



Enter and View

YAWN Life

March 2026

healthwatch

1 Contents

Contents 1

What is Enter and View?2

Overall summary.....4

Methodology5

Summary of findings6

Recommendations.....11

Service provider response.....13

Introduction

2.1 Details of visit

Name of home	Yawn Life
Service provider	Yawn Life CIC
Date and time	3 rd March 12.00–13.30
Authorised representative (s)	Pat Lattimer, Steph Power Maureen Matthews, Angela Andrews

YAWN Life

YAWN Life offers Day opportunities to people with learning disabilities. The activities provided are all aimed at using and improving the skills needed to live a happy and fulfilling life. YAWN also offers a group for sociable young adults with learning disabilities aged 16 – 30 years. It offers a safe environment for people with learning disabilities to meet, socialise and take part in activities with their friends.

2.2 Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Luton would like to thank the service provider, staff, service users and their families for contributing to this Enter and View visit, notably for their helpfulness, hospitality, and courtesy.

2.3 How we gathered the data

This report is based on our observations and the experiences of the residents, relatives and staff we spoke to on the day of the visit.

What is Enter and View?

Part of the local Healthwatch programme is to carry out Enter and View visits. Local Healthwatch representatives carry out these visits to health and social care services to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement. The Health and Social Care Act allows local Healthwatch authorised representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families, and carers on premises such as hospitals,

residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists, and pharmacies. Enter and View visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service, but, equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation – so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first-hand.

Healthwatch Enter and Views are not intended to identify safeguarding issues specifically. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit, they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch safeguarding policies. If at any time an authorised representative observes anything that they feel uncomfortable about, they need to inform their lead, who will inform the service manager, ending the visit.

In addition, if any staff member wishes to raise a safeguarding issue about their employer, they will be directed to the Care Quality Commission, where they are protected by legislation if they raise a concern.

3.1 Purpose of visit

The aim of the visit is to understand and report on the experiences of residents in selected Luton living in supported living, residential and nursing homes and day centres, their relatives, supporters and staff.

3.2 Strategic drivers

This visit was part of Healthwatch Luton's wider work to hear from underrepresented groups using community-based care and support services. Yawn is a day centre for adults with learning disabilities, and the visit was designed to gather insight directly from service users, staff and management about their experience of care and support.

Healthwatch Luton is gathering feedback from people in inpatient and residential settings, in addition to daytime provision for people with learning disabilities. Given the ongoing need for more inclusive, personalised and accessible services, including in non-residential settings, this visit offered valuable insight into how well current provision meets people's needs.

This visit also supports our commitment to ensuring that people whose voices are less often heard, including those with learning disabilities, are given the opportunity to share their views and help shape services.

Overall summary

Healthwatch Luton carried out an Enter and View visit to Yawn Life on 3 March 2026. The visit provided insight into the experiences of individuals attending the day centre, as well as the perspectives of staff.

Yawn Life is a community-based day service supporting adults with learning disabilities. During the visit, Healthwatch Luton observed the environment, interactions between staff and service users, and the range of activities available.

Overall, the centre presented as clean, well maintained and welcoming. The atmosphere appeared inclusive and active, with individuals observed engaging confidently with staff and each other. Activities were tailored to individual needs and preferences, with some individuals attending community-based activities in the morning before returning to the centre.

Service users spoke positively about their experience, describing staff as “amazing” and approachable. One individual stated, “I enjoy coming here to see friends and do activities.” Feedback indicated that individuals value the opportunity to socialise and take part in a range of activities.

The service provides opportunities to develop independent living skills, including the use of a designated flat area for activities such as cooking, cleaning and daily living tasks. Additional facilities, including a gym space and access to outdoor and community-based activities, support a varied programme.

Staff demonstrated an awareness of individual care and communication needs, including the use of Makaton where required. Activities also included community engagement, such as gardening projects, supporting participation and skill development.

No significant concerns were raised during the visit. However, opportunities for development were identified, including strengthening feedback mechanisms and ensuring dietary preferences are clearly recorded and reviewed.

In summary, Yawn Life presented as a positive and inclusive day service, supporting individuals to engage in meaningful activities, develop independence and maintain social connections.

Methodology

The Enter and View visit to Yawn House took place on **3rd March 2026**, from **12.00 to 1:30 PM**. The visit was carried out by four Authorised Representatives from Healthwatch Luton: **Patricia Lattimer, Steph Power, Sandra Gouldbourne, and Maureen Matthews**. The provider had been informed in February 2025 that a visit would occur, although the specific date and time were not disclosed.

Upon arrival, the team introduced themselves to the person in charge. **Jeanette Karon Tennyson and Julie Woodhouse**, who are active directors. The purpose of the visit was explained, and the manager confirmed which areas could be accessed. A brief tour of the communal areas was provided, and the team was introduced to available staff and residents.

The Authorised Representatives were given access to communal areas of the service and used a structured observation checklist to assess the environment, layout, and atmosphere. Interactions between staff and residents were also observed during the visit.

A semi-structured conversation approach was used to gather resident and staff feedback. Residents were engaged in communal areas and supported one-to-one, with flexibility in how questions were presented depending on communication needs. Staff completed written feedback forms during the visit.

In total, feedback was collected from:

Two residents, through supported interviews

Three members of staff, via questionnaire

Two directors, through a questionnaire

Residents were informed that participation was voluntary, and it was made clear that they could withdraw from the conversation at any time. Staff and residents appeared relaxed and open during interactions. All feedback was anonymised and reviewed following the visit.

Summary of findings

6.1 Overview

Yawn Life is a day service supporting adults with learning disabilities. The service is an independent organisation based in Luton town centre. The visit took place on 3 March 2026.

The service is managed by Jeanette Karon Tennyson and Julie Woodhouse, who are active directors and have been in post since 2013.

The premises were observed to be clean, well maintained and spacious. Communal areas were clearly defined and supported a welcoming and active environment.

The atmosphere during the visit appeared relaxed and person-centred. Staff were observed to be approachable and attentive, and service users appeared comfortable within the setting.

The service was operating as usual during the visit, with a range of activities taking place both within the centre and in the community. During the morning, service users had participated in activities including chair-based exercise and a community gardening project, while others remained at the centre taking part in cooking and art activities.

At lunchtime, service users were observed socialising and eating together. Following lunch, activities continued within the centre, including games such as snooker. As the visit concluded, staff and service users were preparing for afternoon activities, including swimming and gardening.

Based on observations and feedback gathered during the visit, Yawn Life presented as an active and inclusive day service supporting service users through a range of structured and community-based activities.

6.2 Premises

Yawn Life is a single-storey day centre with a spacious and accessible layout. The environment was observed to be clean, bright and well maintained, with no unpleasant odours or visible hazards. The temperature within the centre appeared appropriate, contributing to a comfortable setting.

The layout includes a range of spaces designed to support both individual and group activities. Communal areas include a large day room used for activities and a kitchen where cooking skills are developed. Additional facilities include a gym located within a separate summer house and a dedicated area for gardening activities, including storage and preparation space. Service users participating in gardening activities are provided with appropriate clothing and equipment, which are maintained by the centre.

A separate area within the building is used to support the development of independent living skills, including a flat designed for activities such as cooking, cleaning and daily routines.

Communal areas are arranged to allow for both group engagement and one-to-one support. Rooms were observed to be well organised and adaptable, supporting a structured yet flexible environment. Staff reported that the layout enables them to meet a range of individual needs.

Signage throughout the centre was clear and appropriately placed, supporting accessibility. A Healthwatch poster was displayed within the main communal area. Décor was colourful and engaging, contributing to a welcoming environment.

Accessible bathroom facilities were available and observed to be in good condition. The centre also benefits from a small, well-maintained garden area with seating, providing an outdoor space for service users.

Overall, the premises presented as a clean, safe and well-maintained environment that supports a range of activities and individual needs.

6.3 Staff interaction and quality of care

During the visit, staff were observed interacting with service users in a warm, respectful and supportive manner. Interactions appeared responsive, and service users were observed to be relaxed and comfortable within the environment. Staff supported individuals to maintain independence, and service users confirmed that they felt listened to and cared for.

Service users spoke positively about staff, describing them as **“amazing,”** **“helpful,”** and approachable. One individual stated, **“Staff are really lovely, you can speak with them about anything,”** while another commented that staff **“communicate well”** and take into account their religious beliefs. Service users indicated that they felt safe and able to express their views.

Service users also reported being involved in discussions about their care. One individual stated, "We have discussions about my care and staff support me and help me if and when I need it." Staff reflected this approach, with one stating that **"all the residents are individuals, and we meet their individual needs."** This suggests a person-centred approach, with service users involved in decisions about their support.

Communication was adapted to meet individual needs, including the use of Makaton, visual aids and other methods. One of the directors explained that a range of communication approaches are used, including face-to-face interaction, Makaton, pictures and alphabet boards. Service users appeared to know who they could speak to if they had concerns, with one stating, **"You can speak to any of the staff, they listen."**

Staff described a positive working environment, with good team relationships and low staff turnover. One director noted that there is **"lots of banter between staff and clients,"** while another described the team as small, supportive and working well together. Staff reported that morale is good and that they feel valued within their roles.

Although the service operates as a day centre and does not support personal care routines such as bathing or dressing, staff demonstrated awareness of service users' individual needs and preferences during the day. Service users reported that staff understand their needs, including mental health and communication needs, and provide appropriate support.

Staff confirmed that a complaints process is in place and understood. Both staff and service users referred to an open-door approach, with individuals able to raise concerns at any time. Regular staff meetings were also described.

Service users access healthcare services through their primary carers; however, the centre supports communication by sharing information about available services. One service user noted that staff provide information to families about health services.

Staff reported receiving relevant training, including induction, safeguarding and specialist training in areas such as communication and learning disabilities. Ongoing training is available, including refresher sessions and additional learning opportunities. Staff demonstrated a willingness to continue developing their skills to meet service users' needs.

Overall, observations and feedback suggest that staff provide supportive, person-centred care, with strong relationships contributing to a positive and inclusive environment.

6.4 Social engagement and activities

Service users at Yawn Life reported taking part in a wide range of activities, both within the centre and in the community. Activities mentioned included gardening, cooking, art, tennis, snooker, swimming and chair-based exercise. One service user stated, **"I enjoy coming here to see friends and do activities... I enjoy swimming, chair yoga at Lewsey, cooking and tennis,"** while another commented, **"I am very happy to come here... I do cooking, tennis and play snooker."**

During the visit, service users were observed engaging in a variety of activities and social interactions. At lunchtime, individuals were socialising, playing snooker and games, and interacting comfortably with both staff and peers. Cooking activities had taken place earlier in the day, with one service user stating, **"We did cooking this morning, we made bread pudding."**

Staff described how each service user has an individual activity plan, developed in discussion with them to reflect their preferences. These plans are flexible and can be adapted if individuals choose to change activities, supporting a person-centred approach.

A range of activities were observed or reported during the visit. In the morning, some service users attended community-based activities, including gardening and chair-based exercise, while others remained at the centre participating in cooking and art. In the afternoon, activities included swimming and gardening tasks such as planting seeds. Staff supported activities across different settings, with staffing levels adjusted according to the needs of the service users and the nature of the activity.

Communal areas within the centre supported both group activities and informal social time. Service users were observed choosing how to spend their time, including engaging in activities, preparing for sessions, or socialising with others.

Service users confirmed that they are able to maintain contact with family and friends, with one stating, **"My family can pop into the day centre."** Staff also demonstrated awareness of individual needs, including religious considerations where relevant.

Staff reported that feedback is gathered through annual surveys for service users and carers. While no formal meetings were referenced during the visit, feedback mechanisms were in place.

6.5 Dining Experience

The dining experience at Yawn Life was described positively by service users. The centre does not provide cooked lunches, and service users bring their own packed meals, which are eaten within a communal dining space.

Service users confirmed that they are able to choose where they sit and who they eat with. The dining environment appeared relaxed and inclusive, with individuals sitting with friends and socialising during mealtimes.

During the visit, service users were observed eating together and engaging in conversation. The atmosphere was positive, with individuals appearing comfortable and included. Staff were also present within the dining area, interacting with service users and contributing to a social and supportive environment.

6.6 Choice

Service users at Yawn Life appeared to have a good level of autonomy in their day-to-day experience. Individuals were able to choose how they spent their time, including whether to take part in activities, which activities to engage in, and where to eat.

Service users also demonstrated independence in how they accessed personal items and communication tools. One individual stated, **"I have use of my phone, iPad, laptop and desktop,"** while another explained that they bring their laptop into the centre. Service users were also able to attend the centre independently, with one stating that they travel to the service on their own.

Staff reported that service users are involved in reviewing their care plans regularly. One individual described this as an ongoing process, stating, "Everyday review, add changes," indicating that preferences are considered and discussed frequently.

Communication support was available where required, including the use of Makaton and other adapted communication methods. Staff demonstrated

confidence in supporting a range of communication needs and described adapting their approach to suit each individual.

Staff also described a flexible, person-centred approach to activity planning. Individual timetables are developed based on service users' preferences; however, these are adapted where individuals choose to change activities, supporting choice and responsiveness.

Feedback is gathered through annual surveys for both service users and carers. While no formal resident forums were referenced during the visit, service users indicated that they felt able to express their views, and staff were observed to respond to individual preferences.

Staff described maintaining regular communication with families, carers and external professionals, including social workers, to ensure that support remains appropriate to each individual's needs.

Overall, observations and feedback suggest that service users are supported to make choices and maintain independence, with staff providing flexible and person-centred support.

Recommendations

Overall, Yawn Life was observed to be a positive, inclusive and well-managed service. Feedback from service users and staff was consistently positive, and no significant concerns were identified during the visit. The following recommendations are intended as areas for ongoing development rather than reflecting any major issues.

Continue to strengthen formal feedback opportunities for service users

While service users were able to share their views informally and through annual surveys, there was limited evidence of regular structured forums or meetings. The service may wish to consider introducing or promoting more frequent opportunities for group feedback to further support engagement and shared decision-making.

Timescale: Within three months.

Ensure dietary preferences and needs are consistently recorded and reviewed

Although service users bring their own meals and appeared satisfied with their dining experience, the service may wish to ensure that any dietary preferences or requirements are clearly documented and regularly reviewed, particularly where cooking activities are involved.

Timescale: Within **three months**.

7.1 Examples of Best Practice

Yawn Life demonstrated a number of strong examples of best practice during the visit.

Service users were actively supported to maintain independence, including preparing food, accessing activities, and making decisions about their daily routines. The open access to facilities and flexible structure of the day supported autonomy and confidence.

A wide and varied programme of activities was available, both within the centre and in the community. Activities such as gardening, swimming, exercise sessions and cooking provided opportunities for skill development, social engagement and physical wellbeing. The use of community-based projects, including gardening initiatives, supported inclusion and meaningful participation.

The service provides a dedicated space to develop independent living skills, including a flat used to practice tasks such as cooking, cleaning and daily routines. This supports service users to apply skills beyond the centre and into their home environments.

Staff demonstrated a strong person-centred approach, adapting communication methods to meet individual needs. The use of Makaton and other communication tools supported accessibility and inclusion for service users with differing communication abilities.

Service users were involved in planning their activities through individual timetables, which were flexible and responsive to changing preferences. This ensured that support remained tailored to individual needs and choices.

Relationships between staff and service users were consistently positive. Staff were described as approachable and supportive, and observations confirmed a respectful and inclusive environment where individuals felt comfortable expressing themselves.

The environment was clean, well maintained and thoughtfully organised to support both group activities and individual needs. The layout enabled a range of activities to take place simultaneously, supporting a structured yet flexible approach.

Staff also described strong working relationships within the team, with good communication, low staff turnover and ongoing training opportunities contributing to consistency of care.

Service provider response

Thank you for forwarding a copy of the Healthwatch report. It was lovely to meet you and your team on the day and share what our service provides with you. We felt the report was a good reflection of our service. We were particularly pleased that it recognised several of the areas we focus on and are really proud of, including the role our wonderful staff team play. There are just a couple of things misunderstood that maybe should be corrected and some parts we would like to provide feedback on. As discussed on the day, there is often confusion between YAWN Life cic and YAWN. In the introduction the report mentions YAWN which is in fact a separate legal entity to YAWN Life cic. YAWN is a Registered Charity and YAWN Life a Community Interest Company. YAWN Life do work in close partnership with YAWN, supporting YAWN to run Social Discos every month. These discos are for anyone with a Learning Disability not just for people who attend the YAWN Life Day Opportunity Service. YAWN no longer runs a group specifically for 16 – 30-year-olds. The overall summary and recommendations mentioned ensuring that “dietary preferences are clearly recorded and reviewed”. We appreciate that it is difficult to capture everything on a short visit. There is a folder, for staff, in the kitchen area which details all dietary needs and preferences including allergies, health related needs such as Diabetes, cultural etc. This- folder is kept up to date. There are regular reviews set through our policy and procedure review schedule and updates made when we are advised of changes. Client preferences are included in cookery sessions with recipes often suggested by clients and in lunch club clients decide amongst themselves what they are making for lunch, with staff checking this is in line with their dietary needs. On page 8 there is a reference to alphabet boards? This doesn’t reflect practice, could it be removed from the report? Sometimes a client might “finger spell” (Makaton/BSL) the initial letter of a word to help their speech be understood. Makaton is not used as a primary method of communication but is

sometimes used by staff and clients as a supplement. Signs learnt through Sing & Sign activities or learnt previously, are often useful to help, with other strategies. Perhaps where a client is having difficulty with their words hasn't understood or the atmosphere is too loud!

On Page 8 – Point 6.6 it states one client brings their laptop into the centre. This is not normal practice, perhaps the client meant that they use the laptops that are provided here. Clients do bring their mobile phones for use during “free time” but use outside of these times is discouraged in favour of being social with their friends and engaging in activities. Re the recommendations We have been planning to further develop annual surveys so that they encourage more specific detailed feedback from parents/carers and clients. We want to know the areas particularly valued or encourage clients and their parents/carers to share where they would like something different or feel improvements or consistency could be improved. Our plan is to focus feedback requests on different areas of the service at different times so that parents/carers/clients are not overwhelmed. For example, a survey 3 or 4 times a year but each one focussing on something specific like transport, Community Access, staff support, cost of activities etc. etc. Following your visit we have developed a new simple 1 page “form”. This “form” prompts clients, with staff support where needed, to share in a more formal way. It provides space to say more about themselves, their interests, things they would like to do, things they don't like and anything else. We feel this will be a useful additional tool to then use within small group chats looking for new ideas and making decisions around future timetables, Community Access and on-site activities and resources. Further ideas include re-introducing client scrapbooks and formal staff questionnaires. This would be in addition to the current free flow informal contributions staff already regularly make. As mentioned previously systems are already in place for Dietary preferences and needs. It was particularly pleasing to read the examples of Best Practice. We pride ourselves on providing an energetic, vibrant and sociable atmosphere for our clients. They are all individuals that want to engage in worthwhile activities with their friends and a peer group who share similar needs, interests and desires. Combining so many characters together and managing their relationships with each other is not always easy but as recognised we have a strong and amazing staff team who constantly adapt to support the individuals and the group across whatever activity they are engaged in. As our vision states....We believe people thrive when they are given opportunities to learn, develop their skills and get involved with other people. Please do contact us if you have any questions or would like to discuss anything.

