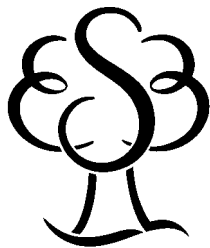


# JOINT INVESTMENT PLAN FOR SWINDON

## WELFARE TO WORK FOR DISABLED PEOPLE



**SWINDON**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Swindon  
Primary Care Group 



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## **Joint Investment Plan - Welfare to Work**

### **1. Introduction**

#### **1.1 What is a Joint Investment Plan (JIP)?**

While the government is strongly committed to providing appropriate support for those disabled people who cannot work, or who are beyond working age, it is recognised that if support to those who can work is to be optimised, there is a particular need to develop better links between health and social services, education, careers and employment services and the Benefits Agency. The Joint Investment Plan, Welfare to Work provides a means of addressing this. It will also ensure that appropriate links are made with other JIPs relevant to the client group e.g. the JIPs for adult mental health and people with learning disabilities.

The Welfare to Work JIP is intended to cover all disabled people of working age who wish to maximise their employment chances. It includes those who

- Need continuing support to remain in employment
- Wish to re-enter employment through (for example) re-training
- Are entering employment for the first time
- Are not yet work-ready but want to move closer to the world of work.

#### **1.2 Access to employment**

The Government believes that work is the best route out of poverty for disabled people as well as for others of working age, wherever it is practical. The White Paper *Modernising Social Services* sets as a new national objective for social services: “..... that people of working age who have been assessed as requiring community care services are provided with these services in ways which take account of and as far as possible maximise their and their carers’ capacity to take up, remain in or return to employment”.

Nationally, around 2 million disabled people already work and one million more say they want to.

The Government’s strategy for helping disabled people who want to work is based around four strands:

- Providing active help and encouragement for people with disabilities to move into work (in particular through the New Deal for Disabled People and the ONE pilots)
- Taking obstacles to work out of the benefit system
- Making sure that work pays
- Promoting radical change in the workplace to ensure equality and opportunity. With an end objective to improve outcomes for disabled people who need support to move closer to the world of work, to take up or remain in employment, the Welfare to Work

JIP will enable health and local authorities to contribute more effectively to the strategy.

### **1.3. Employment and the Disabled Person – Some Facts**

- Disabled people are only about half as likely as non-disabled people to be in employment. Employment rates vary greatly, however, between types of disability, and are lowest for people with mental illness and learning disabilities.
- While employment rates among disabled people are only around 40%, in 1999 disabled people made up half of all those who were not employed but said they would like to work and one third of those who were available to start work within a fortnight.
- Getting work is more difficult for disabled than non-disabled job seekers. Even after allowing for the fact that some disabled people cannot, or do not wish to, move into employment, the proportion of non-disabled people likely to get work is still four times that of disabled people.
- One third of disabled people who do get work will already be out of work again by the following year. This compares with one-fifth of non disabled people starting work.
- International Labour Organisation (ILO) unemployment rates for long-term disabled people are nearly twice as high as those for non-disabled people, (9.4% compared with 5.0%).
- Of those who become disabled while in work, one in six lose their employment during the first year after becoming disabled. (Each year around 3% of those in work become limited in “daily activities”, of whom about half also report disability the following or a subsequent year)
- Disabled people are twice as likely as non-disabled people to have no qualifications. This difference is consistent across all age groups.
- Employed disabled people are disproportionately found in manual occupations and to have lower average hourly earnings than their non-disabled peers. This remains true even after taking account of differences in age, education and occupation.
- Half of all disabled people have incomes below half the general population mean (often taken as an indicator of poverty) after making an adjustment for extra costs. Disabled adults in families with children are even more likely to be in poverty - 60% by this measure.
- Greater severity of impairment is generally associated with lower income
- Overcoming transport difficulties presents a significant challenge to the disabled person in all aspects of their life and may present a particular hurdle to the individual wishing to seek work

From research conducted by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, it is considered that many of the factors behind the economic exclusion experienced by disabled people are common to other groups in society.

Personal and job characteristics – such as low educational qualifications - associated with better chances of retaining or getting employment are similar to those that have been identified as pertinent to other marginalised groups, but the differentials – for example between manual and non-manual occupations, or areas of high and low employment – are in many cases sharper for disabled people. In addition there are barriers relating specifically to impairment, particularly for those with mental health problems or an impairment effecting mobility.

Employment rates for both disabled and non-disabled people also vary with the economic cycle, but appear more volatile for disabled people.

#### **1.4 Why the JIP is important for Swindon**

Swindon's Poverty Profile of June 2000 reports that the latest available unemployment figures of just under 2000 people, indicate that claimant unemployment levels have continued to fall. While the fall is broadly in line with the rest of UK, high employment may have its downside for disabled people. Although unemployment is low, the availability of unskilled work, "traditionally" the only work available for most disabled people, is quite limited. In an area of hi-tech and manufacturing industries, Swindon does experience some skills shortages and disabled people need opportunities to gain skilled or semi-skilled employment and need the training required to meet this need. As substantial development has taken place in Swindon since the mid 1980's when building regulations and planning control improved standards of access up to and within the work place, there are advantages for people who have difficulties with mobility seeking employment in Swindon.

#### **1.5. Disability and Definitions**

The Disability Discrimination Act describes disability as 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. For a disability to be considered as long-term it must have lasted, or be expected to last, for at least a year.

The definition of disability referred to in the Welfare to Work JIP includes physical, sensory, specific learning disabilities, mental health needs and disabilities such as epilepsy, asthma and diabetes.

The way disability has been viewed by society has been strongly influenced by the disability movement, academics and professionals. A number of models have been devised to attempt to explain these differing perceptions.

##### **A. The Medical Model**

This defines disability as an impairment which needs to be remedied. The perceived disability rather than society is viewed as the constraining factor. An employer may consider that the person's disability prevents them from undertaking

the job rather than the design of the environment, the way the job is structured or the views of work colleagues.

### **B. The “Personal Tragedy” Model**

This model presents disability as an individual tragedy rather than a social issue. This is reflected in language, which presents a disabled person as dependent on the help of others and is sometimes reflected in patronising behaviour.

### **C. The Social Model**

This model shifts the emphasis from the individual to society, arguing that it is society rather than an individual’s impairment that disables them from participating in society leading to social exclusion. This includes gaining meaningful employment. The model highlights the social and cultural barriers rather than the disability itself as the obstacle to equal opportunities.

(Source: **The Politics of Disablement**, Michael Oliver, Macmillan Education Ltd, 1990)

As well as the barriers to employment for disabled people, providers of supported employment may also need to address other issues regarding discrimination including those associated with minority ethnic groups, gender, sexual orientation, age and social background in ensuring opportunities to employment are not restricted on these grounds. Some employers may also require support and guidance on their ethical and legal responsibilities regarding equal opportunities and fair recruitment practices in these areas, while considering issues around disabilities.

## **2. Demographic Information**

### **2.1. National figures**

There are over 6.6 million disabled people of working age in Great Britain. They account for nearly a fifth of the working age population. The level of disability increases with age: only 9% of those aged 16-17 years have a current long term disability compared with 34% of those aged 50 to state pension age. (There are however regional variations in the incidence of disability which may to some extent be due to differences in the age profile of the local population). In 1998 the population of the Borough of Swindon was 173,769 which is predicted to grow by 6% or 10,500 over the next five years, this is far in excess of that expected nationally and regionally. A similar increase would be likely among the population of people with physical disabilities. Based on Benefit Figures in February 2000, there are around 108,300 people of working age in Swindon.

### **2.2 Locally, the number of people with disabilities is quite difficult to ascertain. Figures are collected in different ways for some service user groups, for others there are**

few statistics available. Some people do not want to be considered in statistics and some may feel threatened providing personal information.

- 2.3 Since April 1997 there have been 2,078 new referrals to Social Services from people with physical disabilities. 1,538 assessments have been carried out - an average of 512 assessments per year. This information does not include a picture of how many people are able or prepared to work.
- 2.4 The Report about Services For People with Learning Disabilities produced by the Service Planning and Research Database, states that in 1999 there were 695 on their register, around 600 people were of working age and of those 94 people have said they would like to work. This does not account for the number of younger people who have expressed an interest in accessing employment services in the next few years, considered to be around 60 people.
- 2.5. Mental health  
National estimates (see Table) extrapolated, suggest that an average area such as Swindon and District may have the following levels of mental ill health in the community at any one time, amongst those aged over 16 years

<b>Mental Illness</b>	<b>% Prevalence</b>	<b>Potential Swindon Nos.</b>
Schizophrenia	0.2 – 0.5	400 – 1,000
Affective Psychosis	0.1 – 0.5	200 – 1,000
Depressive disorders	3.0 – 6.0	6,000 – 12,000
Anxiety states	2.0 – 7.0	4,000 – 14,000
Often or always stressed	15.0	30,000

- 2.6. Head Injury  
No information
- 2.7. There are currently 766 people over 16 years of age registered with a Sensory Impairment under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act. Again, it is not possible to estimate the number of those of working age or the number of those who wish to work.
- 2.8. Number of people claiming disability benefits:  
Income support is a tax free income related benefit payable to all people aged 16 and over who aren't required to be available for work and whose income from all sources is below a minimum government set level. In August 1998 19.9% of those claiming income support were disabled.  
Disability Living Allowance (DLA), a non contributory, non income related benefit given to people who because of illness/disability need personal and or mobility help before their 65<sup>th</sup> birthday. There are two components (Care and Mobility) and there

are different rates (high, middle or low depending on the extent of help needed. The number of claimants in the Borough equates to 3.1% of the under 65 population. There is no UK data available to allow national comparison.

Disability Working Allowance (DWA) is a tax free benefit paid to people who work at least 16 hours/week but have an illness or disability which puts them at a disadvantage in getting a job. A claimant must be 16 or over and receive a qualifying benefit. (From 05.10.99 DWA was replaced by Disabled Persons Tax Credit) In Swindon 0.05% of Swindon's working population claim DWA. The percentage of the UK population of working age claiming DWA is 0.04%

- 2.9. Possibly the way of gaining a reasonably accurate picture of the amount of people with disabilities who may want to work, is to consider the claimants of disability benefits together with Labour Force Survey estimates. These state that 50% of disabled people are in work and that 16% of all of the people surveyed wish to work. (This percentage is very similar to the numbers of people with learning disabilities in Swindon who have said they wish to work). In Swindon in February 2000, there were 6,500 claimants meaning that there may be about 1,400 people who wish to work. Although from these figures it is possible to gain some idea of the numbers of people concerned, it does not take into account the number of disabled people claiming Job Seekers Allowance. There is also no way of taking into account the number of people who do not wish to disclose their disability when registering at the Job Centre.

### **3. Pathway to Employment**

The following pathway describes a process of assessment and enablement. It is expected that every disabled person, whether he/she needs support to remain in employment, wishes to re-enter employment through for example re-training, is entering employment for the first time or simply wants to move closer to the world of work will travel. For some paid employment will be an appropriate destination. The pathway however does not attempt to value paid employment differently from other forms of work.

For some disabled people, particularly those with physical disabilities and even some with learning difficulties, impairment tends to be constant, and so a process that "enables " people with these disabilities can often be understood in easily defined terms e.g. physical adjustments, job 'coaching'. Progression for people experiencing mental health problems – especially of a chronic and episodic nature may be more complex.

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation notes that although many disabled people do need help to prepare for work, particularly in identifying skills and aptitudes which they may not have been encouraged to recognise, research suggests that there is an over emphasis on this stage of the employment process. Disabled people have

become sceptical about the value of training schemes, which do not lead, to real, sustainable jobs with wages at the market rate for the job. “On the job” training may be the most valued and appropriate method of people being able to learn the skills required to carry out their duties. This may have the greatest appeal as people may be paid while being trained. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation also points to the fact that the needs of a working disabled person are frequently “everyday ones”. For instance adaptations do not usually involve expensive technology and often involve easy tasks such as changing the height of a desk, improving lighting or allowing rest breaks.

The disabled person’s need for support may not end when employment is found. Sustaining employment, particularly for individuals with a mental health problem may require the support of an outside organisation. However the presence of a supportive individual or a mentor, in the workplace can often be key to determining whether or not the disabled person is able to maintain employment. A supportive, healthy workplace where everyone’s needs are respected, is one in which disabled and non-disabled people alike can thrive. It should also be noted that a disability does not preclude the individual from assuming the role the status of being an employer in his or her own right.

The changing labour market offers both challenges and opportunities to disabled people. There has been much debate about “flexible” employment. Some forms of flexibility such as fixed term contracts and the use of agency staff may result in poorer prospects for disabled people. Other developments such as part time work, tele working and self-employment may offer benefits by making it possible to work flexible hours and accommodate needs arising from an impairment. Employers could offer these types of work as “reasonable adjustments” under the Disability Discrimination Act, but most tend to think only in terms of physical changes to the work environment. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation also notes that while the spread of new technology in the workplace is something that should offer benefits to disabled people, it may also prove to have a downside. Some disabled people find that new technology means that their “human skills” are undervalued, and that they are put under damaging pressure to increase their output.

Sources:

**Enduring economic exclusion: disabled people, income and work**

By Tania Burchardt

Published for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation by YPS

**Disabled people and employment: A review of research and development work**

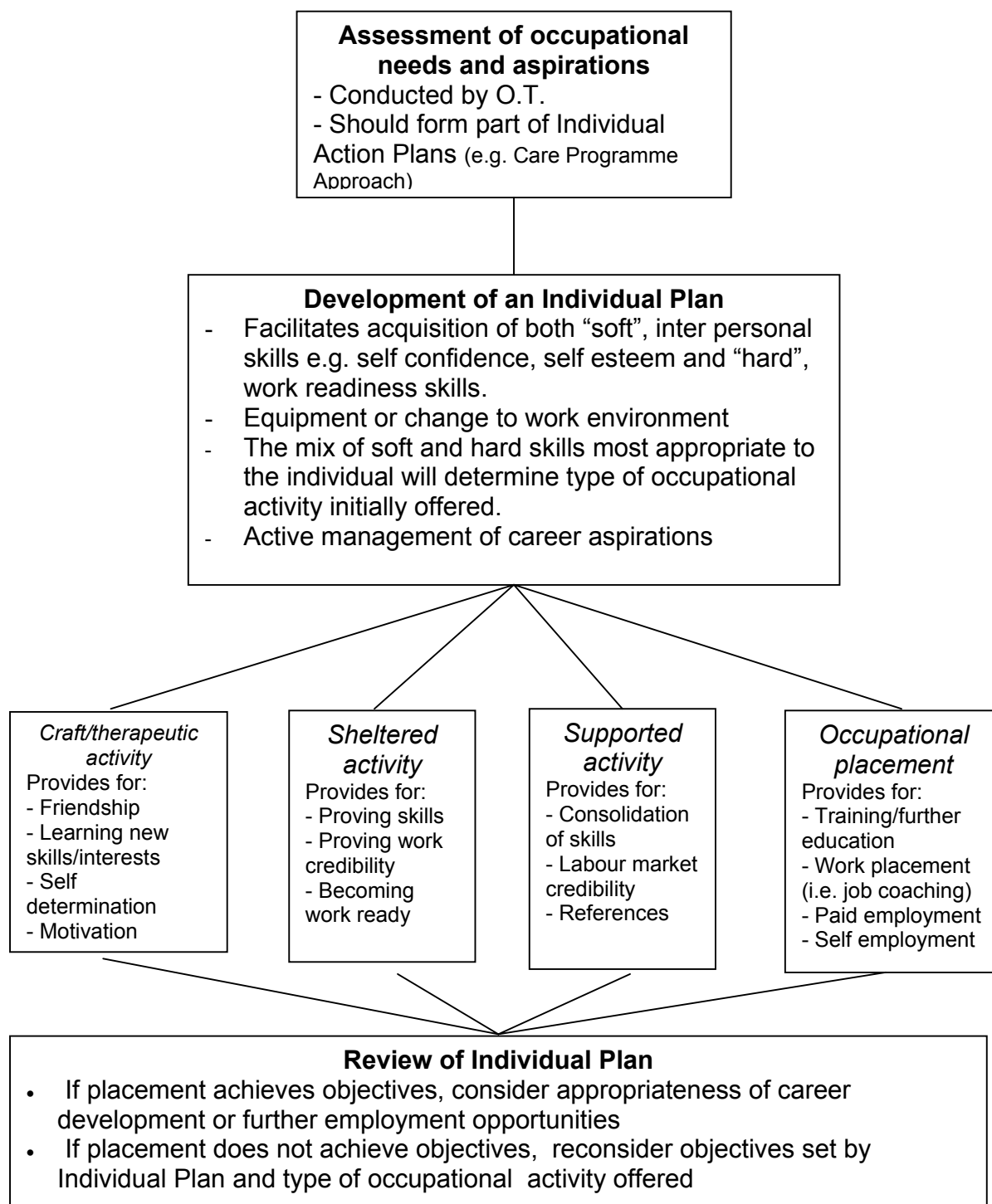
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Published by the Policy Press

**Poverty Profile, June 2000**

By Swindon Borough Council

## The Occupational Pathway



## 4. Consultation and Views of Service Users

### 4.1 Background

During the latter part of 2000, Swindon Housing and Social Services have collected information about stakeholders with an interest in Welfare to Work and the provision and promotion of employment for disabled people. This was necessary to “map” existing services while eliciting their comments on Welfare to Work issues. Information was also obtained from drawing on the experiences of stakeholders and making use of available data (for example Learning Disability Research database).

### 4.2 Views have been obtained from:

- Welfare to Work Stakeholder’s Conference – September 2000
- Providers’ Conference – January 2001
- Learning Disability Day Services Conference – October 1999
- Learning Disability Joint Investment Plan – Questionnaire
- Joint Investment Plan Steering Group Meetings
- Comprising of Housing & Social Services, Primary Care Group, The Employment Service, Workability, Connect, Working for Opportunities
- Feedback from Swindon People First
- Feedback from Disability Planning Group
- Feedback from Occupational Partnership Group (Mental Health)
- Review of the Clapham Hobbs Centre

### 4.3 General Feedback & Views across service user groups

4.3.1 Many people would like to have the opportunity to take up employment or take training opportunities that could lead to work. Work placements without remuneration needs to be relevant to a specific outcome, and require regular reviewing to ensure that they do not become habitually routine or exploitative in any way. Employment leads to *economic independence* or a way of extending social networks. A great concern has been expressed by both service users and service providers around the issue of Benefits. The rules regarding Therapeutic Earning, (remuneration that can be earned before Benefits are affected) are a cause of great anxiety and confusion. It is considered that national rules may not be applied consistently in local Benefit offices. People are concerned that once embarking on a placement, they may have their Benefits stopped as they are considered as being fit for work. Many service providers lack the expertise in being able to advise service users accurately regarding Benefits.

4.3.2 The level of wages that can be earned particularly during work preparation programmes can act as a disincentive to people from taking up such opportunities. Starting pay may be less than Benefit rates or not significantly sufficient for someone to withdraw from the Benefits system.

- 4.3.3 Some service users have said they do not have the confidence to return to or embark on employment or feel themselves not able to work. Some find their lives offer enough challenges without additional stress caused by work. Many question whether there would be patience from employers and fellow employees with regards to learning the work tasks. There is a feeling that employers need to be encouraged to employ more disabled people and once employed provide the appropriate level of support.

#### **4.4 Comments from specific groups**

##### **4.4.1 People with Mental Health Problems**

A major concern for people with mental health problems is that of the episodic nature of their illness. Many people may experience a relapse in their condition and are concerned that work colleagues and employers will not understand changes in mood or behaviour and will not be able to provide the necessary support, or ensure work may continue or resume after treatment.

##### **4.4.2 People with Physical Disabilities**

Regaining confidence particularly following trauma is a major concern for people with physical disabilities. There are obvious concerns about physical access and whether physical support or personal care will be available. Many disabled people have questioned whether there will be ways to overcome the issue of emotional access or whether potential work colleagues will be understanding, hostile or discriminatory.

##### **4.4.3 People with Learning Disabilities**

Perhaps the service user group who have expressed the greatest keenness in the world of work, feeling that it provides great opportunities to extend social contact and improving economic opportunities. For some, convincing their relatives/carers/parents that work is a realistic aspiration can be difficult. According to the Learning Disability Planning and Research Database demand is increasing for work opportunities particularly from teenagers who will be leaving school in the next 2 to 3 year. For some people with learning disabilities travel to and from work can also present a barrier to employment. While transport training can be provided, some may not obtain the skills needed to travel alone and alternative methods may need to be found.

##### **4.4.4 Carers**

For many relative carers, work is not seen as a high priority for the people they care for. Their concerns are more around the provision of care, support and safety. For the carers who do consider work to be a viable opportunity, the concerns expressed by service users around Benefits and access also apply. They also consider safety within the community going to and from work as well as safety in

the work place is a major consideration. Issues concerning carers remaining in, or returning to work will be addressed within the Swindon Carers' Strategy and action plan.

#### 4.4.5 People with Head Injuries

Although no specific feed back has been received from people with head injuries, the Head Injuries Co-ordinator for Wiltshire has found that there are difficulties in knowing where to refer people, and what services are available. Some service users have hidden problems that only become apparent once they commence employment. Additional to physical disabilities, some people may have mental health problems, difficulty with cognitive skills (for example memory loss and difficulties maintaining concentration) and often quite severe epilepsy.

#### 4.4.6 Employers

Although there have been difficulties engaging with employers, the Employment Service have provided details of what employers have said about the employment of disabled people. Assessments, if available, do not necessarily reflect the needs of the employer and any effective measure of employability needs to consider employer requirements as a benchmark. Employers require reliability and consistency from their employees. As long as these needs are met, employers are prepared to appoint people with disabilities. Some employers are more pro-active at expressing their intention and willingness to employ disabled people and will seek advice about reasonable adjustments and instigate adjustments to facilitate employment. The Disability Discrimination Act may help with the willingness of employers to consider employing disabled people, but employers need guidance and support in ensuring their responsibilities in respect of the DDA are met.

#### 4.4.7 Sensory Impairments

For people with sensory impairments, in addition to concerns about accessibility and the issues of support in the workplace, a major issue is the high cost and availability of special equipment. There are also difficulties with the availability of accessible information with regards to Benefit claims and information about employment opportunities and entering the employment pathway. Leaflets in Braille, loop systems and the need to use signers makes accessing services very difficult and generally means there is a need to give notice prior to making first contact.

### **5. Services provided to help along the Pathway to Work**

- 5.1 Swindon has a number of organisations working towards or participating in supported employment. For some their involvement can be around providing "soft skills"- the skill required to embark on the Pathway to Work, for others their involvement is more directly related to the provision of supported, sheltered or full employment. Some organisations may not consider that their primary aim is to help

the people they support into employment. Their participation in promoting individual rights, offering a support group role to service users and carers or by highlighting the difficulties the people they represent face in their everyday lives, must not be underestimated its contribution in moving people closer to the world of work. Examples of these organisations are, MIND, Mencap, SCOPE, Young Stroke Club, Headway and the Multiple Sclerosis Society. As well as the supporting role, these organisations will help people with the soft skills by helping develop relationships following Trauma and developing the individual's confidence - for most, a fundamental need prior to embarking on work.

## **5.2 Day Services**

- 5.2.1 In Swindon there are a number of services providing daytime activities for people with disabilities. With regards to work, these may not provide direct access to employment, but can develop the many skills that may help people towards becoming work ready. Activities may include numeracy, literacy, daily living skills, transport training and participation within the community together with skills that may be of a direct vocational benefit. Attending such services can also help towards relationship and confidence building and disciplines around time keeping and punctuality together with other soft skills required to encourage increasing employability.
- 5.2.2 For people with learning disabilities Upham Rd Centre, Open Door and One Step Ahead are centre-based provision. There is also Swindon Support Team, which provides daily support to people in the community. Assisting them in living in their own homes and encouraging skills which, as well as helping with living in the community, may be helpful in finding, securing and remaining in employment.
- 5.2.3 For people with physical disabilities there is the Clapham Hobbs Centre and Living Options. Both services can encourage people onto the pathway to work by increasing skills and in some cases, can help people towards gaining recognised qualifications for example NVQs and I.T. qualifications.
- 5.2.4 For People with Mental Health Problems, United Response provide a day service, the United Friendship Club which provides an atmosphere that is without pressure and which supports a wide range of service user needs including providing opportunities for individuals to develop skills and interests. They also develop self-help groups which can help people's self-confidence.

## **5.3. Supported Employment and Work Skills Development**

The following are the organisations in Swindon who provide direct support to people with disabilities or mental health problems who are interested in embarking on, returning to or remaining work:

- **Connect:** improves people's employment prospects by providing supported training and employment opportunities. This service takes people along a defined employment pathway that contains job advice and guidance, pre-vocational / key skills development, training and work experience. Support is provided at all stages by a dedicated job coach promoting full integration into the work place. This service works primarily with people with learning disabilities, however the supported employment model adapts to work with other disadvantaged groups. Connect is managed by Swindon Borough Council - Housing and Social Services.
- **Enterprise Works:** Managed by Swindon Services, Enterprise Works provides sheltered employment for people with disabilities either in their workshop manufacturing fencing panels, sheds and other garden items. They offer a printing service, assembly and packing service and will be opening a horticultural and training unit at Lydiard Millicent in spring/summer 2001.  
As part of the government's "Workstep" programme, from April 2001, they will be aiming to move a percentage of their employees into open employment by employing a placement officer.
- **Workability:** This is a work preparation programme that, via the Disability Employment Advisors at the Job Centre, accepts referrals for people with any disabilities to prepare them for work. This service is also managed by Swindon Services and has close links with Enterprise Works.
- **Working for Opportunities:** provides a means for disabled people in the Swindon area to register their interest in work and, at the same time, puts employers in touch with those people whose skills and experience match the job requirements. Employers can also join the Working for Opportunities Employers Forum on Disability that provides information and networking amongst employers, large and small, on disability related employment issues.
- **QEST:** part of the Richmond Fellowship, Qest is an employment support project for people experiencing or recovering from mental health difficulties offering training to improve self confidence and individual support in finding and sustaining employment.
- **New Dimensions:** Provide training, development of self-confidence and help with coping strategies, for people with mental health problems. This work contributes to the individual's ability to take up employment opportunities.
- **Living Options:** Works with people with physical disabilities providing training, support, work and social skills. Activities here can help to prove work credibility, develop learning skills, confidence, and back to learn skills and generally help people to gain work ready skills. This is a managed unit of Scope who have a high priority with issues relating to employment of disabled people.
- **T.W.I.G.S.:** (Therapeutic work in gardening in Swindon) Aims to provide an environment where people with mental health problems can engage in therapeutic horticulture, carpentry and arts & crafts. Their main service activity is designed to help people to return to work.
- **Goldfinger Project:** Is a project for people with severe and enduring mental health problems. It aims to help with motivation and confidence while developing work

skills training, work ethics and workshop practices. Other service users may access this service.

- **SCAMP:** Swindon Communications Project: Supports disabled people to use computers and can lend equipment to service users to learn skills in their own homes. They will train them up to and beyond a level of commercial acceptance to facilitate access to employment. Scamp may be able to make a major contribution in the sign posting of services around Welfare to Work in the future.
- **Taurus Skills Foundation:** This is a centre committed to provide opportunities for disadvantaged people wishing to gain a qualification, work experience or open employment. They specialise in NVQs in Warehousing and manufacturing practices and can help with interviewing techniques, CV writing, communication and presentation skills. In addition to this, Taurus operates EDT (Employment Development Training) which aims to equip their service users with the motivation and interpersonal skills and practical tools to secure employment.
- **Shaw Trust, SCOPE and Remploy Interwork:** are independent organisations promoting the employment of disabled people. They administer and monitor the Employment Service Supported Employment Programme, a programme of training, support and financial incentives to employers who recruit disabled employees.

## 5.4 Educational Opportunities

5.4.1 There are good educational opportunities in Swindon including some designed for people with special needs. For some, attendance on a college course, particularly “mainstream” courses, may be dependent on them developing some of the soft skills also necessary for employment. Some service users have expressed concerns that college may not be socially and emotionally accessible to them and need to develop confidence and motivational skills prior to considering further education. However, these difficulties are taken into account by college staff when developing a syllabus. In the future there may be more of a legal requirement on educational establishments to improve access and support packages.

- **Swindon College:** There is a complete range of educational opportunities listed in the college’s prospectus which may be accessed by people with disabilities and mental health problems via the enrolment process. Swindon College runs a number of courses suitable for students recovering from mental illness. These include art, IT, music, and woodwork. Other suitable subjects could be discussed, as they are willing to expand the number of courses on offer to people with disabilities. Entry requirements, as with all courses, need to be discussed and agreed. All students on all courses are entitled to extra support if required and where possible a support package would be identified as part of the interview/admission procedure. Most areas of college are accessible to students using wheelchairs. Swindon College have a number of sites in the community which may be more accessible for some people and more convenient. For example

Learning City in the town's centre where some courses offered are part of the college's Work Related Learning programme. They also run the Access computer centre and the Upham Rd Computer Centre offering I.T. assessments and development and future employment/vocational advice.

- **Aistone Special Education Unit** – Offer full or part time course for people with learning disabilities. Students can learn basic skills, which can help towards employment. At the end of their course some of the students may be referred to Connect.
- **Skill Base:** Offer courses to prepare people for independent living and work skills. They also arrange work experience and make referrals to other providers of supported employment.
- **New College:** New College offer a wide range of courses available to everyone, subject to their meeting the entry requirements or there being evidence of their ability to benefit from the course. Although they do not currently offer discrete courses for people with learning difficulties, they offer learning support to any student. New College is able to arrange personal care assistants for physical support needs, and/or educational assistants for academic support in the classroom. Additionally 1:1 tutorials exist to assist with study skills, and specific learning difficulties (dyslexia etc.)

Interviews are held with students who have learning difficulties or other needs with a learning support team, to ensure awareness of student needs, and that appropriate arrangements are put in place.

Emotional support is available from counsellors and the learning support co-ordinator will liaise with referral bodies to agree appropriate support strategies for potential students.

#### 5.4.2 Schools

The transition from school on to the pathway to work is important for young people with disabilities and it is necessary to enhance their prospects of future employment by developing the key employability skills. Involvement prior to leaving school can increase their chances of success although some may need further education before work placements. Involving carers at this stage can allay some of the concerns expressed previously. Service providers generally can help people once they reach 18 years of age and services may need to develop for teenagers between the ages of 14 (to begin the transitional work) and 17 years of age.

- **Uplands School:** This is a school for people with special needs up to the age of 19. Staff works closely with Connect to encourage the transition into work.
- **Crowdys Hill School:** Provide special education up to the age of 16. School leavers may move on to Swindon College prior to accessing supported employment services.

## 5.5 Swindon European Social Fund Partnership Bid

A partnership bid to secure funding from The European Social Fund from April 2001 for up to 3 years has been successful. The bid is concerning social exclusion and includes involvement from 19 partners, of which 8 are involved in work related schemes for disabled people. These include some of the organisations listed above – Connect, Qest, Living Options, Working for Opportunities, Scamp, Goldfinger Project, TWIGS and Learning City. There is also Back on Track who, although not primarily for disabled people, work closely with Lifetime Careers, to assist people who have had drug problems back to work or on the pathway to work. In their experience many of the people they are working with have experienced mental health problems.

## 5.6 New Deal for Disabled People (NDDP) Extension and ONE

The New Deal for Disabled People is a part of the Government's Welfare to Work agenda. It aims to support and test innovative ways of helping people into work if that is what they want to do. Aimed at people on incapacity benefits, from July 2001, this will introduce access to an employment gateway, establish a network of job brokers, encouragement for job brokers to be innovative and focus on outcomes to achieve sustained employment. Service user participation in NDDP will remain voluntary. Wiltshire (including Swindon) is a control area for the first year, and therefore is not included in the programme until June 2002. If the scheme is successful in other areas and is to continue, organisations in Swindon, who have submitted a bid for the scheme will then have the opportunity to run a project locally.

**ONE:** Is a government pilot (but not currently in Swindon) aiming to encourage clients to work where they can, whilst ensuring support is available for those who cannot. Service users entering the welfare system will be offered personal advice, access to opportunities and available assistance to become more independent through work. Where this scheme is being piloted, they are situated at Job Centres.

## 5.7 Advice, Information and Support

Throughout the process of securing employment, service users require advice and support from people who are aware of some of their specific difficulties.

- **Swindon Coalition of Disabled People:** Have a shop front in a busy shopping centre in Swindon. They offer advice and support for disabled people and have developed a personal advisory service. They also offer work placements to help people gain work skills and develop self-confidence.

- **Swindon People First:** Is a service user led self-advocacy organisation for people with learning disabilities. It provides people with information about their rights and supports people to express their concerns. As well as providing employment opportunities for service users on specific projects, they can also help people develop a range of skills. Swindon People First also run an Information Library concerned with people's rights, the law and advocacy.
- **Service Users Network Swindon:** SUNS is an independent organisation led by people who currently use mental health services. They provide members with opportunities to influence service provision, promote the sharing of information and participate in mental health planning groups. SUNS also offers training sessions and confidence building to its members.
- **Wiltshire & Swindon Users Network:** can support disabled people to participate in the planning of services and represent their views regarding policy development and change.
- **Swindon Mind:** Provides information for anyone with an enquiry about mental health. They have a wide range of information and access to the Internet. Advocacy worker provides support to people who experience mental health problems to have their views heard, particularly when attending meetings with professionals. Mind may be able to play a part in the sign posting of services. Mind also provide a befriending scheme and activities may be helpful in developing confidence and soft skills.
- **Swindon Advocacy Movement:** is a citizen advocacy organisation, which provides and supports partnerships between a citizen advocate and a person with a learning disability. The role of the advocate is to represent the rights, views and wishes of the person and the support them to protect their rights. This could be in relation to any issue in their life including securing or retaining employment.
- **Voluntary Action Swindon:** Produce a valuable community publication that is used to advertise jobs and publicises groups in the voluntary sector, forthcoming events and training opportunities. As with many of the organisations listed above, Voluntary Action are involved in The Swindon Information Federation who are committed to the "effective provision of public information in Swindon". These resources could contribute to improving the "free flow" of information around Welfare to Work.
- **The Law Centre** offer specialist legal advice concerning Welfare Benefits, Employment, Discrimination, Housing and Immigration. They also have a Disability Discrimination Project aiming to raise awareness of the Disability Discrimination Act. They run training courses for the public and publish a quarterly newsletter providing information and news in developments in their areas of expertise.
- **Lifetime Careers:** This organisation can provide careers advice, information and training for people who are unemployed, in receipt of benefits or working part time and wish to develop their career. People can drop-in and receive one to one career guidance and assessment. They provide support and access for disabled people.
- **The Employment Service** Disability Employment Advisors (D.E.A.): based at the Job Centre in Swindon the DEAs provide advice and information about all aspects

of disabilities as it impacts upon employment and training. DEAs can assist with issues around access to work and may be able to help with reasonable adjustment in the work place. They may also refer people to providers of supported employment and work preparation. They act as a link with sponsors of supported employment and sheltered workshops.

Also at the Job Centre there is Steps to Learning which provides advice on training and courses.

### 5.8.1 Funding for Supported Employment (and related services) 2001/2002

	Housing & Social Services funding	Health Authority Funding
Organisations directly involved in Welfare to Work	£428,113	£123,300
Support Advocacy Advice (NB organisations not exclusively involved in employment issues)	£85,371	£15,400
The employment service funds individual sheltered employment placements or work preparation referrals (Enterprise Works, Workability)		
Swindon European Social Fund Partnership (Including "non-disability" services) from 2001 to 2003 total £1.27 Million – This represents 43.9% of the total commitment, with the partners using other finances to fund the remaining 56.1%		

## 5.9 General Issues

Disabled people on the pathway to work may also need additional support to be available to them. This may include the need for specialist equipment which may be available either through Occupational Therapy Departments or funded via the employment service. Some larger employers have their own occupation health provision that can be utilised to enable continuation of employment and facilitate the employment of disabled people. Other employers need advice on reasonable adjustment; the action necessary to ensure disabled employees can access facilities and have appropriate working areas. Continual assessment and reviews are required to ensure additional support is provided as necessary or withdrawn if it is no longer needed. While in employment, some people may still require support in the other aspects of their lives. For example help with budgeting, available Benefits and healthcare needs.

### **5.9.1 Direct Payments**

The community Care (Direct Payments) Act 1996 gives local authorities the power to make cash payments for community care direct to individuals who need services. Direct payments are able to bring about improvements in the quality of life of people who would like to manage their own support. They promote independence, and they aid social inclusion by offering opportunities for rehabilitation, for education, leisure and employment of people in need of community care.

Real Home Care and Swindon People First can help people in obtaining Direct Payments.

## **6 Other initiatives and plans**

### **6.1. Joint Investment Plan for People with Learning Disabilities**

This plan has been developed during the same period as the Welfare to Work JIP. Regarding work, the learning disability JIP confirms the need to continue to develop employment opportunities for people with learning disabilities. Concern has also been expressed here about Benefits issues. As part of the Welfare to Work action plan, there will be a need for liaison with the Benefit Service, this may help in achieving some of the aims of the Learning disability JIP and the Welfare to Work JIP will feedback on any developments in this area.

### **6.2 Health Improvement Plan**

The Health Improvement Programme (HIMP) is lead by the Swindon Primary Care Group working in partnership with the Borough Council, Swindon and Marlborough Healthcare Trust, Wiltshire and Swindon Healthcare Trust, Avon and Wiltshire Mental Healthcare Trust, Voluntary organisations, users and carers. The objectives of the HIMP are to improve the health and well-being of Swindon residents through targeting priority health issues and improving the provision of co-ordinated measures that will help to prevent ill-health. Priority areas of work for 2001 - 2003 include:

- Developing comprehensive mental health services that will support users and their families and allow them to live as independently as possible in the community
- Developing services to support people who have had a stroke, including expanding community-based rehabilitation services to assist people at home
- Developing services for people with a respiratory disease, including support at home.

6.2.1 Common themes emerging for the HIMP are:

- Growing emphasis on preventative work
- Responding to users' wishes to live in their own homes as independently as possible with the appropriate support to do this.
- The need to ensure good communication and co-ordination links between all parts of the health service and other services according to the needs of the individual and their family.

These measures will help to ensure the continuation of work and the potential of people with long term health issues being able to consider employment or a return to employment as a realistic outcome.

**6.3 The review of The Clapham Hobbs Centre**

Over the last 12 months a review has taken place of the Clapham Hobbs Centre a day service for people with physical disabilities. This has identified the need for it to be more active in developing skills and to give people the opportunity to make use of community facilities and in some cases take up employment. This may be possible by extending the service to provide an outreach service and more activities that could result in gaining qualifications. Closer partnership work with The Primary Care Groups and Swindon College has also been proposed.

**6.4 The National Joint Strategy for People with Learning Disabilities**

This is a White Paper to improve the shaping of services for people with learning disabilities. The strategy was released in March 2001 and increasing employment opportunities is a major theme contained within the paper. It also addresses the need for public sector employers to consider their policy towards positive action in recruiting people with learning disabilities. (Comments received from stakeholders during the process of formulating this JIP have been critical of the low numbers of disabled people employed by the Local Authority and the Health Service. The White Paper also considers the need to increase such levels within Central Government Departments.)

**6.5 The National Service Framework, Mental Health**

Although there are seven standards within the framework, the standard would seem pertinent is that dealing with Mental Health Promotion: "Health and social services should: promote mental health for all, working with individuals and communities - combat discrimination against individuals and groups with mental health problems and promote their social inclusion".

**6.6 The Review of Day Services**

During the first few months of the JIP, Swindon Housing & Social Services will be carrying out a review of day services for people with learning disabilities. Judging

from responses received by the Planning and Research Database, improving opportunities for people to enter employment is likely to be a major focus.

### **6.7 The Disability Planning Group (DPG)**

The purpose of the DPG is to bring together the views of people with physical disability or sensory impairment and the statutory agencies to provide a focus for the development of health and social care services to improve the health and well being of disabled people in Swindon. It will develop and agree strategic plans reflecting both local and national policies and priorities for disabled people. The existing action plan is currently being reviewed and it is anticipated that Welfare to Work will feature in the updated plan.

## **7 Health Services**

These are provided mainly through GPs and the primary health care teams, community health services, such as speech therapy and podiatry, acute services, mainly through Princess Margaret Hospital, and a specialist mental health service. Swindon and Ridgeway Downs Primary Care Groups are responsible for planning and commissioning services on behalf of Wiltshire Health Authority. Agencies continue to seek to improve the co-ordination of services to improve the outcomes and experiences for individual users and their families.

### **7.1. Areas of work which link with Welfare to Work include:**

- The development of a care pathway for people who have had a stroke. This is lead by the Stroke Action Group
- The development of a care pathway for people with a head injury. This is being lead by the Traumatic Brain Injury Review Group.
- The development of joint community teams with Social Services

### **7.2. Agencies are working within restricted resources but recognise that improved co-ordination, communication and information sharing will lead to improved outcomes - outcomes that could lead to retaining or re-entering employment.**

## **8 Benefits Agencies**

It is unfortunate that the Swindon Benefits Agency was not able to contribute to Swindon's Steering Group in the development of the JIP. Wiltshire colleagues were more successful at engaging the Benefits Agency and the feedback received by Wiltshire is seen as being pertinent to Swindon. The Benefit Agency representative has stated that they need to provide their staff with disability awareness training and examine their practice regarding the accessibility of information and up to date advice. As the same regional office covers Swindon, this local office would also able to take advantage of this initiative. In turn, this JIP has highlighted the need to be able to sign post services more comprehensively. An area the Benefit Agency could contribute to and benefit from.

## 9 Conclusions

- 9.1 From the work carried out by the steering group and during consultations with stakeholders, a number of common themes have emerged which will need to be addressed within the action plan outlining work which is required to proceed with Welfare to Work issues. A strengths and needs, analysis has been carried out and identified the resources which are needed to bridge the gaps that are evident. Some potential threats to Welfare to Work have also been identified. One of the concerns is that some of the programmes for supported employment are outcomes lead and funding is only available on achieving the outcomes. For example, service users needing to achieve employment within 6 months of embarking on a programme. This may not only have the effect of deterring some people from starting work preparation, but may lead to providers needing to restrict their referral criteria, thus meaning some services are only available to the most able. Services need to be available for people with more severe disabilities, who in time and with the adequate support, could become successful employees.
- Another barrier to supported employment can be the National Minimum Wage (N.M.W.). This may deter employers from employing disabled people, as there may be concerns about productivity balanced against employer's legal responsibilities regarding N.M.W. This is a national issue which is being addressed by The Association For Supported Employment (A.F.S.E.) who are lobbying for flexibility around therapeutic work which can bridge the gap between welfare and work.

## 9.2 THEMES

### 9.2.1 Engagement with employers:

To maximise the work opportunities available in Swindon, it is necessary to ensure as much engagement takes place to:

- Ensure disabled people have wide work opportunities and increase service user employability
- For employers to have the means to say what skills potential employees need to have
- For employers to have information on their responsibilities regarding the Disability Discrimination Act and help and advice with "reasonable adjustment"
- Ensure employers are aware of the largely untapped work force which could contribute to their business/service
- Allay any concerns around National Minimum Wage

Connect and Working for Opportunities both regularly engages with employers. Connect are members of Swindon Chamber of Commerce and give presentations and network with local employers. Working for Opportunities have created a Swindon employers' forum to raise awareness of disability issues, promote and work towards best practice and increase employment opportunities for disabled

people. Employer's attention is drawn to the benefits of accessing a largely untapped pool of labour. Developing the forum will provide an opportunity in developing relationships with more employers and explain the support available while highlight their responsibilities.

### **9.2.2 Benefits:**

All stakeholders have stated concern about benefits and the complications regarding therapeutic earnings and determining what benefits are payable while in employment. This can be a major disincentive for people wishing to enter or re-enter employment. It is recognised that this is a national concern and employment concerns and disability groups nationally are lobbying for change. However, some stakeholders have questioned whether at a local level Benefit rules are applied consistently and in line with national guidelines. During the first year of this Joint Investment Plan, engagement with the Benefit Service is a high priority and following discussions to secure clarity about these issues stakeholders will be appraised of developments.

### **9.2.3 Sign Posting:**

The Pathway to employment identifies the complexities in being able to enter into or remain in employment whether it is for the first time or following illness or a trauma. It was apparent from the first stakeholder's conference in September 2000, some were unaware of the existence of all the organisations involved in employment related provision. They felt the need to capitalise on the relationships the organisations could develop. Improved communication, sign posting and partnership working needs to be an outcome from this Joint Investment Plan. The formation of a provider's forum to co-ordinate provision and liaise with each other is seen as desirable. This will also ensure duplication of objectives is less likely.

### **9.2.4 Careers advice:**

Together with sign posting services, there is a need to ensure service users receive advice about what career opportunities are available for them. A comprehensive vocational assessment process needs to be available to help with accurate advice and to increase people's employability. This will also help to increase opportunities for disabled people to secure skilled or semiskilled work.

Promoting choice and self determination of people through their involvement in personal planning, in deciding what type of job skills are to be developed and what career path are to be taken through structured work experience, need to be higher on the future agenda.

### **9.2.5 Identify a Lead:**

Stakeholders are keen to ensure that identified actions are taken and that the Joint Investment Plan becomes a working document and process for developing services and employment opportunities. It is the opinion of the steering group and other providers that to co-ordinate activities, there needs to be a lead agency

willing and able to devote sufficient time to the fulfilment of the Plan. Funding such work may prove difficult, but through a providers' forum an organisation may be identified able to utilise funding streams to finance this work.

### **9.3. The Future:**

The Learning Disabilities Service Planning and Research Database and the Joint Investment Plan for Learning Disabilities have identified that the demand for supported employment will increase over the next 2 to 5 years. 59 potential service users will be leaving school over the next 3 years and are felt to need supported or sheltered employment, possibly following further education at Swindon College. Data is not available as to the number of people with physical disabilities, mental health problems and head injuries who may be requiring services in the future, but numbers could increase by at least 6% over the next 5 years based on the predicted growth in population in Swindon. Following the first year of this Joint Investment Plan, the plan would need to be reviewed and updated to reflect the progress made and apparent increases in demand for services. It will be necessary to take into account and influence new initiatives that organisations in Swindon may wish to bid for. With improved liaison between all the stakeholders, proposals should have an improved chance of being successful in focusing their services to the client groups in the most need.

## Themes - Resources and Gaps

### Engagement with Employers

NEEDS	RESOURCES	GAPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support to employers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employers forum</li> <li>Providers willing to give support to employers</li> <li>There is an “untapped work force” who may be recruited</li> <li>Connect is a member of the Chamber of Commerce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Involving employers in Welfare to Work</li> <li>Employer’s awareness in The Joint Investment Plan</li> <li>Employers need to be aware of the benefits of tapping into additional work force</li> <li>Support need to be maintained once work starts</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flexible working arrangements</li> <li>Provision of reasonable Adjustment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Disability Discrimination Act highlights the need to make reasonable adjustment to engage employees with a disability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liaison with individual employers about how work arrangements may be flexible to facilitate worker with a disability</li> <li>Employers need guidance and advice on their responsibilities regarding this legislation</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of Workplace mentors</li> <li></li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employers need to be persuaded to enlist workplace mentors (from current work force) to assist people with disabilities</li> </ul>

### Benefits

NEEDS	RESOURCES	GAPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarity on Therapeutic Earnings</li> <li>Are service users aware that they may not lose all their benefits?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of stakeholders will to discuss issues with the Benefits Agency</li> <li>Number of services with the correct information would be able to advise service users</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Application of rules appears to be inconsistent</li> <li>Lack of information on rights regarding Disabled person’s Tax credits</li> <li>Need to ascertain classification of work preparation by Benefits Agency</li> <li>What benefits are available to employees with disabilities</li> <li>Information available to service users</li> </ul>

**Sign-posting**

<b>NEEDS</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>GAPS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information and advice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Swindon Information Federation</li> <li>Disability Information Service</li> <li>Voluntary Action</li> <li>Swindon Coalition of Disabled People</li> <li>Millin Advice Point</li> <li>Service Planning &amp; Research Database</li> <li>The Law Centre</li> <li>Swindon People First Library</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need to engage Benefits Agency in Sign posting</li> <li>Everyone involved needs up-to-date information</li> <li>Advocacy groups need the information. Do they need to refocus with regards to employment?</li> <li>Need to convene a providers forum</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal Support &amp; domestic help</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal support available through the Employment Service</li> <li>Direct payments is available</li> <li>Swindon People First</li> <li>Real Home Care Trust</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support at Home sometimes not timely - e.g. availability of carer before working hours</li> <li>Information is available but is not coherent \ organise this using pathways model</li> <li>Establish local policy regarding Direct Payment for employment?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to &amp; up-keep of equipment</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employers need grant support to make premises disabled friendly</li> <li>Need to identify funding source for equipment</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Advocacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of advocacy groups in Swindon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish employment focus for advocacy groups</li> </ul>

### Careers advice & increase employment opportunities

NEEDS	RESOURCES	GAPS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Availability of careers advice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some providers are able support people in this area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited specific careers advice for adult with disabilities</li> <li>• Providers need correct and up to date information about opportunities and where service users may receive support</li> <li>• Forum for providers of supported employment</li> <li>• Need to make full use of the involvement of training providers in the forums</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Links with schools, colleges, providers of supported employment, benefits agency and Employment Service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are already some good links with colleges (they are in the Employers Forum &amp; Joint Working Group)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to formalise</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accurate evaluation of people's ability regarding employment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providers aware of limitations of existing assessment tools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are currently no consistently used assessment tools</li> <li>• Skilled staff to carry out specialist assessments</li> <li>• The development of a comprehensive range of assessment processes</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased employability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing models of job coaching &amp; workplace mentoring</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactive work with employers to encourage workplace acceptance &amp; increase the "emotional accessibility" with potential colleagues</li> <li>• Improved links with employers</li> <li>• All pre-employment schemes need to have the equipment necessary to assess &amp; enable access.</li> </ul>

**Identify a Welfare to Work Lead**

<b>NEEDS</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>GAPS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Someone with the knowledge around Welfare to Work, benefits &amp; with the workload capacity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of people with experience around the provision of work for people with disabilities or with a keenness to ensure opportunities are available</li> <li>Number of support groups, charities &amp; disability groups who may be able to access funding for this work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Person will need the capacity in their work load to carry out this task fully</li> <li>Funding to employ lead person</li> </ul>

### Year One Action Points

ACTION	THEME (S) ADDRESSED	RESPONSIBILITY	EXPECTED OUTCOMES
1. Convene Service Provider Forum	9.2.2 Benefits 9.2.3 Sign-posting 9.2.4 Careers advice 9.2.6 Increased opportunities	Joint Investment Plan Steering Group (utilise existing groups to widen representation e.g. Joint Working Groups)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service providers aware of each other's work</li> <li>• Formulation of employment pathway</li> <li>• Each organisation able to provide advice on pathway</li> <li>• Providers have information regarding benefits</li> <li>• Links with benefits agency</li> <li>• Increase employability</li> <li>• Discussion on suitable assessment process</li> <li>• Best use of advice networks</li> </ul>
2. Provide local employers with information about the joint Investment Plan & increase employers involvement in existing forums	9.2.1 Engagement of Employers 9.2.3 Sign Posting advice 9.2.4 Careers advice 9.2.6 Improved opportunities	Joint Investment Plan Steering Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employers aware of the JIP</li> <li>• Awareness of training needs to increase workforce</li> <li>• Employers aware of available workforce</li> <li>• Disability Discrimination Act part of Employers agenda</li> <li>• Employers informed of DDA responsibilities</li> <li>• Increase work opportunities for disabled people and improve employability</li> <li>• Employers "sold" concept of employment pathway</li> </ul>
3. Engaged with the Benefits agency (action following outcome of action 1.)	9.2.2 Benefits 9.2.3 Sign – Posting  (Feed into Learning Disability JIP)	Joint Investment Plan Steering Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of rules around therapeutic earnings &amp; available benefits when beginning work preparation Etc.</li> <li>• Providers forum able to inform Benefits agency about utilising the employment pathway for claimants</li> <li>• Regular dialogue with the Benefits Agency</li> </ul>
4. Identify a lead to take Welfare to Work JIP forward	All	Joint Investment Plan Steering Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JIP remains a "live" issue</li> <li>• Liaison with Joint Working Groups/Disability Planning Group etc.</li> <li>• Point of contact for service development</li> <li>• Chair of Provider forum &amp; maintenance of link with employers</li> </ul>
5. Review JIP – Feb2002 Involve Service Users	All – Additional themes may be added	Joint Investment Plan Steering Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment of effectiveness of action taken</li> <li>• Evaluation of relevance of JIP</li> <li>• Amended Year 2 and year 3 Action Plan</li> </ul>

### Year Two Action Points

ACTION	THEME (S) ADDRESSED	RESPONSIBILITY	EXPECTED OUTCOMES
1. Establish vocational assessment tool & process	9.2.3 Sign-posting 9.2.4 Careers advice 9.2.6 Improved opportunities	Welfare to Work Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standardised assessment process used consistently by all providers</li> <li>• Service provision focused on individual needs &amp; requirements</li> <li>• Training needs identified – relayed to Colleges etc.</li> <li>• Employers reassured about employability of employees</li> <li>• Service users provided with accurate information on opportunities</li> </ul>
2. Increase employability	9.2.1 Engagement with employers 9.2.6 Improved opportunities	Welfare to Work Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skilled &amp; semi-skilled jobs may be filled by disabled people</li> <li>• Training geared to employers wishes</li> <li>• Educational establishments course design to meet training needs</li> <li>• Employers' needs met</li> <li>• New calls for bid on Welfare to Work initiatives are relevant to Swindon's needs &amp; service users' needs</li> </ul>
3. Ensure careers advice & advice regarding sign-posting is accurate & up-to-date	9.2.3 Sign-posting 9.2.4 Careers advice 9.2.6 Improved opportunities	Welfare to Work Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All providers &amp; “advice points” have correct information</li> <li>• Information is accessible, timely &amp; user friendly</li> </ul>
4. To update benefits information & ensure providers	9.2.2 Benefits 9.2.4 Sign – Posting  (Feed into Learning Disability JIP)	Welfare to Work Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders possess correct information to advise/reassure service users</li> <li>• Providers of supported employment aware of current benefits issues</li> <li>• Increased confidence in benefits system while embarking on the employment pathway</li> </ul>
5. Review of JIP end of year 2	ALL	Provider's forum Employers forum (Users' conference?)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment of effectiveness of action taken</li> <li>• Evaluation of relevance of JIP</li> <li>• Amended year 3 Action Plan</li> </ul>

### **Year Three Action Points**

<b>ACTION</b>	<b>THEME (S) ADDRESSED</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>EXPECTED OUTCOMES</b>
1. Establish provision to develop accessible employment	9.2.1 Engagement of Employers 9.2.6 Improved opportunities	Welfare to Work Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Established &amp; simple process to facilitate issues around reasonable adjustment and personal support</li> <li>• Employers continue to receive support in this area</li> <li>• Maximised work opportunities for disabled people</li> </ul>
2. Review effectiveness of providers forum	9.2.3 Sign-posting 9.2.4 Careers advice 9.2.6 Increased opportunities	Welfare to Work Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Membership of forum is complete and includes new service providers</li> <li>• Forum responsive to the needs of stakeholder and employers</li> </ul>
3. New initiatives are investigated & are focus on service users needs	9.2.3 Sign-posting 9.2.4 Careers advice 9.2.6 Increased opportunities	Welfare to Work Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calls for bids are relevant to need</li> <li>• Consider new funding from European Social Fund</li> <li>• Responsiveness to national &amp; local policy &amp; requirements</li> </ul>
4. Review of Welfare to Work JIP	ALL	Welfare to Work Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Judgement of effectiveness of plan (effect on benefit claims?)</li> <li>• Carry work forward into other development plans (local &amp; national)</li> </ul>
5. Consult with stakeholders	ALL	Welfare to Work Lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of stakeholders views of the effectiveness in Swindon's Welfare to Work programme</li> <li>• Feed views into new initiatives &amp; future plans</li> </ul>
6. Obtain views of Employers	9.2.1 Engagement of employers	Welfare to Work lead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish how effective plan has been in increasing the numbers of disabled people in work</li> <li>• Evaluate employers' commitment to DDA</li> <li>• Establish effectiveness of supported employment provision</li> </ul>