



# Hear Our Voices get together report - October 2023

## Introduction

Mencap and Healthwatch Herefordshire had been thinking about how people with a Learning Disability can have a bigger say in what matters to them in Herefordshire.

In addition, Star College had suggested to Mencap that there should be more opportunities for people with learning disabilities to meet across Herefordshire and share ideas.

Sometimes people don't get a say and sometimes the same people are asked all the time and other times services get it right.

We wondered can we do better by working together and increasing the pool of people that are asked for what matters to them?

Perhaps we can let services know a better way to hear the views of people with a learning disability.

We wondered if it would be good to get together groups of individuals and reps who like to speak up and support them to meet each other to discuss it.

We asked if this was a good idea and 11 organisations/services asked participants and agreed and they supported interested individuals with a learning disability to sign up.

We came up with a catchy name that groups liked and created a logo and chose a day and venue.

Herefordshire Community Foundation offered funding to make the day a reality.

Hear Our Voices get-together happened on 19th October 2023 at the Kindle Centre in Hereford and this is a report of:

- What we did on the day
- What People said
- What people thought of the day and Hear Our Voices



# Appreciations!

Thank you to the participants on the day for coming along and making it a day full of energy and inspiration and most of all for sharing their enthusiasm and views.

Particular thanks to the people with a learning disability that spoke on the day and worked hard to organise and make the event a success.

Thank you to Herefordshire Community Foundation for funding the event.

## Participants

There were 33 participants with a learning disability from 11 organisations with 20 support workers, and 2 event organisation staff.

### Organisations involved were:

Mencap, Our News Our Views, Aspire, National Star College, Enviroability, ECHO, Walsingham Support, Shared Lives, Health Checkers, Barrs Court, Healthwatch.

## Agenda

This was our agenda:



### Agenda

10.00am	Tea/Coffee
10.20am	Introduction and Housekeeping
10.25am	Phil Hughes, Royal Mencap Society Trustee
10.40am	Getting to Know You
11.25am	<b>Table Activity</b> What are your organisations currently doing?
12 noon	<b>LUNCH</b>
12.45pm	Speakers: Tracy Crum, Ian Harper and Bev Davies
1.15pm	<b>Table Activity</b> How would you like to be involved?
2.30pm	Reflections of the day - where do we go from here?
3.00pm	End



# PowerPoint

Our PowerPoint shows the activity content and is in the appendix.

## Table activity – what are the organisations already doing?

Participants discussed their activities and noted them on flip chart paper as follows:

### Shared Lives

Given staffs' phone number	Treated equally
Dedicated staff for each individual – same with carer	Feedback forms
Encourage to use own words	Individual Review
Make own decisions	Involved in the farm
Make my own choices, ie bedroom	Included in meal choices
Included in staff interviews for new carers	Choices, own health, activities, own pet

### Our News Our Views

Recruit 2 more people	Newsletter Working on edition December/January 400 & 50 emails
Invite MPs	Speak as team. Discuss → supervision
Invite people to visit	Herefordshire
Learning disability champion	Raise money for refereshments/biscuits
Supervise support worker	Stories welcome. We hear about us!
Under ECHO umbrella	Write articles, write letters



### Walsingham Support, Mencap (national), Shared Lives

Involvement meetings	Social worker meetings
House meetings/residents' meetings Key worker meetings	Working/personal jobs
Staff meetings	Town Hall meeting/council meeting (Walsingham)
Financial meetings	Email access (Walsingham)
Questionnaires	Creative learning (Walsingham)

### Shared Lives

Scope charity shop	Shared Lives staff
Day activities – Houghton Project	Social worker
Mencap	Safe places
Health Checkers	Involvement in interviewing new Shared Lives carers.
Speakeasy NOW	Friends/family
Learning Disability team	Social groups

### ECHO

Rep group: weekly meetings. Voted on participants from the projects	Newsletter to say what's going on
Trustee Support: 1/3 of the board are participants	We ask! Questionnaires and visits. Make sure everyone is happy
High quality events + activities putting participants first.	Help interview staff
Employ a participant involvement worker	Provide day activities and volunteering opportunities
Membership of ECHO – vote at AGM	Day trips and holidays
Promote independence	We do things at evenings and weekends too
Seen and treated as individuals	Try to offer as many choices as possible
Get involved and lead	Go out into the community and play an active part.

### Enviroability

Leisure Link: I'm a member of Leisure Link and we have quarterly meetings where members choose what events they like on the Planner	Projects I'm involved in: Spread our wings Grow a lot The book shop Retail Newsletter Leisure Link Business admin (computer work)
I came up with the idea for an Enviroability newsletter and Enviroability supported me in making it happen	I am organising a Hallowe'en party in Ross. My friends at Enviroabiity wanted a Hallowe'en party so I agreed to organise it.

### National Star College

Safeguarding	Student Voice
Talk to OT	Chatting with staff
Ring the college	Email service manager
AACL	Facilitator
Class tutor	Email supervision manager
Student Parliament	Communication device
Job coach	Sign language
Annual review	Talk to EWS

### Barrs Court

Student Assembly	Talk to staff → Head of College or Assistant Head
Meetings	Work Experience preferences
ACC devices, ipads, emails	Options for lessons, ie choices
Student Council	Talk to trusted friends
Facebook: uploads from different events	Class Reps
Eco Council	Transition visits

# Table activity – How would you like to be involved?

Tables considered 5 different ways of being consulted and commented on them before filling in their personal preferences on their individual forms. All together 30 forms were completed.

My name \_\_\_\_\_

My telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

My email address \_\_\_\_\_

My support worker's name \_\_\_\_\_

My support worker or support organisation's email address \_\_\_\_\_



I want to be a participant of of Hear Our Voices.

I am happy for services to find out my views in the way I have ticked.

I am happy for Mencap or Healthwatch to contact me.

I understand that it is ok to say no when I don't want to say my views.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

	Type of involvement				What support would you need?
1	Surveys/Polls/Vote face to face				
	Surveys/Polls/Vote online				
2	Focus group face to face				
	Focus group online				
3	Committee face to face				
	Committee online				
4	Individual interview/chat				
	Individual interview/chat online				
5	Hear Our Voices: Get together				

## Surveys/ Polls/ Vote

Participants looked at 4 different surveys and commented on them using smileys and writing.

13 people liked this type of involvement face to face and online.

14 people liked this type of involvement face to face only. "Support needed".

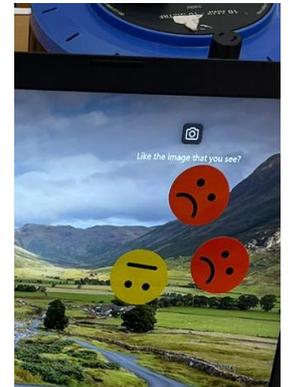
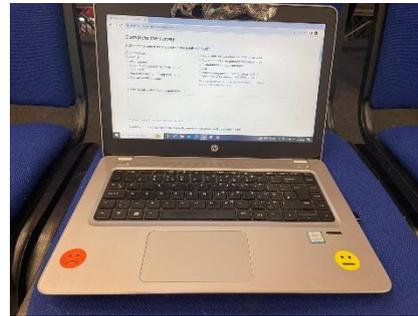
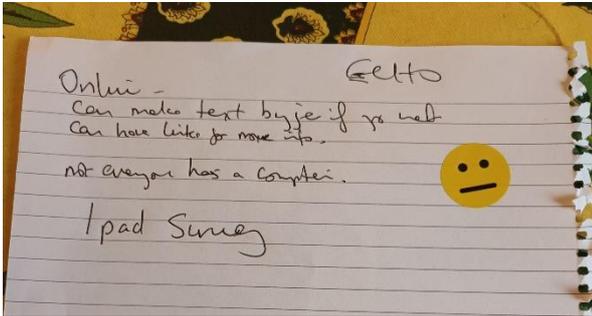
2 did not like this type of involvement at all and 2 were undecided.

"Cos of the big words that I don't understand or do not know what words mean".

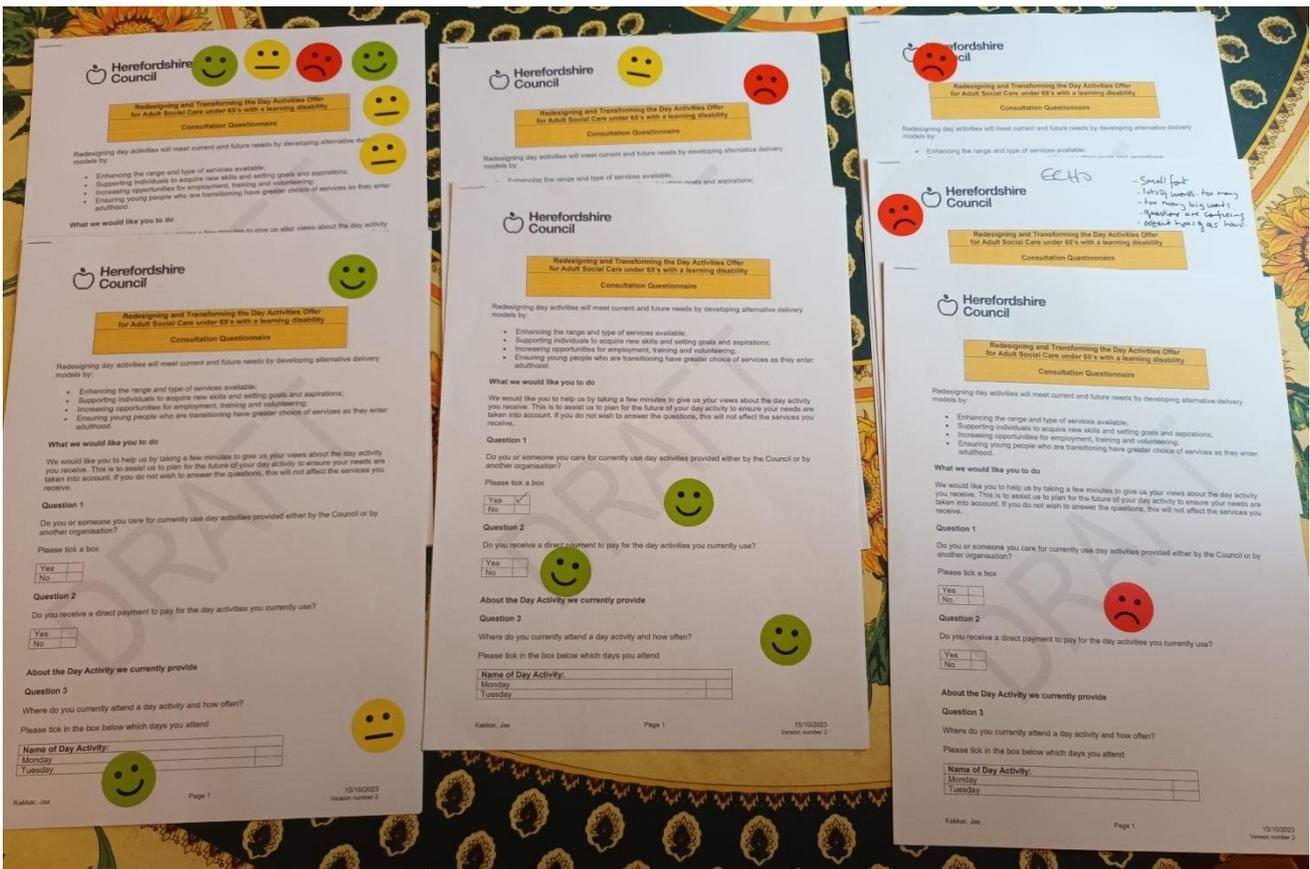


Comments on individual surveys are below:

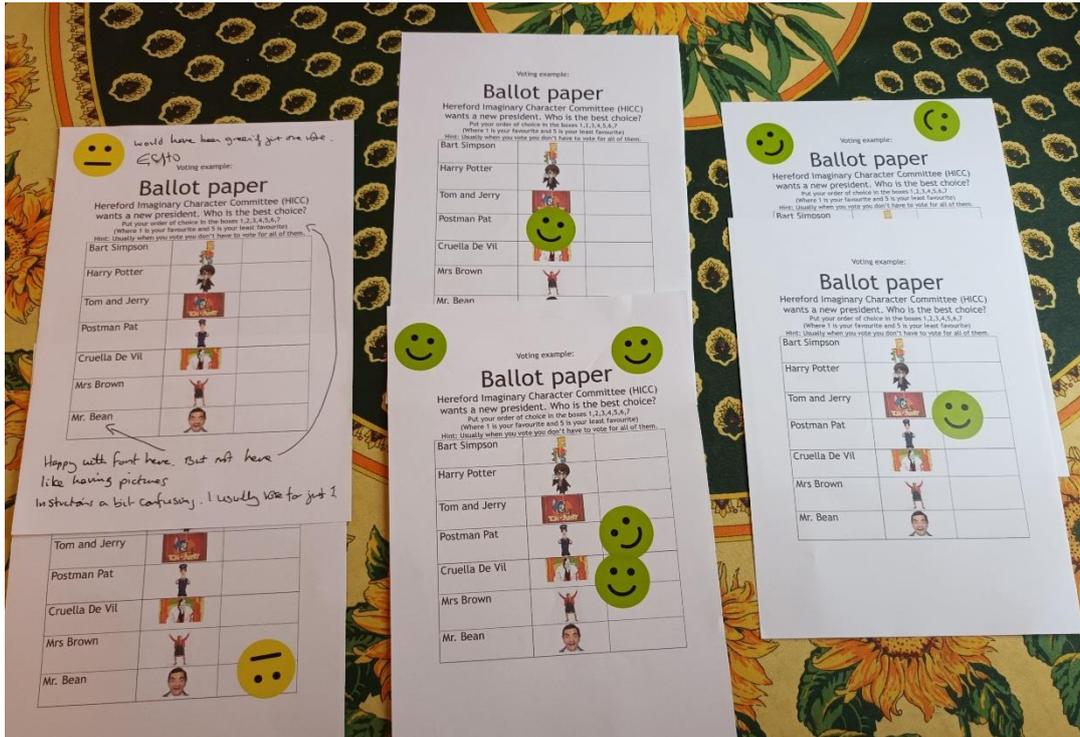
## Healthwatch Herefordshire Have your say share your views online form



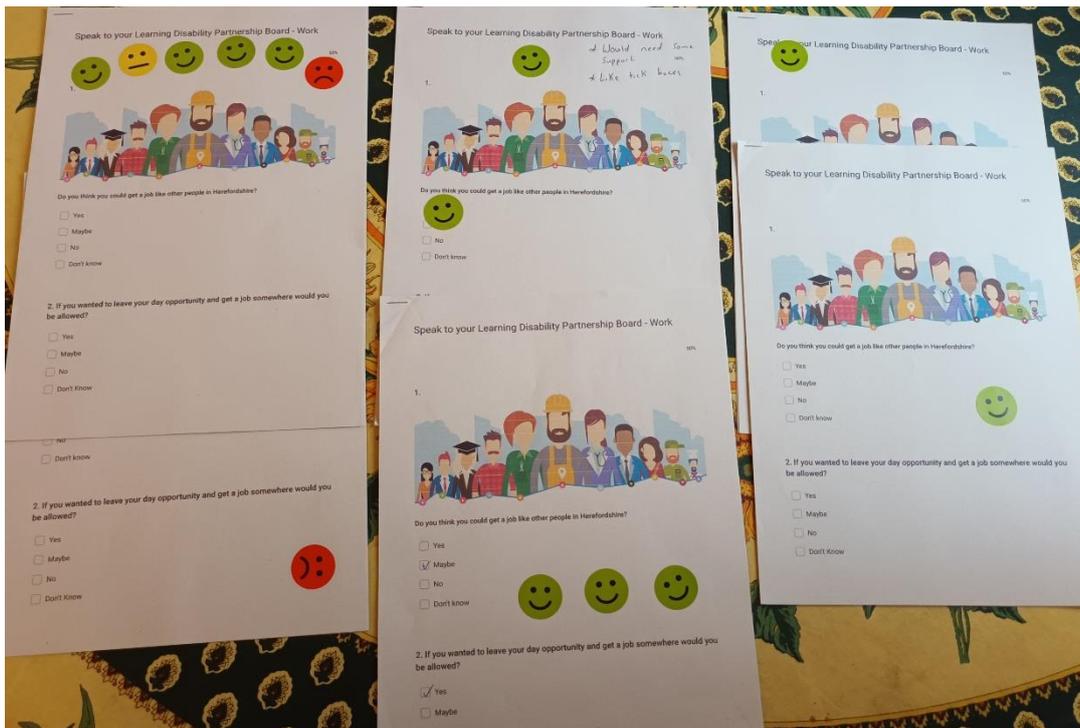
## Herefordshire Council day activity survey



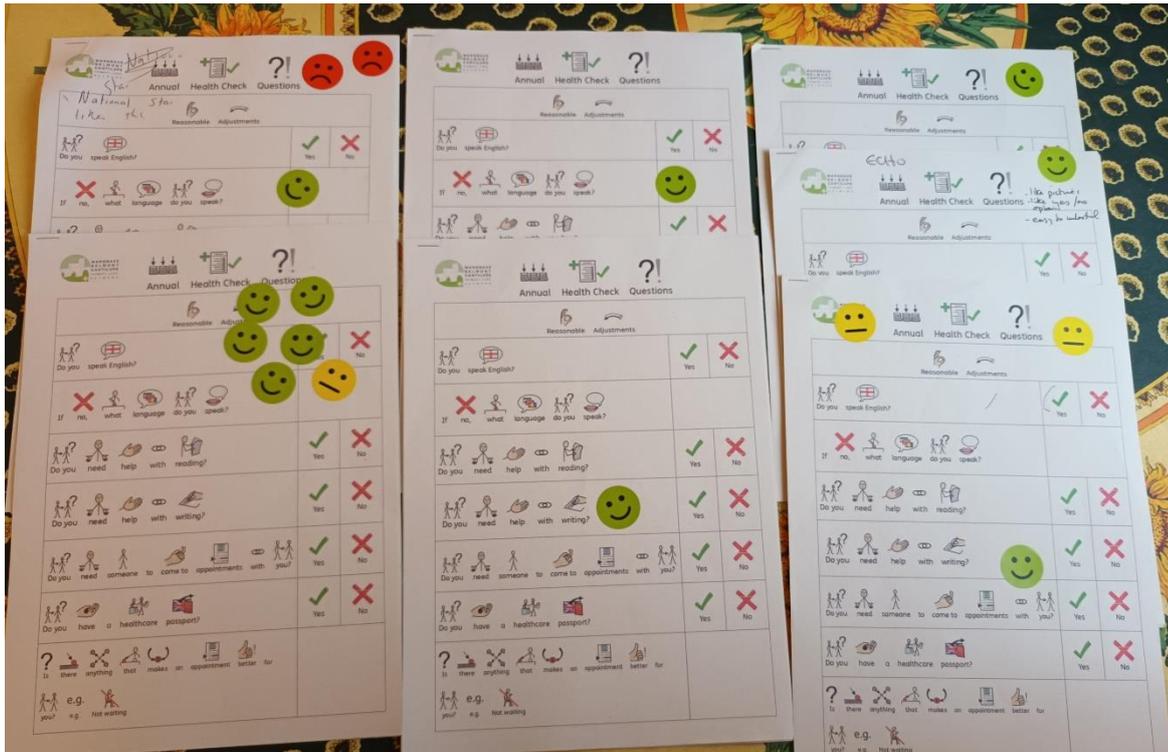
## Ballot paper with pictures



## Learning Disability Partnership Board easier read survey with pictures.



## Annual Health Check survey with widgets

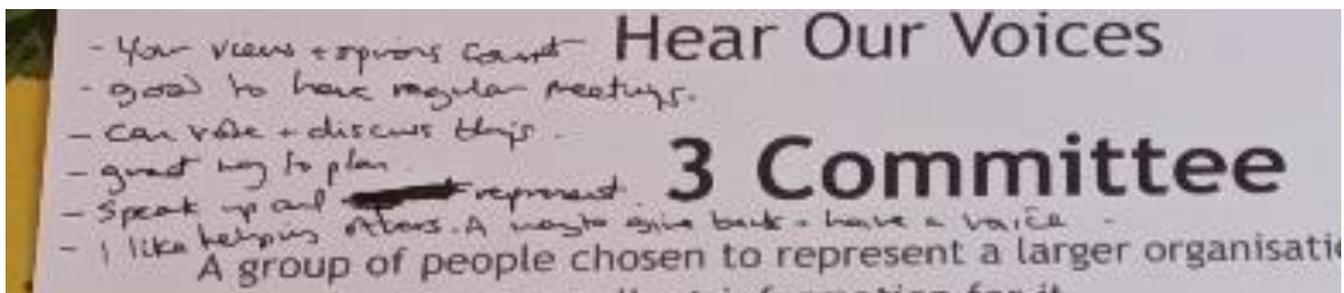


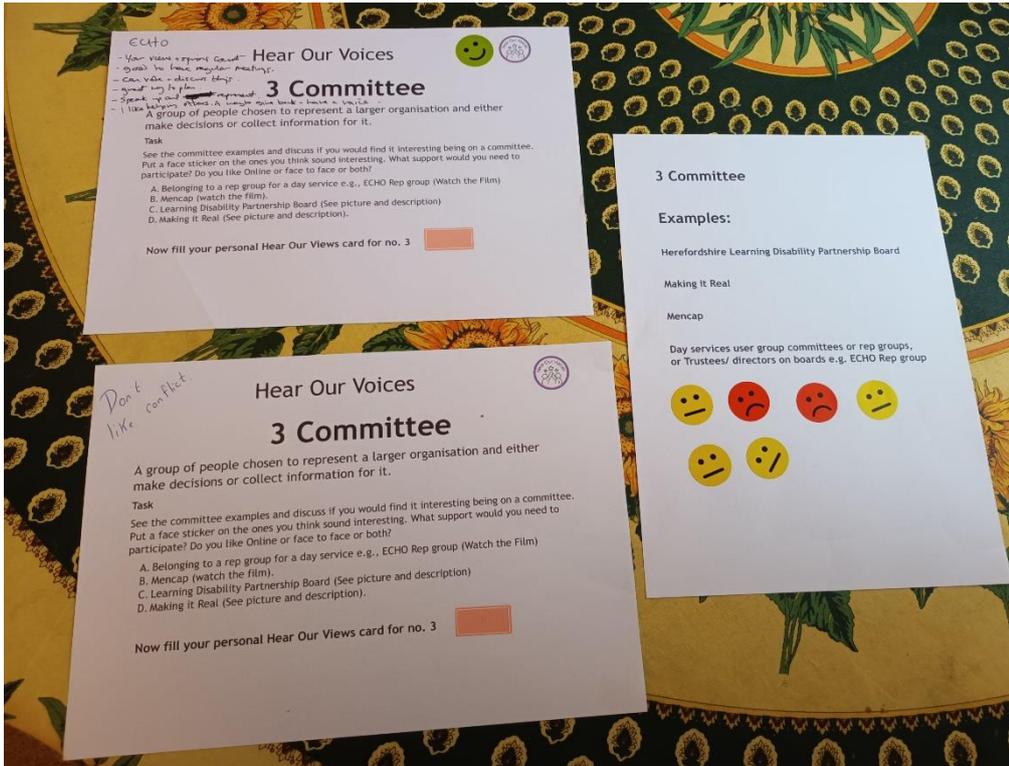
### Focus groups

- 12 liked this way of involvement both face to face and online.
- 14 people liked this way of involvement face to face but not online.
- 3 didn't like this method of involvement at all. "Noisy, Overwhelming".
- 1 was undecided "scary."

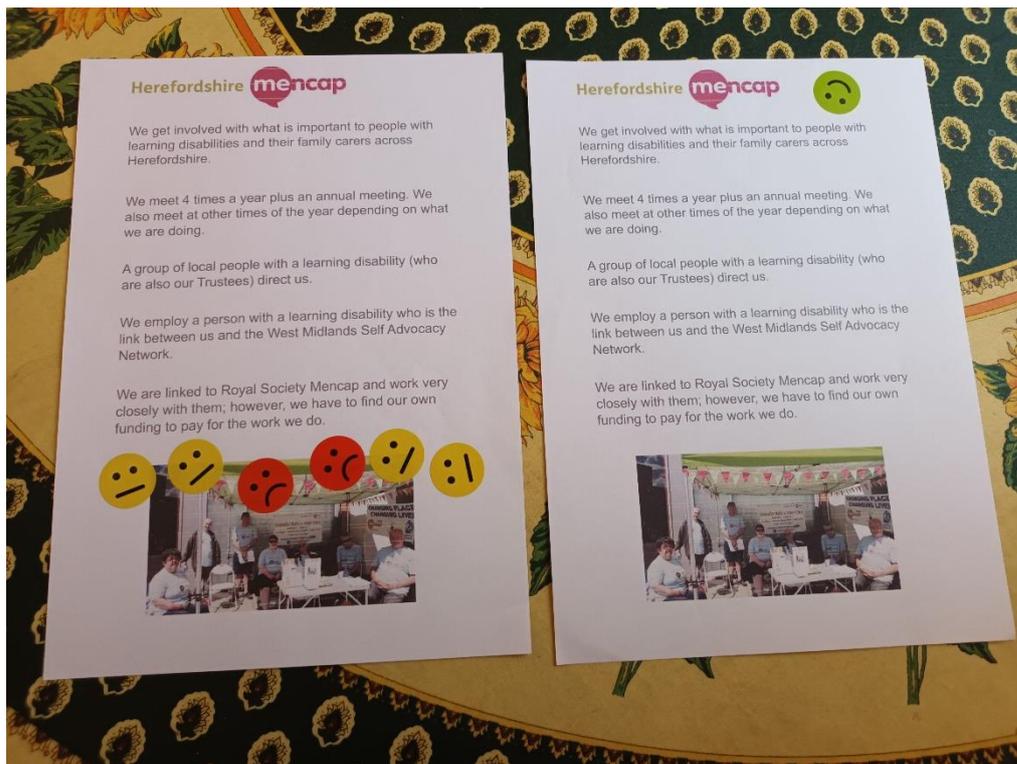
### Committees

- 10 liked this way of involvement face to face or online.
- Preference face to face "support needed", "Go in a group", "Prefer subject specific".
- 12 liked this way of involvement face to face only. "I would need support to understand". "Prefer topic specific meeting".
- 8 didn't like this way or were undecided. "Its embarrassing".

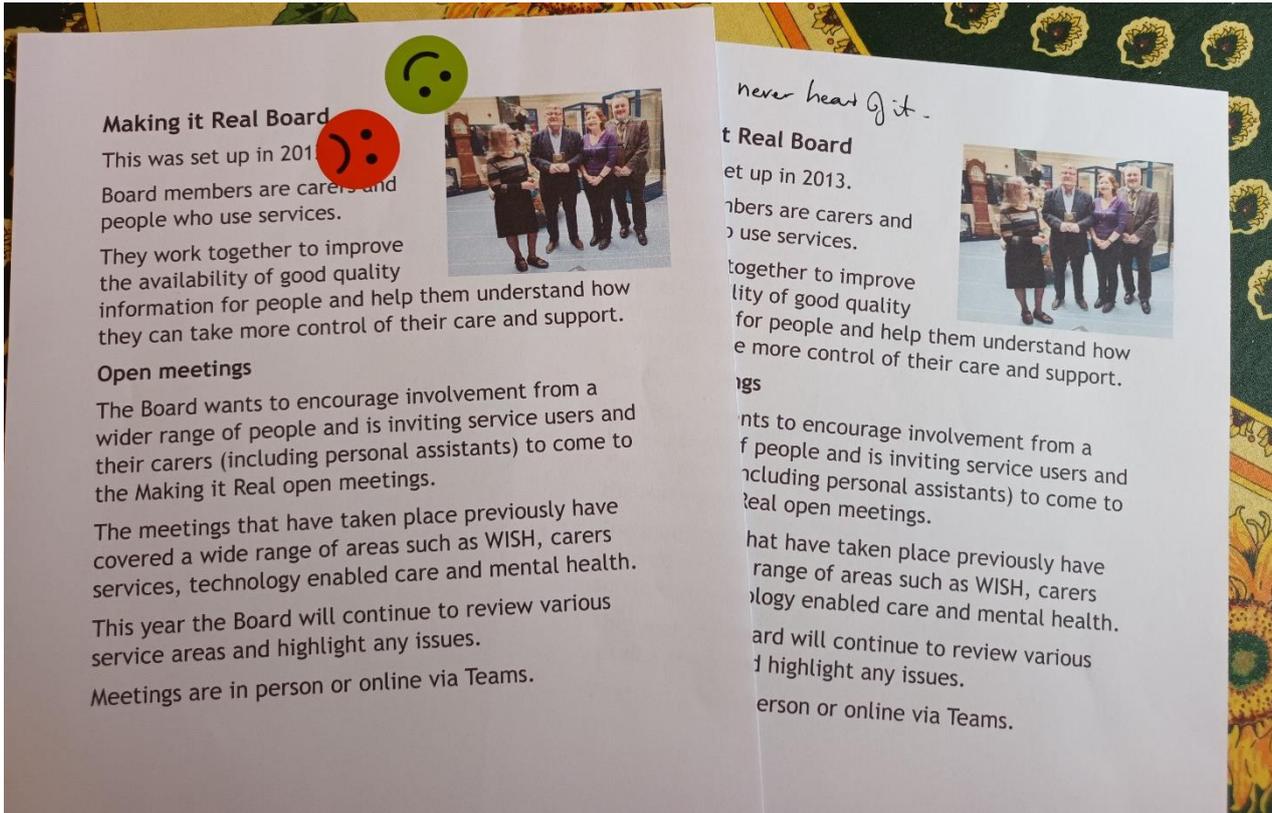




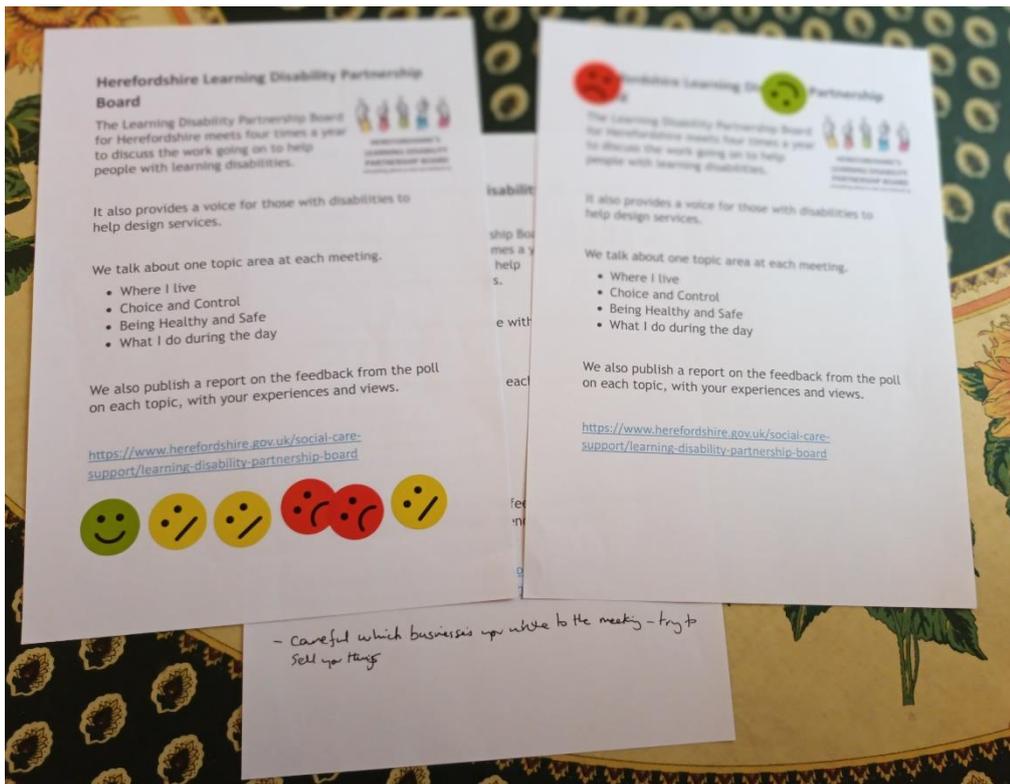
**Mencap**



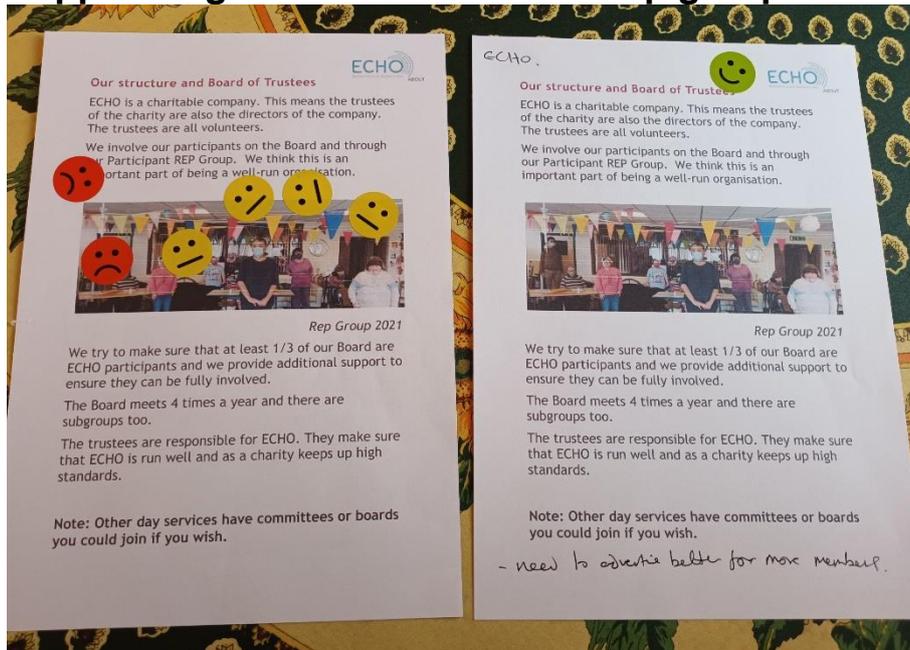
## Making It Real



## Learning Disability Partnership Board



## Support Organisation Trustee or Rep group – ECHO as example



### Individual chats/ Interviews

14 liked this way of involvement face to face or online. "With support".

13 liked this way of involvement face to face and not online.

3 didn't like this way or were undecided "Too much typing".

### Hear Our Voices Get Togethers

24 liked the idea of Hear Our Voices get together as a way of getting involved/ being consulted.

2 were undecided.

3 did not like this way of getting involved.

## Reflections of the day

28 people filled an evaluation form.

### Have you found the event useful?

27 people said yes nobody said no.

### What did you like about the event?

Variety.

Everything / all of it x5

Well organised.

Everyone's information was very interesting.

Everybody getting together.

All presentations were good, hearing all the views and lived experiences.



It has been interesting, cake, hearing our voices to be heard.

Discussions.

Brilliant!

Be good to see your friends.

I liked seeing my friends and socialising. I loved the interview, it was amazing!

The food was very good too.

Seeing new people.

I liked talking to different people and seeing friends I haven't seen for a while.

Plenty of room.

Learning about the health checkers.

Getting here was an easy walk, meeting with friends, liked the presentation screen.

The variety of organisations, group discussions, sharing of information, seeing individuals speaking up and being involved.

Involved in the speaking. Everyone got to have their say. X2

Being involved in the talks.

See different people.

It was nice for the students to see the successes of people with learning disabilities and how they can get their voices heard.

Today was amazing I would love to do more.

A good mix of organisations, sign in, agenda order, speakers and lunch all really good.

Very glad most of the speakers were participants.

Next time I will bring more participants!

Well organised, thank you!

### **What didn't you like about the event?**

Nothing x20

Struggled to understand some of the talks.

Some information overload. Too many pieces of paper on table at once.

(Shared lives x 4)

The room was too warm.

Tables too close together for wheelchairs, room gets quite noisy, needed a little longer for the survey exercise (ECHO)

### **Would you come to the next Hear Our Voices event?**

Yes x 28.

### **How often do you think Hear Our Voices should meet?**

3 monthly x6, 6 monthly x16, Yearly x 9

### **Other comments**

If we know the topics in advance, we could prepare for you.

