



Our Mission to Reduce the Disability Employment Gap

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**Resilience and
Employability Conference**
Unlocking the Hidden Labour Force





What are we doing to tackle the disability employment gap

Mark Dale, CEO Portland Charity



Outline

- What is the disability employment gap?
- Why does it matter?
- How does Portland try to close the gap?

Disability Employment Gap

The percentage difference between the number of disabled adults who are economically active compared with non-disabled adults



The size of the gap

- 81.9% of non-disabled people in the UK are economically active
- 53.9% of disabled people are economically active
- The gap hasn't really closed in 10 years though there are more disabled and non-disabled people in the workforce now

Source: DWP data on working age people (16-64) October 2023



Do local trends mirror this picture?

- The disability employment gap locally is consistently higher
- In Nottinghamshire the gap is 37%
- Here in Ashfield there are around 7,000 people on Disability or Incapacity Benefits (8.2% of working age adults, compared with 6.3% nationally)



Why does it matter?

- Around 15% of the adult population has a disability
- Being economically active is good for a person's income, health, self-esteem, sense of belonging
- Businesses and public sector need to recruit and retain talented people
- A quarter of economically inactive disabled people in Nottinghamshire equates to approximately 15,000 people – a significant hidden labour pool
- Inequality in the labour market costs the individual and the state



Is economic growth the answer?



Employers are the best answer

- Self-interest – more vacancies than job seekers
- Excellent retention rates
- Ability to tap into other resources to help you make adjustments (often free-of-charge)
- Typically much less expensive and quicker than Overseas Workers Visa Sponsorship



Portland Pathways – supporting disabled people and employers



Town centre locations in Sutton-in-Ashfield, Mansfield, Worksop, Newark, Kirkby-in-Ashfield



Our support for employers

- We don't get paid by job outcomes so we look for good matches between employer and prospective employee
- Provide post-employment support for the people we bring you
- Help with paperwork and arranging any extra support (e.g. Access to Work, Disability Confident)
- Advice and training on reasonable adjustments, disability awareness
- Help you recruit in a different way and enjoy the benefits this brings
- Our services are free to individuals and employers

