

# You Said, We Did

## Annual Report



# You Said, We Did

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My Voice is Real Life Options survey framework designed in 2021 to give the people we support, their families and guardians, a real voice in the development of the services being offered. In 2021/22 we delivered three surveys, each created to capture valuable feedback from people we support - particularly important as we were stepped in the COVID-19 pandemic.

In line with care regulators, the Care Inspectorate and Care Quality Commission's (CQC's) Involvement strategies, we recognised the value of people's experiences in shaping what we do and how we do it. It's critical that everyone has choice and control over their support and care. Through our survey framework we can continuously listen to people's views and act on them to review our approaches and identify good practice that improves the quality of the support and care people receive using our services.

Each My Voice survey focused on a different topic and in addition to the roll out of each survey we also invited participants to join the My Voice delivery group to discuss key themes and provide enlightening insights to inform and shape the way we support people in the future. So far although people we support and/or their family members have indicated a willingness to be part of the My Voice delivery group to date they haven't been able to link in. We will continue to encourage partnership working with the hope that opportunity will be taken up.

The purpose of our Annual Report 2021/22 is to offer an overview of the surveys completed, key feedback we received and how that feedback shaped service delivery and future surveys.

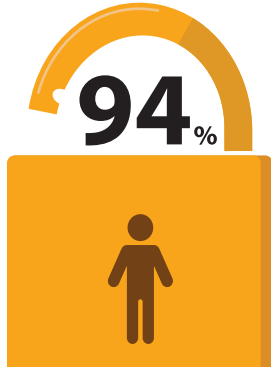
We have chosen to call our Annual Report **'You Said, We Did'**.

As we had been experiencing a very challenging time supporting people to remain safe and well throughout the pandemic, we wanted to shape our first survey on capturing feedback on how people were feeling generally and what they thought of the support they received from Real Life Options.

## You Said ...

The results of this first My Voice survey were overwhelmingly positive, with almost three quarters of respondents providing the highest scores for every question. Key themes arising from the qualitative feedback questions included the high-quality of staff and their attentive and person-centred approach which helps to enable independent living. The people we support expressed that staff always listened to them and helped keep them safe and secure in their home and in their community. They spoke about being given real choices and being supported to make their own meals, take part in interviews, get involved in gardening, shopping and seeing their friends and family. They also cited that staff were friendly, caring, kept them informed and showed good community spirit.

Families and guardians reinforced the positive view, saying that Real Life Options provided excellent individualised support and that staff are kind, considerate, helpful and professional. Many reported that communication is excellent and that they are kept well informed.



94% of people we support said they get the support they need to feel safe

91% of people we support said they always get the support they need to be healthy

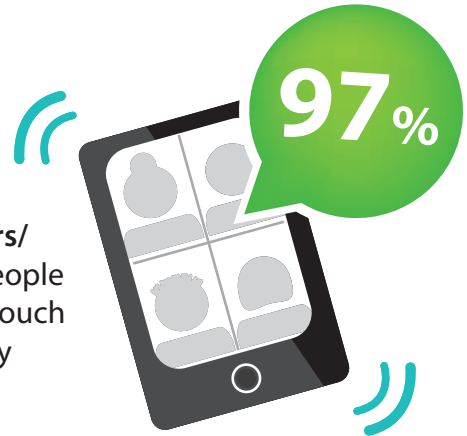


92% of people we support said they always get the support to feel clean and tidy and wear what they want to wear

94% of family members/guardians said that people are supported to live a full and happy life

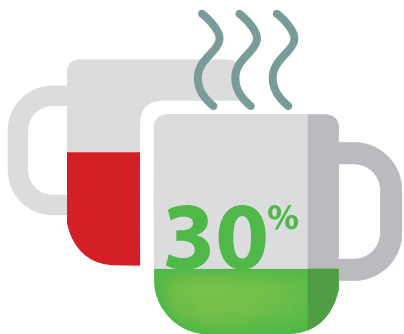


97% of family members/guardians said that are people are supported to keep in touch with friends and family

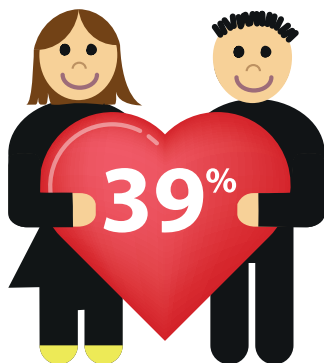


The My Voice survey also indicated some areas for improvement, which included enabling people to get out and participate in group activities and being involved in running their own home.

**39% of people we support said**  
they could keep their friendships  
private if they want to



**30% of people we support said**  
they always spend time with  
people who are not paid to be  
with them



**50% of family members/  
guardians said** that people are  
always involved in running  
their home

## We Did ...

Real Life Options have rolled out the first phase of their Person-Centred Support and Enablement (PCSE) academies which fully train staff and enable them to support people to become more involved in their home life and the decisions they want to make about their own homes and the people they meet up with.

Community Hubs have been set up across several areas of our UK services following the lifting of the COVID-19 lockdown restrictions. The hubs enable people we support to become a bigger part of their community and enjoy socialising, taking part in activities and even leading on some of the hub projects.



## Survey 2

# Supporting People to Manage their Money

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The second survey was more bespoke with the purpose of gathering feedback from those people we supported with their finances and who had been sampling new debit cards to access their money and purchases instead of having to go to the bank or relying on Real Life Options staff to make purchases on their behalf. Staff were also surveyed to gather feedback on the processes and procedures in place to enable them to provide this enablement service.

## You Said ...

Positive qualitative responses gathered from this survey suggested that people we support like to have the opportunity to manage their finances, looking after their money and bank cards and using them to buy what they choose, when they choose whether this be at the shops or online.

Having a bank card gives people we support more independence, and most understand and are grateful of the role that Real Life Options play in providing safety measures to keep their finances safe.

People we support have the opportunity to make financial choices around spending and they are having conversations with their support team if they have concerns surrounding judgements and decisions made regarding their money.

*“ The staff support me to use my card to buy items I like and choose.”*

a person we support

*“ Give me choices and support me how best to spend my money.”*

a person we support

95% of staff feel that policies on supporting people to manage their money are sufficient and all staff said that they are familiar with our policy documentation. All staff respondents had high levels of confidence around understanding their responsibilities with no rating falling lower than 8/10.

*“ Regular auditing of income and expenditure ensures that people’s money is kept safe. The work from Matthew and Catherine do in keeping communications with managers is valuable.”*

support worker

*“ Look for ways to improve access for people to use their money how and when they choose.”*

support worker

*“ Gives the People we Support more independence in this area as they can now use the contactless to pay for items or be supported to withdraw money from the bank using their card, can also by item online easier now.”*

support worker





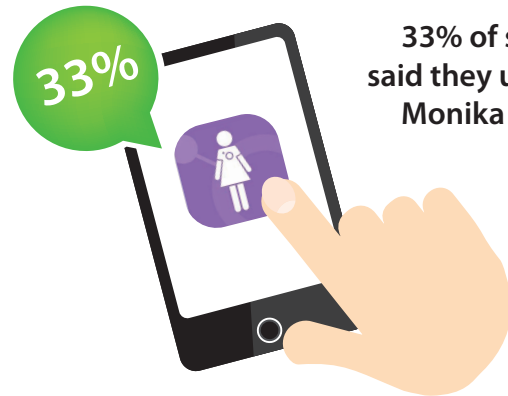
**100% of people we support**  
said they choose how they  
spend their money

**100% of people we support**  
said they take part in  
reviews about money



**67% of people we support**  
said they use their own debit  
card to buy things

**78% of people we support**  
said they like using a debit card  
to buy things



**33% of staff**  
said they use the  
Monika app

## We Did ...

The comments from this survey have supported our decisions to endorse the Money Carer card in our services. We would like to increase the number of people who own a debit card, however, we don't hold financial guardianship for many of the people we support and therefore can't extend the rollout. Despite this we will continue to promote the use of the cards both internally and externally by highlighting the benefits that they provide in supporting people to have more independence, choice and control over their finances.

Real Life Option's Finance Team have been working in partnership with the Money Care Foundation Team to further improve the usability and functionality of the Monika app. Our finance team have been shaping future advancements, by trailing and testing the app. A new updated version of the app is due to be released in early February 2023, which includes the ability to run statements direct from the app which will further benefit our staff teams by saving time and money. Providing first hand feedback has allowed us early access to this update.

Due to the positive feedback, from both staff and people we support we are aiming to further increase the number of staff using the app. We are making it more widely available by publishing the app on tablets used within the service, enabling support staff on the floor to access financial information without having to be reliant managers providing details.

To further reduce paper forms and simplify processes we will start to investigate the potential of the financial wallet section on One Touch our in service administration platform, which is now embedded in the majority of our services.

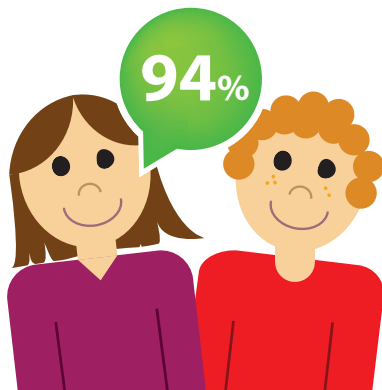


Real Life Options helped to test the latest developments of the Monika app upgrade

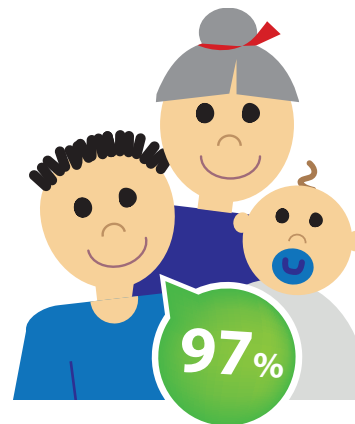
The third survey was developed using the feedback from the first survey and was based upon relationships with family and friends.

## You Said ...

Throughout the comments and feedback provided, the inclusion of family, the promotion of choice and the ability to make (and break plans) if they so wished were the main themes regarding areas of strength, especially in regard to family contact.

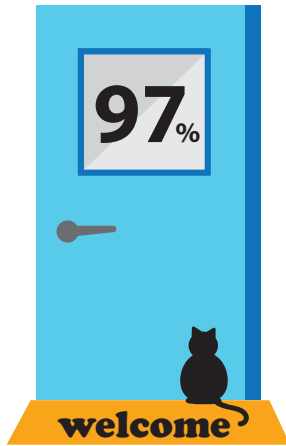


**94% of people we support**  
said they get support to see their  
friends how and when they want to

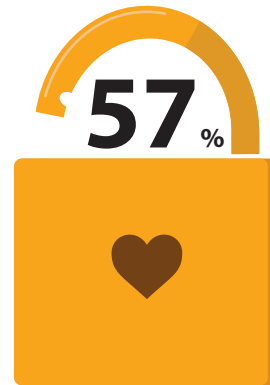


**97% of people we support**  
said they can see their family  
when they can

Maintaining or enhancing privacy of friendships was the largest area identified for development. Meeting new friends and keeping in touch with other friends or people they don't see as often was also an area for some development.



**97% of people we support**  
said my family can visit me  
at home

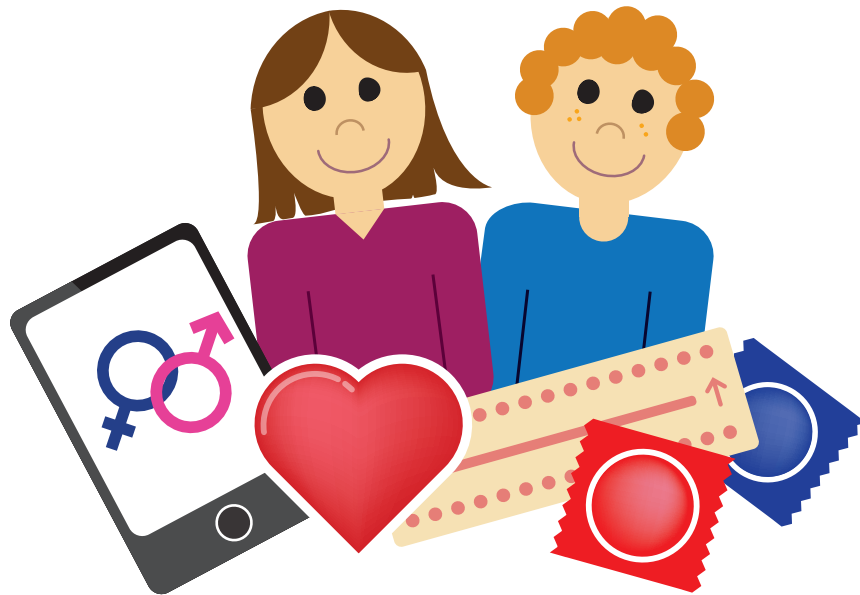


**57% of people we support**  
said they wanted to keep their  
friendships more private

## We Did ...

We decided to discuss the topic of Sexuality and Relationships in our fourth survey.

The results of the survey, as always, were completely confidential and will drive the desired transformation of support, guidance and independence where necessary. In addition, our teams will be supported with relevant training and links to key partners, advocates and information.



Real Life Options launched the My Voice  
Sexuality and Relationships Survey

# Survey Responses

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The total amount of responses received across the three surveys



**People We Support**



**Staff**



**Family and Guardian**

All  
respondents  
were  
anonymous

To read the full survey results click below

[Survey 1 : How we Support People](#)

[Survey 2 : Supporting People to Manage their Money](#)

[Survey 3 : About People I Know](#)

## Continuing to Listen

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We thank all the people who have taken the time to respond and provide invaluable insights into the support we provide. As we continue to listen to all our stakeholders, all our future surveys will be shaped by the previous survey and cover topics which we feel need further exploration. Additional surveys will be introduced based upon national guidance or organisational development.

To further endorse our commitment to openness and ensuring that people have their voices heard, we will host a mini conference in the Summer of 2023. The all inclusive event will bring together the people we support, their support workers and families and guardians, to share lived experiences and help shape best practice.

If you have any comments you would like to share, or if you would like to sign up to take part in a future focus group, please email  
**[myvoice@reallifeoptions.org](mailto:myvoice@reallifeoptions.org)**

**Real Life Options**  
*a real choice | a real voice | a real difference*

[reallifeoptions.org](http://reallifeoptions.org)