



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

## Research and Information Service Briefing Paper

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# Examples of Support for People with Learning Disabilities in North West England

The following paper provides information on organisations that provide support to people with learning disabilities in North West England.

This information is provided to Members in support of their Assembly duties and is not intended to address the specific circumstances of any particular individual. It should not be relied upon as legal or professional advice, or as a substitute for it. A suitably qualified professional should be consulted if specific advice or information is required.

## Key Points

### **The Seashell Trust**

- The Seashell Trust began as a school opened in 1837 for deaf children. In 1972, as local authorities in England expanded their own services to include deaf children, the Trust opened a special unit for children with complex needs;
- The Seashell Trust provides extensive support to children and young people enrolled in its school and College;
- A major part of the work of the Seashell Trust focuses on education. The Trust is the home to Royal School Manchester, a non-maintained special school, and the Royal College Manchester, an independent Specialist Further Education College;
- The school and college are residential and cater for students from the age of 2 to 25;
- Each child and young person at the Royal School have an individual programme based on a personal curriculum, tailored to their specific needs;
- The School provides a variety of activities under the curriculum, including themed days, social interaction and work experience;
- An Ofsted inspection in 2012 found the school to be “Outstanding”;
- The Royal College provides education and skills support for young people aged 19 - 25 who have severe and complex difficulties including autistic spectrum disorder and multisensory impairment. In 2013, it had 52 full time students;
- The curriculum at the College is based on relevant, practically-based and motivating learning opportunities, which enable students to explore options and develop skills;
- An Ofsted report in 2013 found that the College was “Good” in all aspects of the inspection, including in its outcomes for learners, the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of the College’s leadership and management; and,
- The Seashell Trust also provides support such as residential services, an employment service and an on-site medical centre.

### **Project Search**

- Project Search is a programme which first started in 1996 in Cincinnati, United States of America. It began in Cincinnati Children Hospital, which had developed a project to develop jobs for people with learning disabilities;
- Working with local disability and development agencies, the hospital provided employment to people with learning disabilities to fulfil this role;
- The programme was successful and subsequently expanded. It has now become an international project in operation in four different countries and across 150 different sites;
- The Project is in operation in the United Kingdom, and now has seventeen active programmes. In 2011, there were nine job sites, five of which reported a 60% job success, one 89% and another 100%;

- There are a number of these Projects running across Great Britain, with the vast majority operating within a hospital setting;
- One example of Project Search that is not hospital based is in Blackpool Council;
- The Council is providing work experience placements within the Council itself, with ten students undertaking teaching and learning activities in a classroom in new Council offices;
- The Council hopes to greatly improve the employment prospects for people with learning disabilities in the Blackpool area; and,
- The project started in September 2014, with ten pupils starting two months of skills learning, before moving on to different areas of the Council to gain work experience. The students work with special education teachers from Blackpool and the Fylde College, as well as a support worker from Mencap.

### **Manchester City Council – Manchester Learning Disability Partnership**

- Manchester Learning Disability Partnership (MLDP) is the body responsible for delivering public services to people with Learning Disabilities in the Manchester City Council area;
- The service is available to those aged over 18 who have significant learning disabilities. The MLDP also provides advice and information to anyone with learning disabilities;
- The MLDP is governed by a Board, which is chaired by the City Council's Executive Member for Adults. The Board's membership is drawn from self-advocates, carers, voluntary providers and mainstream agencies (such as employment, leisure and police representatives);
- The MLDP provides a number of services across the City Council area, including day services, transition to adult life support and Community Learning Disability Teams; and,
- A study in 2012 carried out by The Association of Directors of Adult Social Services, Learn to Care and Skills for Care as part of the Department of Health's Working for Personalised Care, identified the support provided by Manchester City Council for people with disabilities and learning disabilities as an example of best practice.

### **The Together Trust**

- The Together Trust is a charity that offers care, support, and special education to children, adults and families;
- The Trust is a not-for-profit service and provides support across North-West England and the surrounding area;
- The Trust provides a number of services Residential Care, Fostering Family Support and Special Education and Support;

- In 2012/13 the Trust worked with over 1,400 families, children and adults in England and Wales. 249 of these were pupils and student attending Ashcroft School, Bridge College and Inscape House School;
- The Trust operates three education services: Inscape House School for children and young people aged 4 to 19 with autism spectrum conditions; Ashcroft School for children and young people aged 8 to 18 who struggle to cope in other schools as a result of their barriers to learning; and, Bridge College, a non-residential specialist FE College; and
- All three education services have received “Good” ratings from Ofsted.

### **PossAbilities**

- PossAbilities is a care provider for people with learning disabilities in Rochdale, England. The organisation was developed from the existing Adult Care Provider, run by Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council Adult social care service;
- PossAbilities is a Social Enterprise co-owned by staff and service users, commencing operation on the 1st April 2014.
- It operates as a community interest company (CIC), with service users and their families represented on the company’s board and have a say in decision making, as do the staff;
- As a social enterprise, PossAbilities has access to grants not previously available to its previous iteration when part of the Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council;
- PossAbilities delivers a comprehensive service that enables it to combine a range of care packages, including Respite, Daycare, Supported Employment, and Shared Lives; and,
- PossAbilities operates the Rochdale Employment Development Service (REDS). REDS works with service users to identify individual skills and strengths, and then match these with a prospective employer.

### **Other Support of Note**

- During the course of writing this paper, three additional learning disability support providers were identified which may be of note;
- Respite North West (RNW) is a service registered to support children and adults with their care and support needs;
- RNW works to:

*Enable individuals to maximise their own potential and opportunities as a member of their community. We achieve this by using dedicated staff members who are trained and supported to deliver services in an informed and discreet way.*

- The Bren Project offers supported employment opportunities, in a wide range of working environments, to people with learning disabilities;
- The Project has a “hands on” approach to support for participants, utilising job coaches to support people find and sustain employment;
- Stockdales is a charity based in Manchester, which is dedicated to improving life for adults and children with learning and physical disabilities; and,
- Awarded Charity of the Year 2012/13 by Altrincham and Sale Chamber of Commerce, Stockdales offers individually planned care to over 200 people with severe learning difficulties and special needs, including running four houses which offer residential support for up to 24 people. Its services are primarily delivered to the North West of England.

## 1 Introduction

This paper discusses organisations providing support to people with Learning Disabilities in the North West of England. It provides further information for the Committees Inquiry into Learning Disability Support in Northern Ireland.

Organisations discussed in this paper include:

- The Seashell Trust;
- Project Search;
- Manchester City Council - Manchester Learning Disability Partnership;
- The Together Trust; and
- PossAbilities.

The final section of this paper also provides a brief discussion of some additional service providers which may be of note.

Please see Appendix 1 for a map of North West England highlighting the location of the support identified.

## 2 The Seashell Trust

The Seashell Trust began as a school opened in 1837 for deaf children. In 1972, as local authorities in England expanded their own services to include deaf children, the Trust opened a special unit for children with complex needs.

In 1979, the school shifted its provision entirely to support for those with additional and complex needs.

The Seashell Trust provides extensive support to children and young people, including through its School and College. In total the Seashell Trust has capacity to provide places for 120 children and young people.<sup>1</sup>

In evidence to the Committee for Employment and Learning, Katherine Corey of the Seashell Trust stated that:<sup>2</sup>

*We take students with severe or profound learning difficulties, much more severe than the students at Parkanaur<sup>3</sup> have. The vast majority of our students have no verbal communication, or, if they do, it is very limited and, in the most part, is not functional. A third of our students have autism spectrum conditions. A third have deaf-blind dual-sensory disability. Some of the students have hearing or visual impairments, profound multiple*

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<sup>1</sup> Seashell Trust, About Us, <http://media.seashelltrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/About%20us.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Committee for Employment and Learning, Official Report, 22 October 2014, Inquiry into Post-Special Educational Need Provision in Education, Employment and Training for those with Learning Disabilities: Parkanaur College and Seashell Trust

<sup>3</sup> Parkanaur College is an independent, specialist further education College for students aged 18+ with intellectual, physical and/or sensory disabilities.

*learning difficulties and complex physical disabilities, as well as a range of other medical needs.*

The Seashell Trust provides extensive support to young people with complex learning disabilities. The section below discusses this support in more detail.

## 2.1 Education

A major part of the work of the Seashell Trust focuses on education. The Trust is the home to Royal School Manchester, a non-maintained special school, and the Royal College Manchester, an independent Specialist Further Education College.

The school and college are residential and cater for students from the age of 2 to 25.<sup>4</sup> Each child and young person at the Royal School has an individual programme based on a personal curriculum, tailored to their specific needs. Similarly, young people enrolled in the Royal College have a personalised timetable based on a core curriculum and individual choices.<sup>5</sup>

As stated by Katherine Corey of the Seashell Trust:<sup>6</sup>

*We aim to provide our students with meaningful opportunities, which is about promoting their independence, getting their voice heard and getting society to recognise that they are valuable and have the right to be heard. Obviously, some of our students will not progress to employment. That is not the whole point of college. The point is to give people opportunities to explore avenues and expand their horizons, and that is what happens with a lot of our students.*

The Royal School provides a mixed day and residential school for children and young people aged between 2 and 19 who have complex learning disabilities. In 2012, the School had 41 pupils enrolled of which 14 were in Sixth Form.<sup>7</sup>

The School offers a number of different placement types, including 38 weeks weekly boarding from Monday to Thursday, 38 weeks term based boarding and 52 weeks boarding. In October 2014 approximately five students were boarding year round.<sup>8</sup>

As stated above, the School develops individual curriculums for each pupil to better engage and motivate them. The School provides a variety of activities under the curriculum, including:<sup>9</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Seashell Trust, What we do, <http://www.seashelltrust.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do>

<sup>5</sup> Seashell Trust, About Us, <http://media.seashelltrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/About%20us.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Committee for Employment and Learning, Official Report, 22 October 2014, Inquiry into Post-Special Educational Need Provision in Education, Employment and Training for those with Learning Disabilities: Parkanaur College and Seashell Trust

<sup>7</sup> Ofsted, October 2012, School Report,

<http://media.seashelltrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/Valuing%20Employment%20Now%20Brochure.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Committee for Employment and Learning, Official Report, 22 October 2014, Inquiry into Post-Special Educational Need Provision in Education, Employment and Training for those with Learning Disabilities: Parkanaur College and Seashell Trust

<sup>9</sup> Seashell Trust, School: Curriculum, <http://www.seashelltrust.org.uk/school/curriculum>

- **Themed days:** Students have access to a range of cultural, creative and knowledge based activities through half term Theme Days;
- **Social interaction:** Interaction with others is part of each students' individual programmes and teaching process;
- **Work experience:** Students access on site work experience from Year 11 and off site work experience at Sixth Form. These opportunities are based on their personal preferences; and,
- **After schools clubs:** The School has three after school clubs – cookery, art and music. The clubs are run by staff members, volunteers and musicians in residence.

An Ofsted inspection in 2012 stated that:<sup>10</sup>

*All aspects of the school's work are outstanding. Outstanding teaching for pupils of all ages ensures their outstanding achievement and rapid and sustained progress, particularly in communication and independence skills.*

The Royal College provides education and skills support for young people aged 19-25, who have severe and complex difficulties, including autistic spectrum disorder and multisensory impairment. In 2013, it had 52 full time students and received its funding from the Education Funding Agency (EFA) and the Welsh Assembly Government.<sup>11</sup>

The curriculum at the College is based on relevant, practically-based and motivating learning opportunities, which enable students to explore options and develop skills. It covers areas such as:<sup>12</sup>

- Creative studies;
- Everyday skills;
- Life skills;
- Person centred learning; and,
- Vocational skills.

As skills are developed:<sup>13</sup>

*Students' progress from the course to a range of options including supported living, personalised day services, further learning or supported work as appropriate to each person's needs and aspiration.*

An Ofsted report in 2013 found that the College was "Outstanding" in all aspects of the inspection, including in its outcomes for learners, the quality of teaching and the effectiveness of the College's leadership and management.

<sup>10</sup> Ofsted, October 2012, School Report,

<http://media.seashelltrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/Valuing%20Employment%20Now%20Brochure.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Ofsted, August 2013, Learning and Skills Inspection Report,

<http://media.seashelltrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/Ofsted%20College%20Inspection%20Report%20August%202013.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> Seashell Trust, College: Curriculum, <http://www.seashelltrust.org.uk/college/curriculum>

<sup>13</sup> Ibid



Amongst its comments on the College, the Ofsted report stated:<sup>14</sup>

- Students with a range of complex and profound learning difficulties and/or disabilities make outstanding progress in developing their communication skills and their ability to stay calm and better manage their own behaviour;
- Students achieve a high level of their personal targets, which are broken down into small steps in learning to provide appropriate challenge across all aspects of their programme;
- Where appropriate, students make excellent progress in gaining independent living skills, and a good understanding of workplace expectations, safe working practices, travel and coping skills; and,
- Strategies to support the development of students' communication, behaviour management and independence skills are outstanding.

## 2.2 Other Services

The Seashell Trust provides a wide variety of additional services and supports for those enrolled at the Royal School and Royal College, including:

- **Residential:** Children and young people attending both the Royal School and the Royal College have access to residential facilities on-site. This includes weekly and term boarding for pupils, 24 hour waking care, parent accommodation and short breaks. The Seashell Trust also provides short break facilities for children and young people who do not have an educational placement at the Trust. The Trust provides accommodation such as small two-bedroom homes to larger ten bedroom houses. These provide a range of environments such as low stimulus to high levels of structure to best suit the needs of individuals. The Trust also provides social and leisure activities to residents such as an athletics club, cinema visits, music therapy and swimming;<sup>15</sup>
- **Additional Services:** The Seashell Trust is able to provide a number of other services, including an all-inclusive sports facility, hydrotherapy pool, sensory rooms, an animal care unit, an audiology centre, cycling facilities, a fitness suite and horticultural activities;
- **Medical Centre:** The Seashell Trust has a medical centre on-site in order to support students with severe medical needs. It is staffed by two nurses and can provide 24 hour medical care if needed;<sup>16</sup>
- **On-site Therapists:** The Seashell Trust provides a number of on-site therapists, including two physiotherapists, two occupational therapists, three speech and language therapists and an audiologist. They provide support to the educational

<sup>14</sup> Ofsted, August 2013, Learning and Skills Inspection Report,

<http://media.seashelltrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/Ofsted%20College%20Inspection%20Report%20August%202013.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> Seashell Trust, Living at Seashell, <http://www.seashelltrust.org.uk/care/living-seashell>

<sup>16</sup> Committee for Employment and Learning, Official Report, 22 October 2014, Inquiry into Post-Special Educational Need Provision in Education, Employment and Training for those with Learning Disabilities: Parkanaur College and Seashell Trust

activity of pupils and students in “*order to have as great an impact on students as possible*”;<sup>17</sup> and,

- **Employment Service:** The Seashell Trust provides young people in the Royal College with the opportunity to take part in its work experience programmes. It provides vocational tasters within the curriculum, onsite work experience at Seashell Trust, partnerships with local employers who provide off-site work experience and a Job Coach service for students’ final year and the following six months. For employers interested in taking on a work experience student, Seashell Trust also provides support including disability awareness training, support with risk management and support to source, one to one personal support for employees. The Trust works with a variety of employers, including Lakeland; Sodexo @ Astra-Zenece, Hilton Hotels, BNY Mellon, Deanprint, Think Money, Tatton park, Nixons Farm, Woodhouse Park Lifestyle Centre, Bramhall Methodist Church Café and The Wellspring Centre.<sup>18</sup>

### 3 Project Search

Project Search is a programme which first started in 1996 in Cincinnati, United States of America. It began in Cincinnati Children Hospital, which had developed a project to develop jobs for people with learning disabilities. At the same time the hospital had a resourcing issue in retaining staff to restock hospital supplies.

Working with local disability and development agencies, the hospital provided employment to people with learning disabilities to fulfil this role.

The programme was successful and subsequently expanded. It has now become an international project in operation in four different countries and across 150 different sites.

Project Search operates under the following philosophy:<sup>19</sup>

*People with disabilities have the right to choose a path toward education and employment. However, while freedom of choice is given, the right to work is earned. Earning the right to work is dependent upon the student's preparation.*

The Project is in operation in the United Kingdom, and now has seventeen active programmes. In 2011, there were nine job sites, five of which reported a 60% job success, one 89% and another 100%.<sup>20</sup>

A Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) study into the effectiveness of the project found that it had the following benefits for employers:<sup>21</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Ibid

<sup>18</sup> Seashell Trust, Valuing Employment Now, <http://media.seashelltrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/Valuing%20Employment%20Now%20Brochure.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> Ibid

<sup>20</sup> PLUSS, Project Search, <http://www.pluss.org.uk/project-search-0>

- Norse (a facilities management group) reported that delivering the model saved it £5,500 per year in recruitment costs and £16,000 per year in overtime payments;
- Norse has won a national Business in the Community “big tick” award for their work on Project Search and employing other disadvantaged groups;
- Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital are saving £6,000 per year in recruitment costs; and,
- Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital won the Community Impact award in the Eastern Daily Press Business Awards 2010. The judges described Project Search as a ground-breaking and innovative programme.

The Evaluation found that:<sup>22</sup>

*Project Search interns reported a positive experience of the programme. Their parents, Project Search partners and the interns themselves said that their confidence, motivation, decision-making, self-esteem and health had all improved while on the programme.*

Project Search is an example of a successful and wide ranging programme that helps people with a variety of learning disabilities to find employment.

There are a number of projects running across Great Britain, with the vast majority operating within a hospital setting.

One example of Project Search that is not hospital based is in Blackpool Council.

The Council is providing work experience placements within the Council itself, with ten students undertaking teaching and learning activities in a classroom in new Council offices.

The Council has undertaken the project as:<sup>23</sup>

*The national average employment rate for people with disabilities in the UK is 7.7%, in Blackpool this figure is just 1.8%. Blackpool Council is committed to raising aspirations for all its young people across the town, this includes those with and without disability and has a number of apprenticeship schemes and work placement opportunities across the borough.*

The project started in September 2014, with ten pupils starting two months of skills learning, before moving on to different areas of the Council to gain work experience. The students work with special education teachers from Blackpool and the Fylde

<sup>21</sup> DWP, Office for Disability Issues, Project Search, <http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/odi-projects/jobs-for-people-with-learning-disabilities/project-search.php>

<sup>22</sup> DWP, Office for Disability Issues, Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion, February 2012, Project Search Evaluation: Final Report

<sup>23</sup> Blackpool Council, Project Search, <https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Your-Council/Blackpool-Council-jobs/Project-Search/Project-Search---For-employers.aspx>

College, as well as a support worker from Mencap, to help the pupils achieve their goal of a permanent job.<sup>24</sup>

#### 4 Manchester City Council - Manchester Learning Disability Partnership

Manchester Learning Disability Partnership (MLDP) is the body responsible for delivering public services to people with Learning Disabilities in the Manchester City Council area. The service is available to those aged over 18 who have significant learning disabilities.<sup>25</sup> The MLDP also provides advice and information to anyone with learning disabilities.

The MLDP provides health and social care services and is a partnership between the Manchester City Council's Adult Social Care Department and the NHS.

As stated by the MLDP:

*We work with each person together with their families, carers and friends to encourage health, well-being and independence and give support to help people live full and happy lives as members of their community.*

The MLDP is governed by a Board, which is chaired by the City Council's Executive Member for Adults. The Board's membership is drawn from self-advocates, carers, voluntary providers and mainstream agencies (such as employment, leisure and police representatives).

There is no charge provided for the services MLDP provides as part of the NHS or advice and information from social workers. However, people are expected to make a contribution to social care services that they have been assessed as needing and which the council funds. The amount will depend on the level of service received and means testing, including savings and money coming in, for example from welfare benefits. As part of the assessment process a financial assessment is carried out.<sup>26</sup>

The MLDP provides a number of services across the City Council area, including:

- **Adult Placement:** Manchester Adult Placement Service (MAPS) arranges placements for people in the homes of paid carers (also known as Adult Placement providers) for people who are learning disabled, physically disabled, with mental health needs and older people. The service can provide long-term placement as part of a family / household or respite care to provide a break. There is also a Sitting and Befriending service,<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Blackpool Council, 10 October 2014, New project to help disabled youngsters in to work, <https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/News/2014/September/New-project-to-help-disabled-youngsters-in-to-work.aspx>

<sup>25</sup> Manchester Learning Disability Partnership, Frequently Asked Questions, <http://www.mldp.org.uk/faq.htm#1>

<sup>26</sup> MLDP, How to get a service - FAQ, <http://www.mldp.org.uk/faq.htm#1>

<sup>27</sup> MLDP, Manchester Adult Placement Service, <http://www.mldp.org.uk/maps.htm>

- **Day Services:** MLDP operates a number of day services, with the aim of supporting people with a range of needs. Everyone attending a day centre has a person-centred day plan which staff will work with individuals with learning disabilities and their family to complete, which helps to identify their likes, dislikes, what's important to and for them, and how best to support them safely and effectively. The MLDP also helps people accessing day services to run advocacy groups. There are six sites providing day services, offering a range of activities including swimming, arts and crafts, cooking sessions, music therapy, and communication and rebound therapy;
- **Community Learning Disability Teams:** Community Learning Disability Teams are the gateway to health and social care and support to people with a learning disability who have been assessed as eligible for a service. The teams have several different types of workers including Community Nurses, Psychology and Behavioural support, Physiotherapy and Occupational therapy;<sup>28</sup>
- **Transition to Adult Life:** The MLDP focuses, initially, on support for young people aged 16 – 21 and their families, as they make the transition to a post-school life. To support this, an integrated transition team from both children's and adult services was established, bringing together social care and health staff with responsibility for transition; and,
- **Domiciliary Support:** MLDP's Domiciliary Support Service helps people to live at home in their own community. Some people live independently and some live with their family. MLDP focuses on developing both new skills and opportunities so people have the chance to maximise their choice, independence, health and wellbeing.<sup>29</sup>

A study in 2012 carried out by The Association of Directors of Adult Social Services, entitled "Learn to Care and Skills for Care", as part of the Department of Health's *Working for Personalised Care*, identified the support provided by Manchester City Council for people with disabilities and learning disabilities as an example of best practice.<sup>30</sup>

Amongst the examples of good practice cited are its brokerage service which offers good links with all relevant experts should problems arise; for example, finance or legal issues, which would take a good deal of time for external people to have resolved. The service is also offered to people who fund their own care.

The study also cited the close links with the NHS, developed via the MLDP, which allows the Council to support people in using their personal health budgets, with a member of staff seconded to the NHS in order to learn from their experience.

<sup>28</sup> MLDP, Community Learning Disability Teams, <http://www.mldp.org.uk/cldt.htm>

<sup>29</sup> MLDP, Domiciliary Support, <http://www.mldp.org.uk/domiciliary%20support.htm>

<sup>30</sup> The Association of Directors of Adult Social Services, Learn to Care and Skills for Care, October 2012, Case studies to highlight good practice <http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/Document-library/Employing-your-own-care-and-support/Good-practice-case-studies.pdf>

## 5 The Together Trust

The Together Trust is a charity that offers care, support, and special education to children, adults and families.

The Trust was founded in 1870 and initially provided homes and education for street children in Manchester. In 1993, the Trust began to provide education for children with autism and learning disabilities/complex health needs, with the opening of Inscape House and Bridge College.

The Trust is a not-for-profit service and provides support across North-West England and the surrounding area.

The Trust provides:<sup>31</sup>

- Residential Care:
- Fostering;
- Family Support;
- Community Services;
- Special Education and Support; and,
- Information, Advice and Support Services.

In 2012/13 the Trust worked with over 1,400 families, children and adults in England and Wales. 249 of these were pupils and student attending Ashcroft School, Bridge College and Inscape House School. A further 431 children and adults were supported by community services either at home or in the community.<sup>32</sup>

### 5.1 Residential Care

The Together Trust has a wide range of residential homes and services for children, young people and vulnerable adults aged between 5 and 30 years.

As stated by the Trust:

*The children and adults who use our services live in safe, stable placements with individual assessments/person-centred plans supported by a highly experienced, committed and specialist staff who include clinical psychology and behavioural support teams.*

The Trust provides an extensive list of residential care, including:<sup>33</sup>

- **Early intervention services:** Based around person and family centred approaches with a focus on safeguarding and empowerment;

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<sup>31</sup> Together Trust, What We Do, <http://www.togethertrust.org.uk/what-we-do>

<sup>32</sup> Together Trust, Annual Report 2012/13, <http://www.togethertrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/annual-review.pdf>

<sup>33</sup> Together Trust, Residential Care, <http://www.togethertrust.org.uk/what-we-do/residential-services>

- **Short to long term placements:** Offers short, medium and long-term care for children and vulnerable adults up to the age of 30;
- **Integrated care and education:** Holistic care and education services for young people aged 11 to 17 years;
- **Crisis placements:** Established services offering crisis placements in the North West area;
- **Post 16 independent living:** Supporting young people to make successful transitions into adulthood and independent living; and,
- **Disability care:** Services for disabled people in the North West support children, young people and vulnerable adults who have physical disabilities and/or learning difficulties, autism spectrum conditions or complex health needs.

## 5.2 Fostering Service

The Together Trust Fostering Service has been established as a fostering agency for over 15 years and provides placements throughout Manchester, the North West and surrounding areas.<sup>34</sup>

The Trust provides prospective foster carers with training via the Preparatory Training Groups, known as “Skills to Foster”. Foster carers also receive a non-taxable allowance to cover the cost of caring for a child and weekly fee.<sup>35</sup>

The Trust also provides foster carers with post-fostering support, including:<sup>36</sup>

- Access to a duty social worker 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year;
- Up to 14 days respite;
- Annual fostering holiday;
- Supervision from a qualified social worker;
- Support in meeting the child’s educational needs through our educational services; and,
- Support at professionals meetings.

## 5.3 Family Support

The Trust provides families with support in meeting the needs of children with autism, learning disabilities or complex health needs. The Trust has experienced staff who offer support in areas such as:<sup>37</sup>

- **Autism support:** Work directly with families which include an individual with an Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC);

<sup>34</sup> Together Trust, Fostering, <http://www.togethertrust.org.uk/what-we-do/fostering>

<sup>35</sup> Ibid

<sup>36</sup> Ibid

<sup>37</sup> Together Trust, Family Support, <http://www.togethertrust.org.uk/what-we-do/family-support>



- **Therapy services:** The Trust has an experienced team of speech, language and occupational therapists provide advice and programmes;
- **Sleep support:** Many children with ASC have poor sleep patterns. The Trust operates a Sleep Clinic to help families to deal with these issues. They offer an ASC-specific sleep counselling service run by professionals who are experienced in working with children and young people with ASC, who are all trained sleep counsellors;
- **Family group conferencing:** The Trust provides services such as appointing a Family Group Coordinator to help families make decisions and enable the development and implementation of family plans; and,
- **Disagreement resolution:** The Trust can organise independent meetings for parents and carers of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN), their local authority and their school when there is a disagreement about how best to meet their child's need.

#### 5.4 Community Services

The Trust provides Care Quality Commission (CQC) registered services deliver a range of personalised support in Stockport, Greater Manchester and the surrounding areas. They provide person-centred, creative, fun and professional support services to families, children, adults with complex needs, including:<sup>38</sup>

- Autism;
- Physical and/or learning disabilities; and,
- Behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.

The Community Services include:<sup>39</sup>

- **Outreach and home services:** The Trust offers a variety of services, including individual transition services and personal assistance to support to promote accessibility within education and the workplace;
- **Support to live at home:** Home services are designed to be supportive and unobtrusive to the family. The Trust offers a range of support that includes sitting services during the day, evening or overnight and weekends;
- **Adult community services:** Offers a range of innovative and vibrant community services for adults with learning disabilities, autism and/or complex health needs at a number of sites, including Newbridge and Oldham. The Trust has a wide range of flexible services, which are available to people aged over 18 with individual budgets or direct payments. They also work with brokerage services to deliver tailored packages of support to meet people's budget and goals; and,

<sup>38</sup> Together Trust, Community Service, <http://www.togethertrust.org.uk/what-we-do/community-services>

<sup>39</sup> Ibid



- **Working and Training Together (WaTT):** Offers young people aged 16+ the chance to gain catering industry experience and qualifications in a professional, safe and supporting environment.

## 5.5 Special education and support

The Together Trust offers a range of education services for young people and adults with multiple and complex learning needs. It provides education for young people with autism, emotional difficulties and complex health needs.<sup>40</sup>

The Trust offers:

- Personalised and creative programmes;
- Support for children with emotional or learning difficulties aged 5 to 18 years at Ashcroft School;
- Further education for young people aged 16 to 25 years with complex needs and ASCs at Bridge College; and,
- Education and support for children and young people with autism aged 4 to 18 years at Inscape House School.

As mentioned above, the Trust provides education services to people with autism, learning disabilities and complex needs. It does this via Inscape House School, Ashcroft School and Bridge College.

Inscape House School is a non-maintained day special school which meets the needs of children and young people aged 4 to 19 years with autism spectrum conditions (ASC) and related social communication difficulties.<sup>41</sup> It had 107 pupils enrolled in 2013.<sup>42</sup>

It provides a range of support for learners, including: a team of specialist speech and language therapists; a learning mentor who works with individual pupils to support their engagement with learning and subsequently their achievement; and, an educational psychologist who provides additional support for young people and advice to staff and families.<sup>43</sup>

An Ofsted inspection in 2013 found Inscape House to be “Good” in all areas inspected. The Ofsted report stated that<sup>44</sup>:

*From starting points of failure and frustration in their previous schools, students make good and sometimes exceptional progress in coping with their autism and in developing their learning. Almost all students leave with*

<sup>40</sup> Together Trust, Special Education Support, <http://www.togethertrust.org.uk/what-we-do/special-education-support>

<sup>41</sup> The Together Trust, About Inscape House, <http://www.togethertrust.org.uk/about-inscape-house>

<sup>42</sup> Ofsted, January 2013, Inscape House School

<sup>43</sup> The Together Trust, Support for Learning, <http://www.togethertrust.org.uk/special-education/inscape-house-school/support-for-learning>

<sup>44</sup> Ofsted, January 2013, Inscape House School

*brighter prospects, having achieved much of their potential. This is demonstrated by the improvement in attitudes to learning, the gaining of accreditations and examination success and by the improvements in family life.*

Ashcroft School is based in Cheadle, Cheshire and is one of the specialist education services provided by the Together Trust. Ashcroft is an independent special school. They cater for children and young people aged 8 to 18 years who have struggled to cope in other settings because of their individual barriers to learning. In 2013 it had 28 pupils enrolled and annual fees of £32,152 for day pupils.<sup>45</sup>

An Ofsted report in 2013 stated that:<sup>46</sup>

*All pupils except one have statements of special educational needs and almost half are looked after by local authorities. All have histories of disrupted schooling and are unable to access a place at a mainstream school.*

The School offers bespoke packages aimed at raising attainment and self-esteem and provides 25 hours of learning per week.

Teaching can include:

- Access to the national curriculum;
- Art;
- Cooking;
- Gardening;
- Vocational courses;
- ICT; and,
- Intensive literacy support.

An Ofsted inspection in 2013 found the school to be of “Good” quality in all areas inspected.

The report states that:

*The school places a strong focus on the personal development of pupils; teachers seize every opportunity to encourage pupils to consider their actions and to improve.*

Regarding teaching at the school, Ofsted stated that:

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<sup>45</sup> Ofsted, February 2013, Ashcroft School, [http://www.togethertrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/AshcroftSchool-Ofsted-Feb2013\\_0.PDF](http://www.togethertrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/AshcroftSchool-Ofsted-Feb2013_0.PDF)

<sup>46</sup> Ibid

*Teaching is good. Good arrangements for the induction of new pupils ensure that they quickly adjust to school life and perform well according to their abilities.*<sup>47</sup>

Bridge College is a non-residential specialist FE college. It meets the needs of students up to the age of 25 years who have learning difficulties and disabilities, complex needs, communication disorders and autism. In 2013 the College had 86 full time learners and 4 part time.<sup>48</sup>

Based in East Manchester, Bridge College provides learning opportunities in different settings and provides additional support through a hydrotherapy pool, sensory rooms and their rebound room. The College moved to purpose build, state of the art facilities in 2012.

The College states that:

*Our mission at Bridge College is to create a learning environment that is inclusive and will help you make a successful transition to adulthood through developing your skills, independence and confidence.*

Bridge College provides students with learning pathways, with students encouraged to plan their own learning programme with support from staff.

The College provides a number of education options for students, including full-time, part-time or a blended programme which can be in partnership with another college, including The Manchester College.<sup>49</sup>

The College has access to the therapy services provided by the other aspects of the Trusts work, augmenting the work of the College. For example:<sup>50</sup>

*The Speech and Language Therapy (SaLT) team support you to develop alternative and augmentative communication systems such as PECS (picture exchange communication system), objects of reference and intensive interaction.*

Ofsted has carried out inspections at all three of the Trusts education bodies. In 2013 Ofsted inspected Bridge College and found it to be “Good” in all areas inspected and found that.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Ofsted, February 2013, Ashcroft School, [http://www.togethertrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/AshcroftSchool-Ofsted-Feb2013\\_0.PDF](http://www.togethertrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/AshcroftSchool-Ofsted-Feb2013_0.PDF)

<sup>48</sup> Ofsted, October 2013, Bridge College, <http://www.togethertrust.org.uk/sites/default/files/documents/Bridge%20College%20Ofsted%20Report%202013.pdf>

<sup>49</sup> Together Trust, About Bridge College, <http://www.togethertrust.org.uk/about-bridge-college>

<sup>50</sup> Together Trust, Bridge College – Therapy Services, <http://www.togethertrust.org.uk/special-education/bridge-college/about-bridge-college/therapy-services>

<sup>51</sup> Ibid

*Learners make very good progress in developing their confidence, communication skills, independence and ability to make choices for themselves.*

It also stated that:

*Highly effective teamwork between teachers, support staff and therapists ensures that teaching, learning and assessment are good in most classes and outstanding in a few.*

## 5.6 Information, Advice and Support Services (IASS)

The IASS offers free, impartial and confidential information, advice and support to parents and carers of children and young people with SEND and to young people themselves.<sup>52</sup>

The IASS:

- Has a role in ensuring parents' and young peoples' views are heard, understood and respected;
- Aims to increase parent's confidence in being able to make informed choices and decision;
- Offers individual support such as home visits, attendance at meetings and reviews, support with liaison between agencies and information about other parent support groups; and,
- Provides information and links to other organisations delivering health and social care.

## 5.7 Accreditation

The Together Trust has a number of accreditations, including:<sup>53</sup>

- **Investors in People (IiP):** The Together Trust has held Investors in People since 2001, in accordance with guidelines provided for assessors by the United Kingdom Commission for Employment and Skills. An IiP report on the Trust stated that it had: *Dedicated, energised and committed staff who genuinely care for service users;*<sup>54</sup>
- **Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations (PQASSO):** PQASSO covers all aspects of an organisation, from governance to service delivery and monitoring outcomes. As well as helping the Together Trust to plan and implement improvements, PQASSO has provided a framework to measure the differences that such changes actually make to the organisation; and,

<sup>52</sup> Together Trust, IASS, <http://www.togethertrust.org.uk/what-we-do/parent-partnership-services>

<sup>53</sup> Together Trust, Accreditations and Quality, <http://www.togethertrust.org.uk/who-we-are/accreditations-quality>

<sup>54</sup> Ibid

- **National Autistic Society Accreditation:** Following a process of quality assurance focused around service practice within the Trust's autism services, the Together Trust has recognition from the National Autistic Society by Autism Accreditation for all of its services for young people with an autistic spectrum condition.

## 6 PossAbilities

PossAbilities is a care provider for people with learning disabilities in Rochdale, England. The organisation was developed from the existing Adult Care Provider, run by Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council Adult social care service.

PossAbilities is a Social Enterprise co-owned by staff and service users, which began operation on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014. Operating as a community interest company (CIC), service users and their families are represented on the company's board and have a say in decision making, as do the staff.<sup>55</sup>

It should be noted that the services for people with learning disabilities in Rochdale transferred to PossAbilities when the organisation went into operation in April 2014. As stated in the local press.<sup>56</sup>

*Residents who currently access the services have all been informed and will not notice any day-to-day changes. All phone numbers will stay the same except the contacts for the employment service, which service users have been made aware of.*

As a social enterprise, PossAbilities has access to grants not previously available to its former iteration when part of the Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council. It will also be able to seek out new business and develop new services, as their constitution states that any profit made is invested back into services.<sup>57</sup>

The transfer of services to a social enterprise is expected to save the Council around £500,000 a year.<sup>58</sup>

PossAbilities delivers a comprehensive service that enables them to combine a range of care packages, including Respite, Daycare, Supported Employment, and Shared Lives

These services are available to anyone with a learning or physical disability in Manchester, Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Information Commissioner's Office, June 2014, PossAbilities Advisory visit, [https://ico.org.uk/~media/documents/library/Data\\_Protection/Notices/ico-advisory-visit-summary-possabilities-20140620.pdf](https://ico.org.uk/~/media/documents/library/Data_Protection/Notices/ico-advisory-visit-summary-possabilities-20140620.pdf)

<sup>56</sup> Rochdale Online, Adult care services ready to move over to social enterprise, <http://rochdaleonline.co.uk/news-features/2/news-headlines/86147/adult-care-services-ready-to-move-over-to-social-enterprise>

<sup>57</sup> Ibid

<sup>58</sup> Ibid

<sup>59</sup> PossAbilities, What We Do, <http://www.possabilities.org.uk/services/day-services/>

## 6.1 Day Services

PossAbilities provides Day Services comprising of a programme of stimulating and engaging activities catering for a range of different needs and abilities. Activities are either held within PossAbilities centres or via the local community. Activities include:<sup>60</sup>

- Art / Craft;
- Music;
- Health and Beauty;
- Literacy and Numeracy;
- Cycling;
- Voluntary Work; and,
- Recycling.

The PossAbilities Day Service also has a farm and an allotment which provide the opportunity, support and encouragement for people to learn new skills and to improve their existing ones. This helps develop skills for employment or voluntary opportunities and a more active role in the local community. It also encourages confidence building, team work, friendships, and health and well-being.<sup>61</sup>

People interested in and/or applicable to accessing Day Services are referred to PossAbilities by health care professionals such as social workers, district nurses or care managers. Families and individuals can access the service directly by contacting the Centre. Once a referral is received, a manager from PossAbilities Day Services arranges an initial visit to the Centre for the person, usually with whoever referred them, and a family member or carer.<sup>62</sup>

## 6.2 Employment Service

PossAbilities operates the Rochdale Employment Development Service (REDS). REDS works with service users to identify individual skills and strengths and then match these with a prospective employer.<sup>63</sup>

It offers a number of services for individuals, including:

- Assessment to identify individual needs;
- Information, advice and vocational guidance;
- Work preparation coaching;
- Assistance with CV writing and application forms;
- Job Search;
- Interview techniques and coaching;

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid

<sup>61</sup> Ibid

<sup>62</sup> Ibid

<sup>63</sup> PossAbilities, Employment Services, <http://www.possabilities.org.uk/services/employment-services/>

- On the job training;
- Ongoing support and mentoring; and,
- Volunteering opportunities.

It also provides supports to employers via assistance in recruitment and retention of staff and guidance on promoting equal opportunities within the workplace.

Anyone aged 18 to 65 with a learning disability, a diagnosed mental health condition and or physical or sensory impairment can access REDS.

REDS also delivers the Work Choice Programme throughout the Borough of Rochdale. Work Choice is a DWP funded programme, which REDS is sub contracted to deliver in partnership with Shaw Trust and the European Social Fund.<sup>64</sup>

Work Choice is a voluntary programme for people with disabilities, who find it difficult to access employment. It provides training, skills development confidence building and interview coaching.<sup>65</sup>

### 6.3 Family Based Support

As stated on the PossAbilities website:<sup>66</sup>

*This service provides support to adults with substantial learning disabilities aged 19 plus. People who provide placements and support under Shared Lives are referred to as Shared Live Carers. This service offers both long term and short term placements. It can be used as day support, as home from hospital care and as a stepping stone for someone to get their own tenancy. Individuals supported in Shared Lives arrangements may have learning or physical disabilities, they may be older people who are frail or living with dementia or mental health problems.*

Placements are provided to

- Adults with disabilities;
- Adults with mental health needs;
- Older people; and
- Vulnerable young adults.

### 6.4 Respite Services

PossAbilities offers a respite service. The aim of the service is to provide respite for parents and carers, and a pleasurable break from home for the individuals who they care for.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Ibid

<sup>65</sup> GOV.uk, Work Choice, <https://www.gov.uk/work-choice/overview>

<sup>66</sup> PossAbilities, Family Based Support, <http://www.possabilities.org.uk/services/family-based-support/>

An individual service is designed to meet the needs of service users with a range of respite opportunities, including overnight respite, outreach services, short break holidays, drop in events, day trips and support within the home.

Activities cater for a range different needs and include:

- Crafts;
- Baking and cookery;
- Gardening; and,
- Day Trips.

## 7 Other Support of Note

The following section provides a brief overview of other organisations and projects which may be of note.

### 7.1 Respite North West

Respite North West (RNW) is a service registered to support children and adults with their care and support needs.<sup>68</sup>

RNW works to:<sup>69</sup>

*Enable individuals to maximise their own potential and opportunities as a member of their community. We achieve this by using dedicated staff members who are trained and supported to deliver services in an informed and discreet way.*

It provides the following four types of support for people with learning and physical disabilities, mental health needs and acquired brain injury, as well as people with profound and multiple learning disabilities:

- **Domiciliary Care:**<sup>70</sup> Support workers come to an individual's house and work with them to meet their daily needs. This practical help can include personal care, housing related for example helping pay bills and manage their home. It may also be social where RNW support people to access their local community;
- **Residential Care:**<sup>71</sup> RNW has two residential care homes (with another currently at the planning stage). The two open residential care homes are Springvale and Ashbrook. Springvale is a specialist home for four service users with complex needs. Staffing levels can vary by need, but can be one to one or two to one.

<sup>67</sup> PossAbilities, Respite Services, <http://www.possabilities.org.uk/services/respice-services/>

<sup>68</sup> Respite North West, About Us, <http://www.respitenorthwestltd.co.uk/about-us>

<sup>69</sup> Ibid

<sup>70</sup> Respite North West, Domiciliary Care, <http://www.respitenorthwestltd.co.uk/care-we-provide/domicilliary-care>

<sup>71</sup> Respite North West, Residential Care, <http://www.respitenorthwestltd.co.uk/care-we-provide/residential-care>



Ashbrook is a slightly larger specialist home, providing support for people with acquired brain injury;

- **Supported Living:**<sup>72</sup> RNW support adults with learning disabilities and mental health needs to live in a home they help to set up. As little or as much support as needed is provided with the supported living team always on hand to manage a user's service, and help them to design the service they want; and,
- **Day Services:**<sup>73</sup> An individual day support package can be provided in any borough and can be specific to a user's needs and wishes. The service, known as "Chrysalis", is open from 9:30am- 3:30pm Monday to Friday, with a team of Support workers.

## 7.2 The Bren Project

The Bren Project offers supported employment opportunities, in a wide range of working environments, to people with learning disabilities.<sup>74</sup>

The project has a "hands on" approach to support for participants, utilising job coaches to support people when finding employment and then to sustain it.

The Bren Project targets two groups of people with learning disabilities and autism:

- Young people (14-18) in special school education and facing the difficult transition to adult life and employment; and,
- People aged 18 plus, those that have been through education and perhaps, in some cases, previous employment and who now find themselves isolated and not able to access employment support elsewhere for a variety of reasons – most usually the severity and complexity of their disability(ies) and their associated support needs.

In 2013, the project worked with 43 people. Of these, 24 undertook placements, 2 dropped out and 17 were profiled for placement in 2014. Three of those who took part in 2013 found paid work or volunteering following the programme.<sup>75</sup>

The programme includes the following supports:<sup>76</sup>

- Beneficiary Induction Programme to introduce the individual to the work of the charity and the support process they benefit from;
- In depth vocational profiling to ascertain the individual's preferred vocational choice;
- Development of an Individual Action Plan setting out clear aims and objectives. This document evolves as the beneficiary progresses through the programme;
- Targeted Job Searching to meet the requirements of the Action Plan, with a view to setting up appropriate work placements in a real work setting;

<sup>72</sup> Respite North West, Supported Living, <http://www.respitenorthwestltd.co.uk/care-we-provide/supported-living>

<sup>73</sup> Respite North West, Day Services, <http://www.respitenorthwestltd.co.uk/care-we-provide/day-services>

<sup>74</sup> The Bren Project, <http://www.brenproject.org.uk/>

<sup>75</sup> The Bren Project, Social Accounts 2014, [http://www.brenproject.org.uk/bren\\_social\\_accounts\\_2014\\_web.pdf](http://www.brenproject.org.uk/bren_social_accounts_2014_web.pdf)

<sup>76</sup> The Bren Project, Our Support Model, [http://www.brenproject.org.uk/our\\_support\\_model.html](http://www.brenproject.org.uk/our_support_model.html)

- Once a potential host employer has been identified, informal Workplace Tour for the participant, including a meeting with staff/supervisors;
- Gradual fading out of the Job Coach to encourage independence and to help establish if the required tasks can be done without support;
- End of placement review; and,
- Negotiation of employment, setting up of further work placements or signposting individual on to alternative training/support agencies to help continue the individual's personal development.

The Bren Project has eight sessional self-employed job coaches who provide support by:<sup>77</sup>

- Liaising with the beneficiary and employer;
- Learning the role which the beneficiary is due to undertake during the placement;
- Supporting and encouraging the beneficiary at work;
- Assisting with travel arrangements to the placement; and,
- Assisting with other incidental issues relating to the work placement.

### 7.3 Stockdales

Stockdales is a charity based in Manchester, which is dedicated to improving life for adults and children with learning and physical disabilities.<sup>78</sup>

As stated by the charity:<sup>79</sup>

*We're a caring, committed team of people, always growing and changing to meet the developing needs of the people we work with. We love what we do; we think there's no greater reward than the satisfaction of seeing people enjoy fulfilling lives with our support.*

Awarded Charity of the Year 2012/13 by Altrincham and Sale Chamber of Commerce, Stockdales offers individually planned care to over 200 people with severe learning difficulties and special needs, including running four houses which offer residential support for up to 24 people.<sup>80</sup> Its services are primarily delivered to the North West of England.

Stockdales offers a number of services for people with learning disabilities in the Manchester area, as highlighted below:<sup>81</sup>

- **Lifeskills Activities:** Stockdales offers a programme of activities designed to help people with learning disabilities make the most of their independence. They offer a

<sup>77</sup> The Bren Project, Social Accounts 2014, [http://www.brenproject.org.uk/bren\\_social\\_accounts\\_2014\\_web.pdf](http://www.brenproject.org.uk/bren_social_accounts_2014_web.pdf)

<sup>78</sup> Stockdales, Who we are, <http://www.stockdales.org.uk/who-we-are/>

<sup>79</sup> Ibid

<sup>80</sup> Ibid

<sup>81</sup> Stockdales, What we do, <http://www.stockdales.org.uk/what-we-do/>

choice of classes and activities including literacy, numeracy, ICT, independent living skills, conservation, allotment growing, yoga, cookery, drama, art and dance. These classes are held at various locations across Trafford, and the timetable is accessible and diverse. Social clubs are held twice a week with people encouraged to offer their own suggestions for what activities should take place;

- **Community:** The Stockdales Community team works with service users and their families or carers to create a bespoke package of support designed to meet their individual needs. They help with personal interests, socialising and getting out and about, as well as with day-to-day necessities; and
- **Residential:** Residential services are for people with severe disabilities who need round the clock care and support. They are also for those who like to have their own secure space and privacy, but with care on hand when they need it. Stockdale runs four houses that offer residential care. These are based in Ashton, Harboro, Hayling and Headonhey.

## 8 Aspects of Note

Each of the organisations discussed above have unique features which may be of note to the Committee:

- **The Seashell Trust:** The Seashell Trust provides state of the art facilities for children and young people with learning disabilities. Alongside its Outstanding and Good ratings for its education facilities from Ofsted, the Trust provides additional support such as on-site therapists, a medical centre and an employment service which offers one to one personal support and works closely with a variety of employers such as Lakeland and Hilton Hotels;
- **Project Search:** Project Search is a programme which has been rolled out in a number of countries following its successful development in the USA. Providing on the job training and support via classrooms on-site, Project Search has been able to attain high rates of job success (for example, in five job sites in 2011 there was a 60% job success rate). The Blackpool Council operated Project Search has just recently began operation, with ten participants and links directly to the Council's goal of improving employment rates in the area for people with disabilities;
- **Manchester Learning Disability Partnership (MLDP):** MLDP is an example of the joined up working that can be developed between a County Council and the NHS in order to deliver services effectively. A study carried out in 2012 by the Association of Directors and Adult Social Services identified the support provided by Manchester City Council for people with disabilities and learning disabilities as an example of best practice;
- **The Together Trust:** The Together Trust provides extensive support to people with learning disabilities across North West England, including residential care, family support, community services and special education via its three education bodies (Inscape House School, Ashcroft School and Bridge College, all of which have

received “Good” ratings from Ofsted). The Trust has also received accreditation from Investors in People and National Autistic Society Accreditation;

- **PossAbilities:** PossAbilities is of note as a result of its establishment as a Social Enterprise. The organisation is co-owned by staff and service users and took over the services previously provided by Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (indeed, PossAbilities is run by former staff of the Council’s Adult Social Care Service). As a Social Enterprise it is possible for PossAbilities to apply for grants that were not available to the Council. It can also seek out new business and develop new services, with any profits generated used to support its services. PossAbilities provides day services, an employment service (which provides needs assessments, on the job training and job coaches) and family based support;
- **Other Support of Note:** As part of writing this paper, other support organisations were identified, which may be of note but for which there was less available information:
  - **Respite North West (RNW):** Provides support to children and adults with care and support needs. RNW provides domiciliary care, residential care, supported living and day services. It’s residential care provides extensive support for residents including one to one and two to one support;
  - **The Bren Project:** The Bren Project is an example of an organisation providing supported employment opportunities for young people and people over the age of 18 in the North West. It provides job coaches to support both service users and employers in developing sustained employment. In 2013, 24 participants undertook placements with three finding paid work or volunteering;
  - **Stockdales:** Stockdales was awarded Charity of the Year 2012/13 by Altrincham and Sale Chamber of Commerce and offers support to over 200 people with severe learning disabilities each year. Of note is its Lifeskills Activities is designed to help people with learning disabilities through classes such as literacy, numeracy and independent living skills.



**Appendix 1: Location of Identified Learning Disability Support Organisations in North West England.**

