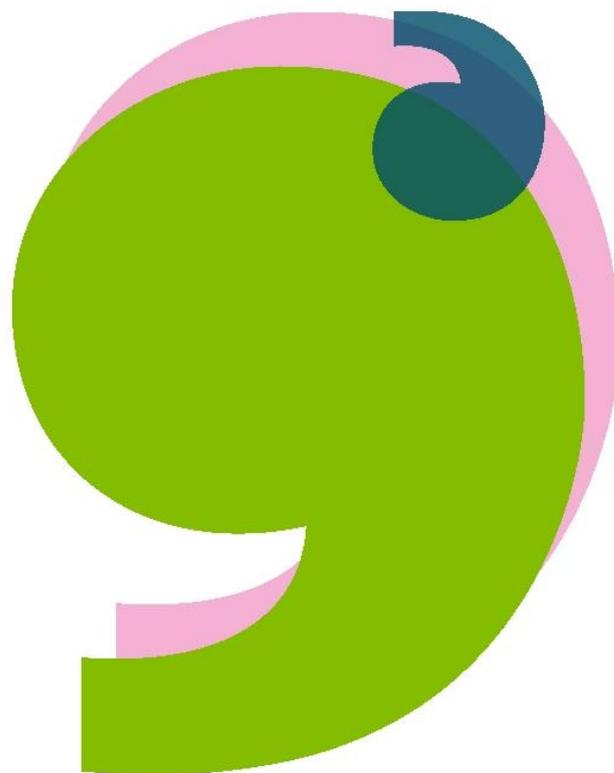




**Report: Reasonable Adjustments  
2019/2020.**



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# 1 Context

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## Context

In the UK, it's surprisingly ordinary to be disabled. There are 13.9 million disabled people who have some form of disability or are living with a long-term health condition and may need some additional support to carry out everyday activities.

**8%** of children are disabled.

**19%** of working age adults are disabled.

**45%** of pension age adults are disabled. (Family Resources Survey 2016/17).

Disabled people in the UK are estimated to have a combined spending power of £249 billion often referred to as "The purple Pound".

According to 'We are purple.org.uk':

*"Disabled people are fiercely loyal to disabled friendly organisations.*

*Talented employees with lived experience of disability offer fresh perspectives on the workplace and the consumer market that could help shape new and better products and services.*

*New technology is driving products and services that increase the choice, control and independence of disabled people".*

It is in the interest of services and employers to make reasonable adjustments to increase custom, talent, and income.



Under the Equality Act 2010, businesses and organisations have a legal duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' that will allow disabled people to access the same opportunities and services as non-disabled people.

Small adjustments such as turning down background music, can make a location or environment more inclusive for everybody, for example.

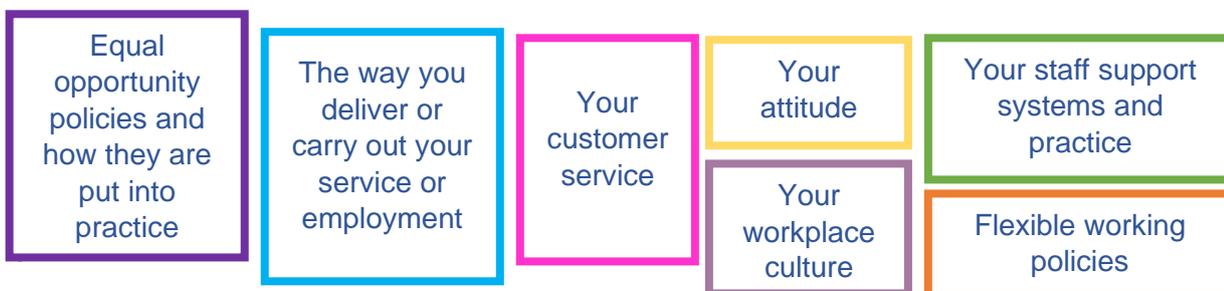
## So, what are Reasonable Adjustments and what does the law say?

The Act recognises that solutions may vary according to individual circumstances and offers simple criteria that any proposed adjustment must be:

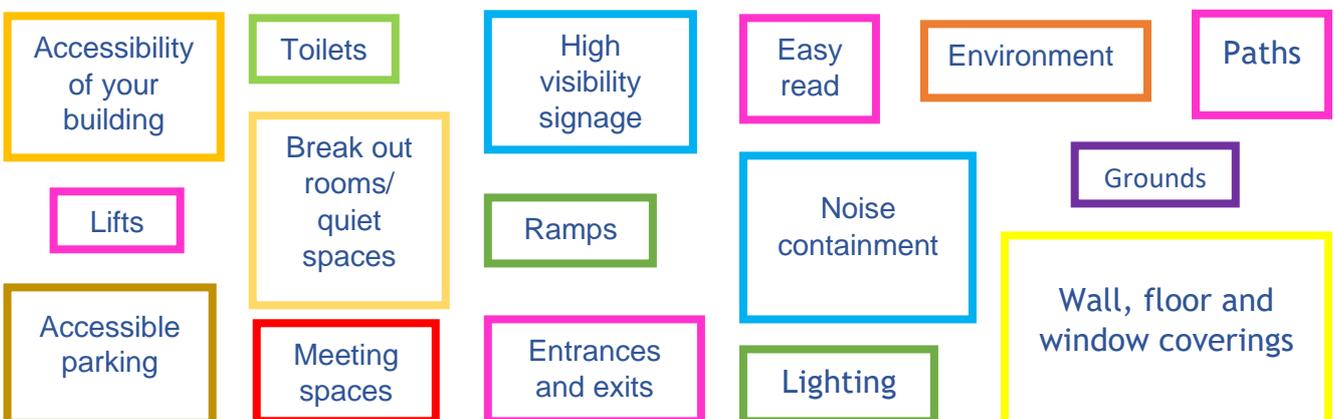
### Effective, Practical, and Significant.

The duty to make reasonable adjustments in goods and services is anticipatory. This means the trader, business or service provider must not wait for a disabled customer or employee to ask them to do something. Businesses and services need to consider, in advance what they need to do to make their services accessible to all their disabled customers and employees.

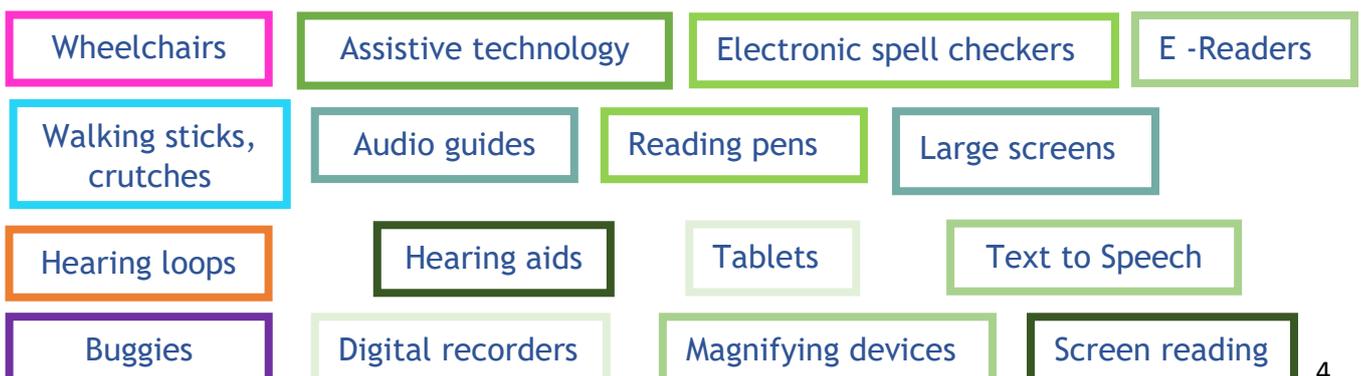
A Reasonable Adjustment for a disabled person may include: **'Provisions, criteria and practices'** for example:



**'Physical features'** for example:



**'Provision of auxiliary aids'** for example:



## The Social and Medical Models of Disability

The distinction between these models of disability is important. It is helpful to be aware of the difference.

The social model views the individual as “disabled by society”. Adults and children with ‘impairments’ are excluded from the mainstream of social activities because contemporary social organisation takes little or no account of them.

This approach looks at improving and adapting society and social and economic institutions so that disabled and non-disabled people can access services and employment on an equal footing.

The medical model focuses on the individual’s impairment or condition as being the primary interest. The individual does not meet the accepted social “norms”. This approach looks for medical ways to explain and cope with an individual’s disadvantage.

Examples:

*If a wheelchair using student is unable to get into a building because of some steps, the **medical model** would suggest that this is because of the wheelchair, rather than the steps.*

*Referring to the ‘Asperger’s man’ in accounts (**Medical model**) as opposed to the “man in accounts with the colourful jumpers, who likes listening to white noise, has a great aptitude with problem solving and has Asperger’s”.*

The central legal requirement on employers and services to make reasonable adjustments to remove barriers to a worker’s full participation, uses the social model and includes the medical model where relevant, given that people are far more than the sum of their disabilities.



## Our aims

We created an online survey that we publicised, and we visited groups of people with disabilities in Herefordshire.

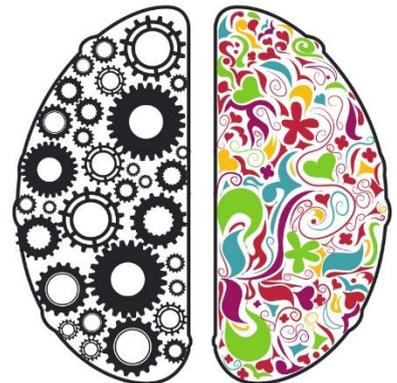
This was our intention:



**1.) COLLECT STORIES FROM SERVICE USERS WITH IMPAIRMENTS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS AND EMPLOYERS.**

## **2.) WRITE REPORT CREATIVELY**

Infographics, GIFS, Online clips anything to deliver messages received in stories



## **3.) COLLABORATE WITH HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS**

Contribute to MECC training, HC Charter, About Face artistic interpretation of stories., Services and employers mentioned in stories

## 4.) CREATE RESOURCES

Online, Training, Show, Presentations, Infographics of Outcomes.



## 5.) PROMOTE AND SHARE POSITIVE OUTCOMES/ TRAINING/ PRESENTATIONS/ SHOWS/ RESOURCES

Social media, networking, publicity, performance

Covid-19 interrupted engagements so we have adapted the project gaining some feedback for some disabilities from online sources for the training.

This report contains solely the experiences of Herefordshire people with disabilities.

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## 2 Recommendations

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1. Herefordshire Council to read the public advice, digest the training/ infographics and create a reasonable adjustment charter for Herefordshire Council in partnership with Learning Disability and Autism Partnership Boards, Healthwatch Herefordshire and others e.g. Making it Real members.
2. In partnership with the Public Health team Healthwatch Herefordshire to create training modules on WISH site as MECC+ modules (make every customer count).
3. Create a pack of infographics or similar that can be used as resources.
4. Approach the following services and businesses and ask them to consider the following issues cited by disabled Herefordshire people and make reasonable adjustment improvements to remove some of the barriers to services and increase their ability to access the purple pound:
  - a. Odeon cinema: Consider the trailers as well as the film when putting on a screening for autistic people. Consider wider seats for wheelchair users.
  - b. GP surgeries - St. Owen out of hours: Consider looking at access for wheelchair users. There is an awkward angle to turn to get into building and carers have to hold door open and push wheelchair.
  - c. GP Surgeries: Consider having quiet areas to wait for people that get anxious.
  - d. Santander Bank: Make wheelchair accessible counter available for use at all times and not just on request when it becomes an awkward process, or not possible and causes delays for the customer.
  - e. Lloyds bank Leominster: Consider creating wheelchair access.
  - f. The Courtyard theatre: Consider a review of the accessible facilities for height as the driers are too high to push. (Although you do have paper towels instead). Could the sink be automatic activation as in the main toilets instead of a need to turn (even though have long handles)? And consider ways to accommodate wheelchair users in the studio so that they can sit with their companions and are not too far forward.

- g. Herefordshire Council Blue Badge scheme: Consider issuing an additional small card or key fob that people can present at box offices and other venues to save travel to and from the car.
- h. Surgeries: Request that surgeries consider not requiring people to get a pass at reception to put in your car - blue badge should be enough.
- i. Buses: Please don't pull away before people have sat down.
- j. Council staff that deal with social care: Consider giving training in autism.
- k. Shops that have customer services at the back of the store or upstairs: Consider re-positioning them downstairs near the front of the store.
- l. Pool farm NHS dentist: Consider installing a lift?
- m. Barclays Bank Broad street: Consider alterations to lift "Installed lift has been badly measured and badly positioned almost impossible for lone wheelchair user to use".
- n. Katherine Harriet Ltd - care agency: Consider alterations to door. "Heavy door with no automatic door and dip in the floor just inside. Impossible for a lone wheelchair user to get in".
- o. Café at All Saints church: Consider installing an automatic front door mechanism. "Heavy glass front door but automatic door at little used back door".
- p. Job Centres: Consider developing a specialist quiet area for people with a brain injury or autism or other disability and staff disability awareness training for security guards.
- q. Supermarkets: Consider reducing noise and music volumes for more customers at different times.
- r. All services: Consider creating more adult quiet spaces and activities that welcome and serve people with disabilities that struggle with noisy busy venues. "peaceful adult sensory friendly spaces for adults". Fewer fluorescent lights. Natural light or well shaded lamps.

Healthwatch Herefordshire will write to the businesses and print any replies in the report.

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## 3 Service Provider Responses

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At the time of publishing this report we have contacted the businesses referred to in a,b,d,e,f,g,l,m,n,o and p above - these are the individual businesses rather than the generic ones. However, we also sent r to The Courtyard. At this time, we have received the replies that follow.

We think the examples below show, an awareness, and a desire to make changes to support people with disabilities and we welcome that. Thank you to all the businesses that have replied so positively.

**Lloyds bank Leominster:** Consider creating wheelchair access.  
A telephone call related the following:

*“We were closed February/March time so had a lift put in so people can actually get into the branch. So do now have access. Just wanted to let you know”.* Genna

**The Courtyard theatre:** Consider a review of the accessible facilities for height as the driers are too high to push. (Although you do have paper towels instead). Could the sink be automatic activation as in the main toilets instead of a need to turn (even though have long handles)? And consider ways to accommodate wheelchair users in the studio so that they can sit with their companions and are not too far forward.  
Consider creating more adult quiet spaces and activities that welcome and serve people with disabilities that struggle with noisy busy venues. “peaceful adult sensory friendly spaces for adults”. Fewer fluorescent lights. Natural light or well shaded lamps.

*Good afternoon Mary,  
Thank you for getting in touch.  
We have taken the time to look into the feedback. Please find our statement below.*

*Accessibility has always been important at The Courtyard. We recognise that this is an ever-evolving part of what we do and we welcome customer feedback. This project by Healthwatch Herefordshire is a great example of how we can improve.*

*There are some outdated features at The Courtyard, such as our accessible toilets. This is due to new technologies and information being available since their last capital development. Be assured, we plan to make updates to these areas at the next available opportunity.*

*We are really pleased that wheelchair users feel comfortable with our Main House set up. The frustrations with the Studio layout are understandable, particularly when used as a Cinema. That said, these difficulties are born from the need for a flexible seating rake which allows us to transform the space. This enables us to host a variety of events and productions designed for people with access needs such as our Relaxed Screenings. Over the years we have explored several alternatives, and this is currently the best available set up.*

*Finally, we want to acknowledge the family friendly nature of our venue. This is an aspect of The Courtyard that we are incredibly proud of and have worked on tirelessly over the years. That said, the layout of the building, before we closed earlier this year due to the pandemic, was open plan. While spaces could be divided, noise levels were difficult to control. This could make the space uncomfortable for those needing a quieter environment. During our closure we have been able to complete our/ Capital Expansion Project. We believe this will enable us to better cater for customers with these needs.*

*This year has been a challenge, but we are working hard to ensure that when we reopen The Courtyard will be even more accessible than you remember it.*

*If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to get in touch.*

*Best wishes,*

*Phil*

**Herefordshire Council Blue Badge scheme:** Consider issuing an additional small card or key fob that people can present at box offices and other venues to save travel to and from the car.

*Dear Mary,*

*Thank you for the email and the suggestion made by your service customers. I would need to investigate this further so would need a little time to do this but wanted to acknowledge your email and request.*

*My initial concern would be that there is already a huge amount of fraud surrounding the badges themselves so if there was also other identifying material out there, it could get into the wrong hands.*

*Please let you users know that I will consider/investigate and come back to you.*

*Kind Regards, Claire*

**Katherine Harriet Ltd - care agency:** Consider alterations to door. “Heavy door with no automatic door and dip in the floor just inside. Impossible for a lone wheelchair user to get in”.

*“Hi Mary*

*Many thanks for the email and making contact with us.*

*I note your comments and I would like to also offer some feedback on this.*

*Our offices based at 9 Broad Street, are the main hub for our offices. As we are a Domiciliary Care Company - 99% of our work and support is carried out in our Clients homes and also at Community Centres where possible.*

*We have a doorbell, and the Reception is manned at all times by our Receptionist. We do have wheelchair users enter our offices and the door width is widened to ensure they can access easily. There is also a slope (rather than a step) to ensure wheelchair access.*

*We have had no issues or difficulties with this over the last 18 months since moving to these offices and we are all on hand to ensure we help and support with any issues.*

*We have disabled toilets that are also available for visitors.*

*We offer a service where we will always come and visit our Clients in their own homes (particularly during COVID) to ensure they are safe and full PPE is always worn. This is sometimes preferable for our Clients or visitors.*

*I hope that helps to clarify and any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.*

*Best wishes, Hattie*

**Café at All Saints church:** Consider installing an automatic front door mechanism. “Heavy glass front door but automatic door at little used back door”.

*Hi Mary*

*Thanks for getting in touch. I can completely understand the points that the customer makes at the end of your email and it's an issue that the café and the church together have spent some time thinking about. As you can imagine it's not a straightforward building to make changes to!*

*However, since the structure of the building is out of our remit at the café I'd better leave the West Hereford Team to make a substantive reply.*

*Many thanks for the good work that you're doing,*

*Bill*

**Job Centres:** Consider developing a specialist quiet area for people with a brain injury or autism or other disability and staff disability awareness training for security guards.

*We received a telephone call from Mike customer service officer. Mike explained that customers do have the option of meeting in a quiet area in the foyer area. There are private interview rooms available 'on request'. This is noted on a board which has lots of information on.*

*The job centre is open to liaising and having sessions to help job coaches better help people with disabilities.*

*The job centre is on the Safe Places list.*

*We discussed Healthwatch meeting with Sarah Lewis to discuss the feedback further and how the job centre might take a look at its signage to make it more obvious to an anxious customer that they can request a private quiet space for their interview.*

*The job centre will consider further and make a formal reply.*

**We will add further replies when we receive them and replace the website copy.**

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## 4 Acknowledgements

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### 4.1 Acknowledgements

Thank you to all of the individual carers and people with disabilities and impairments for talking to us and filling our surveys.

Healthwatch Herefordshire would like to thank the venues and organisations that allowed us to engage with their service users and the organisations, services and employers who responded to our surveys.

### 4.2 Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to authentic experiences and observations on specific dates by service users. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

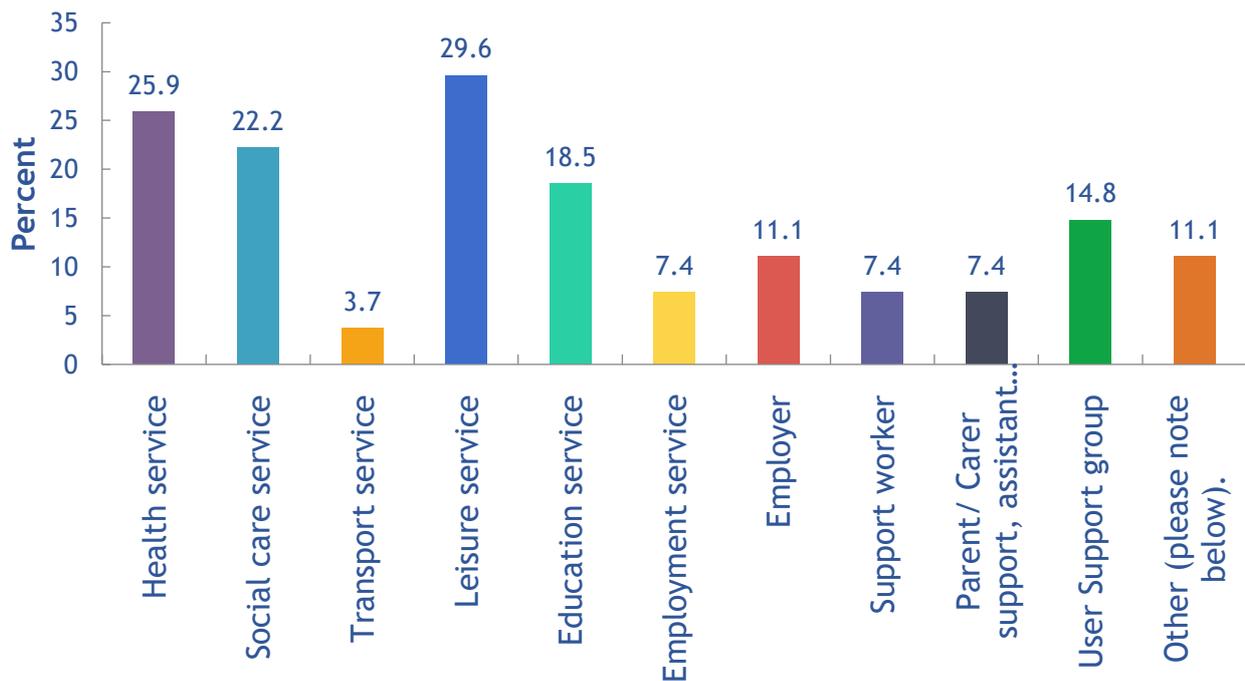
# 5 Results of survey

## What we asked and where we engaged

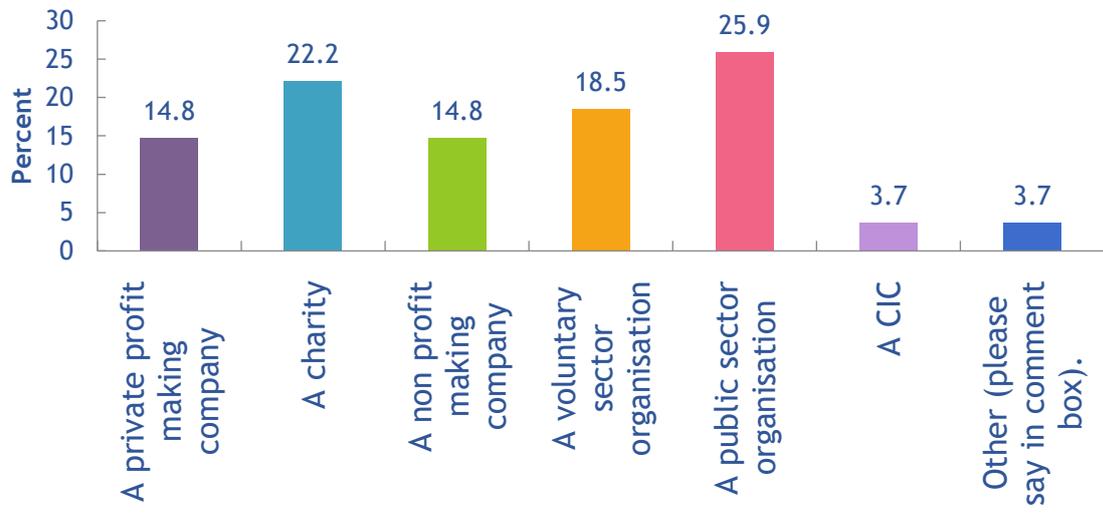
35 Service users and employees were engaged by an online survey facilitated by email discussions with/ or visits to, the following groups:

- National Autistic Society - Autism Ball, Lads and dads club.
- Deaf Direct + Action Deafness, Rose Garden residents.
- Headway Carers group
- Aspire Men’s Shed, Staff forum
- SIL - staff team
- BBO - staff team
- Addaction - staff
- About Face - staff
- Services attending the Herefordshire Council’s Young people’s showcase.
- Autism Partnership Board members and organisations
- Learning Disability Partnership Board members and organisations
- Vision Links
- Addaction
- Elgar House
- Mencap
- Job Centre
- Cartshed
- Spring Housing
- Walsingham Involvement Group
- 2G
- Dementia Meeting Centre
- Carers Trust for all

27 Services and employers were engaged by an online survey and sectors consisted:



### And sectors consisted:



## The service user /employee surveys asked:

1) Please tell us about an experience or experiences of reasonable adjustments. What adjustment or change was made?

Why did you need the change?

How did it help? What difference did it make for you?

2) Have you ever asked for a reasonable adjustment and not achieved it?

Please tell us what you asked for and why (what difference it would make for you).

What reason were you given for it being turned down?

## What we heard from service users/ employee survey:

Examples of the sorts of comments we collected e.g. people with a Learning Disability.

*A good social worker that helps a person with a learning disability to have a good assessment or review is somebody that:*

*Supports me; Understands me;*

*Is good at knowing my needs and asks how it is going;*

*Does not keep asking me about relationships when I don't have any.*

*I have a learning disability.*

*I need people to use shorter words.*

*Simpler words.*

*Take time to talk to me.*

*Explain things clearly.*

*I have a Learning Disability and a support worker is important.*

*A good support worker will: Listen to you; Help you; Understand you; Offer good friendship; Respect you as you respect them; Give advice;*

*For some people having a support worker that can sign is important too.*

## E.G. Autism

*I have three children with varying degrees of autism. The biggest adjustment for one I find is that you need to ask for one action at a time.*

*If there are a sequence of things that are needed. Break it down. For example, take your night clothes off.*

*Let them do that first.*

*Put on the clothes on that chair.*

*Then once they have done that come downstairs.*

*Then eat your breakfast.*

*It is too much to say take off your pyjamas, get dressed, have breakfast, and don't forget your school bag in your bedroom - you have to break it down.*

*For another of my children I have to be very organised.*

*Socks always go in one drawer, tops in another.*

*Everything has its place.*

## The Service or employer survey asked:

1) Please tell us about an experience or experiences of making or providing reasonable adjustments.

What adjustment or change was made?

Why did your service user or customer or employee need the change?

How did it help? What difference did it make for them and your service/ organisation?

2) Have you ever been asked for a reasonable adjustment and not felt it was reasonable or not been able to achieve it?

Please tell us what you were asked for and why (what difference it would make for your customer, service user or employee).

What reason did you give for it being turned down?

## Example of the sorts of comments we collected.

This example concerns employing somebody with a learning disability:

*Clear and precise instructions including boundaries and reminders.*

*This meant that they could complete work to a high standard were unlikely to do anything outside of their role and ask for help when needed. Reminders helped them to remember to keep going when their minds wandered or they felt like chatting to customers too much.*

An excellent example of an equal opportunity employer recognising the talents of people with disabilities and acting so that they can take advantage of their skills and abilities by removing barriers.

*We employed somebody that could not walk up the three flights in our building.*

*We actually moved buildings!*

*We reckoned that if we were to be an equal opportunity employer and some of our employees were disabled, we needed to be in an accessible building.*

*We didn't want to miss out on good employees.*

Here an employer shows good autism awareness.

*For people with autism it is important to be calm and keep noise levels down. To show respect and understand their point of view even if the group they are with do not.*

*Be aware of people's concentration spans and stamina levels and don't overwhelm people with information. Take breaks when needed.*

*Be aware of different ability levels and watch out for people nodding but not understanding.*

*Be prepared to repeat things and support people in the ways they need to achieve their aims without taking over or dis-empowering them.*

*Watch out for tasks that are causing anxiety and look for ways to make them less difficult or support more to practice them with lots of reassurance.*

**Please see Appendix 2 for all of the comments collected from Herefordshire.**

## Additional questions

There were some additional questions in the surveys that people could answer if they wished:

Herefordshire Council are going to create a reasonable adjustment charter this year.

Do you have any advice for them about what should be included?

The answers given were: (comments from service users and employees on the left, employers and services on the right).

*Discuss what might be helpful with the disabled person concerned. Have they had adjustments made for them anywhere else from which you could learn? See what you can come up with together.*

*Always ask parents and carers what will help.*

*There are lots of things you can't see when someone has autism. Parents/ carers can help advise.*

*Good friendly customer service.*

*Examples of what the adjustments could be and how.*

*Details of access to funding for employers to make the relevant adjustments.*

*Most jobs can be done effectively by very reasonable adjustments by being flexible, conference calls, preventing unnecessary travel making it easy for mothers to return to work.*

*I think that blue badge holders sometimes need to show proof in places, but card is in the car for parking. A pocket ID or proof would be great to avoid walking back and forth.*

*Options to contact - post/online instead of phone calls or having to go in. First time I claimed my bus pass I had to go in which is difficult for me. 2nd time I could do it online - was fab!*

*It would be really nice if all supermarkets all of the time didn't have music playing in them.*



*That it doesn't matter if a manager doesn't understand or agree with the reasonable adjustments - they still need to be provided.*

*Be careful - R.A. confuses and puts off many employers - emphasise REASONABLE.*

*The involvement of people likely to be disabled by the environment in the approvals stage for new build.*

*Something that is practical - not just lip service.*

*Access to funding to make adjustments.\**

*\* See Appendix 1 Access to work funding.*

*People who do not use computers - for whatever reason - should not be disadvantaged.*



Is there anything else you would like Healthwatch Herefordshire to note about Health and Social care services in Herefordshire and how they serve you?

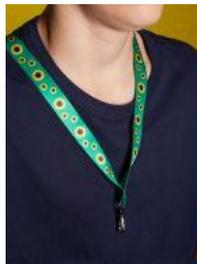
Examples of answers:

*Being able to see the same Midwife. My daughter has a brain injury and gets very anxious.*

*Continuity is important. They need to feel safe. Fatigue will be an issue.*

*Doctor visits to your home would be good when very anxious.*

*Focus on "hidden" issues such as mental health and HSE requirements - link to employer training to ensure mentally healthy workplace.*



*Receptionists should check access or mobility needs (pushchair/ difficulty walking/ breathing difficulties), before they book appointments up flights of stairs.*

*Hospital parking is all day parking, but it is just 2 hours.*

*GP appointments - we have to book online because telephone is difficult.*

*But this is not good and have to wait 4 weeks to get an appointment. I end up calling in if the need is urgent.*

*St Owens street route through garden difficult.*

*Greyfriars I can't go up steps from car park so approach differently.*

*I was offered an appointment at Credenhill but could not go because there was no transport.*

*I can't fault the audiology department in the hospital. The drop in is excellent.*

*There are six places you can go to re getting hearing aids fixed. Better than Worcestershire.*

*We can go to Leominster, Kington, Bromyard, Ledbury, Ross-on- Wye (very busy) Hereford.*

*Ross was monthly but too many people went so it is weekly now.*

*The audiologists travel there and Deaf Direct too. They give great help re: equipment and with your TV etc.*

*The You At Home service has been positive for me. Their staff and services have been extremely helpful in keeping me safe and preventing falls around my home. The equipment provided and fitted increased my mobility around the house.*



*People getting increasingly disillusioned and expectation low - question priorities and how arrived at.*

*Difficult to get appointments.*

Is there anything you would like to say about other services, shops, leisure facilities in Herefordshire and how they serve you?

Examples of answers:

*Cinema - Odeon Went to an autism friendly screening.*

*It wasn't the main feature that was the problem the trailers had a huge explosion and way too much noise and colours and so on.*

*My child just got up and fled. I can't persuade them to try again.*

*It is sad because they will miss out on the experience of going to the cinema now.*

*If you carefully pick the feature that will suit - perhaps there could be ways to avoid the trailers or turn them down or features to match tone of feature?*

*That if they are aware of conditions people may need help with, they should also know who they could call for extra help.*



*Cinema is too loud! Louder than a portable loop!*



*I would like to see more quiet spaces and activities.*

*Everything and everywhere seems to be 'family friendly' and FF activities are often free of charge at that.*

*There are an awful lot of us, who are child free with money to spend on going to chilled out and peaceful adult and sensory friendly spaces and events, but they don't exist.*

*It would be really nice to have a relaxing haven for adults who'd like to get out of the house too.*

*(I mean this from a sensory processing difficulty perspective, but I know a lot of people without those difficulties who would enjoy something like that too).*



*Pool farm NHS dentist is in a listed building so no lift.*

*Surely that is not an excuse as The Grange is listed but they have a lift.*

*Once they forgot and gave the person, I assisted an upstairs appointment.*

*Kingstone tend to see same one or two doctors which is good.*

*The Courtyard has a great level area. In the main house they block off 2 levels and there is enough room for wheelchairs.*

*It can be difficult to sit next to the person I am with and caring for in a wheelchair.*

*In the Studio you are too near the front. It would be good to have a way of going further back.*

*It feels better in the main theatre for a live performance.*

*I wonder what they have at the blind college?*

*The toilet facilities at the Courtyard are interesting as the taps in the accessible toilet require turning albeit with a lever handle tap whereas in the ordinary toilets the taps are automated. Not sure why?*

*Also, you have a paper towel and automatic hand dryer that is too high up to push button.*

*Some things that are for people with prams or mobility issues are upstairs!*

*Floor planning questionable and customer services being at the back...*



*Wheelchair user: Barclays Bank in Broad Street have installed a lift, but it was badly measured and badly positioned and is almost impossible for a lone wheelchair user to use.*

*Katherine Harriet Ltd - a care agency - has a heavy door, no automatic door, and a dip in the floor just inside. It would be impossible for a lone wheelchair user to get in.*

*At the café at All saint's church they have put the automatic door at the little used back door, but the main door has a very heavy glass door, no automatic door. Even able-bodied people struggle with it. This seems crazy. Why don't they put the automatic door at the main entrance?*



*Background noise in supermarkets is difficult you can't hear each other talk.*

*I can use my own loop to block out others so that is useful.*

*Lloyds bank Leominster -  
can't get up steps.*



*At Rose Gardens we have lots of good things:*

- *Alexa is good you can have a conversation.*
- *An in-house line ex-directory.*
- *Wi-Fi calling with your phone.*
- *Intuitive IT.*
- *The cost of contracts is going up after a short time.*
- *Small print is not that obvious. Switching is not that simple in rural areas.*
- *Ability net.*
- *IT support at home - a charity.*
- *Talk Talk foreign accent is difficult with hearing difficulties. Very difficult to hear. But so is a strong Liverpool, Newcastle one! I can't always understand them on the phone.*
- *Type talk can help - a third party types to mum.*
- *Repeat text can't understand a Liverpool accent.*
- *Now NGT next generation is improved.*
- *Facetime helps as can lip read or sign.*
- *What's ap video can lip read and hear.*
- *Can do this by mobile.*
- *Embroidery for people that can sign.*

*Chandas and Chave Jackson do 1:1*

*St. Owens Street surgery take you to a quiet corner so you can sort it out. A little place to talk.*



I do appreciate the ability to park close to shops in Hereford, and often with no cost to blue badge holders. Helps tremendously.



Is there anything you would like to add about employers in Herefordshire and how they support you?

Examples of answers:

*Mental health of employees: Provision for employees to seek help; Reducing Stigma of being off work due to mental health; Reassurance that it won't affect their employability or progression opportunities.*



*Some very good in supporting staff - but generally the smaller family firms who will find them therapy.*

*Council would do so if work related and brief in circumstances.*

*Job Centre: I Daniel Blake is sooo true. They all have computers now.*

*It helps if someone talks to you.*

*Security guards eyeball you.*

*Mentality is that everybody cheats.*

*You have to sit and look up on computer.*

*It would be good to have a specialist area for people with a brain injury or disabled in another way.*

*Often people have lots of ability, but they don't see it.*

*People could have a hidden disability card. Often for a person disabled by a brain injury anxiety levels are high.*

*They will have lost some confidence. This needs to be recognised to help them to seek employment.*



*Most employers I work with, when placing adults with a learning disability into placements, are very reasonable.*

*My job is to make the process simple, without hassle.*

*Otherwise it can take up too much of their time and resources. It has to be a partnership with employers! Not us and them!*

*People with a learning disability can make very good employees.*

*Our employee was particularly good at remembering everyone's names including a lot of customers.*



*Offered me a saddle stool to work at children's level which has wheels and is a great help.*



*I think that there should be a zero-tolerance approach to managers who bully and harass those who need reasonable adjustments.*

*I raised a formal grievance that went nowhere because upper management had also made mistakes that they wanted to cover up.*

*It would have helped me at the time to have someone to have escalated this to, some sort of monitoring board or agency. Like the environmental health dept.*

*Employers are getting away with far too much the bullying I've seen in the last couple of years through various organisations has been disgusting, but the reality is, people just have to put up with it because they can't afford to do anything about it.*

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## 6 Awareness raising, training resources and next steps.

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### Awareness raising and training resources.

Through discussion with the Learning Disability Partnership Board, Autism Partnership Board and Public Health we looked at how we could use the information and where it could be most effective as a resource. Public Health suggested we develop units to put on WISH as MECC+ (Make every Customer count+) training modules.

We worked through the lockdown period to gather and research information from speciality websites about different disabilities and impairments. For each disability we recorded:

**Introduction / local statistics:** This is a basic introduction to barriers and impairments, what this could mean for people (such as not liking loud background music), local or national statistics / context if possible, such as how many people in Herefordshire have dementia or autism.

**Suggested adjustments:** This is a list of suggested adjustments that could be made such as turning the music down, adding a ramp etc.

**Local case study / infographic / film:** local case studies/ public quotes, infographics or films, which demonstrate how reasonable adjustments can help or what they mean to people in Herefordshire.

**Additional information:** This is signposting to other organisations or charities for more information, advice or guidance, such as the government, NHS, Mencap, Headway, National Autistic Society, Mental health.org.uk and local support like Vision Links.

These have been completed and we are collaborating with disability groups in Herefordshire to read and comment on the content prior to putting them on the WISH website as training units that are free to services and employers and the public to access.

This will allow services and employers to access information and skills raising advice about how to offer reasonable adjustments for many impairments.

Once it has been edited and commented upon by 15 disability organisation representatives, we hope to begin to get it online in the autumn after the new WISH website is launched and when the Public Health team is able to find the time.

We will also be creating some more accessible infographic resources and videos with the help of partners over time. If you would like to get involved, please contact us.

## Next Steps

1. Once training is complete and infographics we will publicise and share widely.
2. We will present the completed work to disability groups to encourage individuals to signpost services and employers to it to help them to achieve the reasonable adjustments they need and services and businesses to gain from the talents and purple pound of people with impairments.
3. We will create a downloadable pack for wider internet access for a small charge for employers and services.
4. We will approach services that people mentioned as needing to improve their practice and aim to gain some positive responses, actions and improvements.
5. We will support Herefordshire Council to complete its reasonable adjustments charter and encourage other organisations to follow suit.

### And finally, 'The ask':

- Please signpost people to the training once it is in place.
- Let me know if your group would like to produce some easy to use resources and/or be in charge of reading through a unit each year to check it is current.
- Let us know if our report or training helped you to make or ask for reasonable adjustments. Please let us know if you use our tips/resources as this helps us to assess and record impact. Thank you.

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**For greater detail, people's comments and suggestions please see Appendices and training on WISH once it is in place.**

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## 8 Appendices

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### 8.1 Access to Work Funding

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#### Get help and advice

##### Employer

You can get advice on reasonable adjustments from the Disability Employment Adviser (DEA) at your local Jobcentre Plus office, or the Disability Employment Service if you're in Northern Ireland.

You can apply for Access to Work if you need extra help.

There's more detail about employers' obligations and how to meet them on the Equality and Human Rights Commission website.

<https://www.gov.uk/reasonable-adjustments-for-disabled-workers>

##### Employee

If the help you need at work is not covered by your employer making reasonable adjustments, you may be able to get help from Access to Work.

You need to have a paid job or be about to start or return to one.

You should talk to your employer about reasonable adjustments before you apply for Access to Work.

You'll be offered support based on your needs, which may include a grant to help cover the costs of practical support in the workplace.

An Access to Work grant can pay for:

- special equipment, adaptations, or support worker services to help you do things like answer the phone or go to meetings
- help getting to and from work

You might not get a grant if you already get certain benefits.

The money does not have to be paid back and will not affect your other benefits.

#### Equality and Human Rights Commission information

If something is a reasonable adjustment, your employer must pay for it. The cost of an adjustment can be taken into account in deciding if it is reasonable or not.

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/multipage-guide/who-pays-reasonable-adjustments#:~:text=If%20something%20is%20a%20reasonable,or%20disability%20affect%20your%20work.>

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### **Further information**

If you think you might have been treated unfairly and want further advice, you can contact the [Equality Advisory and Support Service](#).

Phone: 0808 800 0082

Textphone: 0808 800 0084

You can email using the contact form on the EASS website.

Also available through the website are BSL interpretation, web chat services and a contact us form.

Post: FREEPOST, EASS HELPLINE, FPN6521

**Opening hours:** 9am to 7pm Monday to Friday, 10am to 2pm Saturday, closed on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

More information here: <https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/access-work>

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## Appendix 8.2 Individual comments

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### Reasonable Adjustments - Responses 1-27 Individuals

Please tell us about an experience or experiences of Reasonable Adjustments. Actions that have changed the environment/ space/ attitude/ support/ language/ method or mode of giving a service or enabling you to work. What adjustment or change was made? Why did you need the change? How did it help? What difference did it make for you?

#### Learning Disability

- Walsingham Support have helped the involvement group by making the paperwork easier. They have changed it to Easy Read and colour codes so that agendas have a yellow band, Information is blue, and Notes are Purple. This makes it much easier when you have a lot of paper. There are also cards we can hold up that say, "Slow down" or "Shorter Words". This helps speakers to know what we need. They give clear invoices. Support workers and keyworkers help us wherever we go.
- A support worker is important. A good support worker will: Listen to you; Help you; Understand you; Offer good friendship; Respect you as you respect them; Give advice; For some people having a support worker that can sign is important too.
- A good social worker that helps a person with a learning disability to have a good assessment or review is somebody that: Supports me; Understands me; Is good at knowing my needs and asks how it is going; Does not keep asking me about relationships when I don't have any.
- At airports it can be confusing if you have a learning disability. It is important to have good support and I found airport staff are friendly and helpful.
- I need people to use shorter words. Simpler words. Take time to talk to me. Explain things clearly.
- Banks can be complicated if you have a learning disability. Mine is good - they talk to you and not just your carer. I sign my own forms. They give me time to do that.
- People need to explain important things to me. They need to listen to you. When you tell them something, they need to listen to you.
- When I use the cash point my support worker stands so nobody can see my number and steal it.

- Cinemas need to make seats wider for wheelchair users to transfer.
- I find it helps in shops if the shop assistant double checks your money for you when you pay. I think dentists do excellent work, they support me well and check my files. When you go to the doctor it is important that they check my files too. There is a lift at the cinema for wheelchair users. I sometimes get anxious in waiting rooms. It would help if I could sit somewhere quiet and not have to wait too long.
- A change in lighting, from horrible, glaring, buzzing, retina frying, migraine inducing fluorescent strip lights to natural light only or well shaded lamps. This stopped me from getting a migraine and reduced my anxiety-sensitivity to light and sound can be very distressing, more so alongside other factors-for example, having to sit in a packed GP waiting room with crying children. Making the room look and feel less stark and clinical and reducing the assault on the senses from fluorescent lighting is incredibly helpful.
- I think giving time, space and considering noise levels. In the doctor's surgery my child is really too old for the children's play area, but they go there and quietly play. It is an area that generally is free of other people and they can feel free to move about and be alone and quiet.

### **Physical impairments**

- When I broke my leg, my employer allowed me to work from home and be flexible as I recovered. My employer is good at discussing and supporting me with issues that can affect my mental health.
- Accessible parking as I can't walk far.
- For me it is important to have level areas that are accessible for wheelchairs.

### **Brain injury impairment**

- I find ready meal deliveries are a good thing. Being clear about where to go. I found I was being called at the surgery, but they were calling for me at the waiting room upstairs not the one I was in! Clear instructions is important.
- Being able to see the same Midwife. My daughter has a brain injury and gets very anxious. Continuity is important. They need to feel safe. Fatigue will be an issue. Doctor visits to your home would be good when very anxious.
- Being sent to familiar accessible surgery and consideration of accessibility for out of hours too.
- Having a set appointment time for you not 20 people with the same time. It is confusing and frustrating. It is really helpful to have timed appointments so that you can plan properly with carers/personal assistants with parking with transport, with being mentally prepared about what to expect.

- Having the same GP makes such a difference. I know they have computer records, but you still have to repeat yourself.
- It makes it hard to trust them knowing all about you. Mind you I saw the same one last time and they said Have I met you before? I said yes, you told me to come back to see you! So, it's not all good... For non-verbal people some easy to point to or indicate signs. E.G. At the Chequers pub Etnam Street the beer pumps are labelled with numbers so you can gesture if you wish.

### **Deaf and Hearing Impaired**

- Signs with large letters. Time of day for visits not too early/ not too late! I find I have to rest/ sleep a lot.
- Often just listening to you properly when altering equipment. Sometimes people can help too much and alter it too much. Don't push probe down in ear too much it is painful. Can leave your ear very sore. Keep it short. People need to talk directly at you even if you can't lip read it is helpful. The Dr. is often sideways on typing. I have to tell them to look at you!
- Speak more slowly. More options than telephone because hearing impaired can find it difficult.

*Have you ever asked for a reasonable adjustment and not achieved it? Please tell us what you asked for and why (what difference it would make for you). What reason were you given for it being turned down?*

### **Learning Disability**

- I'd like to know how to make my bed. This is hard for me because I get bad backs.
- The bank sometimes don't say how much money do you want but wait for me to speak.

### **Autism**

- I asked to be able to listen to white noise on my headphones whenever it got too loud/busy in the office for me to concentrate on my work. I also asked to manage my own diary so that I could balance out my schedule and factor in rest breaks or more straightforward tasks after more challenging ones. My line manager went out of their way to make this difficult (continuing to talk to me by shouting over when I had headphones in. For stupid reasons, like asking what I was listening to, even though they already knew, and it was already agreed that putting my headphones in was a way for me to signal that I was struggling and needed a time out). They refused to let me manage my diary and continued to put things in anyway, without telling me either. This caused no end of problems. They went out of their way to prevent me having reasonable adjustments which impacted on me being able to do my job. They then punished me for this. It was a wonderful experience (!)

- I have three children with varying degrees of autism. The biggest adjustment for one I find is that you need to ask for one action at a time. If there are a sequence of things that are needed. Break it down. For example, take your night clothes off. Let them do that first. Put on the clothes on that chair. Then once they have done that come downstairs. Then eat your breakfast. It is too much to say take off your pyjamas, get dressed, have breakfast, and don't forget your school bag in your bedroom - you have to break it down. For another of my children I have to be very organised. Socks always go in one drawer, tops in another. Everything has its place. If not, it is difficult and frustrating for my child. I just do it naturally now. It is not hard.

### **Physical impairment/ Wheelchair users**

- Good transport links to GP's. I'm lucky for me it is not too bad because my wife drives. Home call by GP's is rare now.
- I have asked for the low-level counter at SANTANDER to be staffed. The low-level counter being staffed would allow me to sign the machine and keep my signature secure. Santander bank, High town, Hereford, have 1 low level counter where a wheelchair user could reach the machine to insert card, pin number, sign etc. I have to sign but cannot reach the other machines from my wheelchair so cannot sign them legibly. However, the low-level counter - signed with wheelchair symbol - is often not staffed. The other staff refuse to move across and staff it and instead make me sign a piece of paper, which is then hanging around I don't know where. I have said that is bad security. Reason for being turned down: They would have to "log on" to the till at the disabled person's counter and it is too much trouble, it would take too long!
- Physiotherapists appointment changed to internet zoom style contact. Covid virus management because I'm high risk. Helped by allowing me to stay home, no social contact, no travelling, no parking, no cost, no stress, all positive. More time with the therapist, felt more personal, visual is even better than a phone call, good for the staff too. I appreciate some people do not have access to a computer, however more and more do, maybe its a tablet, mobile phone or laptop, all do the job. Alleviates parking issues, reduces traffic at hospital car parks. In my opinion, It's a win, win.

### **Brain injury and Wheelchair users**

- I think surgeries that require you to go in and get a pass to take out to your car. This should not be required if you are displaying a blue badge as its extra walking.
- I think professionals and receptionists should listen to carers and respect their views more. Westfield Walk is very bad - stropky receptionist told me the nurse practitioner was just as good as a doctor. I begged to differ as I was a nurse practitioner. I knew the person I assist needed to see the doctor.
- They have seen a different midwife every time in spite of saying how important continuity is for her being disabled by a brain injury and anxiety. The senior

registrar was not happy especially because they have twins. Was put under care of a locum on one occasion. They commented to their carer "I feel like a cow".

- Was sent to St. Owen's Street surgery Out of hours in spite of accessibility issues. There is a back entrance under archway through garden. Not good especially at dusk. A narrow path (width of wheelchair) and awkward angles to turn to get into building. Have to hold door open as push to get in.
- Having continuity especially when getting medical support with multitude of medications. You need to know they are fully briefed about adding medication. Also, with a brain injury so important for them to note progression. Soul destroying going to doctor - a different one and explaining from scratch and not encouraging because don't see the progress achieved. Bus drivers pull off before people sat down, they jerk a lot which can be difficult when you are in pain and speed bumps are particularly uncomfortable.

### **Physical impairment**

- I have bought myself a standing desk because it is helpful to my health and wellbeing. In a small company they could not afford it but have been happy to allow me space to use it.

***Herefordshire Council is going to create a Reasonable Adjustments Charter this year. Do you have any advice for them about what should be included?***

- That it does not matter if a manager doesn't understand or agree with the reasonable adjustments - they still need to be provided.
- I think that blue badge holders sometimes need to show proof in places, but card is in the car for parking. A pocket ID or proof would be great to avoid walking back and forth. Options to contact - post/online instead of phone calls or having to go in. First time I claimed my bus pass I had to go in which is difficult for me. 2nd time I could do it online - was fab!
- It would be really nice if all supermarkets all of the time didn't have music playing in them.
- People who do not use computers - for whatever reason - should not be disadvantaged.

***Is there anything else you would like Healthwatch Herefordshire to note about Health and Social care services in Herefordshire and how they serve you with your disability or particular difficulties or needs?***

- They don't. I had an assessment and they had nothing that they could offer me or signpost me to. The only signposting, they could give was to services that hadn't existed for two years and ten years respectively. It's very sad that when someone fights SO hard for independence, their experience and disability is minimised. 'They can't be that bad if they can work'. My career was my life. Ill health forced me to work part time and the lack of any kind of support suggests I'll eventually be unable to work at all, so I may as well be brain dead at that point. Except, of

course, I'll be forced onto various schemes to 'help me back to work' when I could have just stayed in my proper job with the right support, at far less cost.

- Receptionists should check access or mobility needs (pushchair/ difficulty walking/ breathing difficulties) before they book appointments up flights of stairs.
- A&E waited 9 hours 35 minutes! There was a shift change and they forgot us... I know an 89-year-old that is caring for a partner with dementia. They were given a cataract operation at 8 a.m. They live in a market town and had to catch a 6.45 bus as could not drive with nature of operation. They left a bed bound husband and were very worried with no idea given of how long it would be to plan return journey.
- All GP surgeries should have training on Autism awareness and all staff at the council who deal with social care should have training too.
- The general population is being told to get off their computers, go out, exercise, and engage with other people. Social services is pressuring elderly and disabled people to do the opposite. I was told by a social worker that I should get a computer buy the necessities of life on it and then I would never have to go out at all!! (With adequate help I am capable of going out and doing normal things).
- I can't fault the audiology department in the hospital. The drop in is excellent. There are six places you can go to re getting hearing aids fixed. Better than Worcestershire. We can go to Leominster, Kington, Bromyard, Ledbury, Ross-on-Wye (very busy) Hereford. Ross was monthly but too many people went so it is weekly now. The audiologists travel there and Deaf Direct too. They give great help re: equipment and with your TV etc.
- Hospital parking is all day parking, but it is just 2 hours. GP appointments - we have to book online because telephone is difficult. But this is not good and have to wait 4 weeks to get an appointment. I end up calling in if the need is urgent. St Owens street route through garden difficult. Greyfriars I can't go up steps from car park so approach differently. I was offered an appointment at Credenhill but could not go because there was no transport.
- 111 calls such a long list of questions. I had a chest infection. All the questions seemed irrelevant. I explained the issue, but they couldn't bypass the diagnostic questions. Before it seemed better, but it has got worse. The ASDA walk-in is missed. Herefordshire medical group I rang up and there were 91 others before me. Lady in charge there was to come to speak to our group Deaf Direct but didn't turn up for 3 appointments. It is getting better but 4 weeks for an appointment is still too long. Asthma ran out of puffer. Can't have a spare now. Have to apply when it runs out. One has a n indicator and can feel a bit low but can't really tell. People don't know about out of hours. Wargrave walk down steps fell and they had to call an ambulance. If looked after you feel safe in hospital on a trolley but if no staff...

- The You At Home service has been positive for me. Their staff and services have been extremely helpful in keeping me safe and preventing falls around my home. The equipment provided and fitted increased my mobility around the house.
- Finding a dentist that works with NHS is difficult, and often dentist's surgery is upstairs, which can be an issue.

***Is there anything you would like to say about other services, shops, leisure facilities in Herefordshire and how they serve you with your disability or particular difficulties or needs.***

- I would like to see more quiet spaces and activities. Everything and everywhere seems to be 'family friendly' and FF activities are often free of charge at that. There are an awful lot of us, who are child free with money to spend on going to chilled out and peaceful adult and sensory friendly spaces and events, but they don't exist. It would be really nice to have a relaxing haven for adults who'd like to get out of the house too. (I mean this from a sensory processing difficulty perspective, but I know a lot of people without those difficulties who would enjoy something like that too).
- We went to an autism friendly screening. ( Cinema - Odeon) It wasn't the main feature that was the problem the trailers had a huge explosion and way too much noise and colours and so on. My child just got up and fled. I can't persuade them to try again. It is sad because they will miss out on the experience of going to the cinema now. If you carefully pick the feature that will suit - perhaps there could be ways to avoid the trailers or turn them down or features to match tone of feature?
- Some things that are for people with prams or mobility issues are upstairs! Floor planning questionable and customer services being at the back...
- The Courtyard has a great level area. In the main house they block off 2 levels and there is enough room for wheelchairs. It can be difficult to sit next to the person I am with and caring for in a wheelchair. In the Studio you are too near the front. It would be good to have a way of going further back. It feels better in the main theatre for a live performance. I wonder what they have at the blind college. The toilet facilities at the Courtyard are interesting as the taps in the accessible toilet require turning albeit with a lever handle tap whereas in the ordinary toilets the taps are automated. Not sure why? Also, you have a paper towel and automatic hand dryer that is too high up to push button.
- Lloyds bank Leominster - can't get up steps. Pool farm NHS dentist is in a listed building so no lift. Surely that is not an excuse as The Grange is listed but they have a lift. Once they forgot and gave the person, I assisted an upstairs appointment. Kingstone tend to see same one or two doctors which is good.
- No, I have a tendency not to use anything except at non busy times.

- Barclays Bank in Broad Street have installed a lift, but it was badly measured and badly positioned and is almost impossible for a lone wheelchair user to use. Katherine Harriet Ltd - a care agency - has a heavy door, no automatic door, and a dip in the floor just inside. It would be impossible for a lone wheelchair user to get in. At the café at All saint's church they have put the automatic door at the little used back door, but the main door has a very heavy glass door, no automatic door. Even able-bodied people struggle with it. This seems crazy. Why don't they put the automatic door at the main entrance?
- At Rose Gardens we have lots of good things. Alexa is good you can have a conversation. An In-house line ex-directory. Wi-Fi calling with your phone. Intuitive IT. The cost of contracts is going up after a short time. Small print is not that obvious. Switching is not that simple in rural areas. Ability net. IT support at home - a charity. Talk Talk foreign accent is difficult with hearing difficulties. Very difficult to hear. But so is a strong Liverpool, Newcastle one! I can't always understand them on the phone. Type talk can help - a third party types to mum. Repeat text can't understand a Liverpool accent. Now NGT next generation is improved. Facetime helps as can lip read or sign. What's ap video can lip read and hear. Can do this by mobile. Embroidery for people that can sign. Chandas and Chave Jackson do 1:1 St. Owens Street take you to a quiet corner so you can sort it out. A little place to talk. Cinema is too loud! Louder than a portable loop!
- Background noise in supermarkets is difficult you can't hear each other talk. I can use my own loop to block out others so that is useful.
- I do appreciate the ability to park close to shops in Hereford, and often with no cost to blue badge holders. Helps tremendously.

***Is there anything you would like to add about employers in Herefordshire and how they support you with your disability or particular difficulties or needs?***

- I think that there should be a zero-tolerance approach to managers who bully and harass those who need reasonable adjustments. I raised a formal grievance that went nowhere because upper management had also made mistakes that they wanted to cover up. It would have helped me at the time to have someone to have escalated this to, some sort of monitoring board or agency. Like the environmental health dept. Employers are getting away with far too much the bullying I've seen in the last couple of years through various organisations has been disgusting, but the reality is, people just have to put up with it because they can't afford to do anything about it.
- Offered me a saddle stool to work at children's level which has wheels and is a great help.
- Job Centre: I Daniel Blake is sooo true. They all have computers now. It helps if someone talks to you. Security guards eyeball you. Mentality is that everybody cheats. You have to sit and look up on computer. It would be good to have a specialist area for people with a brain injury or disabled in another way. Often people have lots of ability, but they don't see it. People could have a hidden

disability card. Often for a person disabled by a brain injury anxiety levels are high. They will have lost some confidence. This needs to be recognised to help them to seek employment.

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## Appendix 8.3 Organisations/ Services

### / Employers' comments

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#### Reasonable Adjustments - Responses 1-27 Organisations/ Employers

Please tell us about an experience or experiences of making or providing Reasonable Adjustments. Actions that have changed the environment/ space/ attitude/ support/ language/ method or mode of giving a service or enabling employees to work. What adjustment or change was made? Why did your service user or customer or employee need the change? How did it help? What difference did it make for them and your service/ organisation?

- Allowing me to correspond via email through a lovely receptionist to my doctor, seeing me quickly when I arrive.
- Someone with a sight impairment needed an enormous screen. Sadly, they didn't stay long, and we did not know what to do with it! We have bought all sorts of seats, footstools, soft wrist rests, screen filters etc to make sure employees do not suffer bad backs or eye strain.
- We employed somebody that could not walk up the three flights in our building. We actually moved buildings! We reckoned that if we were to be an equal opportunity employer and some of our employees were disabled, we needed to be in an accessible building. We didn't want to miss out on good employees.
- People with a learning disability and autism and epilepsy. The sorts of adjustments that we make are to use simple straight forward plain English; take time to explain things clearly; listen carefully and always ask what people need; being user-led is a good way to adjust. For people with autism it is important to be calm and keep noise levels down. To show respect and understand their point of view even if the group they are with do not. Be aware of people's concentration spans and stamina levels and don't overwhelm people with information. Take breaks when needed. Be aware of different ability levels and watch out for people nodding but not understanding. Be prepared to repeat things and support people in the ways they need to achieve their aims without taking over or dis-empowering them. Watch out for tasks that are causing anxiety and look for ways to make them less difficult or support more to practice them with lots of reassurance.
- I am an Occupational Therapist who is adjusting every day e.g. Bath Access, Shower handles, Ramps, Stair lifts. If I were to pick one it would be a ramp. This helps somebody disabled by medical conditions that affect mobility and wheelchair users. It can make a huge difference.
- surveyors, Home Improvement Agency, and the OT Team worked together with Housing and County Team to adapt a house for two people with learning and

physical disabilities to live together. Adjustments included height adapted sink and work surfaces. They are very much enjoying their new home and are certainly making the most of it. It is enabling them to take on tasks they did not have access to previously.

- I researched and provided information on how to get help to get to work for an employee with a broken foot so unable to drive; PIP benefits for transport alternatives; Access to work scheme; Bus Timetables. The information was not used much!
- However, I also allowed flexible home working which was used and appreciated.
- Assisted doors that made them very light to open. Older users found the doors difficult. They could be opened very easily.
- Allowing staff to work more flexibly as mental health affected by bereavement. Staff were able to gradually come back to work, stay in touch and up to date, was less anxious about losing job on top of loss of loved one, felt more confident returning and valued.
- Clear and precise instructions including boundaries and reminders. Employing somebody with a learning disability. This meant that they could complete work to a high standard were unlikely to do anything outside of their role and ask for help when needed and reminders helped them to remember to keep going when their minds wandered or they felt like chatting to customers too much.
- Clear instructions, targets, find jobs where wouldn't get distracted as very sociable. Give reminders as forgetful. Find time to talk to them for encouragement. A person with a learning disability. This enabled them to be more productive and happier, so people were happy with his work. They were able to work and be part of a team.
- Autism: Always ask what an employee might need they will be relieved to be asked. I always turn off strip lights. I ask if they find the clock distracting and remove it.
- Autism: When I carry out counselling, I always ask what is needed.
- A child attending an after-school club had learning difficulties. She was capable of taking herself to the toilet but frequently forgot that she needed to. Mum bought a watch with a vibrate function and set it to vibrate each hour. That reminded the child to go to the toilet. This averted any need for staff to take responsibility for reminding the child and stopped the potential embarrassment of being reminded in front of her peers.
- Four examples that I have experienced employers doing when employing people with a learning disability: Café changed working hours for employee from evening to morning, so they were not responsible for locking up café. Office cleaners provided with smaller Hoover that was easier to lift. Pectoral aids provided so

employees could learn routine tasks in local hairdressers, local shop and a café. Staff training at hairdressers and café to help understand better ways to communicate with adults with a Learning Disability.

- In my experience it is important to: Build a positive therapeutic relationship with a client. Be adaptable/ approachable. See the world through their lives.
- After returning to work having been absent for any reason the sort of adjustments that are useful and reasonable that I've experienced arranging and working well are: Lightened duties. Broken down duties. Ergonomic adjustments. Look at what in environment is disabling. Arranging a personal assistant.
- Taking on a blind student counsellor. We needed to create new versions of all our standard forms and paperwork that could be read by her braille computer as well as look at safe access to the building. As an equal opportunity aware and disability aware organisation we wanted to support their development and possibly provide a counsellor who had a different understanding of some of the clients who might come to us with disabilities.
- I chair our local Dinedor Heritage Group. We have a meeting/talk next Tuesday. The village hall has just had a hearing loop fitted. We emailed all members and asked if anyone would want it. A member said yes and we're providing it.
- Environmental adjustment and IT. Wheelchair access and IT access. Enabled young employee to do their job.

***Have you ever been asked for a reasonable adjustment and not felt it was reasonable or not been able to achieve it? Please tell us what you were asked for and why (what difference it would make for your customer, service user or employee). What reason did you give for it being turned down?***

- Yes, Automatic doors. As a very small organisation it was too expensive.
- Refused flexible working because of need for partner to transport them to work for a role that served customers at a set time each week as they had a sight impairment - too small an organisation to accommodate. No public transport in rural area. Tried a number of solutions but friends and neighbours and volunteers were not able to reliably transport them. They had to seek employment in a place that had reliable public transport.
- In a small organisation you can only accommodate so many people with extra time needs of the supervisor. For example, only so many with a mental health disability.
- A person was refused a stool to sit on in a manufacturing setting. It was a reasonable "turndown" given the environment and hygiene and safety.
- We were asked by a staff member to limit our criteria for accepting clients as there was a conflict of interest for them with a new position they had taken on.

We did not feel it appropriate in this instance to make a change in our procedures to benefit one member of staff as it would affect our ability to assist others.

- Yes. Difficult commute. Staff asked to work from home because of commuting problems. However, employee was responsible for staff team and should be there with team when the team is there.
- Yes. Wheelchair access. Listed building - unable to change access to building itself and toilets. Supported client in alternative premises.
- Not possible or often reasonable in a crowded venue.

***Herefordshire Council are going to create a Reasonable Adjustments Charter this year. Do you have any advice for them about what should be included?***

- Always ask parents and carers what will help. There are lots of things you can't see when someone has autism. Parents/ carers can help advise.
- Examples of what the adjustments could be and how.
- Discuss what might be helpful with the disabled person concerned. Have they had adjustments made for them anywhere else from which you could learn? See what you can come up with together.
- Be careful - R.A. confuses and puts off many employers - emphasise REASONABLE.
- Something that is practical - not just lip service.
- Details of access to funding for employers to make the relevant adjustments.
- Most jobs can be done effectively by very reasonable adjustments by being flexible, conference calls, preventing unnecessary travel making it easy for mothers to return to work.
- Access to funding to make adjustments.
- The involvement of people likely to be disabled by the environment in the approvals stage for new build.

***Is there anything else you would like Healthwatch Herefordshire to note about Health and Social care services in Herefordshire and how they serve your service users, customers or employees?***

- Difficult to get appointments.
- People getting increasingly disillusioned and expectation low - question priorities and how arrived at.

- Focus on "hidden" issues such as mental health and HSE (*Health and safety executive*) requirements - link to employer training to ensure mentally healthy workplace.
- I would welcome a discussion about how to engage with commissioners & ensure that preventing sexual violence becomes a recognised strategic aim.
- From a local perspective it would be good to understand what is going on; where, and what stage of evolution it 'is at' - focussing resources and funding to a planned roadmap.

***Is there anything you would like to say about other services, shops, leisure facilities in Herefordshire and how they serve your service users, customers, or employees?***

- That if they are aware of conditions people may need help with, they should also know who they could call for extra help.

***Is there anything you would like to add about employers in Herefordshire and how they support your service users, customers, or employees?***

- Mental health of employees: Provision for employees to seek help; Reducing Stigma of being off work due to mental health; Reassurance that it won't affect their employability or progression opportunities.
- People with a learning disability can make very good employees. Our employee was particularly good at remembering everyone's names including a lot of customers.
- Most employers I work with, when placing adults with a learning disability into placements, are very reasonable. My job is to make the process simple, without hassle. Otherwise it can take up too much of their time and resources. It has to be a partnership with employers! Not us and them!
- Some very good in supporting staff - but generally the smaller family firms who will find them therapy. Council would do so if work related and brief in circumstances.



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