



DCAG
Disability Confident Action Group



disability
confident

The Value of Disability Confident in Croydon

Emma Shepherd

1st October 2019

Disability Confident Scheme



disability confident
COMMITTED

This is to certify that [redacted] is [redacted]

Period of award: [redacted]

Issue date: [redacted]

As a Disability Confident Employer we:

- Ensure our employees are safe
- Communicate with our employees
- Offer an inclusive environment
- Anticipate and respond to our employees' needs
- Support our employees with long-term conditions
- At least one of the above

Find out more at www.gov.uk/dcs

disability confident
EMPLOYER

This is to certify that [redacted] is [redacted]

Period of award: [redacted]

Issue date: [redacted]

As a Disability Confident Employer we:

- have undertaken a self-assessment
- are taking an active leadership role in encouraging and helping other employers on their journey to becoming Disability Confident.

Period of award: August 2016 to August 2017

Issue date: 24 August 2016

As a Disability Confident Employer we:

- have subjected our Disability Confident self-assessment to an external challenge and validation
- are taking an active leadership role in encouraging and helping other employers on their journey to becoming Disability Confident.

Find out more about Disability Confident at: www.gov.uk/dwp/disabilityconfident #DisabilityConfident



What are your barriers?



What is the DCAG

Disability Confident Action Group

Board Constitutes of

Employers
Council
DWP
Councillors
Disabled People
Support Services
Training Providers

Presentations

Matthew Taylor - Taylor Review
Liz Sayce – Switching Focus
Hammersons
Books Beyond Words
Millwood

Action Plan

1. Awareness and events
2. Work with schools and Transitions
3. Work with employers & organisations
4. Intelligence of local demography
5. Implement solutions for employment opportunities

Events

Reverse Jobs Fairs
Training
Conferences
Supported Self Employment
Take Over the Council

Time Line

July 2017

Disability
Awareness Training
for employers

Nov 2016

1st Reverse
Jobs Fair

Feb 2016

Raising Aspiration
Event

Oct 2015

1st Event for
employers



Time Line

Feb 2018

Yes I Can
initiative with
DWP

Nov 2017

DWP Proof of
Concept

Oct 2017

2nd Reverse Jobs
Fair

Sep 2017

Supported Self
employment Academy



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for Croydon
www.croydon.gov.uk

Time Line

Jun 2019

Take Over the Council Day

Nov 2018

3rd Reverse Jobs Fair

August 2018

All About Me

July 2018

Disability Awareness for Employers



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Time Line

Dec 2019

Turn Town Hall
Purple

Nov 2019

4th Reverse Jobs
Fair

Oct 2019

Supported Self
Employment Academy

Sep 2019

All About Me



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So, what have we done?



SUPPORTED SELF-EMPLOYMENT ACADEMY
Croydon programme for people with disabilities who want to start their own enterprises

A ten-part enterprise training programme to support people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities into registered self-employment. The course is delivered by Sue Shephard in partnership with Status Employment and Croydon Council.

Dates: 10 days over 10 weeks starting Sat/Fri 2019 (dates TBC)

Venue: Croydon venue: TIC

Book: To register interest call Emma on 07500 118622 or Robert on 0208 655 3344

Contact: For eligibility, support & sign up: Robert 0208 655 3344
r.shephard@statusemployment.org.uk 0202 8655 3344

For training after place is granted: info@reeshephard.org.uk 0208 3948 3673

CROYDON Delivering
the future for Croydon

Tree Shepherd

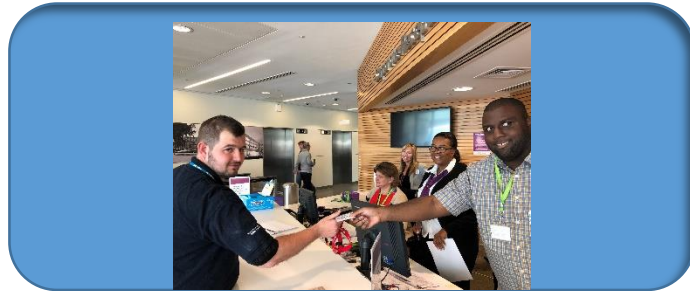


REVERSE disability
confident

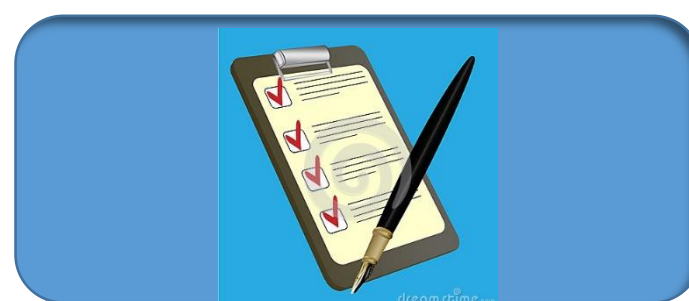
JOBS FAIR
EVENT



Apprenticeships



Disability Awareness Training for Employment



Supported
Internships

Case Study: Croydon

Disability Confident Action Group

Published: July 2018

Croydon Council signed up to the Disability Confident Scheme that supports employers to realise the benefits of a diverse workforce. They developed a Disability Confident Action Group made up of public, private and voluntary sector organisations, service providers and the DWP with the aim of increasing the number of disabled people in employment by providing a coherent offer to employers.

They ran a series of events for employers and disabled people, the most recent one being a 'reverse jobs fair' where employers approached potential candidates. Twenty employers attended the event and five job offers were made on the day, one of which was an apprenticeship as well as offers of interviews and work experience.

Values - why is this important?

Disability Confident is a scheme from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) which has replaced Two Ticks symbol. Disability Confident supports employers to make the most of the talents that disabled people can bring to the workplace. More and more businesses are signing up to Disability Confident every week, and there are now over 5,000 employers signed up. The scheme helps employers think differently about disability, and improve how they attract, recruit and retain disabled workers.

Disability Confident helps business to realise the benefits of a diverse workforce which includes disabled people. These include:

- Drawing from the widest pool of talent;
- Securing and retaining high quality staff who are skilled, loyal and hard-working;
- Saving time and money on the costs of recruitment by reducing staff turnover;
- Keeping valuable skills and experience;
- Reducing the levels and costs of sickness absences;
- Improving employee morale and commitment by demonstrating that they treat all employers fairly.

The scheme has 3 levels designed to support employers with employers progressing to become Disability Confident Leaders, acting as a champion with their local and business communities. Croydon Council became a Disability Confident employer in 2015 and is working towards becoming a Disability Confident Leader.

What are the challenges?

The employment rates for disabled people in the UK is very low (48%) despite the country experiencing the highest levels of employment since comparable records began. People with mental health conditions, learning disabilities and / or autism are even further disadvantaged as their employment rates are much lower, which is resulting in employers missing out on valuable talent (32%, 24% and 32% respectively). Croydon's current rates of employment for these individuals reflects the national picture

Solution

Croydon Council has a skills and employment plan which set out the agreed priorities for Croydon in terms of raising the skills levels within the borough's communities, creating sustainable employment opportunities and increasing the overall borough employment rate.

Their plan sets out how they aim to achieve this by working in partnership across the public, private and community and voluntary sector to ensure those most marginalised in employment are offered the best support, which includes disabled people.

They are also keen to ensure that they are offering Croydon employers a more coherent offer in providing a strategic framework for the key organisations involved in the delivery of skills and employment services in Croydon, reducing duplication and improving the customer journey of local jobseekers, and easing the burdens of local employers.

Croydon Council established a Disability Confident Action Group (DCAG) in 2015. It is made up of public and voluntary organisations with a stake in supporting disabled people in Croydon towards and into employment, chaired by the Council's Gateway Employment Support Service.

The group developed an action plan to ensure they are co-ordinating their activities, sharing information and working in partnership to provide a coherent offer to employers to support them to employ greater numbers of people living with a disability or long-term health condition in the borough. They ran a series of successful events resulting in an increase of employment rates of disabled people in the borough.

The DCAG organised their first Disability Confident event in May 2015, which was held at Fairfield Halls. It was attended by a number of employers as well as disabled employees to encourage employers to understand the

true benefits of being an inclusive employer, ensuring they were accessing the untapped talents and skills of Croydon residents with a disability.

Personal experiences were shared, and the DWP provided a presentation about Access to Work, highlighting the support that can be provided to employers as well as dispelling myths around to costs associated with recruiting and retaining disabled staff. Pledges were made by employers and these were followed up to ensure they were supported by the partnership to recruit more disabled talent.



Shaun Lochinger of Interserve along with Julie Brickley and David Aherne addressing delegates at the Disability Confident Event in February 2016

A second event took place in February 2016 addressing the need to raise the career aspirations of young disabled people. Further pledges were made by employers who attended regarding the changes they would make to their recruitment processes to ensure that they were not missing out on the valuable talent of disabled people.

The next event was an innovative approach to running a Jobs Fair for disabled people called a Reverse Jobs Fair. Instead of potential candidates approaching employers for possible jobs, the process was turned on its head with employers seeking to recruit, approaching potential disabled candidates. Twenty employers attended the event, and five job offers were made on the day, one of which was an apprenticeship, as well as offers of interviews and work experience.



Emma Shepherd, Mayor Wayne Lawler, Terry Smith, and Cllr Andrew Randle at the opening of the Reverse Jobs Fair.

The DCAG went on to host three half days of Disability Awareness Training for 250 Council staff and local businesses in July 2017.

They covered the Equality Act, reasonable adjustments, mental health, learning disabilities, autism, visual impairments and Access to Work. This in turn fed into the next Reverse Jobs Fair that they held in November 2017 which prepared employers to have a better understanding of employing disabled people.

A number of events have been planned for later this year including more disability awareness training, another reverse jobs fair and 'Yes we Can' events enabling local businesses to meet up with local job seekers to understand more about their barriers.

The Valuing People's Alliance



Case Study

What have Croydon done well?

- An 'Excellent' Supported Employment team that scored 95.8% at audit, which is quality driven
- The creation of Disability Strategy Lead for Employment role
- Referrals for the service from many sources
- The 'Network' held monthly
- Two awards in 2018
- Highest amount of disabled people into employment in 2018/19
- BASE Associate for supported Employment



British Association for
Supported Employment

- A strong sense of focus on having more structured and meaningful conversations with employers
- New signups from employers and contractors (due to procurement obligations).
- Employers feel more encouraged to have conversations around employing disabled people and less nervous about starting up an initial conversation.
- A real sense of inclusion for applicants during the recruitment process.
- Employers actively wanting to support disabled people into employment utilising the resources the DWP supply



What do we intend to do next?

Virtual Reality for
vocational profiling

Mental Health First
Aider training for
local employers

Disability
Leadership
Programme

Disability Proud

Learn from what
employers want
from the survey

Any Questions?





Emma Shepherd

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Chair of the DCAG
Vice Chair of Staff Disability Network
MHFA Instructor

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