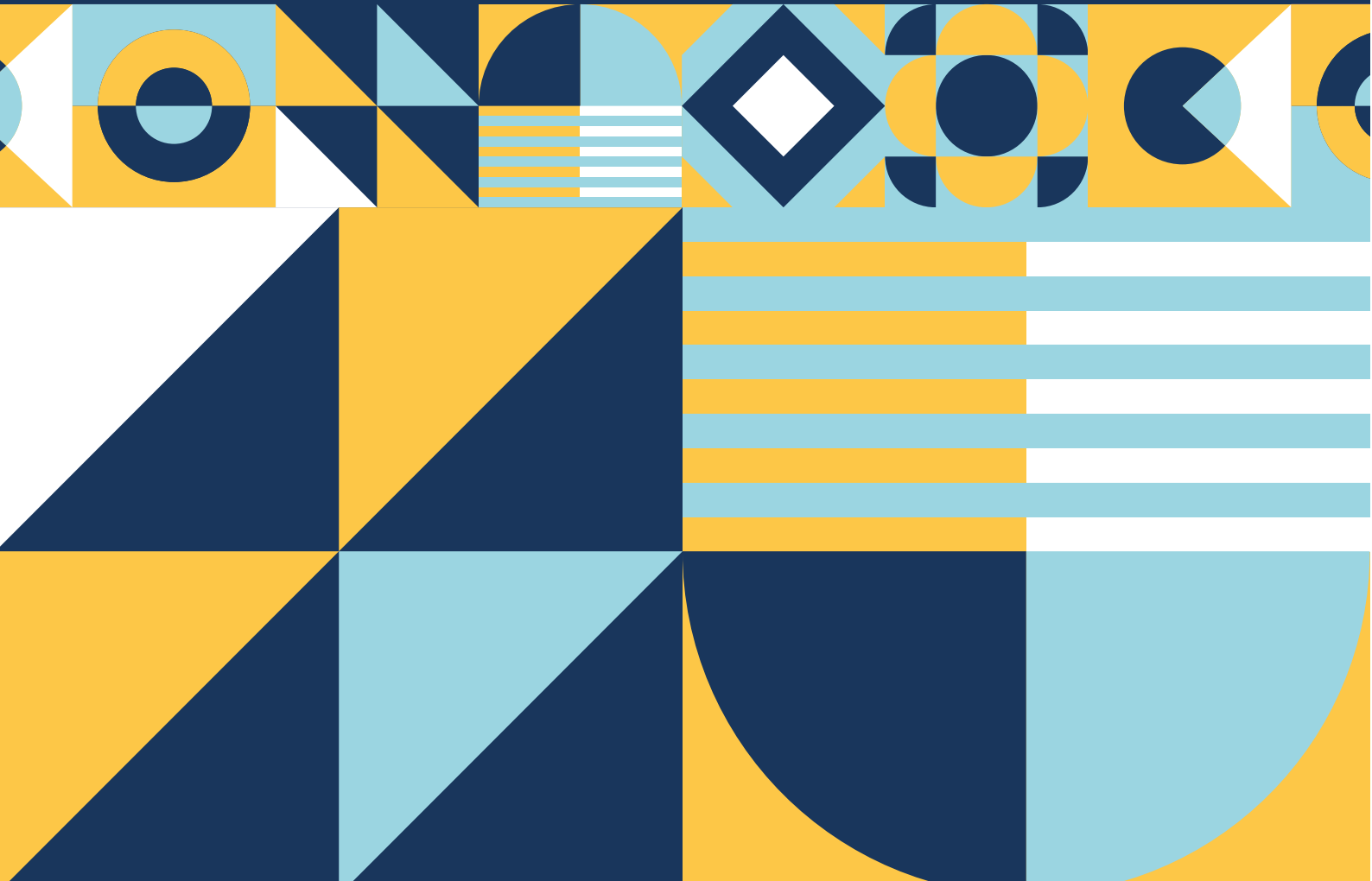


# Disability & Inclusion Strategy

End of year report 2022



## Foreword - Deputy Malcolm Ferey – Assistant Minister for Social Security

2022 was a year of great change both locally in Jersey as well as several global events that had an impact on our community.

Locally we had a General Election which has seen a significant change in the Government, and we are committed to working in partnership to ensure every islander thrives. Equally, I am committed to supporting the delivery of the Disability Strategy and championing the rights of the 16,000 Islanders with a disability, as well as their carers and their families.

Global events have also had a considerable impact on the cost of living, this has also impacted the wonderful charities that support disabled Islanders who have seen a reduction in their fund raising. Despite this, charities continue to deliver a wide range of services for disabled Islanders, and I will continue to champion the sectors cause across Government.

2022 was also the year where we started to slowly emerge from the pandemic which has allowed increased focus on the delivery of the Disability Strategy. I would like to pay tribute to the Disability and Inclusion Team as well as all other stakeholders who are committed to delivering the strategy and improving lives.

As you will see in the report, there has been good progress in terms of meaningful engagement, accessing public buildings, services for the dDeaf community and the redesign of the Learning Disability Services website.

Organisations such as Autism Jersey continue to develop strategic thinking in partnership with Government and other organisations such as Mencap continue to provide a range of regular activities for over 140 Islanders.

As 2022 came to a close we welcomed Paralympian Gold Medal winner Liz Johnson to our island to be the keynote speaker at Embrace our Difference, where over 200 Islanders attended the event representing 36 organisations. Many more watched this successful event online. I closed the evening by stating that we will continue to move forward together to make this Island more inclusive. That remains my mission.

We will focus on a range of priorities during 2023, including the Community Transport Project as well as Pathways to Adulthood. We will continue to challenge inequality and work collaboratively to ensure that all Islanders are able to thrive at home, in the community and in the workplace.

## Contents

<b>Executive summary</b> .....	4
<b>Engagement</b> .....	5
<b>The cost of living</b> .....	6
<b>Delivering change within Government of Jersey</b> .....	6
<b>Improving accessibility of GoJ buildings</b> .....	7
<b>The elections, Vote 2022</b> .....	7
<b>Community transport scheme</b> .....	8
<b>Support for dDeaf services</b> .....	8
Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) .....	9
Adult Learning Disability Service .....	10
<b>Pathway to adulthood</b> .....	11
<b>Highlights from other organisations supporting persons with disabilities.</b> .....	11
<b>Embrace our difference 2022.</b> .....	12

## Executive summary

According to the 2021 census, almost 16,000 people in Jersey identify as having a disability or long-term health condition that affects their day-to-day lives. This report provides an overview of interventions working to improve the quality of life for persons with disabilities. It highlights some of the challenges faced by persons with disabilities and reflects on the overall services delivered by Government and charities supporting the sector.

The Disability & Inclusion team (D&I team) continued to invest in listening to people with disabilities, their aspirations, and their challenges. It was important to engage organisations delivering services to highlight issues and work in partnership to find solutions to improve accessibility.

Over the year the D&I team facilitated over 50 workshops, in addition to smaller meetings and events to maintain a balanced understanding of the realities faced by persons with disabilities in Jersey.

The year created many challenges for vulnerable Islanders with increases to the cost of living not previously experienced since the 1980's having a potentially negative effect on disabled Islanders. The retail price index<sup>1</sup> inflation rate was 12.7% in December 2022 putting significant pressure on low-income households on the island for which disabled Islanders make up a significant percentage.

Attention was given to the accessibility of public buildings with a plan proposed to the GoJ Executive leadership team to address the immediate issues identified by access audits that had been undertaken during the year.

The elections and change in Government attracted the attention of many and the D&I team gave time to highlighting the importance of disability to individual candidates standing in the elections. The D&I team also met with political parties to encourage consideration for disability and inclusion to be included within their manifestos. Audits were undertaken at all polling stations and general communications were adapted so that the voting process was more accessible.

The Adult Learning and Disability Service continued to improve and enhance their service delivery and programmes. Their new website Adult Learning Disability Service [Adult Learning Disability Service \(easy read\) \(gov.je\)](#) improving accessibility and understanding of services delivered.

Jersey organisations dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for persons with disabilities continued to deliver appropriate services with many bringing in new and innovative approaches.

November saw the second Embrace our Difference event targeting Islanders' attitudes towards disability. It worked to reduce prejudice towards persons with disability. The campaign promoted all Islanders to get involved and consider how they could make small changes in their lives to be more inclusive. The event, held at the Jersey library attracted 36 organisations showcasing their work, approximately 200 people in attendance and over 660 views on You Tube.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Retail Prices Index (RPI) is the main measure of inflation in Jersey. It measures the average change in prices of goods and services purchased by households and is sometimes referred to as the 'cost of living'.

## Engagement

The D&I team continued to invest in listening to people with disabilities, their aspirations, and their challenges. It was important to engage organisations delivering services to highlight issues and work in partnership to find solutions to improve accessibility.

**Enable Jersey** has been working with the D&I team to improve and broaden the participation of stakeholders in its activities. For Enable Jersey, 2022 has been a year of building foundations and working with professional partners and the local community to find the best way to engage with those interested in contributing to the implementation of the Disability Strategy.

During the year Enable Jersey have benefited from an appointment focused solely on supporting Islanders to contribute their lived experience via Enable Voice and she has worked closely with the D&I Team.

The Disability Strategy suggested a wide range of activities many of which are simply impossible to action without wider buy-in and investment. To this end a decision to focus on a smaller number of deliverable projects was made. However, this in turn has narrowed the focus and interest of the wider community who have no experience or interest in some, or all of the areas chosen.

Enable Jersey's effort has included working on the established engagement process and how this could be improved to further encourage Islanders to contribute. Key to this has been assisting the D&I team to further develop an understanding of the necessary support tools required to ensure people with a disability are able to meaningfully contribute and participate in discussions on topics that they have lived experience of and contribute to sustainable change.

The reality is that different people, living with different challenges need to be given different opportunities to engage in different ways. To this end there needs to be better preparation for discussions, considering the format and timing of meetings, the amount of notice given, how to support people to prepare and how there needs to be adaptation to make all meetings accessible.

The collective time and work put into understanding the needs of the deaf and hard of hearing community is a good example of how this can work and how individual and hybrid meetings can be positive and successful. This work has been extremely time consuming and at times difficult for all those involved but there appears to be some small but important progress.

Enable Jersey also supported the pathway to adulthood workshop by working closely with several young Islanders to support them to contribute. This included meeting with them to explore their thoughts and feelings regarding their own experiences of transition, positives, and negatives. They also supported a young person to attend and share their experiences in person. Supporting people to contribute to this day was a stark reminder of how triggering sharing experiences can be and how essential it is to have support in place before, during and after asking someone to do so.

Enable Jersey have been working with a small group of young Islanders who want to be part of a movement to improve the lives of other people who like themselves have a disability. This work provides the opportunity for them to share their views with the D&I team along with identifying their own priorities for change in Jersey.

Unfortunately, it is noted that there is a degree of historic frustration from Islanders as many suggest they have 'heard this or been here before'. The collective task continues to be to break down this

thinking but to do this we must be able to deliver what we talk about or at least be open and honest in terms of expectation.

Some have argued that the D&I Team are under-resourced and that the onus seems to be on charities to deliver on the Government's behalf.

### The cost of living

Vulnerable Islanders experienced significant challenges with increases in the cost of living not previously experienced since the 1980's.

During the 12 months to December 2022 the All-Items Retail Prices Index (RPI) for Jersey increased by 12.7% to stand at 212.2 (June 2000 = 100)

The December 2022 12 month increase in the RPI was the largest since the early 1980's.

One can argue that this had disproportionate effect on disabled Islanders. Previous island surveys have highlighted that a greater proportion, as much as four times as many people on low income have a disability compared to those that have stated that they don't. Seventy percent of unemployed respondents or those unable to work have a disability compared with 11% of employed/engaged respondents.

#### Annual change

The increase in the All Items Retail Prices Index (RPI) over the twelve months to December 2022 was 12.7%. The annual percentage changes in the RPI since March 2000 are shown in [Figure 1](#).

Figure 1 - Jersey RPI annual inflation rate (percent) Mar 2000 to Dec 2022

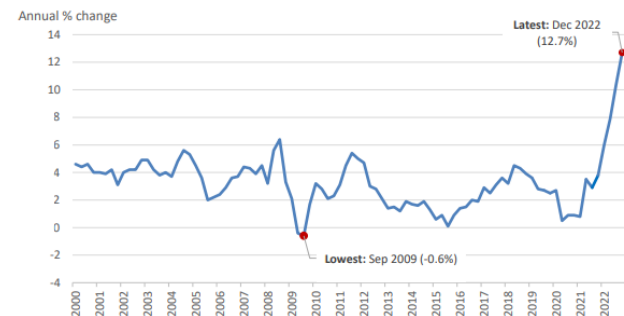


Figure 1 is taken from the December 2022 jersey price index report and shows a diagram of how the price index has fluctuated between 2000 and 2022. 2022 is clearly the largest increase over the 22 years

### Delivering change within Government of Jersey

The D&I team had originally looked at embedding 'inclusion champions' throughout each area of GoJ to assist with auditing services and promoting disability inclusion within the Government. However, during the beginning of this work, it became apparent that this required significantly more buy in and understanding from each area than had been anticipated by them and greater realisation of what barriers existed for people needed to be realised.

There was a need to re-evaluate the inclusion champion approach to ensure that we were properly supporting the organisation to be able to make change, rather than asking individuals to make that change happen.

GoJ was missing many of the threads of inclusivity and accessibility through the way services were delivered and improved. There was a presumption that things were inclusive and accessible, but this was not specifically thought about or actively considered. This meant common tools and audits did not address the underlying issues as most came with a presumption of inclusive design already being embedded.

For example, in the UK the Public Sector duty obliges the Government to consider how they will make sure that their services and products are useable by people with disabilities, and they must document what steps they take to make sure this happens. There are Equality Impact Assessments, which support this and detailed expectations and 'must haves' and 'must dos' set down by central Government. In Jersey we do not have this, however, we are now putting this in place. One of the first major areas is around inclusive communication as departments do not consistently produce everything in ways that people with disabilities need.

To move forward, the team encouraged Islanders to use the feedback routes to log accessibility issues and supported some Islanders to feedback specific communication barriers. Colleagues were asked to create customer journeys and explore how Islanders experienced our services, for example if they could not use the telephone, or the GoJ website didn't work for them. The team highlighted when services weren't accessible and what that meant for customers. Next year will see the introduction of an accessible communications standard, which will set out how the GoJ should communicate to ensure that this works for people with disabilities.

### **Improving accessibility of GoJ buildings**

The D&I team reviewed the audits that were undertaken of public buildings including offices, schools, and public toilets. The team proposed a way forward with the GoJ Executive leadership team that will focus on addressing the immediate recommendations from accessibility audits undertaken by Liberate and develop a training programme to build understanding and capacity of GoJ staff to better support persons with disabilities.

Liberate reflected on the audits they had undertaken with a strong focus on schools including Jersey College, Grainville, Le Rocquier, Haute Vallee, Mont a l'Abbe, Les Quennevais and the Philip Mourant Training Centre, as well as several parishes and other primary schools.

The new school at Les Quennevais was seen as outstanding, in terms of the provision for students, staff, and parents with disabilities. It was felt that this should be the standard to which all Jersey schools should now be working. However, it is much easier to build-in accessibility when designing a property than it is to retrofit a property. For example, many of the parish primary schools have a Victorian listed building at their centre with later extensions spurring off. This causes the schools problems at the point where the Victorian and modern parts of the building meet, often resulting in a step down or up halfway along a corridor. Despite the physical limitations of many of the buildings, the awareness of a range of disabilities and the attitudes of staff working in these conditions to make education accessible for all is to be commended.

In addition to the schools Liberate also was asked to consider the accessibility of Philip le Feuvre House, Eagle House, Howard Davis Farm and all the public toilet blocks under the care of the Government. A programme to take issues identified forward is in place.

### **The elections, Vote 2022**

The D&I team organised for all polling stations for the 2022 elections to be reviewed for levels of accessibility through audits undertaken by Liberate.

All polling stations were then re-visited on Election Day by Liberate auditors to review what recommendations had been implemented.

There reflections were that within a relatively short timeframe from the audit being conducted to Election Day, every polling station made some adjustments to improve their inclusion of people with disabilities. Some of the adjustments that the auditors witnessed that stood out included: the signage at Rouge Bouillon School and New Gilson Hall; the ramp at St Martin's Public Hall; the special dispensation arrangements for one voter at St Mary's Parish Hall; the single, inclusive entrance for all voters on a difficult site at Grouville; and the improvements to toilets at St Lawrence and St Saviour.

All polling stations made parking provision for disabled people a priority and created spaces close to the building.

The auditors biggest positive impression was left by the people met during the audits and on Election Day who, without exception, were engaged in the process, wanted to do their best to include people and went out of their way to offer help.

Candidates were also considerate of voters, enabling clear entrance ways by their positioning alongside the door which, the auditors felt, had not always happened in previous elections.

People were alert and attentive, offering support through a greeting or an approach, then asking if the voter needed something, rather than waiting to be asked. It felt at ease and comfortable, not forced.

The volunteers, staff and police noticed the obvious, but they also noticed the less obvious. Everybody seemed equal in the process and were greeted the same.

Information and help that was given was appropriate to the individual voter that the staff had in front of them.

There is more that can be done to improve inclusion and over the next four years and it is hoped that some of the bigger issues identified by the audits can be addressed, which will serve the parishes well outside of election time in terms of accessing the halls for day-to-day business.



Figure 2 A banner designed for the 2022 elections to encourage people to vote.

### Community Transport Scheme

A partnership of organisations including **Bosdet Foundation, EVie** and GoJ are launching a community minibus scheme for the benefit of local charities and voluntary organisations. A consultation process has taken place with a range of stakeholders to consider the feasibility of the scheme.

A pilot project will start in 2023 to build a deeper understanding of demand for the scheme and its true cost.

Local organisations have allocated seven vehicles for the scheme, from which four will be used in the initial stages of the pilot.

Should demand be sufficient additional vehicles may be introduced to meet the demand.

Bosdet have provided initial funding of £15,000 to purchase the equipment required to utilise EVie systems and the GoJ have allocated recurring budget for a coordinator to set up and manage activities. The Disability & Inclusion Advisory Group will track the development of the scheme.



Figure 3 The logo for the community transport scheme

### Support for dDeaf services

With the support of Enable Jersey, the D&I team engaged the dDeaf partnership Board, Earsay, deaf club, the deaf society, and other key stakeholders, to explore a long-term, sustainable solution for dDeaf<sup>2</sup> Islanders. Utilising the independent recommendations of the Royal Association for Deaf people, three areas are being focussed on: -

- Improving effectiveness and efficiency of representation in Jersey for dDeaf and hard of hearing Islanders.
- Enhancing accessibility and inclusiveness of public services.
- Increasing the levels of independence and empowerment of individuals to improve their quality of life.

Four technical workshops will take place in January 2023 to shape key aspects of support to the community and shape the approach to: -

- Enhance the video relay service.

---

<sup>2</sup> The term brings together everyone who has a hearing loss. **d** describes hard of hearing, deafened and deaf people and **D** describes profoundly Deaf people who are proud to be Deaf, and whose first language is often British Sign Language.



- Recruit a Community Engagement Officer.
- Improve how dDeaf Islanders are represented.

### Speech and Language Therapy (SALT)

2022 has seen SALT develop and broaden its role within the Disability Strategy. It has also been a year of creating partnerships with the Disability and Inclusion (D&I) Team and key strategy stakeholders. They have successfully begun to see awareness and perceptions of communication needs increase; however, the time and resources needed to implement the appropriate adaptations are still lacking.

The initial role designated to SALT fell under Priority 1.3 (Promote communication within health and care) of the strategy. The exact action reads as follows:

*“Review need for training of workers in care settings and those delivering community care, to enhance their communication skills (including residential homes)”*

Various strategies were piloted within nursing homes with the aim of empowering nursing home staff, by increasing their skills, knowledge, and awareness of communication difficulties. These strategies included:

- Offering communication awareness training sessions
- Offering advice for creating communication friendly environments
- Working with activity coordinators to improve the accessibility of activities.
- Establishing small conversation groups for residents with communication needs
- Offering bespoke individual episodes of care for residents with communication needs
- Extensive one-to-one work introducing high-tech augmentative and alternative communication aids, training staff teams to support and encourage use.
- Completing accessible questionnaires, assessing the communication quality of life of residents

Unfortunately, this approach encountered multiple challenges, including Covid-19 lockdown measures, staff sickness/understaffing (in nursing homes and within SALT team), minimal uptake and responses, and a lack of resources/support for nursing home staff. This meant that little change was observed in the communication environments of nursing homes after a year of piloting.

SALT have met with the Jersey Care Commission (JCC) to discuss current standards around meeting the communication needs of residents within care homes and monitoring adherence to these standards. An audit of mandatory communication training within care homes was conducted and showed that many homes only receive minimal training in this area. Furthermore, the JCC acknowledged it did not have always have clear methods for measuring adherence to their standards. Nonetheless, the JCC have welcomed SALT advice and have pledged to make communication a focus of the 2023 approach. SALT plan to provide continued support where needed.

Encouraged from meeting with the JCC and other stakeholders, it was felt that a reframing of the SALT approach was needed. Rather than working with individual nursing homes and teams, it was envisioned that a top-down approach would be more effective for creating change. Without standards, policies, or the Government leading by example, there is no recognised structure or support in place for improving the accessibility of island-wide services.

Ultimately, it was decided to move away from the scope initially given to SALT, and to work on a broader level. This has involved working more closely with the D&I team, Government departments, and other stakeholders to achieve island-wide goals of increasing inclusivity and accessibility.

### **Adult Learning Disability Service**

The Adult Learning Disability Service faced ongoing challenges over the year due to Coronavirus (Covid-19) which led to changes in practices to ensure effective support of people with learning disabilities. These were unprecedented times and the Learning Disability Services diversified to exceed the standards expected; this is a testimony to the commitments made by the service users, families, staff, and professionals to embrace change.

Jane Nicolle (Senior Community Healthcare Assistant) won the Health & Community Services (HCS) Our Stars award: Health Care Assistant of the Year 2022 and was highly commended for Diversity and Inclusion 2022. Jane facilitates a weekly drop-in service where people with a learning disability can come together and meet one another and members of the Nursing and Therapies team. Throughout Covid-19 she also co-facilitated the weekly peer-to-peer swabbing; this was on top of her job working with clients and enabled staff in the LD team and adult social care to continue working with clients.

Aimee Harris, winner of HCS Our Stars award: Diversity and Inclusion 2022, developed easy read guidelines and templates so that people could make their own easy read information for people with learning disabilities. In addition, she completed a host of other easy read leaflets which include things such as health screening, consent & capacity that had excellent feedback about the easy read information.

‘Embrace our difference’ event – As part of the Government’s Disability Inclusion Strategy, support was given for events and activities to drive visibility and conversation on disability inclusion. The Learning Disability Services supported the development of a video on how services had progressed over the years from institutional living to community living. This included interviews with adults with learning disabilities and their families. It is expected that the media and information shared on the evening will be used again at future events.

The Growing Group – The group is run in partnership with the Salvation Army and encourages people to grow vegetables on their beautiful plot in Gorey. Not only is spending time outside good for wellbeing and physical health, it also enables skills development, team work and engagement with people outside of the client’s usual network. The Growing Group has included the creation of an honesty box from which produce is sold, development of videos, interviews with the local media, entries into the RJHS carrot competition and ongoing contact with the Salvation Army, where some of the vegetables are used for their soup!

Literacy Group – 12 people with a learning disability have benefitted from attending a weekly literacy class run in partnership with Highlands College. This has been a huge success with people setting goals and working towards them with great enthusiasm and commitment. Many of the people who attended missed out on literacy development during their school years and have felt this has been a void in their life in terms of inclusion and independence. As well as developing a valuable life skill, people are meeting and socialising with others in the same situation and are developing new friendships.

Learning Disability Service, [Adult Learning Disability Service \(easy read\) \(gov.ie\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/adult-learning-disability-service) re designed their website to use easy read for people with a learning disability with support from Mencap and BSK. The feedback has been positive, and some UK agencies would like to use the template for their own

website. It was further complimented by Karl Seymour (the person who developed Photo symbols) who stated “The site layout is one of the clearest I have seen. It has a friendly, approachable look and you really have made the most of our images. Please pass on my congratulations to the whole team involved”. The inclusivity of this project is a credit to everyone who collaborated, critiqued, and considered the content of the website at every stage of development.

Still managing the challenges Covid-19 brings even today, the learning disability services has grown from what they have had to endure. They are in a much stronger position through the collaborative work in times of great challenge to service users, families, and colleagues. These key successes are noted to be only a few of what the service has achieved.

### **Pathway to adulthood**

A series of workshops took place with a broad spectrum of stakeholders to take forward an initiative to consider the challenges for young people when transitioning through informal and formal education into adulthood. A problem statement will be completed in 2023 to guide the process going forward.

### **Highlights from other organisations supporting persons with disabilities.**

**Autism Jersey** are committed to ensuring that there is an island strategy for autism, to fit in with the wider Government strategies including the Disability and Neurodiversity Strategies. Following the island wide consultation questionnaire, in 2022 Autism Jersey hosted an integrated workshop titled ‘The autistic experience and voice – a neurodiversity strategy for Jersey’ to further develop the information attained in the original consultation. The workshop included autistic individuals, family members, professionals, and elected members.

The workshop was important and verified key priorities that needed to be addressed in , Mental Health Services, Employment, Education, Diagnosis, Autism Awareness and Training and housing

An action plan based on the information attained at the workshop will inform the neurodiversity strategy and all departments to understand and agree the priorities for further developing services.

**Jersey Mencap** facilitated a wide range of activities for adults with a learning disability and their membership at the end of 2022 stood at 141. Mencap recognise that having lots of opportunities and activities can positively enhance wellbeing and welcome 50-70 members every week throughout the year.

2022 was a bumper year where they offered 227 art sessions, , 65 horticultural sessions at their pond project, 46 book clubs and 264 social club activities which include discos, Zumba, yoga, singing, fitness circuits, health walks, boccia/pétanque, boat trips and more. Mencap Jersey regularly introduces new activities and enjoy lots of collaborations with other charities, agencies, and local companies.

Jersey Mencap are reliant on fundraising and like other charities, 2020 and 2021 presented lots of challenges when fundraising events were cancelled due to the pandemic. They were delighted that their main event, the South Coast Charity Challenge could be held again in May and saw 400 walkers take on this challenge whilst raising awareness and funds for the organisation.

### **Jersey Employment Trust (JET)/ Acorn Enterprises**

The Employment Service supports individuals with every aspect of finding and sustaining paid employment. The range of people who come to us has become much more diverse, as are the types of employment opportunities they seek.

The service supported 550 people in 2022, with 158 new jobs sourced. Job starts were slightly down, but the complexity of clients' needs has increased. There is more pastoral problem-solving as people face pressures in housing, wellbeing and the cost of living.

Acorn employs 60 people, 78% of whom have a disability or long-term health condition.

The Acorn Training & Development Service (ATD) provides pre-employment services, supporting individuals to develop the skills and confidence required for progression onto independent volunteering or onto JET's Employment Service. In 2022, it supported 148 people, with 336 vocational training placements and 64 supported volunteering opportunities. Some ATD projects are now run within the Acorn business units of Reuse, plant nursery and Woodshack.

Many of our training projects provide a therapeutic environment and are extremely beneficial to those who struggle with their mental health.

**Skills Jersey's** Career Guidance team have developed and delivered a bespoke careers education programme to Mont á L' Abbé for the last 3 years.

The seven week, educational programme focused on a variety of units.

- Exploring job roles
- Meeting employers
- Goals and Aspirations
- Strengths and values

This work has grown with the development of insight sessions to various employers and includes summer camps, where students have enjoyed a variety of practical sessions, including carpentry and cookery which were a big hit.

### **Embrace our difference 2022.**



Thirty-eight organisations that provide services and support for disabled Islanders showcased how they are being innovative and embracing disability inclusion at the 'Embrace our Difference' event held at the Jersey library in November.

Liz Johnson, the gold medal Paralympian swimmer was the keynote speaker, the event aims to continue to drive visibility and conversation on disability inclusion and work closely with stakeholders across the Island to deliver positive change.

200 people attended the event with over 650 viewing this on live feed.

