

Learning Disability Partnership Group

Making it Happen meeting minutes, 29.06.26

Attendees

The meeting was recorded and transcribed automatically; the transcript's speaker labels could not be reliably matched to names throughout, so this list reflects only those attendees identifiable with reasonable confidence from the recording. Please add or correct names as needed.

Nathan Holt, Involving People IOW
Liz Hennessy, IOW Council
Neil Bolton-Heaton, Help and Care
Katharine Arblaster, IOW Council
John Phillips (Chair)
Robert Paton (Vice Chair)
Daron Perkins, IW Council
Natalie Barker, IW Council Activities Coordinator
Alix Woodford, IW Council No Barriers
Rebecca Baker, One Wight Health
Becca Blachford, Action IW / One Wight Health
Cara Brown, Milford Del
Kerry Hughes + Lucy, Way Forward
Claire Webb, People Matter IW
Terri Baker, People Matter IW
Cheryl Milne, NHS Assistant Practitioner LD Team
Moya Ayres? student Occupational Therapist, name not quite audible
Adam Tucker. West Wight Sports and Community Centre

Apologies

Jo Smith, Healthwatch IW
Katie Keddie, NHS
Laura Reid, Action IW

1. LD Strategy Progress Update and LDPG Structures

Katharine Arblaster updated the group on progress with the Learning Disability Strategy. The strategy went to committee the previous week and the group is awaiting the outcome. Because the strategy has been developed collaboratively with everyone involved, the relevant director has been given authority to approve any minor amendments arising from that process, so this should not hold up progress. The next formal step for the IWC governance is sign-off by the Health and Wellbeing Board, although we need to ensure that Health/ICB and other relevant organisations have taken it through their governance process, after which the strategy can be launched. Katharine will follow up the outcome from the committee and process this to the next stage as appropriate.

Neil Bolton-Heaton introduced what is only a proposal for a new “Wayfarers” model of community engagement, based on a model pioneered by Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living, also updated on a “Take 10” approach that has been used by Healthwatch for community groups to take 10 mins to talk about what is and not working and then feeding this back to Healthwatch. This is something that could be adopted and revised for Learning Disability providers (a short, simple web form that providers or individuals can use after a group session or activity to record what is and isn’t working). The Wayfarers model would involve identified people - including people with lived experience, not only professionals - acting as a named point of contact within their organisation or community group, gathering views informally and feeding them back

through an established route to decision-makers, as an addition to (not a replacement for) attendance at meetings such as this one. Neil noted that this thinking has been informed by approximately 650 one-to-one conversations carried out with Island residents over approximately the last 18 months, of which roughly 110–120 were specifically with people with a learning disability.

The proposal is not yet approved. It needs to be commissioned within the current contract and signed off through the Council's committee process before it can be developed further. Liz Hennessy said the Council expects to know whether it has been agreed very soon, and that the detail of how it works in practice would then be built from the bottom up with this group and others, rather than being a fixed model imposed centrally. She confirmed the model is not intended to replace this group, and that it is designed to apply across all client groups, not only people with learning disabilities.

Robert Paton also noted that Peter Smith (IOW Council) had indicated there may be a possibility of facilitating main LDPG Making it Happen meetings at County Hall. This will be explored further in due course.

The group discussed the proposal at length and raised a number of points, including:

- o A wish to make sure that any new model genuinely amplifies the voice of people with disabilities, rather than diluting it through too few representatives covering too many people or services.
- o A strong feeling that feedback loops need to be visible: when people share concerns, they need to see what happened as a result, or they will become discouraged from contributing further.
- o A question about resourcing, given that no additional staff are being recruited to deliver the model.
- o General support, while reserving judgement, for trying a new approach given the ongoing difficulty in getting people to attend and contribute to meetings such as this one.
- o A reminder from a Healthwatch perspective that this group remains an important escalation route to the LD Partnership Board, and that any insight gathered through Wayfarers or Take 10 should be used to identify themes the group can ask the Board to act on, with results reported back.

Neil agreed to circulate available impact evidence from the Wiltshire pilot and confirmed the group would be kept updated once contract sign-off is confirmed.

Update- The Wayfarers proposal was discussed with councillors last week. We have been asked to temporarily pause this piece of work as the new council is in the process of developing the corporate plan which will provide the strategic direction of travel for the council over the life of this administration. For councillors it is essential to ensure that any public engagement aligns to their strategic priorities.

- **Leaflet and Webpage**

The leaflet has been finalised, printed and circulated; copies were available at the meeting for attendees to take away and distribute further. The Learning Disability Partnership Group webpage is now live on the Involving People website and includes details of meetings (including this one) and the topic meetings programme. <https://involvingpeople.org/ldpg/>

- **Topic Meetings — The Year Ahead**

Nathan reflected on the first topic meeting, on road safety, which was run twice on the day to accommodate a second group of attendees who arrived partway through the first session. Both sessions were well attended and well received, and a reflective report on the session was produced and will be shared via the chair and the relevant administration with the LD Partnership Board and the LDPG. The video and quiz can be found here should providers wish to run individual sessions. <https://www.speakup.org.uk/safetycircles>

Internet safety was confirmed as the next topic meeting, in line with what participants asked for following the road safety session. It is planned for early August (a Tuesday afternoon) at the Riverside Centre, with an exact date still to be confirmed. The Isle of Wight College has been approached but is unable to send a

representative in person; Nathan is exploring options such as a live video link so the College can still contribute. Materials being sourced include a short, accessible video produced by Brighton University and an easy-read “staying safe online” guide from Sally Ash (IOW Council training standards), who will also attend on the day to answer any specific questions. Members of the group also suggested involving a PCSO to provide more specific safety and legal advice, given some difficult experiences reported by people they support; inviting the PCSO who regularly attends the LD Partnership Board was discussed as one option. Nathan will follow up.

Robert Paton highlighted the importance of keeping this work anchored to the three core themes of the Learning Disability Strategy: keeping safe, staying healthy, and living my life, so that activity under each theme builds towards a coherent picture over the year.

The group also discussed how to gather feedback more widely for future topic meetings, beyond those attending in person. It was agreed that:

- o “Keeping safe” will be the first theme for this exercise, rather than trying to cover “staying healthy” and “living my life” at the same time, to keep the scope manageable.
- o Nathan will draft a small number of focused, open questions on this theme (for example, around feeling safe and being able to make decisions).
- o Providers will use these questions, adapted as appropriate for the people they support, to gather feedback — with a preference for creative or interactive formats over formal written surveys where possible.
- o Responses will be collected via a short web form so feedback can be analysed and themed.
- o This needs to be completed in time to brief the group ahead of the next LD Partnership Board meeting on 2 September 2026, allowing roughly six weeks for feedback to come in and be analysed.

Commented [NB1]: Nathan see actions section for deadline to be created

• GP / Doctors Surgeries Project — Healthwatch IW

On behalf of Healthwatch IW (Joanna Smith, who was unable to attend), Nathan shared an update: Healthwatch is running a survey on people’s recent experience of contacting and using GP practices, covering any changes since 1 October 2025, with a report due to be published in summer 2026. Healthwatch is also planning to speak directly with people with a learning disability about their GP experiences, working with John Phillips, Becka Blachford, and others to arrange this, and a small focus group (involving Joanna Smith, Nathan and others) is planned to look specifically at GP appointment access for the LD community. Anyone interested in sharing their experience of accessing GP services was invited to get in touch.

This prompted a wider discussion about access to primary care, including:

- o Significant variation between GP practices in how well reasonable adjustments are delivered, even where these are well understood and agreed.
- o Increasing reliance on digital and app-based contact methods (for example, online consultation tools and health apps) creating barriers for some people with learning disabilities.
- o Positive examples of good practice, including autism-friendly walkthrough videos and visual/QR-code “what to expect” guides at some surgeries, and improvements in identifying and following up annual health checks.
- o A view that responsibility for delivering reasonable adjustments sits with the organisation, and that individual staff supporting a reasonable adjustment cannot resolve more fundamental access problems alone — these need to be escalated within the organisation.

A partner organisation working on the health checks project reported significant progress on the island, with completion rates reported as up by more than 10% this year and at least one surgery reaching 100% completion (these figures were given verbally during the meeting and have not been independently verified). The project will be reviewed at the end of its current, extended year, with an update to be brought to the LD Partnership Board.

- **Updates from Partners**

A number of partner updates were shared, including:

- o Activity programme update from a Johns Club: well-attended weekly sessions including quiz/games nights and karaoke, a planned silent disco, a monthly member-led DJ night, a riding activity moving to a “going out club” format, themed food nights, and an active pool team taking part in a summer league.
- o People Matter - Recruitment for paid trainer and lead facilitator roles to deliver mandatory learning disability and autism awareness training to health and care professionals, with capacity expanding from two to three training days per week from September.
- o The Learning Disability Support Centre is looking to grow its Thursday sessions for young people with additional needs (free taster sessions are available) and will be running an open session for people to come and see what is on offer.
- o An update on the Intensive Support Team: progress has been slow but is moving forward, with sign-off received for additional staffing; an occupational therapist post has been in place for three months and a speech and language therapy session has also been secured.
- o West Wight - An accessibility-focused update to the West Coast Sports and Community Centre website is underway.
- o Neil gave an update on cancer outcomes for people with a learning disability, which remain poorer than for the general population. A partnership with Wessex Cancer Trust (part of the NHS) is being explored, which would train and pay two or three people with a learning disability to help deliver cancer-awareness sessions; more detail will follow once available.

- **A.O.B.**

Leaflets about the Learning Disability Partnership Group were available for attendees to take away and share with the people and organisations they work with.

Actions:

- Safety scoping:
 - o Nathan to draft a small set of “keeping safe” themed feedback questions and circulate to providers.
 - o Providers to gather feedback from people they support using these questions, in a format that works for their group, and return it via the web form.
 - o Feedback to be analysed and a summary brought back to the group ahead of the LD Partnership Board meeting on 2 September 2026.
 - o Nathan will send a separate email with all details and guidance.
- Nathan to confirm and circulate the date, time and venue for the Internet Safety topic meeting (early August, Riverside Centre).
- Nathan to explore options for the Isle of Wight College to contribute remotely (for example, a live video link) to the Internet Safety topic meeting.
- Neil to circulate available impact evidence from the Wiltshire Wayfarers pilot and update the group once contract sign-off for the Wayfarers proposal is confirmed.
- Healthwatch IW (Joanna Smith), Nathan, John Phillips, and Becka Blachford to arrange a focus group on GP appointment access for the LD community.
- Neil to share further detail on the proposed Wessex Cancer Trust partnership once available.
- Attendees to take leaflets about the group to distribute among the people and organisations they work with.