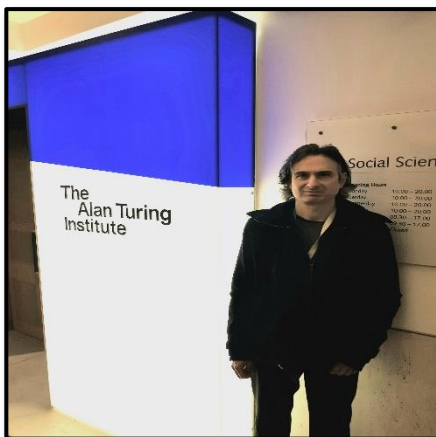


CamdenAbility

Evaluation Report on Impact of Project on CamdenAbility Registered Service Users

Produced by Cross River Partnership & Business Disability Forum for Camden Council

June 2019



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Executive Summary

This report provides a detailed summary of the CamdenAbility project that Cross River Partnership (CRP) has delivered in partnership with Business Disability Forum (BDF) for Camden Council from August 2016 to June 2019.

Cross River Partnership (CRP) is a non-profit and impartial partnership organisation that has been delivering positive change for London's residents, businesses and visitors for 25 years. CRP works with its partners to deliver an array of innovative projects to contribute to the community, environment and economic health of London.

CRP has a long experience of delivering successful programmes which help jobseekers back into sustained employment. This is achieved through a Workplace Coordinator working closely with businesses to access their vacancies, engaging candidates through a variety of referral partners, and preparing candidates for the specific jobs available. Since 2015, the project diversified and is specifically supporting candidates with disabilities and health conditions into work by securing tailored employment opportunities to meet the specific needs of the candidate being supported.

Business Disability Forum (BDF) is a not-for-profit membership organisation providing specialist support, training, consultancy and network opportunities for over 300 members and 30 partners, helping them become fully accessible to disabled customer and employees.

CRP and BDF successfully submitted a joint application to the Camden Growth Economic Fund in February 2016, outlining a plan to deliver a unique, innovative and ambitious disability employment project utilising their wealth of knowledge, experience and expertise in recruitment, employment and disability awareness.

A Specialist Workplace Coordinator (SWPC) was recruited to manage the project in August 2016 and CamdenAbility was launched officially in February 2017.

CRP and BDF have worked in close partnership to deliver CamdenAbility and although many tasks overlap, their roles on the project can be defined as:

Cross River Partnership's role:

- Develop and provide support to a caseload of candidates of Camden Jobseekers with disabilities and long-term health conditions
- Deliver specialist support and create bespoke opportunities to remove barriers to employment
- Work closely with recruitment, EDI and HR teams from businesses signed up the CamdenAbility Employer Network to create a marketplace of opportunities for Disabled Camden Jobseekers
- Develop a referral network of disability support services in the London Borough of Camden
- Deliver in-work support for employers that hire disabled candidates during the project.

Business Disability Forum's role:

- Attract and grow the Employer Network from within it's existing members and promote the project externally.
- Deliver consultancy, training and specialist advice, including tailored consultancy packages, such as reviews on attraction, recruitment and on-boarding, and workplace adjustments processes.
- Facilitating regular Network Forum meetings and disability awareness events and training.
- Promote access to BDF's online resources and information

- In-work support for employers that hire disabled candidates during the project.

CamdenAbility is a disability employment project tasked with improving disability standards in businesses in and around the borough of Camden and creating a marketplace of opportunities in the borough for people with disabilities and health conditions.

Initially funded in part by the DWP with Camden Council in its first year of delivery, the project has been entirely funded by Camden Council since Jan 2018.

CamdenAbility supported candidates who were:

- **A resident of the London Borough of Camden**
- **Unemployed, economically inactive or experiencing intermittent working.**

And either:

- **Have a learning disability** – including residents with neurodiverse conditions such as autism and Asperger's, downs syndrome and language processing disorders.
- **A Physical Disability** – including anything that affects co-ordination or mobility, sensory impairment, wheelchair users and amputees.
- **Or Long-term health condition (LTHC)** – this is a broad category and includes anyone who feels that their health condition affects their chances of finding work. For example, this would include conditions such as chronic back conditions, epilepsy, arthritis, hepatitis, diseases such as HIV/AIDS, people looking to return to work after cancer treatment/or surgery, and other congenital (from birth) conditions.

It was not a requirement for candidates to have a medically diagnosed condition. Candidates were able to self-diagnose and able to register with the project if they felt and recognised that their health condition affected their ability to find and sustain work.

Candidates with mental health conditions and learning difficulties were supported by other Camden Council funded services and initiatives.

Candidates from the following groups were unable to register with the project:

- **Mental health conditions** – such as depression, anxiety, eating disorders etc. (however the project was able to register these candidates if they had an additional disability/health condition)
- **People with learning difficulties** – such dyslexia, ADHD, Dyspraxia.
- **People who were employed with regular work**

Cross River Partnership delivered the CamdenAbility Project in partnership with Business Disability Forum from August 2016 to June 2019 and the project was funded by Camden Council.

Summary & Project Results

The project changed and developed since its launch in recognition to greater than anticipated levels of support required by candidates being referred to the project, and the availability of jobs coming through the network of employers.

The original plan for the project was to move relatively high volumes of disabled job-ready candidates into roles mostly created through the Employer Network. With year 1 being very much a pilot phase, Camden Council tasked the project with supporting what was thought to be, a large number of skilled disabled workers already in the borough, into work through a job-matching service.

During the initial stages of the project, in which time a large referral network was created consisting of disability employment services, job centres and community council services in the borough, it became evident that the disabled jobseekers being referred to the project required a lot more support and were typically further away from the jobs market than first thought.

Candidates initially referred to the project were from the mature groups (over 35 years old), had a long-term health conditions, were long term unemployed (or had never worked) and were far from the job market due to skills shortages, employment gaps and experienced numerous barriers to work such as housing, benefits reliance and a history of worklessness. Furthermore, many of the candidates referred to the project through the job centres were in the process of appealing decisions to withdraw their health-related benefits and didn't feel ready to return to work. Candidates referred to the project required more intensive advice and guidance support than what was delivered through the project in its early form.

The project's original target for the first year was to support 35 candidates into work. This was adjusted during the final 2 quarters in agreement with Camden Council to 15 in recognition to the much greater level of support required by the disabled job seekers registered.

Over the project lifecycle candidates were supported into work using a number of different methods, the most pragmatic of these involved working closely with the employer network to create unique and bespoke opportunities for CamdenAbility candidates.

Project Lifetime Achievements – Candidates

Output	Target	Achieved	% Achieved
Jobs created	44	38	86%
Work experience/shadowing placements facilitated	22*	21 (32)	96%
Site tours arranged	9*	11 (11)	122%
Employment workshops delivered	8*	16 (21)	200%
Interview skills workshops	25*	30	120%
Disabled job seekers supported	105	114	108%

Figure 1: Table showing how CamdenAbility performed against targets over 3 years

*These were not required targets in year 1 although performance against these measures was still recorded
() – including first year achievements when outputs were measured as part of 'disabled job seekers supported' target and further defined as individual targets in year 2 and 3.

CamdenAbility performance in line with expectations

The table below looks at the achievements of the project in its first year of delivery.

February – December 2017: YEAR 1

Project Activity	Year 1 target	Achieved	% Achieved
Engagement to gain referrals of eligible candidates onto the project	100	100+	100%+
Register candidates onto the project and carry out initial assessment / action planning.	60	63	105%
The SWPC will deliver one-to-one employment support to prepare candidates for work. Content will be tailored to meet candidate need. This could include a short work placement to help them trial a career and build skills / confidence.	50	63	126%
A suitable employment opportunity will be secured for the candidate through working directly with employers	35 (reduced to 15)	11 (13)	86% (adjusted)
The candidate will be prepared for and supported into a suitable employment opportunity, with advice for employer and candidate about any adjustments needed	20	10	50%
26 candidates sustaining work for 26 weeks	26	0	*not recorded

Figure 2 – Year 1 outputs, targets and achievements

Year 1 Summary

The first year aims, targets and aspirations of the project was very different to how it ended in June 2019. The initial remit of the project was to identify and work with a large group of job ready disabled residents in Camden and to move them into work through opportunities brokered by the Network.

During the embedding period of the project, where it focused on identifying the candidates and building the network of employers, it was evident that the type of candidates the project was initially created to support where not present in borough in great numbers.

This was recognised in the second quarter of delivery and as such the project's objectives were changed after its official launch in Feb 2017 from being a high number recruitment vehicle for disabled candidates to find employment through, to a service that provided support to overcome barriers to employment and create steps towards employment.

The project was very successful in receiving referrals, which came mostly through the Job Centres with candidates who predominantly had a long-term health condition and in receipt of health-related benefits.

Despite the change in direction for the project half way through delivery in the first year, paid employment opportunities were secured for 11 candidates, 2 of who were supported back into employment after leaving their initial placements (13).

The employment network was established and had grown to 23 businesses by the end of the project. CamdenAbility was still developing a way to effectively work with the Employer Network, however the project was still able to secure employment opportunities for five candidates through the Network. Sustainability targets were not recorded in the project's first year due to the candidates starting work after June.

CRP was notified of Camden Council's intention to renew funding for an additional year in December 2017. The project was changed significantly in recognition to the type of work offered by the network, and the greater level of support required by the candidates.

January – December 2018: YEAR 2

The table below looks at the achievements of the project in its second year of delivery.

Project Activity	Year 2 target	Achieved	% Achieved
Number of clients engaged	60	70	116%
Number of clients accessing intensive support	30	44	146%
Number of clients benefitting from work placements and work shadowing	15	13	86%
Number of employer site visits	4	5	125%
Number of clients who will benefit from practice interviews held by employers	15	23	153%
Number of workshops delivered by the Specialist Workplace Coordinator	4	8	200%
Number of clients in paid employment	20	16	80%
Number of jobs from the Camden Ability Network	11	4	36%
Number of clients who sustain in work for 26 weeks	6	4	66%

Figure 3 – Year 2 Outputs, Targets and Achievements

Year 2 Summary

In the second year of delivery several additional activities were included into the project, designed to support candidates move closer the job market. These included:

- Work experience placements
- Employer site visits
- Employment workshops
- Reverse job fairs
- and practice interviews.

As well as being supportive measures, these activities were also useful tools to engage with the employer network to broker opportunities.

There was a greater emphasis in the 2nd year of delivery was to increase the number of candidates registered onto the project with learning disabilities, with particular focus on those that fell within the 18-24-year-old age group. In year 1, 57% of candidates registered onto the project were over 35 years old, and only 16% under 24.

In order to engage with this group of candidates, referral links were established with various Camden Council teams such as Adult Social Care, Connexions and Youth Services as well as more regular activity with local learning disability services such as The Camden Society, The Westminster Society and Elfrida Rathbone.

By the end of the year the number of young candidates with learning disabilities was successfully increased from 38% of the caseload, to 56%.

13 candidates completed work experience placements through the project, these were in the form of weekly placements, work shadowing arrangements with organisations or as work trials with a view of moving into paid work.

16 paid employment opportunities were created through the project, however only 4 of these were through the Employer Network. This was partly due to the type of roles offered, opportunities through the Employer Network tended to be for experienced, skilled workers with qualifications, which were unsuitable for candidates registered onto the project.

Unfortunately, a number of recruitment initiatives set up in year 2 failed to materialise, such as a traffic marshal recruitment drive at Skanska, an Autism Actuary internship at Willis Towers Watson, and an early career program at Dentsu Aegis. Had these opportunities materialised, these would have resulted in a far greater number of jobs created through the employer network. This was largely due to these organisations experiencing organisational staff changes and a reluctance from 3rd parties involved in the recruitment process (training providers).

The project was very successful in creating 14 jobs through assisted job search and one to one support. This was partly due to the increased presence of the SWPC in the borough, which resulted in more time being spent with candidates giving one to one advice, addressing barriers to work and completing job applications. The project established the use of offices at The Living Centre in Somerstown, and KX recruit in Kings Cross where the SWPC was able to deliver the project from.

Additionally, the measures put in place to support candidates, address skills and experience shortages, such as the creation of work experience placements, work showing opportunities, reverse job fairs, employability

workshops, site tours and interview skills training also had a positive effect on our candidate's ability to find work through assisted job search.

Finally, the project was very successful in engaging candidates registered to the project. At the end of the year, only 7 candidates out of 44 registered failed to access any of the project's activities.

January – June 2019: YEAR 3

The table below looks at the achievements of the project in its third and final year of delivery.

Project Activity	Year 3 target	Achieved	% achieved
Registration & assessment form	15	16	106%
Work experience/Job Shadowing	7	8	114%
Site Visits	3	4	133%
Practice interviews	10	15	150%
Job starts	9	9	100%
Apprenticeships	1	1	100%
Employers on Network	30	32	106%

Figure 4 – Year 3 Outputs, Targets and Achievements

Year 3 Summary

In its final 6 months, the project achieved far greater success with brokering unique and bespoke employment opportunities through the CamdenAbility network. In the first two years of the project, jobs created through the network accounted for 31% (yr1) and 25% (yr2) of overall outcomes. By the end of project, despite the shorter duration of delivery (6 months instead of 1 year), the project was able to successfully recruit 56% of jobs through the Employer Network.

Jobs brokered through the Employer Network were created for CamdenAbility candidates exclusively, working in close collaboration with employers to develop opportunities and to source, train and implement adjustments.

The project was able to successfully utilise its learnings from the previous 2 years to successfully implement strategies to engage and recruit via the Employer Network. One of the main reasons for this was the better understanding of the Employer Network of the project and its candidates, but also the project's relationships with employers developed in the past 3 years.

In year 2 the project established a greater presence in the borough to increase the number of young people (under 24) with learning disabilities. As much of this was already in place the project was able to seamlessly

continue into year 3 with a strong focus on delivery and the creation of opportunities, rather than time spent on developing the project.

Many candidates were retained from year 2, with only a handful of new candidates being registered (10) in year 3. Because of the time spent receiving support from the project, candidates were closer to the job market having had exposure to activities facilitated through the project to bridge skills and employment gaps. Importantly, there was also a number of suitable jobs coming through the Employer Network.

The project brokered 9 jobs in its final few months, which included an apprenticeship following a successful work experience placement at the Customer Contact centre at Camden Council.

Finally, a big emphasis towards the end of the project was placed around the project's handover to Camden Council. 11 candidates who were registered with the project and out work were referred to Central London Works where they have the option of registering to continue receiving employment support.

The table below outlines ways in which the project was able to increase the amount role jobs created through the employer network:

Type	How it was effective
'Meet the employer' sessions	Reverse recruitment sessions enabled the Employer to meet with and engage with Candidates for the first time. These events introduced candidates to employers and gave employers the opportunities to meet face-to-face with candidates they ordinarily wouldn't have met.
Trust and knowledge of the project	Many of the Employer Network had established strong links with the project over the past 2 years. We were able to use the trust built during their time on the project to formalise agreements that made changes to recruitment processes and initiate new opportunities such as the roles created at Camden Council, Wellcome Trust and UCL. These positions were recruited exclusively through the project. Ordinarily, these roles would have been advertised and sourced through mainstream recruitment methods.
Putting theory into practice	Employers were keen to put into practice their knowledge gained through CamdenAbility network meetings and disability training sessions.
Being Direct	With the level of trust we had built with the Employer Network the project was able to take a more direct approach with its employers. For instance, sending CVs directly to employers asking them to explore opportunities.
Expanding organisational networks	Organisations were encouraged to 'spread the message' to promote the project, and candidates to their vendors, supply chain and other departments. The 2 internships at the Wellcome Trust were created by our regular contact at the organisation promoting CamdenAbility to different departments inside the trust.

Figure 5 – Examples of how the project engaged with the Employer Network to create employment opportunities.

Analysis of jobs created

The table below shows a year by year analysis of the percentage of jobs brokered within the employer network and those brokered through assisted job search outside the employer network.

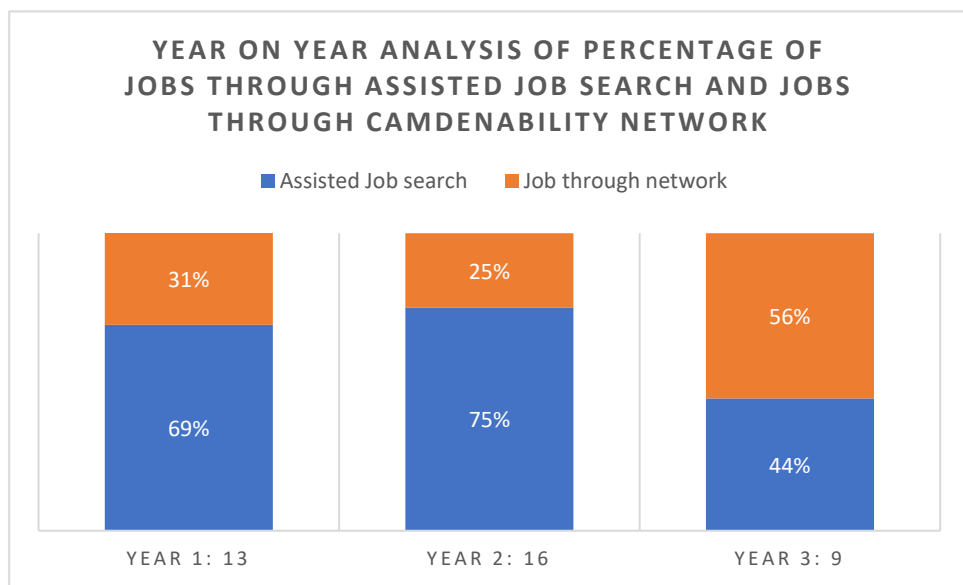


Figure 6 – Analysis of jobs created through Employer Network and through Assisted Job Search

Year 1: August 2016 (Project officially launched in Feb 2017) - Dec 2017: 13 total Jobs created

Year 2: Jan 2018 – Dec 2018: 16 total jobs created

Year 3: Jan 2019 – June 2019: 9 total jobs created

Jobs outside the network were obtained by:

- Intensive and regular job search sessions (one to one appointments)
- Assisted job application and CV submission support
- Interview skills training
- Through opportunities received through our network of referral partners
- Effective partnership working
- Business engagement (reaching out to local businesses)
- Empowering candidate, particularly with the confidence to disclose disabilities and acting on their behalf to recommend adjustments around their disabilities.

To ensure the project worked towards its fundamental aim to support disabled Camden residents into employment, support measures were put in place to move candidates into work outside of the employer network, utilising mainstream recruitment methods and reaching out to non-network businesses.

Sectors recruited for

For the duration of the project candidates have typically looked for work in entry level positions, with a particular interest in hospitality and catering services. This is reflected by the type of work secured for candidates, with over 35% of the jobs recruited for being catering related.

The table below shows the percentage of jobs that were brokered in different sectors during the project life cycle.

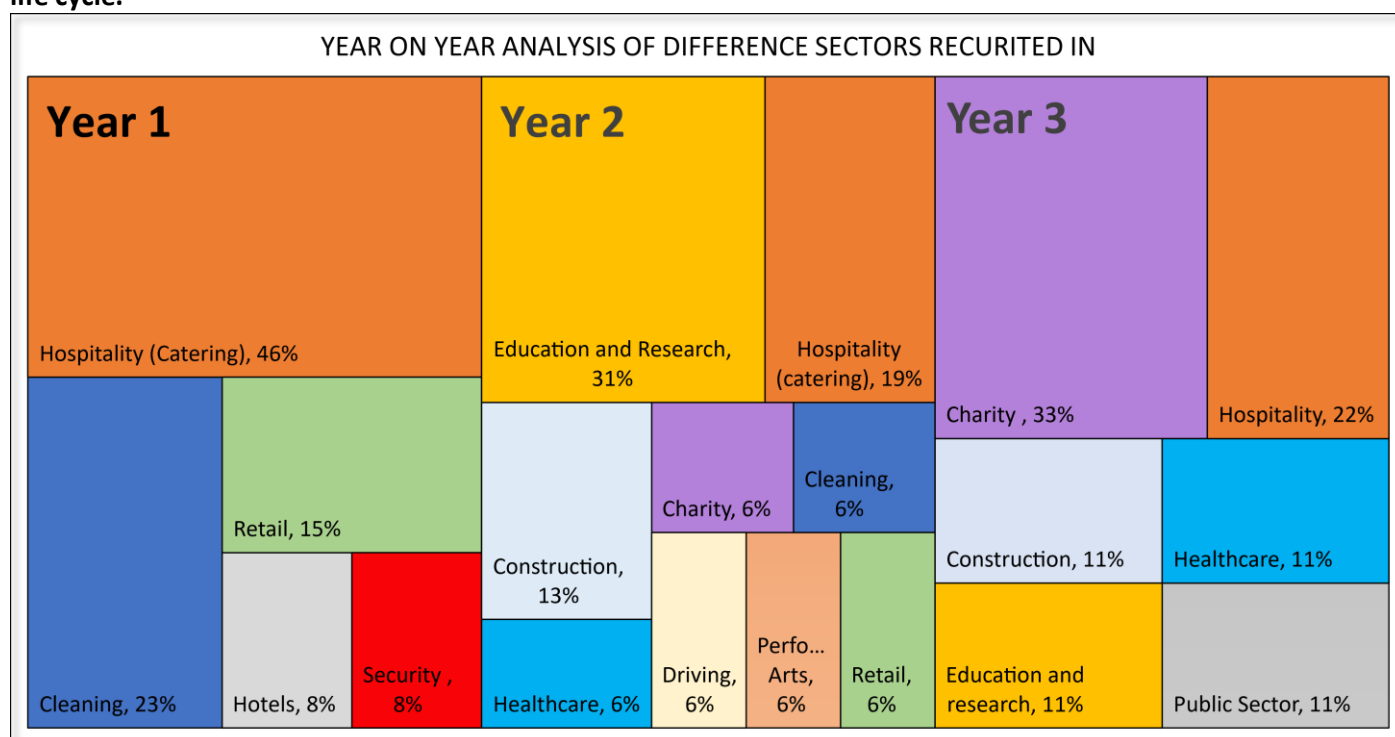


Figure 7 – Analysis of the percentage of candidates finding work in different sectors

Hospitality was by far the most successfully recruited for and most sought-after sector. This is perhaps unsurprising, given the amount of pre-employment training candidates with disabilities receive for these types of jobs during their time in education, and through employment advice services such as The Camden Society, who referred many candidates to the project during its lifecycle.

Given the nature of the hospitality industry and the tendency to recruit in bulk and regularly, we found employers willing to create opportunities for disabled applicants. We also found employers to be more willing to be flexible with their standard recruitment processes, willing to take on recommendations and work with the project to take on our candidates.

An example of this is the project's work with Caterlink. Caterlink are a catering contractor operating in Camden, providing catering services to schools and colleges in the borough. CamdenAbility successfully placed 3 candidates with Caterlink. They were willing to work exclusively with to the project to recruit disabled staff, and having candidates registered who were interested in these roles with qualifications and experience made this opportunity a successful match-up.

Other successes in the hospitality sector came through our partnerships with other employment services such as CRP's Recruit London programme and Kings Cross Recruit. We found employers such as Pergola, who were working with Recruit London to recruit new kitchen staff very susceptible to work with the project to

implement the adjustments needed for one of the project's candidates to start work with them in March 2018.

Level of work found for candidates

The table below details how many jobs were created in entry level positions, mid-level positions and experienced roles.

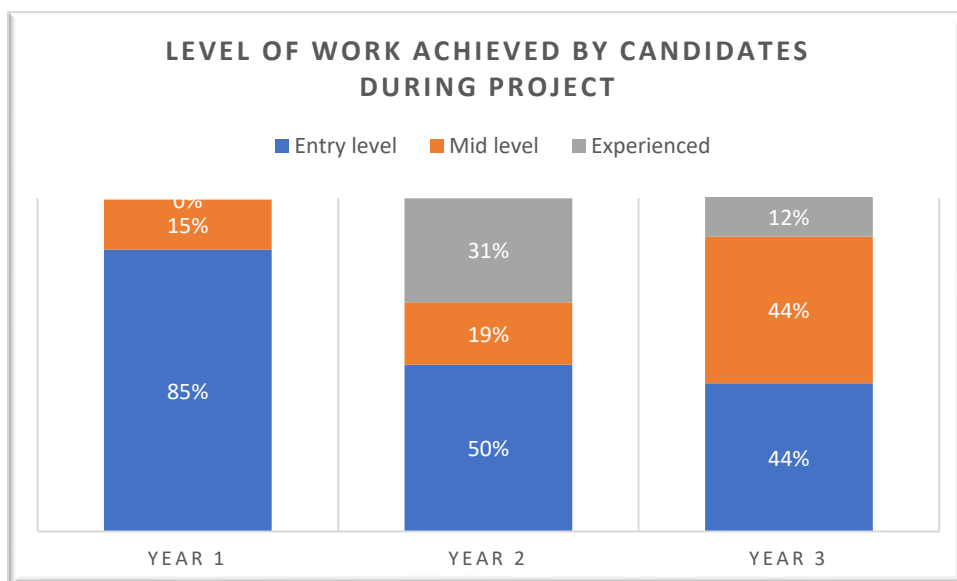


Figure 8 – table showing the types of work achieved through the project.

CamdenAbility candidate Max (left) was supported by CamdenAbility to secure a Catering Assistant role at one of Caterlink's kitchens in October 2017.



"I get up with a smile in the morning and I feel happy I am going to work. I feel comfortable in myself with the work I am doing"

Max (CamdenAbility Candidate)

"Maxime is a very hard working individual and has settled well into the role"

Claire Martin, Area Manager, Caterlink

Cleaning was another area where there was success in placing candidates, with 18% of jobs brokered through the project were in cleaning and maintenance positions. Similar to the catering roles, these positions were well suited to the project's candidates because of the repetitive nature of the roles, being hands-on manual work and not requiring many qualifications. Employers in these sectors were often flexible and open to working with the project to change their recruitment methods in order to be better placed to recruit candidates with disabilities.

CamdenAbility successfully placed two candidates with network member Apleona, a cleaning and maintenance contractor at the Francis Crick Institute. They were able to completely change the way they recruited in order to make adjustments to the recruitment process for disabled candidates.

The first step on their recruitment process was changed from competency based interview to an informal introduction with the hiring manager, moving on to a short work trial before being offered permanent contracts on successful completion.

Other sectors in which there was success in finding work for candidates was Education and Research and Charities. This was mostly due to the project's work with The Francis Crick Institute, The Wellcome Trust and The Alan Turing Institute, who were all network members from these industries that worked with CamdenAbility to create initiatives to support candidates into work.

Project life cycle analysis of the types of jobs created for candidates with specific disabilities and health conditions

Conditions				
Level of work found	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Project Total
Entry level				
Learning Disability	31%	19%	44%	60%
Physical Disability	8%	6%	0%	
Long term Health Condition	23%	13%	11%	
Nerodiverse	23%	13%		
Mid-level				
Learning Disability		6%	12%	24%
Physical Disability				
Long term Health Condition	15%	13%		
Nerodiverse			22%	
Experienced				
Learning Disability		6%	12%	16%
Physical Disability		6%		
Long term Health Condition		19%		
Nerodiverse				

Figure 9 – table showing different levels of jobs created and type of disability.

The vast majority of job outcomes were for entry level positions (60%) which is entirely reflective of the level of candidates referred to the project, their work aspirations and the level of support they required. This group of candidates moving into employment had typically never worked before or had very little experience. The majority of candidates who achieved entry roles through the project had a learning disability.

26% of jobs were found in mid-level positions, typically for candidates who had some experience and some qualifications. These candidates either had a long term health condition or high functioning autism.

16% of candidates achieved higher level, experienced jobs. These were mostly obtained for candidates with long term health conditions, who were university educated and had utilised the project's support and employment network to overcome barriers to employment.

Candidate Overview

Supporting Candidates

How candidates were sourced onto the project.

Source	Type	Examples of organisations
Referral network	Established links with local employment services, particularly those with a disability focus, training providers and community organisations. The SWPC would promote the project during introduction meetings with staff, or workshops with their service users.	Somerstown Jobs-hub, Asian Women's Project, Outward Housing Association, KX Recruit, West Euston Partnership, One Housing, Training Link and Hillside Clubhouse.
Local Jobcentres	A referral link was created on the jobcentre LMS systems for work coaches to identify and refer their candidates to. The SWPC attended staff meetings to initially promote the project and attended subsequent monthly workshops with candidates. During year 1, the SWPC worked from Kentish Town Jobcentre on a weekly basis to meet and register candidates.	Kentish Town JCP, Marylebone JCP,
Camden Council teams	The project was promoted to various departments in the Council in order to gain referrals. The SWPC delivered introductory workshops and presented to staff at team meetings	Adult Social Care, Connexions, CLDS, Support Workers
Self-referrals	Candidates would contact the project through learning about it via leaflets, online marketing and word of mouth	Leaflet, online, word of mouth
Walk ins	The SWPC worked at different locations, KC Recruit, Somerstown jobshub JCP Kentish town	Walk in referrals

Figure 10 – table showing different ways candidates came onto the project

Candidate Caseload

In year 1, 35% of candidates were in receipt of JSA (many of whom had recently had their health-related benefits stopped) and 51% of candidates had been unemployed for over 3 years or had never worked. 51% of these candidates had long term health conditions of physical disabilities.

Only 16% of candidates fell into the 16-24 year-old category and only 22% of candidates had been recently employed (under 1 year).

In year 2, the project attempted to register more young candidates, particularly those in the Learning Disabilities category.

Further information on how assisted job support was delivered

Specialist Workplace Co-ordinator (SWPC) Support	Description
Intensive and regular job search sessions	The SWPC would meet job ready candidates once or twice a week for job search appointments. In these appointments, the SWPC would apply for multiple positions in their desired job role.
Assisted job application and CV submission support	These would normally take the form of hour-long meetings specifically for the purpose of applying for one position. The SWPC would advise and support the candidate to complete the application form or re-write their CV to apply for their desired job role.
Interview skills training	In order to prepare for an upcoming interview, the SWPC would train the candidate to successfully pass the process. This was sometimes over a number of weeks in the build up to an interview and at the time involved network members supporting.
Opportunities received through the network of referral partners	Job vacancies were often shared by other employment services in and around Camden, and the project would work with these organisations to support the candidates through their processes
Effective partnership working with recruitment organisations	The project has worked closely with the job centre in Kentish Town, Kings Cross Recruit and Somerstown Jobs Hub, working in partnership to influence employers and support candidates through recruitment schemes
Business engagement	The SWPC would contact and work with businesses outside the network to promote candidates and support them to implement adjustments.
Empowering candidates particularly with the confidence to disclose disabilities and acting on their behalf to recommend adjustments around their disabilities.	Through one to one appointments, the SWPC would work with candidates to improve their confidence, motivation and support them to overcome fears around their disability, particularly with the willingness to disclose their health conditions to prospective employers.

Figure 11 – examples of how assisted job search was delivered by the SWPC

CamdenAbility caseload makeup December 2018 (Year 2)

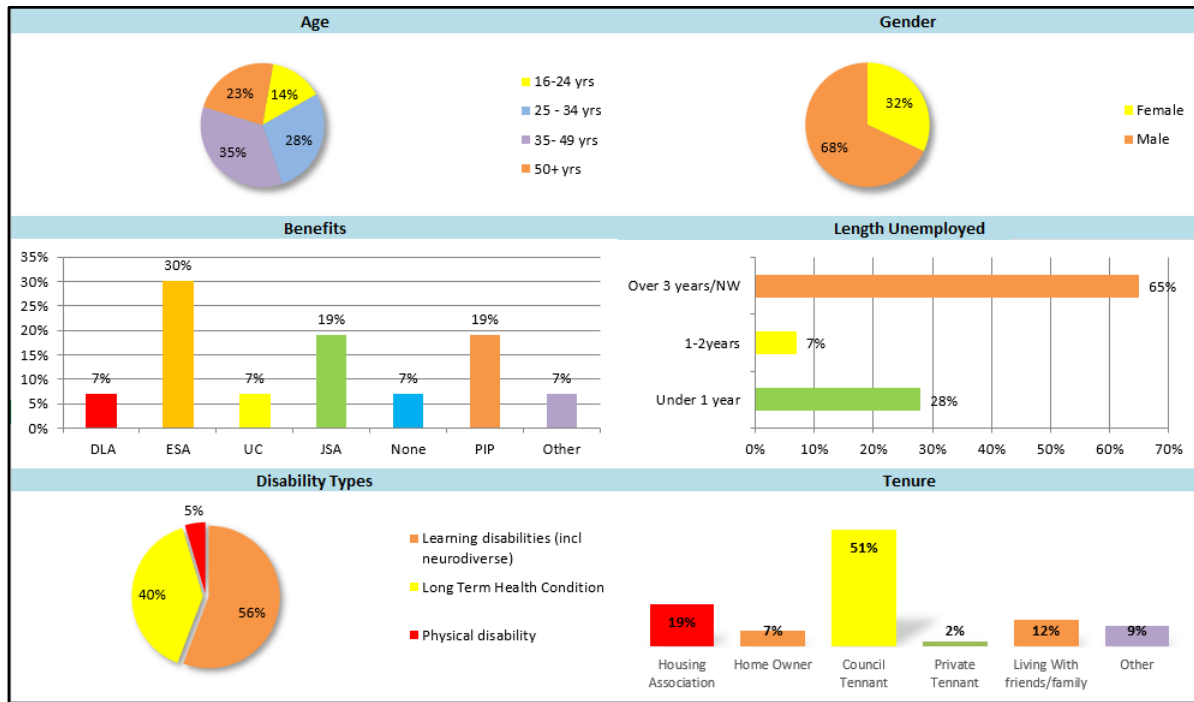


Figure 12 – Candidate caseload in December 2018 (end of year 2)

At the end of the second year of the project:

- 68% of candidates registered were men
- Increase of Personal Independent Payments claimants – from new referral partnerships with supported housing organisations
- Rise in number of candidates under 35 however the project still struggled to engage and register candidates in the 16-24 group
- Increase of candidates 3+ years that had never worked
- 56% learning disabilities
- Over 50% of service users were council tenants
- 56% of candidates were in receipt of a health-related benefit

CamdenAbility candidate make up June 2019 (end)

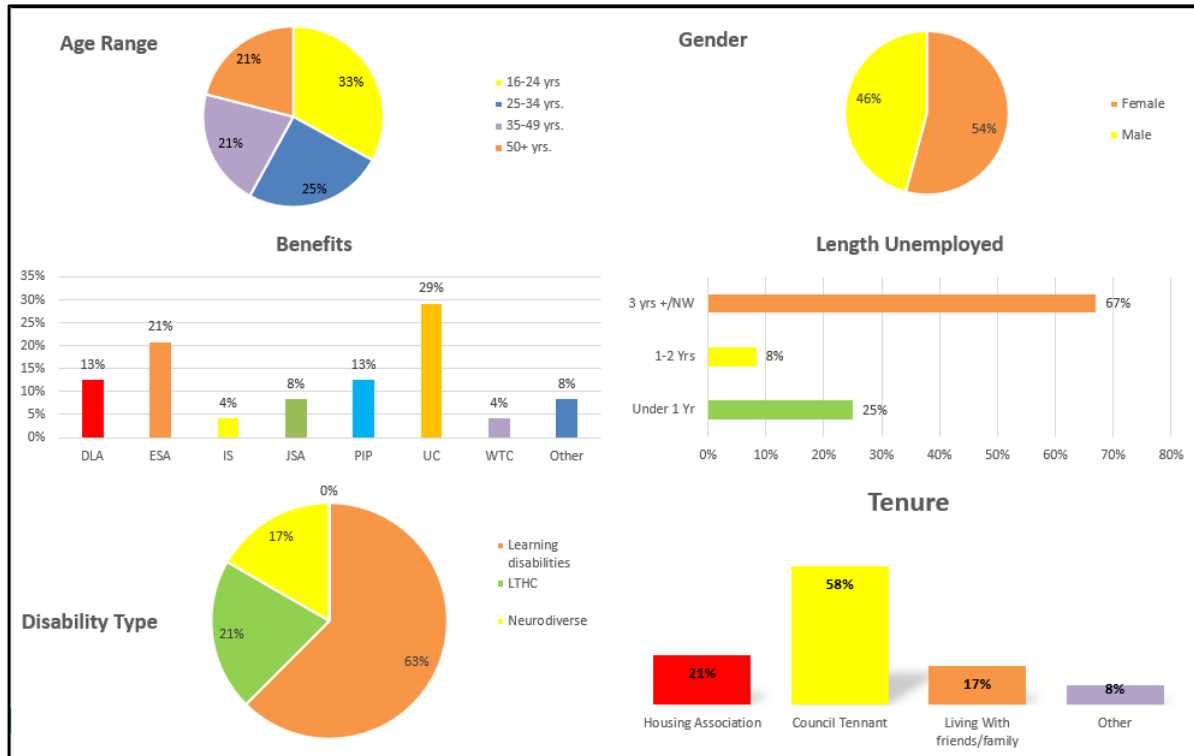


Figure 13 – Candidate caseload in June 2019 (end of project)

At the end of the third year of the project:

- Increase in number of candidates aged 16 - 24 years old accessing the project (up from 14% of caseload in 2018)
- Much larger proportion of candidates in receipt of universal credit
- Disabled candidates tend to have never worked, or have been out of work for more than 3 years
- 56% of candidates had a learning disability
- Over 58% of service users are now council tenants
- The overwhelming majority of candidates on the caseload now had a learning disability and neurodiverse conditions.
- Zero candidates had physical disabilities.

Barriers to employment

Examples of types of barriers to employment experienced by CamdenAbility candidates and the type of support given

Barrier to employment	Support given
Employment Gaps (gaps in CV)	Work Experience Placements Work Shadowing arrangements Mentoring arrangements
Skills gaps	Work Experience placements Referral to short training courses
Benefits Concerns	Benefits calculations Referral to Citizens Advice or Mary Ward Centre
Lack of knowledge of type of work	Site tours One to one advice
Lack of Confidence	One to one confidence building sessions Work experience placements Work Shadowing/mentoring
Fears of disability disclosure	One to one advice sessions
Inability to pass interviews	Interview skills training
Accessing suitable opportunities	Jobs matching 'meet the employer' events Work Trials One to one job searching support
Housing issues	One to one advice Citizens Advice referral
Poor/No CV	One to one support
Unable to complete Job applications	One to one support
Fear of employer not understanding disability	One to one support 'meet the employer' events Site tours Work experience placements Work trials
Criminal records	One to one support to write a declaration statement
General lack of employability skills	Employability workshops Interview skills training

Figure 14 – Table looking at barriers to employment and how the project supported candidates overcome these.

Overcoming Barriers: Type of support needed and accessed

Support given to CamdenAbility candidate to overcome barriers to employment

	Work Experience	Work Shadowing	Site Tour	Mock Interviews	Reverse Job Fairs 'meet the employer events'
Info	An opportunity for disabled candidates to gain invaluable experience within a CamdenAbility employer to help bridge gaps in CVs, gain new skills and improve their confidence from a short work experience programme	Employers to open up availability of staff to disabled candidates to talk to them about their job role	Small group of disabled candidates visit Employer's premises for a talk/tour and find out more information of the organisation and the different roles available	A series of mock interviews with employers to simulate professional interviews and give feedback to candidates on their performance.	An event organised by CamdenAbility for employers to meet job ready disabled candidates and speak to them about their businesses and opportunities
Duration	1 week	Min 1 hour up to a 1 day	Up to half a day	Dependant on no. of candidates (at least 30 minutes each)	Approx. 2 hours
During Event	Candidates to follow Work experience plan agreed in advance Feedback given at end of Work Experience from both Candidates and Employers	Candidates to sit with selected staff to find out more about their work. This could be as a one off informal meeting. Or supporting them complete tasks over the course of a few hours	Candidates to be shown different departments and roles within business premises This could incorporate a talk/presentation or simply a walk through the premises to build knowledge	Once time and dates agreed, Parma will select suitable candidates and book in interview times Candidates will be interviewed for mock positions and feedback discussion given at the end of the interview	Candidates and employers encouraged to engage and discuss opportunities and adjustments related to their disabilities Employers to preferably bring suitable live vacancies, and for CamdenAbility to share candidate profiles to ensure opportunities are suitable
Outcome	Candidates build gaps in CVs, improve skills and experience and gain confidence. Employers are able to examine the suitability of their disability standards and use the experience to test their disability processes.	Excellent opportunity for Candidates to have an informal discussion about roles and industries they might be interested in.	A great opportunity for Candidates to fight out more the opportunities and nature of large businesses in and around Camden. The aim of the site tour is to improve their knowledge and ultimately make disabled candidates more comfortable and confident to apply for jobs at our organisations	Disabled candidates further away from the job market have an opportunity to brush up on their interview skills and obtain invaluable feedback on how to improve	An innovative approach to job fairs, giving the Candidates the opportunity to discuss their requirements and suitability for job roles with businesses. It's also an excellent opportunity for employers to promote their business and job roles with an area of the community who they might ordinarily not engage with.

Figure 15 – Different types of support given through the project to support candidates overcome barriers to employment

Developing and working with the Employer Network

Business Disability Forum (BDF) led the delivery of the employer focused element of the CamdenAbility project. This ultimately meant establishing a network of employers located in or near to the London borough of Camden and working with them to increase organisational disability awareness to improve the attraction, recruitment and retention of disabled jobseekers in the borough. At the outset of the project there was a target of recruiting 25 organisations to the CamdenAbility, this target was increased slightly over the second year of delivery.

Employers Recruited	Target	Achieved	% of target achieved
Year 1	25	23	92%
Year 2	30	32	107%
Year 3	30	31	103%

Figure 16 – Number of employers recruited, targets and achievement by year

Year 1 recruitment

In the first year of delivery BDF employed a project assistant who was tasked with identifying suitable organisations and making direct approaches to establish initial meetings where BDF consultants could visit identified contacts and discuss the project. In addition to this, organisations were identified that were already within BDF's existing membership.

It was noticeable that this recruitment stage of the project was significantly resource intensive. In total 231 organisations were contacted during year one of delivery, 53 of these organisations were existing BDF members. Sector specific organisations were not targeted to approach as it was felt that creating a network of employers across a range of employment sectors would be most beneficial to the project. Retail, education, health and construction were the sectors where the highest volume of approaches were made to.

In total face to face meetings with 48 employers were made during the recruitment phase and this led to establishing a network of 23 employers at the end of year one.

Year 2 recruitment

The second year of recruitment saw a much more targeted approach with significantly less time and resource allocated to building the network. Organisations were targeted that were part of the existing employer network supply chain which resulted in companies such as Costain-Skanska and SCS Railways joining the project. Organisations were brought onboard that were already involved in supported employment work onto the employer network, this saw Mencap, Leonard Cheshire, RNIB and the Tottenham Hotspur Foundation recruited.

By the end of year two the network had grown to 32 employers. This followed an initial 'cull' of employers that were not engaged with the project at the start of year. It was noticeable that around 15% of the network were companies involved in construction, a sector which has had a specific focus on increasing the representation of disabled people in recent years. It did not prove possible to increase the volume of retail organisations on the network something the project had hoped to do during the year.

Year 3 recruitment

No commitment was made to further grow the network in the final six months of the project as the focus was on retaining the existing network and aiding the transition of these employers to Camden Council's new supported employment offer.

Despite not actively seeking to recruit new members direct approaches were received from Cap Gemini and ACAS who were keen to join the project, they have been added to the network and anticipate them transitioning to the new supported employment model.

The 'offer' to employers

To recruit organisations to the project it was important to develop an offer that would be attractive to employers. The offer was also designed around helping companies build disability capability and awareness to improve how they attract, recruit and retain disabled people. To that end the following offer was designed:

- Access to the BDF Advice Service – A dedicated line available Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm staffed by disability consultants. This ensured that all employers had unlimited access to disability advice, guidance and support throughout the life of the project.
- Access to the BDF 'member hub' – Unlimited access to BDF online resources was made available to all employer key contacts.
- Free training events – 11 free disability training workshops were made available to members of the employer network over the life of the project along with the delivery of two additional workshops for SMEs and third sector organisations.
- Network meetings – 10 employer network meetings were held during the life of the project. These meetings provided an opportunity to share best practice and discuss topics that were important to network members, e.g. Disability Confident, Access to Work, apprenticeships.
- Free consultancy – All employers who joined the project in year one were allocated a day of consultancy (which could be converted to training if required). In year two this offer was slightly refined to those organisations who committed to certain levels of activity (see employer commitments section).
- Access to BDF disability consultants – All employers involved in the project had direct access to senior disability consultants at BDF.

Employer commitments

In the first year of delivery employers were not asked to commit to any specific activity to support the project and we were not prescriptive in the ways that organisations could get involved. At the start of the second year of delivery it was felt that it would be helpful to obtain greater clarity on how organisations intended to support the project. It was felt, that this would enable CRP to be more targeted in which employers they engaged with in relation to candidate placements.

It was recognised that some organisations were not able to commit to providing employment or work experience opportunities however it was appreciated that there were other ways in which these employers

could support the project. Organisations were asked to confirm at the start of the second year the type of activities they were likely to be able to help with and whilst the Tier 1 and Tier 2 lists below were not exhaustive these were predominantly the activities that employers provided.

Around two thirds of our employer network committed to Tier 1 activities with the other third offering Tier 2 level support.

Details of the operating Tiers are provided below;

Tier 1: Employer Commitments		Y/N
1.1	Hosting project related events	
1.2	Providing interview practice or recruitment workshops	
1.3	Staging open days or site visits	
1.4	Regularly attending employer network meetings and training events	
1.5	Providing short term (1 day maximum) job shadowing opportunities	
1.6	Helping us work with your partners and suppliers to encourage them to join the employer network (i.e. provide contacts, introductions, speaking opportunities etc)	


Tier 2: Employer Commitments		Y/N
2.1	Provide opportunities for permanent paid employment and demonstrate a willingness to make adjustments to accommodate candidate requirements where necessary	
2.2	Provide opportunities for short term work trials (with a view to it leading to permanent paid work)	
2.3	Provide work experience opportunities	
2.4	Guarantee an interview for project candidates where minimum role requirements are met	

The commitment pledge was a 'soft sign up' really aimed at providing us with a steer of activity levels rather than anything that would be used to hold employers to account. It was found, however, that having the levels of commitment clearly defined helped in the recruitment of new employers to the project.

Building the brand

Part of the success of CamdenAbility has been through building an awareness of the project. Through various communication channels a positive brand and reputation has been built for CamdenAbility. In year one this was predominantly achieved through regular newsletters and a series of cases studies which showcased candidates being placed into roles and how employers had utilised the consultancy offer (example of the latter included at Appendix E).

In addition to this a dedicated CamdenAbility webpage was hosted on the BDF website (example screen shot below).



CamdenAbility is a collaborative project that aims to improve disability confidence free of charge across businesses throughout the London borough of Camden.

Now in its third year the project, delivered by Business Disability Forum (BDF) and Cross River Partnership with funding from Camden Council aims to significantly increase the number of Camden residents with disabilities who are in full-time employment.

Over 20 organisations local to the borough of Camden or in neighbouring boroughs have joined the project forming a unique employer network committed to supporting all disabled employees. As the project evolves we are keen to grow this network further to increase the number of employment opportunities and work experience placements that can be provided to Camden residents with disabilities. Please do get in touch if your organisation would like to be part of the employer network.

There are clear business benefits in joining the project. You will be able to learn from BDF and network employers through sharing best practice and knowledge relating to disability employment. In addition, you will have access to

"Good overview - managed to fit in a lot with capacity to discuss in open environment"

Attended from Camden Ability
Barrier free recruitment
workshop

Year two saw the development of a CamdenAbility 'brochure' and a one-page overview document which were used to assist with the recruitment of new employers to the network. The use of social media to help promote the project with both LinkedIn and Twitter was also used. The profile of the project raised significantly in year two and year three and actually resulted in organisations approaching BDF to join the network. We were also approached by other local authorities and the Scottish Government to help in the development of similar employment models.

Employers network meetings

Over the life of the project 10 employer network meetings were held and an initial launch event. All meetings were hosted by CamdenAbility employers as the intention was to take the meetings to different locations throughout the project.

In the first year of delivery the network meetings were very much used as providing information regarding the project, summarising work delivered and outlining next steps. Attendance at meetings was relatively poor although there were organisations who did regularly attend these meetings. In the second and third year of the project the focus of these meetings was changed so that they had three distinct purposes;

- An opportunity to discuss and share best practice with other employers
- Learning opportunities
- Project updates

The feedback received from employers was that they valued the opportunity to speak with other employers and learn about initiatives that were being delivered to improve the attraction, recruitment and retention of disabled people. We therefore built an 'employer update' into every network meeting.

By building learning opportunities into the meeting structure helped increase the number of employers that attended meetings. Rising from an average of 7 organisations per meeting in year one to an average of 11 organisations per meeting in years two and three. Subjects covered at employer network meetings included:

- Visual impairment and the use of technology (presentation delivered by RNIB)
- Supported employment initiatives (presentation by Mencap and Leonard Cheshire)
- Access to Work
- Disability Confident (the government disability initiative)
- Mental Health, a lived experience (presentation by Jason Grant)
- How to attract candidates with disabilities
- Apprenticeships (presentation by Camden Council Apprenticeship Team)

At two of the employer network meetings time was set aside to utilise part of the session as an opportunity for candidates to come and meet the employers. A further third 'meet the candidate' event was held as a separate session as well. These events proved extremely popular and valuable. Firstly, it gave the project's candidates the opportunity to meet with several employers (normally between eight and ten) in one afternoon. The feedback received from employers that attended said they had benefitted from meeting candidates face to face. The meet the candidate sessions directly led to some offers of work experience placements and paid work. Most importantly the sessions helped to address perceptions that some of the employers and the candidates had.

In the evaluation survey issued to employers in June 2019 eight employers (out of 14 respondents) indicated that they would like to continue meeting with other employers on a regular basis.

Training workshops

A main focus of the CamdenAbility project was to help organisations build disability awareness and in-house expertise. To help achieve this BDF provided a programme of training workshops on a range of topics. To ensure that the needs of the employers were met, at the start of each year of delivery network members were invited to select the workshops they most wanted delivered. The programme of delivery was as follows:

Workshop	Number of attendees	% of attendees who rated the training very good or better
Making Adjustments	12	92%
Neurodiversity	11	100%
Barrier Free Recruitment and Onboarding	10	90%
Attendance and Performance Management	14	85%
Disability in the Workplace	12	83%
Mental Health in the Workplace	17	94%
Attendance Management	16	100%
Neurodiversity and Mental Health	13	92%
Making Adjustments	12	100%
Barrier-free Recruitment	14	100%
Disability and Performance Management	18	88%
Disability Awareness (SME/third sector workshop)	7	100%
Disability Awareness (SME/third sector workshop)	11	83%

Figure 17 – Details of training workshops delivered by BDF

Training workshops were well received by those that attended with consistently high feedback ratings received across the project. There was however a fairly high rate of ‘non-attendees’ with on average around 25% of people who registered failing to attend. This is higher than most workshops/events that BDF run and is likely to be because all workshops were free and therefore there was no financial loss for failing to attend.

Under-utilisation of consultancy days

As previously stated, in year one of the project all employers were allocated a day of consultancy or training as part of the offer for joining CamdenAbility. BDF found that in general organisations valued the free training events and network meetings more than the consultancy offer. This was replicated in year two and three where the consultancy was also under-utilised however this did enable allocation of additional days to organisations that wished to benefit from the consultancy. Over the life of the project BDF did carry out a selection of meaningful consultancy projects which included:

- **University College London** – BDF Disability Standard support (appendix E) plus guest speaker presentations at UCL disability events.
- **Dentsu Aegis** – Review of early careers recruitment
- **Camden Council** – Review of attraction, recruitment and onboarding
- **Costain Skanska** – Review of existing disability data monitoring (appendix F)
- **The Francis Crick Institute** – Policy document review and building usability review
- **The Alan Turing Institute** – Training on a variety of topics including making adjustments and mental health serious situations
- **The Wellcome Trust** – Building usability and job content review prior to candidate placements
- **Laing O'Rourke** – Training on making adjustments and barrier-free recruitment

Feedback from employers

On 14th June 2019 a short survey was conducted, and employers were asked to provide feedback on their involvement in the CamdenAbility project. The survey remained opened for 10 days, closing on 24th June 2019. In total 14 responses were received to the survey. Below is an overview of some of the key feedback:

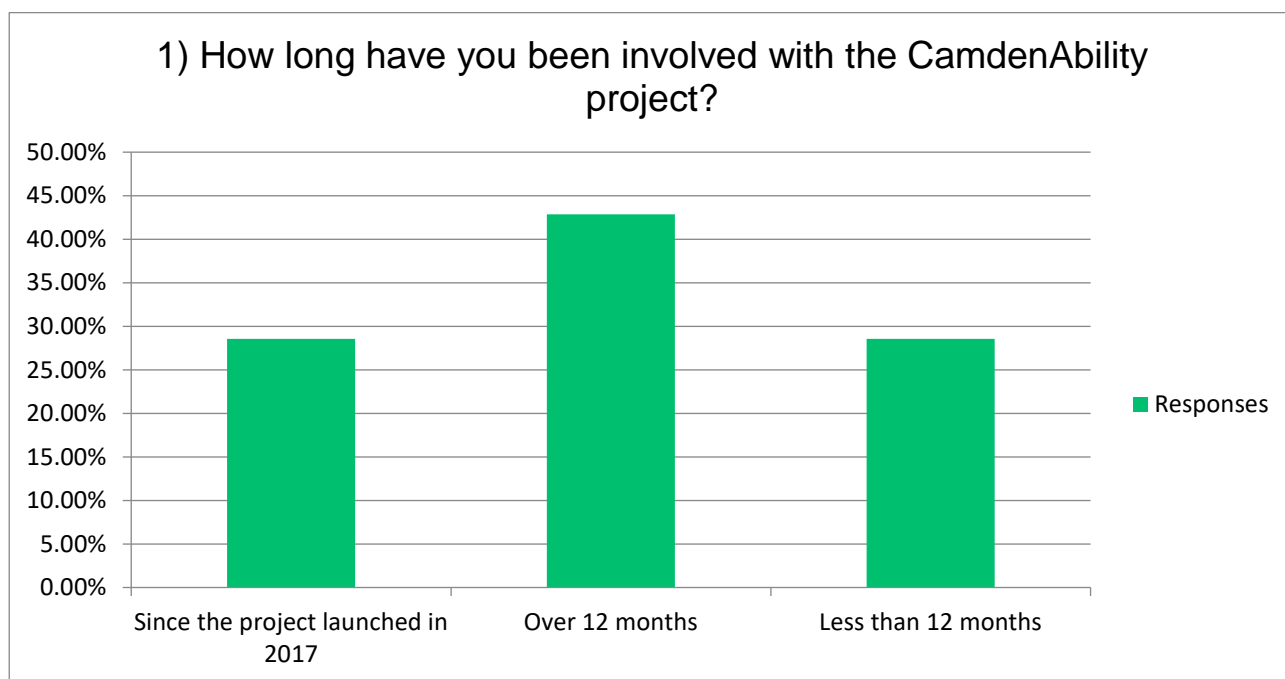


Figure 18 – Length of time employers involved with CamdenAbility project

Around 80% of responding employers had been with the project for over twelve months with four respondents having been with the project from the launch date. Much of the success of CamdenAbility came from the ability to build longstanding relationships with employers. This saw organisations such as The Francis Crick Institute, UCL and The Wellcome Trust, all organisations that joined in 2017, offer jobs in the last six to eight months of the project.

2) Have you (or any colleagues) attended any of the quarterly CamdenAbility employer network meetings over the life of the project?

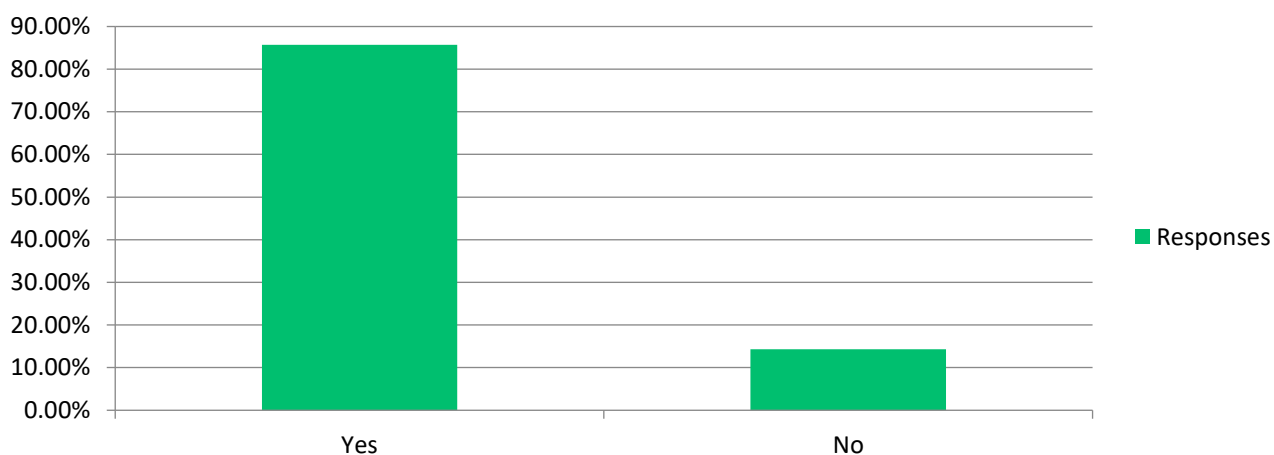


Figure 19 – Employers attending CamdenAbility Employer Network meetings

3) Have you (or any colleagues) attended any of the CamdenAbility training sessions over the life of the project?

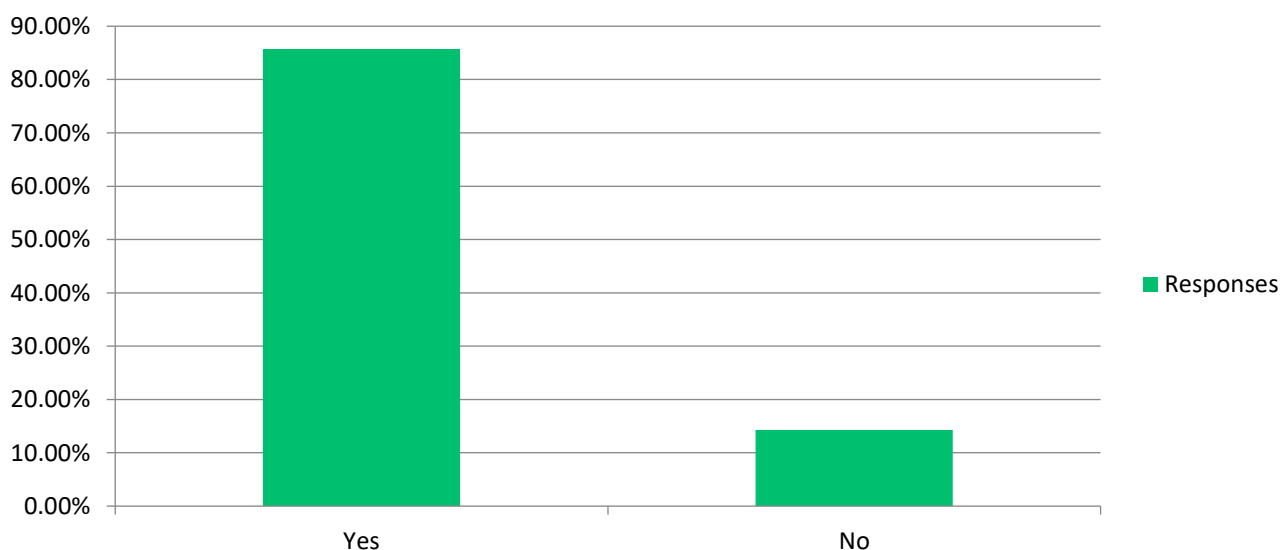


Figure 20 – Employers attending CamdenAbility training sessions

12 of the 14 respondents indicated that they, or a colleague, had attended an employer network meeting. Over the course of the project it was found that there were a consistent 10 to 12 organisations that attended meetings with other organisations attending more sporadically. Attendance at meetings grew in year two and three of delivery, peaking in late 2018 and early 2019. In relation to training events, again there was a consistent group of employers that would attend the free workshops. We did see other organisations like the British Transport Police, Iceland and City Lit attend training fairly regularly but did not attend the employer network meetings. This really illustrates that employers identified different elements of the offer that were of most benefit to them.

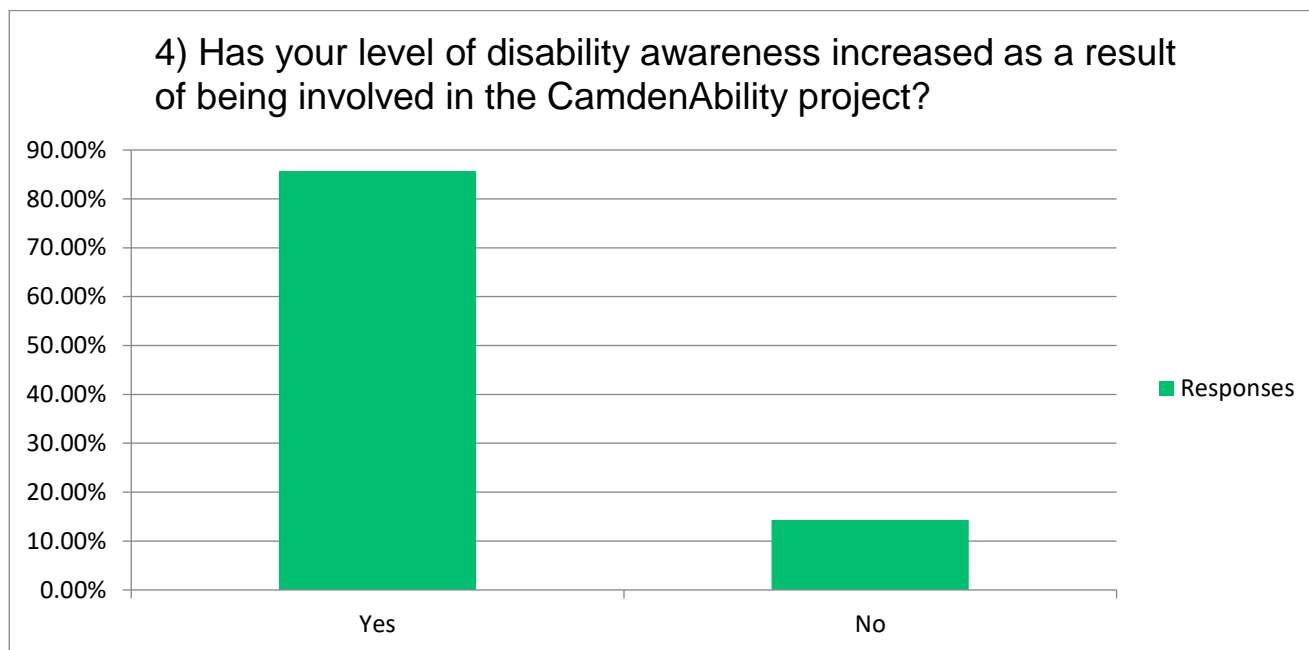


Figure 21 – Increased level of disability awareness by employers

One of the longer-term ambitions of the project was to increase the levels of disability awareness amongst employers in the borough. It is therefore pleasing to note that 85% of respondents felt that their levels of disability awareness had increased as a direct result of being involved in CamdenAbility.

5) How has the CamdenAbility project helped increase disability awareness within your organisation?

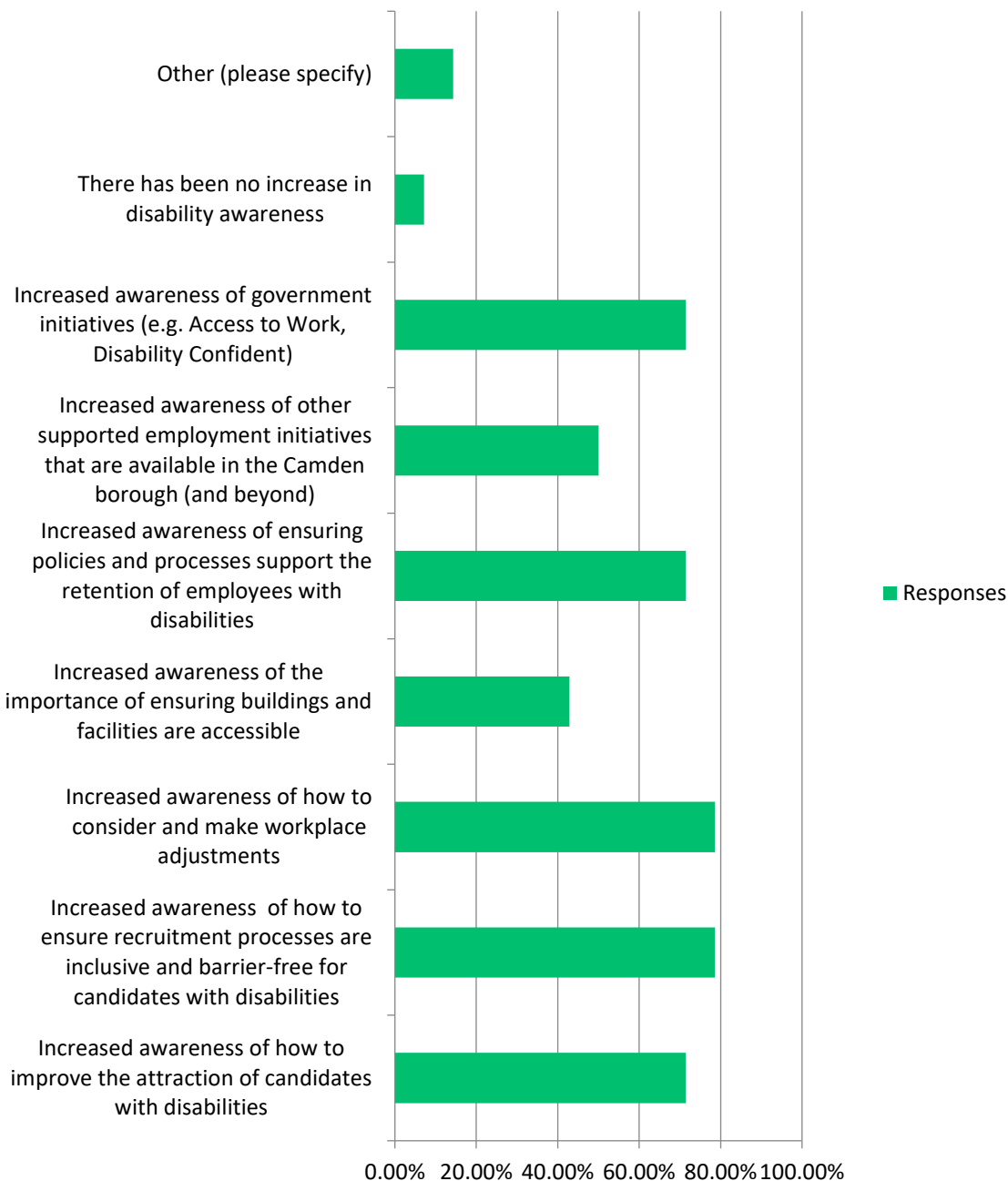


Figure 22 – Increased disability awareness levels of employers

It was explored in detail how the project had helped increase disability awareness and learnt that nearly 80% of respondents felt they were now more aware of how to make adjustments and how to ensure recruitment processes were barrier-free for disabled candidates. Around 70% of respondents were more aware of the importance of ensuring policy aided the retention of disabled people and had increased awareness of how to attract candidates with disabilities. Likewise, just over 70% of employers stated they had increased awareness of government initiatives like Access to Work and Disability Confident.

A question, ‘Are there matters relating to disability that you would like further information on to help increase levels of disability awareness in your organisation?’ was included with a view to helping Camden Council tailor support and information to employers moving forward. Responses to this question were free text and included;

- A need to focus on a range of supported employment routes not just internships. (1 response)
- A request to keep updated on inclusive recruitment practice (2 responses)
- A requirement for some focus on building/structural accessibility and advice on solutions (1 response)
- A request for support in brokering direct access to candidates with disabilities (1 response)
- A requirement to be kept informed of employment initiatives taking place in the borough (1 response)

Summary of key learning points

Below is a summary of the key learning points established through the delivery of the project. It is hoped that these points will enable Camden Council to maintain and develop the network of employers.

- **Build the relationships** – We learnt that in a supported employment project like CamdenAbility there are often not quick wins and that the ability to successfully place candidates into roles relies on the relationships with employers that are built over a period of time. A significant proportion of the employers involved in CamdenAbility were part of the project for well over 12 months and this enabled strong relationships to be built. In the final months of delivery saw candidates placed with three organisations who had been with the project since 2017. The well-established relationships helped in carving the right opportunities for the candidates.
- **Creating opportunities for the candidates and employers to meet face to face** – This is something that had not done in the first 18 months of delivery however following the first ‘meet the candidates’ event it was recognised the benefit to both the employers and candidates from running the event. A further two events which were equally as successful. It is definitely recommended that such opportunities are identified and made available in the future.
- **Circulating candidate CVs** – Again this is something that was not done on a wide scale in the first 18 months of delivery but commenced on a quarterly basis in the last year of the project. It was found that employers liked to see CVs, and also some of the contacts circulated the CVs within their supply chain. This approach was successful and led to opportunities specifically being opened up for the project’s candidates.
- **Have a range of employers across sectors** – Whilst there were a good mix of employers involved in the project it proved difficult to bring onboard the right level of retail and hospitality organisations that had been initially envisaged. It was noted that these were sectors where a number of the candidates were keen to work in but not many roles were offered in these sectors. It is also recommended that consideration is given in how to engage small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) moving forward as it was only possible to engage a limited number of SMEs with the project.
- **Have a well-defined offer to employers** – The most significant factor in recruiting organisations to the project was that there was a clear offer to employers which provided tangible benefits at no cost to them. Keeping the network engaged may require some form of offer being made available.

- **Ensure continued learning** – Employers wanted to improve their awareness and capability when it came to attracting and recruiting disabled people. The programme of training sessions helped with this and it was learnt that making the employer network meetings learning forums helped improve attendance and contributed to the increased disability awareness experienced by employers.
- **Removing employers from the network** – There is a danger in running a project such as CamdenAbility that a lot of time can be invested in employers who are either disengaged or not contributing to the outcomes of the work. We learnt that it was better to focus on those organisations that were engaged or at the very least were keen to improve their awareness. As such, a ‘cull’ of disengaged employers was performed at the end of each year of delivery.
- **Explore the supply chain of employers** – In year two and three of delivery a conscious effort was made to ask employers to introduce BDF to their supply chain and several organisations were recruited to the project through this route. Working with the supply chain can be beneficial as often the parent organisation can help influence partners and suppliers.
- **Consultancy support** – In general the consultancy offer was under used however where it was utilised it enabled pieces of work to be undertaken that changed policy and practice within organisations.
- **Build the brand** – The length of the project meant that it was possible to build good awareness of CamdenAbility to the extent that organisations were directly approaching BDF to be part of the project. Using publicity materials, social media and speaking opportunities all helped with this. It will be important for Camden Council to create a clear communication strategy for the supported employment work moving forward.
- **Consult with employers** – It was important to consult with employers to ensure that the offer evolved to meet their requirements. Using surveys and face to face consultation helped to design the content for employer network meetings and the training schedules for each year.
- **Clarity on commitments** – It was also found that providing clarity on what was required from employers helped organisations be clear on how they could support the project and helped to target the right conversations with the right employers. Having something that helps employers determine how they can assist supported employment initiatives in the borough will be helpful for all moving forward.

Independent Evaluation Findings of Candidates

An Independent evaluation of candidates registered on the project was conducted by a CRP staff member not connected to the project.

The aim of the evaluation was to find out how the candidates found their experience of the project, what type of support they found useful, how they benefited from accessing the project and what they would like to see done differently.

14 CamdenAbility candidates completed questionnaires over the phone and via an email questionnaire. The candidates were chosen at random, from a cross sector of disabilities, some found employment from the project, the rest were unemployed.

Candidates who were able to communicate effectively in person were spoken to over the phone. Those with greater support needs, such as those with registered support workers and those unable to communicate verbally were given the opportunity to complete the questionnaire via email.

Evaluation group make up:

Candidate	Employment Status	Disability type
1	Employed	Long term health condition
2	Employed	Long term health condition
3	Employed	Autism
4	Employed	Learning Disability
5	Unemployed	Long term health condition
6	Employed	Learning Disability
7	Unemployed	Long term health condition
8	Employed	Autism
9	Unemployed	Learning Disability
10	Employed	Learning Disability
11	Employed	Autism
12	Unemployed	Long term health condition
13	Employed	Autism and Learning Disability
14	Employed	Long term health condition

Figure 23: Employment status and disability type of evaluation group

Question 1) Where did you hear about CamdenAbility?

Candidates were asked about where they first heard about the project.

Referral Source	Number of Candidates
Job Centre	7
Project Search	2
Self-Referral	3
Camden Society	2
Total	14

Figure 24: where candidates were referred from

Most candidates in the evaluation group were referred by the Job Centre. This was partly through referral pathways built with work coaches at Kentish Town Jobcentre during the project, and through monthly workshops held at the 'Stepping Stones' Programme – a disability employment course run by the Disability Employment Advisor at Kentish Town Jobcentre.

Question 2) What sort of activities and support did you receive from the project?

Candidates were asked about what activities and support they received from the project. The table below records their responses and the number of candidates mentioning each particular activity:

General advice	Job searching	Site tours	Emotional support
8	12	5	4
Work experience	Employment (job start)	Training workshops	Interview skills
7	10	4	7
Benefits advice	Job fairs	Events	Housing advice
6	5	4	3
Mentoring	Confidence	Motivation	Health Advice
8	7	7	6
Employers connections	CV help Yes	Training General	Access to support
6	10	2	5

Figure 25: types of support candidates received through the project

Candidates surveyed as part of the evaluation stated that they received support on Job Searching, CV help, work experience Interviews and Employment job starts. Much of this was done through one to one advice sessions.

Housing advice, general training and events were the least accessed support activities. This was possibly due to the evaluation group being mostly employed and therefore mostly closer to the job market and not needing this type of support.

Question 3) What did you find most useful about the support you received from the project?

Candidates were asked about what activities they found most useful from their time on the project. The table below records some of the typical responses:

"Project focussing on her abilities (rather than impediments), and broadened her horizons"
"The interview skills and additional support."
"Assistance with CV and work experience at Camden Contact Centre"
"Help filling job applications; work experience."
"I appreciated the one to one help from a person who understands my needs and wants to help."
"Getting her back into employment."

Figure 26: statements from candidates on what they found most useful in terms of support received through the project

Candidates generally felt the one to one support and advice given by the SWPC was the most useful activity from the project. Some also mentioned the work experience placements, which they felt was important in securing paid employment.

Question 4) Do you think the project has helped you move closer to employment?

Candidates were asked if they felt the project had helped them move closer to employment

"Yes, thanks to work experience with Camden Café and interview skills training."
"Yes".
"Yes. Parma obviously cared a lot about Dennis's success and provided support including introductions to others in his network who could help."
"Yes, it has, as I have not worked before. I have become more confident in myself as I've learnt that I have more skills than I thought I had and they are useful. I have been in situations that I did not know I could cope with."
"Yes, currently employed thanks to CamdenAbility."

Figure 27: responses to being asked if the project has helped them move closer to employment.

Candidates overwhelmingly felt the project helped them move closer to employment. Even candidates who were still out of work, felt activities such as work experience and the recruitment events helped them.

Question 5) What would you like to see the project do differently if we were to run it again?

Candidates were asked if they would like to see the project do anything different should be run again.

"I do not think the project needs to be run differently."
"More events and training workshops."
"More links to actual employment. Apprenticeships not useful for people like Thomas – too varied, when Thomas thrives in a stable environment with a fixed set of tasks. More suitable roles for people with special needs. Lead by example – too much talk (re wanting to hire people with special needs), little substance."
"More training in useful job skills. Particularly interested in IT training that accounts for people with physical disabilities."
"No."
"Nothing different, per se."

Figure 28: responses to being asked what the project could have done differently

Candidates were generally very satisfied with the support they received from the project and didn't feel there was anything different they would want to see done differently. Some candidates who weren't in employment stated that they would have liked to have more individual tailored support, access to more training and attend more employer led events.

Question 6) On a scale of 0 to 5 how do you feel the project has helped you in the following areas: Health, Confidence, Move closer to employment and being financially better off.

The table below details the average score given by evaluation group on how they felt the project has helped them.

On a scale of 0 to 5 how do you feel the project has helped you in the following areas: (0 – none, 5 – a lot)					
Health:	0	1	2	3	3.9
Confidence:	0	1	2	3	4.1
Closer to employment:	0	1	2	3	4.5
Financially better off:	0	1	2	2.8	

Figure 29: average responses to being asked how the project has helped in areas of health, confidence, move closer to employment and financially.

Candidates were asked how they felt the project helped them with different aspects of their wellbeing with regards to their health, confidence, employability and financially.

Candidates responded by stating the project had a very positive effect on their health, confidence and moving closer to employment. As 10 out of the 14 candidates questioned had moved into employment, we can conclude that working and moving into paid employment has a direct positive effect on disabled jobseekers.

Conversely, candidates didn't always feel financially better off. This is true with regards to candidates who were still unemployed as their financial situations didn't change, but also candidates who working part time hours. Part time work often led to some confusion when moving into paid employment with regards to in work benefits and often resulted in job seekers only being slightly better off in work. This would go some way to explain why on average the evaluation group scored only 2.8 out 5 when asked about how the project helped them financially.

Summary of Outcomes/ Proposals

CamdenAbility was tasked with building a local Employer Network to create a marketplace of opportunities of disabled Camden jobseekers. Over 3 years the project adapted and changed its delivery in recognition to type of candidates being referred to the project, and the type of work they aspired to achieve. CRP's involvement on the project can be broadly broken down into 3 sections; Working with the Employer Network, managing a caseload of disabled jobseekers and working in partnership with other services in the borough.

Employer Network

CamdenAbility became increasingly successful when working with an Employer Network over the 3 years of the project's life cycle culminating with 56% of the jobs brokered from employers on the network. An overview of the findings and recommendations are listed below:

- Encourage employers to engage with disabled job seekers. Feedback from events such as the projects 'meet the employer' sessions and reverse recruitment workshops were overwhelmingly positive. Many of the project's contacts from organisations on the Employer Network either worked in recruitment, HR or diversity teams but had very little day to day contact with disabled job seekers. By introducing both parties to each other, it helped overcome preconceptions and allowed both sides to discuss opportunities which previously would not be possible.
- Promoting reasonable adjustments. Not every successful disabled candidate moving into work required adjustments. Those that did, required soft adjustments around aspects of their work such as environment, work schedules, handling of information and on-boarding. One of the barriers employers have stated they anticipated when taking on disabled staff, was the cost of implementing adjustments. We found this not to be the case.
- Creating opportunities outside of paid work. Work experience placements, site tours and work shadowing opportunities were successful tools in not only introducing disabled job seekers to employers, but also for employers to examine their own disability readiness. Furthermore, these sort of activities with employers acted as springboards for the candidates to move into employment by improving their confidence and bridging skills, knowledge and experience gaps.
- Directly approaching employers created opportunities. Particular into the later stages of the project, we found that employers were more susceptible to a more direct approach in our efforts to broker opportunities.
- Bring others into the conversation. We found that we were able to create more opportunities by encouraging employers to promote the project to their supply chains, vendors and other departments. This was certainly true with the creation of an apprenticeship opportunity at Camden Council. The project failed to create any opportunities through the HR and recruitment teams at the Council but had much greater success when introduced to the contact centre for a work experience position which became a paid apprenticeship.
- Promoting recruitment of disabled staff as beneficial to business, and not a charitable act. Every candidate we placed in paid jobs were able to perform their roles as good as abled bodied staff once reasonable adjustments were implemented when necessary.

Managing a caseload of disabled jobseekers

The makeup of candidates registered onto the project changed over the 3 years. From predominantly mature candidates with long term health conditions at the beginning, to younger candidates with learning disabilities towards the end. Our findings and recommendations of working with this caseload of job seekers is summarised below:

- Candidates require holistic, regular and expert advice to overcome barriers to employment. Our candidates benefited immensely once the project established a regular local presence in the borough. Initially working from only the Jobcentre in Kentish Town, the project expanded to work from the Living Centre in Somerstown jobs hub and KX recruit. This continued presence in the

borough meant the SWPC had more access to candidates and was able to support them overcome what was often multiple barrier to employment.

- The SWPC working on the project is qualified in Advice and Guidance and has over 10 years of experience of supporting long term unemployed job seekers experiencing multiple barriers to employment into work. Candidates on the project have stated that one of the most useful aspects of the project was the general advice, mentoring and support they received from the SWPC. Candidates have stated that one of the most useful aspects of the projects was that they had regular access to expert advice on issues on housing, benefits, relationships, and financial worries on top of the advice and training they received in regard to employability and job-related activities.
- Candidates registering onto the project rarely expressed a desire to work in a particular field or industry. Many candidates registering onto the project had some experience, be it paid or unpaid in the hospitality industry gained through support services such as the Camden Society and Project Search and therefore leaned towards these types of jobs. Part of the advice given by the project helped these candidates identify transferable skills and introductions to different job types. Activities such as site tours and work shadowing arrangements were important tools to help candidates identify types of roles to apply for.

Working in partnership with other services in the borough

Much of CamdenAbility's success came from the way it worked in partnership with other employment support services in the borough. This was particularly true in the case of the initiatives created with Somerstown Jobs Hub at the Francis Crick Institute, joint working arrangements with the Camden Society where many employment workshops were delivered and establishing referrals through the stepping stones programme at Kentish Town Job Centre, Project Search at Great Ormond Street Hospital and the Adult Social Care Team at Camden Council. Some of our findings and recommendations are listed below

- With only one SWPC working on the project it was difficult to provide regular one to one support with every candidate registered onto project. It was therefore vital that working partnerships were established with other employment services and referral partners in the borough. The project often worked in tandem with services such as The Camden Society, Hillside Clubhouse and Project Search in order to ensure candidates received the level of support they required.
- One of the projects most successful partnerships was number of opportunities brokered from the Francis Crick Institute working closely with Somerstown Jobs Hub at the Living Centre in Kings Cross. Through this partnership four jobs were secured through the Institute, 8 site tours were facilitated and a number of work experience opportunities arranged. One of the reasons why this partnership was so successful was the ability to combine resources to generate initiatives for both CamdenAbility candidates, and the Job Hub's candidates. Although these were mixed groups, because of the joint working arrangement the Institute was prepared to exclusively work with the project on opportunities before recruiting through their mainstream portal.
- Although the project was promoted heavily with different Camden teams, it is believed the project would have benefited from a having a regular presence inside a Camden Council service. This would have allowed the project to share knowledge and work together to support candidates better and would have led to an increase of candidates being sourced via Camden Council's services.

For further information please contact Carol Quamina carolquamina@crossriverpartnership.org

Appendices

Appendix A: CamdenAbility Case Study 1

CamdenAbility

The Alan Turing Institute

CamdenAbility Case Study, January 2018

Jason, 36, recently started working at The Alan Turing Institute in Kings Cross

Meeting Jason

CamdenAbility recently supported Jason into work as a HR Administrator at The Alan Turing Institute in Kings Cross.

Jason registered with CamdenAbility in June 2017 to look for work, having found it difficult to find an employer who understood the flexibility he required around his health condition.

Jason obtained a BA hons in History with Archaeology and has worked only sporadically since graduating in 2013.

Parma Sira, CamdenAbility's Specialist Workplace Coordinator, supported Jason through a number of one to one sessions creating an action plan to plot his journey back to work. The first step was to arrange a work placement to bridge gaps in his CV, improve his skills and experiences and importantly, to give Jason the confidence and belief that he was able to work in a professional office environment.

Work placement at Camden Council

Camden Council fund the CamdenAbility project, and are also signed to the project as part of the Employer network of businesses in Camden committed to improving their disability confidence.

As part of their involvement with the project, the council opened up a work placement opportunity for a CamdenAbility candidate.



Working with Camden Council, CamdenAbility developed a week long placement with the HR department arranging an array of activities to improve Jason's IT skills, give him experience in researching projects and improve his communication skills. CamdenAbility also advised on the necessary adjustments required around Jason's health condition.

After successfully completing his work placement, Jason felt empowered and was eager to use his new experience to secure full time employment.

Working at The Alan Turing Institute

The Alan Turing Institute are a world renown data science institute. They joined CamdenAbility to improve their disability standards and explore ways to make their opportunities and workplace accessible to local people with disabilities.

The Institute were looking for a new HR administrator to join their team in Kings Cross and asked CamdenAbility to find suitable candidates.

Jason was a perfect match for the opportunity, and after a successful interview where he was able to refer back to his experience at Camden Council, he started working at the institute and is excelling in the position. Jason's health condition effects his coordination, and CamdenAbility worked with the institute to make the necessary adjustments, which required minor adaptations to this shift patterns.

CamdenAbility is funded by Camden Council and delivered in partnership with Business Disability

It is going very well and I feel like I am improving my skills. The whole place, people and situation are great to work with. Thank you!

Jason, CamdenAbility Candidate

Appendix B: CamdenAbility Case Study 2



The Francis Crick Institute

Lorraine's Story

Lorraine joined CamdenAbility having found it difficult to find and stay in work due to a progressive medical condition. She was initially looking for customer service positions and knew very little about the Francis Crick Institute.

CamdenAbility arranged for her to attend a site tour at the institute to find out more about the Glass wash technician role they were recruiting for.

During the tour Lorraine had the opportunity to find out more about the role, and speak to staff. She was excited by the role and as CamdenAbility candidate was guaranteed an interview. After a successful interview, Lorraine was offered the position and the project worked with the institute to make the necessary adjustments, for example:

- **Environmental considerations**
- **Factoring in medication breaks into her work schedule**
- **Adjusting duties to avoid heavy lifting**
- **And diarising upcoming medical appointments**

Lorraine has now been working successfully at the Crick for the past 4 months.

The institute were delighted with the success of the new recruitment model, and continue to work closely with CamdenAbility.

Get in touch

CamdenAbility is funded and supported by Camden Council and delivered in partnership with Business Disability Forum

For more information please contact Parma Sira at parmasira@crossriverpartnership.org

Working together for disabled jobseekers

The Francis Crick institute joined CamdenAbility to diversify their workforce and to improve access to their opportunities for local disabled job seekers.

Some of the issues the Crick faced on attracting local job seekers included:

- **A lack of knowledge of their opportunities**
- **Inaccessible & complicated recruitment process**
- **Confusing, unfamiliar job titles**
- **Inflexible entry requirements and rigid recruitment process**

Working in partnership with CamdenAbility's Parma Sira, the Crick agreed to trial a new strategy in an effort to remove barriers to recruitment for residents with disabilities. This involved:

- **'de-mystifying' confusing job descriptions**
- **Facilitating site tours in departments with suitable and current vacancies**
- **Guaranteed interviews for candidates interested in applying for roles after the tour**
- **By-passing the mainstream recruitment website**
- **Working with CamdenAbility to implement any necessary adjustments.**

Appendix C: Meet the employer event Case Study



Being innovative

CRP's CamdenAbility project recently held its first ever 'meet the employers' event at the Somerstown Jobs Hub in Kings Cross.

The event was run in the style of a reverse recruitment fair, empowering the project's disabled jobseekers to meet and discuss employment opportunities with a number local employers.

As a unique take on standard recruitment fair formats, the event instead put the spotlight on local jobseekers and encouraged employers to tour the room allowing every candidates the opportunity to discuss their work ambitions, skills and experience and employment prospects with every employer in attendance.

CamdenAbility holds its first 'Meet the Employers' event for disabled Jobseekers

Beneficial to candidates & employers

The event was also an great opportunity for employers to meet disabled candidates from the local area, promote their organisations and discuss the accessibility of their opportunities.

Our 'meet the employers' event was fantastically well received and featured a number of CamdenAbility network employers, including Camden Council and it's apprenticeships team, HS2, The Francis Crick institute, Apleona and Wellcome trust.

Get in touch

CamdenAbility is funded and supported by Camden Council and delivered in partnership with Business Disability Forum. The project works in collaboration with a network of employers in the borough, raising the profile of local disabled job seekers through the creation of a range of work related opportunities.

If you'd like to more information about CamdenAbility, please contact Parma Sira at parmasira@crossriverpartnership.org

Appendix D: Work Experience Case Study

Lisa, 32, completed a work placement at Mott Macdonald's Equality and Inclusion department

CamdenAbility: Improving disability confidence in Camden



"I had a full on experience in the equality, diversity and inclusion department and gained so many skills that will help me secure full time work. It was such a great experience! "

Lisa

CamdenAbility working with Mott Macdonald

Mott Macdonald are a worldwide engineering consultancy firm. They joined CamdenAbility to explore ways to make their opportunities and workplace accessible to local people with disabilities.

Lisa is a business management and marketing graduate with over 10 years of experience of working with internationally renown organisations such as Lehman Brothers and the John Lewis partnership.

Lisa left her role as a Systems Analyst at Scope in 2012 due to illness. She then worked as a self employed health consultant whilst raising her daughter as a single parent.

She registered with CamdenAbility in June 2017 to explore her employment options. Although she is highly qualified and experienced, Lisa found it difficult to find an employer who understood the flexibility she required in terms of her health condition.

Parma Sira, CamdenAbility's Specialist Workplace Coordinator, supported Lisa through a number of one to one sessions creating an action plan to plot her journey back to work. Lisa had a particular interest in developing a career in a role that promotes equality and diversity, an area she felt could utilise her professional and personal experience to help and support others in similar positions to herself, in a commercial environment.

Work Placement with EDI department

CamdenAbility worked closely with Richard Chapman, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager at Mott Macdonald to develop a work placement for Lisa to work alongside the department as a project assistant to help plan a number of disability awareness events ahead of 2018.

Richard understood the need for Lisa to work flexibility, and worked with CamdenAbility to ensure adjustments were made to accommodate Lisa's need for flexibility, allowing her to complete her assignments over the course of 2 weeks via flexible agile working arrangements.

During Lisa's work placement, she worked on organising Mott Macdonald's Stress Awareness Day, EDI initiatives and researched good practice examples on Dyslexia inclusion amongst other duties.

Parma is now working with Lisa to utilise the experience gained from her work placement and support her back into permanent employment.

CamdenAbility is funded by Camden Council and delivered in partnership with Business Disability

Appendix E - Case Study: Disability Standard Surgeries – University College London

In August 2016, University College London (UCL) became a member of the disability-smart project, CamdenAbility. CamdenAbility aims to increase access to employment to disabled Camden residents and those with long-term health conditions. BDF's role in the project is to work with local employers, including UCL, to create a disability smart environment for a group of selected job applicants.

UCL shared with Business Disability Forum (BDF) its ambition to have a whole organisation disability review to help measure and improve their progress towards becoming a disability-smart organisation. In order to do this UCL expressed an interest in completing BDF's Disability Standard.

The Disability Standard

The Disability Standard is the world's only management tool that enables organisations to accurately plan for and measure their progress towards becoming an increasingly disability-smart organisation.

First launched by Business Disability Forum (BDF) in 2004, the Disability Standard provides the framework for a 'whole organisation' approach to drive sustainable improvements in disability performance.

A whole organisation approach is necessary as adjustments to remove barriers that limit how organisations interact confidently with disabled customers, employees and candidates can involve all parts of the organisation: from senior leaders through to human resources and recruitment teams, information and communication technology departments, facilities managers, procurement professionals, marketing and communications teams, designers of products and services and so on.

UCL's Disability Standard surgeries

As a member of the CamdenAbility employers network UCL had access to the consultancy services provided by BDF. Mike Higgins, UCL's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager, asked BDF to provide a series of surgeries to members of UCL's Disability Standard Self-Assessment Team (SAT). The surgeries led by Adrian Ward, Senior Disability Consultant at BDF, delivered the surgeries which:

- reviewed the self-assessment evidence gathered by the UCL Disability Standard (SAT).
- looked in turn at each of the specific components of the Disability Standard:
 - Commitment
 - Know How
 - Adjustments
 - Recruitment
 - Retention
 - Products and Services
 - Partners and Suppliers
 - Communication
 - Premises and
 - Information and Communication Technology (ICT).
- identified areas where existing evidence could be strengthened by providing guidance and tangible examples to the key business area leads and Disabled 'Experts through Experience' on the UCL SAT.

The review of evidence gathered to date and the accompanying surgeries highlighted a wide range of existing good practice already embedded within UCL. In particular it was clear that there was a strong organisational commitment to attract, recruit and retain disabled people. This, coupled with an ambition to provide a learning environment that is fully inclusive, places UCL in a good position to realise its ambition of becoming a disability-smart organisation.

As a result of holding these surgeries, the SAT has developed a Disability Equality Strategic Action Plan which is being considered by the Strategic Management Team and will form a key part of UCL's submission when it is evaluated under the Standard by BDF in 2018. Besides its existing Disability Equality Champion Rex Knight, Vice Provost (Operations) UCL has now decided to appoint a further three Disability Equality Sponsors: the Director of Human Resources, who will lead on employment of Disabled People; the Director of Information Services, who will lead on ICT accessibility; and the Director of Estates, who will lead on embedding best practice into facilities management.

Commenting on the surgeries and review of the UCL's Disability Standard self-assessment evidence, Mike Higgins said:

"UCL is a world leading research and teaching institution which employs more than 12,000 people and has 40,000 students. This series of ten surgeries gave UCL an invaluable opportunity to gain expert advice. The surgeries provided a framework through which those leading in each area of the Standard could focus upon how UCL can best ensure the equal treatment of its Disabled staff, students, applicants and visitors. Central to our approach is ensuring that not just management leads take responsibility for driving forward change in this area. The active involvement of and engagement with Disabled staff and students through the SAT is pivotal to ensuring that UCL achieves lasting and sustainable cultural, organisational and environmental change."

Commenting on this work, Adrian Ward said:

"UCL's use of the consultancy available to them as part of the CamdenAbility project has enabled the organisation to assess their current position as they strive to become a disability-smart organisation. Holding surgeries with colleagues actively involved in compiling the Disability Standard, who work in key business areas such as recruitment, procurement, communications and facilities, ensured a rich, solution focused dialogue took place. The review of evidence and surgeries enabled us to make a series of recommendations aimed at developing and improving existing good practice and addressing any areas of weakness. UCL's Disability Standard working group is an excellent model for other organisation's to follow as it ensures that every area of the business is actively involved in completing the Standard. Our experience is that this is certainly best practice when taking a whole organisation approach to disability.

Further information

For more information regarding BDF's Disability Standard please follow this link

<http://www.businessdisabilityforum.org.uk/disability-standard/>

Details of UCL's equality, diversity and inclusion work can be found at <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/equalities/>

www.businessdisabilityforum.org.uk

Business Disability Forum is committed to ensuring that all its products and services are as accessible as possible to everyone, including disabled people. If you wish to discuss anything with regard to accessibility of this document please contact us.

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Appendix F – BDF/Costain Skanska published article on data monitoring



Changing perceptions one project at a time

Posted on [May 17, 2019](#)



[Ebunola Adenipekun, Business Disability Forum](#)

Costain-Skanska Joint Venture is working with CamdenAbility and Business Disability Forum to improve dialogue between employees with disabilities and managers

CamdenAbility is a collaborative project funded by Camden Council and co-delivered by Cross River Partnership and Business Disability Forum. The project works with businesses throughout the London borough of Camden with a view to improving how organisations attract, recruit and retain people with disabilities. The ultimate aim of the project is to identify employment opportunities for Camden residents with disabilities, impairments and long-term conditions.

Costain-Skanska Joint Venture (CSJV) has been working with CamdenAbility for 18 months. CSJV is delivering the High Speed 2 enabling works in and around Euston station through to West Ruislip. It has teamed up with CamdenAbility, jointly headed up by Adrian Ward, Senior Disability Consultant in the Specialist Solutions team at Business Disability Forum and Cross River Partnership's Specialist Workplace Coordinator Parma Sira, to help find ways to ensure employees were comfortable sharing personal information about their disabilities.

Alice Jennison, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager at CSJV shares how working with Business Disability Forum increased participants sharing their information:

"Using the consultancy support available via the project we approached Adrian at Business Disability Forum for some help to increase the number of staff who provide details of their protected characteristics. At the time, 52% of staff had not communicated whether they did or did not have a disability. This made it really difficult for us to understand the needs of our staff, and also know what positive interventions and support should be put in place.

"Adrian offered insight into why staff might not feel comfortable to share their personal information and produced a communications plan to relaunch our survey. He also provided advice on the best ways to discuss disability and rephrase the question to be more positive.

"We changed the wording of the questions in line with the Equality Act but also to broaden the scope of what we mean by the term 'disability'. The rate of preferring not to say went from 52% to 14% in less than a year. The result is that the information we hold about our staff is more accurate now – 9% have told us that they have a disability (it was 1% before the survey).

"Since being involved with the CamdenAbility project people's perception of being disabled in our organisation has changed. It might have been the visible disabilities people thought about, but at 9%, nearly 1 in 10 people have disabilities in our organisation – and line managers now realise there are people who would benefit from conversations about this.

"This means that we can have a pinpointed dialogue with managers now – to talk about what these disabilities are, how to lead conversations and how we can support our staff.

"The impact of working with Business Disability Forum has been organisation wide – we recently gained Disability Confident Employer status to enable us to tailor support to existing staff, and ensure our recruitment is open to all.



“We look forward to Adrian and Business Disability Forum hosting more events such as the Construction Roundtable hosted in February. It’s vital we work as an industry together to attract the best and brightest talent. Health and safety is obviously an essential element in this – we would love to work further to understand how disabled employees can contribute to our projects as employees.”

To find out more about how CamdenAbility could work for you, go to: <https://businessdisabilityforum.org.uk/our-services/consultancy-services/camdenability/>