

# 'What's Going On' event

BANES mental health providers, service users and supporters learning from each other

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## Summary report

January 2022

Organised by KS2 Bath & St Mungo's, funded by Healthwatch BANES

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**St Mungo's**  
Ending homelessness  
Rebuilding lives



**healthwatch**  
Bath and North East  
Somerset

*"People want to change and are dedicated to making change possible".*

Participant

# 'What's Going On' event

## Summary Report

### Introduction

Event aim: The aim of the event was to create an opportunity for anyone affected by mental health issues to talk directly with mental health service providers and commissioners to find out what's going on in the Bath and North East Somerset (BANES) area.

Before the event we listened to 91 local people, who shared their personal views, experiences and ideas on accessing mental health and wellbeing services in BANES. We captured both the experiences of service users and carers via a survey (paper-based and online format) and 6 focus groups. This feedback was then used to inform the event and the themes for discussion.

### What's Going On Event

The event took place on Wed 17<sup>th</sup> Nov 2021 at the Salvation Army, central Bath. It enabled people to hear, from people directly responsible for services, about what they provide and their plans for the future; giving people affected by mental health issues the opportunity to give direct feedback and ask questions.

The service providers that attended were:

- Rachel Redman, Clinical Lead for BANES, Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership (AWP) NHS Trust
- Justin Wride, Head of Wellbeing Services, BANES Community Health and Care Services, Virgin Care
- Kate Morton, Chief Executive, Bath Mind

Apologies were provided by Dominic Hardesty, Chief Executive, Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership (AWP) NHS Trust and Lucy Kitchener, Mental Health Commissioning Manager, B&NES Council & Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), who at short notice were unfortunately unable to attend.



Each service provider gave a short presentation. Following which, those with lived experience then joined one of four group discussion tables:

- Theme 1: Managing own mental health and wellbeing in the community
- Theme 2: Collaboration of organisations
- Theme 3: Crisis support, inpatient care and discharge planning

- Themes 4 & 5: The value of involvement / co-production in services + equal access to services and meeting the needs of person-centred care

Rachel Redman, Justin Wride and Kate Morton then spent time with each of the discussion groups, listening to those with lived experience and answering questions. Angus Claydon, Director of Operations, The Care Forum / Healthwatch BANES also joined each discussion group.

A full summary of what was said in each of the group discussions can be found in the 'What's Going On event - Full report, Jan 2022', click [here](#).



## Reflections & Actions

### Kate Morton, Bath Mind

**Reflections** - So positive to see people in person and have dedicated time to listen to people's experiences of the services and share their thoughts in a safe space. Collective and creative solutions to some of the challenges across the system was also very refreshing and thought provoking.

#### Actions:

- I have had conversations within Bath Mind about how we can improve our feedback mechanisms and ensure improved co-production of service development with member's panel and peer volunteers.
- Bath Mind are reviewing and developing our protocols around family and carer involvement and importance of family views/experience.
- Bath Mind will improve connections and communication with people accessing our services, particularly around service challenges and when there are system challenges we have to manage.

### Justin Wride, Virgin Care

**Reflections** - It was interesting to learn that many local people hadn't realised that Virgin Care (now HCRG Care Group) provided health and care services across Bath & North East Somerset even though they have been doing so for the past 5 years. I think I took for it for granted that people would have known this and I'm sure many others who work for Virgin Care would have thought the same. This demonstrated that even large, local organisations need to ensure that they're continually promoting their services to increase their awareness.

It was interesting to learn from some people how much they valued the Wellbeing College (now known as Wellbeing Courses) and Volunteer Services and how these services had been such an important part of their recovery. This has made me feel even more determined to ensure that these services continually improve and develop.

The event helped make me and others realise how important, refreshing and exciting it was to see people again, physically and not over a screen. This is definitely something we need to start doing more of again as soon as we're able.

I feel that it's really important to take the information from these events and ensure that we use it to help make improvements to mental health services that people would like to see.

**Actions:**

- Continue to improve access to all our wellbeing services by providing them in numerous different ways especially to those that can benefit most.
- Improve the marketing of all our wellbeing services to ensure that more people understand what is available to them.
- Increase feedback from people who use our services to continually improve them.

**Rachel Redman, AWP**

**Reflections** - The energy and commitment to improve the experiences of those experiencing mental health difficulties in the local community was palpable. Having time to connect in a shared space and talk freely about the complexities of mental health and the services we have in Bath & North East Somerset highlighted [to me] the power and importance of collaboration if we are going to successfully shape and change services for the better.

**Actions:**

- To contribute to work with system partners to support the developing Community Mental Health Framework (CMHF) agenda.
- To work with service users and carers through our existing forums to improve communication with families and carers in accordance with our recent Triangle of Care audit. A particular focus will be on recognising and recording carer contact, confidentiality and signposting to additional support.

Due to the absence of commissioner representation, participant questions were taken and responded to after the event by Lucy Kitchener, on behalf of the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). These questions and responses can be found in the 'What's Going On event - Full report, Jan 2022', click [here](#).

## Conclusions

Early access to health and wellbeing services is important, but more importantly is for people to know how and where to access support. People want support that isn't just based around 9am-5pm, weekday provision.

Having a range of wellbeing groups and activities, volunteering opportunities, and local peer support groups aid community wellbeing.

People don't want to feel bounced around services and having to keep retelling their story. They want better communication and more joined up care; between both statutory NHS services, community health and care services, and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector partners (i.e. Bath Mind, DHI, BANES Carers Centre).

People want to have ownership over their care, choose what is right for them and be able to access it. Having the right support, at the right time, for the right length of time is imperative.

People want crisis prevention support that is person-centred and delivered in a trauma informed way.

Loved ones of those struggling with their mental health want to be listened to, treated with care and compassion, and supported themselves within their role. For carers, the triangle of care is crucial.

Overall, people want to be heard and want to work collaboratively with professionals, as equals, not only within their own care, but also in the evaluation, design and development of services.

## Recommendations

Based on our conclusions, we make the following recommendations:

- **Improve access to clear mental health and wellbeing information** - both online (i.e. promotion of relevant websites/apps) and in printed form (more mental health related posters in GP surgeries, leaflets in pharmacies, hairdressers, taxis... etc), including how and where to access crisis support.
- Ensure the **Hope Guide is fully funded and maintained** as a sustainable collaborative resource.
- Enhance provision of **wellbeing groups and activities during evenings and weekends**.
- **Improve accessibility of mental health and wellbeing services within BANES rural communities** (Chew Valley, Keynsham, and Somer Valley).
- **Tackle digital poverty through new initiatives**, i.e. 'an IT buddy would be helpful to access online support services, someone to help with IT problems and build confidence with things such as log-ons and codes etc'.
- **Increase awareness of self-referral pathways** (i.e. AWP Talking Therapies), to reduce the need for GP referral and having to retell your story.
- **Improve awareness and implementation of the triangle of care**.
- **Co-deliver community-based psychoeducational workshops** alongside those with lived experience (bipolar, hearing voices, eating disorders, etc), to improve awareness, reduce stigma and create supportive conversations.
- **Provide more opportunities to hear service user and carer voices**, through meaningful involvement and coproduction activities within all mental health and wellbeing services.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all the group members for giving their time to attend the What's Going On event and for being open, honest and reflective whilst sharing their lived experience. Thank you also to the speakers, facilitators and volunteers from partner organisations (AWP, Virgin Care, Healthwatch BANES, Creativity Works, St Mungo's, Bath Mind, BANES Carers Centre, Trauma Breakthrough, KS2 Bath and BANES Council) who all contributed to the success of the event.

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