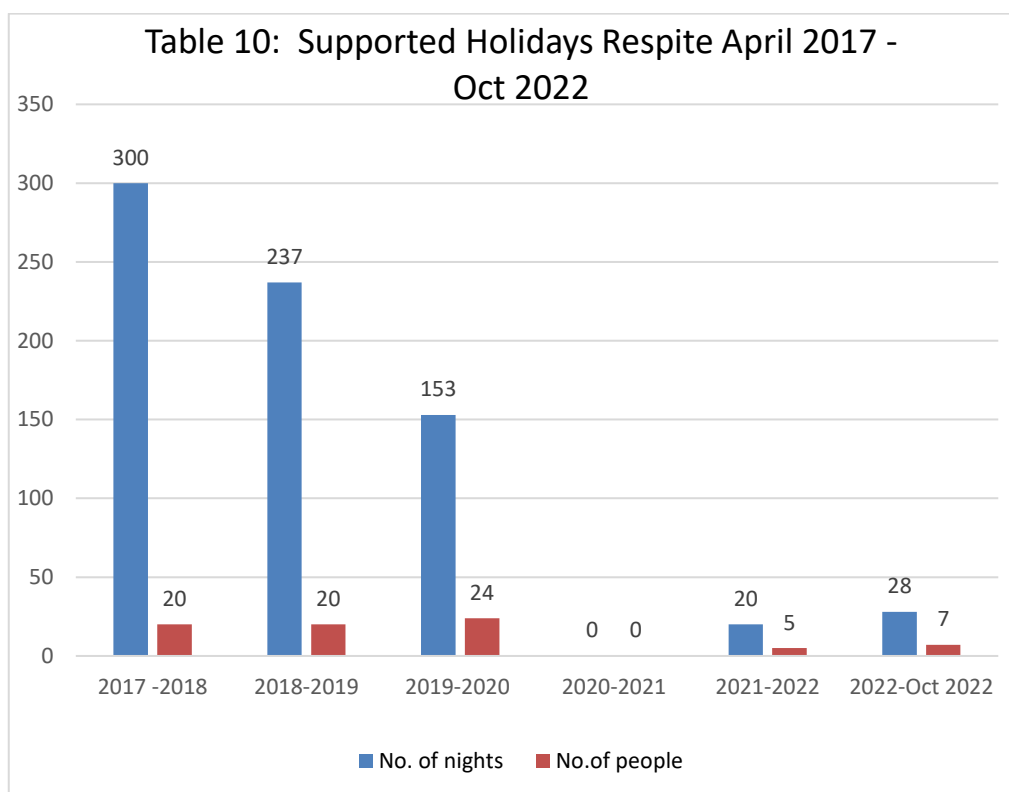
The Respite Opportunities Service has been generally successful in improving the range and availability of different types of respite support available to people with learning disabilities in Monmouthshire. Significant development has been seen in in terms of the provision of Supported Holidays and Shared Lives and these are now widely valued and used respite options by the majority of people. The promotion of Direct Payments was less successful initially with a modest take up of this option since the service began in 2011, although this picked up from 2018 onwards.

Demand for residential respite has changed considerably over the last 11 years with this option now being used by 26% of people. Predicted increases in the number of people with a learning disability will require a flexible and adaptable approach to the provision of respite support which can accommodate an increase in demand.

The conclusions for each option of the service as well as additional options are explored below.

Supported Holidays

When this option was first offered in 2011 it was very much uncharted territory for those receiving support, their families and colleagues working in the Respite Opportunities Service. From its gentle evolutionary beginnings, it developed considerably and by 2020 was a much used and valued form of respite; with over 2/3rds of people having a supported holiday. The emergence of the Covid 19 pandemic in March 2020 had a significant impact upon supported holidays and it is clear that take up of this option has begun, but not yet at its pre-pandemic level, see table 10 overleaf.



A variety of supported holiday providers had been sourced and we are able to offer a selection of holidays offering short breaks and longer holiday experiences. Various types of holidays were on offer including hotel based, holiday accommodation and holiday camps such as Butlins. People were able to choose a holiday experience which best suited their interests and needs; people would often holiday with other respite recipients with whom they were friendly. Other chose to attend organised holidays alone, meeting and making new friends when they went. There has been some success in working with holiday providers to design and deliver bespoke holiday experiences, tailored to meet the needs and interests of the holiday makers.

4 (36%) people responding to the Engagement Exercise were from people who either currently or had recently received respite via Supported Holidays. All were really satisfied with this option; it was reported that some providers were able to provide a door-to-door service and photos were provided throughout the trips which was really appreciated. Comments included people really enjoying music holidays, and the opportunity to meet new people. Respondents were keen to receive more holidays and a request was made for more investment in this area to increase opportunities.

Supported Holiday provision for people with a learning disability is very much a specialist area and therefore a limited number of operators to source holidays from. The nature of the holiday sector is that holidays usually need to be planned quite far in advance, brochures usually being made available in the autumn for the following April to March. This has meant that people often need to decide in advance when and where they want to go if they are to have access to the full range. The availability of holidays is often reduced the further into the season it is as bookings have already been made.

Another significant area which has been a challenge is the availability of supported holidays for people who are wheelchair users and or have high level support needs. There was a hotel in Cornwall which offered this but unfortunately ceased trading in 2020 because of the pandemic. While certain bespoke holiday packages have been put together, generally this remains an area which requires development in the future.

Comments from the Engagement Exercise include a request for more investment to increase opportunities.

Since the easing of restrictions following the pandemic and the return to more normal life, take up of supported holidays has been very slow; in part due to people's lack of demand but also due to a lack of holiday options. A challenge moving forward will be how to increase confidence in this option and to promote its availability and benefits to people eligible to access respite support. In addition, the predicated growth in numbers of people requiring support from 2025 will require a broader range of provision to be available.

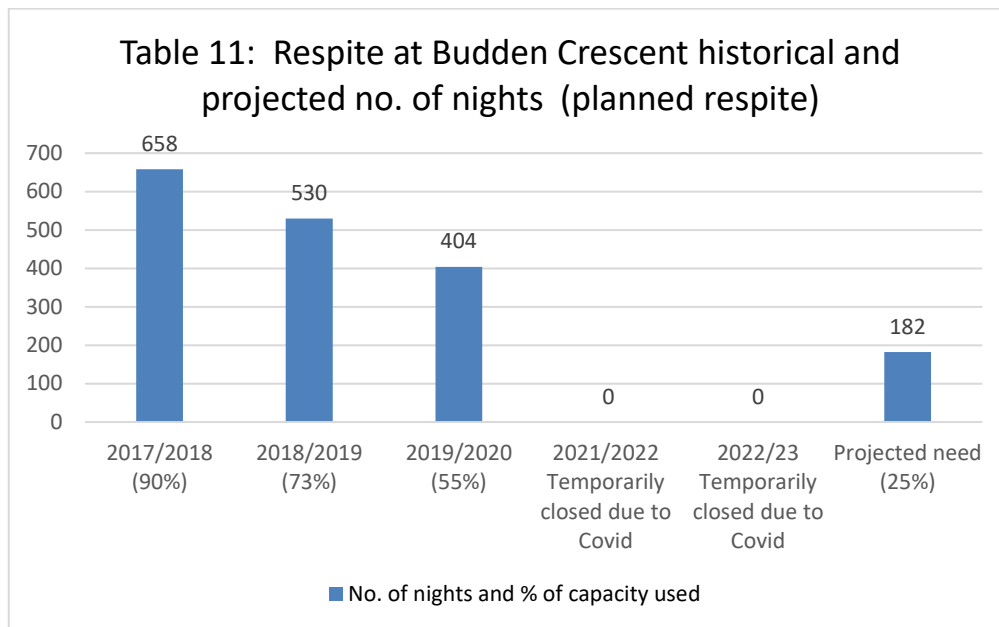
Residential Respite

Residential respite has been a crucial component of the Respite Opportunities Service since its beginning and even more before so, when prior to 2011 it was the only respite provision available to people with a learning disability. The vast majority of residential respite has been provided for over 20 years at Budden Crescent in Caldicot, a small domestic property, operated by Monmouthshire County Council. The service has a dedicated, highly experienced, and skilled team, most of whom have worked at the home since it opened. The service provides high quality support and can support people with higher level care needs and those who are wheelchair users.

Many of the people who have used the service at Budden Crescent have done so for many years and have built trusted relationships with the team; people and families have enormous trust in the service and team. People receive respite support in a homely and familiar environment by a team they trust and who know them well. Individual respite programmes are developed for each guest so they can maximise their stay, enjoying trips out and activities which suit their interests and needs.

Residential respite remained the most popular respite option for some years, in 2017/2018 more people received residential respite than any other option. Between 2018 - 2020 the number of people accessing residential respite decreased. At the point when the Pandemic started the number of people eligible for residential respite had reduced to 13 with 8 of those receiving it at Budden Crescent.

The declining demand for residential respite since 2017/18 has a few key reasons, including an increase in take up of other respite options such as supported holidays and Shared Lives, respite being provided on assessed need rather than a fixed annual allocation, younger people preferring other respite options and people no longer requiring respite following a move to a care home, supported living setting or out of county. One outcome of this reduction in demand has been that people receiving support at Budden Crescent are often the only guest at the home and do not benefit from the opportunity to mix with others. The impact of this reduced demand for residential respite is greatest in terms of Budden Crescent. This trend is seen in table 11 below.



There are currently 8 people who require residential respite support; 2 people receive their support from homes in Blaenau Gwent and Newport. 6 of the 8 people receive/ed support from Budden Crescent (prior to its temporary closure). A maximum estimation of the future respite requirements of those 6 people suggests 182 nights per year. This is approximately 25% of the home's capacity. During initial discussions with the people and their families, 4 indicated they would consider accessing residential respite options other than Budden Crescent. The other 4 were clear that they would consider no other residential service other than Budden Crescent. Other residential options have been sourced for those people who expressed a willingness to, including Centrica Lodge in Newport. Newport City Council has indicated that it would be open to discussing extending the current interim arrangement or entering a longer-term arrangement.

A maximum estimation of the respite needs of the 6 people who receive/ed support from Budden Crescent (prior to its temporary closure) suggests 182 nights per year.

Future predictions suggest a 54.5% increase in the number of people in Monmouthshire with a learning disability by 2035. If this is applied to the existing number of people who need residential respite support, then that would equate to an increase from 8 to 12; statistically significant but does not represent any significant challenge in terms of providing support.

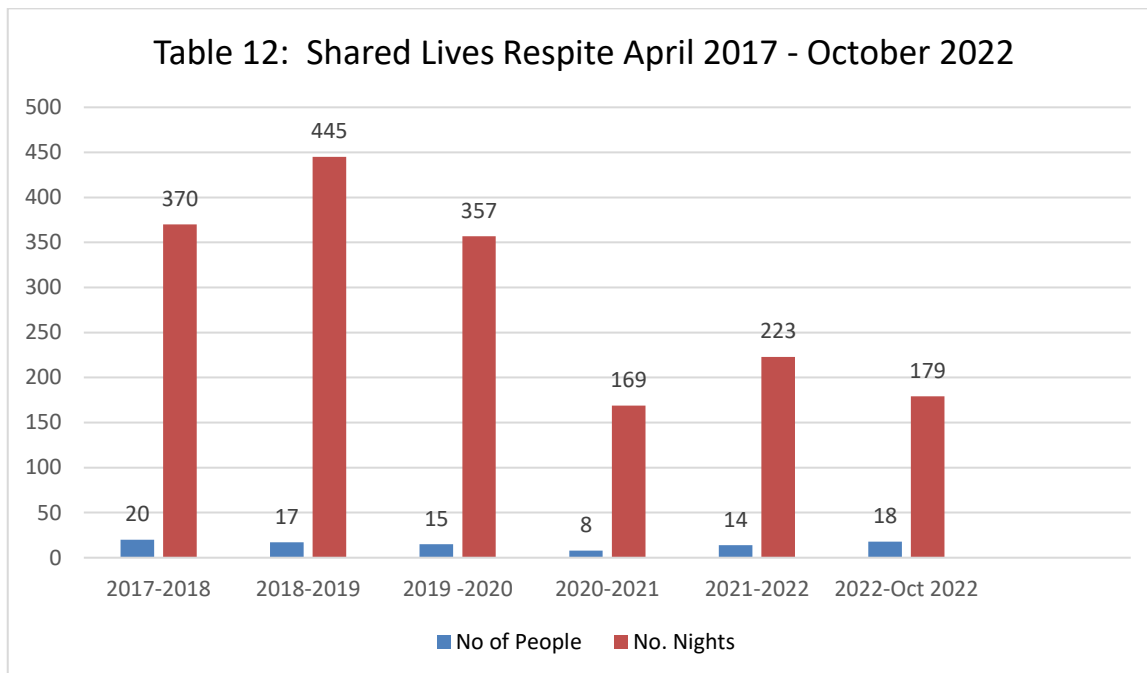
3 of the engagement exercise respondents were very keen to see the reopening of Budden Crescent. One respondent did not currently meet the criteria for Budden, but they felt that if criteria was broadened the service would be used more. One respondent understood that the number of people who utilised it was small, and that it wasn't as popular amongst 'younger people' however they felt Budden was a 'trusted model' that they would use if it reopened. Another reported Budden as providing a 'lifeline' and the 'freedom' and 'peace of mind' that the individual was in 'safe hands' while they had a break.

Budden Crescent has been a highly valued and trusted service for many years and remains so for a small number of people for whom no other option is acceptable. The changes seen over the last 11 years, the current demand and the future demand projections all indicate that a service of this scale is no longer required, and the future operation of the home may no longer be necessary or financially viable.

Shared Lives

Shared Lives has seen consistent and considerable growth in the number of people using this support option. It is clearly a valued and attractive option for people which offers respite within a family setting and allows guests and host families to develop long term relationships. The option is very flexible with people having both short and longer term breaks; some Shared Lives carers provide emergence as well as planned support, this is particularly valuable when respite is needed at very short notice.

Of all the respite options, Shared Lives has seen the least impact in terms of take up as a result of the pandemic. Support continued to be provided during 2020/2021 albeit it a reduced level. Use for the first half of 2022/2023 is up, and if replicated in the second half, then levels should be at the pre 2020 level; see table 12 below.



4 of the engagement responses were from people who currently use or had recently received respite via Shared Lives. Feedback was universally very positive with one family keen to increase their hours.

The Shared Lives service is operated via the Gwent wide South East Wales scheme which is made up of 6 local authorities. The benefits of this collaborative approach can be clearly seen in terms of expanding the number and location of shared lives carers. People receiving report are matched with host carers from anywhere in the areas and are not restricted to their local authority footprint. This brings considerable benefits in terms of increasing availability and the right fit for people. The added benefit being that people experience different opportunities in another area.

The lack of availability of Shared Lives carers with suitably adapted homes to support wheelchair users and people with higher level support needs has been a key issue for some time. This has resulted in people who might benefit from using this option having no opportunity to experience it. Further work will be needed to explore the opportunities there might be to facilitate this in partnership with out South East Wales partners.

Another aspect which would benefit from expansion is the availability of shared lives carers who provide short notice or emergency support. Although this is rarely required having robust arrangements in place will bring added security and robustness.

Direct Payments

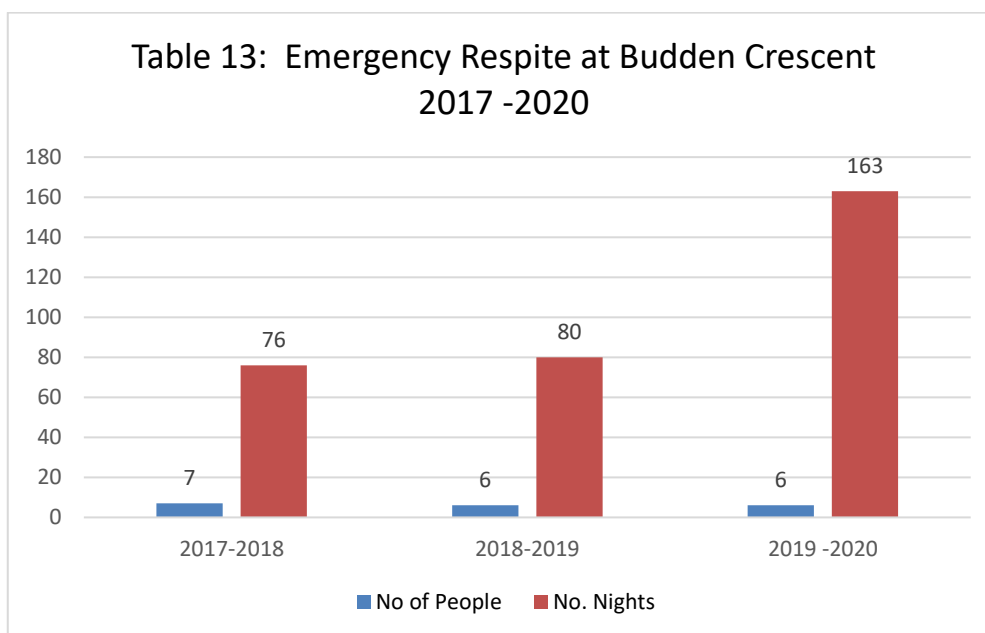
The take up of Direct Payments as means of facilitating respite support has increased with numbers averaging 8 per year. The way in which this type of support is used varies from other

types. Often people use it for very short periods of time e.g. 1 or 2 days and the flexibility of this approach enables people to dovetail their support to best fit their lives. It is often more attractive to younger people and their families who desire a truly bespoke response to their respite needs.

It is hoped that the current work across the Gwent Region to collaborate on the promotion and delivery of Direct Payments will bring benefits in the future and will ensure that this valuable option is promoted and used.

Emergency Respite

Emergency respite is sometimes required at short notice when family carers are unwell or unable to provide their usual care due to other reasons. These are typically for short periods of time though occasionally this may be longer where individual circumstances require it. Historically emergency respite has predominantly been provided at Budden Crescent. Analysis of the data during 2017-2020 indicates that a high proportion of emergency respite admissions were because of people needing a new home/placement rather than true respite. See table 13 below.



From 2020, when Budden Crescent was temporarily closed, other solutions for providing emergency respite support have been found including respite support at home, Shared Lives and alternative care homes. The current interim arrangement with Newport City Council provides sufficient capacity to provide emergency respite as well as planned.

Further work will be needed to develop a robust suite of options which can be sourced to support people when they need an emergency response.

Respite at Home

Another option for consideration in the future range of respite options is respite at home. During the early part of the pandemic when respite options were limited, creative and innovative solutions were explored. One such option was providing support into the person’s home when their carer was unable to support them as they usually would, either due to absence or illness. This proved successful when used in two incidences. This option could be a valuable addition to the range. Through the engagement exercise 2 families noted they were keen to explore a respite at home option to allow the individual to stay in a familiar environment whilst their family went elsewhere.

11. FUTURE DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

No.	Recommendation	Opportunities	Risks
1.	Expand the range of supported holiday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater choice for people and experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited availability of the supply in the market

	opportunities to enable greater choice to match people's interests and needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased capacity to meet current and future demand • Improved self-confidence and esteem through making new friends and new experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unable to develop more options and an expanded range • Take up may not increase
2.	Create holiday opportunities for people who are wheelchair users or who have higher level care needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People will no longer be disadvantage due to their needs • Greater equality of opportunity • People will benefit from experiences which they have been previously unable to access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very limited supply currently • Ability to arrange bespoke solutions may be restricted by lack of appetite from providers • Small number of people needing the support may impact on viability for providers
3.	Refocus residential respite option so people can access support in a range of different homes including those in neighbouring counties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People will have access to range of different respite homes to suit their needs • Extending the interim arrangement with NCC will provide certainty of supply • People will benefit from opportunities to mix with new people, make friends and take part in activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support may not always be available when spot purchasing respite • Newport City Council may not wish to enter a long-term arrangement • Potentially may be a lack of support to meet need
4.	Cease to provide residential respite at Budden Crescent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A range of homes enables a more bespoke response to people's respite needs. • Resources can be released and invested in other respite options i.e. Supported Holidays, Shared lives and respite at home • A highly skilled and experienced team would be released at a time when there is high number of vacancies in SCH. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant impact on colleagues. Some co-ordination resource required for the new service, but most colleagues would need to be found alternative redeployment options. • It is a treasured resource for a small (6) number of families. A decision to move to alternatives options might be unwelcome/unpopular. • Colleagues are currently supporting 2 people in their community and alternative arrangements will be needed.
5.	Extend the availability of Shared Lives support to specifically enable people who are wheelchair users or who have higher level care needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater equality of opportunity and access for people • People will be able to receive support in a homely environment and develop relationships with their carers • Increase in respite options for people who 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited interest or availability of carers with appropriate properties • Investment may be required to fund adapted properties • Limited number of people requiring this support

		use wheelchairs or have high level care needs	
6.	Develop a respite at home option for people who would prefer to remain at home when their family are away.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People can stay in their homes when their families aren't there • Expanded range of respite options especially for people who require adaptations to their environment • Increased reassurance for families when they are away 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand may be limited • Lack of availability of providers • Operationally may be challenging
7.	Promote and increase the uptake of Direct Payments for people who need respite.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater choice and control in how people's respite support is provided. • Offers greater capacity for bespoke options • Increased capacity to meet current and future demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased demand on Direct Payments team • Lack of interest/take up
8.	Develop a range of robust emergency respite options including Shared Lives, residential and respite at home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust range of options in place • Choice of emergency respite support will allow for a more person-centred response • Increased capacity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support may not always be available • Limited demand may impact on viability of block booked options