

Talkback

Personal Development & Skills



Life and Social skills
Work Experience
The Accessible Workshop
Working Outdoors
Expressive Arts
Sports & Good Health

Talkback

DEVELOPING A WORLD OF POSSIBILITIES

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Welcome to Personal Development and Skills

At Talkback, we support autistic individuals and those with learning disabilities as they move to the next chapter of their lives, offering guidance for both employment and personal development.

Many adults in our community face challenges with basic life skills such as budgeting, money management, and using public transport, which limits their independence. Our Personal Development and Skills Programme helps individuals build essential life skills, confidence, and friendships, while focusing on their strengths and goals to promote self-esteem and independence.

Key Impact Statistics

Our plays and professional education films, made by our members, have been viewed **over 2,000 times**, reaching audiences locally and beyond.

Over 60 people each year gain work skills through our Work Experience and Working Outdoors Groups.

Our Sports Academy has helped **over 200 individuals** stay active in the past year.

100% of our members achieve outcomes in the areas of Life and Social Skills.

Our vision is to empower individuals to build lasting, meaningful friendships, thrive with newfound freedom and confidence, develop essential life and employment skills, and work towards taking control of their wellbeing

We believe every individual has the potential to thrive and look forward to supporting you on your journey.



Neil Sainsbury
Head of Service for Adults and Employment



Life Skills



At Talkback, developing essential life skills is at the heart of what we do. We support individuals at every stage of their journey, whether it's learning how to stay safe at home and in the community, gaining confidence in travel training, managing finances, learning to cook, or preparing for employment.

Our life skills groups continuously evolve to meet the needs of our members, helping them set goals and achieve meaningful outcomes. We focus on the following areas:

- 1 Travel Training**
Enhancing independence, from basic community safety to navigating local, regional, national, and even international travel.
- 2 Health & Wellbeing**
Encouraging good nutrition and developing cooking skills, as well as physical activity for a healthier lifestyle.
- 3 Employability**
Developing the key skills that are needed for volunteering or paid employment.
- 4 Maintaining a Household**
Developing core skills needed in the house. From doing the washing, through to booking a doctor's appointment or managing a phone bill.
- 5 Healthy Relationships**
Developing a deep understanding and fostering strong, long-lasting relationships.

Social Skills



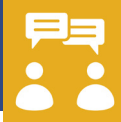
We understand that improving social skills and making new friends is not easy. Our social groups create an environment where people feel comfortable to express ideas and opinions. Key elements of the group include:

- 1 User-Led Activities**
Tailored to the needs of the members. These can range from cooking, to gaming, sports or even activities that build skills in the home.
- 2 Community Based Activities**
Encouraging independence and accessing local facilities. Including travel training and community safety.



ChaTea
Café

Work Experience



Our work experience groups offer opportunities to build skills in retail, hospitality, and customer facing roles. Each group combines practical experience with theory based sessions to help you identify the most suitable pathway for the future. Whether it be volunteering or paid work.

For example, our partnerships with Discover Bucks Museum and the Paralympic Heritage Trust in Aylesbury and The Mustard Seed Cafe and Food Hub in High Wycombe, enable members to build the following skills:

- 1 Communication Skills**
Developing confidence in speaking to people, through customer facing roles and interaction with peers.
- 2 Numeracy Skills**
Pricing items for sale, which helps to use and improve functional maths skills.
- 3 Money Skills**
Operating a cash register/till to process transactions accurately and efficiently.
- 4 People Skills**
Reception duties, including answering the phone, taking messages, and directing enquiries.
- 5 Customer Service Skills**
Working in a retail environment, and being able to answer customer queries efficiently.

ChaTea Café



A unique and welcoming space in High Wycombe created to support individuals with learning disabilities and autism. This exciting new venture is more than just a café, it's a place where people can develop valuable life skills. Through hands-on experience, participants gain essential skills such as serving, money handling, food hygiene and safety, and customer service.

The café not only offers a warm and inclusive environment for the local community but also plays a vital role in empowering individuals to build confidence and independence. With every cup served, ChaTea Café is helping to shape brighter futures by teaching skills that will last a lifetime.



THE ACCESSIBLE
WORKSHOP



The Accessible Workshop offers a comprehensive range of woodworking and practical skills designed to empower individuals. Participants not only learn how to plan and manage projects but also gain the knowledge needed to market and sell their finished items.

From basic home safety awareness to repairing, creating, upcycling, and developing valuable employment skills, The Accessible Workshop provides clear and achievable progression pathways.

Each person works from clear, structured plans on commissioned and bespoke projects. The income generated is reinvested into the enterprise or used to support our charitable partners. We also offer the opportunity to gain qualifications through NOCN accredited courses, ranging from Entry Level 3 to Level 2 in Carpentry and Joinery. Additionally, we actively seek to employ individuals who have demonstrated the skills and passion needed to contribute to our mission and develop within the environment.

Key skills you'll gain

- 1 Basic woodworking and DIY skills that can be applied in everyday life.
- 2 Confidence to tackle a wide range of DIY tasks.
- 3 Proficiency in using a variety of hand and power tools.
- 4 Knowledge of upcycling and how to turn unwanted items into valuable products.
- 5 Skills in budgeting, marketing, and selling products.
- 6 The ability to plan, execute, and complete projects for home and garden use.
- 7 Hands-on experience with advanced power tools and machinery.

Our workshops cater to adults of all abilities, taking into account a diverse range of physical and learning needs. Using both commercial and DIY tools, participants have the opportunity to repair, create, upcycle, and build skills that are directly transferable to the workplace.

Safety is our top priority. We have a clearly defined competency framework for operating machinery and power tools, ensuring all participants develop essential skills in a safe and supportive environment.





Our outdoor working group aims to build skills, engage people in work-related activity, and promote positive physical and mental wellbeing. With a clearly structured day that includes a wide variety of horticultural tasks, the group encourages the values and benefits of work.

Our unique partnerships with The Lady Ryder Memorial Garden in Frieth and St Mary and St George Church in High Wycombe enable us to be actively linked to the local community; and for our groups to work alongside the staff and volunteers that access the facilities of the walled garden.

Key elements of the group include:

- 1 Following Instructions**
Following clear and structured instructions to complete a task accurately and efficiently, ensuring a high standard of work.
- 2 Teamwork**
Building communication skills to work with others as part of a bigger team.
- 3 Horticultural Skills**
Developing a deeper understanding of horticulture to enhance practical skills and knowledge.
- 4 Practical Experience**
Undertaking regular activities, including digging, weeding, planting, thinning of seedlings, harvesting of crops, clearing of plots, potting, and taking cuttings.
- 5 Social Skills**
Building social networks and friendships through meeting and engaging with others.
- 6 Time Management**
Understanding the importance of good timekeeping and working to a schedule.
- 7 Seasonal Awareness**
Gaining a better understanding of the seasons and the importance of a scheduled workload.



Expressive Arts



Our Expressive Arts groups use a range of traditional techniques, including drawing, painting and working with clay; as well as incorporating music, physical activity and mindfulness techniques that build confidence and an ability for members to express themselves. We also incorporate technology in to sessions including the use of Cricut machines. Key elements include:

- 1 Creativity**
Using art as a powerful tool for self-expression and creativity, allowing individuals to explore their imagination and develop unique ideas.
- 2 Emotional Exploration**
Engaging in sensory-based art sessions to explore and express different emotions in a safe and supportive environment.
- 3 Communication**
Building communication skills by using alternative art techniques to convey thoughts, feelings, and ideas visually.
- 4 Self-Awareness**
Encouraging self-reflection and personal growth by fostering an 'I Can' attitude through artistic expression.
- 5 Confidence**
Developing the courage to speak up, share opinions, and express individuality through creative work and group discussions.
- 6 Art Skills**
Gaining hands-on experience with a variety of art techniques and materials, enhancing both artistic ability and problem-solving skills.

Performing Arts



Our weekly theatre group works towards two performances a year, one in summer and one at Christmas, providing a clear goal and continuous development. It offers a supportive space to build confidence, creativity, and self-expression while developing valuable life skills.

Participants engage in scriptwriting, developing storylines and characters while collaborating with others. The group also strengthens social and communication skills, teamwork, and memory techniques. Through practice and performance, members gain confidence, explore their creativity, and set personal goals with support to achieve them. Our group has also worked on film projects covering topics such as online scams and antisocial behaviour.





Our Sports Groups offer people the opportunity to engage in regular activity that helps them live a healthier life and make friends. We believe that sport should be fun and that a healthy diet can be achieved by better understanding of food.

Sports activities include multisports and team games, boccia, netball, volleyball, cricket, badminton, polybat, table tennis and football, as well as dance and fitness.

Key elements of the group include:

- 1 Teamwork**
Developing skills that help encourage and support people to be more active and access opportunities that promote well-being.
- 2 Inclusive Coaching**
Assisting in delivering fully inclusive sports and activity sessions run by our sports coaching team or in partnership with sporting organisations.
- 3 Employability**
Developing key employability skills through hands-on coaching experience.
- 4 Qualifications & Experience**
Working towards and gaining coaching qualifications, as well as valuable work experience.
- 5 Planning & Organisation**
Enhancing the ability to plan, coordinate, and organise new activities by learning how to structure events and manage resources effectively.
- 6 Confidence & Self-Esteem**
Building confidence and self-esteem by enabling people to share interests, ideas, and work effectively as part of a team.
- 7 Leadership & Communication**
Encouraging individuals to take on roles requiring responsibility and strengthening communication skills.
- 8 Community Awareness**
Increasing awareness of the local community and available opportunities.
- 9 Sport & Social Access**
Supporting individuals to discover and participate in new sporting and social activities

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To Find Out More Contact Us

Jodi Barrett

Adult Services Assistant Manager

t: 07422 396786

e: pds@talkback-uk.com

Helen Krauze

Adult Services Manager

t: 07410 696825

e: pds@talkback-uk.com

Or contact the office

t: 01494 434448

e: talkback@talkback-uk.com