

Somerset



Your voice on local health and social care

# Somerset

## Local Involvement Network (LINK)

### Report for the West Somerset Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

July 2010

## Contents

- I. Summary & methodology
- II. Responses from individuals
- III. Responses from community groups
- IV. Conclusion

## i. Summary & methodology

### Summary:

In March 2010 the Somerset Local Involvement Network (Somerset LINK) was invited to contribute towards the Joint Needs Assessment (JNA) for West Somerset.

The LINK distributed a questionnaire devised by the JSNA Project Manager and the Somerset LINK host to registered LINK participants living in West Somerset during May 2010. This report is a comprehensive summary of the data gathered from respondents to the questionnaire.

### Methodology:

The West Somerset JNA survey was distributed to approximately 50 individuals and groups (all registered LINK participants, including third sector organisations, in that district). The questionnaire contained four broad questions, similar to those used in engagement with Patient Participation Groups.

- What do you think is working well in terms of health and social care in your area?
- What do you think is not working well in terms of health and social care in your area?
- What might be needed to improve health and wellbeing in your local community?
- What sort of factors do you think might influence the health and wellbeing of people living in your community? (e.g. employment, transport, crime, leisure activities, housing, binge-drinking, environment etc.)

Respondents were also asked to state which part of West Somerset they live in (eg. Dulverton, Alcombe, Williton etc).

Responses were received from 22 individuals in West Somerset, and one response was received from a third sector group operating in West Somerset (Mind in Taunton & West Somerset).

One response was from a resident of Somerton. It was agreed to keep this response in the data, as it was not clear whether the person worked in or used services in West Somerset. It should be noted that several responses were received from service users of Mind in Taunton & West Somerset, following LINKs approach to third sector organisations (ten in total), which is why this particular service is mentioned several times within the individual responses data.

Responses and comments were categorised into services in order to carry out basic quantitative analysis. This is included in this report, along with detailed individual responses.

Responses from individuals are recorded in the following report. The formal response from Mind in Taunton & West Somerset is included after the individuals' responses. All comments are anonymised and we would like to take this opportunity to everyone who took the time to take part in this consultation. Somerset LINK is keen for its members to

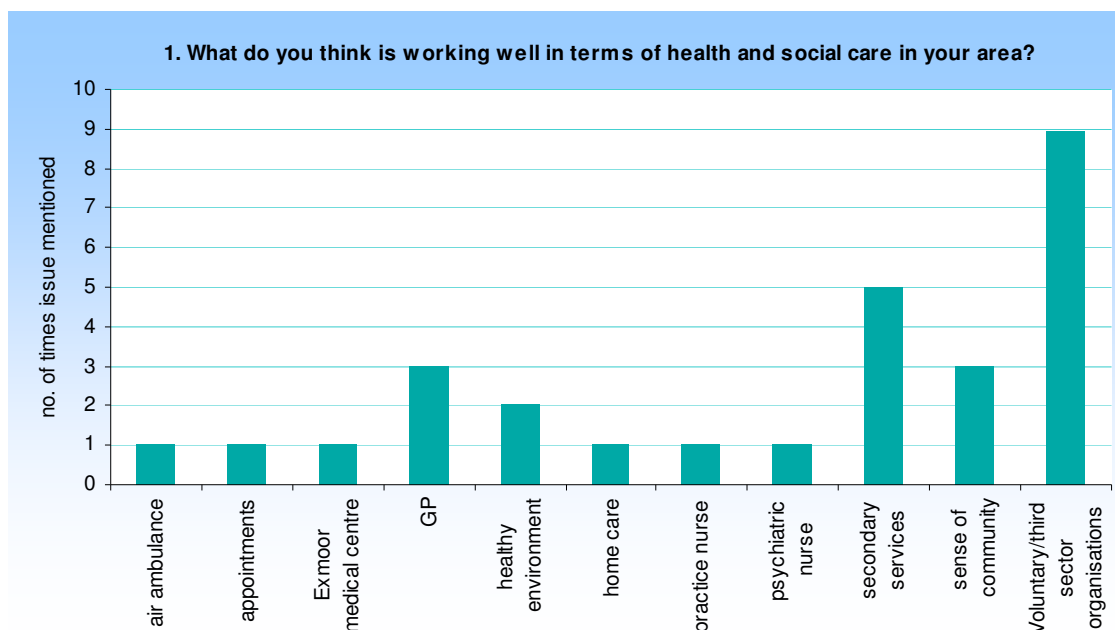
become involved in the 'refresh' of the county-wide Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), to be carried out in 2011.

**The Somerset LINK**  
**[somersetlink@makesachange.org.uk](mailto:somersetlink@makesachange.org.uk)**  
**1 July 2010**

## ii. Individual responses

### 1. What do you think is working well in terms of health and social care in your area?

30 services or issues were raised as “working well”. The count of responses by category is shown in the table below.



Voluntary/third sector organisations were mentioned nine times as “working well”, which was the highest number of occurrences for any service. The next highest occurrence was for secondary services, which were mentioned five times. Three people singled out the local area as having a strong sense of community.

The following specific services were mentioned by name: Mind in Taunton & West Somerset (seven mentions) and Musgrove Park hospital (one mention).

Responses to the question: “What do you think is working well in terms of health and social care in your area” are shown below, by category:

#### Voluntary/third sector:

- Dulverton Co responders ie provision made by Third Sector/ volunteers, Voluntary organisations.
- I find the Mind group very supportive and look forward to the meetings every Monday morning. I enjoy socialising with the people who attend.
- Mind drop-in: helps cope with problems (listening service). Gardening cooking walking. Peer support groups

- There's only the Mind office in Minehead, who try to help people in other towns in the area. Otherwise no help is offered to anyone with problems.
- Mind Monday - Friday. Groups and activities. Especially Monday drop-in.
- The support that is given in particular with Mind. Both individual and group support is currently very much in (*not legible*)
- Mind Group, they supply cooking classes, allotment, occasional day outings, support with problems and are there when you need to turn to someone for advice.
- The Mind meeting place on Monday is a good place to meet others and relate your problems.
- The Mind drop-in is good but I wish there were more of the same during the week because I look forward to it. The cooking course.

### **Secondary services:**

- If we do need hospital treatment, Musgrove Park offers excellent service, with short waiting lists.
- Back up services after treatments seem more efficient.
- Local hospital also excellent and very necessary. We hear nothing but praise for both of these facilities [*Musgrove and Minehead*]
- GP referrals to cardiology worked well for me . I was seen within 2 weeks
- Elderly taken into hospital if care is required.

### **GP:**

- Local Doctors surgery provides an excellent service.
- Doctor's surgery.
- My GP is excellent.

### **Sense of community:**

- Good community spirit (self-help).
- We also benefit from a strong community, looking after each other's welfare.
- In Minehead we have a very close community of carers, who will give support to other carers when needed.

### **Healthy environment:**

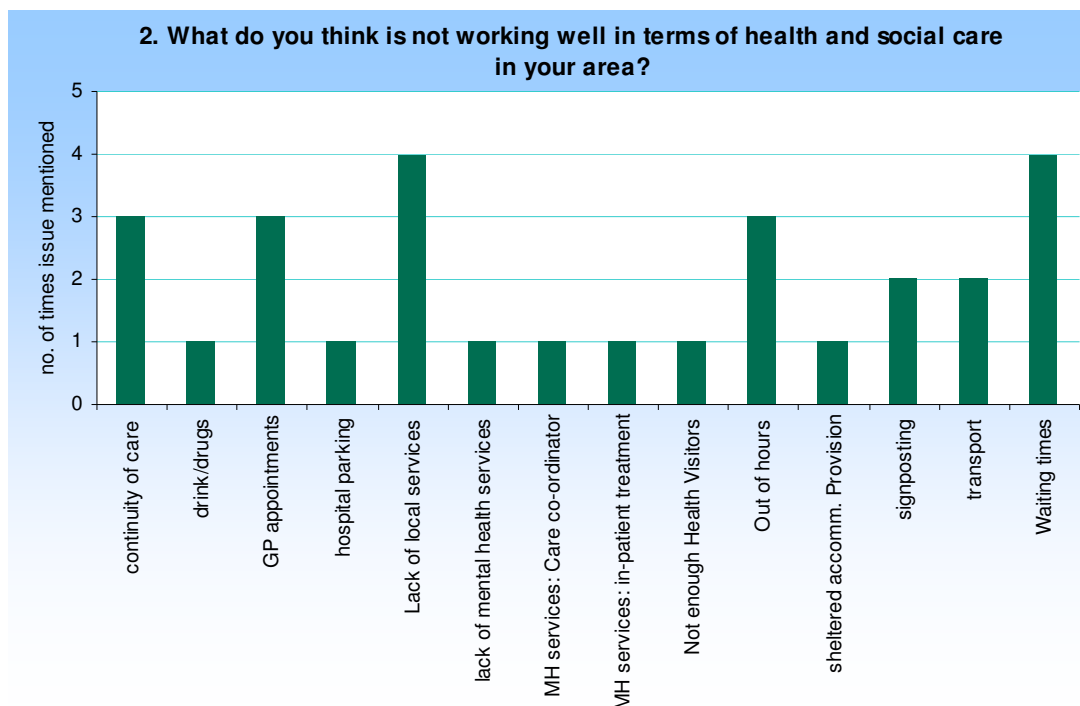
- It's so healthy living here in Watchet that I never need the health services
- We stay fitter longer.

### **Other comments:**

- Air Ambulance - quick response.
- Appointments for hospital visits seem to be easier and quicker to make.
- The Exmoor medical centre in Dulverton will deal with some minor injuries, and run special clinics for Diabetes, Asthma, COPD and other chronic conditions.
- Home care provision (nurses and personal care).
- Practice nurse.
- I look forward to visits from my psychiatric nurse when she visits me at home.

## 2. What do you think is not working well in terms of health and social care in your area?

Thirty-three comments were made about services or issues that were “not working well”. The count of responses by category is shown in the table below.



Lack of local services was the issue raised the most number of times (four times). Waiting times were raised four times, although this was for a variety of services (hospitals (one), social services (one) and mental health services (two)). GP appointments, continuity of care and out of hours service were all mentioned three times.

Responses to the question: “What do you think is working well in terms of health and social care in your area” are shown below, by category:

### Lack of local services:

- In a village like ours with no bus service, access to the Dulverton surgery 6 miles away is problematic for many elderly residents.
- Social Care workers and other health workers having to travel huge distances - need to try employing more locally
- Withdrawing of support in various areas. (Mind) Plans to have Minehead covered by Taunton and plans to meet in Minehead perhaps twice a week. Depression does not operate an appointment system.
- There are not enough group outings/meetings going on in Minehead

### Waiting times:

- Waiting time for small non-urgent operations at Musgrove (18 months for a hernia).
- Social services - waited at least a month for advice, which was too late.

- My doctor referred me to Right Steps who were unable to see me for several weeks! Then had to ask for Mind listening service help.
- My doctors referred me to counselling, but that took several weeks to set up. When I needed help before that Mind was there. After the counselling course there was nothing.

#### **Transport:**

- Transport (cost of getting around)
- Lack of hospital car service for frail older people -Social Car schemes inundated with requests and often cannot deliver
- Cost of transport and activities. This week I have heard that transport at the Seahorses Day Centre will not be used to bring service users into the Kit club held monthly. Another person I spoke to was unable to undertake activities due to costs.

#### **Out of hours:**

- The 'Out of Hours' service, based in Bridgwater 30 miles away, is dangerous. Sometimes a closer doctor can attend, but if one has to come from the Bridgwater area, it takes more than an hour to reach our locality. Many worried patients decide instead to go to A&E, or worse still, call an ambulance, which is a very expensive use of resources.
- Out of hour's service.
- Out of hour's service. We have received so many complaints regarding this highly inefficient service.

#### **GP appointments:**

- No doctors appointments possible on Saturdays
- GP Surgery appointments, is frustrating and time consuming to book.
- Trying to get appointments at GP surgeries - Irnham Lodge, Minehead, is very difficult and I have to explain everything to the receptionist - then a Doctor makes an appointment, not you

#### **Continuity of care:**

- Discharge of elderly from hospital with poor social care in the community.
- Care always going wrong. Feel I have to fight for everything which is wrong when so unwell.
- Social Care is a minefield, with many people being pushed from pillar to post.

#### **Signposting:**

- GP's and statutory health and social professionals don't tell people about voluntary services such as the drop in and active listening service. Is this partly why it's closing?
- Absence of any resource centre like the Albermarle at Taunton.

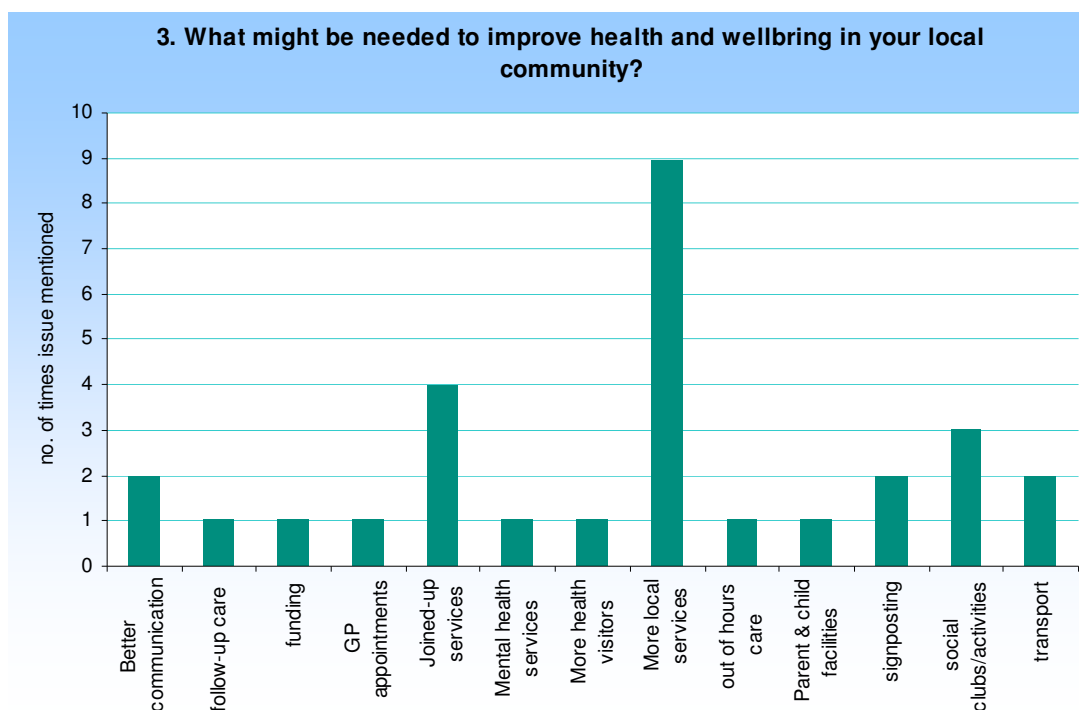
#### **Other comments:**

- Binge drinking and drug-taking in local park.
- Cost of parking at Musgrove.

- For those with mental health needs there is little to do and I heard that our local drop in and active listening service may soon close. (West Somerset Mind)
- Difficult to get hold of care coordinator
- Lack of access to local psychiatric unit.
- Health Visitors not being able to make contact with families, only those at risk or with special concerns
- Not enough advertising around town
- Not enough sheltered accommodation.

### 3. What might be needed to improve health and wellbeing in your local community?

Thirty comments were received about services or issues which might improve health and wellbeing in the local community. The count of responses by category is shown in the table below.



The issue that was mentioned the most as being needed to improve health and wellbeing in the local community was “more local services”, with nine mentions. This was followed by “joined up services” with four mentions. The need for more social clubs/activities was raised three times, and transport and the need for signposting services were mentioned twice.

Responses to the question: “What might be needed to improve health and wellbeing in your local community?” are shown below, by category:

### **More local services:**

- It would be good if a weekly surgery, or even vaccination or specialist clinics could be reinstated in the community.
- More generally, our isolated community would benefit from improvements to the village hall, which does not have disabled facilities. Although we are trying to address this need, money for such projects is very hard to find in low populated rural areas.
- Staff covering smaller local areas
- The opening of a new hospital in Minehead to relieve the distance and time spent travelling to hospital.
- Local contact and centres to go for company etc.
- A place to go and have contact and people to talk to, rather than be lonely and dwell on your problems. If people do not have a job they are isolated.
- Continuation of access to local Mind office in Minehead. More local mental health care (Taunton is 25 miles away!)
- More drop-ins like on Monday (Mind)
- Local Right Steps provision - not travel to Bridgwater / Taunton.

### **Joined-up services:**

- Some liaison between social care and health to look at those who are not in obvious need of care
- better integration of statutory providers of services
- Better partnerships and secure funding arrangements with Voluntary Organisations - they can often deliver more efficiently and more effectively
- A central office for social care, where you can be directed to the right person to see to your needs, without making many phone calls and being put on hold.

### **Social clubs/activities:**

- Money to support luncheon groups and exercise classes for elderly and unfit
- More support to be made available for day outings
- Availability of sheltered workshops

### **Transport:**

- Good funding to enable centres and groups to provide good transport to activities, meetings, there (*not legible*)
- Many elderly residents no longer drive.

### **Signposting:**

- We need to ensure people are not isolated and there are workers who have the time to find and help people access services.
- A resource centre offering various activities for people with mental health problems.

**Better communication:**

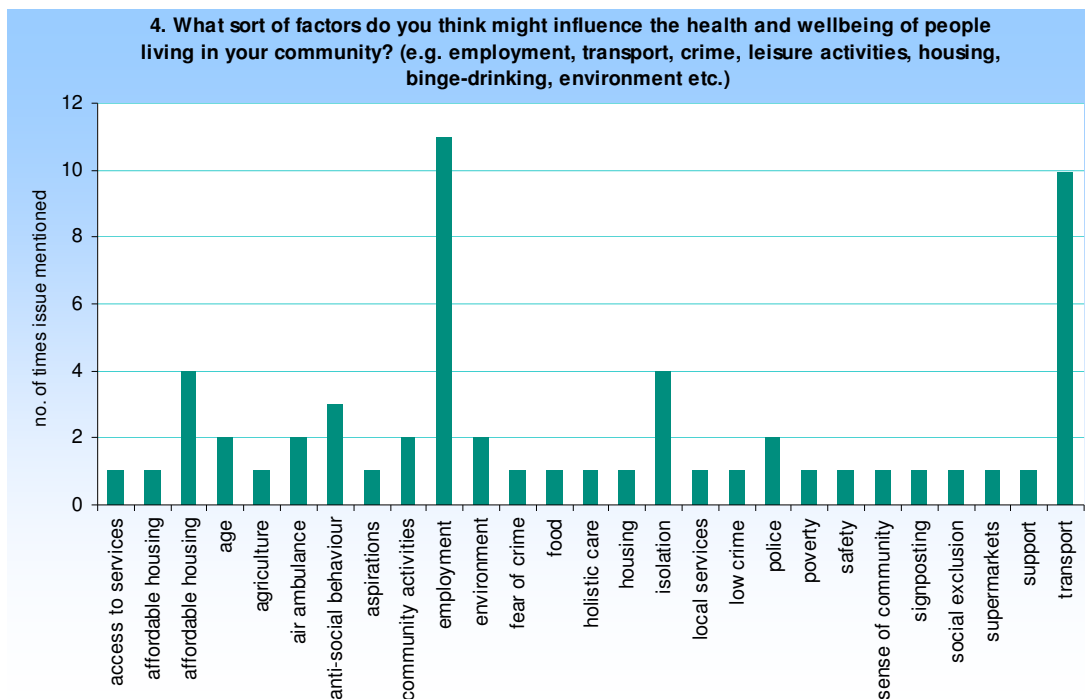
- More outreach and contact by phone.
- Doctors willing to be contacted by email

**Other comments:**

- More support. Have just had surgery and no extra support given. Not even a phone call.
- Funding!
- Some GP Surgeries seriously need to review the system of how appointments are made.
- More funding in order that the Mind operation continues as it is desperately needed in West Somerset.
- More health visitors
- Saturday appointments for doctors
- Provision of mother and baby facilities for remote areas.

**4. What sort of factors do you think might influence the health and wellbeing of people living in your community? (e.g. employment, transport, crime, leisure activities, housing, binge-drinking, environment etc.)**

Fifty-eight issues were raised in response to this question. The count of responses by category is shown in the table below.



Employment and transport were the issues raised more frequently (11 and 10 times respectively). Social isolation and affordable housing were both mentioned four times.

Responses to the question: "What sort of factors do you think might influence the health and wellbeing of people living in your community?" are shown below, by category:

### **Employment:**

- Bad influence: Low pay and employment prospects,
- Low incomes
- Juggling part time seasonal work - affects mental health
- More paid employment, jobs on offer to those with disabilities are unpaid.
- Lack of affordable housing - and jobs - for young people.
- Sufficient employment
- Low employment
- Employment for young people.
- We are a low wage area.
- Unemployment
- Unemployment effects the whole family

### **Transport:**

- Transport difficulties and costs
- Huge difficulty for some people getting to hospital appointments
- Transport off the bus service pathways.
- Transport links frequent and reliable and at a cost where people would be willing leave the car behind.
- Support for voluntary driving scheme to enable residents to visit hospitals, dentists and friends.
- Better roads
- A cheaper bus pass, so people who don't or can't work can get out, to improve their isolation. Under 60's especially!
- I can't use public transport - access to the knowledge of volunteer transport
- Bad transport at night
- Lack of regular public transport: Musgrove/Benefits/Medical checks not expecting people first thing in the morning as no buses to Taunton then.

### **Affordable housing:**

- Affordable housing for young people starting out.
- Lack of affordable housing - and jobs - for young people.
- Affordable housing
- Low rent local needs housing.

### **Isolation:**

- Rural isolation
- All of the above suggestions plus isolation
- Isolation
- Isolation in area

**Anti-social behaviour:**

- Binge drinking and drug-taking in local park.
- Drugs
- Every weekend there is a pub/club noise from Lloyd's bar and it keeps me awake every weekend with screaming girls and boys fighting but I don't know how to approach the owner about it.
- Community activities
- Activities for older and less fit people.
- Community get-togethers improve communications, leisure activities, housing and leisure activities.

**Environment:**

- Good influence: environment
- Outdoor lifestyle

**Police:**

- More police back up.
- More police walking the street of towns to curb binge drinking, knife crime etc.

**Age:**

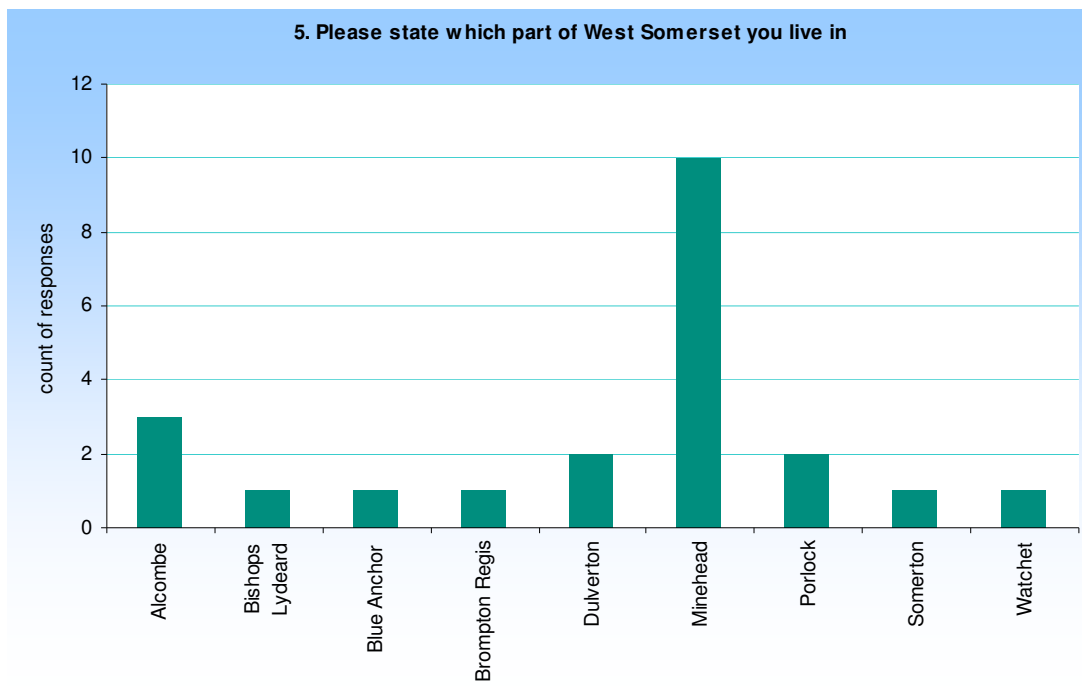
- Age
- Porlock has the oldest demography in the country - we need a more balanced population.
- Deprivation associated with not living in an urban area e.g. poor access to services

**Other comments:**

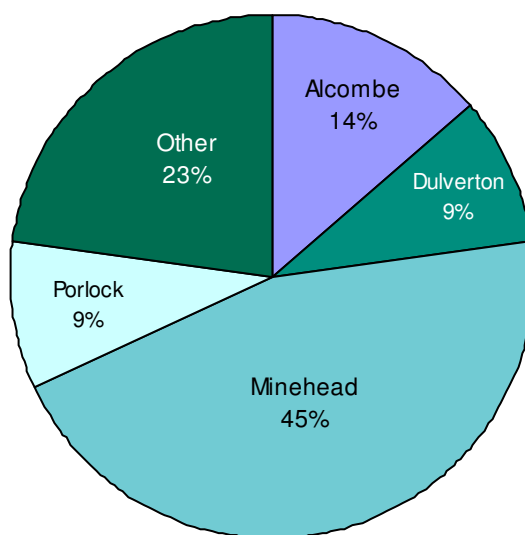
- Agricultural environment, well known as dangerous and accident prone.
- Low aspirations
- Outdoor lifestyle,
- Fear of crime.
- Need better healthy food
- Mental and physical health joining as one. They are so separate.
- Housing,
- A negative one is that communities cannot be successful at 26 miles (Mind Taunton office)
- Low crime rate
- Tackling poverty in young families,.
- A safe environment for all.
- Strong sense of community,
- Access to information. If GP's and social workers don't know what's out there how are we expected to know.
- Being excluded!
- No more supermarkets!
- Appreciate support for those people that need it.

## 5. Please state which part of West Somerset you live in eg. Dulverton, Alcombe, Williton etc.:

Twenty two individuals answered this question. The totals are shown below:



### 5. Please state which part of West Somerset you live in



('Other' includes: Watchet, Blue Anchor, Bishop's Lydeard, Somerton and Brompton Regis.)

The map below shows the responses plotted over the West Somerset area, where one 'pin' represents a response.



## ii. Community Group responses

### Mind in Taunton & West Somerset

Mind in Taunton & West Somerset submitted a written response to the JSNA questionnaire. This included information about their concerns for the provision of mental health services in the area from March 2011. Their submission follows in full.

**Mind in Taunton & West Somerset submission: Page 1 of 5**



**For better  
mental health**

Mind in Taunton & West Somerset  
3 Parks Lane  
Minehead  
Somerset  
TA24 5NU  
T: 01643 708765  
E: [westsomerset@mindtws.org.uk](mailto:westsomerset@mindtws.org.uk)  
W. [www.mindtws.org.uk](http://www.mindtws.org.uk)  
Mindline T: 01823 276892

Dear Lucy,

Re JSNA-Mental Health Services in West Somerset.

Further to our recent conversations, I would like to highlight the lack of service provision both for those with severe and enduring mental health problems, and those who need short – term support to improve their emotional well-being.

In 2002, Mind in Taunton & West Somerset commissioned the “Mind the Gap” Report, looking at the services provided for and the needs of those with mental ill-health.

As a result of this report, Mind was able to secure funding to open an office in Minehead, and opened a West Somerset Inclusion Project. In 2006, we secured further funding from the Lottery to expand. This runs out in March 2011. Currently we have 3 part-time members of staff and a small group of volunteers. We have adopted a recovery and rehabilitation approach to our work, and use solution-focussed methods when working with groups and individuals.

**Mind in Taunton & West Somerset submission: Page 2 of 5**

Since the Mind the Gap Report, **all** of the services then being offered in West Somerset have **closed**.

The Mind Office in Minehead, therefore, is the only non-statutory service in West Somerset....indeed the only service for those with mental distress, as patients of Right-Steps are expected to travel to either Taunton or Bridgwater for treatment: not easy if you rely on public transport and have problems associated with anxiety and panic-disorders.

We are already supporting people who are on the Right-Steps waiting lists, as if, for example, people have problems with reactive depression, or bereavement, then support in 12 weeks time is not helpful!

I attach for your information a list of the services we currently offer, together with some statistics which show the number of enquiries and one-to-one support sessions we have carried out during 2009-2010.

We have commissioned an external evaluation of the project, which will be presented to our Board on 5<sup>th</sup> July. I will send you a copy as soon as it is available. Service-users who have responded to our questionnaires say that they have found the Mind office in Minehead to be invaluable; indeed two say that they owe their lives to it.

We have raised some money towards continuing the project beyond March 2011, and are hoping to secure extra/match funding, so that we can maintain our current level of service delivery. The evaluation will be used to inform possible future funders of the project , which, if it were to close in 2011, would leave West Somerset with no services other than the CMHT, (which now no longer provides any “day services”), and Right Steps, but only if you can travel to towns 25-30 miles away.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any further queries.

Yours sincerely

Deborah Melmoth  
West Somerset Inclusion Project Manager

Reg.Office Mind in Taunton & West Somerset, The Market Building, Canal Road, Taunton, TA1 1PN  
Reg.Charity Number:1109626 Company Number: 514841



West Somerset Inclusion Project

## Menu of Services

May- June 2010

### Monday Drop-In, Minehead

10.30am - 1.00pm at The Ark Room, The Parks Baptist Church, Minehead.

For just £1 a week individuals can access a range of activities in a supportive, welcoming environment

### Watchet Relaxation Group

**Thursdays**, 10.00am - 11.20am at Maglands Community Room, Watchet. £2.00 per session. Relaxation with Tracey Roberts, supported by Mind volunteers. Refreshments 11.00-11.20.

### One-to-One Support

We can help individuals to build confidence, self-esteem and motivation by offering one-to one listening support sessions, or by accompanying people to appointments or community activities, e.g. shopping, using public transport, educational and recreational activities. This is offered on a 6-8 week basis.

### Cooking 4 One

Commencing **March 2nd**, we are pleased to be able to offer a 12 week course, meeting on **Tuesdays** between 10.00am and 12.00 at The Methodist Church Hall, The Avenue, Minehead. In conjunction with West Somerset Living Well Programme. £2.00 per session.

If there is sufficient interest, we could start a new course on May 24th Contact the Mind office for further details.

### Allotment Project

We are grateful to Minehead Town Council for allocating us an allotment at Alcombe, in order to offer people the opportunity to grow their own food and get some exercise to improve their well-being.

Meet at the Allotment- Plot 46 at Marshfield Road , Alcombe on **Wednesdays and Thursdays** between 2.00-3.30pm. Group members will be able to tend the allotment in their own time.

### Relaxation Group at Minehead

Relaxation sessions with Tracey Roberts, supported by Mind. **Monday Evenings** 6.00pm-7.30pm at The Parks Baptist Church Lounge. £2.00 per session, Refreshments included.

### Advice & Information

The Mind office is open for advice and information weekday morning. This includes a range of free literature and free self-help guides. Opening times are:

Monday	9.30 am - 11.00 am
Tuesday	9.30 am - 11.00 am
Wednesday	9.30 am - 11.00 am
Thursday	9.30 am - 11.00 am
Friday	9.30 am - 11.00 am

### Outreach

Mind Staff at Williton Children's Centre each Tuesday afternoon, 1.30-3.00 during term times, by appointment.

Mind Staff at Washford Village hall on Thursday afternoons' 1.30-3.00pm during term times, by appointment.

### Advocacy in Mind

Mind's Advocacy service is available by appointment

Please telephone Bethan at the Taunton office on 01823 334906 for further information..

Mind in Taunton & West Somerset submission: Page 4 of 5

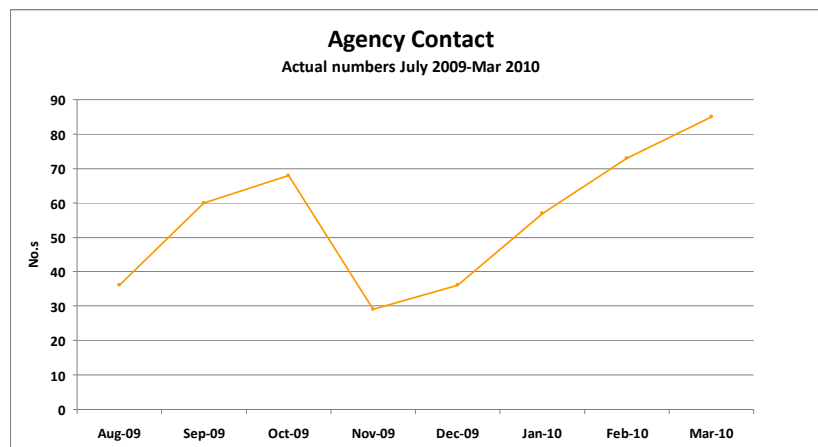
Monthly numbers (actual)

Activity	Aug-09	Sep-09	Oct-09	Nov-09	Dec-09	Jan-10	Feb-10	Mar-10
MONDAY GROUP No. Attending	21	14	34	20	27	27	38	35
WATCHET GROUP No. attending	9	22	35	30	22	17	19	23
CLIENT ENQUIRY	35	27	20	23	14	36	33	41
CLIENT SUPPORT	43	41	43	23	21	41	29	30
OUTREACH No. clients supported	6	10	13	12	5	7	10	6
AGENCY CONTACT	36	60	68	29	36	57	73	85
LISTENING SERVICE No of clients supported	11	9	22	19	12	3	6	21
VOLUNTEERS contacted	20	24	37	20	31	24	20	24

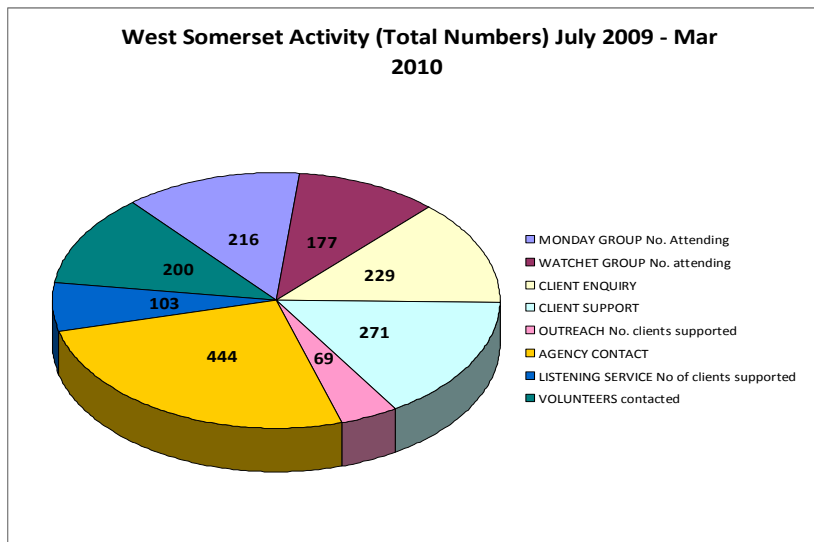
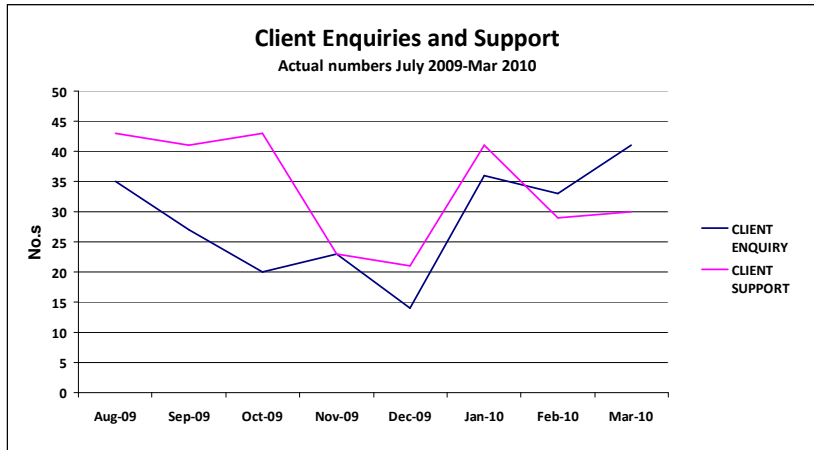
Appendix 1

Monthly Averages

Activity	Aug-09	Sep-09	Oct-09	Nov-09	Dec-09	Jan-10	Feb-10	Mar-10
MONDAY GROUP No. Attending	5.3	4.7	6.8	6.7	5.4	6.8	6.1	7.0
WATCHET GROUP No. attending	9.0	7.3	8.8	7.5	7.3	5.7	7.3	4.6
CLIENT ENQUIRY	8.8	6.8	4.0	5.8	3.5	9.0	5.8	8.2
CLIENT SUPPORT	10.8	10.3	8.6	5.8	4.2	10.3	7.8	6.0
OUTREACH No. clients supported	1.5	2.5	2.6	3.0	1.0	1.8	2.2	1.2
AGENCY CONTACT	9.0	15.0	13.6	7.3	7.2	14.3	11.5	17.0
LISTENING SERVICE No of clients supported	2.8	2.3	4.4	4.8	2.4	0.8	2.9	4.2
VOLUNTEERS contacted	5.0	6.0	7.4	5.0	6.2	6.0	6.1	4.8



Mind in Taunton & West Somerset submission: Page 5 of 5



## iv. Conclusion

The data in this report stands alone as a representation of the views of the Somerset LINK participants about health services and social care services in West Somerset. These comments are the views of the individuals who responded and, as such, some of the details may be disputed by service providers.

West Somerset community has a high percentage of individuals over the age of 65. The themes that emerge reflect a community that is widely dispersed and concerned about the issues that perhaps inevitably go alongside this, such as isolation, a lack of local services, economic prospects and affordable and efficient transport links.

The LINK would, however, like to draw particular attention to the concerns of Deborah Melmoth, West Somerset Inclusion Project Manager for Mind in Taunton & West Somerset.

The Mind Office in Minehead is the only non-statutory service in West Somerset... indeed the only service for those with mental distress.

We have raised some money towards continuing the project beyond March 2011, and are hoping to secure extra/match funding, so that we can maintain our current level of service delivery. The evaluation [of our services that we are currently undertaking] will be used to inform possible future funders of the project, which, if it were to close in 2011, would leave West Somerset with no services other than the CMHT, (which now no longer provides any "day services"), and Right Steps, but only if you can travel to towns 25-30 miles away.

In an area as large as West Somerset, it is important that mental health services continue to receive funding and that mental health service users are not asked to travel large distances at their own expense to receive face-to-face support.

We will be bringing this issue to the attention of the commissioners of mental health services and would ask that the JSNA project team ensure that this information is fully represented in their final report.

*The Somerset LINK  
6 July 2010*