

Brighton & Hove City Council

Consultation Engagement summary

Engagement Activity 1: Speak Out Engagement – Wellington House Service Users

Date: 7th May 2026

Participants: Service Users

This consultation has focused on a sensitive proposal affecting people supported at Wellington House. Throughout the process, extensive engagement has taken place with families, carers, staff, social workers, advocacy organisations, and representatives of the wider learning disability community to ensure that views and concerns are fully understood and reflected.

Following discussions with parents, carers, and social workers, it was agreed that people supported at the service would not be informed of the proposal at this stage. Families and carers raised concerns that discussing potential closure plans before any decision had been made and without the ability to provide clear reassurance about future arrangements, could cause significant anxiety and distress, particularly for autistic individuals, it was therefore agreed that, if a formal decision is made, information would be shared at the appropriate time and in a way that is tailored to each individual's communication and support needs.

Speak Out were able to support engagement and completed a visit to the service to consult on what was important to attendees, things they enjoy and friendships. Speak Out were able to complete their report without referencing the potential closure plans.

Key findings:

Feedback from service users was overwhelmingly positive. Participants consistently described Wellington House as a place they enjoy attending, using phrases such as:

- "I love it."
- "It's fun."
- "It's good. I love it."
- "When I walk through the door, I feel happy."
- Most surveyed individuals selected positive emotional responses when asked about their experience of the service.
- Strong satisfaction with the service and positive emotional responses.
- Friendships and social connections are highly valued.
- Staff recognised as caring, knowledgeable and responsive.
- Meaningful activities and community participation are highly valued.
- Routine, familiarity and stability support wellbeing.

Summary: Service users expressed overwhelmingly positive views and highlighted the importance of relationships, routine, and specialist support.

Friendships and relationships have been captured within individual reviews and

Brighton & Hove City Council

commissioners and social work managers are aware of the groupings that would like to stay together with any new proposed re-provision.

Any new provider would need to assure that they will provide valued meaningful activities and community participation through a scheduled week of activities devised to meet the needs and desires of the group supported.

Engagement Activity 2: Learning Disability Partnership Board

Date: 30th April 2026

Participants: Partnership Board Members

Key findings

- Discussion of financial rationale for proposal.
- Concerns regarding service continuity and future demand.
- Concerns regarding market capacity and complex needs provision.
- Need to be evidence regarding alternative provision.

Summary: Members emphasised the importance of ensuring future provision can meet current and future demand.

Engagement Activity 3: Parent Carers' Council (PaCC) and AMAZE

Date: 19th May and 2nd June 2026

Participants: Parent Carers' Council Members and Stakeholders

Key findings

- Financial savings versus service quality.
- Capacity and suitability of alternative provision.
- Future demand for services.
- Impact on individuals and families.
- Trust, transparency, and consultation integrity.

Summary: Parent Carers' Council and AMAZE requested robust evidence that alternative provision can safely replicate current outcomes.

Engagement Activity 4: Learning Disability Partnership Board Link Group - focused discussions

Date: 8th June 2026

Participants: People with lived experience

Key findings

- Strong opposition to closure.
- Concerns regarding loss of community and belonging.
- Impact on wellbeing and independence.
- Need for accessible communication and advocacy.

Summary: The response from Speak Out Link Group Peer Advocates demonstrates strong concern about the loss of a valued community resource, uncertainty about the

Brighton & Hove City Council

suitability of alternative provision, and fears regarding the impact on wellbeing, social inclusion, and support networks. Respondents consistently emphasised themes of community, continuity, fairness, and protecting vulnerable people from further disadvantages.

Engagement Activity 5: Family and Carer Engagement Meeting

Date: 9th June 2026

Participants: Families and Carers

Key findings:

- Continuity of care and transition planning.
- Provider quality and capability.
- Support for people with complex needs.
- Market capacity and value for money.
- Alternative options to closure.

Summary: Families and carers sought reassurance regarding quality, safety, and continuity.

Engagement Activity 6: Provider Engagement Event

Date: 30th June 2026

Participants: Providers, Families and Carers

Key findings

- Providers outline service models and capacity.
- Families met providers and discussed support options.
- Some service visits arranged on request of carers

Summary:

- The Provider engagement meeting on 30th June provided an event for families and carers to meet and discuss the “potential” Day opportunity provision options with the independent day service providers in the city, that are referenced as part of the formal consultation document. To ensure that everyone is fully informed about the Provider Market and what is available, to support engagement with the Formal consultation.
- On the day Providers were able to discuss their current capacity and ability to expand their capacity to meet proposed demand. They were also able to discuss usual practice of working to capacity, and not operating with vacancies, as it would not be financially viable for them to employ staff and run with vacancies. Leaflets with written information on each service were available to share with attendees.

Engagement Activity 7: Family and Carer meeting with Councilor Mitchie

Brighton & Hove City Council

Alexander

Date: 30th June 2026

Participants: Families and Carers

Summary: Why Wellington House is being considered for closure and whether alternative savings are available. Impact on long-term service users, many attending for decades. Concerns about trust, previous promises, and consultation transparency. Loss of choice, specialist provision, and suitable alternatives. Potential false economy due to increase in respite and residential care costs. Calls to improve and modernise the service rather than close it.