



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Fulfilling Potential: Making It Happen - Strategy Progress Update

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Foreword by the Minister of State for Disabled People

Making our communities, workplaces and society in general fully accessible for and inclusive of disabled people is a goal we have made real strides towards over the past few years. But we have not yet finished the job. This document sets out some of what we have already achieved on the strategy we set out in Fulfilling Potential – Making it Happen. But we need to maintain the momentum for change and continue to drive forward on that ambition. That is why I am pleased to launch the Accessible Britain Challenge. We will only be able to achieve our goal if all of us in the public, private and voluntary sectors work together to make our communities more accessible for all disabled people.

I want to get the message out that disability is about “us” not “them.” There are now almost 12 million disabled people in the UK, many of us have disabled people among our friends or family and we are all increasingly likely to live to an age when we may well experience multiple impairments ourselves. So it makes sense that we should all think about how to shape communities which meet our needs.

Removing barriers is not just good for disabled people but for all of us. As disabled people's talents and skills are integrated into the economy to help maintain and drive strong and sustainable economic growth, their spending power is realised by our businesses.

But accessibility isn't just about the physical environment. It starts with the attitudes that society has towards disabled people. That is why I want to build on the legacy of the 2012 Paralympics and successes like the Disability Confident campaign for employers. It means continuing to work, for example, with broadcast media, sports clubs and others and sharing best practice.

The goal can be achieved if we work together. That is why I have been working across Government with my Ministerial colleagues in a new Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group. It is why I co-chair the Fulfilling Potential Forum of disabled people representing different impairment groups from across the country to really understand the issues affecting disabled people and to harness their ideas. And it is why we have been working with disabled people and others in the Disability Action Alliance and the Disabled People's User-Led Organisation Programme.

I believe that a partnership approach is the key to lasting success. The Accessible Britain Challenge builds on that approach. I hope that you will be part of it.

Mark Harper MP

Introduction

Fulfilling Potential: The journey so far

Last July we published Fulfilling Potential – Making it Happen, with the Fulfilling Potential: Making it Happen Action Plan. That strategy document was built on previously published analysis and discussion. At the heart of Fulfilling Potential is the need for innovative cross sector partnerships with disabled people and their organisations and promoting new ways of working to deliver meaningful outcomes. Fulfilling Potential is the vehicle for taking forward the obligations of the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People, and embraces the legacy of the 2012 Paralympic Games.

This update report on how we are delivering the strategy is complemented by the updated action plan and an analytical update (Fulfilling Potential – Disability Outcomes and Indicators Framework Progress Report, which sets out the available data in relation to the outcomes and indicator framework. Read them at <http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fulfilling-potential-making-it-happen-updates-september-2014>

Working together to fulfil potential

In January this year we published “Fulfilling Potential: Better Ways of Working with Disabled People.” This set out new arrangements for working in partnership with disabled people. We set up the Fulfilling Potential Forum, which brings together representatives from forty different disabled people’s organisations to discuss current issues affecting disabled people.

The discussions from the Forum feed directly into a new Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group on Disability established by the Minister of State for Disabled People. The Inter-Ministerial group and the Forum have considered

progress on delivering the vision of Fulfilling Potential and have agreed that we need to:

- improve understanding and communications;
- improve accessibility;
- improve opportunities; and
- identify and share good practice with Government leading by example.

As a country we have been marking International Day of Disabled People both officially and through disabled people's local actions since 1992. The Government will continue to mark this day and we hope others will continue to do so. The Government will continue to work with disabled people and their groups such as the Disability Action Alliance and the Programme for Strengthening Disabled People's User Led Organisations.

However, as part of the legacy of the 2012 Paralympics we want to mark the contribution of disabled people to society. That is why the Minister of State for Disabled People is launching the Accessible Britain Challenge to encourage local engagement and build inclusive and accessible communities.

As part of the Challenge we want to share good practice and experiences so that organisations from across all sectors, as well as disabled people themselves can benefit and see what is possible. Raising the profile of the potential of disabled people to play an active part in their local community should also contribute to positively changing attitudes and behaviours towards disabled people.

Devolution

Fulfilling Potential – Making It Happen, and this report, refer to a wide variety of policies, some applicable across the whole of the UK and many specific to England only. In relation to Scotland and Wales, references to employment and social security policies are applicable and for Wales some aspects of transport and justice policy. In relation to Northern Ireland all domestic policy

is devolved. The devolved administrations have their own policies with regard to devolved matters. They have their own arrangements in place to meet the obligations of the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People, where those obligations are devolved.

Improving Understanding and Communications

If disabled people are to be able play a full role in society then it is crucial that we work together to improve communication channels for disabled people to give them equal access to services and also improve understanding more widely about disability.

The nature of sensory impairments and learning disabilities and difficulties can mean that people experience real barriers using standard forms of communication and might require accessible formats to be produced. The public sector is committed to doing this. DWP is currently reviewing its accessible formats and NHS England is currently developing a new information standard which will provide direction to the health and adult social care system as to actions which must be taken to ensure that disabled patients, service users and carers receive information in formats they can understand and communication support if they need it. A formal consultation began in August 2014. More information is available at www.england.nhs.uk/accessibleinfo.

The Government is also committed to working with others to promote Deaf communications and video relay services. In Government, Departments are looking to introduce VRS. Following a Ministerial letter to FTSE companies in 2013 eight have now got VRS in place and at least two others are considering doing the same. Lloyds Banking Group were one of the first businesses to offer the service and for them it was about customer service and "...making it as easy as possible for customers to talk to us and this is especially true for customers for whom using the telephone isn't possible. The introduction of a video relay service is our first step in helping such customers with further

improvements planned over the coming months.”¹ There has been a delay in Next Generation Text Relay Service but the real benefits and flexibility it offers should now be available in early October 2014.

These are steps in the right direction but we recognise that there is still much more to do to ensure that communications are offered in a format which is accessible to all citizens.

Understanding and Attitudes

The visibility and success of the Paralympics resulted in a positive change in attitudes towards disabled people. The Commonwealth Games this year in Glasgow was another opportunity to showcase disabled people’s sport. Work to carry on the social and economic ambitions of the Games is led by the Olympic and Paralympic Legacy Cabinet Committee and a joint Legacy programme has been established which brings together Government and the Greater London Authority.

We know that that Games and the accompanying positive portrayal in the media had a positive effect on how disabled people are viewed by the British public with nearly 70% of the British public feeling attitudes towards disabled people have improved since the London Paralympic Games in 2012.² The Minister for Disabled People has been working with the major television companies to raise the profile of disabled sport, and, more broadly, to increase the number of disabled people employed on and off screen and create better broadcast media representation of disabled people.

People’s attitudes towards disabled people are influenced by what they see on television. Coverage of disabled people in the media is extensive (with most people, 80% disabled and 85% non-disabled people recalling disabled people portrayed on television). It is also overwhelmingly positive, with sports

¹ Graeme Whippy, Senior Manager, Lloyds Banking Group. Reported on Scottish Council on Deafness website <http://www.scod.org.uk> on 5th June 2014.

² DWP (July 2014) Paralympic data from the ONS Opinions and Lifestyle Survey

coverage and children's television being the most positive. Even in the print media, non-disabled people who do read newspapers/magazines are still around three times as likely to recall positive images of disabled people in newspapers/magazines than negative images.³

The Government takes all hate crime seriously and the UK has in place one of the strongest legislative frameworks in the world to protect communities from hostility, violence and bigotry. This framework is kept under review and in May this year we published the first Progress report on the Government's "Challenge it, Report it, Stop it" cross-government hate crime strategy, which was launched in March 2012. Two years on, we have delivered many of the actions under our three core principles of prevention, increasing reporting and improving operational response and are making good progress on the others. We are building the evidence base on hate crime, including delivering on our coalition commitment to improve police recording of hate crimes, including disability.⁴

Improving Accessibility

In order for disabled people to participate fully in society, communities, workplaces and services need to be accessible to them. Across Government we are investing in infrastructure and services to make Britain more accessible.

The Government has made available an additional £100 million funding to extend the Access for All programme from 2015 until 2019 and recently announced 42 rail stations across the UK that will receive a new step free route into the station and between platforms. Improved accessibility will mean a better experience for disabled passengers but also for those travelling with children or carrying heavy luggage.

³ Opinions and Lifestyle survey Q1 2013

⁴ Home Office (May 2014) "Challenge It, Report It, Stop It: Delivering the Government's hate crime action plan"

The physical environment is a key factor in accessibility. Pavements and road-space design as well as parking restrictions can have a significant effect on disabled people's experience. In 2002 Department for Transport published "Inclusive Mobility: A Guide to Best Practice on Access to Pedestrian and Transport Infrastructure." This provides advice on accommodating the needs of disabled people in the built environment. In order to take account of changes in standards since the guidance was published, the Department has committed to review and update it during 2014, as set out in its Accessibility Action Plan.

Buildings, whether for work, retail or residential, need to be accessible. The Built Environment Professional Education project is working with the key professional institutions including those representing architects, planners, surveyors, engineers and facilities managers, to ensure that inclusive design education becomes a requirement on all accredited courses. Embedding inclusive design learning into assessed training will help to challenge poor practice and deliver excellent accessibility. The two new access standards for housing, introduced in to the Building Regulations by the Housing Standards Review, will make it easier to build high quality accessible homes able to meet the needs of a broad range of people. However, as most disabled people want to continue living in their own home, means tested Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) allow for adaptations. The £220 million grant for DFG in 2015/16 is 19% higher than in 2014/15. The Home Improvement Agencies deliver around half of these adaptations and also offer handyperson services to disabled and vulnerable clients.

For accessing key services such as health, education and work, the physical environment is an important first step. However access can also be promoted through better communication and by ensuring that organisations recognise where inequalities exist and promote better access. For example, there are real health inequalities between some groups of disabled people and the population more generally. The Health and Social Care Act 2012 placed NHS

England under a legal duty to reduce health inequalities and will hold NHS England to account for doing this.

Similarly, the Accessible Universities Roundtable Group has been established to lead work to tackle unequal access to Higher Education, whether the barriers involved relate to physical access or the need for other adjustments. Organisations with expertise across the sector have been brought together to consider how to promote best practice with regard to disabled students. The Equality Challenge Unit⁵ supported by BIS and DWP has undertaken research with disabled students, and this will inform guidance to Higher Education institutions on what works in supporting disabled people to enter employment after graduating.

As well as making mainstream arts and cultural attractions more physically accessible, there are projects to make them relevant for impairment groups. Among the examples are the i-map at the Tate which makes visual art accessible to people with visual impairments and the resources offered to carers of people with dementia through the National Museums Liverpool's, the House of Memories. Likewise, the publicly funded Arts Council England supports some projects aimed specifically at disabled people such as the Graeae Theatre, which is composed of disabled actors and makes use of BSL and audio description and Deafinitely which performs in BSL.

In the year of the World Cup, the difficulties that many disabled people face in accessing football stadia and other spectator sport's venues is something we want to change. The Minister of State for Disabled People wrote to all professional football clubs in April 2014 asking them what they were doing to ensure that their venues were inclusive and accessible for disabled supporters.

⁵ The unit supports the higher education sector in its mission to realise the potential of all staff and students. It is funded by Universities UK, Guild HE and the relevant funding bodies in the four nations.

In participatory sport we are making progress with the number of disabled people participating in sports at least once a week growing to 1.6 million. Yet, the proportion of disabled people playing sport (19%) in 2013/14 about half of the proportion of non-disabled people (39%).⁶ Sport England is working with National Governing Bodies of Sport, National Disability Sport Organisations, the English Federation of Disability Sport, Disability Organisations and others to reduce this gap. It has invested over £170m to make sport a practical lifestyle choice for disabled people. This includes £18.2m into 88 projects delivering opportunities directly to disabled people through the Inclusive Sport Fund; 146 local clubs and organisations receiving equipment that can be used to deliver sporting opportunities to disabled people; and £47m into creating accessible facilities.

Improving Opportunities

We want a society in which everyone – disabled and non-disabled – has the opportunity to achieve their potential and live fulfilling and active lives. A key theme of the Accessible Britain Challenge is about working together to make communities inclusive for everyone. This builds on the Disability Confident campaign, which has been working to change employers' attitudes and increase their confidence in employing disabled people.

Being able to fulfil potential requires an education that prepares young disabled people for an active and fulfilling life, whether that is in mainstream education, with additional support in place, or through special education. . The Children and Families Act means that now children and young people will have a single Education, Health and Care Plan, which will move with them through schools and into further education. These will be supplemented by the local offer for children with Special Educational Needs that all Local Authorities are required to publish from September 2014.

⁶ Fulfilling Potential – Disability Outcomes and Indicators Framework Progress Report

The evidence we have from schools shows that we are making progress.⁷ And where pupils get the required grades for University, the proportion going on to Higher Education is very similar whether or not the student has special needs. Once at University, students entitled to Disabled Students' Allowance have better retention rates than non-disabled students and after six months of graduating 84% of disabled students were either in work, studying or in both (88% of non-disabled).

Apprenticeships are an alternative to academic education for disabled and non-disabled young people. There has been between 2004/5 and 2012/13 a more than doubling (from 31% to 68%) in the number of learners with a learning disability or difficulty successfully completing their apprenticeship.

Around 6.5 million working age people are disabled under the Equality Act 2010, because they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The Disability and Health Employment Strategy⁸ set out a range of interventions to further shape positive attitudes towards disabled people's capability, stimulate demand for disabled people in the workforce and better target support to where it will make the most impact.

For those in work Access to Work provides additional support, over and above the employer's reasonable adjustment obligations, for individuals whose health or disability affects the way they do their job. It can include travel to work, support workers and specialist adaptations and equipment. A review is being planned for the summer to look at how it can support more people within the available resources.

We know that a significant barrier for disabled jobseekers is employers' attitude.⁹ As well as the Disability and Health Employment Strategy, in July

⁷ School data is broken down by SEN rather than disability. For further information see "Fulfilling Potential: Disability Outcomes and Framework Progress Report.

⁸ DWP (December 2013) "The disability and health employment strategy: the discussion so far" Cm 8763

⁹ 42% of jobseekers reported employer attitudes were one of the greatest barriers to getting work (A survey of disabled working age Benefit Claimants, July 2013)

2013, the Prime Minister launched the Disability Confident campaign. This campaign aims to increase understanding, challenge attitudes and showcase the talents and abilities of disabled people who are working. It provides a range of promotional materials and case studies to help employers understand the business case and broader benefits of employing disabled people. Over 1,100 employers took part in the national Disability Employment Conference and the regional Disability Confident events. We have updated and extended the Employer Portal, which signposts employers to a range of advice and resources. We have launched a toolkit to support MPs in arranging events to bring together employers and jobseekers at local level, giving a more practical focus to activity. In the next year we will also be reforming the Two Ticks Disability Symbol.

Identifying and sharing good practice

Achieving the vision of Fulfilling Potential means that Government, the private sector, disabled people's organisations, others in the voluntary and public sectors should work together and share best practice. It is also important that Government sets an example to other sectors by leading the way. We hope, for example, that DWP and HMRC along with other departments looking at adopting video relay technology could help stimulate both supply and demand in that market and thus adoption by other sectors.

The Fulfilling Potential Forum

The Fulfilling Potential Forum brings together representatives from 40 disability organisations and Disabled People's User Led Organisations, from across the UK. The Forum is convened by the Minister of State for Disabled People and the Minister of State for Care and Support. It meets quarterly to discuss and input into strategic priorities and direction across government to improve the key outcomes identified by disabled people as set out in "Fulfilling Potential: Making it Happen."

The Forum continues the engagement with disabled people and their organisations that led to development of Fulfilling Potential, and recognises the expectation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People that disabled people will be involved in how it is implemented and monitored.

Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group on Disability

The Inter-departmental Ministerial Group on Disability aims to encourage and stimulate progress to ensure disabled people are included in society and have opportunities to realise their aspirations, building on Fulfilling Potential. Chaired by the Minister of State for Disabled People, the Group meets quarterly and consists of 14 government departments. The Group is working together to help coordinate support for disabled people and to identify what further actions can be taken. It looks to identify how Government can lead by example, identifying improvements in how it delivers services for disabled people, employs disabled people, and procures goods and services

Disability Action Alliance

The Disability Action Alliance was set up by the Office for Disability Issues in DWP and brings together disabled people's organisations with other organisations from the public, private and third sector: to work in partnership and deliver actions at a national and local level that will make a real difference to the lives of disabled people. Its members decide on priorities and which actions to take forward. There are around 300 member organisations, from all sectors, regions and of all sizes.

Strengthening Disabled People's User Led Organisations

We have long recognised the value and need for strong Disabled People's User-Led Organisations (DPULO's). These are organisations run by, and for, disabled people, making sure disabled people have their voices heard at

every level. Our Strengthening Disabled People's User-Led Organisations Programme promotes and encourages the growth of DPULOs, to support their work in building their capacity. We have already provided more than £2.9 million to over 174 organisations across the UK to take forward a variety of projects. In addition we have recruited eleven DPULO Ambassadors and six young ambassadors to provide advice and support to DPULOs across the UK to help them expand the DPULO network.

The Community Support Fund was co-produced with disabled people to minimise the negative social impact of the Remploy factory closures on the lives of the ex-employees and their families. To date the CSF has supported 302 disabled ex-employees into work and delivered 1745 work ready and social activities. The different projects are sharing their experiences and we will learn from them what works.

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