

A year in the **Personal Development and Skills Programme**

Our work in 2024/25



Talkback

DEVELOPING A WORLD OF POSSIBILITIES

Our Personal Development and Skills Programme offers sessions designed to develop a person's life journey.

We deliver a range of skills-based sessions that enable greater freedom. As well as activity-based sessions that enhance confidence, help make new friendships and develop practical and emotional skills.

The programme covers key personal development areas. Including employment, travel training, sports and well-being. As well as friendships, personal safety, creative and performing arts, and practical DIY skills.

Welcome to our year

And what an incredible year it has been.

At Talkback, we don't just run a programme. We build futures. 2024/25 has seen extraordinary progress across our Personal Development and Skills Group, with members developing real-world skills, growing in confidence, and making strides towards independence.

In this review, you'll read about how our workshops, activities and tailored sessions have created opportunities for members to thrive.

Whether it's learning to use a bandsaw, running a café, or standing on stage with pride, you'll meet individuals who've found their voice, discovered new passions, and overcome challenges with remarkable resilience.

From employment and travel training to sport, arts and emotional development, the stories inside this document showcase the very best of what we do. They're a celebration of progress, both big and small, and a reminder of why inclusive, person-centred support matters.

Thank you for being part of our journey.
We can't wait to see what next year brings.

Neil Sainsbury

Head of Adult Services and Employment

Our year in numbers

2,000

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

60

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

200

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

100%

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

Creative Media

Professional Education Films



Over the last couple of years, we have created innovative training videos, aimed at autistic people or those with learning disabilities, which help explain what to do if they find themselves a victim of crime.

The theatre group were definitely up for the challenge of creating our next film, which deals with modern slavery. This film will carry on the work we started two years ago, producing free Cyber Crime training resources and more recently our Cuckooing training. All of these videos and the accompanying training resources are available to download for free via our website.

The Accessible Workshop

Little Libraries



From measuring and sawing to painting and assembly, creating Little Libraries gave our members the chance to learn hands-on skills in a real-world project. Working as a team, they built a series of book-sharing boxes that are now dotted around local communities, bringing both pride and purpose. It's a brilliant example of how meaningful, creative projects can help people grow in confidence, communication, and independence.

The Accessible Workshop Gets Two Special Visitors



We were thrilled to welcome Stephen Kinnock, Labour MP for Aberafan Maesteg, and Minister of State for the Department of Health and Social Care and Emma Reynolds, MP for High Wycombe, to The Accessible Workshop, on Monday 11th November.

Our guests were welcomed to the workshop by our own Neil Sainsbury who introduced them to Marcus, Jay and Lewis, members of The Accessible Workshop. They gave the MPs a tour, talked about items they had made. They also gave a demonstration of the work they do.

Performing Arts

Talkback's Got Talent



Once again, a magnificent cast of courageous individuals and ensembles took to the stage to entertain their peers, parents and staff. An eclectic fun-filled festival of song, dance and entertainment, the show was also testament to the dedication of our staff who helped put it all together. This year, we were also thrilled to also have some special guests in attendance; with the High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire, Pippa Kirkbride and Local Buckinghamshire County Councillor Lesley Clarke, OBE

Performing Arts

The Talkback Panto



The Talkback Drama Group delivered an unforgettable performance of Jack and Jill and the Beanstalk at Buckingham Park Community Centre. From the moment the doors opened at 10.30, the hall buzzed with excitement, and by 11.00, the audience was enthralled by a show filled with laughter, creativity, and joy. It truly was the highlight of the season!

Sport

The Festival of Sport and Fun



We were thrilled, to hold our second Festival of Sport and Fun at Wycombe Leisure Centre. And what a day it was! More than a hundred people attended our Festival of Sport and Fun and took the opportunity to take part in a wide range of sporting sessions. These were run by our partners, each of whom has significant experience in providing sporting opportunities for autistic people and those with learning disabilities.

From dance and fitness, bowls, seated yoga, netball, tennis and cricket there really was something for everyone.

Employment **The ChaTea Cafe**



Our ChaTea cafe is a unique and welcoming space in High Wycombe, which we have created to support individuals with learning disabilities and autism. This exciting new venture is more than just a café, as 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 and teach skills that will last a lifetime.

At Talkback, we are forever focused on creating clear and meaningful outcomes for our members.

It is our pleasure to share some of these with you. As well as this, we take a look at some of our member journeys, highlighting what they have achieved in their time with us.

Outcomes

Steven



“

Steven has grown in confidence this year and he feels confident enough to stand up for himself. Staff have witnessed Steven handle situations with other members and staff haven't had to intervene

Outcomes Christian



“ Christian has improved in his use of the Bandsaw and Mitre Saw to a point where he can use both machines with minimal supervision. His work on the bandsaw has become exceptional. Christian has built up in confidence in the workshop and can be left to work on aspects of a project independently.

Outcomes

Sophie



“

While working at the café, Sophie struggled with identifying coins. Each week staff would use a sheet for her to place coins in the correct place. Each week she would get more coins correct and can now look at a coin and know what coin has been handed to her.

Outcomes

Marcus



“

Marcus has become more mature when talking to peers. He listens well to others and shows empathy and understanding of others' situations and needs; for example, if a peer is talking about friendship problems, he will offer reassurance and advice. He will often pick up on things that peers are saying and approach staff if he thinks someone needs help with something.

Marcus will now travel home independently. He is able to read a timetable and will communicate with staff when he is on a bus and when he has arrived home

2022

Actions

Sam joined and participated in sessions on communication and managing emotions.

Key Outcomes

- Better communication with Talkback staff and his peers.

2023

Actions

He participated in sessions that explored healthy affordable recipes. He also worked at the Greatmoor Recycling Plant.

Key Outcomes

- Sam improved in his understanding about making healthy choices.
- The work at Greatmoor continued to improve communication

2024

Actions

Sam engaged in sports games to enhance physical stamina, as well as taking part in sessions on friendships and communication.

Key Outcomes

- Better understanding of sports and teamwork.
- Formed friendships in the group.

2025

Actions

Sam has shown great progress. He has transitioned from being a quiet and reserved individual to someone who enjoys engaging with others.

Key Outcomes

- Confidence development.
- Enhanced communication skills.
- Increased sense of trusting others.

“

I have learned to take part in the session even if I am unsure of the topic or if I like it, as I will learn something new.

2022

Actions

Moved from Education into Adult social care joining two skill-based groups, and a weekly sports session to enhance his physical fitness.

Key Outcomes

- Alex has formed friendships.
- Alex demonstrated an ability to say 'no' if he didn't want to do something.

2023

Actions

Alex participated in a 12-week Relationships Course to develop his understanding of boundaries, emotions, feelings and the different types of relationships.

Key Outcomes

- Alex improved in managing his feelings.

2024

Actions

Alex undertook

- Travel training sessions.
- Life- skill sessions including cooking basic recipes.
- A work experience placement at the mustard seed café.

Key Outcomes

- Improvement using his bus pass.
- Grown confidence with cooking skills and kitchen safety.
- Developed confidence and communication through working at the café.

2025

Actions

Alex is now confident to use a jobs checklist independently for work experience, which supports him to know what he is doing whilst working.

Key Outcomes

- Confidence development.
- Alex communicates well with his peers and staff.

“

I feel more confident now. I can get the bus on my own and I really enjoy talking to people at the café.

Our commitments

to all our members

1

To provide a supported and safe place to allow you to prepare for the challenges of life.

2

To help you to explore and develop your unique skills and to build self-esteem and confidence.

3

To help you engage with services and employers so you can integrate into local communities and achieve your aspirations.

4

To ensure that each and every one of you has exactly the same opportunities as everyone else.

Talkback

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