

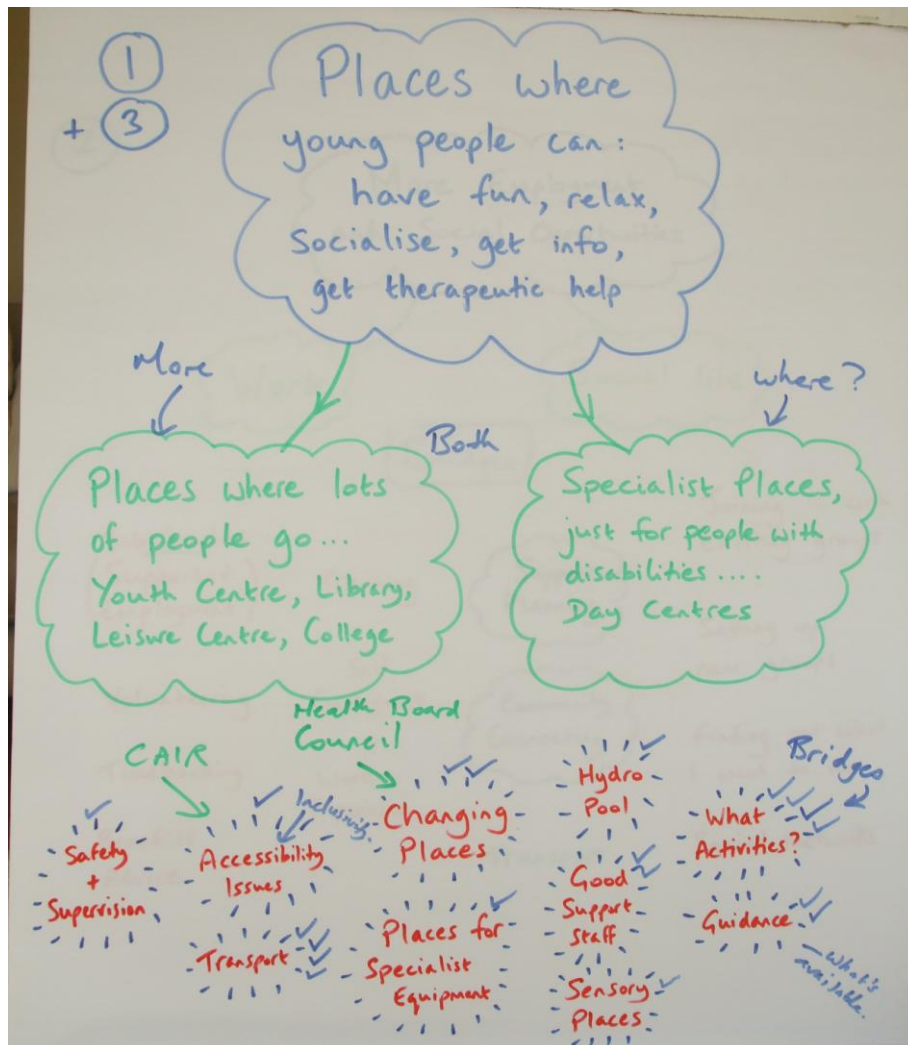
Monmouthshire Transition Cooperative Summary of Meeting on 22 May

The Transition Cooperative Project held a meeting on 22 May at the Nags Head in Usk to discuss the priorities of the Project.

Who came? Helen Leamon, Sandra Peebles, Gwenda Watson, John Pask, Sara Chicken, Sue Parry, Gemma Martin & Mike Logan.

We talked about the priorities that had been identified at the meetings on 22 and 26 April. Mike had prepared some posters to help with the discussions about the 4 main themes:

Theme 1 (Placards 1 & 3): **Places where young people with disabilities can go to have fun; relax; socialise, get info and get therapeutic help.**



We discussed the issue of whether these places should be specialist places which are just for people with disabilities (like day centres), or places where lots of people go, such as youth centres, libraries, leisure centres and colleges.

Some particular problems were identified, such as

- ★ the need for specialist 'changing place' facilities which enable carers to provide personal care for people with complex needs: these facilities are costly to create. In the past they have been built within specialist centres. If we want young people with complex needs to be able to use community facilities, we will need more 'changing place' facilities to be available (see campaign: <http://www.changing-places.org/>).
- ★ the difficulty of storing specialist equipment (such as Standing Frames, Wheelchairs, Symmetrikit Chairs) which are needed by some young people with disabilities to maintain or improve their posture.
- ★ accessibility issues that relate to behaviours: if a young person has a tendency to make loud noises, or take books off shelves, then there could be problems with visiting places such as libraries where there are other visitors who might want a quiet environment.

We decided that we need a range of options in Monmouthshire:

- ★ more places in the community where young people with disabilities are welcome and able to take part in activities, and
- ★ more places with disability-friendly facilities, such as 'Changing Places' toilet facilities.

Each of the parents were given 3 votes to choose the issues within this theme that the Transition Cooperative Project should aim to work on. The votes are indicated by ticks on the poster above. The issues, in order of votes, are:

Transport (4 votes)

What activities? (4 votes) – The Bridges Bright New Futures project will be creating more opportunities for social activities from November 2013

Good support staff (2 votes)

Guidance (2 votes) – for instance on what opportunities are available

Changing Places (2 votes) – but we thought that the council and health board should be helping with this

Accessibility Issues (1 vote) – the CAIR organisation can help with physical access issues; there are also broader Inclusion issues linked to this

Safety and Supervision (1 vote) – although Good Support Staff would help with this

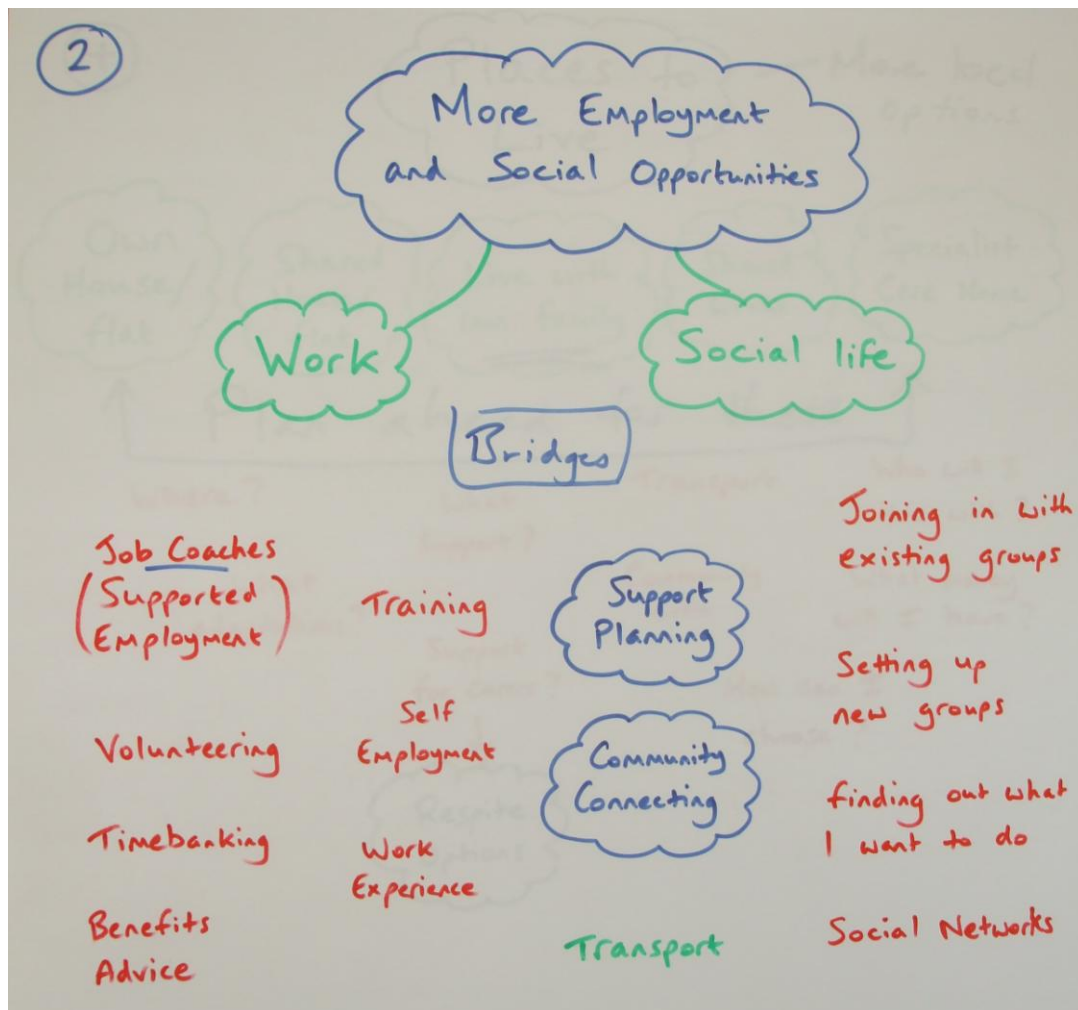
Hydrotherapy Pool (1 vote) – there was recognition that hydrotherapy is of great benefit to a particular set of people, but that Hydro Pools are expensive to build and maintain

Sensory Places (1 vote) – this covers Sensory Rooms and Gardens, and there was similar recognition that sensory input is of great benefit to some people, but that sensory facilities can be costly to create.

We had a short discussion about how the Transition Cooperative Project could make progress on these issues.

- ★ One option is to make representations to other groups who can do something about these issues.
- ★ Another option is to create solutions ourselves, by raising finance to provide facilities, preferably in partnership with other organisations who have an interest in these issues.

Theme 2 (Placard 2): **More employment and social opportunities**



For this theme, we discussed a range of opportunities that some young people with disabilities could benefit from. For some young people, there are a number of possibilities relating to work and social life that the Transition Project could focus on. The options for creating more work and social opportunities will also be addressed by the Bridges Bright New Futures project which will run from November 2013 – October 2017.

Gemma and Mike are currently working with 20 families and are trialling 'Support Planning' and 'Community Connecting' as ways of working that will lead to more personalised ways of supporting young people with disabilities.

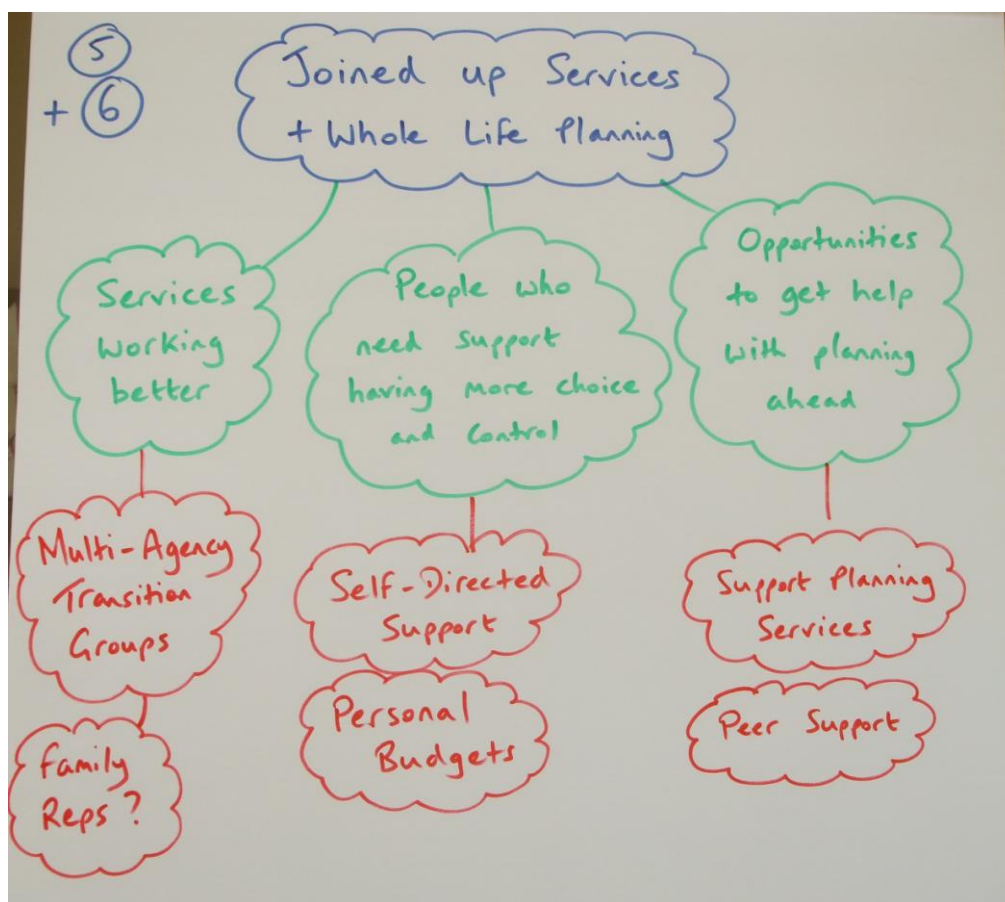
Theme 3 (Placard 4): Places for young people to live



This theme is difficult to find a consensus on, because the housing solution for each young person will be unique to them. However, we agreed that there is a need to plan well ahead with families on this. If the best solution in a particular case is for the young person to stay living their own family, then the need to support family members with their caring role is vital. This in turn leads on to the issue of respite, and the need for a variety of options.

Sara asked whether we could have a meeting with the parents who set up the Martha Trust Hereford charity which has created 2 purpose-built specialist care homes for young people with complex needs. Mr and Mrs Sharp-Smith were the founding trustees of the charity and they have said that they are willing to help out other groups of parents who are facing the same issues as they were facing 17 years ago.

Theme 4 (Placards 5 & 6): **Services working better**



This theme led to a discussion about how services can be encouraged to work together more effectively.

- ★ One idea was that the Monmouthshire Multi-Agency Transition Group might welcome the input of family representatives, who could attend its meetings on behalf of the families involved in the Transition Cooperative Project. Mike said that he would ask the Multi-Agency Transition Group about this.
- ★ Another idea is that people who need support should be able to 'self-direct' that support using a personal budget. Monmouthshire County Council are already trialling this approach using their Direct Payments system.
- ★ The option of getting support to plan ahead could be welcomed by some individuals and families. Gemma and Mike are trialling the idea of a 'support planning service', and the Monmouthshire Transition Cooperative could be a way of setting up this service within a not-for-profit, independent organisation.
- ★ Another idea for more Peer Support came from Sheffield, where parents who have gained experience of transition planning and working with health, education and social services, can pass on their knowledge and advice to other parents who are going through the transition process. The Sheffield model is called 'Pass It On'.

Finally, we talked about setting up a 'Constituted Group' for the Transition Cooperative. This would allow the group to

- ★ set up a membership of supporters,
- ★ raise finance to work towards the group's aims, and
- ★ represent the membership's interests in discussions with others.

This would need:

At least 3 people to be on a committee to run the group for its members;

An agreement about what the aims of the group are

An agreement about what the group should be called.

Mike circulated a Draft Constitution which could be adopted by the group.



Draft Constitution

The working title for the group is: **Monmouthshire Transition Cooperative**

Some people thought that the name of the group should include the word 'Disability'. We agreed to ask people from the wider circulation list whether they have any better ideas for the name of the group.

The aims of the group according to this draft constitution are:

To provide a support network for families in the Monmouthshire area who have young people with additional needs dealing with transition issues such as: moving on from school, or preparing for adulthood.

To campaign for and create better opportunities for young people with additional needs as they move into adulthood.

We had some volunteers who are willing to be on the committee. Mike and Gemma said that they would be able to support the group as part of their job roles, which should help the committee to get established.

We decided to contact all the people who have been involved in the project so far, to ask them the following questions:

What do you think of the idea of setting up a 'Constituted Group'?

Have you got any suggestions on how the name and aims of the group could be improved?

Would you be willing to join this group?
(Membership wouldn't cost anything at this stage.)

Would you be willing to help the group by joining the committee?
(We know that your time is very precious, and we would minimise the amount of time that committee members would spend on meetings.)

We will ask people to respond by 20 June 2013.

Mike Logan
28 May 2013