



# LUTON VCS SHORT BREAKS CONSORTIUM

## ANNUAL REPORT 2022/2023



**The Consortium receives funding from BLCF as part of the  
Luton Rising Community Investment Fund**





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# INTRODUCTION

## BACKGROUND

The **Luton Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Short Breaks Consortium** was set up in 2013. The Consortium brings together a number of not-for-profit organisations that provide short breaks services for children and young people with a range of disabilities in Luton.

From April 2013 until March 2020 the Consortium received funding through direct donations from **London Luton Airport Limited (LLAL)** as part of its Partnership Fund. In April 2020 new arrangements for LLAL's donation funding were put in place under Luton's Community Investment Fund, which is managed by **Bedfordshire and Luton Community Foundation**. LLAL has also been re-named Luton Rising.

The Consortium receives funding from **BLCF** as part of the **Luton Rising Community Investment Fund**.



In 2022/23, the Consortium was awarded £269,500. This was a **4% reduction** from the previous year's grant.

Autism Bedfordshire was appointed as the Lead Organisation for the Consortium in 2013 and continues to act as the lead in dealing with the management and administration of the Consortium, as well as the allocation of funding to Consortium members. An Operations Manager at Autism Bedfordshire is responsible for this management work for the Consortium.



## CONSORTIUM MEMBERS

The 6 Consortium members in 2022/23 were





# OVERVIEW OF WORK IN 2022/23

The Luton VCS Consortium continues to deliver much needed respite services for the people of Luton.

In 2022/23 the Consortium helped 430 unique children and young people. Of these, 319 were children and young people (aged 0-25) with disabilities and 111 were siblings.

Consortium members organised 734 short break sessions which provided parents and carers in Luton with over 34,390 short break hours.

Last year, the Consortium tried to vary the offer to people. In addition to the standard clubs several diverse activities were organised. This included trips to the farm, zoo, gym, disco and nature trails.

The funding to the Consortium has been cut over the last few years. Whilst funding for 2023/24 thankfully remains the same as this year the running costs have increased significantly. The Consortium works hard to continue with their levels of service but unfortunately it is inevitable in the current climate that some services may have to be reduced.



**430**

Helped children  
and young people

**734**

Support Sessions  
Organised

**34,390**

Short break hours  
provided

# CONSORTIUM SERVICES 2022/23

## SUMMARY

Consortium members provided a wide range of short breaks services in 2022/23 for children and young people (aged 0-25) in Luton across 54 different clubs and activity sessions including: after school clubs; weekend clubs; holiday playschemes; and outings and other activities. Some Consortium members also encourage siblings to attend some of the sessions that they provide.

Provider	Club / Service	Age range	After school club	Weekend club	School holiday club	Trips and other activities	Support for siblings	Support for parents / carers	Total sessions (in 2022/23)	Total short break hours (in 2022/23)
Autism Bedfordshire	Loads of Autistic Fun	0-12		✓			✓	✓	34	361.5
	Wanted Fun	10-17	✓						19	539
	Extra activity sessions (inc. Summer Scheme)	3-17				✓	✓		53	891
Centre for Youth and Community Development (Access Disability Project)	Wednesday Club	6-11	✓						34	2975.5
	Friday Club	18-25	✓						31	2103
	Saturday Club	11-18		✓					36	4320.5
	Holiday Clubs	6-25			✓	✓			40	3882.5
CHUMS (Friendship Scheme)	Friday Club	11-25	✓		✓				39	163
	Holiday Club	11-25			✓	✓			5	48
	Extra sessions (1 activity)	11-25				✓			7	36
Families United Network	Saturday Respite Club	9-18		✓		✓			29	4258
	Holiday Respite Club	9-18			✓	✓			Inc above	
	Family Holiday Club	0-25			✓		✓	✓	30	4584
Friends of Bright Eyes	Weekday evening clubs (5 different clubs)	8-25	✓						171	4023
	Weekend clubs (2 different clubs)	8-25		✓					73	2588
	Holiday Club	8-25			✓	✓			16	1565
Special Needs Out Of School Club	Saturday Respite Club	8-25		✓		✓			52	903
	Holiday Respite Club	8-25			✓	✓			65	1149
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>clubs / activities</b>	<b>0-25</b>							<b>734</b>	<b>34390</b>



# AUTISM BEDFORDSHIRE

Autism Bedfordshire is a charity that works across the whole of Bedfordshire — in Luton, Bedford Borough and Central Bedfordshire. It has been providing information, advice and support to autistic people, their parents and carers, and their siblings for 30 years. As a service provider in Luton, Autism Bedfordshire provides various short break services as part of the Consortium's offer.

## LOADS OF AUTISTIC FUN (LOAF)

This is a family support and activity group for children aged 0-12 with autistic spectrum conditions, their siblings and parents/carers. It ran fortnightly on Saturdays during term time.

## WANTED FUN

Social club is for young people aged 10-17 with Asperger Syndrome or high functioning autism. The group helps people to learn and develop skills including decision making, planning and organisation. The club ran fortnightly on Thursday evenings throughout term time.

## SUMMER SCHEME

3 different activity schemes were organised for autistic children in Luton aged 3-17: Junior Activity Scheme, Holiday Club, and Summer Fun. Each of the sessions offered a range of activities and outings which were all risk-assessed and tailored to the ages, interests and abilities of the children attending.

## ADDITIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Other sessions were organised for autistic children and young people in Luton including: swim sessions; farm trips; multi-sport sessions; tennis sessions; soft play sessions; gym sessions; and sessions for bowling, Laser Swat, and trampolining



☎ 01234 214871

✉ [enquiries@autismbeds.org](mailto:enquiries@autismbeds.org)

🌐 [www.autismbedfordshire.net](http://www.autismbedfordshire.net)

“ This service is incredible! An amazing opportunity for the children and a blessing for the parents and siblings ”



106

Support Sessions



1791.5

Short break hours



125

Disabled children and young people supported (inc siblings)

6

# CENTRE FOR YOUTH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (CYCD)

CYCD is a local charity in Luton working mainly with the local South Asian community. As part of its Access Disability Project (ADP), CYCD provides a range of short break services for children and young people with disabilities. The project aims to change negative attitudes towards disability in the Asian communities by focusing on abilities, giving each young person opportunities to develop to their full potential, and demonstrating that each child or young person is valued.

“ He is happy that he has a safe place where he is able to play games online and knows how to play safely ”

The service users really enjoy using the computers and they feel more confident using them now after the group discussion.

## AFTER SCHOOL CLUB

Children's club for disabled children aged 6-11. It runs every Wednesday in term time at CYCD in Bury Park, Luton.

## FRIDAY YOUTH CLUB

Youth club for 16-25 year olds. The club runs every Friday at CYCD.

## SATURDAY CLUB

This club is for children and young people aged 11-16. The club runs every Saturday during term time at CYCD in Bury Park, Luton.

## HOLIDAY PLAYSCHMES

These schemes were provided during the school holidays for children and young people. Some sessions were for children aged 6-11 and others were for children and young people aged 11-25.



**141**  
Support Sessions



**13,281.5**  
Short break hours



**45**  
Disabled children and young people supported (inc siblings)





# CHUMS

CHUMS is a mental health and emotional wellbeing service for children and young people, offering a variety of services across Luton and Bedfordshire. Services delivered in Luton include bereavement support for children, young people and families, including a stillbirth and neonatal service; trauma support for those young people bereaved traumatically as well as those who have been subject to sexual abuse or witness to domestic violence; young carers support groups; individual mentoring programme and recreational therapeutic programme delivered using football and music. CHUMS is a member of the VCS Consortium because of its work in delivering its Friendship Scheme for young people with disabilities.

## FRIENDSHIP SCHEME

The Friendship Scheme now runs every Tuesday night from The Hub in Luton. The club is for young people living in Luton with disabilities, aged 13-24 years in term time and during half terms. The group meet to have fun, try different activities and with support devise a termly plan at the start of each term.

## FRIENDSHIP SCHEME – HOLIDAY CLUB

The Friendship Scheme members also meet up for activities and to go on outings during the Easter and summer holidays. This included movie nights and a pancake party!

“Just to say a BIG thank u to all of chums organisers for enjoyable two trips. My son loved it so much!! He really wants to watch sonic hedgehog now!!”



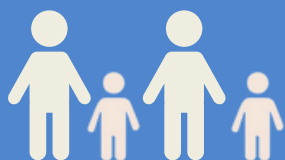
51

Support Sessions



247

Short break hours



14

Disabled children and young people supported (inc siblings)



FUN is a local charity which provides a range of specialist support services for children and young people with additional needs and disabilities, and their families, from the point of diagnosis to the age of 25 years. Members of FUN come from Luton and across Bedfordshire. FUN operates from large, multi-facility premises in Leagrave Road, Luton.

## SATURDAY RESPITE CLUB

This club, for children and young people with disabilities aged 9-18, ran fortnightly in term-time at FUN. Most of the users needed 1-to-1 support (and some even 2-to-1 support) which allows their parents to have full respite time during the club sessions.

## HOLIDAY RESPITE CLUB

This service is aimed at children aged 9-18 with more complex needs who require 1-to-1 (or 2-to-1) support.

## FAMILY HOLIDAY CLUB

Children and young people aged 0-25 attend the club at FUN with their parent or a carer, and siblings are also welcome.

“ My son has always enjoyed coming to club. I feel it gives him more confidence to speak to people and try new things. ”



59

Support Sessions



8842

Short break hours



171

Disabled children and  
young people supported  
(inc siblings)

9

FOBE is a local charity based in Luton. It provides a range of short break activity clubs, holiday schemes, and trips and outings for disabled children and young people with disabilities (aged 8+).



## WEEKDAY EVENING CLUBS

Clubs were held during the week in term time in different locations in Luton at Beech Hill Primary School, Dallow Community Centre and Lady Zia Wernher School.

## WEEKEND CLUBS

Clubs were organised on Saturdays at Beech Hill Primary School and on Sundays at Lady Zia Wernher School.

## HOLIDAY CLUB

Sessions were held during 2022/23 in the Easter, summer and winter holidays. The club was based at Beech Hill Primary School



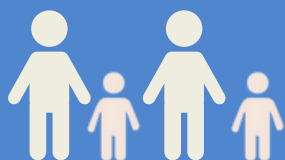
260

Support Sessions



8176

Short break hours



62

Disabled children and young people supported (inc siblings)



We as a family would like to say a special thank you to the staff who organise these groups and especially to the volunteers who look after our kids, it takes a special person to want to volunteer and help our lovely challenging kids with their needs. When the kids are happy to come to FOBE then you know it's down to staff and volunteers who make the sessions fun and comfortable for our children.





# SPECIAL NEEDS OUT OF SCHOOL CLUB (SNOOSC)

☎ 01582 868244

✉ Snoosc1@gmail.com

🌐 [www.snoosc.org.uk/](http://www.snoosc.org.uk/)



SNOOSC is a local charity which has operated for 20 years. It offers full respite services for children and young people with complex/profound disabilities including severe learning/ behavioural difficulties. At all its short breaks sessions, SNOOSC staff provide 1-to-1 care and intimate care services, and 2- to-1 care for some children. SNOOSC is based in Dunstable in Central Bedfordshire, and users come from the local area and from Luton.

## SATURDAY RESPITE CLUB

These clubs ran throughout the year. The club now operate from Apex Business Centre in Dunstable. The club is for children and young people aged 8-25

## HOLIDAY RESPITE CLUB

These clubs are for children aged between 8-25 based at Apex Business Centre throughout the year.



“ THE STAFF ARE FANTASTIC WITH \*\*\* HE COMES HOME VERY HAPPY, THEY TEACH HIM BASIC LIFE SKILLS LIKE MOPPING THE FLOOR AND HOW YOU WOULD MAKE TEA. \*\*\* LIKES TO LEARN AND HAS STARTED TO GROW UP AND BE HELPFUL SINCE ATTENDING SNOOSC – THIS PLACE IS A GOD SEND! ”



117

Support Sessions



2052

Short break hours



13

Disabled children and young people supported (inc siblings)

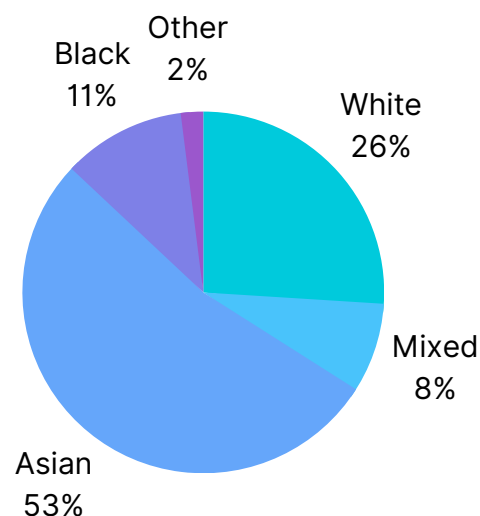
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430 unique children and young people were supported in 2022/23.

# ANALYSIS OF CONSORTIUM USERS

## ETHNICITY

Luton has a very diverse population. Prior to 2016/17 the ethnic mix of Consortium users (ie disabled children and siblings) was fairly similar to that in the overall population of Luton. However, since then there has been a significant increase in the numbers of Asian users supported by the Consortium. In 2022/23 the number of Asian users was again higher than the number of white users, and users from Black and Ethnic Minority (BAME) groups accounted for 72% of total Consortium users.

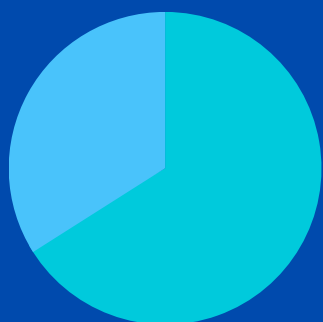


## GENDER

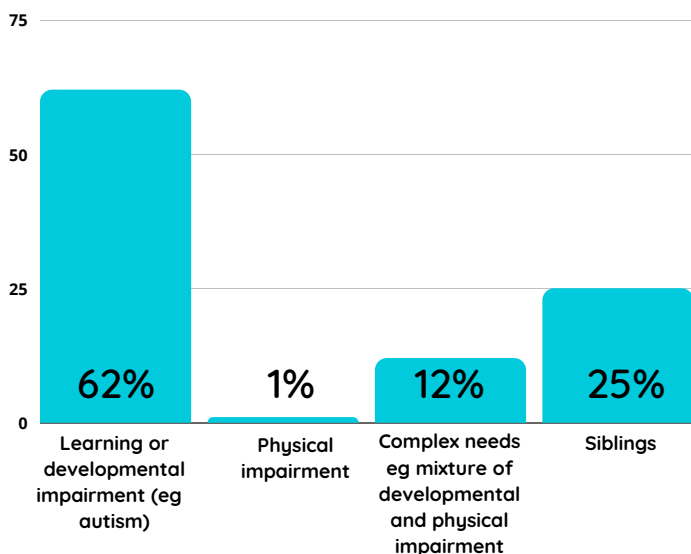
As in previous years, more males continued to be supported by the Consortium than females. This is because a higher proportion of males than females are affected by certain illnesses and disabilities, and the diagnosis levels for conditions such as autism are considerably higher for boys than girls. An ongoing target for the Consortium is to increase the number of female users.

Male  
66%

Female  
34%

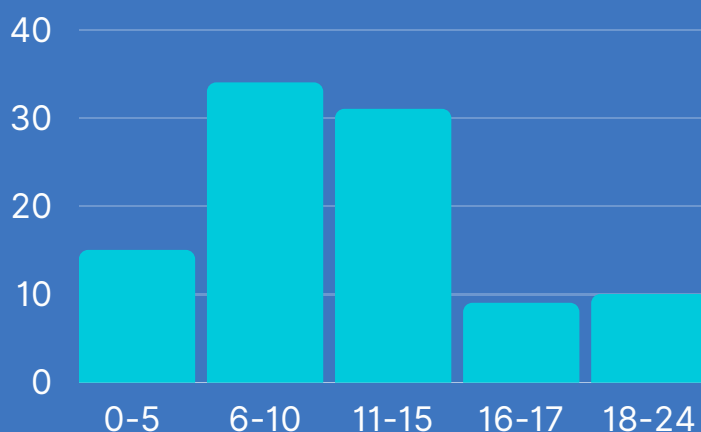


## TYPE OF USER



Consortium users with disabilities are recorded under three categories of impairment. 74% of our users were disabled and 26% were siblings. This support provided to siblings is very important because research shows that siblings of a disabled child are also significantly disadvantaged.

## AGE



The Consortium's services are open to children and young people aged 0-25. The analysis shows that the Consortium's services were provided to a very good mix of different aged children.





# LUTON VCS SHORT BREAKS CONSORTIUM ANNUAL REPORT

2022/2023



For further information about this Annual Report or the Luton VCS Short Breaks Consortium, please contact Autism Bedfordshire



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