

'My home is your workplace': findings from the Feeling at Home photovoice research project

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Feeling at Home



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Feeling at Home project

www.feelingathome.org.uk

@Researchinghome

Research team:

- Learning disability clinical practitioners
- Geographer
- Experts by experience
- Disability arts

Why is 'homeliness' important in residential care for people with learning disabilities?



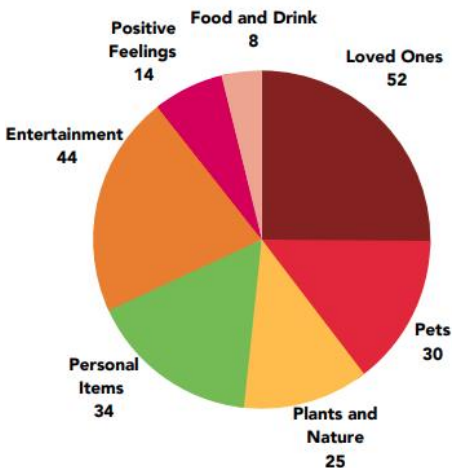
- When the residential support setting is more like an 'ordinary' home:
 - Better outcomes for residents: better mental health, engagement, participation (Verbeek et al., 2009)
 - Better outcomes for staff: less burnout, lower staff turnover, better job satisfaction (Sum et al., 2023)
 - Despite emphasis on 'ordinary life' in learning disability housing policy, little research on how far staffed group residences feel like 'real homes'.

What Makes You Feel at Home?

We asked visitors to our exhibition at the Science Gallery, London, to share what makes them feel at home.

Visitors wrote their thoughts on Post-it notes.

We counted the different types of answers to learn what makes people feel most at home.



'Positive feelings' reflect feelings such as safety, comfort, peace and quiet associated with home

'Personal items' included furniture, toys, clothes and utensils.



Interestingly, **entertainment** such as watching TV and playing games was the second most common answer from visitors, after spending time with and being in the presence of loved ones.

For more information about the exhibition or the project, please visit: <https://feelingathome.org.uk/>



Feeling
at Home

Our Research

- Question:
What helps people with learning disabilities living in group homes to feel at home where they live and what gets in the way?
- Methods:
 - Photovoice with 19 residents living in group homes: focus on residents' perspectives
 - Interviews with 25 staff and family members



Findings

- Challenges of making sure residents ‘feel at home’ in a setting where home is also a workplace for staff:
 - Home as a verb
 - ‘Putting up with it’
 - The workplace and ‘home unmaking’

Home as a verb: homemaking



- Residents and staff collaborated on making sure personal spaces reflected identities and achievements.
- Other stakeholders also were part of homemaking – provider organisations, family, neighbours, CQC, local authorities,
- Harder to make sure residents were actively involved in everyday activities of home-making
- ‘Hotel model’ not uncommon

'Putting up with it'

- Some residents had little control over major aspects of their home life:
 - Who they lived with
 - How long they could stay in their home
 - Coming and going of staff
 - Contact with friends and family
- Family members wary of 'rocking the boat'
- Staff also had to 'put up with' external pressures

Home as a workplace and home 'unmaking'



- Some areas of the home 'out of bounds' for residents.
- Staff understood importance of relational aspects of care but wanted more support around this.

Feeling at Home Resources

Checklist

Your living room and other shared rooms



Tick the box that you agree with the most.



13. Somewhere comfortable to sit

- I have a comfortable place to sit in the living room.
- I do not have a comfortable place to sit.
- This is not important to me.



14. Things to do

- There is plenty for us to do in our shared rooms. Like TV, games, crafts.
- There is not enough for us to do in our shared rooms.
- This is not important to me.

Do you want to say anything else about your living room and other shared rooms?

Toolkit

Bedroom



Activity: Painting your bedroom walls

If you want to change the colour of your walls, talk to staff about how you can do this.

- Your housing organisation might agree to do it for you.
- Or you could pay someone to paint your bedroom. But this can cost a lot of money - about £350 for one room.
- You can also do it yourself. You might need support from staff.

Doing it yourself

To paint your wall, you will need money for supplies. You can do a simple budget with a supporter. You will need about £100 to do it yourself.

You might need

- old clothes or overalls that are OK to get messy
- paint rollers and brushes
- sugar soap
- old sheets or plastic to cover the floor and furniture
- masking tape.



Steps

- Shop for supplies
- Move furniture and things you do not want to damage.
- Cover the floors and furniture that you cannot move. You might want to tape the sheets down.
- Clean walls with sugar soap if they are dirty
- Use masking tape to cover the edges, like skirting boards.
- Paint the walls. They might need 2 coats of paint.
- New paint sometimes smells a lot. You might need to air the room before using it again.
- Tidy up and enjoy the new look.

Get rollers - these are easier

What next?

- We tested out the Checklist and Toolkit in 15 homes
- Received feedback from residents and staff
- Resources will be modified and available from Spring 2024
- Sharing event TBC

Contact

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