



The Life Opportunities Survey 2009-2011

The most important things people told us

Important

This is a big booklet, but you may not want to read all of it.

Look at the list of contents on page 1. It shows what is in the booklet. Look down the list to find things you want to read about.

Green writing

In this Easy Read booklet we sometimes explain what words mean.

The first time we mention any of these words, it is in **bold green** writing. We then write what the words mean in a blue box.

These words and what they mean are also in a Words list at the back of the booklet.

If any of the words are used later in the booklet, we show them in **normal green** writing. If you see words in **normal green** writing, you can look up what they mean by looking for the blue box earlier in the booklet, or by looking at the Words list.

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CDS, 7 Eastgate, Leeds LS2 7LY

Tel: 0113 399 4000

Web: www.cds.co.uk/clarity

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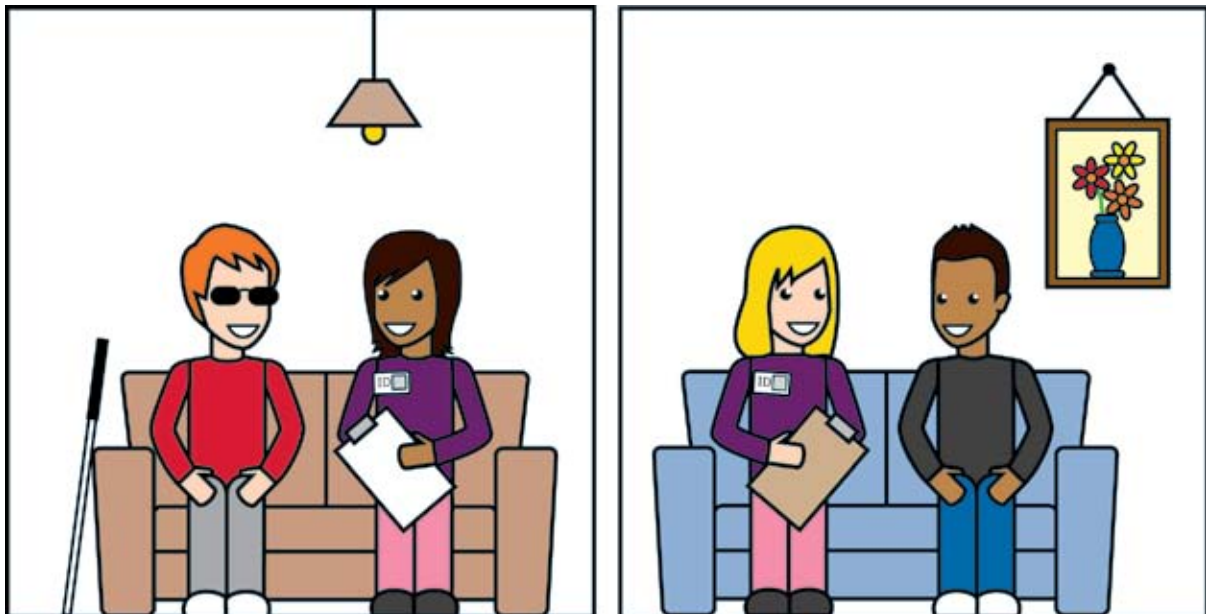
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What this booklet is about

The Life Opportunities **Survey** is a big new **survey** that started in June 2009.

Survey

This is when we ask a big group of people questions to find out what they think about something.



The **survey** tells us a lot about the lives of disabled people and what needs to be done so that disabled people get full **equality**.

Equality

This means having the same chances in life as everyone else.

It is the first big **survey** to look at how **barriers** can stop people with an **impairment** from living their lives the way they want to.

Barriers

These are things that may stop people living their lives the way they want to, or stop them doing the everyday things they want to do. Barriers include things like being treated unfairly, or not getting enough support to do the things you want.

Impairment

This is something about the way a person does things. It may be things like being unable to walk well, not being able to see or hear other people clearly, not being able to think hard for a long time, or not being able to remember things.

But having an **impairment** does not mean a person is **disabled**.

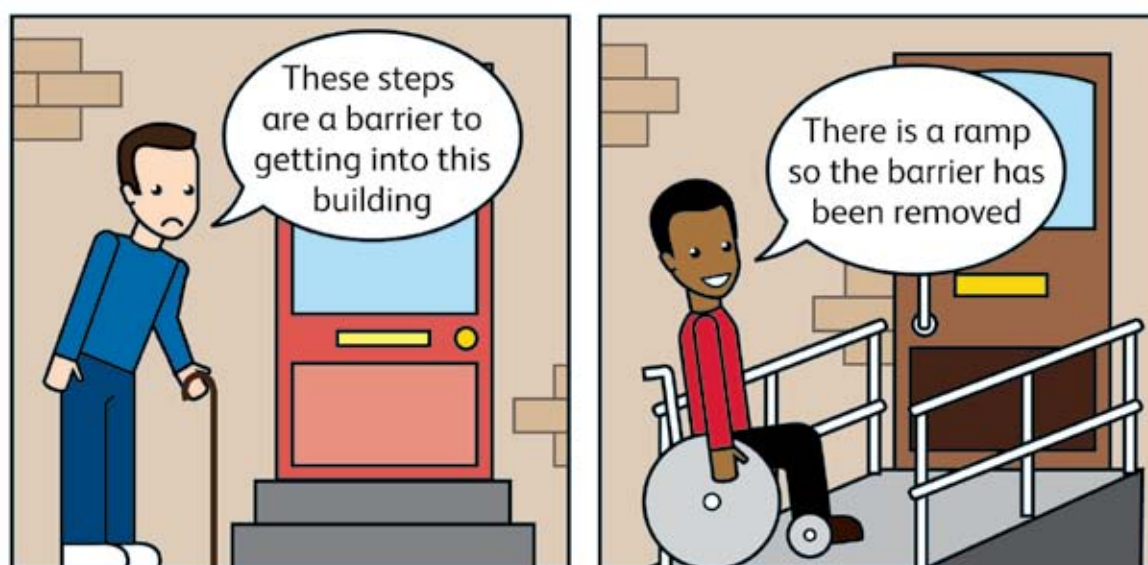
Disabled

We say someone is disabled if they have an **impairment** and **barriers** stop them doing the things in life that they want to do.



Barriers for adults with an **impairment** included things like

- being treated unfairly.
- people thinking and acting towards them in a different way.
- buildings that wheelchair users cannot get about in.



- finding it hard to use transport services like buses and trains easily.
- not getting the equipment or changes to their way of working to help them live and work like other people.

When we did the Life Opportunities **Survey**, we talked to people with an **impairment** and to people without an **impairment** about many things. For example

- 1 Using learning and training services.
- 2 Working, or trying to find work.
- 3 Paying bills, a loan, or having a holiday.
- 4 Using transport services, like buses and trains.

- 5 Using spare time to do the things people enjoy – for example, sport and doing **voluntary work**.

Voluntary work

This is work people do for which they are not paid. For example, working in a charity shop or teaching children to play a sport.

- 6 Keeping in touch with friends and family.
- 7 Getting into different rooms at home.
- 8 Getting about outside.

Then we had a careful look at the different answers we got from the people with an **impairment** and the people without an **impairment**. This is important to help the government understand the **barriers** that **disabled** people come up against.



The next section is about the most important things we learned from the **survey**, from June 2009 to March 2011.

The most important things we found out

On this page and the next 2 pages we tell you the main things we found out from the Life Opportunities **Survey**.

Disabled people who are protected by the law

We found out that 26 adults out of every 100 were disabled and protected by a law called the **Equality Act**.

Equality Act

This is the Government's law to make sure all people are treated fairly.

People with an impairment

We found out that 29 adults out of every 100 had an **impairment**.

This list shows the most important things people told us.

- 16 out of every 100 adults with an **impairment** said they came up against **barriers** to using learning and training services. This compares with only 9 out of every 100 adults without an **impairment**.



- 57 out of every 100 adults with an **impairment** said there were **barriers** to the type of work they did or the hours they could work. This compares with only 26 out of every 100 adults without an **impairment**.
- 75 out of every 100 adults with an **impairment** found it hard to use transport services like buses and trains. This compares with only 60 out of every 100 adults without an **impairment**.
- 44 out of every 100 households with an adult with an **impairment** said they would find it hard to pay an unexpected bill, pay off a loan, or have a holiday. This compares with only 29 out of every 100 other households.
- 82 out of every 100 adults with an **impairment** said they found it hard to do things in their spare time, like doing sport or **voluntary work**. This compares with only 78 out of every 100 adults without an **impairment**.



Taken together, all these things show that there are lots of **barriers** that make it harder for adults with an **impairment** to take part in everyday life compared with adults without an **impairment**.

The next section shows facts and figures from the **survey**. There is a lot to read in the next section, so you may only want to read the bits you are interested in.

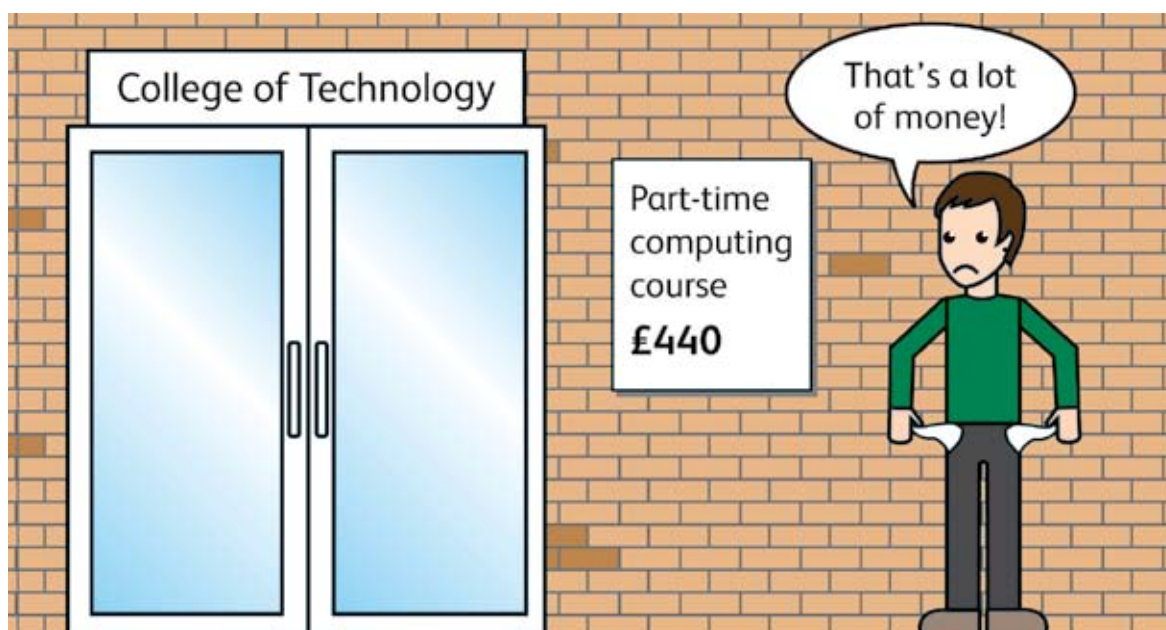
Barriers for 8 areas of life

This section shows the top 2 **barriers** in 8 areas of people's lives. You may only want to read the bits you are interested in.

Learning and training services

16 out of every 100 adults with an **impairment** said they came up against barriers to using learning and training services as much as they wanted to. This compares with only 9 out of every 100 adults without an **impairment**.

- The top **barrier** for adults with an **impairment** was the cost of learning and training services. This was also the top **barrier** for adults without an **impairment**.



- The second biggest **barrier** for adults with an **impairment** was they were too busy or they did not have time to use learning and training services. This was also the second biggest **barrier** for adults without an **impairment**.

People also told us about lots of other **barriers** they come up against. For example, finding it hard to use transport and not getting the information they need.

At work

57 out of every 100 adults with an **impairment** said there were **barriers** to the type of work they did or the hours they could work. This compares with only 26 out of every 100 adults without an **impairment**.

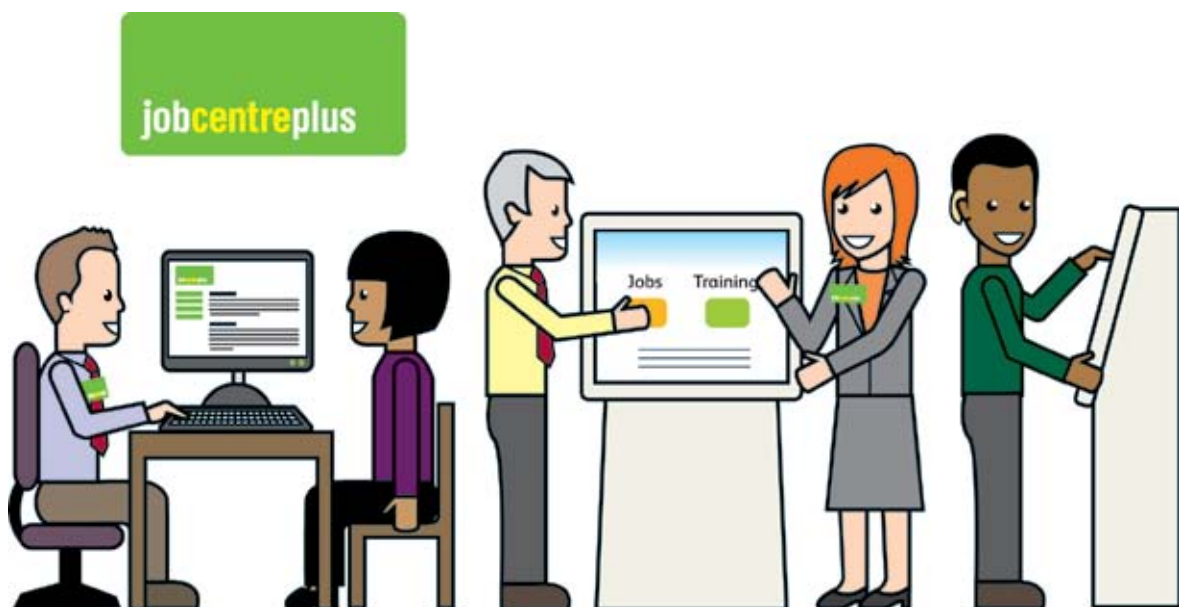
The next few pages show the different **barriers** and **enablers** at work.

Enablers

These are the things that help people to live their lives the way they want to, and do the everyday things other people do. Enablers at work include having a personal assistant and being allowed to change working hours.

The information on **barriers** and **enablers** is divided up into 3 groups.

- People who already have a job.
- People who are looking for a job.



- People who are not looking for a job.

People who already had a job

33 out of every 100 adults with an **impairment** who already had a job said they had **barriers** to the type of work they could do or the hours they could work. This compares with only 18 out of every 100 adults without an **impairment**.

The top 2 **barriers** for adults with an **impairment** who already had a job were

- looking after their family. This was also the top **barrier** for adults without an **impairment**.
- too few chances for them to move into better jobs.

The top 2 **enablers** that gave adults with an **impairment** the chance to work were

- working for a company that lets them change their working hours or lets them work fewer hours.



- being able to get tax credits, which are paid to people on low wages.

People who were looking for a job

58 out of every 100 adults with an **impairment** who were looking for a job said they had **barriers** to the type of work they could do or the hours they could work. This compares with only 31 out of every 100 adults without an **impairment**.

The top 2 **barriers** for adults with an **impairment** who were looking for a job were

- too few chances for them to get a job. This was also the top **barrier** for adults without an **impairment**.
- finding it hard getting to and from work.



The top 2 **enablers** for people looking for a job were

- working for a company that lets them change their working hours or lets them work fewer hours. This was also the top **enabler** for adults without an **impairment**.
- being able to get tax credits, which are paid to people on low wages.

People who were not looking for a job

The top 2 **barriers** for adults with an **impairment** who were not looking for a job were

- looking after their family. This was also the top **barrier** for adults without an **impairment**.
- feeling nervous about working.

People also told us about lots of other **barriers** they come up against. For example, finding it hard to use transport and not having passed the right exams.

The top 2 **enablers** for adults with an **impairment** who were not looking for a job were

- working for a company that lets them change their working hours or lets them work fewer hours. This was also the top **enabler** for adults without an **impairment**.
- working for a company that provides the special equipment they need to do their job like other people.



Paying unexpected bills, loans or having a holiday

Households that include an adult with an **impairment** found it harder to pay unexpected bills, pay loans or have a holiday.

Household

This means a group of people who live together, like a family.

This means that they could not pay for things as much as other **households**.

- 27 out of every 100 **households** with an adult with an **impairment** said they found it very hard paying off their loans. This compares with only 14 out of every 100 other **households**.
- 38 out of every 100 **households** with an adult with an **impairment** said they would find it hard to pay an unexpected bill of £500. This compares with only 26 out of every 100 other **households**.
- 33 out of every 100 **households** with an adult with an **impairment** said they could not afford a week away on holiday each year. This compares with only 20 out of every 100 other **households**.



Using transport services like buses and trains

75 out of every 100 adults with an **impairment** found it hard to use transport services like buses and trains. Only 60 out of every 100 adults without an **impairment** said the same.

We asked people to tell us which kinds of transport they did not use, and which kinds of transport they did not use as much as they want to. The top 2 answers were

- motor vehicles.
- local buses.



For adults with an **impairment** the top **barrier** to using motor vehicles and local buses was the cost.

For example, 51 out of every 100 adults with an **impairment** did not use motor vehicles because of the cost. And 21 out of every 100 adults without an **impairment** did not use local buses because of the cost of tickets.

People also told us about lots of other **barriers** they come up against. For example, buses being too full and finding it hard getting in or out of transport or finding it hard getting to the stops or stations.

Using spare time to do the things people enjoy

Compared with adults without an **impairment**, adults with an **impairment** had more **barriers** that were stopping them doing things in their spare time. These were things like doing sport or **voluntary work**, or going on holiday.

They were also more likely to say they did not have much choice about how they spend their spare time.

This is what we found out from the survey.

- 72 out of every 100 adults with an **impairment** said they did not join in sports as much as they would like to. Only 54 out of every 100 adults without an **impairment** said the same.
- 34 out of every 100 adults with an **impairment** said they were too busy to join in sports as much as they would like to. But 71 out of every 100 adults without an **impairment** said they were too busy.



- 19 out of every 100 adults with an **impairment** said it costs too much to play sport as much as they would like to. This was the same as adults without an **impairment**.
- 68 out of every 100 adults with an **impairment** did not go to places like museums as much as they would like to. 58 out of every 100 adults without an **impairment** said the same.
- 41 out of every 100 adults with an **impairment** said they could not go to places like museums because they were too busy or did not have enough time. 74 out of every 100 adults without an **impairment** said the same.



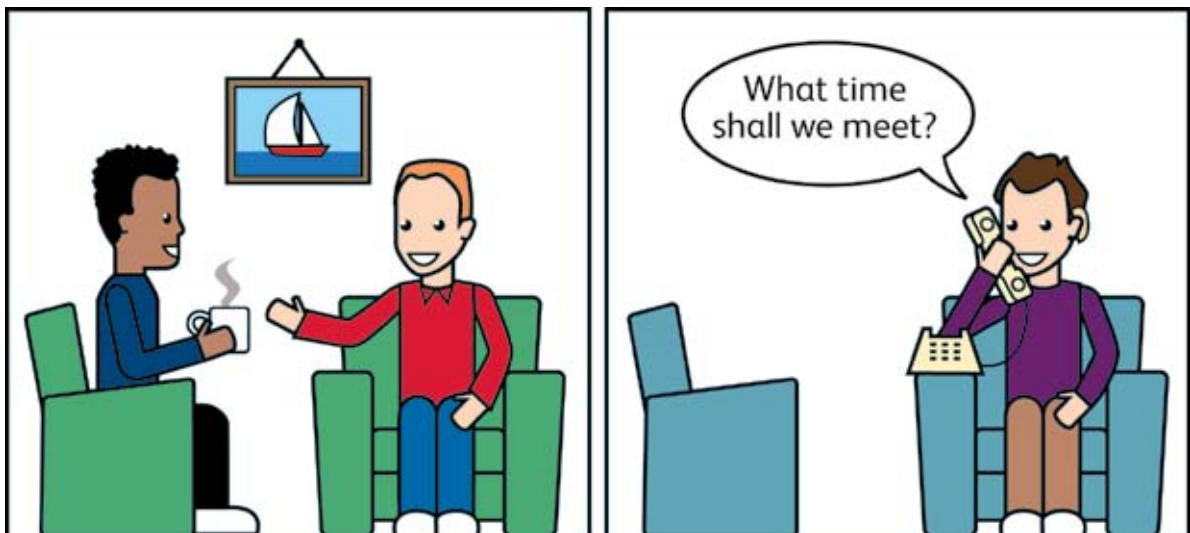
- 22 out of every 100 adults with an **impairment** said they had little choice about how they use their spare time. Only 13 out of every 100 adults without an **impairment** said the same.

Keeping in touch with family and friends

Adults with an **impairment** were in touch with fewer family members and friends, and met or spoke to them less often, than adults without an **impairment**.

This is what we found from the **survey**.

- Only 54 out of every 100 adults with an **impairment** said they were in touch with more than 5 close friends or family. 65 out of every 100 adults without an **impairment** said the same.
- Adults without an **impairment** usually talked to more people each week than adults with an **impairment**.



- 24 out of every 100 adults with an **impairment** said they did not meet or speak to friends and family as much as they would like to. Only 21 out of every 100 adults without an **impairment** said the same.

For adults with an **impairment**, the top 2 **barriers** that stop people keeping in touch with friends and family were

- being too busy or not having enough time. This was also the top **barrier** for adults without an **impairment**.
- friends and family were too busy.

People also told us about lots of other **barriers** they come up against. For example, the high cost of travelling and finding it hard using transport.

Getting into different rooms at home

It was harder for adults with an **impairment** to get into different rooms at home than other people.

This is what we found from the **survey**.

- 8 out of every 100 adults with an **impairment** found it hard getting into a room at home.

For adults with an **impairment**, the top 2 **barriers** that made it hard for people to get about at home were

- stairs, because there were not enough ramps or a stair lift.



- not having a handrail to the front door or to get about inside their home.

Getting about outside

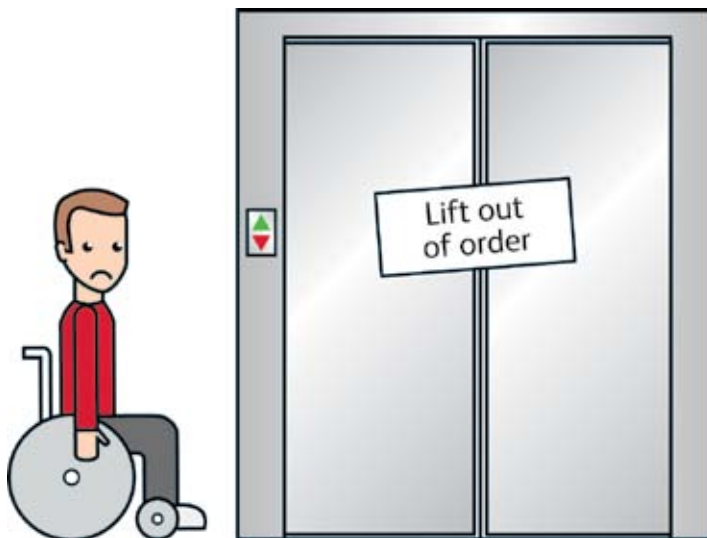
It was harder for adults with an **impairment** to get into and move about in buildings outside their home. The buildings that people found hardest to use were shops and hospitals.

13 out of every 100 adults found it hard to move around buildings.

29 out of every 100 adults with an **impairment** said they found these things hard to do. Only 6 out of every 100 adults without an **impairment** said the same.

The top 2 **barriers** that made it hard for adults with an **impairment** to use buildings outside their home were

- finding it hard moving around a building. This was because of stairs, small doors, and small passages. This was the top **barrier** for adults without an **impairment** too.
- some buildings did not have enough lifts or moving stairs.



Word list

Barriers

These are things that may stop people living their lives the way they want to, or stop them doing the everyday things they want to do. Barriers include things like being treated unfairly, or not getting enough support to do the things you want.3

Disabled

We say someone is disabled if they have an **impairment** and **barriers** stop them doing the things in life that they want to do4

Enablers

These are the things that help people to live their lives the way they want to, and do the everyday things other people do. Enablers at work include having a personal assistant and being allowed to change working hours10

Equality

This means having the same chances in life as everybody else3

Household

This means a group of people who live together, like a family14

Impairment

This is something about the way a person does things. It may be things like being unable to walk well, not being able to see or hear other people clearly, not being able to think hard for a long time, or not being able to remember things.....3

Survey

This is when we ask a big group of people questions to find out what they think about something.....2

Voluntary work

This is work people do for which they are not paid. For example, working in a charity shop or teaching children to play a sport5

How to contact us

Email odi.losteam@dwp.gsi.gov.uk



Telephone 0207 449 5046



Letters Life Opportunities Survey Team
Department for Work and Pensions
Caxton House
Tothill Street
London
SW1H 9NA



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