Inclusion Gloucestershire Survey

June 2022

Work & Education

Chapter 5

INCLUSION GLOUCESTERSHIRE

BIGGER DREAMS ▶ BETTER LIVES ▶ BRIGHTER FUTURES

Contents

Introduction

Inclusion Gloucestershire wanted to understand the areas of everyday life that are causing concern or worry for people in Gloucestershire who face disabling barriers.

In June and July 2021, we invited people who face disabling barriers to give us their opinions and experiences along with any ideas they have for improving things.

We asked people who face disabling barriers, family and friends, and paid staff members who support people facing disabling barriers.

As a user led organisation, we want to make sure that our work is led by those who face disabling barriers, and their families and friends.

We have used the information we have been given to guide our organisational strategy (big plan) for the next 3 years.

For more information on how we found out about what people thought, please see our headline report, at:

https://www.inclusiongloucestershire.co.uk/research-strategy-and-partnerships/
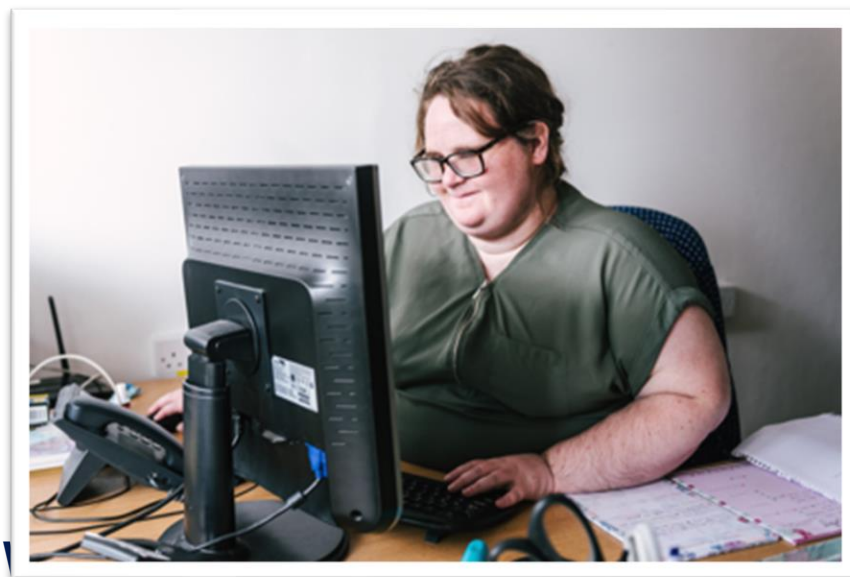
135 People Gave Us Their Views!

There is more information about who gave us their views in the headline report but here is a summary:

- Most people identified themselves as female.

- Most people did not identify as transgender.

- Most people identified themselves as heterosexual.

- The largest group of people who gave us their ideas were aged 55-64. The second largest group were aged 45-54, closely followed by people who were in the 35-44 age group.

- Nearly all people used English as their first language.

- Most people identified themselves as White British.

- The largest group of people who gave us their ideas had lived experience of a mental health condition. The closest group to this were people with learning disabilities, and then people with a physical impairment.
  Several people had more than one "type" of lived experience.

- Most people lived in Gloucester or Cheltenham, but there were still many participants who lived in other areas in or near Gloucestershire.

- Most people who gave their ideas were not members of Inclusion Gloucestershire at that time.

- Most people had not used Inclusion Gloucestershire's services in the last 6 months.

For more information on how we found out about who responded to our survey, please see our headline report at:

https://www.inclusiongloucestershire.co.uk/research-strategy-and-partnerships/
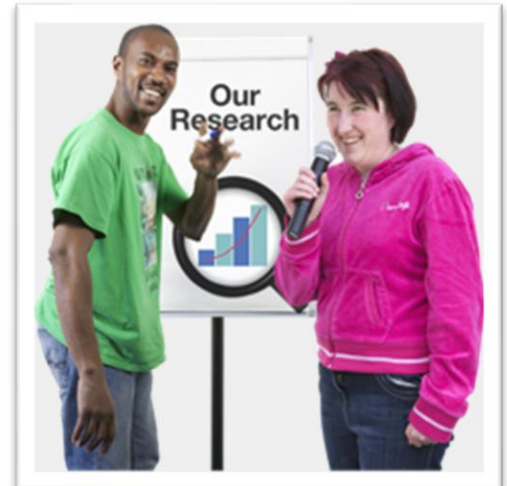
What areas of life are worrying people?

We asked people who gave us their ideas and opinions to tell us how worried they are about 22 areas of life.

We asked people to tell us if they were:

- **Very worried,**
- **A little worried,**
- **Not sure,**
- **Not too worried,**
- **No worries or**
- **Whether the area does not apply to them.**

In most of our work, we use a strengths-based approach but the reason that this survey used the negative concept of worries and concerns was to reflect that people still face significant disabling barriers in society. We wanted to identify where there are issues and gaps so that something can be done to address them.

One area which was causing people some worry was in relation to work and education.

More people were not worried about these areas than were worried.

This report is going to tell you more about what people have told us.
If you want to know more about the other areas we asked about, we will be writing one more report in the next few weeks. You can see our headline report and specific chapters on the following areas on our website:

- Health
- Choice and Control
- Social and Leisure
- Social Care and Advocacy

https://www.inclusiongloucestershire.co.uk/research-strategy-and-partnerships/

This is a summary of the key information we found out about work and education worries:
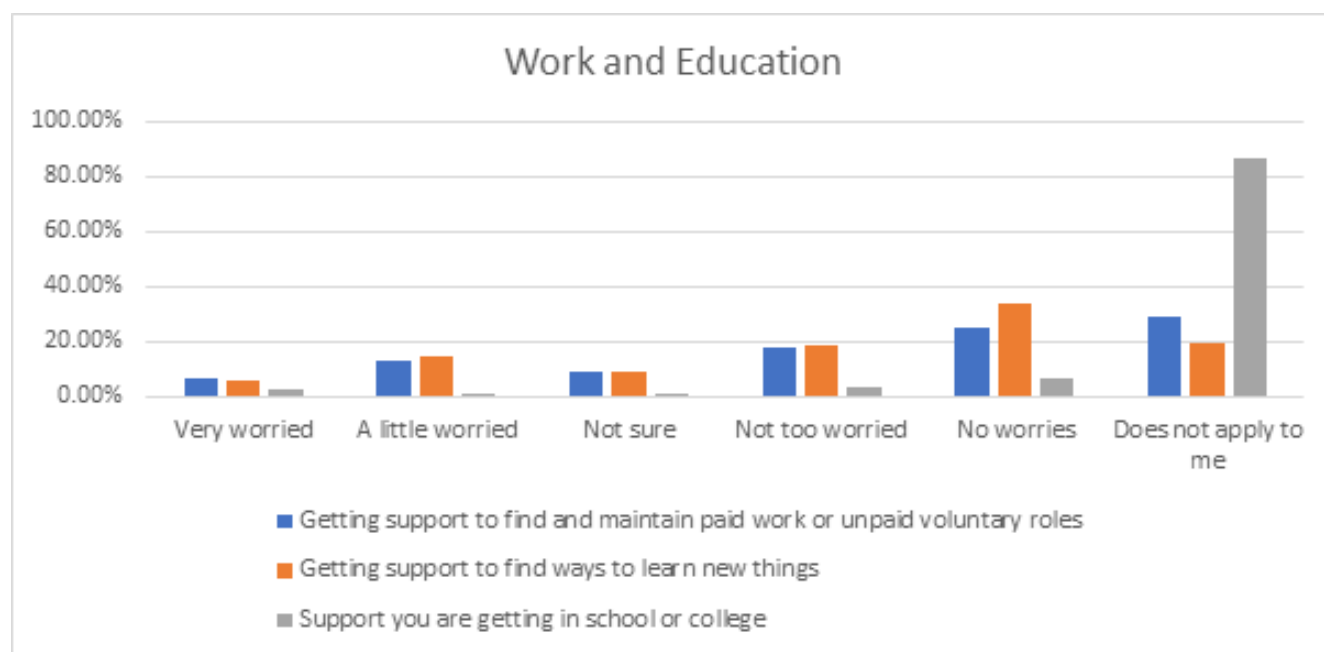
- **Almost one fifth (19.1%) of people said they were very or a little worried about getting support to find and maintain paid work or voluntary roles. This was 25 people.**
- **Just over two fifths of people (42%) were not worried about the support they could get to find paid work or unpaid voluntary roles.**
- **Almost one fifth of people (19.8%) said they were very or a little worried about getting support to find ways to learn new things. This was 26 people.**
- **69 people (52.7%) were not worried about this.**
- **For the 17 people, for whom getting support in school or college applied to; 12 people were not worried about the support they were getting (9.5% of the total), 1 was not sure and 4 people were very or a little worried (3.2% of the total).**

Work and Education: more information about what people said is worrying them

We asked people 9 questions about work and education.

The questions we asked were:

1. Are you worried about getting support to find and maintain paid work or unpaid voluntary roles?
2. Are you worried about getting support to find ways to learn new things? This may be a course at a college or joining a group to learn a new skill or hobby.
3. If you are at school or college now, are you worried about the support you are getting?
4. Please tell us about whether you are working or volunteering at the moment.
5. If you have had support to find and maintain paid work or unpaid voluntary roles, how good was it?
6. Please tell us about your experiences in getting support to find paid work or unpaid voluntary roles.
7. If you have had support to find ways to learn new things (like a new skill or hobby) to learn about, how good was it?
8. Please tell us about your experiences in getting support to find ways to learn new things.
9. If you go to school or college, please tell us more about the support you get in school or college.

We also asked people what the one thing was that was causing them most concern, and how they think things could be improved. If this is related to work and education, we have included them in this report along with any other information we were told about concerns in this area.
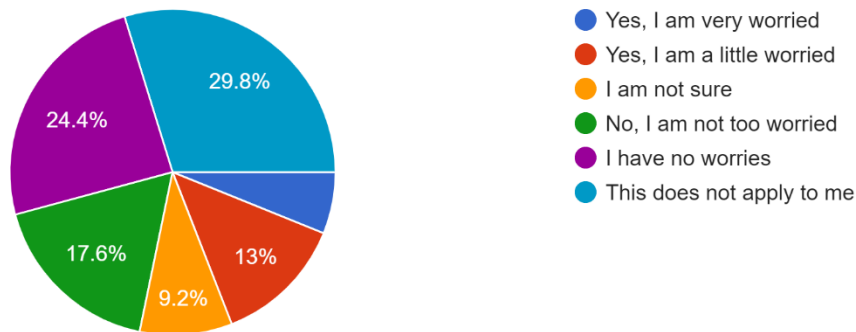
What did people tell us?

1. **Almost one fifth (19.1%) of people said they were very or a little worried about getting support to find and maintain paid work or voluntary roles. This was 25 people.**

   Just under a third of people (29.8%) of people said this did not apply to them (39 people) and the most people who answered this question (42%) said they were not worried.

8. Are you worried about getting support to find and maintain paid work or unpaid voluntary roles?
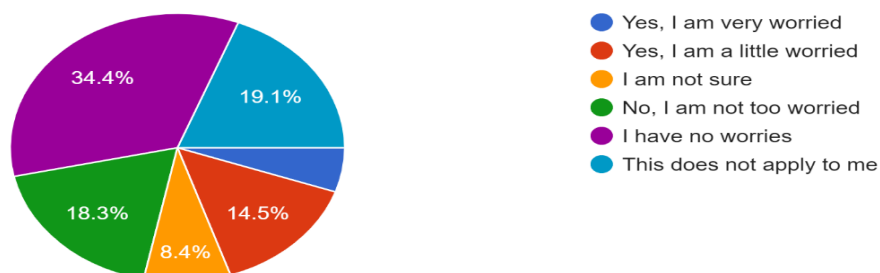
131 responses

- Yes, I am very worried
- Yes, I am a little worried
- I am not sure
- No, I am not too worried
- I have no worries
- This does not apply to me

2. **Almost one fifth of people (19.8%) said they were very or a little worried about getting support to find ways to learn new things. This was 26 people.**
   25 people (19.1%) said this did not apply to them and 69 people (52.7%) were not worried about this.

9. Are you worried about getting support to find ways to learn new things? This may be a course at a college or joining a group to learn a new skill or hobby.
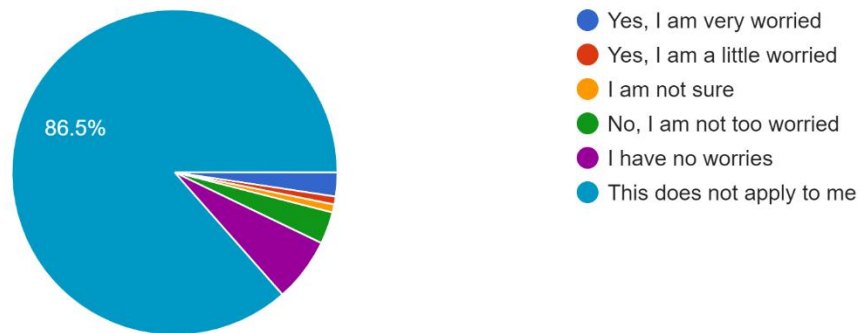
131 responses

- Yes, I am very worried
- Yes, I am a little worried
- I am not sure
- No, I am not too worried
- I have no worries
- This does not apply to me

3. **Most people (86.5%) said that the question about being worried at school or college did not apply to them. This was 109 people.**

   Of the 17 people, who this did apply to; 12 people were not worried about the support they were getting (9.5% of the total), 1 was not sure and 4 people were very or a little worried (3.2% of the total)

10. If you are at school or college now, are you worried about the support you are getting?
126 responses

- Yes, I am very worried
- Yes, I am a little worried
- I am not sure
- No, I am not too worried
- I have no worries
- This does not apply to me

86.5%

4. **We asked people about whether they were working or volunteering and there were lots of different responses.**

   From the 101 people who responded to this question:

   13 people were working full time
   31 people were working part time
   1 person was working on a zero hours contract
   1 person worked occasionally
   1 person was volunteering on a full time basis
   **26 people were volunteering on a part time basis**
   3 people were not working but were looking for work
   6 people were not volunteering but were looking to volunteer.
   Other people were taking a break from volunteering due to health considerations and others were not looking for work or voluntary opportunities at this time.

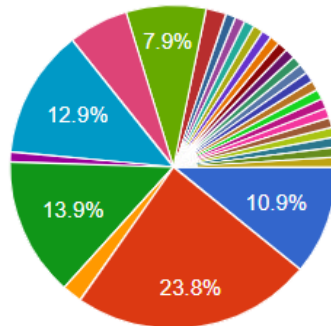## 36. Please tell us about whether you are working or volunteering at the moment

101 responses
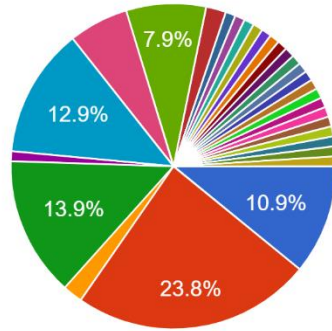
- I work full time in a paid job
- I work part time in a paid job
- I am not working at the moment but I…
- I am not working at the moment and I…
- I volunteer on a full time basis
- I volunteer on a part time basis
- I am not volunteering at the moment b…
- I am not volunteering at the moment b…

▲ 1/4 ▼

36. Please tell us about whether you are working or volunteering at the moment

101 responses

Copy

- I work part time in a paid job and I vol…
- zero hours contract for IG
- Work full time and volunteer
- Never been discussed to my knowledge
- I have a part time paid job and part ti…
- I am not working due to my brain injury
- I am not working at the moment and I…
- I am not volunteering at the moment-i…

▲ 2/4 ▼

36. Please tell us about whether you are working or volunteering at the moment
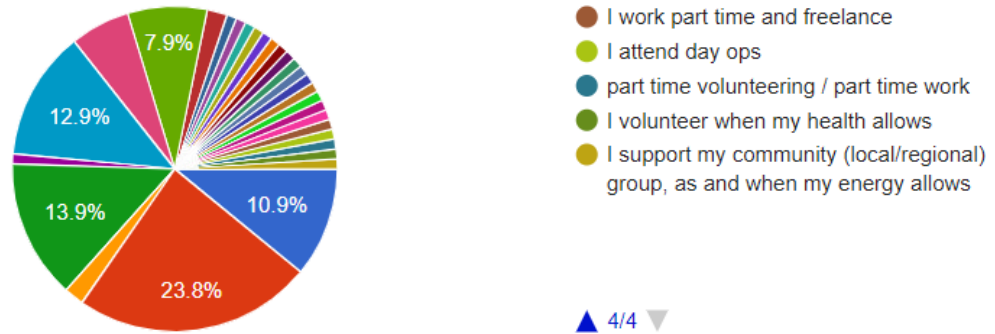
101 responses

Copy
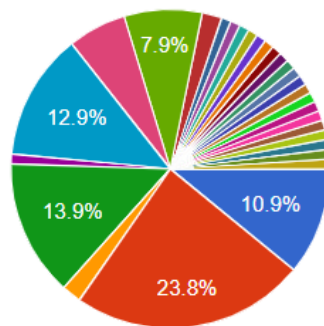
- Disabled
- Work full time, volunteer part time
- Volunteer in garden and woodwork wo…
- I volunteer part time with occasional p…
- I am not working now but I am looking…
- I work part time and volunteer part time
- Work 8 hrs per week paid work
- Work and volunteer part-time

▲ 3/4 ▼

10

36. Please tell us about whether you are working or volunteering at the moment

101 responses

- I work part time and freelance
- I attend day ops
- part time volunteering / part time work
- I volunteer when my health allows
- I support my community (local/regional) group, as and when my energy allows

▲ 4/4 ▼

5. **37 people answered the question about how good the support was that they had had to find and maintain work or voluntary roles.**

   Over half of the people (57%) thought that the support was good or very good and almost a quarter (24%) thought it was not good.

37. If you have had support to find and maintain paid work or unpaid voluntary roles, how good was it?

■ 1 ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5
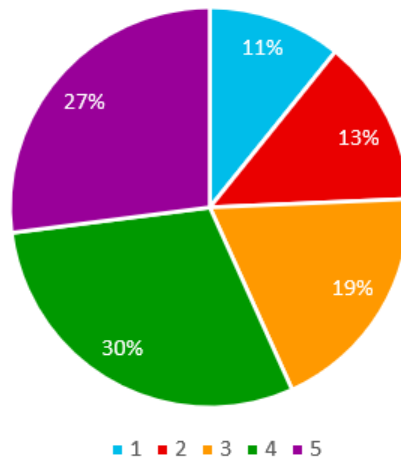
1= Not good at all - 5= very good

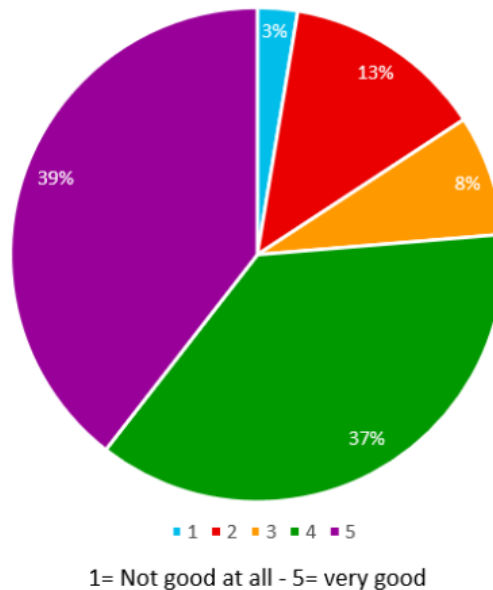6. **In relation to people's experiences of getting support to find paid work or volunteering opportunities, these were mixed and will be highlighted in the next section.**

7. **38 people answered the question about how good the support was that they had had to learn new things.**

   Over three quarters of the people (76%) thought that the support was good or very good and under a fifth (16%) thought it was not good.

39. If you have had support to find ways to learn new things (like a new skill or hobby) to learn about, how good was it?

1 = Not good at all - 5 = very good

8. **In relation to people's experiences of getting support to find ways to learn new things, these were also mixed and will be highlighted in the next section.**

9. **5 people responded to the question about support in school or college, one of whom had had to leave their university education due to lack of support, one who is being home educated, and one who is receiving their education in both specialist and mainstream provision and one who uses day opportunity services. The remaining person did state that they were received excllent support from their university.**

The details of the reasons why people answered in the way they did are shown in the next section.

Experiences in relation to Work and Education

People told us about their experiences in the areas of work and education and we have been able to use this information to explore which areas are common to people. We discuss these further below.

Barriers to accessing support

Some of the barriers to accessing support that people shared were related to not knowing how and where to find support and finding support difficult to access including process barriers like insisting people use telephones.
The financial barrier faced by some people when they are not able to secure sufficient income in paid work to meet their outgoings was also highlighted.

"I tried to contact a local organisation (named) for help in this matter but they insisted I phone them so I did not pursue it."

"…the issue for me would be poverty trap e.g. earning enough money to live on without benefits."

"Looking for work has been really hard. Everyone wants experience but no one will give a job so that I can gain experience."

"Don't know how or where to find."

"Difficult and inaccessible."

Not enough of the right support in learning, work, or volunteering

People have shared a variety of experiences which have resulted in them not being able to secure the right support in finding education, work, and volunteering.

Some have faced low expectations from others and some people feel that support is not geared to individual needs.

It is also felt that there is not enough employment support available and that there are not enough jobs or employers who are committed to employing people facing disabling barriers.

Concerns have also been expressed regarding government cuts impact on education and employment opportunities.

"No help – do it yourself."

"No-one shows enough interest to show me where to start asking (regarding the kind of volunteering I'd be suited to)."

"What support?"

"I have worked in the past but I now feel that as all the disability groups are lumped together the support for someone's individual needs isn't tailored to their needs."

"Pressure when not ready or able."

"No expectations from people who don't know me."

"Not really had much support….."

"I applied for a job which left me on my own on my first day, gave no guidance so I just walked out…."

"It is difficult to find jobs outside of your direct sector."

"I feel employment opportunities and employment support for people who have disabilities has fallen over the decades due to government funding cuts in 2010."

"Continued government/local authority cuts to services for those with additional needs. Particularly accessing education and the level of work required on the part of parents/carers to access appropriate school setting."

"Assuming this includes university: I received counselling following a mental breakdown before I put studies on hold, after which support was pulled and I was told I would have had to go on an NHS waiting list longer than the permitted study suspension (there was also no longer financial assistance since my scholarship would not pay during this period, which meant I could no longer live in the same area). Naturally I withdrew completely from study. All this even though it was their counsellors who originally suggested autism. I feel still that I was coerced into leaving by their "support service" in order to get rid of an awkward patient. (it was (named) university in case you want to know."

"My mother is still home educating me."

"I go to specialist school except for two lessons."

"(What most concerns me is) paid employment for people who have a range of disabilities and mental health. Raising awareness to government, large organisations and the media."

"I find a lot of people aren't really happy or able to teach someone who is blind something new so very often I have had to teach myself with books of CD's and I am now using the computer more and learning to access online."

"Does this (support) exist?"

"Low expectations."

"Couldn't find relevant learning to support my caring role for a blind person. I never had a blind person in my life before so needed to know how to support them e.g. guiding – no training for this."

"I didn't know what was out there."

"Tried doing generic classes and found it too much."

"No support out there, it all comes down to money to pay for courses."

Discrimination, denied access and bullying

Discrimination and bullying have been the experience of a few people.
Please also see our report on Choice, Control and Other Important Areas where further experiences of discrimination are shared.
https://www.inclusiongloucestershire.co.uk/research-strategy-and-partnerships/

"Faced discrimination for many times over the last 20 years whilst in full time employment."

"I got bullied as well on my first day."

"Discrimination in the workplace and not being able to succeed because I am a woman of BAME origin."

"I wanted to learn new things about woodworking, but they wouldn't let me join (named service)."

Positive Experiences

A number of people have had very positive support in relation to education, learning, work, and volunteering.

"(Named service) is brilliant."

"Staff support me to learn new things."

"My keyworker arranged for me to do a cookery course."

"Through the support of my art therapist I have regained an interest in making art."

"I look for it (support) myself. I have enjoyed (named provider) coming to (named service)."

"(Named provider) found me a local art group, told me about art on prescription and got me on a free online course."

"I did cookery with (named provider) – it was great."

"Information has come from various friends and local press."

"Good support as far as possible via Zoom."

"My support team look for new things for me to try."

"My support team are continuously looking for new activities and ideas to help me access the community."

"I had training and support when I started my job."

"I receive excellent support from (named university) in studying a Psychology degree."

"(Named organisation) has helped me to find paid work with (named organisation)."

"Working at (named place) has given me the opportunity to experience new ways to learn and now I am doing my dream job."

"I was emailed the application for my part-time paid job by my therapist who helped give me the confidence to apply."

"I was supported by (named provider), they were helpful in finding courses and supporting me to apply for work."

"I ask about jobs/volunteer work going in places. They tell me what is available and work out what is easier for me."

"They sat with me and helped find suitable roles."

"I was with (named provider) and they helped me find my part time job."

"A positive experience which is ongoing."

"Staff helped me find a job."

"The house manager gave me the DBS form."

Areas of learning and involvement

People have shared with us a number of areas in which they have learnt new skills or had new opportunities.

A number of people have extensive involvement in their communities.

"Volunteered in local library and after that in a local charity shop."

"I volunteer at a (named) fitness centre on 3 mornings."

"Have spent most of my life in various unpaid voluntary roles. Sadly no longer able to do so."

"Charity shop."

"Learning to cook."

"Learning how to make pom poms. We got to sit down together and learn how to make them. Someone showed us how to make them."

"Learning how to make things at the Carnival. We got given the materials, I got to add to it."

"Learning how to count money was good, they were clear in explaining."

"Learnt how to recycle properly."

"Mowing."

"Learnt new knitting skills."

"Learnt leather work."

"I put myself through a course of Holistic healing, no support needed."

"Piano workshop."

"I learn to cook, washing clothes and others."

"I am power lifting world champion."

Other Research

Our findings in relation to work and education are similar to other research and information gathering.

For more information, please see the following reports:

1) **Mencap: Adults with a learning disability in paid employment**

https://www.mencap.org.uk/learning-disability-explained/research-and-statistics/employment-research-and-statistics

2) **Disability at Work: various reports**

https://www.disabilityatwork.co.uk/about-us/

3) **Office for National Statistics: Outcomes for Disabled People in the UK 2021**

https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/articles/outcomesfordisabledpeopleintheuk/2021

4) **Work and Pensions Committee Parliamentary Report: Disability Employment Gap**

https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5802/cmselect/cmworpen/189/18902.htm

Easy read:

https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/7006/documents/72895/default/

British Sign Language Video Summary:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nkg6Zt6zszI

5) **Research by Enactus, UCL**

https://blog.evenbreak.co.uk/2020/03/03/the-real-barriers-to-employment-faced-by-disabled-people/

6) **Ofsted: Supporting SEND**

https://www.gov.uk/government/news/some-pupils-with-send-missing-out-on-specialist-support
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-send

7) **Institute for Employment Studies: Review of Support for Disabled Students in Higher Education in England**

https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/a8152716-870b-47f2-8045-fc30e8e599e5/review-of-support-for-disabled-students-in-higher-education-in-england.pdf

Recommendations

Overall, people who responded to our survey did not show high levels of worry in relation to education, volunteering, and work. However, there were some areas of concern which might be addressed through the following recommendations.

- **All people working and supporting those facing disabling barriers should have high aspirations and expectations in relation to people's ability to learn new things and achieve paid or unpaid employment. This in turn will facilitate individuals to have high self-expectations. Conversations around expectations for the future and career/further education planning should start at a young age when children are in school.**
- **Accessible information about the range of employment and education support available to people should be readily available in a variety of formats.**
- **Good support in further and higher education settings should be available as this is a determining factor in individuals' ability to pursue studies.**
- **Support to find and maintain paid work and voluntary opportunities need to be individualised and staff in support roles need to have the necessary skills and training to achieve this.**
- **Work and training to change attitudes of potential employers are needed and positive examples of disabled people in the workplace should be widely showcased.**
- **Government aspirations in relation to education and employment specified in both the National Strategy for Autistic Children, Young People and Adults and the National Disability Strategy need to be realised and local organisations need to work collaboratively to achieve this, campaigning for resources as needed.**
- **Sustained investment in existing education and employment support services needs to be maintained and extended if possible.**

What Will Inclusion Gloucestershire Do Next

We will share this report with those who work in employment or education services in Gloucestershire, and with other local organisations and groups.

The report will be available on our website, publicised on social media and shared with individuals who were part of the survey and gave us their contact details.

We will ensure that in all forums in which we are involved we share the experiences and recommendations with decision makers. This includes connecting with the following workstreams and groups:

- **Learning Disability Partnership Board**
- **Physical Disability and Sensory Impairment Partnership Board**
- **Autism Partnership Board**
- **Carers Partnership Board**
- **Mental Health and Well Being Partnership Board**

We will continue to actively engage with people who face disabling barriers to seek their views and experiences in relation to education and employment support via our Speak UP Groups; MHELO (Mental Health Experience Led Opportunities) Focus Groups; Inclusion Hubs; GEM service; our user led Quality Checking visits and our regional network of self-advocacy groups.

If you would like any information on any of the above activities, please visit our website or contact us on the email below:

https://www.inclusiongloucestershire.co.uk/our-services/
info@inclusion-glos.org

We will implement the organisational specific recommendations highlighted above and work in partnership with others to achieve the system wide recommendations.

And finally, thank you!

We would like to thank everybody who gave their time to complete our survey and share their experiences with us.

We would also like to thank our small team of volunteers who have given their time and insight to enable us to present people's experiences in this report.

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