



**SWINDON**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

## **Supported Employment Strategy for Swindon 2018-2022**

Our vision is that all young people and adults living in Swindon have the opportunity and support to gain sustained paid employment or volunteering

September 2018

# 1. Introduction

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- 1.1 This Supported Employment Strategy 2018-2022 sets out Swindon's ambitions for supporting young people and adults with care and support needs to secure and retain employment. Councils can play an important role in helping people with a disability who are in receipt of social care to find and maintain a job, at the same time as managing future demand for council-funded social care and helping employers to benefit from a more diverse workforce.
- 1.2 We recognise work plays a pivotal role in defining an individual's quality of life and should be an integral part of a person's overall life experience. Studies have shown a consistent association between paid employment and better physical and mental health (Public Health England 2018). Research into the cost-effectiveness of supported employment for adults with a learning disabilities has shown that supported employment (but not voluntary work experience) is cost-effective in helping people in paid work (National Development Team for Inclusion 2014) With the right support, employment is an achievable goal for both people with care and support needs and young people leaving care. Our aim is to support these people into real jobs with the same terms and conditions as everybody else including pay, equal employee benefits, safe working conditions and opportunities for career advancement. We recognise that successful outcomes depend on strong and flexible partnership working to encourage young people leaving care and adults with care and support needs to explore employment as a way of improving their quality of life. Appendix A provides more information on how we aim to secure an effective supported employment model across Swindon using the evidence based model recommended by the British Association for Supported Employment (BASE: [www.base-uk.org](http://www.base-uk.org)), and Appendix B outlines the 'Top Tips on Supported Employment' developed by ADASS and BASE. This strategy outlines six ambitions to help more young people and adults with care and support needs to gain and retain paid employment in the open market, or gain another meaningful employment related activity by:
  - 1.2.1 Creating a climate of high expectation and aspiration for achieving and sustaining paid employment for Swindon's residents with care and support needs and young people leaving care, through shared corporate ownership and action from a range of key players from across the local authority.
  - 1.2.2 Ensuring there is effective transition from education (between 16-25 years) into employment and that young people are well prepared for work and have the appropriate support to sustain their employment.
  - 1.2.3 Ensuring there is a robust outcome focused approach to commissioning education, training, housing and support services that address the current barriers to employment, and leads to increased independence and improved employment outcomes.
  - 1.2.4 Engaging with the local business community to ensure that employment opportunities are available for Swindon residents with care and support needs and care leavers across a range of employment sectors, and employers have access to the support needed to ensure employees are successful.
  - 1.2.5 Ensuring residents and the workforce have good quality up to date information on the employment services and support available, and that there are well understood pathways into employment in place.

- 1.2.6 Ensuring the provision of a sustainable supported employment solution which aligns to the Council's priorities and maximises opportunities to use external and funding sources more creatively to deliver best value in terms of cost and outcomes.
- 1.3 Primarily, this strategy is concerned with improving employment opportunities for care leavers and people with care and support needs who are eligible for social care. We will also signpost young people and adults who have additional needs but not reliant on specialist services, to organisations that can support them into employment. We will work with partners to ensure mainstream services are more accessible and effective in supporting individuals who are disadvantaged into employment.

## 2 National and Local and context

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### Legal Framework

- 2.1 There is a range of specific laws which provide a backdrop to the council's approach to supporting individuals with care and support needs into employment. The Disability Discrimination Act (2005) and the Equality Act (2010), the Care Act (enacted 2014, updated 2016) set a framework for local authorities and employers to take active steps to consider disabled people's rights, and prevent them from experiencing discrimination in their everyday life and access to meaningful activity. This includes at work, when applying for jobs, and when using services.
- 2.2 The Welfare Reform Act (2012) introduced a wide range of reforms to make the benefits and tax credits system fairer and simpler. It aimed to create sustainable incentives to encourage more people to work.
- 2.3 The Government has also introduced a number of frameworks for improving the lives and life chances of care leavers. Care leavers are one of the most vulnerable groups in our society. The Care Leaver Strategy 2013, Staying Put duty 2014, Keep on Caring: Supporting people from Care to Independence 2016, and Children and Social Work Act 2017 focus on improving support so care leavers get the right support at the right time to help them make the transition to adulthood and independent living. There is a new duty, in effect from April 2018, to provide Personal Advisor support to all care leavers up to age of 25 when required. The Special educational need and disability code of practice: 0-25 years (2015) outlines how children and young people with SEND special educational needs/disabilities (SEND) and their parents or carers will be fully involved in decisions about their support and what they want to achieve. Importantly, it states that aspirations for children and young people will be raised through an increased focus on life outcomes, including employment and greater independence.

### National policy context

- 2.4 People with disabilities are considerably less likely to be in employment than those without disabilities; currently employment rates for disabled people are 31% lower than for non-disabled population (Commons Library Briefing, January 2018). Over the past 10 years, increasing employment and personalising public services have been key objectives of Government policy. Specific policies include Access to Work, Work Choice and the Work Programme as well as work schemes such as those offered by Job centre Plus. The Government's recent work, health and disability green paper:

'Improving Lives' announced a new Personal Support Package for providing better employment support to people with care and support needs to help them move closer to the labour market and into employment.

- 2.5 National indicators (NHS Digital 2017) show that the proportion of working-age adults with learning disabilities who are receiving long-term social care support and are also in paid employment has fallen every year over the last three years, from 6% in 2014/15, to 5.8% in 2015/16, and then 5.7% in 2016/17. There is also a big variation in reported employment rates between local authorities. Although volunteering and sheltered employment can provide a stepping stone to paid work, national research has identified that people who start off working by volunteering or in a sheltered workshop, frequently can get stuck in these settings and rarely – if ever – progress into real, paid employment. Evidence also shows there are a range of benefits connected to being in sustainable paid employment including increased independence, improved mental health, and the ability to learn and develop.

### Local policy context

- 2.6 This Supported Employment Strategy supports Swindon's vision as outlined in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy that everyone lives a safe, fulfilling and independent life and is supported by thriving and connected communities. Three of the priority outcomes for action set out in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy relate to this strategy:

2.6.1 Priority 2: Adults and older people in Swindon are living healthier and more independent lives;

2.6.2 Priority 3: Improved health outcomes for disadvantaged and vulnerable communities (including adults with long term conditions, learning disabilities, physical disabilities or mental health problems)

2.6.3 Priority 4: Improved mental health, wellbeing and resilience for all

- 2.7 The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Swindon (JSNA 2016/17) helps us understand the current health and wellbeing needs of local people, how their needs are currently being met, what their future needs are likely to be and how these can be best met going forward. It also highlights health inequalities and the social factors that have an impact on people's health and wellbeing. These are key to informing our Supported Employment priorities and plan. The full JSNA is available on the website: <http://www.swindonjsna.co.uk/dna>

- 2.8 The overall aims and objectives for ensuring vulnerable people are able to access employment is also outlined in Swindon's Economic Strategy and Swindon's Skills and Employment Board Strategy 2017-2020 and includes the following:

2.8.1 Support the social inclusion agenda by reducing the proportion of young people who are not in education employment or training (NEET) and increase the number of vulnerable residents including Care Leavers and those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) accessing education, employment and training.

2.8.2 Support Adults with Learning Disabilities to access employment.

2.9 Swindon Borough Council is committed to ensuring people are able to live as independently as possible with the support they need, and people have the right skills and support to access work. This is set out in the Council's 2016-2020 Plan: 'Vision for Swindon: How are we going to get there?'

2.9.1 Priority 2: Offer education opportunities that lead to the right skills and right jobs in the right places;

2.9.2 Priority 4: to help people to help themselves while always protecting our most vulnerable children and adults.

2.10 Swindon Borough Council has pledged to increase the percentage of adults with learning disabilities who are in employment (Pledge 29), and to increase the percentage of Care Leavers who are in education, employment or training (Pledge 27).

2.11 The number of people with learning disabilities, and the number of care leavers who are in paid employment in Swindon are lower than in many other areas of the country. We want to help more care leavers and people with learning disabilities to get into paid employment. We recognise the need for an employment culture shift amongst social care workers, education workers, providers and other frontline staff to be more ambitious for both people with disabilities and care leavers. This includes raising aspirations from a young age, raising expectations of family parents/carers, improving transition from education to work, providing pathways and ensuring good preparation. We also need to actively engage and gain commitment from employers – public, private, voluntary sectors to achieve our ambition. Current performance and targets for the areas that have been prioritised for improvement over the next five years are given in the table below:

Target Group	Target for March 2022	SBC Performance as at March 2018
Adults with Learning Disability	Increase the percentage of Adults with a Learning Disability who are known to Adult Social Care in paid employment to 10% by March 2022.	At March 2018, 5.6 % of Adults with a Learning Disability known to Adult social care who are in paid employment
Care Leavers	To increase the percentage of Care Leavers in education, employment and training to 75% by March 2022.	March 2018, 64.46% of care leavers are in a positive destination, 36% of care leavers are not in education, employment or training.
Young people 16/17	To increase the percentage of 16 and 17 year olds in learning to 95% by March 2022 (reduce number not in education, employment or training NEETs/unknowns)	March 2018, 92% of 16 and 17 year olds are in learning.

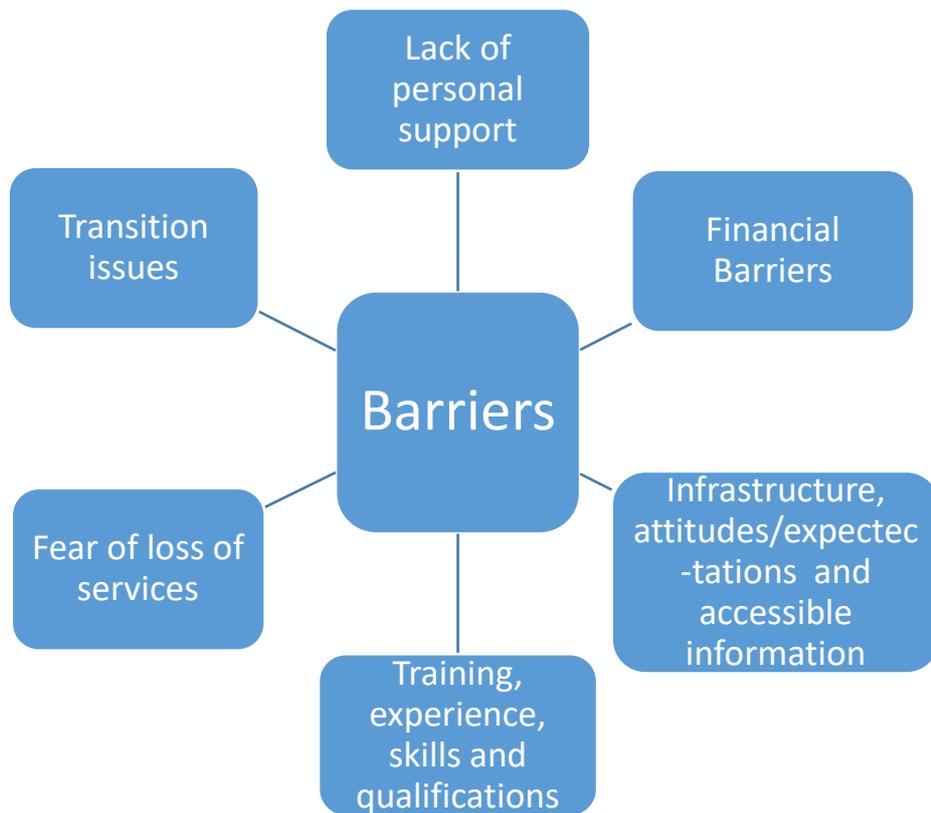
## Swindon Borough Council's Supported Employment Model

- 2.12 Swindon Borough Council currently invests a total of £463K to support adults with care and support needs to gain employment, of which £299K funds Enterprise Works, and £164K funds the Supported Employment Team. These services were transferred from SEQOL to Swindon Borough Council in October 2016.
- 2.13 Enterprise Works provides Supported Employment opportunities to those individuals who have a disability (physical or mental). It offers opportunities for trainees to gain workplace experience through a structured training and support programme, with the aim of progressing into paid employment in the wider workplace. Enterprise Works is presenting a significant cost pressure to the Council, it is not currently targeting the Council's priority cohort for supported employment (care leavers and people with care and support needs who are eligible for social care). The current model is not proving to be effective in progressing individuals to obtain and retain open paid employment. A review of operational arrangements and options for a future business model is currently underway to reduce costs and position Enterprise Works to support the delivery of the Council's Supported Employment Offer as set out in the strategy.
- 2.14 Until July 2018, the Supported Employment Team operated alongside Enterprise Works. The Supported Employment Team delivers Supported Internships and Building Bridges (an ESF funded programme that supports individuals with job searching, training and employment). Historically, the Supported Employment Team has not targeted those adults eligible for social care support and care leavers. As a Council, we recognise better co-production with partners to support individuals to gain and retain paid employment is essential within the context of decreased funding, more children coming into care and the projections of increasing numbers of people living with a learning disability or poor mental health. Future spend on supported employment must deliver best value in terms of cost and outcomes. Our aim is to introduce a supported employment model that provides meaningful paid employment, builds on individual's skills and talents, and provides progression opportunities. Our goal is to achieve a mainstream job outcome at the going rate of pay with support for both the individual and the employer so the position can be sustained.

## **3. Barriers to Employment**

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- 3.1 Research has been undertaken at both a national and local level to understand the barriers that vulnerable young people and adults with care and support needs face when seeking paid employment. Consultation with stakeholders has identified six themed barriers to employment. These are relevant to the majority of disadvantaged individuals irrespective of their particular need or disability, although it was recognised that some barriers are more closely felt by particular groups of people than others. More detail on the specific barriers are provided in appendix C.



3.2 We have consulted with Swindon stakeholders to find out what they want from a Supported Employment Offer with the support of the Learning Disability Partnership Board and Swindon Advocacy Movement (SAM). Feedback was focussed around three key themes: personal support; practical support; and training, experience and skills.

#### **Personal Support**

- ✓ Skilled and compassionate advisers or support workers
- ✓ Personalised support that addresses the individual's barriers and issues, with appropriate signposting to other service where necessary
- ✓ Support that is holistic and flexible and enables the individual to choose from a range of activities or support options (e.g. one to one, online advice) to suit their particular needs
- ✓ Good trusting relationships between the individual and the adviser or staff supporting them who understands their condition or disability
- ✓ The availability of more intensive one-to-one support for those individuals further away from the labour market to help them look for and apply for jobs
- ✓ Individuals are enabled to live independently and support themselves as appropriate

#### **Practical Support**

- ✓ Practical help with finding job opportunities
- ✓ A quick response to requests for support
- ✓ Advisers to help the individual liaise with employers as well as help prepare CVs, job applications and covering letters
- ✓ Good financial assessment of the benefits of an individual moving into work, raising awareness of options such as part-time and flexible working.

### **Training, experience and skills**

- ✓ Activities that develop relevant skills for employment (e.g. training or education and volunteering opportunities) with appropriate support to ensure progression
- ✓ The opportunity to participate in training and education and volunteering as these are important in the journey towards work e.g. signposting learners to appropriate courses that link with their interests and will be beneficial to their prospects.
- ✓ Recognition that learning can help mental wellbeing and lead to softer outcomes such as improved confidence, motivation, time-management skills and commitment which are beneficial for employability.
- ✓ Volunteering being seen as a useful route towards work for some people as it enables people to experience different environments, builds their confidence before entering the workplace, can provide a means for people to get their 'foot in the door', and helps develop transferable skills.
- ✓ Volunteering viewed as a stepping-stone and not an end goal, with individuals encouraged to progress further where this is possible

## **4. Employment Support Provision Available in Swindon**

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- 4.1 There is a range of supported employment providers currently operating alongside Enterprise Works and SBC's Supported Employment Team. Current views from those working in adult and children's services is that there is a lack of clarity around what is available locally, the differing goals between providers, the incentives and target audiences for each provider, how support can be accessed, and lack of knowledge around the recent changes to the benefit system.
- 4.2 Local 'partner' providers have been analysed for the purpose of this strategy to provide a reference point. Appendix D provides information on the providers, type of need targeted, and type of support provided. However, we recognise there are gaps in the existing provision and most funded provision has strict eligibility criteria and lacks flexibility.

## **5. Our vision for Supported Employment**

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- 5.1 Our primary focus is to support care leavers and adults with care and support needs who are eligible for social care and want to work. We will also signpost young people and adults who have additional needs (but are not reliant on specialist services) to organisations that can support them into employment. We aim to support individuals to gain employment or work in the open labour market that is paid the prevailing wage or self-employment. Training, education, volunteering or work experience may be essential elements for driving this aim if they are part of a genuine pathway to real work.

**Vision:** all young people and adults living in Swindon have the opportunity and support to gain sustained paid employment or volunteering (*Swindon's Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017-2022*)

5.2 Our supported employment offer will:

- ✓ Primarily target care leavers and individuals with care and support needs who are eligibility for support from social care
- ✓ Deliver evidenced based outcomes so the individual's journey towards employment can be tracked, progress measured and services continually improved to meet needs
- ✓ Provide or support access for the individual to become work ready, access employment and sustain their job.
- ✓ Provide or support access to a range of innovative employment options and meaningful activities to meet the employment needs of the individual
- ✓ Deliver a sustainable supported employment service that levers in alternative funding streams and minimises any duplication to services available in the community
- ✓ Applies good practice models of supported employment e.g. individual Placement Support and Supported Employment Models to suit the needs of the individual
- ✓ Provide a service which is organised and located to facilitate maximum referrals from relevant professionals and easily accessed by service users
- ✓ Forge effective operational partnerships with other internal and external employment support services to ensure individuals access appropriate and available resources and services to meet their employment needs

5.3 To achieve this goal we will focus on what we can do as a Council, working with partners and local communities, to achieve the ambition of supporting more people from disadvantaged groups into employment.

<b>The Council will.....</b>	<b>Benefits</b>
<p>Ensure employment is viewed as a realistic aim for all individuals and that their needs are assessed to determine their future job and career aspirations and the skills needed to gain employment through Planning Live. This will be part of their personalised care and support plans (including Education Health and Care Plans)</p>	<p>Children, young people and adults with care and support needs will have the same aspirations about taking on paid employment as everyone else.</p> <p>Any assessments and reviews inform a plan that includes preparing for the world of work</p> <p>A culture shift from 'doing to' to 'doing with'</p>
<p>Target and prioritise supported employment services to care leavers and individuals with care and support needs who are eligible for social care support (have a care package) and</p>	<p>Service users' independence and income is maximised and self-confidence and self-esteem have improved</p>

tailor support to meet their individual needs	
Facilitate better working across the partnership (e.g. adult social care, Transitions Team, Leaving Care Team, Special Educational Needs and Disability Information Advice and Support Service, and Routes to Employment) to identify individuals who will benefit from supported employment services and ensure we utilise opportunities effectively including support from existing mainstream supported employment services e.g. Jobcentre Plus Programmes, Adult and Further Education	Individuals are able to get jobs which utilise their skill, qualifications and ambitions, regardless of their disability or vulnerability
Utilise opportunities from supported internship schemes and apprenticeships and promote these to employers	Supported internships and apprenticeships lead to sustainable paid employment as the individual has been equipped with the skills they need for work, through learning in the workplace
Work with employers to secure employment opportunities through developing and participating in existing employer networks, and providing advice and support to encourage appropriate opportunities for employment for people traditionally excluded from the workforce	Successful relationships with local public, voluntary and private sector businesses provide inclusive work opportunities and more employers are recognised as being Disability Confident
Ensure individuals have developed skills to enable them to gain employment	Service users will be assisted through all stages of a support plan towards employment and will understand their employment related skills and development needs
Ensure individuals are assessed and referred to the most appropriate supported employment related service that meet their needs	Service users are able to make an informed choice about their employment options and are equipped to carry out job and working interviews

## 6. Key objectives and actions to be taken

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6.1 This strategy has been informed by national and local policy, views of stakeholders and professionals, and evidence of good practice from effective supported employment approaches for people with additional health and care needs. The strategy proposes the following strategic objectives for 2018-2022:

**Objective 1** - Ensure people with care and support needs have direct support to gain and sustain employment and clearly outline the role of Swindon Borough Council and other partners to deliver this

**Objective 2** - Ensure job seekers are prepared, confident and motivated to find work

**Objective 3** - Ensure employers are confident to employ people with care and support needs

**Objective 4** – Ensure the transition process from age 14 fosters a culture of high expectations and provides high quality person centred planning with clear pathways to employment.

**Objective 5** – Ensure the workforce has the skills, knowledge and competencies to effectively deliver the supported employment offer

### The priority Actions for 2018/19

6.2 These objectives will form the basis of our action plan for implementing the strategy. An action plan will be developed and published within the next 6 months detailing the responsible organisations and officers for each action, milestones and timeframe for delivery. The headline actions are set out below.

**Objective 1 – Ensure people with care and support needs have direct support to gain and sustain employment and clearly outline the role of Swindon Borough Council and other partners to deliver this.**

6.3 It is the intention of the council to commission the most effective employment service to provide direct support to Swindon residents with care and support needs to enable them to gain and retain paid employment.

#### **Headline priority outcomes:**

6.3.1 To review and cost delivery models for a specialist employment support service and identify the preferred option for launching in 2018. This will include the review of the role of Swindon Borough Council and the contribution of other stakeholders and agreeing the Enterprise Works delivery model moving forward.

6.3.2 Review and create effective referral pathways and ensure all professionals can make quick and easy referrals

6.3.3 Ensure individuals are assessed and that they are referred to the most appropriate service to meet their needs

6.3.4 Establish protocol to ensure that all eligible young people and adults have a clear route to access professional support if required

- 6.3.6 To ensure the supported employment service has staff with the right training and skills required for delivering customised employment support and welfare advice, as recommended by BASE
- 6.3.6 Consolidate employment pathways for care leavers and adults with health and social care needs and maximise access to these pathways for individuals to achieve employment outcomes.
- 6.3.7 Supported internships provide meaningful opportunities in open employment.

**Objective 2 – Ensure job seekers are prepared, confident and motivated to find work**

- 6.4 It is evident that service users and professionals lack an awareness of the organisations providing employment support and advice and a lack of understanding between organisations of the roles each play and what they could offer. To create confident job-seekers we need to offer people correct, timely and tailored information so they can pro-actively consider employment and plan their career. We also need to ensure people progress to meaningful employment.

**Headline priority outcomes:**

- 6.4.1 Improve information on the Council’s website so we have updated information and advice on employment support, finding jobs, volunteering, work experience opportunities and apprenticeships.
- 6.4.2 Embed employment aspirations and experience of the world of work into care pathways and plans (e.g. Early Help Records and Plans; Care Management Plans; Education, Health and Care Plans) so individuals are appropriately guided and supported to access training and employment to meet their particular needs
- 6.4.3 Retrain the social care and education workforce to understand employment as a viable option for young people and adults with care and support needs
- 6.4.4 For Assessments, Education Health and Care Plans, Support and Care Plans to include specific goals for supporting progression to employment from an early age.
- 6.4.5 Conduct ‘travel to work’ risk assessments and support eligible individuals to receive travel training where appropriate so they can travel to work independently

**Objective 3 – Ensure employers are confident to employ people with care and support needs**

- 6.5 The Council will work with all stakeholders, in particular local employers, to promote the benefits that employing people with care and support needs bring to the business and to understand any barriers to recruiting and retaining people such needs as employees.

**Headline priority outcomes:**

- 6.5.1 Work with DWP and other stakeholders such as existing employer networks to raise employers’ awareness of the benefits of employing young people and adults with care and support needs with a particular focus on learning disability
- 6.5.2 Raise awareness of the support services that are available to employers such as Access to Work

- 6.5.3 Create case studies that demonstrate the benefits for employers and the support that they can access
- 6.5.4 Identify and share good practice from 'supportive' employers
- 6.5.5 Encourage employers to adopt recruitment and selection approaches that support individuals with additional needs e.g. use working interviews and work trials rather than formal interviews
- 6.5.6 Ensure that Supported Employment Services used have good employer engagement resources and specialist in-work support staff so that sustainable employment can be achieved

**Objective 4 – Ensure the transition process from age 14 fosters a culture of high expectations and provides high quality persons centred planning with clear pathways to employment.**

- 6.6 The Council will work with partners to help young people aspire to, and explore employment as a way of improving their quality of life as they prepare for adulthood

**Headline priority outcomes:**

- 6.6.1 To ensure robust and effective personalised transition planning is in place to encourage and support young people to move from education to employment
- 6.6.2 To ensure employment features strongly in information provided to young people and families/carers when they are planning their post-school future.
- 6.6.3 Provide more opportunities for open work experience and apprenticeships for care leavers and school and college students with health and social care needs
- 6.6.4 Support care leavers and young people with special educational needs to understand and realise their aspirations and ensure the right support is put in place for them

**Objective 5 – Ensure the workforce has the skills, knowledge and competencies to effectively deliver the supported employment offer**

- 6.7 The Council will ensure that the providers and services that are funded to delivery of the supported employment strategy will have well trained people who are knowledgeable, aspirational and skilled to make progression into paid employment a reality.

**Headline priority outcomes:**

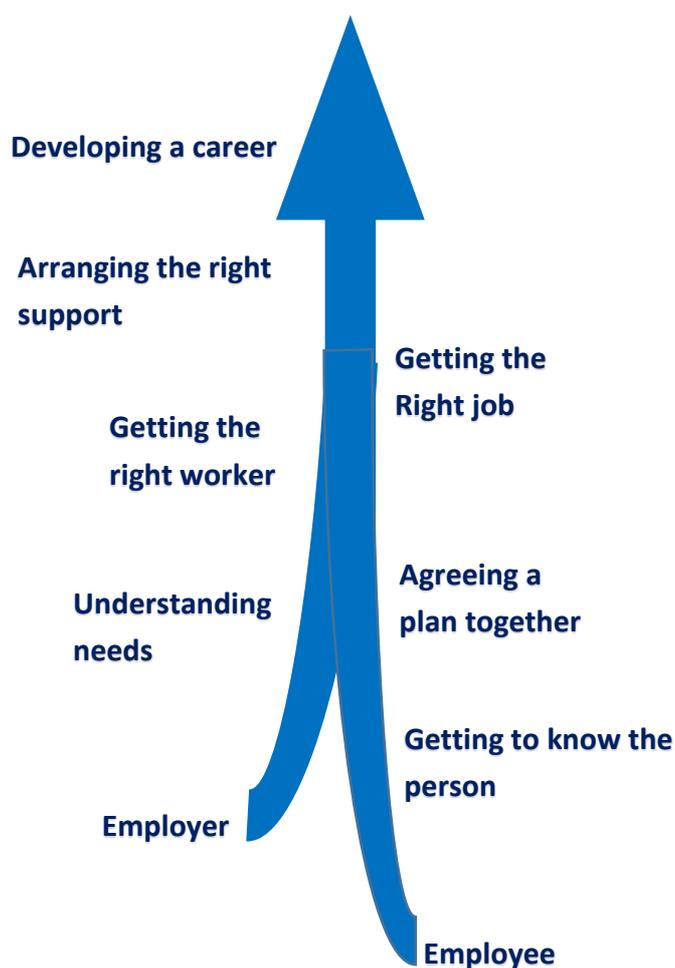
- 6.7.1 Explain and promote understanding about what Supported Employment means, what support is available, and the established referral and employment pathways
- 6.7.2 Develop staff to ensure people have the right skills and knowledge and the right tools available to deliver the Supported Employment Offer
- 6.7.3 Support staff to work collaboratively with partners to understand each other's roles in making employment an achievable goal for both people with disabilities and young people leaving care

## **7. Next steps**

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- 7.1 A detailed action plan is in development to sit alongside the strategy setting out how we will work in partnership with our key stakeholder to ensure successful implementation. We are in the process of setting specific, measurable, and realistic local targets which will be monitored and reported regularly to the relevant partnership boards and council committee meetings.

## Supported Employment Model (BASE)



### Support for Individuals not in employment

- **Participant engagement** to raise the employment related expectations of individuals their families and relevant professionals
- **Vocational profiling** to identify aspirations, skills, needs and job preferences to inform job search
- **Job match and application support** to increase the likelihood of suitable and sustainable employment
- **Employer engagement** to establish relationships with employers and overcome traditional recruitment barriers
- **Referrals** to external employment support organisations

### Support for Individuals who are about to enter or are currently employed

- **Job coaching** to prepare the individual for the duties and commitment of employment
- **Supported training** including inductions to the workplace and supervised learning and development
- **In-work assistance** that is individually tailored and acts to ensure that employees are fully supported in their roles
- **Guidance and advice** for both employee and employer to manager expectations and support the relationship
- **Referrals** to external employment support organisations

### Support for Individuals for whom employment is not the first or most suitable option

- Support into volunteering and community engagement as a means of progression



## Top tips on Supported Employment

To help councils provide the best possible support, ADASS has produced the following checklist of top tips:

- 1. Ensure consistent engagement with local employers.** Ideally, engagement with local employers should be cross-service (pan disability) to prevent fragmented approaches. A good starting point for getting people with disabilities into work is to set up supported work placements, working with local employers to offer meaningful work experience which aligns with DWP regulations and gives people the experience and confidence to move into paid employment. It is also important to make sure employers are aware at the start of their involvement of the support that is available to enable people with disabilities to work, for example the Access to Work scheme.
- 2. Strengthen the commissioning of employment services.** To be good commissioners, council teams need to have a good understanding of the evidence base for supported employment. Providing specialist training for council staff and signposting to information sources would help with this. With a more thorough knowledge of the evidence base, commissioners will be better able to specify the outcomes they require from providers and monitor the quality of internships and supported employment schemes. For example, there is strong evidence that fidelity to Supported Employment and the Individual Placement and Support model achieves better employment outcomes for people. Assessment and review provides an excellent opportunity to plan alternative pathways into employment, utilising the strengths, ambitions and interests of people. It is also worth considering strategic joint commissioning with other authorities, as this may widen the employment opportunities available to disabled people across a shared geography.
- 3. Model good employment practices.** There is a good deal you can do to lead the way in showing what good practice in employing people with disabilities looks like. Do not be afraid to be innovative and offer flexible routes into employment in your own organisation. Given the difficulty of transferring learning from one context to another, strategies like working interviews, job carving and inclusive apprenticeships are a vital route into work, but councils are too often reluctant to move from highly bureaucratic recruitment processes which may exclude people with a learning disability. You could also offer more supported internships, but with a view to having a paid job at the end of the placement.
- 4. Ensure co-ordination between education, children's and adult services.** The message you give out at the point of transition from children's to adult services needs to be 'employment first'. Young people with disabilities can aspire to, move towards and enter into employment as a natural sequence each and every time. To make this aspiration a reality make sure that schools and colleges are giving consistent, high quality careers guidance, to Gatsby Standards (see <https://www.base-uk.org/knowledge/benchmarking-careers-guidance>); that colleges are considering the ongoing support needs of young people who become employed through supported internships and that you are clearly specifying what colleges should be delivering to receive Element 3 funding. Make it a policy to offer better off in work calculations to families when young people are starting vocational courses.

5. **Make sure that funded services employ a well-trained workforce.** Individual Placement and Support specialists, employment advisers and job coaches require specialist skills and training to be able to do their jobs well. It is important that any services your council funds are employing well trained people and are not simply adding employment support onto support worker job descriptions (see [www.base-uk.org/nos](http://www.base-uk.org/nos) for the skills and knowledge required).
6. **Be clear about the desired outcomes and cost benefit case for investment in employment services.** There is evidence that supporting people with disabilities into employment can be cost effective, in that employment improves health and wellbeing and reduces reliance on health and social care services (for example, NDTI 2014; <https://www.centreformentalhealth.org.uk/what-is-ips>). It is a good idea to model the outcomes you hope to achieve from funding a supported employment service and to translate these into financial savings, to make the case for continued investment. It is also helpful to use grants for their intended purpose, for example Section 31 education grants
7. **Make use of the Social Value Act in contracting across the council and its supply chains.** The Social Value Act provides an opportunity for councils to create jobs and training opportunities via contracting in their own supply chains. You could use the leverage you have as an agency contracting with third party service providers to encourage and indeed insist that those contracts always include specific commitments aimed at advancing the opportunities for adults in receipt of social care to compete for and win employment opportunities.
8. **Improve information and online support.** Make sure that the information you provide about routes into employment for people in receipt of social care services is clear and user friendly. Consider using a variety of ways to communicate with people who may want to take up employment support, for example by improving the navigability and content of local offer  
  
Websites and hosting online discussion forums and peer support groups. In particular, make sure that you have clear and accessible information on preparing for adulthood and the employment support that is available as part of your local offer.
9. **Raise the profile of Supported Employment and Individual Placement and Support within Local Enterprise Partnerships and economic regeneration teams.** Employing more disabled people – a talent pool that is currently largely wasted – can help Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) to achieve their local economic growth targets. Building links with LEPs and with your own economic regeneration teams will help you take a strategic approach to supporting people with disabilities into employment.
10. **Support job retention, progression and career development.** The support you provide should not stop when someone gets a job. The employment services you provide or fund could play an important role in facilitating progression for disabled people within their current or to new employers. At the moment it may seem that there is no advantage to the council in doing this, yet helping people to progress may help reduce the need for people to use council-funded support and help manage demand for social care services. People who are supported to achieve in work are good ambassadors for the future employment of people who have a disability. They also help to challenge restrictive assumptions about ability in our communities.  
  
Websites and hosting online discussion forums and peer support groups. In particular, make sure that you have clear and accessible information on preparing for adulthood and the employment support that is available as part of your local offer.

## **Barriers to Employment**

### **Lack of personal employment support**

- People felt there was a lack of personal, tailored support available from both employers and employment support services in supporting people with additional needs into getting and retaining employment
- Job application forms are not always available in accessible formats which can prevent some people applying
- Some job requirements exclude people with certain impairments
- Some care leavers don't have a good sense of their strengths and weaknesses or knowledge about how to apply for a job (possibly due to frequent school or placement moves)

### **Financial barriers**

- Some people were unwilling to seek or take up employment as there is a fear they will be financially worse off if they come off benefits.
- Employment can leave care leavers financially worse off than being on benefits which doesn't incentivise them to get into work.
- Some care leavers do not know they can access financial support from their local authority to fund smart clothes and travel costs for interviews.
- Apprenticeships, particularly in the first year, are not paid well.

### **Infrastructure, attitudes and accessible information**

- Many people reported that there was still a lot of discrimination and stigma towards people with health and social care needs and care leavers. In particular, people noted that recruitment processes can be discriminatory and stigmatising.
- Few employers have the DWP Disability Confident Quality Mark
- Difficulty with transport including high costs
- Physical accessibility can also be a significant barrier to people with health and social care needs accessing work
- Poor housing, either because it is temporary or unsuitable, impacts on being able to hold down a job.
- Poor physical and mental health makes it harder to maintain jobs when extra time is needed for appointments
- Some people conceal mental health problems from their employers because they fear losing their job, or looking weak.

## **Training, experience, skills and qualifications**

- Many people identified a skills gap (e.g. IT skills, literacy and numeracy) and highlighted the need for additional training and skills support mentioning the opportunity for work placements, apprenticeships, advocacy, peer/buddy support, job coaching and further education opportunities
- People mentioned having low levels of confidence and self-esteem
- Although apprenticeships are seen as a good employment option for young people, the GCSE entry requirements can be a barrier.
- There is limited provision outside of the traditional college setting

## **A fear of loss of services**

- Some people and their families fear the loss of their services or benefits if they enter into employment

## **Transition issues**

- Sometimes there is inadequate support for young people and their families to understand and realise their aspirations for adulthood including employment
- Sometimes there is a lack of support planning or person-centred planning to help young people think about work before they leave school, and many young people with a disability do not have the opportunity for quality work experience
- Some young people have not had the opportunity to develop key social, emotional and employability skills, attitudes and behaviours and not had the experience of work through a part-time job.

## Appendix D

**Analysis of the Current Supported Employment market in Swindon**

Provider Name	Programmes delivered	Web	Address
InnerFlame	CV writing workshops, mock interviews, SHINE Mentors, Guest Speakers. Courses such as: Get on Tack, First Tracks, Princes Trust Team Programme (12 week course) to develop essential skills required for employment & life. SHINE	<a href="https://innerflame.org.uk">https://innerflame.org.uk</a>	The Shaftesbury Centre, Percy Street, Swindon. SN2 2AZ
SAM (Swindon Advocacy Movement)	Advocacy for SEND, IMCA Advocacy, IMCA DoLs Advocacy, Parent Advocacy, BUDDIES project: walking grp. maths & English peer support, men's grp., eating out grp, short courses on: cookery, confidence, and computer skills. Get Connected introduction to the internet promoting, self-help, volunteering, employment, independent living.	<a href="http://www.swindonadvocacy.org.uk">www.swindonadvocacy.org.uk</a>	Sanford House, Sandford Street, Swindon SN1 1QH
Swindon MIND	Be Active Prog. 14+ (swimming, yoga, netball football cost is either free or up to £3., Employment- Job club, counselling for self-harm (Self Harmony)Volunteering, Youth Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)	<a href="http://www.swindonmind.org">www.swindonmind.org</a>	Swindon Advice & Support Centre, Sandford House, Sandford Street, Swindon. SN1 1HE

Richmond Fellowship	Help people look for & apply for work. Voluntary work, training. Stress management within the workplace. Advice to employers employing people with mental health problems.	<a href="http://www.richmondfellowship.org.uk">www.richmondfellowship.org.uk</a>	Swindon Advice & Support Centre, Sandford House, Sandford Street, Swindon. SN1 1HE
IPSUM Care (formerly SWADS)		-	
DHI	Info, Advice & Brokerage, Families & Carers Services, Housing & Support. Drug & Alcohol Harm Reduction, Support Planning & Direct Payment Services, Patient Support (Social Prescribing), Drug & Alcohol Structured Intervention, Naloxone & 'Save a Life' Training, Employment & Training. Volunteering roles in Community Wellbeing Projects, Young People's Drug & Alcohol Support	<a href="http://www.dhi.org.uk">www.dhi.org.uk</a>	Swindon Support & Advice Centre, Sandford House, Sandford Street, Swindon SN1 1QH
PLUSS	Traineeships, Work Trials, Ongoing training, Job coaching, Personal Development, Benefits advice	<a href="http://www.pluss.org.uk">www.pluss.org.uk</a>	Suite A, 1st Floor, Wiltshire Court, Farnsby Street, Swindon. SN1 5AH

<p>TWIGS (therapeutic work in gardening in Swindon) &amp; The Olive Tree Café</p>	<p>Gardens, Crafts &amp; Café therapeutic, confidence building, self-esteem &amp; to learn new skills</p>	<p><a href="https://twigscommunitygardens.org.uk">https://twigscommunitygardens.org.uk</a></p>	<p>Twigs, Manor Garden Centre, Cheney Manor Industrial Estate, Swindon, SN2 2QJ</p>
<p>Phoenix Enterprises</p>	<p>Support, Training &amp; Employment opportunities with adults experiencing short or long term mental health problems, 24 hr. emergency phone service. 1:1 training prog. In wp, budgeting, life skills, CV writing, maths &amp; English improvement &amp; IT. A Day Centre. Wk. with local companies to bring in contracts so members get genuine wk. exp. in mails services, packing &amp; assembly services</p>	<p><a href="https://www.phoenixenterprises.co.uk">https://www.phoenixenterprises.co.uk</a></p>	<p>Phoenix Enterprises, Unit A4, Stepenson Road, Groundwell Industrial Est., Swindon. SN25 5AX</p>
<p>SMASH</p>	<p>Voluntary based mentoring (with goals - personal, academic or social) confidence building. Memory Makers for children 8-12, (mtg. their mentor once a fortnight &amp; help them build happy childhood memories, i.e. a movie trip, eating out or fun activity)</p>	<p><a href="http://www.smashyouthproject.co.uk">www.smashyouthproject.co.uk</a></p>	<p>Pinetrees Community Centre, The Circle, pinehurst, Swindon. SN2 1QR</p>

STEP (Swindon 10-18 Project	Volunteering. Programmes delivered are for young people aged 10-18 (or 7-9). Having difficulties with bullying, friendships, struggling at sch., anger, anti-social behaviour, making unsafe choices. There are 3 groups Therapeutic Service (9-18 yr olds) 6-8 pm. Junior STEP (7-11 yr olds) 6-7.30pm. Saturday Grp. specifically for young people with disabilities (10-18 yr olds) every 2nd Saturdays. The grps. involve activities - art, drama, sports, games, cooking etc.	<a href="http://www.swindonstep.org.uk">www.swindonstep.org.uk</a>	Swindon 10-18 Project, Nythe Centre, The Drive, Swindon. SN3 3RD
Wise Ability	The Ucan Project arranges volunteering opportunities, support with applications & interviews, job coaching, in week support. Mental Health recovery services, Reintegration of ex-offenders through training, emp. & other services.	<a href="http://www.wiseability.co.uk">www.wiseability.co.uk</a>	Temple Street, 2 Temple Chambers, Swindon SN1 1SQ
Green Labyrinth	Study Programmes, (educational prog. For SEN, mild learning difficulties & behavioural issues, other barriers to learning), Work Placements, Traineeships, Apprenticeships, Care Academy, Professional Courses, Online Courses		Temple House, Commercial Road, Swindon SN1 5PL or Bowman House, Whitehill Industrial Estate, Whitehill Lane, Royal Wotton Bassett. SN4 7DB

Pennyhooks Farm	Step by step work based training, 1 to 1 support learning through adapted Open Colleges Network (OCN) Countryside Skills Course, modules in animal care, woodwork, horticulture, rural crafts, conservation & cooking. (specialist woodwork teacher & skilled support workers) Student produce & sell a range of quality products in the farm shop, craft days & local outlets. Volunteer by: helping out on the farm, providing woodwork skills & stewards on open days.	<a href="http://www.pennyhooks.com">www.pennyhooks.com</a>	Pennyhooks Farm, shrivenham, Wiltshire. SN6 8EX
D.A.S.H. Swindon	Walk in Service Tuesday 2-4pm. Young adult Social Grp (18-30) meets at Oasis Leisure Centre Mon eve., (badminton, board games, reading, general socialising) Allotment grp. 1.30-3.30 every Wed... Volunteering Available	<a href="http://www.dashswindon.com">www.dashswindon.com</a>	DASH Sandford house, Sandford Street, Swindon SN1 1HE
UTURN	U-Turn is a specialist service providing help/guidance to young people (& their families) who have alcohol and/or drug problems encompassing all illicit substances, solvents & prescribed medication with skilled staff delivering: cognitive-behavioural interventions, motivational interviewing, specialist prescribing, individual one-to-one work, harm reduction advice, family work.	<a href="https://www.thedockswindon.co.uk/organisations/uturn">https://www.thedockswindon.co.uk/organisations/uturn</a>	Uturn, Restorative Youth Services, Clarence house, Euclid Street, Swindon. SN1 2JH

Headway Swindon	<p>Brain Injury Rehabilitation Centre offering a :</p> <p>Cognitive Rehabilitation Therapy Programme:</p> <p>in: Specialist Computer Software, Speech &amp; Language Sessions, Singing Therapy, Cookery Classes, Conversation/ discussion groups. Art Therapy. Quiz Group. Reading Group. Gardening Group.</p> <p>For service users &amp; their families to enable them to lead as independent lives as possible.</p>	<p><a href="https://headwayswindon.org.uk">https://headwayswindon.org.uk</a></p>	<p>Headway Swindon Ground Floor Avocet House The Dorcan Complex Faraday Road Dorcan Swindon SN3 5HQ</p>
NSPCC Swindon	<p>As well as our nationwide services like Childline and the NSPCC Helpline, we work directly with children &amp; families. Provide therapeutic services to help children move on from abuse. Supporting parents &amp; families in caring for their children. We help professionals make the best decisions for children, across the UK. NSPCC Swindon Service Centre offers:</p> <p>Hear &amp; Now Letting the Future In (An adapted version for children with learning disabilities) Parents Under Pressure Pregnancy in Mind</p>	<p><a href="http://www.nspcc.org.uk">www.nspcc.org.uk</a></p>	<p>5 Little London Court Albert Street Swindon SN1 3NH</p>

<p>Willows Counselling</p>	<p>Counselling Service in Old Town, Swindon offering help on the following range of issues:  Relationship Difficulties. Bereavement &amp; Loss. Redundancy. Major Life Changes. Childhood Trauma or Abuse. Dissociative Disorders. Trauma. Self-harm. Identity Issues  Separation. Abandonment Issues. Retirement. Depression. Sexual Abuse. Attachment Issues  Low self-esteem. Addictive Tendencies. Work-related Stress.  Training: starting at Level 2 &amp; continuing to Level 4.  CPD training is also offered for counsellors.  Training days &amp; short courses for those involved on counselling &amp; caring professions &amp; those involved in church pastoral care.  Willows offers a training programme for individuals interested in becoming counsellor.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.willowsscounselling.org.uk">https://www.willowsscounselling.org.uk</a></p>	
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InnerFlame	Volunteer in in areas such as: CV writing workshops, mock interviews, SHINE Mentors, Guest Speakers. Courses such as: Get on Tack, First tracks, Princes Trust Team Programme (12 week course), SHINE	<a href="https://www.innerflame.org.uk">https://www.innerflame.org.uk</a>	The Shaftesbury Centre, Percy Street, Swindon. SN2 2AZ
VAS & Disability Experts	Runs or helps administer some major networks/projects i.e. Swindon Sports Forum, Swindon200, Sanford House, Involve Swindon & SAIL Project		1 John St., Swindon SN1 1RT
Swindon Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)	Help, advocacy with, Benefits, Work, Debt & money, Family, Housing, Law & Courts, Immigration, Health, and Consumer. YOU CAN VOLUNTEER		Sanford House, College Street Entrance, Swindon. SN1 1HE (main office), Cavendish Sq, Park south, Swindon SN3 2LZ & Pinetrees Community Centre, The Circle, Pinehurst, Swindon SN2 1QR
Richmond Fellowship	Help people look for & apply for work. Voluntary work, training. Stress management within the workplace. Advice to employers employing people with mental health problems.	<a href="http://www.richmondfellowship.org.uk">www.richmondfellowship.org.uk</a>	Swindon Advice & Support Centre, Sandford House, Sandford Street, Swindon. SN1 1HE

Dial a Ride	Shopper bus, minibus hire, dial a ride car, community transport, day trips, holidays, Volunteering, MiDAS training for Volunteer Drivers (min. req. 2 years driving, clean licence) volunteer fundraising.	<a href="https://dialarideswindon.org.uk">https://dialarideswindon.org.uk</a>	Swindon Dial a Ride, Newcombe Drive, Hawksworth Trading Estate, Swindon. SN2 1DZ
The National Trust	Vol. In NT house, gardens, coast & countryside (potentially leading to employment), become a member for £6.40 per month & have free access over 500 places, Support Groups,, Travel expenses paid for vol. wk., training provided for certain vol. roles. Rewards for vol. wk. such as Christmas Party, Summer BBQ promotion of volunteer through local press or publications. Work experience.	<a href="https://nationaltrust.org.uk">https://nationaltrust.org.uk</a>	Heelis, Kemble Drive, Swindon. SN2 2NA
Building Bridges	Programmes supporting people across Swindon & Wiltshire gaining skills, access to education & employment, Volunteering, Sponsored Employment. Practical help to address Barriers	<a href="https://www.buildingbridgessw.org.uk">https://www.buildingbridgessw.org.uk</a>	c/o Community First, Unit C2 Beacon Business Centre, Hopton Park, Devizes. SN10 2EY
Great Western Hospital NHS	Work Experience for Year 10 & above but at least 14 years plus. (Cannot work in certain department such as A&E, SCBU etc.) Placements typically a week. very popular usually 4-6 months' notice required. Volunteering where Induction & Volunteer Training given age 17+.	<a href="https://gwh.nhs.uk">https://gwh.nhs.uk</a>	Marlborough Road, Swindon. SN3 6BB

STEP (Swindon 10-18 Project)	Volunteering. Programmes delivered are for young people aged 10-18 (or 7-9). Having difficulties with bullying, friendships, struggling at sch., anger, anti-social behaviour, making unsafe choices. There are 3 groups Therapeutic Service (9-18 yr. olds) 6-8 pm. Junior STEP (7-11 yr. olds) 6-7.30pm. Saturday Grp. specifically for young people with disabilities (10-18 yr olds) every 2nd Saturday. The grps. involve activities - art, drama, sports, games, cooking etc.	<a href="https://swindonstep.org.uk">https://swindonstep.org.uk</a>	Swindon 10-18 Project, Nythe Centre, The Drive, Swindon. SN3 3RD
SWADS	Talking Therapies, Creative Music Therapy, Creative Arts & Crafts therapy Programmes. Volunteering	<a href="http://www.swads.org.uk">www.swads.org.uk</a>	SWADS 13 Milton Road, Swindon, Wiltshire. SN1 5JE
Pennyhooks Farm	Step by step work based training, 1 to 1 support learning through adapted Open Colleges Network (OCN) Countryside Skills Course, modules in animal care, woodwork, horticulture, rural crafts, conservation & cooking. (specialist woodwork teacher & skilled support workers) Student produce & sell a range of quality products in the farm shop, craft days & local outlets. Volunteer by: helping out on the farm, providing woodwork skills & stewards on open days.	<a href="https://pennyhooks.com">https://pennyhooks.com</a>	Pennyhooks Farm, Shrivenham, Wiltshire. SN6 8EX
Volunteer Rangers Swindon Borough Council	Carry out a variety of tasks in our local country Parks, as well as manual you can get involved in helping to run, organise & deliver events e.g., guided walks, wildlife workshops, wildlife surveys.	<a href="https://swindon.gov.uk">https://swindon.gov.uk</a>	The Ranger Centre, Coate Water Country Park, Marlborough Road, Swindon SN3 6AA

D.A.S.H. Swindon	Walk in Service Tuesday 2-4pm. Young adult Social Group (18-30) meets at Oasis Leisure Centre Mon eve., (badminton, board games, reading, general socialising) Allotment grp. 1.30-3.30 every Wed... Volunteering Available	<a href="https://www.dashswindon.com">https://www.dashswindon.com</a>	DASH Sandford house, Sandford Street, Swindon SN1 1HE
Headway Swindon	Brain Injury Rehabilitation Centre offering a : Cognitive Rehabilitation Therapy Programme: in: Specialist Computer Software, Speech & Language Sessions, Singing Therapy, Cookery Classes, Conversation/ discussion groups. Art Therapy. Quiz Group. Reading Group. Gardening Group. For service users & their families to enable them to lead as independent lives as possible.	<a href="https://headwayswindon.org.uk">https://headwayswindon.org.uk</a>	Headway Swindon Ground Floor Avocet House The Dorcan Complex Faraday Road Dorcan Swindon SN3 5HQ
Volunteer Swindon	Volunteer Swindon is Website based & is a place where any organisation from all over Swindon can post details of opportunities, & ask for volunteers to help with vital work they are doing. It aims to work with local residents to help them make improvements to their local communities. Opportunities are listed on the Volunteer Opportunity Search.	<a href="https://www.volunteerswindon.org.uk">https://www.volunteerswindon.org.uk</a>	Volunteer Swindon Civic Office Euclid Street SN1 2JN

<p>Swindon Libraries</p>	<p>Free Courses:  Internet for Beginners, Ipad for Beginners &amp; MS Office for the Workplace.  Visually Impaired reading groups at central Library once a month.  Writing Groups &amp; Reading Groups.  Story &amp; Rhyme Sessions for under 5's (check local library for times)  HeadSpace: teen areas 12+ years available in North Swindon &amp; Central Libraries (graphic novels/magazines. DVD's to hire &amp; Free computer time).  Health &amp; Wellbeing Ambassadors: free &amp; confidential service (6 one to one sessions) covering a variety of issues.  Safe Place Zone; for people who require additional support when out including being safe from bullying.  Extended Access: out of hours access to the library 16+ years, a library member for at least 3 months, &amp; undertaken an Induction.</p>	<p><a href="http://www.swindon.gov.uk/libraries">www.swindon.gov.uk/libraries</a></p>	<p>Central Library  Regent circus  Swindon  SN1 1QG</p>
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