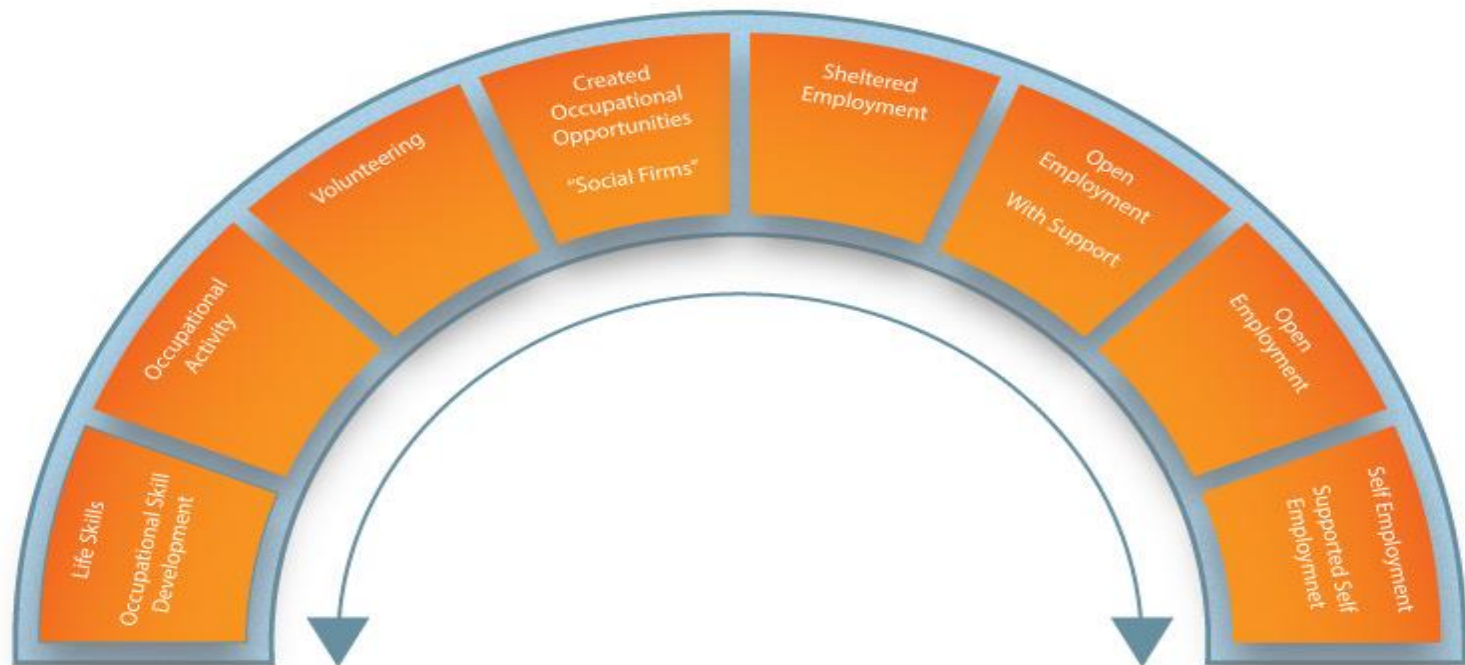


Employment and Autism : a strategic overview

“What I do”



The Occupation Spectrum

Employment within the Scottish Strategy for autism



Recommendation 26

'It is recommended that the supported employment framework for Scotland is evaluated in terms of its impact on employment and employability for people with autism'

Recommendations

Other recommendations refer to the more able adult with ASD, economic costs of autism and sharing good practice.

Goals

'Whole life journey' – 'transition planning across the lifespan'

'Personalised approaches' – 'consistent support across the lifespan'

Vision

'Our vision is that individuals with Autism are respected and valued by their communities and have confidence in services to treat them fairly so that they are able to have meaningful and satisfying lives'

Strategic Priorities 2015-17

What we will do next:

- Support One Stop Shops to become sustainable by embedding in local service delivery plans
- Continue to work across all sectors to improve autism practice through networks, good autism practice events and annual national events...
- Encourage innovation and improvement in autism services through Autism Funded projects and explore how learning...can be evaluated and shared wider
- Promote personal outcomes...by working to influence opportunities for people with autism in...young workforce strategy and employment
- Work with partners to improve Modern Apprenticeship opportunities for young people with autism
- Promote further positively evaluated models of supported employment

Scottish Strategy Development funded projects (Round One):

- ❑ Aberdeenshire Council: Support to young people entering work**
- ❑ City of Edinburgh Council: Support young people through mentoring into further education and work experience**
- ❑ IWORK4ME: Support development of self-employment as an option for people with autism**
- ❑ St. Modan's Academy: Develop work experience projects within the school**
- ❑ The Shirlie Project: Support transitions for young people after school**

Scottish Strategy Development funded projects (Round Two):

- ❑ Autism Rights Group Highland : Employment counselling**
- ❑ B A A G S: Set up an Employment transitions team**
- ❑ Cantraybridge College: Providing support to secure work placements**
- ❑ CEiS: To grow Specialisterne Scotland Ltd**
- ❑ IntoWork: Supporting finding appropriate and sustainable employment**
- ❑ National Autistic Society Scotland: Graduate employment programme**
- ❑ Values into Action Scotland: Promoting the positive benefits of people with autism to employers**

Autism Network Scotland – Employability Network

- ❑ Membership
- ❑ Aims
- ❑ Recurrent Themes

COMMON CHALLENGES (THEMES)

- Support for the person when they are in employment (the focus needs to be not just on getting into work but sustaining employment)
- Educating employers (that people with autism have a lot to offer)
- Reasonable adjustments (it often doesn't take much to make the difference between failure and a successful workplace for a person with autism)
- Understanding and flexibility in employment services, policy and systems (although there are some examples of good practice, statutory employment services are often inflexible and difficult for people with autism to negotiate)

COMMON CHALLENGES (THEMES)

- Atypical career pathways (people with autism often don't follow typical and expected career pathways)
- Negative public perceptions (shift the emphasis from autism being a problem in the workplace to autism being a positive solution)
- Isolated initiatives / projects / good practice (there are many examples of great practice in autism and employment initiatives but they are not universally available and we are often unaware of what is available)

COMMON CHALLENGES (THEMES)

- Complex policy / strategy context (difficult for anyone to negotiate and understand)
- Right person right job (if you get the right person with autism into the right job for then it will lead to success. This may require a more subtle approach to job finding than usual)
- Over 25's initiatives (many strategies, funding and initiatives are focused on the 'young unemployed'. Many people over 25 with autism have much to offer the workplace)

OCTOBER 2013 event:

focus on network and sharing good practice

OCTOBER 2014 event:

focus on engagement with Employers

OCTOBER 2015 event:

focus on the 'employment journey' beginning to end

What does good autism and employment practice look like?

- Individual approaches and solutions
- Accepting difference
- Focus on the task
- Accuracy and Honesty in advertising – recruitment
- Interviews- the best way?
- In-job career guidance
- Reasonable adjustments
- ‘Good autism practice is just good practice’

We know what works and a lot is happening so why are there still gaps and challenges?

- Autism is forgotten or hidden**
- The 'workplace' is increasingly social**
- Difference is increasingly seen as a negative**
- Lack of evaluation of different approaches to employability**
- Changing the attitudes across all employers is a massive task**

So what next:

- More research to evidence the challenge and the possibilities**
- Continue to make connections**
- Engagement with employers**
- Positive Positive Positive**

<http://employment.autismnetworkscotland.org.uk>

Autism Network Scotland facilitate the Autism and Employment Network which aims to provide a forum for sharing information and good practice, highlight common challenges and promote the benefits autistic people can bring to the workplace.

[Learn more](#)

Information for Employers

Information for Autistic People

Information for Service Providers & Professionals

Useful Links & Documents

Employers Project

Autism Network Scotland's Employment Network is currently raising awareness with employers about the positives of hiring someone on the autism spectrum, and what

<http://employment.autismnetworkscotland.org.uk/information-for-autistic-people/>

21:05
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Thank You

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