



Annual review

2016

Front cover shows from left to right: Peter Holmes, CDG – WISE Ability Chairman; Christine Beck, Consort of the Chairman of the New Forest District Council; Councillor Godfrey Beck, Chairman of the New Forest District Council; Linda Matthews, CDG – WISE Ability Partnership Director; Aaron Phipps, Wheelchair Rugby Athlete and London 2012 Paralympian and Mandy Miles, Karate World Champion 2016 for Kata. Picture taken at CDG – WISE Ability’s annual Rewards and Recognition event held in November 2016.

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Foreword

Roy O'Shaughnessy CDG – WISE Ability Board

This past year has been exceptional for our stakeholders, the organisation, and for the community and the country. Even before the result of the Brexit referendum there was concern about government funding for people with disabilities and/or long term health conditions and what would replace Work Choice. Combined with the devolution agenda, these concerns have significant strategic importance to how services will be delivered in the future, and to maintaining their quality. To date, CDG – WISE Ability, under the leadership of Linda Matthews, has offered outstanding support to those wanting to work despite barriers to attaining meaningful and sustainable employment. The staff have delivered a high performing service demonstrating attention to the unique needs of each customer. This extra value is offered so often, it is now the norm rather than the exception. This is also true across the supply chain delivering services on our behalf.

The organisation has achieved a truly community-centred approach, working with the Saints Foundation to maximise social impact. Our fundraising initiative via Ready Emmy Walk further demonstrates what can be accomplished when a community works together. Going forward it seems clear civic organisations with the same commitment to social return must work jointly to make the most of the reduced funding available.

CDG – WISE Ability has a strong ethos reflected in our commitment to using quality to drive performance, leaving no stone unturned to ensure compliance is of the highest standard, and our commitment to continuous improvement.

Questions still remain on the future funding. What is not in doubt is the commitment of Linda, her staff, and the trustees to providing outstanding assistance to any person needing support to achieve independence and employment. This effort has been formally recognised by the Department of Work and Pensions in awarding a 'strong' in the Provider Assurance Team audit in 2016.

On behalf of the trustees, I thank each and every individual who has been part of the success of this past year, particularly the customers who achieved employment or who are on the journey to employment. We will continue to learn from you and improve our efforts to contribute to your long term success.



Linda Matthews

Partnership Director at CDG – WISE Ability

Year six has seen a lot of changes both across the Welfare to Work sector and within the Work Choice contract.

CDG – WISE Ability has taken the challenges and turned them into positives.

Together the supply chain has embraced the changes and created an even stronger partnership, where they work together to achieve the very best outcomes for their customers.

This was recognised by the Department of Work and Pensions Provider Assurance Team (PAT) when they reviewed CDG – WISE Ability in May 2016. PAT graded CDG – WISE Ability as a 'strong', the highest grade you can achieve from the PAT review.

The ethos of a seamless, consistent, clear and transparent approach to delivering the contract ensures a quality customer experience for every single person on the Work Choice programme.

The commitment, dedication and passion shown by everyone in the supply chain is incredible and an honour to be part of.

Year seven will see even further challenges, but I believe that, with the partnership we have in CPA 24, together we will overcome the obstacles and ensure that our customers continue to get the same high quality experience that we have delivered for the last six years.

Together with our supply chain, CDG – WISE Ability will continue to ensure that the customer is always at the heart of everything we do.

Together we are stronger than the sum of our parts.



About us

Where others see disability, we see ability

CDG – WISE Ability was formed in 2009 by Careers Development Group (CDG) and WISE employment. Set up to manage the delivery of Work Choice programme in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, CDG has since merged with Shaw Trust.

As a prime provider of the programme, we manage a supply chain of five partners who deliver Work Choice programme on our behalf. Our supply chain partners were chosen for their expertise and experience in working with our customers; using their specialist knowledge to break down barriers to work.

Our core principles

CDG – WISE Ability is committed to working with partners who share and support our core principles to work towards a society in which employment is available to all. We believe in:

- Innovation and integrity in how we manage the Work Choice programme and our supply chain
- Achieving and maintaining excellent performance and a quality service, and
- Encouraging customer self-sufficiency and empowerment through employment.

Our supply chain partners are:



What is Work Choice?

Work Choice is a voluntary, government-supported employment programme designed specifically for people with disabilities or long term health conditions who, due to their circumstances, may find it difficult to find or stay in work. Work Choice is flexible and tailored to the customers' individual needs, helping them to identify the right job opportunities, apply for work and move into employment.

How do we deliver the programme?

At CDG – WISE Ability we support all of our supply chain partners to work together seamlessly, collaborating to achieve our goals. We place a strong emphasis on ensuring that all of our activities have a direct positive impact on the people we support, and, as managing agents, ensure this ethos is fostered across the supply chain.

As a supply chain partner, in addition to our drive to understanding the requirements of our customers, we also have

the expert local knowledge of the requirements of businesses and employers. This way we can enable our customers to find the right job for them, while also assisting employers to find the right employee. Plus we have an extended network of partners that provide added value to our customers.

Our delivery partners share their expertise and knowledge with colleagues across the chain, so the team offers our customers a personal service backed up by the skills and experience of the wider supply chain. This way we provide a strong, committed and supportive service for all of our Work Choice customers.

Our approach ensures that customers get the best and most effective service possible. This is demonstrated by the feedback we have received this year - 94% of our customers said that their adviser is always willing to help them.

Disability Confident

Disability Confident is a government scheme designed to support employers to help them successfully employ and retain disabled people and those with long term health conditions.

We strongly believe that people with disabilities and with long term health conditions have skills and abilities that can enhance any work place. That's why CDG – WISE Ability has started the process to become a Disability Confident Leader to be able to support and encourage other businesses to also become Disability Confident employers.

And we have already achieved our Level 1 Disability Confident Commitment and Level 2 Disability Confident Employer accreditation.

By stepping up to become a Disability Confident Leader, we will be acting as a champion within our local and business community, with our supply chain and our networks. And we'll be showing people with disabilities that we are serious about leading the way.



Case study



Eva's Story

Job: Cleaner

Employer: Forres Manor School

Eva joined the Work Choice programme with CDG – WISE Ability in November 2015. She had been looking for work with no success for some time. Eva wanted to find cleaning work within a school environment – as a single parent it was important to be able to balance her work life with home life, Eva is profoundly deaf and her dad, knowing we provide support to individuals with disabilities seeking employment, suggested she contacted us.

Eva met with Caroline Day, a Work Choice Employment Adviser, and was immediately sold on the programme. Caroline identified a job opportunity and contacted Roger Dutton, Bursar at Forres Manor School, on Eva's behalf and secured an interview for her. Caroline continued to support Eva, helping her to complete the application form and attending the interview with her, helping Eva feel more relaxed. A few days later the school offered Eva the job.

Eva was supported by the whole team at the school as she learnt the routine of her new job. Debbie Whitbread, Eva's supervisor, provided her with plenty of tips on how to improve her cleaning to

meet the high standards required by the school. Debbie said she was surprised at how well Eva communicated with the team and that Eva had made it easy for the team to adapt to her needs. Debbie also described Eva as a valued member of the team who is easy to get on with and always happy to help others out.

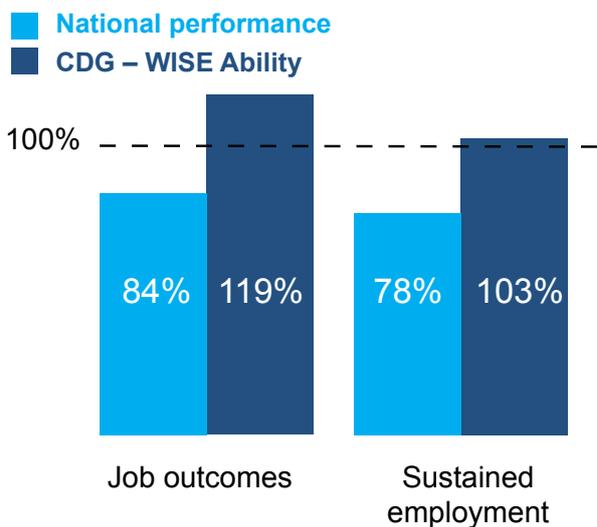
Eva in return said Debbie has helped her with self-confidence and enabled her to be herself at work. Eva's long-term goals are to stay doing the job she loves so much. She feels the job takes her out of the house, giving her an opportunity to meet people and grow in confidence.

Eva said she would not be where she is without the support from Caroline and the Work Choice programme, who have supported her through every stage of her employment. Eva has now completed her probationary period with Forres Manor School and is a permanent member of the Domestic Cleaning Team at the school.

Performance review

CDG – WISE Ability has had another year of strong performance. Our supply chain moved 132 customers into work during year six of the Work Choice contract and they successfully supported 102 customers in sustaining long term employment.

Work Choice Year 6



PAT review

In 2016 we underwent a DWP PAT audit. We are pleased and proud that we were awarded a PAT assurance level of 'strong' for the second consecutive time. We are the first prime contractor to have achieved this.

"The opportunity to meet and share good practice is encouraged by CDG – WISE Ability. All staff interviewed across the supply chain confirmed there are quarterly practitioner forums and regular workshops. All staff interviewed emphasised they are encouraged to work as a team providing the full range of help to customers.

An example of cross provider working was seen where customers employed by a Supported Business are supported by a Work Choice adviser with job search to aid their progression into unsupported work."

"PAT established through interviews with both internal and supply chain staff and through a walkthrough that effective processes are in place and are embedded to ensure contract updates are communicated to staff on a regular basis. This is done through various mediums such as one-to-ones, bulletins and staff forums attended by internal delivery and supply chain where arranged, allocated champions present and discuss updates."

Merlin assessment

What is a Merlin Standard?

The Merlin Standard was designed by the Department of Work and Pensions to recognise and promote sustainable excellence within supply chains and provide guidance to those seeking to achieve it. It is built upon four fundamental and integrated principles: supply chain design, commitment, conduct, and review. These principles have been designed to examine key areas of the relationship between a prime contractor and its supply chain partners.

We were assessed by Merlin in December 2016 achieving our third consecutive 'excellent'. Our result demonstrates the commitment, passion and dedication that CDG – WISE Ability and our supply chain partners have to ensuring our Work Choice customers receive an excellent level of service at all times.

Overall Outcome	93% Excellent
Supply Chain Design	93% Excellent
Commitment	95% Excellent
Conduct	92% Excellent
Review	93% Excellent

Some of the comments that came out of the Merlin assessment included:

The staff of CDG – WISE Ability demonstrated, and supply chain partners validated:

- A very clear and in-depth understanding of both the commissioner and customer demands
- The mix of experience, expertise, size

and sectors across the supply chain was relevant to the requirements of the commissioner and customer group, and

- A wide-reaching and diverse Specialist Support Organisation Network was in place to support the customer journey.
- Business and commercial integrity is embedded across the network
- The network operates in the spirit of true collaboration, and
- Performance expectations are clearly explained, understood and monitored with feedback provided being relevant to need / situation.

These statements were backed up by some very positive comments from members of the supply chain, including:

“CDG – WISE Ability is constantly reviewing and researching to ensure they are providing the best service to its customers and delighting their commissioners and this also involves feedback and consultation with the supply chain.”

“CDG – WISE Ability is very good at keeping the supply chain fully informed of anything relevant to the delivery or future delivery of the contract.”

We are very proud of the results of the Merlin assessment, and feel that the dedicated approach to collaborative working across the supply chain has enabled us to achieve such a fantastic result.

Case study



Community support

Marching towards employment

Saints Foundation is an independent charity aligned to Southampton Football Club. Harnessing the passion of the club and its fans they aim to inspire, support and deliver positive change and equality of opportunity for young people and vulnerable adults across Southampton and surrounding areas. They work across six key themes: youth inclusion, lifelong learning, health and wellbeing, education, schools and enterprise, football and sports development.

In 2016 CDG – WISE Ability and Saints Foundation came together to combine our expertise to support young people with learning needs who were leaving college and wanted to move closer to employment.

Together we created an employability course, Marching Towards Employment, using sport as a platform to build young people's confidence and self-esteem. Participants were invited to come in for individual Rickter sessions in the week before starting. From this we identified

key areas of development and individual goals relating to employment. We were then able to tailor the course specifically around these areas.

The results spoke for themselves, with the follow up assessments showing improvement, development and achievements across the board with all the participants.

One young person on the course said:

“Earlier this year I attended an employability course called Marching towards Employment run by Saints Foundation and CDG – WISE Ability. I really enjoyed the course. It helped me gain a lot of confidence and plan my employment goals. On the course I was also supported in gaining a three week work experience at Halfords in retail and have applied for an apprenticeship in car mechanics.”



Case study



Supporting local initiatives

This year CDG – WISE Ability fundraised for the Ready Emmy Walk initiative. Emmy’s parents give first hand account of Emmy’s story.

“Emmy was diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy Spastic Diplopia at 20 months old. She has a type of brain damage called Periventricular Leukomalacia caused in the womb, when her identical twin sister sadly died at 23 weeks’ gestation.

“Emmy’s cerebral palsy caused increased muscle tone in her legs and feet making them constantly stiff. This affected her balance and coordination, making simple things such as crawling, cruising and even sitting up harder for her. Emmy was not able to stand or walk independently. Whilst there isn’t a cure for cerebral palsy, there is a life changing surgery, Selective Dorsal Rhizotomy (SDR), the only procedure that could permanently eliminate the spasticity in Emmy’s legs.

“Without SDR, Emmy would have faced multiple orthopaedic operations, Botox treatment and leg casting and would have ultimately needed a wheelchair.

“As SDR is not currently available on the NHS, the family decided to raise the £100,000 to pay for the operation and the intense daily physiotherapy that is required afterwards.

“After eight months of tireless fundraising, Emmy had her SDR surgery in St Louis, Missouri in September 2016. She is getting stronger every day and can stand independently for over 30 seconds – a wonderful milestone we thought we might never see. She has a lot of hard work ahead, but we are now so excited for her future and can’t wait to see what she can achieve. We would like to thank everyone at CDG – WISE Ability for helping to support Emmy through your fundraising activities.”

Celebrating success

Rewards and Recognition event 2016

CDG – WISE Ability held its annual Rewards and Recognition event on 4th November 2016 at the Beaulieu Hotel. The event recognises the work of individuals and organisations in helping people with disabilities and/or long term health conditions gain greater independence. It also recognises our Work Choice customers who have demonstrated exceptional commitment to overcoming barriers to enter and sustain employment.

This year's speakers were Wheelchair Rugby Athlete and London 2012 Paralympian, Aaron Phipps and Mandy Miles, Director of River K Solutions.

Linda Matthews, CDG – WISE Ability Work Choice Partnership Director, said:

“The awards are to recognise the fantastic work carried out by the supply chain, our partners, employers and the achievements of our customers who through Work Choice have received the opportunity to achieve their ambitions and secure sustainable work. We were extremely delighted to have both Aaron Phipps, Paralympian, who recently scaled Mount Kilimanjaro and Mandy Miles, current Karate World Champion 2016 for Kata, join us this year. I have no doubt that they will inspire our nominees to achieve even greater things.”

Customer of the Year:
Sandra Wright

Employer of the Year:
B & M Farlington

Adviser of the Year:
Charlene Fletcher

Team of the Year:
**Portsmouth and Isle of Wight
Shaw Trust**

Manager of the Year:
Joanne Proctor

Supporting Others to Achieve:
Jo Nash

Partner of the Year:
Zoe Brown People Plus

Top Achiever Award:
James Davies

Innovation Award:
Mark Hughes

Significant Achievement Award:
Charlene Fletcher

Case study

Sandra's Story

Job: **Telesales Operative**
Employer: **Clarity**



Sandra Wright was nominated for the Customer of the Year award by her Shaw Trust Work Choice Adviser, Pete Hooker. Pete said Sandra has overcome some major challenges to achieve her dream of permanent sustained employment.

Sandra was referred to Work Choice in April 2015 but before she could get started she was admitted to hospital for two weeks. With the support of Pete and her mum, Jill, Sandra put a plan in place to start moving forward. Pete also arranged for Sandra to attend Self Advocacy for Life and to volunteer at Barnardo's.

Sandra soon gained the confidence and self-esteem she needed to take on a fixed-term contract with Clarity in Portsmouth as a Telesales Operative.

Unfortunately Sandra then had an accident which put her back in hospital. When she was ready to return to work, Sandra was soon showing how her determination to succeed had paid off. Sandra started to consistently smash her targets and in August 2016 was offered a permanent position at Clarity. Sandra said that she was ecstatic and ready to take on the world.

Sandra has come such a long way with the support of all those involved, but crucially with her own hard work and determination. Pete said she truly deserved to be recognised as 'Customer of the Year'.

Case study

Jack's story

Job: **Classroom Assistant**
Employer: **Enham Trust**



Jack came to work at Enham Trust as a Classroom Assistant in February 2015. Jack has Asperger's syndrome and finds social situations difficult, sometimes becoming withdrawn and quiet. With the support from his Work Choice Adviser, Clare Binsley, Jack has built up his confidence, learning to manage his anxiety through his work and by attending meeting where Jack has even been able to input ideas.

Jack worked closely with learners and developed his computer skills and learnt about the relevant compliance of paperwork. Jack worked with his adviser on his CV and interview techniques while being encouraged and supported to be able to cope in social situations. Jack has managed to overcome some barriers and join a gym.

Working with his manager, Jack now secured an unsupported Administration Assistant Apprenticeship with Kiwi in February 2016. It is great to see Jack has sustained his employment with Kiwi and continues to enjoy his new role.

Jack will also be undertaking exams in the near future for English and Maths and is also working towards his Customer Service Level 2. Jack has joined Junior Chamber International and has travelled around participating in group work with people from around the world.

For his hard work, Jack achieved a certificate 'The Greatest Leap'.

Partnership working

Yateley Industries and Shaw Trust have been working together to improve outcomes for customers who are part of the Protected Places programme. There have been many challenges in this collaboration including working with individuals who have been part of the programme for many years. Culture change has played an important role in this new approach. For many years the Protected Place's programme has been seen as a 'job for life' for customers, rather than a programme to enable them to gain new skills and experience. The heart of this new collaboration is to take best advantage of these skills and experience in looking for future employment possibilities, allowing the customers to explore what they might want from their working life. The work of Yateley Industries and Shaw Trust has looked at two very different customer groups; those new to the programme and those who have been part of the programme for many years. Examining the needs of each group has led to two distinct approaches.

The Department of Work and Pensions was keen for the Protected Places programme to evolve into a stepping stone for individuals on their journey to employment in an area that they aspire to. Considering this mandate, Yateley Industries and Shaw Trust have worked together to ensure that new joiners to the programme are set these new expectations. This has been achieved by

offering individuals fixed term contracts with Yateley Industries and the continued opportunities to be seconded to external employers to experience and explore other employment opportunities. Shaw Trust support Yateley Industries to fill vacancies ensuring that the right people are being employed for the right job. When customers progress into external employment outside of Yateley Industries, Shaw Trust picks up the support of these individuals to ensure they are able to sustain their new employment.

Having experienced success with new joiners to the programme Yateley Industries and Shaw Trust were keen to offer these opportunities to individuals who have been on the programme for many years but were aware that a different approach would be needed.

Collaboration between the organisations has been key to the team's success in progressing customers on the Protected Place's programme to sustained employment with external employers. The team have worked to develop and grow existing working relationships between the different team members, developed robust and regular communication channels to identify areas of concern and support needs and used innovative approaches to meet the needs of their customers. A unique approach with amazing results!

Case study

Andrew's Story

Job: **Waiter**

Employer: **La Galleria**



Andrew moved into the kitchen at Yateley Industries, undertaking basic food preparation. With the support of the staff there he passed the Level 2 Award in Food Safety in catering. It seemed like Andrew had found his calling. He undertook several work experience placements - at Yateley Manor School in their kitchen and then working in the Tea Room at Bourne Antiques.

Andrew was now certain he wanted to work in catering and set his goal of finding further employment in this area. In between various work placements Andrew continued to develop his skills, working in the coffee shop and taking on more challenges including general clearing up and making sure the coffee shop was always ready for new customers. Unfortunately, the coffee shop closed but the business was sold to an external company that set up a restaurant, La Galleria.

Andrew was offered a work experience opportunity at the new restaurant which he readily agreed to. He progressed well

on his placement gaining both confidence and practical skills. He started to take on responsibility for greeting customers, taking bookings, answering the phone and working behind the bar, something Andrew never thought he would have the confidence to do. Andrew also decided to take his driving test to easily get to his placement. With his new found confidence Andrew passed last year.

In April 2016 Andrew achieved his ultimate goal of employment within the restaurant and now works 21 hours a week at La Galleria. An adviser from Shaw Trust has been supporting Andrew over the last few months and he said: "Every time I see Andrew and we talk about work, he is always wearing the biggest smile." Andrew said that he enjoyed every aspect of his job and loved being part of the team.

Well done Andrew!



Volunteering

As part of CDG – WISE Ability’s commitment to partnership working, a volunteer day was held at Enham Trust, a Supported Business partner.

Staff from the Work Choice supply chain worked alongside Work Choice customers in Enham Trust’s Packing department. Everyone who was involved on the day agreed they had enjoyed the experience immensely and that it had given them a new perspective on the challenges our customers face on a daily basis.

Stakeholder feedback

Customer satisfaction and feedback

The level of service our customers receive from us is vital and therefore to ensure our customers are happy with support they are receiving, we conduct annual surveys to gather feedback. We are extremely proud to say that for the fourth consecutive year over 90% of our customers said they were happy with the level of service they had received whilst on Work Choice.

Quotes from some of our customer surveys:

“As a disabled person this Work Choice programme is a brilliant way to help people like myself to obtain a job and get vital support for the future and I have benefited so much like others.”

“The Work Choice programme has helped me get into employment after I was made redundant. The staff were all helpful and friendly to me. My adviser understood my Asperger syndrome and my strengths and limitations.”

Employer satisfaction and feedback

The relationship we have with our employers is essential to enabling us to provide the best service possible to our customers. We are proud that our employer survey for year six showed 100% of our employers were happy with the service they receive.

Quotes from some our employer surveys:

“In my experience, I have always found the adviser very efficient and professional. The adviser is very passionate and supportive of their customers.”

“Having been involved with the Work Choice during the last year, the business felt supported throughout. I cannot underestimate how important this is to a business as a lack of support and uncertainty, through fear of ‘getting it wrong’, can often deter any potential placements.”

“The adviser has been very approachable and helpful.”

Case study



Peter's story

Job: Administrator and Internal Auditor

Employer: PCMI

Peter Knight is celebrating more than six years as a Portsmouth City Council employee at PCMI employment and training centre.

Peter, who in November 2016 sustained and exited the Work Choice programme, began his PCMI journey in early 2010 by starting an admin work placement.

Peter's skills and attitude impressed management to such an extent that he started paid employment as an Administrator. Since then Peter hasn't looked back, joining the PCMI staff as a Receptionist, and starting on Work Choice for support and guidance.

In June 2016 Peter started as the Administrator and Internal Auditor on the new Solent Jobs Programme.

Peter who is nearing completion a Level 3 NVQ in Business Administration, said working at PCMI has helped him develop his skills in administration and IT and business support. He has also developed new social interactions and customer

service skills. Peter added: "Work Choice has always been available for me to turn to for advice and guidance and support."

Work Choice Adviser, Steve Henwood, said: "Peter has grown to become an invaluable and key member of the administration and business support team at PCMI. He deserves huge credit for all his hard work, dedication and attention to detail."

PCMI Operations Manager, Derek Christie, said: "Considering Peter's starting point in terms of his communications, confidence and personal belief, with the support of Work Choice and the wider team at PCMI, he developed into a capable, confident and self-assured, multi-talented young man who has much to offer. He has become a key part of the team and has now worked across many different contracts providing high-quality customer-focused support for which he has become well known and respected. He displays great flexibility and a real desire to assist wherever he possibly can."

Who we are

Board of Trustees

- Peter Holmes (Chair)
- Roy O'Shaughnessy
- Kay Sutton

Partnership Director and contracts team

- Linda Matthews
- Caroline Preston
- Claire Rowe
- Debbie Davies

Supply chain

- Enham Trust
- OSEL Enterprises Ltd
- PCMI
- Shaw Trust
- Yateley Industries

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CDG - WISE Ability

empowerment through partnership

