



One year on - breaking down the barriers to employment



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Introduction

We want disabled people to have the best possible opportunities to fulfil their potential. Since the 2012 Paralympic Games there has been a dramatic increase in the public's awareness and attitudes to disability. Nearly 70% of the British public say that attitudes towards disabled people have improved since the Games. This gives us a huge opportunity to ensure that employment is a part of disabled people fulfilling their potential.

In the last year we have made a great start to breaking down the barriers that stop disabled people getting work. Government, employers, employees and disability organisations have come together to show that employing disabled people is not only the right thing to do – it makes business sense.

Disability Confident isn't just about extending the talent, experience and diversity of your workforce. It also means you make better connections with your disabled customers who spend over £80 billion a year.

We've had our national and regional events, and now want to take Disability Confident to the next level. We will take the message to every corner of the country in the next year, and bring together employers and the employees they need. Over 1000 employers have already joined the campaign. We now want local companies to join some of the major household names, and we'll be providing the support to make this happen.

Thank you to all those who've already committed to making a difference. In the next year, let's make sure that many more have the chance to get on board.



Rt. Hon. Esther McVey
Minister of State for
Employment



Mark Harper MP
Minister of State for
Disabled People

Background: Disabled People Fulfilling Potential

We are determined to break down the barriers to disabled people fulfilling their potential:

- Educational attainment (SEN pupils) has improved at GCSE and A level, and the proportion of students with a learning difficulty or disability who have successfully completed apprenticeships has doubled within the last decade
- Around two thirds of disabled people now report no difficulties accessing goods and services
- On average, over 150 disabled people per working day have either found a job or taken a significant step towards the workplace via the government's new package of support



But we must go further. As part of the legacy of the 2012 Games, we set out ambitions for improved accessibility and opportunity.

“Disabled people are an integral, vital part of our society and not an add-on”

Lord Coe (Aspire2 Fulfilling Potential Issue One)

- We are launching the Accessible Britain Challenge to bring together the energies and creativity of the public, private and voluntary sectors to make our communities more inclusive and accessible.
- And for the future, the Built Environment Professional Education project is working with professional institutions to ensure that inclusive design education becomes a requirement on all accredited courses.
- An employment gap still exists between disabled people and non-disabled people. Employer attitudes can make a major difference to this. The Disability Confident campaign helps employers build their confidence in employing disabled people.
- A workforce including disabled people will help businesses to respond to the needs of the third of disabled people who still have difficulty accessing goods and services.

There is a real opportunity for disabled people and business if we can grow disability confidence.

The campaign so far...

July 2013: The Prime Minister launched the national Disability Confident campaign. The campaign, the first ever of its kind, aims to encourage employers to become more confident about employing disabled people.

“We need to break the myth about the complexities of employing disabled people, or to put it more simply – to give employers confidence. That is why we are launching the Disability Confident campaign”

David Cameron (Disability Confident National Conference).



November 2013: The regional phase of the campaign kicked off in Birmingham. Business leaders and organisations showcased the talent of disabled workers and the benefits to business.

January 2014: The campaign gathered momentum with a regional event in Swindon. Throughout the campaign we received hundreds of pledges from employers who committed to improving their disability confidence in a variety of ways.

Case study

At the Swindon conference, Pluss, a social enterprise, made a pledge to promote diversification. Since then, they've met with Wiltshire police to help them to improve their recruitment practices. They've also set up local networks, which have included Job Centre Plus, to spread the message of Disability Confident. They have also held their own Disability Confident event.

March 2014: We had four further regional conferences in Glasgow, Leeds, Manchester, London and then in May, Cardiff. Each event generated wide coverage in the local press and on social media where we reached nearly 3 million viewers on local TV and radio, and got 30 million impressions on Twitter. Over 1000 employers have attended Disability Confident conferences.



“We must recognise that being disability confident isn't a problem to be overcome – it's an opportunity not to be missed.”

Ashok Vaswani,
Chief Executive of
Barclays Retail and
Business Banking.

What's next for the campaign

We've just launched the next phase of our campaign – events at a local level. MPs across the country have been given a toolkit to enable them to hold Disability Confident events in their own constituencies.

Case study

Mark Esho, Founder/ Owner, Easy Internet Services and Solutions

I was disabled at the age of 5 with polio which initially left me paralysed from the neck down. After working for a charity for a number of years as a Finance Manager I developed Post Polio Syndrome which forced me to leave my job. In 2000, I set up my first company, Easy Internet Services, a digital marketing company using a credit card as finance. In 2004, I set up my second company, Easy Internet Solutions offer web hosting and domain registration. Both companies employ over 20 people, including disabled people, and have a customer base in excess of 50,000.



Mark Esho (second from right) with Dom Hyams (second from left) and Joe Brown (right) sharing their stories with David Cameron.



Esther McVey celebrating a successful job outcome.

How we're helping employees and disabled people

We've been working with employers to recruit and retain the right mix of people to help their business grow.

We have made a range of improvements to **Access to Work** (AtW). These include extending AtW to individuals undertaking Youth Contract work experience and the recently launched Supported Internship and Traineeship schemes. Since December 2011, AtW has also offered a Mental Health Support Service.

Case Study: Access to Work

Paul has congenital Spina Bifida and is a wheelchair user. Having secured a job as a training officer, he made an application to Access to Work as his existing wheelchair and the factory layout were not fit for purpose. Access to Work funded an assessment of the workplace and recommended the provision of a bespoke lightweight wheelchair. Adaptations to the workplace were also paid for in the form of low-level door switches which facilitated automatic opening and IT software with a supporting headset.

We've launched an **Employers' Portal** which will improve access to information for employers on the benefits of employing disabled people

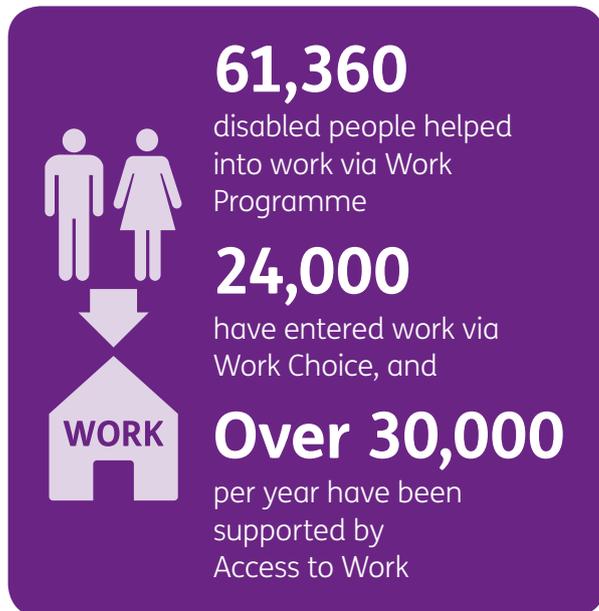
In 2012, we launched the **DWP Role Models**. Over 50 role models from a wide range of backgrounds have spoken to young disabled people about their aspirations and how to overcome barriers they've faced.

We're launching a **Young Person's Portal** which will give young people and those who work with them, the information they need to get the job they want.



Moving on...

Since 2010



Later this year, we'll be launching a new service to provide **advice and support for people to stay in, or return to work**, when they fall ill.

We're about to launch a new **Hidden Impairment Toolkit**. This toolkit will make sure our services are accessible for people with Autism, Aspergers and other less visible conditions.

We're reforming the **Two Ticks** disability accreditation to improve awareness and employer commitment to disability employment.

In December we're holding a **Job Shadowing Day** where young disabled people will get the opportunity to spend a day with a high-profile employer.



Find out more about Disability Confident at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/disability-confident-campaign>
or [#disabilityconfident](https://twitter.com/disabilityconfident)

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