

# We Speak, You Listen

## 13<sup>th</sup> April 2023

### Easy Read Version



There was a **We Speak, You Listen event** on the 13<sup>th</sup> April. It was held at Manor Library.



It was a small event with friends from **Sheffield Voices, the Hive** and a few other **group members**.



These were people **with Learning Disabilities, Autistic people** and their **support staff**.



We talked about the **Cost of Living Crisis** and how it is affecting the Learning Disability Community.



We started by asking if anyone had any **good news** or **stories** to share.



One member told us that they had started a new **volunteer job**. Other people talked about things they had been doing in Sheffield.



We then started our **presentation** about the Cost of Living. We explained what the We Speak, You Listen events are.



Our presenters also explained that we want to **take turns listening** to each other's opinions.



We then played a **game** guessing what prices different food items were at the shops.



We looked at **prices** of items like baked beans, bread, milk and chocolate in **2022** and then we showed **what they cost now**.



There was such a **big change** in price. The most shocking one was the **49p difference** for just one tin of beans.



Next, we explained what **'cost of living' means**. We explained that it is something that is happening in the UK and in other places in the world.



Lots of things that people need to live are **getting more expensive**. We talked about things that people are **worried** about because of this.



Some people said that they are worried about how they will be able to **pay all of their bills and their rent**.



Some people said they were worried about being able to **heat their homes** and have enough **electricity** to live.



They also talked about **care charges going up**. For some people, this means that their families don't have enough money to pay for their care.



One person said they were worried about what will happen to them when their **family can no longer help** look after them.



Another worry was **food prices**. The group said they have had to be more careful with their money to make it stretch.



People said that they can't shop around as much and may not be able to cook **complicated meals** by themselves.



This means that they have to eat **unhealthy foods** because its much cheaper.



One person gave a great example. They said that **twenty pounds** used to be enough for a meal, a glass of wine and a pudding.



Now they have to **choose between** a glass of wine or a pudding, but their twenty pounds **spending money hasn't gone up**.



Some people said they were worried their **care staff might leave their jobs** because they are not getting paid enough.



We also spoke about the **doctor's strike**. People understand why the doctors are striking but they worry about **not being able to get the treatment they need**.



Things people go to during the day are also getting more expensive. They worry that they won't be able to **afford to go to their day service** as often.



People who pay for their care through a **personal budget** say that they worry their **hours of support** will go down.



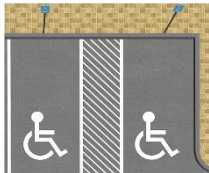
One person said, 'It feels like **benefits are going down** or getting cut, whilst **prices are going up**'.



Some people talked about **taxis** getting more expensive. They said if you don't have your **bus pass**, getting around the city is very expensive.



People said they were worried about **clean air charges** in the city centre making it even harder to get around.



They said they can't afford to get there and **there's nowhere to park**. There's not enough disabled spaces to make things accessible.



We talked about how there's a rise in **crime and homelessness** because of people not having enough money. This forces people into **dangerous situations**.



One person said, 'I worry when I see **people being hurt** and murdered in Sheffield City Centre and other places that I go'.



We also talked about not having any spare money to do **hobbies and other activities**. People said they feel more **alone** because of this.



People said that **places are closing down** because they can't afford their bills, and this is having an effect on people.



For example, people said that **Debenhams closing down** means they have lost a large **accessible bathroom** that was big enough for wheelchairs.



Other places, like the bus station, are now **charging** people to use their toilets. This means they are **not accessible**.



People who have a job that pays around the **minimum wage** are struggling to afford things. Yet it feels like **rich people are getting richer**.



One person said that they used to go to the **Brown Street Foodhall** for cheap hot meals, but it has now closed down.



We then played a fun game of '**Ow Much 'Opoly'**'. This is a board game like monopoly.



In this game, people get '**chance**' **cards** that tell them they have to pay for things like bills. They also get '**choose**' **cards** where they can choose to spend money on things.



The aim of the game is to get to the end of the board without **running out of money**.

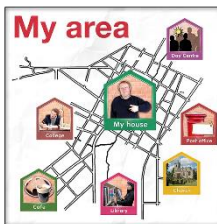




People enjoyed playing this game. They said it was fun to see what people **chose to buy** and how people **saved their money**.



We also talked about different places people could go to **get cheap food and free or low cost meals**.



We looked at a **map** on the **VAS website** that showed places like this. It also showed other community hubs.



We also thought about what else is around Sheffield that **wasn't on the map**.



Here is a **link** to that map:

<https://www.vas.org.uk/sheffield-living-crisis-map-of.../>



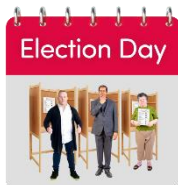
We also gave out **booklets and recipes** for **cooking on a budget** for people to take home.



If you would like a **digital copy** of these recipes, please **email** [info@sheffieldvoices.org.uk](mailto:info@sheffieldvoices.org.uk)



Our next **We Speak, You Listen** event is on the **26<sup>th</sup> May**. We will be repeating some of what we talked about in this event.



At the next event, we will be talking about the **Learning Disability Partnership Board's plans for Sheffield**. We will also mention the Partnership Board **Elections** that are coming up.



We hope to see you then!