

Sense Scotland Supported Living West Dunbartonshire and Surrounding Areas Housing Support Service

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Unannounced

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Service provided by:
Sense Scotland

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About the service

Sense Scotland Supported Living West Dunbartonshire and Surrounding Areas work in partnership to support and promote the interests of disabled people who have communication support needs arising from a range of impairments including, but not limited to sensory impairment, learning or physical disability and/or other complex needs. They aim to provide a high quality, personalised and sustainable service which enables disabled people, including those with complex support needs, to make choices and meet their personal outcomes through either accessing community activities or care at home.

The service currently supports 23 people, 2 of whom receive 24 hour packages of supported living in their own homes.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 17 and 19 March 2026 between the hours of 10:00am and 15:00pm. The inspection was carried out by 1 inspector from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- met with 5 people using the service and 3 of their family members
- read survey results from an additional 5 family members
- spoke with 6 staff and management and read survey results from 8 staff
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- obtained feedback from 3 visiting professionals

Key messages

The service expertly maximised the impact of their efforts to effectively enable supported people to achieve positive health and wellbeing outcomes.

The staff team were cohesive, knowledgeable and committed to providing the correct level of support to people accessing the service.

Recruitment processes should be slightly amended to reflect best practice guidance as used by the wider organisation.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	6 - Excellent
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How well do we support people's wellbeing?

6 - Excellent

We found sector leading strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore, we evaluated this key question as excellent.

We spent time with supported people, staff, and relatives at a social event hosted by the service. During this visit, we observed warm, respectful, and enabling interactions between staff and supported people. Individuals we met with were very happy and were supported by familiar staff who understood their needs extremely well, providing care that was both responsive and highly effective. Relatives we met, along with those who returned surveys, consistently told us that no improvements were needed. Comments such as 'Nothing they could do better' and 'The service is excellent' reflected the strong confidence families had in the support provided. All three external professionals who gave feedback echoed this, offering very positive comments about the service and the improved outcomes achieved for people.

The ethos of the service was clearly collaborative, with managers working innovatively to maximise the impact of the support hours available. They worked closely with external health and social care professionals and acted as strong advocates when people's wellbeing required additional attention. Managers had introduced creative strategies to promote independence beyond direct support hours and used support time flexibly to reflect people's needs and wishes. Managers had known supported people for several years, yet remained ambitious for them, encouraging progress towards meaningful, person-centred goals.

The service's holistic approach extended well beyond contracted supports. Families, community resources, and wider networks were actively involved, fostering a strong sense of inclusion and meaningful participation. Managers had extensive knowledge of community supports, including social clubs, respite opportunities, and services offering financial or benefits advice. Support was individually tailored, enabling the service to have a broader and more positive impact on people's wellbeing.

People were encouraged to pursue lifelong learning and to explore new opportunities. For some, this included college courses, community-based learning, voluntary work, or even leading sports teams. Supported people were enabled to have roles and responsibilities, and their achievements were celebrated and shared, contributing to excellent personal outcomes.

Staff demonstrated an enabling approach, underpinned by an awareness of trauma-informed practice, which shaped how support was delivered. Assistive technology was being promoted, and we heard how audio recordings of meetings had improved accessibility for supported people. Relatives were kept well informed and were routinely consulted, ensuring they were involved in guardianship, financial decisions, and day-to-day communication. The service's recording and reporting practices were exceptionally thorough, keeping us fully informed about accidents, incidents, and any emerging concerns.

The service maintained a clear and ongoing focus on continuous improvement across a range of areas. Health promotion was a priority, with several proactive initiatives underway. Men's health, in particular, was being championed, with improving outcomes and increased awareness among supported people. Strategies were in place to promote people's independence with self-care relating to physical and mental wellbeing. Future initiatives were being identified on an ongoing basis, either in response to emerging need or in an anticipatory manner. Health and safeguarding concerns were identified quickly and acted upon, ensuring people and their families remained fully involved and supported.

Overall, we were assured that the service was innovative, forward-thinking, and well placed to sustain ongoing improvements through stable management systems and a strong commitment to development. People's health and wellbeing outcomes were clearly prioritised, and there was exceptional focus on delivering the highest standard of support.

How good is our staff team?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

The managers and staff we met demonstrated highly cohesive and effective teamwork. Feedback consistently highlighted that line managers and the wider organisation were very supportive of both employees and the people accessing the service. Staffing arrangements were well organised, with familiar and regular staff providing continuity, and senior workers stepping in seamlessly when required. This approach enabled strong, trusting relationships to develop and offered a level of stability that was particularly important for supported people. Family members described this as a clear strength of the service, noting the significant positive impact it had on the quality and consistency of support. There were no reports of late or missed visits, and the reliability of the service was valued by people, relatives, and external professionals.

The management team were thoughtful and selective when filling vacancies, ensuring that new staff were carefully matched to supported people based on their knowledge, skills, and interests. This was made possible by managers' strong understanding of individuals' needs and preferences. Recruitment processes were thorough, with robust reference checks in place. We recommended that the service reintroduce a scoring system for interview recording. Managers advised that this would be straightforward to reinstate, as it was standard practice across the wider organisation. We were confident that this would be actioned promptly. Effective systems were in place to ensure staff maintained the required professional registrations.

Managers had a clear overview of staff training and were proactive in identifying new learning opportunities aligned with the health needs of supported people. Regular team meetings and individual 'check ins' provided valuable opportunities for staff to reflect on their practice and consider their professional development. Throughout our observations, both managers and staff demonstrated genuine enthusiasm for their roles and a strong commitment to achieving positive outcomes for people.

Overall, we were assured that staffing arrangements were appropriate and that staff worked very well together in a collaborative, person-centred, and highly effective way. The right staff were in the right place at the right time to support people's outcomes.

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

The service should review existing risk assessments and update the content as required. Reviews of risk assessments should be robust, clearly recorded, dated and include future review dates.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state:

'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities' (HSCS 3.20)

This area for improvement was made on 7 July 2023.

Action taken since then

We sampled multiple risk assessments covering a wide variety of situations and all were very thorough and detailed. These documents were clearly dated and had been regularly reviewed and/ or updated at routine intervals. The service had introduced a tracker after our previous inspection and we could see that risk assessment review had now become embedded in their routine practice.

This area for improvement has been met.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	6 - Excellent
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	6 - Excellent
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together	5 - Very Good

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