



Wiltshire County Council

Disability Equality Scheme

**Appendix 3 – Involving Disabled People - pilot
survey results**

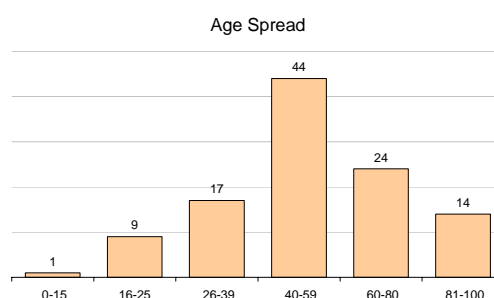
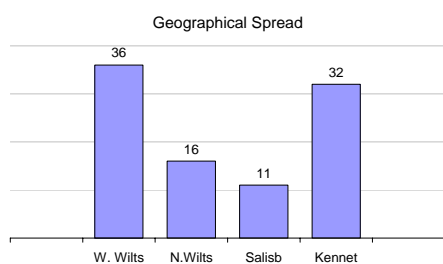
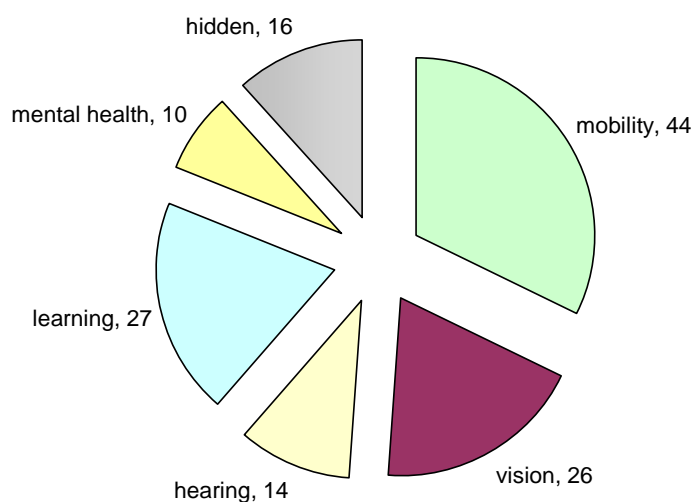
Participants

At this time (August 2006) 105 people have participated in recommending areas for change and putting forward their suggestions, including 20 carers of disabled people. Of these 105 participants, 22 are employed by WCC. The discussions are ongoing as this is a continuing project and the number of people participating increases daily.

As this is a qualitative survey, the proportions of 'disability' categories participating do not reflect the national average figures or in fact the figures available for Wiltshire. The reason is that the issues affecting some disabled people are much less understood and it was necessary to involve more people with these expertises.

The total of all categories is greater than the total participants because of some having multiple impairment.

disability category of those asked (105) at 14.8.06



The age spread (total participants 112) does not add up to 105 because 3 participants gave no age and when talking to carers - only the carer's age was recorded in 5 cases, only the disabled person's age in 8 cases and 7 recorded both ages.

Note: all graphs in this section can be provided with larger text on request by contacting the Equalities Team (equalities@wiltshire.gov.uk).

Issues Raised

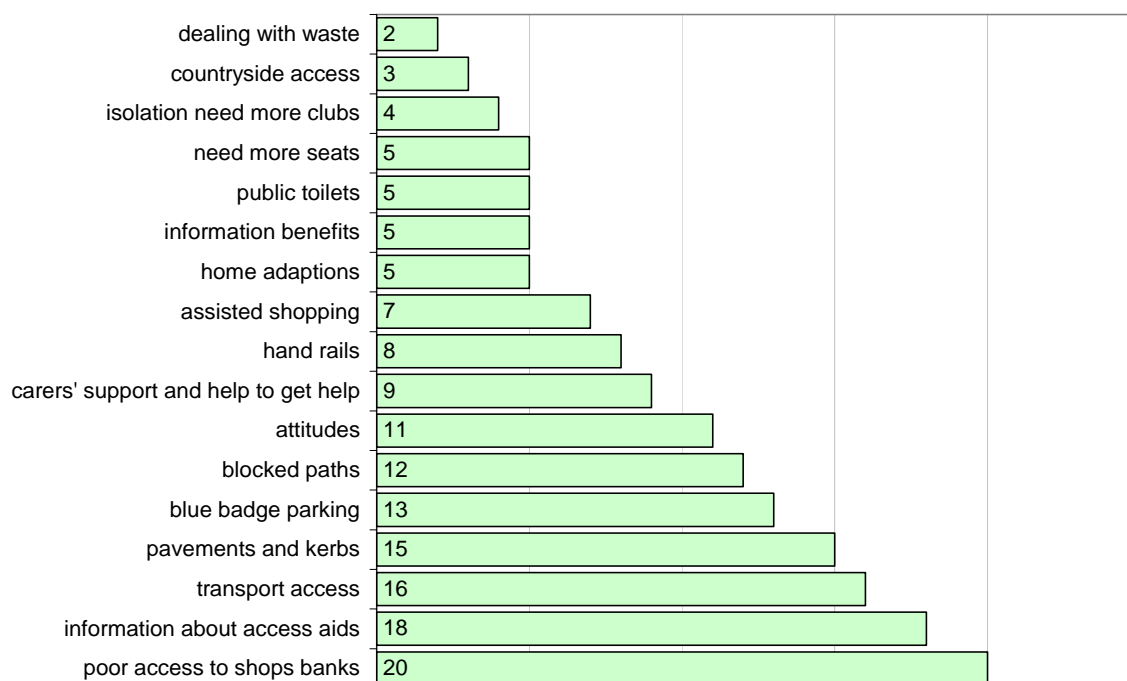
Main issues raised by 44 people with a mobility impairment

The most prominent issues raised by people with a mobility impairment centred around physical access to shops, banks and pubs, which is not the direct responsibility of the council, but the condition of pavements, kerbs, blocked paths and transport are. Blue Badge parking proved to be an emotional subject, with abuse, lack of policing, no link between spaces provided and badges issued and lack of thought in placement of bays. Several people were upset by the attitude or abuse from others when using a Blue Badge bay when not over 90 or in a wheelchair.

Of the 44 interviewed, 5 people had quite strong feelings about the length of time it took for necessary house adaptations, particularly when personal washing facilities were compromised. Others were critical of carers' support and felt that family carers were taken for granted such that their own health suffered as a result.

Issues such as handrails and seats can be more easily addressed and can make a big impact on someone's everyday life

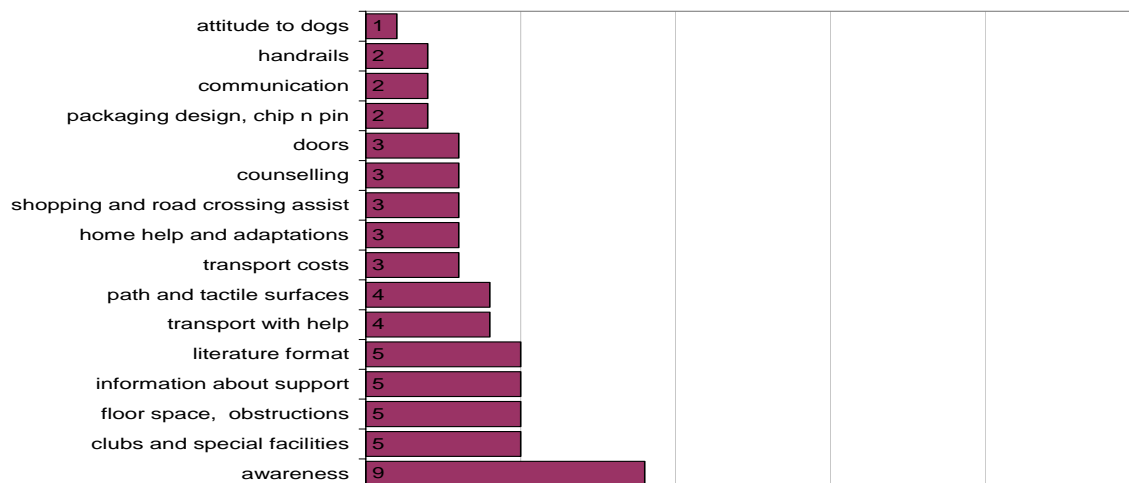
Graph 2.1. Main issues raised by 44 people with a mobility impairment



Main issues raised by 26 blind or partially sighted people

Blind or partially sighted people's issues were often based on thoughtlessness of other and people not understanding their difficulties about seeing obstructions. They feel that there are not enough clubs or special facilities where people are aware of their needs. An issue that irritates 3 of the 26 participating was transport costs; there is no equivalent allowance made for people who are eligible for free bus passes yet are unable to use buses because of their disability.

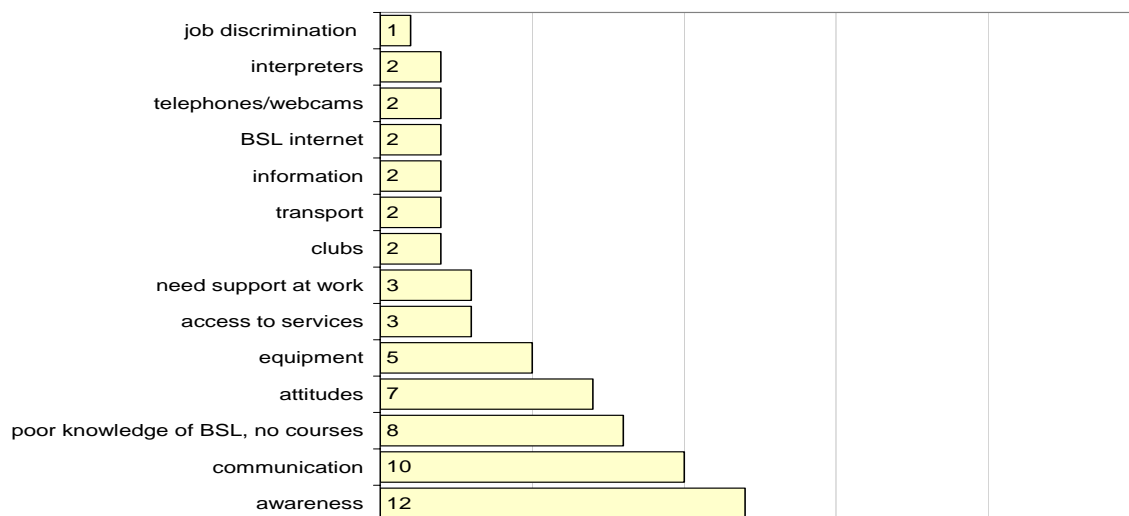
Graph 2.2. Main issues raised by 26 blind or partially sighted people



Main issues raised by 14 Deaf or hearing impaired people

A major issue raised by Deaf people is that being Deaf doesn't mean that you have a disability; it means that you communicate with people in a different way, using a different language, just as a Polish person uses a different language. There are therefore many issues around communication and people not making an effort to communicate.

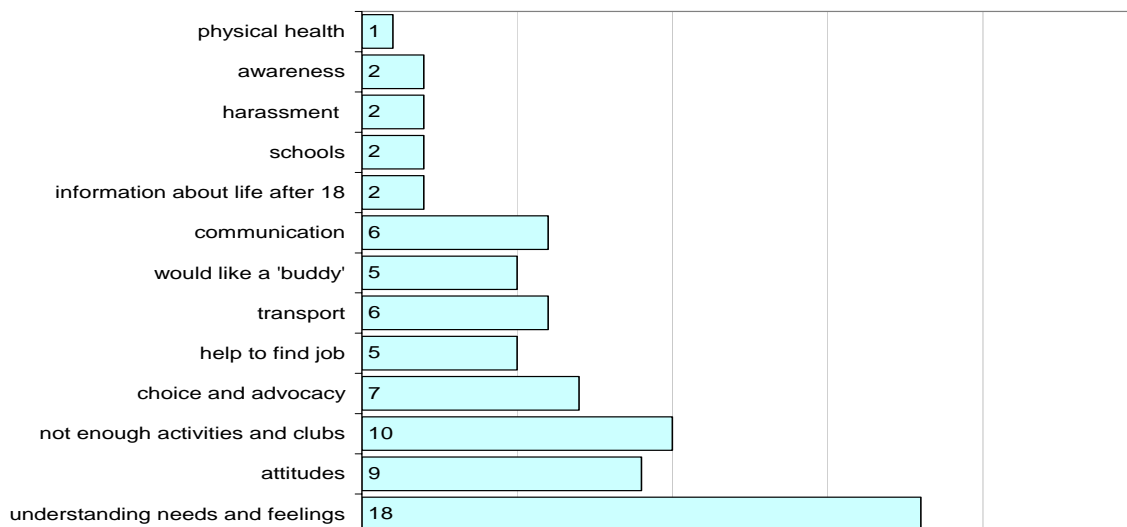
Graph 2.3. Main issues raised by 14 Deaf or hearing impaired people.



Main issues raised by 27 people with a Learning Disability

Discussions with people with a learning disability were mostly between service users and the staff from many day centres around Wiltshire, but the issues were similar, around people's attitudes and awareness of people's individual needs. There was a strong feeling about the poor choice of facilities and activities.

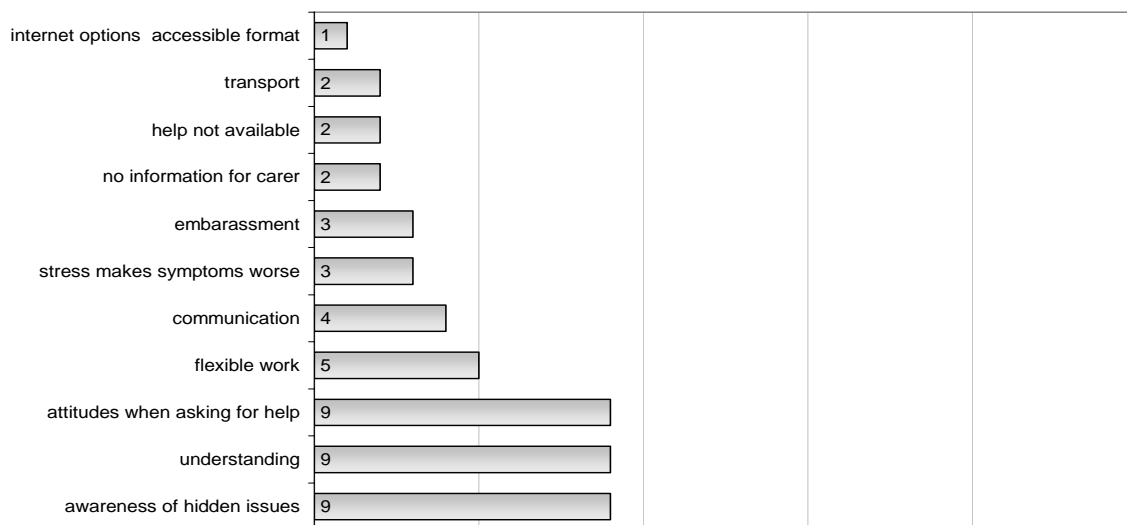
Graph 2.4. Main issues raised by 27 people with a Learning Disability.



Main issues raised by 16 people with a hidden disability

Hidden disabilities cause stress and embarrassment amongst those affected because often few people understand the condition or the need for assistance; people understand wheelchairs because they are visible.

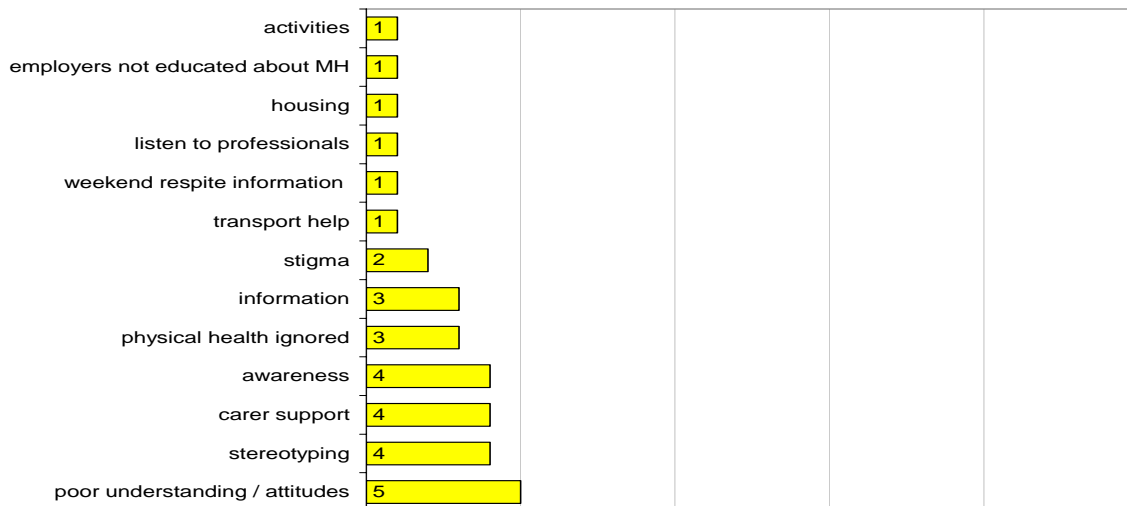
Graph 2.5. Main issues raised by 16 people with a hidden disability such as lupus, diabetes and many conditions that cause pain or fatigue.



Main issues raised by 10 people with a mental health disability

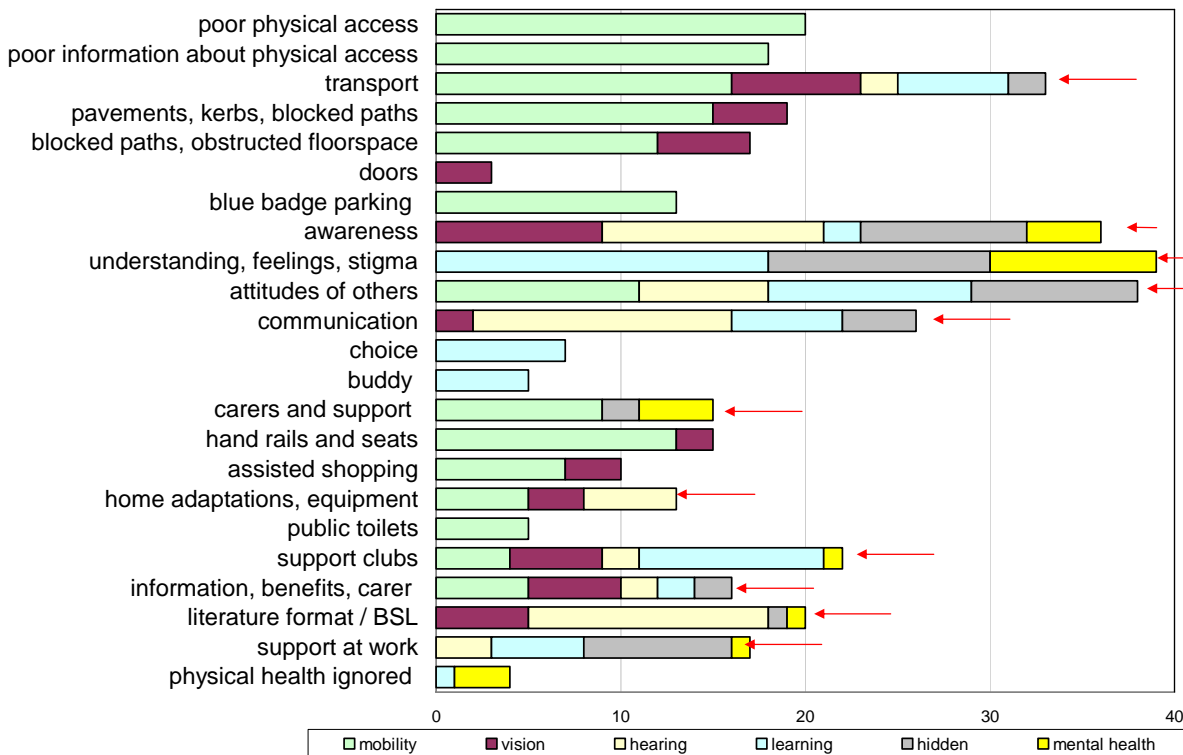
In discussions with people with mental health disability it became very obvious that mental health covers many complex conditions; the barriers and issues cannot be categorised or analysed in a short period. The only valuable information taken from this survey is that there is a lack of awareness and understanding of mental health conditions amongst employers.

Graph 2.6. Main issues raised by 10 people with a mental health disability.



In summary with all disabilities there is an overwhelming need for better understanding and awareness of people’s needs, and questioning our attitudes, especially if these needs are not visible. As the graph below shows, when you combine barriers or issues across the range of disabilities you can see that addressing an issue for one will benefit many (as indicated by the red arrows).

Graph 2.7. Main issues raised by combined categories of disability



How can we change to make things better?

Suggestions for improvement from those with a mobility impairment included:

- provide maps with w/ch accessible path routes;
- organise a local project to inform shops about ramps, handrails, seats;
- free access audits;
- access barriers against motorbikes with Radar locks;
- awareness campaigns; need to publicize good points and actions already taken;
- reserve place on Council for disabled politician;
- teach equality and diversity in schools;
- double yellow line in front of dropped kerbs;
- dropped kerbs at all crossing points;
- encourage shops to report bad pavements outside their premise;
- improve standard of pavements by stopping cars and trucks parking on them;
- more handles;
- more seats;
- change design of ferrules on walking sticks so they don't slip in wet;
- blue badge renewals should include information stressing fairness of use;
- parking awareness campaigns; put architects, builders and road workers in wheelchairs, that's the only way they'll understand;
- a mailing list of help and support organisations;
- more clubs to encourage people to get out more;
- hand rails could be cleaned;
- hand rails on both sides of steps and stairs in CH;
- a public transport 'companion' idea, or volunteer bus conductors;
- supply a directory of guaranteed accessible public transport;
- change Wigglybus timetable to allow round trips

Suggestions for improvement from those who are blind or have a visual impairment included:

- awareness raising ... and not just for wheelchairs!;
- someone to push my w/ch – I can't have a scooter because I'm blind;
- a lollipop lady for older people as well as school children;
- regulations to keep floors clear;
- have literature on show in alternative formats to show you are aware;
- alternative bus pass for blind for peak hours;
- coloured stickers next to handles on glass doors;
- more clubs for blind and partially sighted people, and pay leaders to run clubs;
- tactile pavements should be kept clear; fill potholes;
- visible markings alerting to automatic doors with lines showing direction of opening;
- visible step edging;
- visible swipe card units would help; conductors on buses;
- reduced taxi fares to compensate for others having free bus travel

Suggestions for improvement from those who are Deaf or have a hearing impairment included:

- add 'signstation.com', 'finger spelling' card or 'don't panic pack' in payslips;
- reception staff should learn BSL;
- offer free local courses for Deaf awareness & BSL;
- I can teach sign language;
- schools should have Deaf awareness and BSL courses;
- you could learn BSL on Internet – costs nothing; put videophones, webcams and visual information screens in Libraries and publicise;
- a council website for Deaf users; train people at the top (WCC) in BSL;
- access audits for meeting rooms with information on Intranet

Suggestions for improvement from those with a learning disability included:

- a 'Buddy' scheme with the service-user's interests in mind;
- words of support are not always enough – sometimes a hug should be acceptable;
- a central co-ordinator for 19+, suitable colleges and procedures involved;
- having somewhere to go like a 'drop';
- I would like a choice of where I go; I would like to work;
- people should understand what support I need;
- a good morning call reminder service 'have you taken your tablets?';
- use Makaton (sign language);
- Riding for the Disabled should be recommended and supported;
- taxi-share scheme to college;
- pay service users to do jobs done by contractors eg gardening, catering, cleaning

Suggestions for improvement from those with a hidden disability included:

- awareness course on citizenship for everybody especially starting with school children;
- could be bells to call for trained assistance rather than having to go and look for someone;
- make first-aiders aware of hidden disabilities – it might save a life;
- a phone call to check I'm OK;
- where there aren't hand rails, put some and where there are, clean them;
- make Link schemes more 'accepted', I don't like taking charity;
- awareness training for managers;
- should have a library of info about disabilities put together by staff with disabilities so managers can read up on subject;
- time off work to go to special needs support group during the day;
- home-working would avoid stress

Suggestions for improvement from those with a mental health disability included:

- I am happy to tell people about my problem on the phone but not to a group;
- awareness in schools;
- awareness in work experience situations;
- educate employers to remove barriers caused by stereotyping and stigma;
- listen to carers;
- recognise advocates;
- respite for short periods like a weekend;
- shared ownership housing allocation by someone who has sat in a wheelchair

These suggestions have been categorised by the service and passed to the departments providing the service so that the issues can be addressed and, if necessary, investigated further.