

*Mapping and Development Project*  
*Preparing for Adulthood in the Rumworth Area*



## Executive Summary

Beginning on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2022, a 12 Month Project has been undertaken to investigate the availability of facilities, organisations, and activities available for individuals with SEND approaching the age where they would begin to prepare for adulthood, in accordance with Bolton's Local Offer<sup>1</sup>. In depth mapping of provisions available to the local area of Rumworth have been completed, alongside interviews of parents, young people, owners of some local business and categorising any findings gained under the three main areas of focus identified in the Bolton Local Offer; Independent Living; Good Health; and Friends, Relationships, and the Community.

Using these findings, we have compiled a list of recommendations as to how the provisions that were identified within the Rumworth area could be used to their full potential. Alongside this, we assisted an organisation we identified as a "Hidden Gem" through the application process towards gaining funding for the improvement of their organisation, as well as receiving sensory packs for use at their discretion.

Throughout this report, we will cover the findings made whilst completing this project including but not limited to; local provisions and services; transport links; local schools and colleges admission criteria; and findings gained from interviews with parents and carers of young people with SEND.

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<sup>1</sup> Bolton SEND Local Offer - [Home – SEND Local Offer \(bolton.gov.uk\)](https://www.bolton.gov.uk/send-local-offer)

### *A Definition of Inclusivity – As Defined By Breaking Barriers NW*

Inclusivity as a concept is everchanging in our environment. We encounter a surplus of people from varied walks of life including religion, gender identity, family background and many more, and as such we place high levels of importance in our ability to adapt any scenario on a person-based basis. The majority of our volunteers are brought on with knowledge of their special needs and requirements and we strive to offer them the experience of acceptance and importance in a workplace where they are given a position and title that recognises their contribution to the job. Furthermore, bringing in work experience placements from outside sources further expands our experience beyond what already lies within the charity.

With focus on the charity and the viewpoint we hold it is simply that there is no definitive definition of 'inclusivity' and it is in fact a fluid concept which will be forever changing with each addition of a new factor be that a person, environment or activity. It is often thought of as simplified, one minded definition whereas the concept of inclusivity is one which can not be whittled down and restricted to a dictionary definition. Whilst being inclusive does involve adapting to suit the needs of individuals it is most importantly about finding a collaborative environment where the needs and differences of individuals are identified and recognised but the needs and differences of others are also focussed on to make a sort of 'middle ground' whereby everyone is represented and included but clashes of interest or requirements are avoided. Fairness, recognition, and respect are standards which must be sufficiently met. How we do this is by paying attention to the different ways that people process and function given information and use this to establish a causation relationship between functioning and participating to ensure that individuals are able to enjoy the participation to the best of their given ability.

Mindful communication also holds a key place, taking the time to sit and speak with the individual in question to discover what values they hold and how they would find it best for us to approach situations that may arise and what adaptations would actually be beneficial to them, rather than making generalised assumptions which may not produce the most efficient and helpful outcome. Using this approach ensures that people feel as though their differences and need are recognised in a way that makes them feel valued for who they are and that their differences are celebrated instead of creating assumptions based on a set of pre-set standards which most people would believe to suit the majority instead of placing focus onto the minority. Individuals should be addressed directly and emotional age should be taken into consideration when conversing to avoid confusion, upset or other negative effects.

Whilst all prior made points are essential to achieving inclusivity, one of the most crucial factors to include is family involvement. Having the involvement of family members creates the feeling of a space where individuals always feel safe and the pressure of being 'normal' does not exist. Successes can be shared and celebrated creating a confidence boost unmatched by others and the individual will ultimately leave with the same levels of confidence, importance and acceptance that we hope to create here.

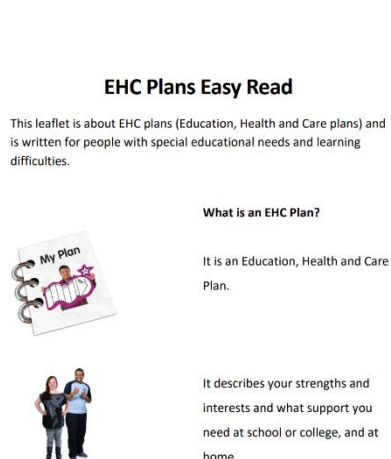
Preparing for Adulthood Pathway	Action	Responsibility / Lead	Timescales	Progress to date (Including RAG)
Health	Identification of the young person's health needs and appropriate referrals are made and recorded in the EHCP to ensure needs are not missed – small task and finish group	Lisa Birtles-Smith (Learning Disability Team) Jane Kinsella (Bridgewater, NHS) Alison Sutcliffe (CCG)	Task and Finish Group to meet by end of May '19	
	Ensure that the standard operating procedure with health providers is co-produced and embedded within the EHCP process.	Lisa Birtles-Smith (Learning Disability Team) Jane Kinsella (Bridgewater, NHS) Alison Sutcliffe (CCG)	By July '19	
	Have a clear path towards achieving a health action plan for every young person who is eligible for one.	Lisa Birtles-Smith (Learning Disability Team) Jane Kinsella (Bridgewater, NHS) Alison Sutcliffe (CCG)	By Oct '19	
	Accessible information available for young people on 'being healthy'.	Julia Rosser (Public Health) Michelle Forder (Health Improvement Team) Mal Hampson (Halton Speak Out / Young People)	Commence by Oct '19 then ongoing	

### How Can We Improve Bolton's Local Offer?

We began our research project by focussing firstly on the current condition of Bolton's Local Offer before we began our research into the Rumworth Area. Upon review of the current state of Bolton's Local Offer, we thought it beneficial to research other local offers to see how they viewed in comparison. From this research, we identified several areas of improvement that could be applied to the Local Offer in Bolton, or alternatively could be used as a point of inspiration for future adaptations.

Listed below is a collection of resources found on other Local Offer websites, along with reasons as to why their existence is beneficial.

Figure One



- Warrington Local Offer <sup>2</sup>
- Realistic timescales made publicly visible for users to see a roadmap for constant improvement of the local offer.
- Red, Amber, Green traffic light system in place to indicate levels of progression.
- Clear Separation of actions to ensure each key are assigned an appropriate level of focus.

Figure Two

- Hertfordshire Local Offer <sup>3</sup>
- Easy to read, simplified explanation of the elements found within an EHCP plan.

<sup>2</sup> Warrington Local Offer - [Special educational needs and disability \(SEND\) | warrington.gov.uk](http://warrington.gov.uk/special-educational-needs-and-disability-send)

<sup>3</sup> Hertfordshire Local Offer - [Preparing for adulthood \(hertfordshire.gov.uk\)](http://hertfordshire.gov.uk/preparing-for-adulthood)

- Financial help and assistance is a point that should be focussed on as without the ability to have financial capabilities and a funding stream, many individuals will struggle to adapt to adult life.



Figure 3

- Hertfordshire Local Offer
- Clear Separation of sections, including a brief description of what information can be found under each subheading.
- Easy to navigate website without the use of overly ambitious language, which would possibly limit accessibility.

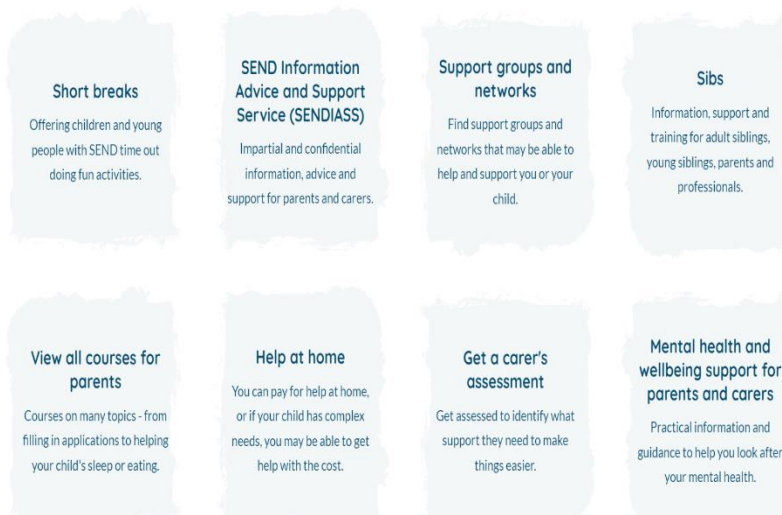


Figure 4

group which is often overlooked.

- Links to respite and help at home, which for some families will be essential.



Figure 5

- Manchester Local Offer <sup>4</sup>
- Clear focus on opportunities for further education, which is often

<sup>4</sup> Manchester Local Offer - [Local Offer SEND Information Hub | Help & Support Manchester](#)

underrepresented in other forms of the local offer.



Figure 6

- Stockport local offer<sup>5</sup>
- Keeping individuals up to date with newest pieces of relevant information which may affect them.
- Focus allocated to budgeting and money management which is key.
- Nice, clear

separation between areas.



Figure 7

- Northamptonshire Local Offer<sup>6</sup>
- Ability to save favourite/relevant pieces of information for easy access next time the website is visited.
- Ability to see results on a map, which is of course the key intention of

this piece of research and so it is helpful to see it in practice.

Figure 8

If you can't find what you are looking for or would like to tell us what you think about our Local Offer, [please click here](#) to go to our feedback page or email us at [local.offer@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:local.offer@tameside.gov.uk)

- Tameside Local Offer<sup>7</sup>
- Giving individuals the opportunity to review and feedback on how they find the service.
- Giving a sense of power to key consumers is such an important prospect to discover how easy they find the service to use or how helpful they find it. This information is essential to fuel improvement and adaptation.

<sup>5</sup> Stockport Local Offer - [Stockport SEND Local Offer | Stockport Information and Childcare Directory \(fsd.org.uk\)](https://stockport SEND Local Offer | Stockport Information and Childcare Directory (fsd.org.uk))

<sup>6</sup> Northamptonshire Local Offer - [Local Offer \(northamptonshire.gov.uk\)](https://Local Offer (northamptonshire.gov.uk))

<sup>7</sup> Tameside Local Offer - [Tameside SEND Local Offer](https://Tameside SEND Local Offer)

Figure 9



- Tameside Local Offer.
- Options for focus points outside the four currently set out by the Bolton Local Offer.
- Section for housing options which is often not covered as an area of importance.
- Section for volunteering which can be an essential tool in assisting the change in adapting to adulthood, and creating a sense of importance through holding a position similar to that of a job.

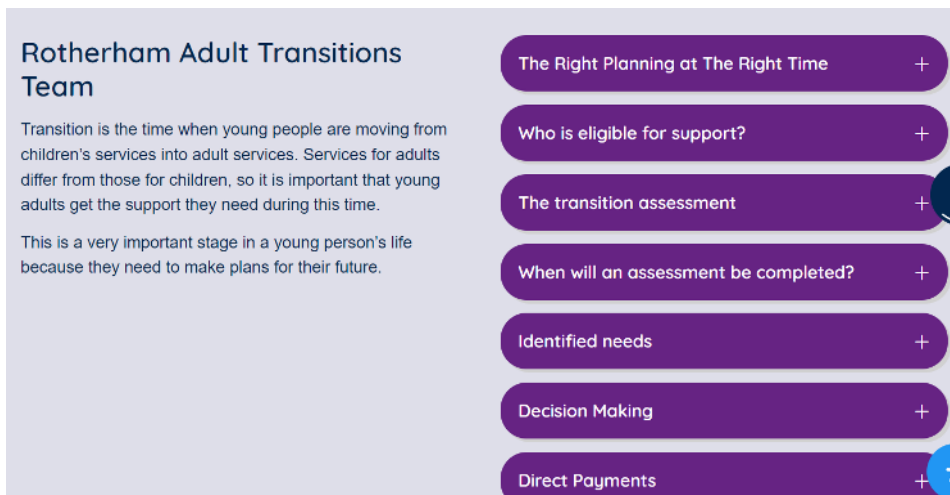
Figure 10

April 2023						
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
27	28 <a href="#">Spectrum Youth Cafe 16+</a> 5.15pm - 6.15pm	29	30 <a href="#">Spectrum Youth Club 11+</a> 4.00pm - 5.00pm	31	01 <a href="#">SEND Family Swimming</a> 4.30pm - 5.30pm	02 <a href="#">Climb Quest SEND Session</a> 9.00am - 12.30pm
03	04 <a href="#">Groovy Gecko nightclub</a> 7.00pm - 9.30pm	05	06	07 <a href="#">Climb Quest SEND Session</a> 9.00am - 12.30pm <a href="#">360 SEN Evenings</a> 6.30pm - 8.30pm <a href="#">Emily's Star Easter Egg Hunt 2023 7 April 10:00 am - 2:00pm</a> 10.00am - 2.00pm	08 <a href="#">MK Gallery SEND Exhibition Tour</a> 11.30am - 12.30pm <a href="#">Toddler Exhibition Tour - Trickster Figures</a> 10.30am - 11.30am	09
10	11 <a href="#">Spectrum Youth Cafe 16+</a> 5.15pm - 6.15pm	12 <a href="#">SEND Parkland Play Sessions</a> 1.00pm - 3.00pm <a href="#">Supporting Xtra Special Families Easter Holiday Fun</a> 1.30pm - 3.30pm	13	14	15	16

- Milton Keynes Local Offer<sup>8</sup>
- Up-to-date and interactive calendar full of activities and groups for website users to view and use as a resource for their own use.

<sup>8</sup> Milton Keynes Local Offer - <https://www.mksendlocaloffer.co.uk/>

Figure 11



- Rotherham Local Offer<sup>9</sup>
- Links to an adult transitions team which may play a vital role in assisting individuals through their journey towards adulthood.

Figure 12



- Rotherham Local Offer.
- Links for assistance for individuals who are wanting to build their own business, alongside covering what grants are available for application.

<sup>9</sup> Rotherham Local Offer - <https://www.rotherhamsendlocaloffer.org.uk/preparing-for-adulthood/>



### Bolton's Local Offer

Following the research into other local offers and the way that they have chosen to utilise their online presence to provide information, support, and contextual information we have concluded that there are multiple improvements that could be made to Bolton's Local Offer to improve not only levels of accessibility but also the usefulness to prospective users.

Referencing back to Bolton's Local Offer, one area of focus that particularly stood out to us was the lack of ability to use the provided search bar to find what was being put into it. We randomly selected 10 provisions/ services we had found during our initial research, which will be discussed in due course, and attempted to search for them using the search bar. The results were as follows:

Provision Searched	Results Given
Bupa Healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- EHCP Assessments</li><li>- Placement in Mainstream School</li></ul>
Odyssey 9 Academy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Return to the homepage.</li><li>- PFA Overview</li></ul>
Time2Run Events Ltd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Short breaks overview</li><li>- Leisure and sport</li></ul>
Bolton Council Learning Disability Services (too long to type completely)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Become a short break carer.</li><li>- Return to the homepage</li></ul>
The Great Lever Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Return to the homepage.</li><li>- EHCP Assessments</li></ul>
Bolton Volleyball Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Get involved.</li><li>- What is a local offer?</li></ul>
Bolton Community Sports and Social Development (too long to type completely)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- EHCP Assessments</li><li>- Become a short break carer.</li></ul>
Firwood High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- SEN support.</li><li>- Education.</li></ul>
Speech and Language Therapy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Personal Budgets.</li><li>- Become a short break carer.</li></ul>
Breaking Barriers NW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- SEN Support</li><li>- Return to the homepage.</li></ul>

Not only is the search bar located far at the bottom of the page which may limit its use to some individuals, the results brought up by searching generic terms such as speech and language therapy as well as schools, healthcare facilities and provisions were often completely irrelevant to the terminology searched. It is our belief that the local offer website should be used to search for local provisions and bring up a series of information regarding the provision in question including but not limited to location, opening times, a brief description of what its use is and contact information for gathering further information.

### The Most Important Voices – First Parental Interview

Arguably one of the most important viewpoints we wanted to capture from this portion of the research project was that of parents/carers who would be most likely to use the local offer service to research how their child/young person will be able to prosper whilst getting closer to impending adulthood.

We used the resources at our fingertips to begin our interviewing process with some of the parents/carers who use our services. We asked them to speak about their thoughts regarding Bolton's Local Offer, with access to the website in front of them.

The results were as follows:

Parent/Volunteer for Bolton IAS and BPCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No back button.</li><li>• Pictures – included lots of pictures of individuals with physical disabilities, however little representation for invisible disabilities.</li><li>• Where's the search bar?</li><li>• Transport form- unclear and has no clear categories.</li><li>• Explanation of disabilities would be nice to see – lack of information can be worrying after receiving a diagnosis.</li><li>• Cannot locate forms easily – e.g. EHCP</li><li>• Further actions for support? – no next steps after diagnosis</li><li>• Abbreviations with no explanation</li></ul>
Parent/Worker at Firwood School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Direct payments section – states that you must have an EHCP before receiving anything (not true)</li><li>• No answers to hypothetical 'What ifs'</li><li>• No cover of DLA forms or any support services</li><li>• Why should you have to ring to receive help?</li><li>• What do you do after leaving school? – how do we go about getting DLA or PIPS? What can you use it for/ entitlement?</li><li>• Not enough provisions – parent support groups/stay and play/youth groups.</li><li>• Involvement with the public?</li></ul>
Parent/Worker at Lifebridge and Rumworth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Early Diagnosis – was left with a leaflet, received a visit 6 months later, told they could receive no support for behavioural issues.</li><li>• No help for people who feel 'lost'.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Short break services – hard to know how to get an assessment/hidden section/ not talked about enough.</li> <li>• Adult groups? Where?</li> <li>• Speech and language accessibility – very poor</li> <li>• Sensory assistance?</li> <li>• Social worker assessments – can be intimidating/would be nice to offer some form of preparation help/assistance.</li> <li>• EHCP assistance.</li> <li>• Independent living?</li> </ul>
Parent & Grandparent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't actually know what's available in Bolton.</li> <li>• Where to next?</li> <li>• Something public should be available for people with no Wi-Fi – physical resources?</li> <li>• Support from parents/carers.</li> <li>• Google only shows worst case scenarios – would be nice to have some reassurance.</li> <li>• Help with a wider array of conditions.</li> <li>• Childcare options?</li> <li>• More availability for activities on weekends for people who work throughout the week.</li> </ul>

Though this sample of parents/carers was small, we feel as though the feedback we gained from speaking to them was vital in showing just how the Local Offer is viewed through their eyes. It gives us invaluable information on how family members of SEND individuals wish that the local offer was different to its current state, not only to improve its useability but also increase the amount/kind of information available to its users which may not only help to answer any questions they may have, but also to bring all information they may need together in one place.

### What's in the Rumworth area?

Upon initial research into the Rumworth area, it was quickly brought to our attention that very little existed in the area itself, but most of the provisions and activities existed in higher numbers in surrounding areas. Due to this, we took the executive decision to classify the Rumworth “area” as including Rumworth itself, as well as a 5-mile radius.

Initial research led us to finding an initial number of 11 resources under the ‘Access to Work’ category, 7 resources under the ‘Independent Living’ category, 46 resources under the ‘Good Health’ category, and 36 resources under the ‘Friends, Relationships and the Community’ category. These have since increased in volume due to ongoing research and the discovery of ‘hidden gems’. (All discovered provisions/activities can be found in the mapping activity.)

With these resources discovered our focus then shifted to levels of accessibility, with a profound interest placed on accessibility in doctors, dental practices, and hospital settings. Information regarding these findings are able to be found on the NHS website when searching for a GP, Dentist Practice or Hospital <sup>10</sup>.

The findings are as follows:

Doctors	Dentist Practices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 7/40 offered a Braille Translation Service</li><li>• 26/40 disclosed having a Disabled WC</li><li>• 23/40 offered Disabled Parking Spaces</li><li>• 34/40 had a Wheelchair Ramp or Step Free Access</li><li>• 15/40 offered an Induction Loop</li><li>• 11/40 offered Signing Services</li><li>• 3/40 offered a Text Relay Service</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1/36 offered a Braille Translation Service</li><li>• 14/36 disclosed having a Disabled WC</li><li>• 12/36 offered Disabled Parking Spaces</li><li>• 31/36 had a Wheelchair Ramp or Step Free Access</li><li>• 14/36 offered an Induction Loop</li><li>• 0/36 offered Signing Services</li><li>• 1/36 offered a Text Relay Service</li></ul>

What is interesting about these findings is that they cover only physical disabilities and have no public information about the support they offer regarding mental disabilities, and as such it is difficult to predict how a given service would be able to handle an issue, should one arise. As such, protocol, disability confidence and any services that could be offered to individuals with mental/hidden disabilities could be an area of improvement in terms of disclosing this information on a public forum.

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<sup>10</sup> NHS Search Website - [Find a GP - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

## Education Opportunities and Eligibility Criteria

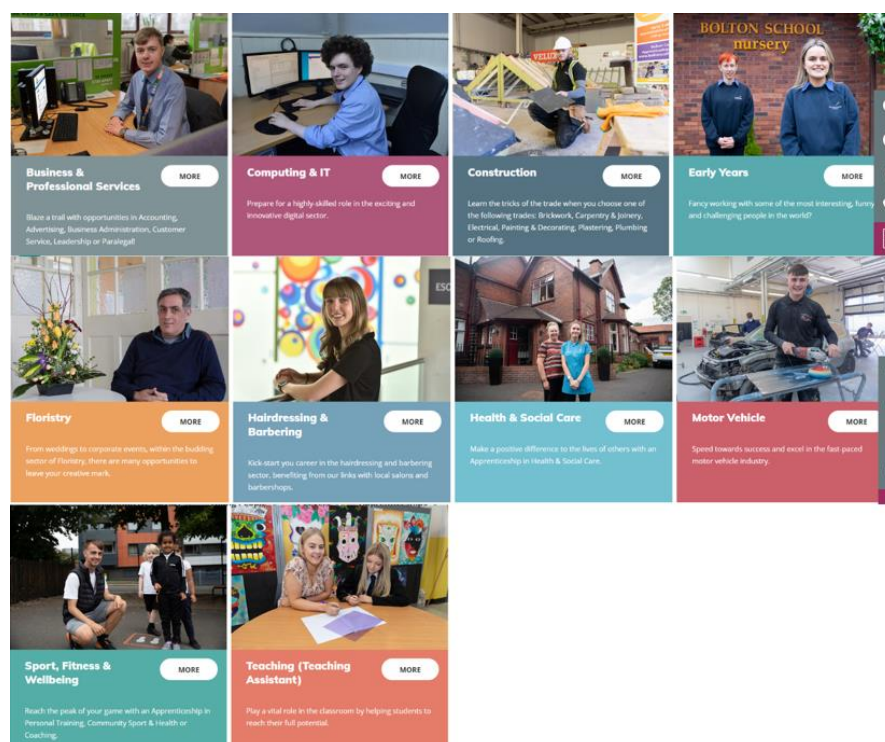
Further education opportunities are a fantastic option for individuals of school leaving age on their journey towards adulthood, opening further doors for opportunities for both employment and independent living skills. As such, we investigated all local schools and colleges to see their entrance criteria as well as what kind of courses they offer.

The results are below:

Clear Criteria for Admission	Subject to Year Group/Referral	No Clear Criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Firwood High School</li><li>- Thomasson Memorial School for the Deaf</li><li>- Bolton College</li><li>- COG Nursery</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Rumworth (referral)</li><li>- St. Catherine's Academy (year group)</li><li>- Ladywood School (subject to request)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Rivington and Blackrod High School</li></ul>

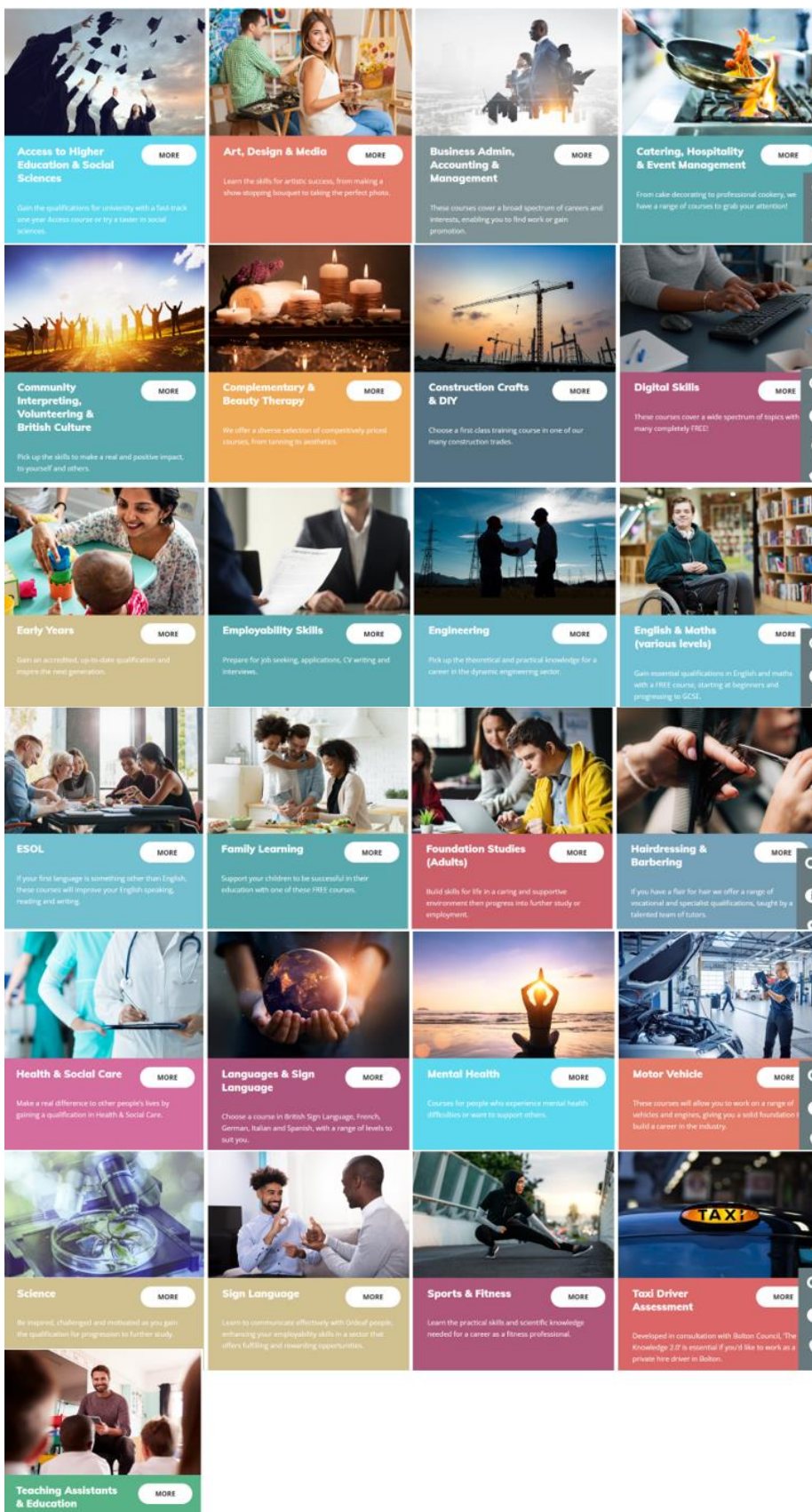
We then used Bolton College as a case study to see the accessibility levels of a local college not designed specifically for SEND individuals but offering a service for high levels of involvement.

Bolton College offers an array of course options with excellent facilities and specialist help and support for their students with learning difficulties/disabilities. They state their aim to be working together to help all students have the opportunity to succeed on mainstream education programmes and gain the opportunity to progress into employment or higher education.



Apprenticeship Opportunities <sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Bolton College Apprenticeship Opportunities - [Apprenticeships » Bolton College](#)



## Adult Learning Opportunities

12

A clear overview of what forms of disability they are able to support is available, showing that they are able to support individuals with:

- Hearing impairments
- D/deaf
- Dyslexia
- Language, Literacy and Numeracy Needs
- Mental Health Needs
- Physical Disabilities
- Visual Impairments

They are also able to offer one-to-one appointments, in class support and appointments with specialist tutors for any individual student who may need them. Moreover, there is access to specialist equipment and resources, as well as social activities available through their enrichment program.

The Bolton College website is highly accessible, being constantly monitored and assessed by Accessible, a company which works to ensure accessibility on Bolton's College campus, as well as throughout their student services.<sup>13</sup>

Accessibility to any disabled individual is highly important to Bolton College. They provide a clear overview of how individuals are assessed, how getting around college can be accessed around their disability, sensory development and also extra help for anyone who may need it.<sup>14</sup>

**Click on the tabs below to see how we can help you make the most of your time at Bolton College.**

#### **Your route to College: Assessment of Needs**

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#### **Sensory Development**

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#### **Extra Help**

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#### **Getting around College**

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Whilst all this information is readily available on the college's own website, we believe it would be helpful to have a link to this or even a brief overview of what to expect when looking for this information available on the Bolton Local Offer website.

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<sup>13</sup> Bolton College AccessAble - [Student Support » Bolton College](#)

<sup>14</sup> Bolton College Accessibility Opportunities - [Support for Learners with Disabilities/Difficulties » Bolton College](#)



## Inclusion in the Workplace and the Disability Confident Employer Scheme

The UK Government introduced a Disability Confident Employer Scheme in 2014, hoping to create a movement of change through encouraging employers to think differently about disability and to improve their organisation through improving how they recruit, retain and develop disabled people.<sup>15</sup>

The scheme was created by employers in partnership with disabled people's representatives to make it both rigorous but also easily accessible, particularly for use by smaller businesses.

**Keywords (optional)**  
Can include job title, employer or reference number

All

**Your location**  
Enter postcode, town or city or [use current location](#)

BL3 3BL

**Within**


5 miles

**Apprenticeship level**

All levels

**Only show**

☒ Disability Confident

 **disability**  
**confident**

[About disability confident](#)

When searching for employment positions on the GOV.UK website, an option is available to only be shown positions by employers who are 'Disability Confident'. The language use alone in this is both ensuring and neutral and implies a sense of calmness when thinking about working for any given company, being provided the information that they are aware and understanding for the needs for reasonable adjustments and would be happy to implement them when necessary.<sup>16</sup>

Disabled candidates will generally be offered an interview if you meet the minimum requirements for this vacancy. Contact the employer for full details.

Employers may need to limit the number of interviews offered to both disabled and non-disabled people if they receive high numbers of applications.

The disability confident scheme supports employers to make the most of the talents disabled people can bring to your workplace.

Clear information is provided regarding the Disability Confident Scheme. The last line in this section alone is essential as it describes the 'talents' that disabled people can bring to a workplace, rather than using other language used which may indicate a weakness. This language use alone can instil the feeling of confidence in employers that adapting their workplace to better fit the needs of disabled people and bring more into their organisation.

<sup>15</sup> GOV.UK Disability Confident Scheme - [Disability Confident employer scheme - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/disability-confident-employer-scheme)

<sup>16</sup> GOV.UK Job search - [Advanced Job Search \(dwp.gov.uk\)](https://www.dwp.gov.uk/advanced-job-search)



## Outreach and Connections – Bringing the Subject of Disability to Local Business

We began the outreach stage of our research by contacting a total of 49 individual business in the Rumworth area via email, with the hopes of receiving useful responses that would provide us with an insight into the availability of training and any they had already conducted of their own accord.

The email reads as follows:

|To whoever it may concern,

My name is Anna [Sherratt](#) and I am writing to you on behalf of Breaking Barriers NW, a registered disability charity. We have been commissioned by Bolton council to conduct a piece of research into gaps in services to improve the local offer for disabled individuals.

I was just wondering if you would be able to provide me some brief insight into your organisation/business in form of the following questions.

- Would you class your organisation/business as being inclusive and how so?
- Do you make reasonable adjustments within your organisation/business to accommodate any individuals who may have extra needs and if so, how do you do this?
- Do you feel as though any training that may be available to learn more about handling an individual with extra needs is sufficient, if not how would you find it easier to use/understand?
- To your knowledge, is there anyone currently using your organisation/business who has additional needs and/or requires any reasonable adjustments?
- Are there any extra comments you would like to make regarding any provisions you are aware of or any suggestions for improvement you may have? (this can be from a business or a personal perspective)

Any response would be greatly appreciated as all further knowledge goes towards improving the lives of these young people in question. You are not at liberty to discuss anything you don't want to and responses can be fed back anonymously if wanted.

Kind regards,

Anna Sherratt

(Breaking Barriers NW)

All emails sent were to provisions/businesses pulled from our mapping spreadsheet that had email addresses publicly available, which unfortunately was only a small number of our sample.

Of the 49 sent, only 3 responses were received. The responses are as follows:

## Response 1 – Create Bolton

Hi Anna - hope this helps...

- Would you class your organisation/business as being inclusive and how so?

We are a small charity and are run with volunteers from all walks of life and including people with a learning disability, people that have experienced poor mental health, older people, and although we are a Christian charity, we are inclusive to people of all faiths and none

- Do you make reasonable adjustments within your organisation/business to accommodate any individuals who may have extra needs and if so, how do you do this?

We spend time training our volunteers, taking longer where necessary if there are reasonable adjustments to be made, we're flexible in how much time they volunteer and we share tips across the volunteer team for example, how best to work alongside someone with autism, or someone whose first language may not be English

- Do you feel as though any training that may be available to learn more about handling an individual with extra needs is sufficient, if not how would you find it easier to use/understand?

I suspect it would be helpful to have more external training available locally

- To your knowledge, is there anyone currently using your organisation/business who has additional needs and/or requires any reasonable adjustments?

YES this is common place for CreateBolton and in fact we make it our purpose to give people with additional needs opportunities they may not always have available to them

- Are there any extra comments you would like to make regarding any provisions you are aware of or any suggestions for improvement you may have? (this can be from a business or a personal perspective)

Look forward to reading the research report when finished?

Andrew Kilpatrick

Lead Officer

## Response 2 – Jump Xtreme

Good Afternoon Anna,

From our Business perspective I believe we are inclusive with disabled individuals. We host numerous bookings throughout the month dedicated to individuals with SEN.

During our quieter periods, we are open to the public where many organisations and charities will bring individuals with disabilities to participate.

During our SEN sessions, we turn our Disco Lights and Music off to make it more comfortable and not a sensory overload. Our check-in and booking is mainly online, meaning there is less time spent at the reception area, and faster movement through the building to their activity. We also allow carers to go on Free of Charge to help supervise the individual they are caring for.

Training would be benefit our team, however, carers are always around to take over the big situations. We believe we'll benefit more from the communication side of training, and being able to resolve smaller situations. Communication training will also help run our Airbag, as it can become dangerous when we're unable to effectively communicate waiting your turn etc.

We have multiple ranges of disabilities and special needs that use our facilities, so a wide range of training would benefit our team. The only addition to the park would be access for individuals that are unable to walk or have limited use of their lower limbs to bounce on the trampolines. An addition of a hoist would make us more accessible, however we lack the funding and the space for this apparatus.

Kind Regards,

Chris

## Response 3 – Bolton Toy Library

Dear Anna

I hope this finds you well and that your Research Project is resulting in some good information.

We are a registered charity established in [1981](#), providing play opportunities offering free loans of toys, books, learning resources and specialised resources for young children (0-5 years) and their families across Bolton. We support children with SEND and disabilities and provide inclusive play sessions. At the Toy Library children and families soon settle and engage well with staff, volunteers and other children and families as we nurture their development. It remains our ethos to provide the best opportunities to help develop children's skills and support the whole family by accessible, therapeutic play sessions, access to specialised toys/resources ~~Eg~~, fibre optic lights, interactive bubble tubes, reward and busy boxes, musical resources, with recordable devices. Our Multi-sensory room is a lovely environment where young children ~~are able to~~ explore their world, experimenting with lights, sounds and textures. Parents/carers enjoy their bonding time with their babies and children in the calming light room where they ~~are able to~~ focus their attention on each other.

As regards your questions we have devised the following from consultation with our families:

Please find our following information.

Gaps that our Parents of 0-5 years old children with SEND have informed us are:

- 1) Insufficient help for children with ASD, Autism, ADHA, Conduct processing disorder etc with feeding issues/problems and behaviours. There is no Children's Excellence Centre where parents can seek advice and knowledge around the needs of their child. This results in Parents having heightened anxieties around their child's health and wellbeing.
- 2) Extensive wait for speech and language therapy which impacts on their child's development and causes emotional dysfunction.
- 3) Help and guidance (peer support) in the process of claiming DLA and applying for nursery/school and navigating other issues around their child's needs.
- 4) Accessible play sessions in a regular Centre that has good transport links.
- 5) Access to professionals and practitioners who ~~are able to~~ answer a quick question. (~~maybe~~ a helpline or an app)
- 6) Parents state that to see the same person regarding their child's issues would help continuity of care
- 7) Nurseries and schools should offer more Transitional days where children with SEND can access a few sessions support to settle their child in a new place as many children struggle with new environments and new people
- 8) Help should be available in one place, with skilled people who are caring and helpful
- 9) Access to appropriate fun activities that children with SEND can participate in, with their siblings. All factors to be considered noise, numbers of people, access of buildings used, facilities that encourage fun and exploration

We know there are many more issues Parents face with regards to accessing support for their child/children with SEND these are just a few.

Good luck with gathering more from other agencies/charities.

Kind regards

Anita

Responses received from our email were incredibly limited which is not only disappointing but unfortunately means that we were unable to draw any sort of strong conclusion. We are incredibly thankful for the few who took the time to respond to us and will use the information provided by them to apply it to our research as much as possible.

As part of our research on the importance of acceptance and inclusivity in the workplace we interview a few individuals with SEND requirements who are now working, either part time or full time.

One of the most important responses we gained is the view that holding a position within a workplace promotes inclusivity tenfold. One individual, who works full time, is quoted saying, “It’s important to work because you feel like you can fit in, you don’t feel like you’re segregated from the community”. This quote alone shows perfectly how SEND individuals may feel they are separated from society as a whole and how the opportunity to hold a position of importance within a workplace may provide a sense of meaning as well as acceptance of sorts from the community. In a way, employment gives a sense of “normality” in a world which otherwise may not make sense.

In another quote, an individual told us that, “people with SEND issues can still come to work and not feel like hey can’t work because they’ve got it”. This demonstrates the unfortunate view that a lot of society holds that a SEND diagnosis holds people back and prevents them from being able to do things anyone else may find normal. SEND individuals being given an employed position shows how they are not held back or defined by their diagnosis, which is another vital outcome from increasing acceptance, understanding and inclusivity within places of employment.

### Community Consultation – The Rollout of Mass Questionnaires

To further our insight into views regarding the state of local provisions as is, we created a questionnaire to be first completed by parents/carers that are members of our charity. We received 37 replies from the first rollout compiled of both online (32) and on paper responses (5).

We then further rolled this out through the assistance of Rumworth School, who sent out a text message to all parents explaining the concept of the research and providing them a link to access the online questionnaire to be filled out at their discretion. Unfortunately, despite this reaching a high number of people we were in receipt of only 6 responses.

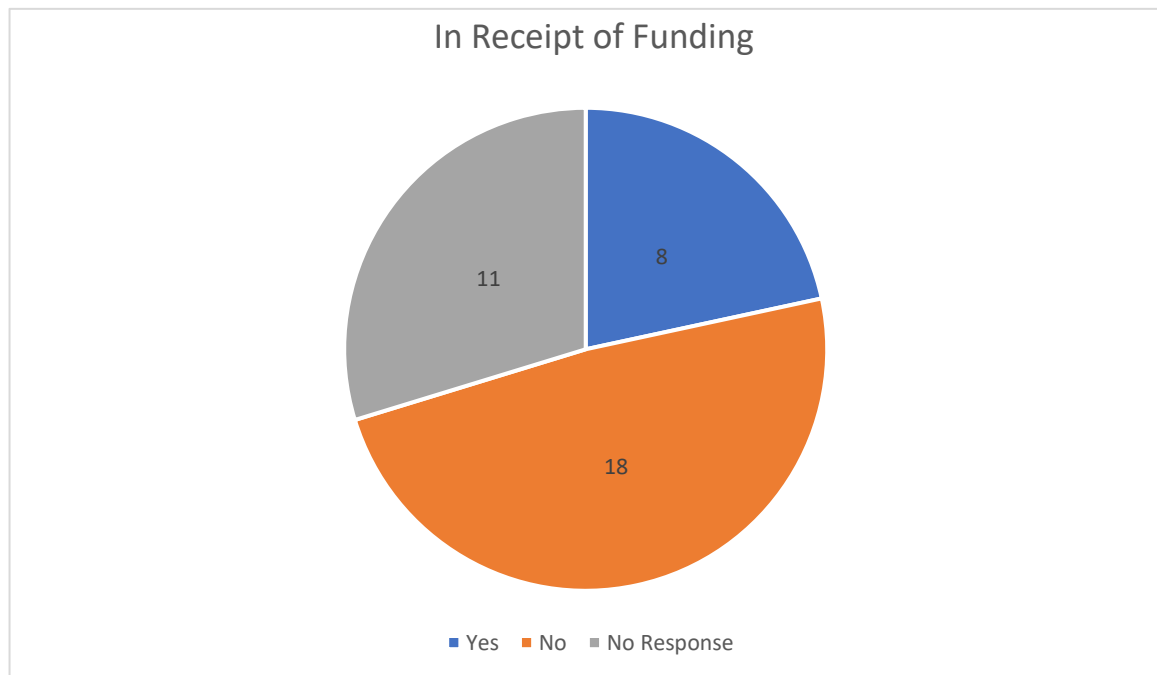
All responses were completely anonymous, and the findings were as follows:

#### Age:

The ages of the children regarded to in the responses ranged from 2-25, with a mean age of 11.

#### Funding

From the findings we were informed that 8 families were in receipt of funding, 18 were not, and 11 either chose not to respond or did not feel comfortable doing so.



#### Further Findings and Responses

Further findings have been collated across a collection sheet and included below is the responses we found most invaluable.

## Thinking back to the point of diagnosis, did you feel that the information and support you received was sufficient? Why?

No. There wasn't any I had to find my own.

Yes it was as I have worked with children who have autism

My 15 year old refused diagnosis, so don't get much support. Breaking barriers offer us lots of support and that's it. My 12 year old was already accessing breaking barriers so hasn't received any more information regarding other support. 10 year old and 3 year old also on the pathway (early stages). I think more support and information should be given before a diagnosis as there is none offered on the pathway or when no diagnosis is given.

Absolutely not! I felt very unsupported and dismissed by the authority and diagnosis process. When you want answers for your child and support it can feel very isolating.

No. Nothing. I got outdated info and was directed to 'the local offer' which had nothing on it.

No not much out there

No, given a folder of leaflets and sent away.

Yes

No, was given the diagnosis and a carrier bag full of photocopied leaflets, a lot of them unreadable and that was it, but that did push me to learn more and get involved with the special needs community

No. Lack of support

It was too long ago to remember properly.

No admit there's the diagnosis then with it now

Didn't receive any support at the point of diagnosis, however information was given where I could receive support if needed

No  
No guidance or support  
No sign posting

Yes but there is always room for more

No we got no support just handed a bunch of leaflets

No. I was given a pack of outdated information. I don't know what I was expecting but someone to possibly talk to would've been nice.

Absolutely not. CAMHS stand out as a particularly damaging and negative experience all round.

No

Na

Yes for medical information, but not for support services

No, he was diagnosed with ASC during COVID and still have had no follow up support

Still waiting for a diagnosis, going to go private. On the pathway with the 6 year old but keep getting deterred off for yet another test he can't deal with, won't put us on the pathway despite CAMHS insisting for the 11 year old as apparently it's just anxiety. So no support anyway, or in relation to my experiences with the pathway I've been overwhelmed with constant appointments which lead to meltdowns and I feel overwhelmed so god knows how my child is feeling! No support at all

No, I learnt almost everything I know from people and online. They were diagnosed in bury and Bolton have just picked up the slack when we moved here in 2021 but aren't much better tbh. It took til 2022 for camhs Bolton to take him on

I was given a folder and sent away totally un useful

No basically left to figure it out myself

No

I was in Trafford at the time. The support was good 11 years ago but I know now it is not the same.

Yes. My daughter was diagnosed with Down syndrome very quickly after birth. All services were amazing.

Camhs ! I'm still waiting for any sufficient support after nearly 4 years

It was sketchy initially

Very little was known and not much was available

No not at all. As a biological girl, there was little to nothing that was helpful. camhs provided the diagnosis then abandoned us. BB was very helpful and the friends we have made through them have been great but we are 7 years on from diagnosis now and it's only now I can see what should have been done

We had to go for private assessment due to lack of understanding in girls that mask so no

From audiology yes very sufficient.

At the time was ok

Yes. The sudden illness and the gravity of the illness meant that support initially was in abundance. However, once leaving hospital the information was not sufficient to help us in the logistics of everyday living. We were unaware that our child was eligible for DLA benefits, other benefits such as direct payments to help us with outside support, blue badge. There was quite a lot that we had to find out about ourselves or we just happened to find out from someone in passing.

No as there was no help

## What Services/Provisions Do You Currently Use in the Bolton Area?

Breaking Barriers  
Transport  
Speech and Language  
Paeds

Breaking Barriers

Every player counts

Son attends Rumworth school. No longer use any services

Camhs

No specialist services as yet. Recently moved here and found nothing. She accesses, mainstream - swimming lessons at farnworth leisure centre, youth theatre at the octagon theatre, we go to Salford for disabled football and Manchester for street dance. I have been to the smile group ran by parents of children with downs syndrome but the children there are mostly under 7.

Breaking Barriers and Reach NW

Learning Disability team  
Community transport to school  
Breaking Barriers NW  
Ladywood School  
Bolton One Swimming  
Incontinence Team (SEND)  
Speech and Language  
Paediatrics

Breaking barriers

SENCO  
Ladywood

Breaking Barriers, LDT,  
Ladywood school, swimming,  
pikes Lane medical Centre,  
excema clinic,

School transport

Bolton lads and girls club

Best choices and breaking barriers

Breaking barriers, REACH NW,  
AFC football club, horwich  
leisure centre for swimming

Breaking Barriers  
Nursery Nurses  
ithrive  
School Nursing Team  
CAMHS

Paeds  
Bury Gp so salt and physio is  
Bury.  
Ophthalmologist at Bolton  
Hospital

Cog, BB, health visitor advice,  
peads and salt

Mainstream primary school

breaking barriers occasionally

Camhs  
Audiology

Breaking Barriers and Bridges  
Support

Breaking Barriers cafe,  
trampolines,

None

Breaking Barriers NW  
Heaton Fold Garden Centre  
British Heart Foundation  
Market Place Bolton

Breaking barriers

Rumworth school

Breaking Barriers NW

Continuing care, physio, OT,  
visual impairment specialist  
service, paediatricians, CAMHS,  
behaviour support, Ed psych,  
mainstream school, specialist  
school, independent school,  
SENDIST, Breaking Barriers,  
Reach NW

Direct payments, smiley faces  
charity, breaking barriers  
charity, Daytrippers charity

Day trippers  
Little Bridges

Breaking Barriers

## What Would You Like To See More of in the Bolton Area?

More support and follow up with EHCP plans from Bolton council and the local authority so children can receive the rightful help they legally deserve.  
More proactiveness in the diagnostic process.

Support for transition years

More options and activities for children with disabilities or fully inclusive u a that have specialist staggy and ratios to fully include a child with a disability.  
Reasonable adjustments should be the norm rather than a parents having to ask all the time and most times adjustments not made.

School holidays provision, wrap around provision, jobs that understand you can't work full time there is no one that offers fully flexible working or even remote working in the first instance! I'm a highly skilled person and it's not enough unless I can do the hours they want this needs to be outlawed for parents of SEN children! It's discriminatory!

Holidays club aimed at children with SEN specifically, some of the provisions are too big, too loud for some SEN children. My son would never be able to attend the Bolton lads and girls club for example due to how busy it and loud it is. The funded HAF clubs being open to those when EHCPs as well as free school dinners

After school clubs specially for SEN children

Free Counselling for children. Help with depression and anxiety and autism/ADHD

Variety of supported work placements.  
Increase in work placed support.

Out of school Provision for 16 year olds

Social events: discos, bowling etc

After school care and collection

More special needs schools, the ones we have are excellent but other special needs kids shouldn't have to miss out on education because there's not enough room for them in the schools we have

Groups for children with no communication to be present with peers  
OT specialise din sensory needs as I've been informed this is not a service offered.

Better services to support families of children with additional needs.

Before/ after school and school holiday childcare for children with additional needs

More things for older teens

More support for children and adults with autism. Places to go to feel part of society

More for Send Children e.g. youth groups ect as places like BLGC are too loud and busy

Accessibility for children with autism, so if there is something offered (such as a ball park, trampoline park, theatre show etc) have times where it's accessible for children with autism and additional needs too, so they can still feel integrated involved and experience things like their peers, less of a stigma also and more education to children within schools so they don't view additional needs as different, they just grow up to see it as like someone having brown hair when they have blonde, they notice it then move on

More opportunities, more understanding, more funding, support/information, more accessible/easier to access

More groups for children with disabilities, not just autism but all different disabilities. More accessible activities for children with disabilities, activities that are not restricted because of age (some children with disabilities do not have the same growth physically or developmentally).

More activities for children, and an information hub or point, that allows parents of children with disabilities to get access to all information, regarding what benefits and entitlement are available I.e blue badge schemes.

Guidance, support, resources

More Sen provisions for both children and adults with Sen needs and disabilities

Proper child centred, flexible provision. Willingness to walk alongside families rather than dictate to them, for example asking families what would be supportive rather than telling them what you think support should be.

I am concerned that if they don't receive enough funding Breaking Barriers will no longer be able to meet my child's needs

Activities for send children

Things for teens, there is nothing at all to access even via local charities for over 14's - no youth clubs, no teen meets, nothing

More activities with breaking barriers. I know they struggle with funding the amazing staff. More focus on the child and less on the parent.  
Mental health services.

Opportunities for building on school friendships and developing those into community opportunities. Friendships are isolated in school and nothing is done to develop that outside.

Services and information for SEND children

Still trying to get information on this as my child is growing

More outside school activities for children with SEN.

Equally given opportunities. More public understanding and awareness. SEND Specific mental health support. A whole family approach

Services making reasonable adjustments, whether health, education or leisure, that would enable equity for all children. This doesn't mean providing the same for everyone, but ensuring that all children have access at the same level to the same range of opportunities. Increasingly we find people and services excusing shortcomings by using covid as an explanation. The ongoing grotesquely skewed impact on children with SEND is set to continue without end while people and services are able to hide behind this excusology.

More board game groups for slightly older children 15+, a cross over of LGBTQ and autism support would be amazing



## Looking Ahead, What (if any) Are Your Concerns For Your Child/Young Adult?

How will he manage when I cannot care for him anymore. Finding the right setting for supported living. Making sure he is always happy and cared for without over burdening my daughter.

Being isolated at home once access to education ends.

Will they be able to live independently what are the options

Friendships

There independence and where to get help.

Moving forward and how to manage independent living, further education managing finance for my child

Secondary education provision

There is nothing out there supporting families with additional needs. Charity's can only do so much.

Will she get the support she needs as a young adult. Could she be supported to live independently in her own home?

Becoming isolated

Not being able to socialise, do things she enjoys

He isn't going to thrive because he hasn't been given support.

Would never be able to express himself and live an independent life.

I do not have enough information on the transition period from child to young adult. My concern is that since turning 16 my child has got lost in a system and the services that were involved are not able to provide her with the same care that she has previously received. Appointments from healthcare professionals have dwindled. I worry that if my child had to go to hospital, because of her age she would be treated as an adult yet she doesn't have the understanding or the ability of an adult. I am concerned that my child will not achieve her goals and dreams because of the lack of communication, education, support and guidance for me and my child. I am concerned that no one knows my child well enough (her care needs, medical conditions) and if I wasn't here then she would fall through the cracks and wouldn't be able to receive the help she needs.

When he starts high school the extra support doesn't seem to be there

Independence and employability as an adult

That they struggle to have their needs met as they get older

Everything! Helping them to manage as an adult, helping them to achieve independence, helping them to achieve their career and life goals.

Mental Health, the services don't exist for SEND

Lack of support in school/college. Not understanding social cues when dealing with the public. Burn out from college, strains due to marking and sensory issues, plus the overwhelm from too much work. People not understanding the bluntness and being offended. Keeping friends.

Lack of social life as a teenager, being at places with friends where she is safe. Opportunities for socialising outside of the family like all other teenagers

Independence

Support at school, public opinion of my child

Puberty, PFA, post education.

They are being forgotten and left to cope. This in turn is causing massive mental health issues.

I will always have concerns about him. Concerns about him being bullied, not accepted, over looked.

The future when she leaves education

Unable to meet other teens in safe environments

I'm worried about how they will integrate into society as they get older (especially when the eldest starts high school) and how children will be with them, as society hasn't been very accepting in my experience so far and life isn't 'made' with additional needs in mind, so there's always a new obstacle around the corner. I just want them to be happy and have friends like their peers, experience the carefree being a child phase before adulthood and responsibilities hit, but at the minute I feel like society isn't allowing that

I worry about adulthood for my boys regarding how they would fit into societies expectations.

Yes needs life skills and social interaction boosting via clubs and pass times

That he will need additional support as he gets older

Having a limited social life/friendships

Not aware of availability of any groups

Inclusion, acceptance and there's very little assisted living apartments for young adults in the Bolton area

I feel we are at the start of our journey so I have many concerns but we have majority of the right intervention needed at present

Too, too many to list. Think of any area of life, of community, education, health.... and there are concerns, differing for each child, but there nonetheless. The impact of the pandemic, of the governments overt disregard for children with SEND (as evidenced repeatedly throughout the pandemic and ongoing via omission repeatedly from directives in all areas aside from the horrendous implementation of DNARS for example), of budget cuts and service restructures.... these are things that have irrevocably damaged a generation of children.

## How Do You Feel That Your Child/Young Person Is Percieved By The Wider Community? How Does This Make You Feel?

Caring by those who take the time to know him. Otherwise quirky as he talks at you, is very blunt and doesn't turn take in conversation. Blank facially with little eye movement so dismissive and awkward socially.

Different, makes me fell sad for her

Generally good with adults but neurotypical children of his age tend not to engage

People still don't understand

I haven't actually thought about that

Strange and poor behaviour, makes me feel upset as they don't know him just how he perceived

Autism needs to be educated to people

Naughty child due to his use of bad language when frustrated, I feel looked down on as a parent who can't control their child's behaviour

Having 2 deaf child and my younger also with ASD people perceive my children as ignorant. People always judge book by its cover and as a parent it is exhausting having to explain your child's disabilities to make people realise.

As different and hard to play with. Others children no longer call.

My 15 year old has a lot of social anxiety, suspended depression and sensory issues so became a school refuser. The school community looked at him as just a naughty kid that won't go to school. My 3 year old (suspected autism) does a lot of ticking/flapping so in public gets a lot of funny looks or comments from passers by. My 10 year old (ASD/ADHD) gets referred to as a naughty child. My 12 year old (ASC/Anxiety) is perceived as a weird outcast.

He's seen as rude and naughty he isnt he has autism it makes me feel very sad

Everyone in our neighbourhood know our daughter has a learning disability. And she is loved and accepted by the community.

My child had extreme difficulties and the public perception of her is negative. It hurts that people don't talk to her because she cant speak. People look at me like I'm a terrible parent.

Happy - Good that he's now settled

I feel that the wider community don't understand my daughters struggles and sometimes think she is being naughty

Different and not welcome

I think that they are pitied or ridiculed at least some of the time. I feel very sad about this but my child's autism means that they often miss these comments or looks which is a kind of good thing.

Very negatively. People stare and tut. People don't understand. I have been thrown off buses and out of shops and taxis.

Very different and I don't care what the wider community think about him

Excluded and low aspirations

People are very judgemental due to there own lack of knowledge and understanding

I think my child is seen as different which makes him Vulnerable. This worries me

The government's approach during the pandemic has legitimised hate crimes and set back progress made sound acceptance, awareness and celebration of our children by decades.

As different. Not enough education done with neuro typical children

Someone who struggles

There is nothing available gif them, makes me feel sad for my child to not have what other children get without prejudice

My child is seen as not normal, a person who will not achieve anything, this makes so angry because I know with the right help, understanding and support my child is capable of achieving a lot more than what she is currently. My child's disability is not consistent, it varies from day to day, hour to hour, she is not wheelchair bound but needs to use a wheelchair but when people see her without her wheelchair and the later with a wheelchair, they have this perception that maybe her illness/disability is not really there and that it is over exaggerated. The wider community need educating on different types of disabilities.

Most people don't understand him as he is non-verbal and makes noises. This makes me feel very angry as they judge his needs.

Lack of understanding, my son is only 2 and I think the wider community think an asd diagnosis can't be given so young (he has an asd diagnosis)

Excluded for being different

I don't think he is very visible to the wider community.

Discriminated against by my neighbour disgusted had to get gmp neighbourhood team and housing involved to stop it

Chance to get him into the community would be a fine thing

I always feel like people perceive them as weird, different, they get sick of them easily, they are never accepted and always judged. School and other places I've tried to access have given the impression that either their a burden or just shut me down completely. I feel incredibly alone, lost and like I've let my children down. I just want them to be happy and like the other children

They see it as there's something is wrong with him, makes me feel upset, people need to be made aware of the ASD

Hyperactive, spoilt, rude ect it makes me feel sad for her.

The findings we were able to gather from the rollout of this questionnaire are invaluable, providing us with an otherwise unknown insight into the journey that families and support systems have had to go through on their journey from the point of diagnosis to whichever stage of life their child or young person is currently at. Seeing it at so many different stages at varying stages in time shows how the journey has had little movement towards positive change and cements the idea that improvements in the process as well as the local offer are incredibly necessary.

### Understanding Disability in the Workplace

Following the questionnaire, we then continued with different interviews. Firstly, Ethical Recruitment located in Swann Mill in Bolton was interviewed regarding them being a social enterprise.

Ethical recruitment was set up after a collaboration lasting over 20 years with Clarity employment for the blind. Their ethos is to give employment training and equal opportunities to blind and disabled people which they have identified to be a real asset to any business setting. They have strong links with Rumworth Sixth Form and help with all aspects of employability from CV writing to interview techniques and introductory letters and phone calls. They are recognized by Bolton social care who have included hours spent at ER within personal budgets.

One recruit W lives with his parents E and A on the Rumworth/Deane border and has been a paid ER member of staff since 2019. He was referred to the service by his Mum and all have worked closely together to make sure W is understood and his needs are met to the best of everyone's ability. We interviewed W and his mum about their journey using ethical recruitment and their hopes for the future. The conversation went as follows:

E – "When W left sixth form, we really didn't know where to go next. He spent 12 months with no structure and nothing of any relevance to do each day which led to him reversing his day and night. He slept all day and was up gaming all night which was extremely detrimental to his Mental Health. Details about ER came via another parent and we rang immediately to speak to Frank Owen. Within a week W had been interviewed and offered a placement as a delivery driver dropping Clarity products to elderly customers within the Bolton area.

W needs time in the morning to complete his routines and prepare for the day and so a 9am start is not practical. ER let W start his day at 10am so he arrives calm, less anxious and ready to work. W does as much work as the other employees in a day but the flexibility and understanding has been key to his success. In the beginning W was closely supported but as time has gone on the direct support has reduced as he now has the confidence to ask for help if he needs it. It is a real shame that ER is just a small stand alone company and one of very few settings who understand the need for reasonable adjustments".

W – "I was very worried after I left college and didn't know what I would be allowed to do or who I could get to help me. It took my Mum long hours to convince me that going to speak to Frank and look at ER was a good idea but I am very glad I did. I really like driving and delivering boxes to the customers and they are always very friendly and nice to speak to and one even got me a birthday present. I like working with the others especially because I don't feel so different and know I have a place to belong and the chance to earn my own money".

This is a fine demonstration of the meaning that work opportunities give to individuals lives, by making them feel included and understood as well as providing a feeling of importance by holding a position of their own.

To further this knowledge, we also interviewed individuals from Sapphire which is a dedicated SEND service for young disabled people aged 19-30. Sapphire focusses purely on non-vocational, non-educational activities with an aim to teach vital life skills and provide enrichment opportunities. 96% of their attendants were previously pupils at Rumworth school and sixth form.

We spoke to Dee and Jen about how they see the future for young people and what more they feel Bolton could be doing to make sure they feel valued and included. They raised many of the same points as reported by others (lack of opportunity, barriers to inclusion, lack of supported placements etc.) but had a different suggestion for meeting as many SEND needs as possible.

Their opinion was that a centre for families and young people who have SEND is required. It would act as a sort of “one-stop-shop” where combined services can be delivered, and the young people in particular can feel they have a place that they belong and can fall back on when additional support is needed. It would be fully accessible and even to those who are in employment or live independently or semi-independently and would be able to provide reassurance that whatever the challenge, there is always a solution.

Activities could be provided, life skills taught in a “mock apartment” set up, help with form filling and assistance in understanding benefits and support with budgeting and saving. There would always be the chance to walk in during opening hours which would include evenings to include parents that work or young people who are still in education and training.

The thinking behind their views is that Bolton has a number of excellent services offering support and advice, but they are spread out and not always obvious whereas by bringing services together in one accessible centre, it will make them more effective in meeting social, emotional and mental wellbeing needs.

### *Hidden Gems in the Rumworth Area*

#### [Sapling Road Allotments]

One of the hidden gems located in the Rumworth area is Sapling Road Allotments, located on Sapling Road in Rumworth.

A conversation between ourselves and a member of the committee (Geoff Anderson) informed us that whilst there are no permanent allotments available and a lengthy wait list, they do have possession of 2 community plots which are available for groups to work on. There does not need to be communication to ensure that works do not clash with what has already been done but the site is all on one level and easily accessible to those with limited mobility. There are currently no toilets on site, but fundraising is taking place to try and purchase a compost toilet which although not accessible is certainly a good start.

It is an extremely calm and sere place despite location and an easily accessible reachable location for children and young people to enjoy the benefits of being outside in nature. There is ample parking nearby as well as local bus routes.

[Ladybridge Community Centre]

Located in the BL3 area, Ladybridge Community Centre is run by Ladybridge Residents Association to offer a series of available spaces for people/businesses to hire out. They have a current schedule shown below:

	Hall 1	Hall 2	Hall 3
Monday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preschool 8:30am-12:15pm</li> <li>• Yoga 1:30pm-3:00pm</li> <li>• Table Tennis 7:30pm-9:30pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Islamic Group 5:30pm-6:30pm</li> <li>• Wireless Group 7pm-10pm</li> <li>• Church 9pm-1am</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preschool 8:30am-12:15pm</li> <li>• Craft Class 12:30pm-3:30pm</li> </ul>
Tuesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preschool 8:30am-12:15pm</li> <li>• Yoga 1:30pm-3:00pm</li> <li>• Dance 4:30pm-6:45pm</li> <li>• Yoga 7:00pm-8:30pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Islamic Group 5:30pm-6:30pm</li> <li>• Dance 7pm-8pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preschool 8:30am-12:15pm</li> </ul>
Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preschool 8:30am-12:15pm</li> <li>• Dance 4:30pm-6:00pm</li> <li>• Keep Fit 6:30pm-7:30pm</li> <li>• Yoga 7:45pm-9:30pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Islamic Group 5:30pm-6:30pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preschool 8:30am-12:15pm</li> <li>• Tutor 4pm-6:30pm</li> </ul>
Thursday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preschool 8:30am-12:15pm</li> <li>• Dance 5:30pm-7:15pm</li> <li>• Table Tennis 7:30pm-9:30pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Islamic Group 5:30pm-6:30pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preschool 8:30am-12:15pm</li> </ul>
Friday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preschool 8:30am-12:15pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Islamic Group 5:30pm-6:30pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preschool 8:30am-12:15pm</li> </ul>
Saturday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dance 9:00am-2:00pm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dance 9:15am-11:45am</li> </ul>	
Sunday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Church 9:30am-12:30pm</li> </ul>		

Their schedule includes multiple groups varying from those focussed on religion with an Islamic Group meeting everyday Monday-Friday and a Church Group on Sunday morning, to sports and wellbeing with clubs such as Yoga, Keep Fit, Dance and Table Tennis.

We had the opportunity to speak to Liz Beamish who is the treasurer of the Ladybridge Residents Association (contactable on 07775928464). Liz informed us of the specifics of the unit which includes

3 Hall Rooms available for hire, a full kitchen, both male and female toilet facilities, 2 car parks and a wheelchair ramp for accessibility.

Rooms are open for all to hire at the following rates:

	Hall 1	Hall 2	Hall 3
Base Rate	£10.50	£6	£10
Charity Rate	£8	£4.50	£7.35
Wireless Group	£4.80	£3	£4.40

Upon speaking with Liz Beamish, it was identified that the biggest issues they were facing as an establishment was lack of people and a struggle to update their facilities such as the website. They have a website at current however it is actually not able to be used as intended and is not up to date and in need of updating. However, despite this Liz and the community are working hard to do up the venue and personally we thought it was a lovely venue.

Demonstrated below is some smaller activity areas we were able to identify within the Rumworth area.

- Horticulture Centre. Purpose built and accessible to all levels of mobility and there are additional allotments close by which need year-round maintenance offering the opportunity to learn planting, harvesting and plant care skills and enjoy time in nature where progress can be seen and enjoyed. YP of all abilities can feel part of something valuable and look forward to sharing produce and plants they have grown themselves. Also, opportunities for development of small enterprise as well as school holiday sessions.



- Complete Forest School setting with various outdoor areas including a covered campfire area, wood gathering and prep, hammocks and chill out areas in which all kinds of outdoor activities can be developed and delivered and include time to socialise, build and maintain friendships, learn life skills and the importance of teamwork and co-operation.

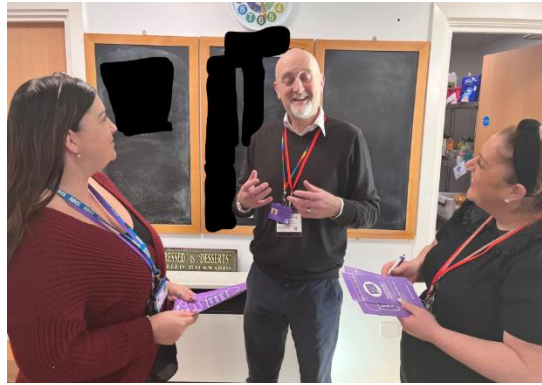




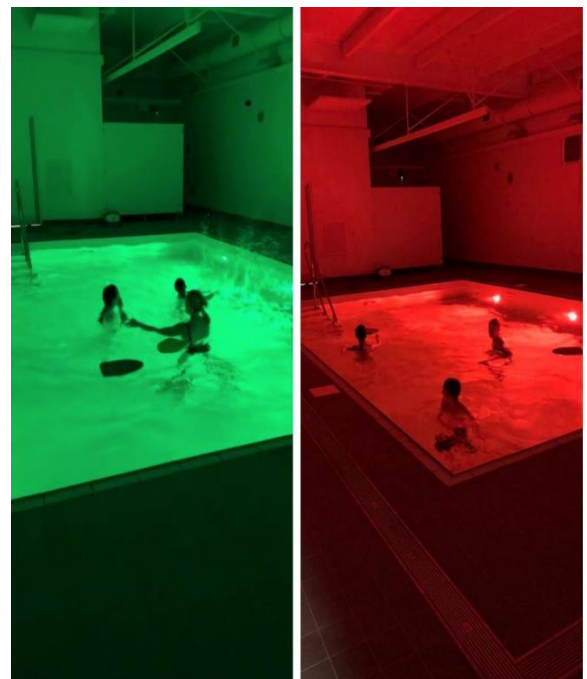
- A fully equipped catering kitchen meeting all food hygiene standards which is used to teach cookery skills from the very basics to more elaborate meals and prep as well as patisserie and cake decorating. Low level units allow for maximum accessibility and a calm and relaxed atmosphere makes for effective and productive skill demonstrations and there is café space attached where socialising and enjoying food together can be done easily and safely. So many techniques can be practiced whilst imparting skills that Disabled YP will use throughout their lives so promoting greater levels of independence, organisation and confidence.



- A community space for organisations to be invited to offer additional support to Disabled YP and their families. A huge barrier for some families is not knowing what is available locally and how services and support can be accessed. By inviting professionals and providers to sessions locally where families can come together, ask questions, listen to presentations delivered in a friendly, relaxing environment whilst having the opportunity to build friendships and network with others in similar situations not only is good quality information shared but anxiety around potentially stressful challenges and situations is reduced so improving mental health and wellbeing and reducing isolation.



- Two of the most commented on difficulties facing YP with SEND are haircuts and the lack of available Occupational Therapy due to the very high demand for the service. The community space can also be used to welcome local Barber/Hairdresser Craig who is fabulous with children and young people with overwhelming sensory difficulties who would otherwise find it impossible to have professional haircuts. The importance of such “everyday” things cannot be underestimated, nor can the stress caused to YP who become so very distressed when scissors or clippers are close by. It would also be a possibility to look at using the same space for Dentists, Vaccinations and Nurse care, nail cutting, beauty sessions (styling and make up) plus a multitude of arts and crafts, photography etc. The hydrotherapy pool, although needing specific supervision and direction, provides invaluable physical and sensory input. Waters fears can be addressed, exercises completed, and relaxation techniques implemented. The calming effect of warm water and modified lighting has been demonstrated to improve mood and reduce anxiety even if the only activity is supported floating.





- Indoor outdoor sporting facilities thanks to a purpose-built MUGA (Multi Use Gaming Area) in which a huge variety of sporting activities can take place. It is completely accessible, and gates can be secured to ensure YP with a tendency to escape are kept safe without feeling “locked in”. The floor is marked out for football, netball and basketball and there are hoops permanently in place. Sessions could be coached or just run for fun to increase physical activity and improve general wellbeing. There is ample car parking close by.



As incredible as these facilities are, the issues lie within the fact that the majority of these exist within the walls of Rumworth school. Rumworth school is undoubtedly the most valuable resource in the area. However, this can only be accessed majority by students of Rumworth and it is within our belief that the area would benefit hugely from an increase in accessibility to non-students, funding this could create an even more priceless resource for the community.

This issue of a lack of potential resources in the area is one which we identified throughout and to further this, a masters student studying Psychological Well-Being in Clinical Practice and Clinical Psychotherapy at Manchester Metropolitan University was tasked with entering the Rumworth to discover as much as they could. Their report is as follows:

As part of a 6-week work placement with Breaking Barriers NW I was asked to research availability of support for SEND children and young people in the Rumworth area of Bolton.

Using internet searches initially and then personal visits to shops and workplaces identified as possible “hidden gems” my findings are as below:

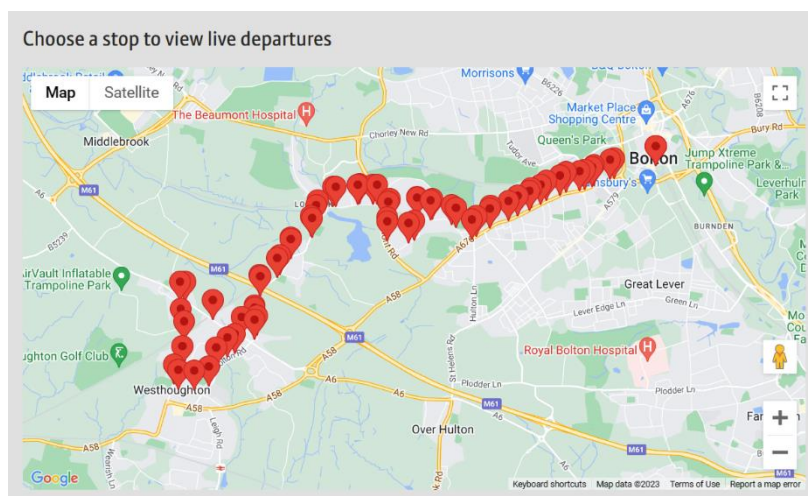
- I was unable to find anything or anywhere that actually stood out and on advice did not include anything to do with Rumworth School.
- On Ladybridge Estate there is a Community centre but despite several emails and phone calls I was unable to speak to the co-ordinator and although on the notice board outside there was information of groups who met there I have no idea how old that was.

- It does however look in good condition and a good size space and clearly can be hired by other groups so with better publicity and better communication it is a location that could provide a wide variety of activities and meetings.
- Ladybridge Medical centre on the same Estate was a recognised covid vaccination centre during the pandemic and many local families used it including families of young people with SEND and the staff worked very hard to make all feel calm and welcome. I spoke to Nancy who was one of the meet and greet staff members and she spoke about making sure she spoke to families and if needed she offered a quieter space to wait and then recover. They did their best to offer the first appointment in the morning or afternoon and for those who didn't manage to have the vaccination first time round they liaised with the booking centre to get another appointment ASAP.
- I visited Marie's Florist on Deane Road on the edge of Rumworth and spoke to Marie. Two of their Saturday staff are adults who have Downs Syndrome. One has worked there for 5 years and one for almost 12 months – both with low levels of support. Marie has a niece with additional needs who worked for her for several years before securing a part time job with a local supermarket and decided to offer Saturday hours to adults with similar difficulties and strongly advises other businesses who can do the same.

Daniel Roach

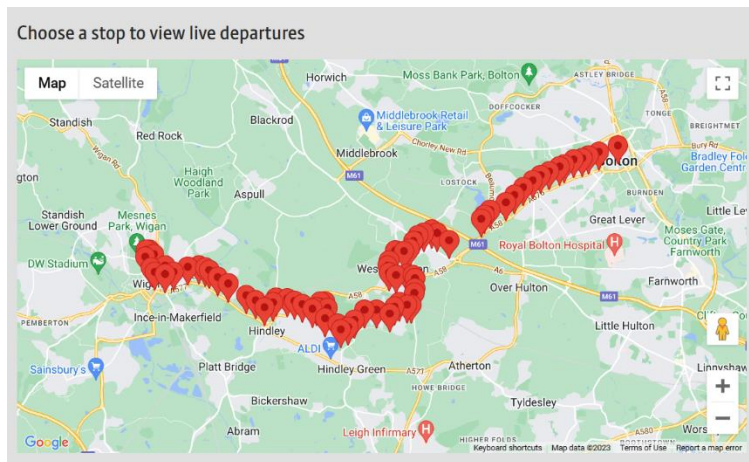
MMU Psychology Student.

From all of this, what has become the most evident fact is that Rumworth lacks in accessible provisions. The area as a whole is catered largely to its older population, with little resources of any nature available unless individuals are able and willing to travel around the surrounding areas. Bar transport by car or taxi, buses seem to be the favourable mode of transport in and out of the Rumworth area. The 520 and the 7 are the 2 bus services which we identified as being able to be used to access the Rumworth area, with routes shown below.



Bus Route (520) <sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> 520 Bus Route - [520 Bolton to Gilnow circular bus route | Transport for Greater Manchester \(tfgm.com\)](https://www.tfgm.com/routes/520-bolton-to-gilnow-circular-bus-route)



Bus Route (7) <sup>18</sup>

The 520 bus is operated by Go North West, a company which has very little in way of information regarding a disability policy. They seem to cover only accessible wheelchair spaces and information regarding policies on service dogs, information which is shown below.

### Dogs on board

We welcome dogs on board our buses, including Guide Dogs. We're signed up to the RNIB Bus Charter, which promotes 13 objectives for bus companies to assist blind and partially sighted passengers.

### Wheelchairs and scooters

All of our buses are wheelchair and scooter friendly, and are equipped with ramps to help you get on and off the bus. Our drivers will always try to ensure that the wheelchair space is kept free for you, and will ask other customer to vacate this space if it is required.

Scooters must be up to 1000mm length x 600mm wide and wheelchairs 700mm wide, both with a turning circle no greater than 1200mm.

Many bus stops in Greater Manchester have raised 'kassel kerbs', which makes boarding our buses easier for everybody.

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Whilst it is good to have some form of coverage on these areas it would be even better if some form of disability support coverage or reasonable adjustment scheme could be covered, including but not limited to onboard next stop announcements, assistant cards and assistance for individuals with hidden disabilities.

The Number 7 bus is operated by Stagecoach, a company which offers more substantial public information in way of accessibility standards and support schemes, as well as areas for future growth.

<sup>18</sup> 7 Bus Route - [7 Bolton to Wigan bus route | Transport for Greater Manchester \(tfgm.com\)](https://www.tfgm.com/routes/7-bolton-to-wigan-bus-route)

<sup>19</sup> Go North West Bus Policy - [Conditions of Carriage - Go North West](https://www.gonorthwest.co.uk/conditions-of-carriage)

## Accessibility statement

### Overview

Stagecoachbus.com is committed to working towards providing a website that is accessible to the widest possible audience, regardless of ability or technology. This page explains our approach to making this website accessible; the features provided to enhance the site's accessibility, and what to do if you have any questions or feedback for us.

### Journey Assistance cards

Journey Assistance Cards are available for you to use if you need a bit more help when using the bus. They'll make it easier for you to let our bus drivers know what extra help you need.

You can use your cards any time of the day, seven days a week, on any of our bus services, and you can apply for Journey Assistance Cards if you have:

- limited vision or hearing
- difficulty in communicating
- special educational needs
- or if English is not your first language
- or you need extra time or help to find a seat
- Find out more about [Journey Assistance Cards](#).

### Accessibility guidelines

This site, where possible, has been developed to conform to level AA of the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 (WCAG 2.0). These guidelines are the internationally recognised benchmark for building accessible web sites. The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines explain how to make websites more accessible for people with disabilities.

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### Using the website

We are actively working to ensure our website is as accessible as possible, and as part of our aim to provide the most accessible experience possible for our visitors we have implemented the following accessibility features:

#### Keyboard navigation

- Logical and consistent navigation is provided for keyboard users
- Links are highlighted on keyboard focus
- Our Stagecoach logo links directly to the home page
- You can skip to the main content, main navigation (when the page contains it) and the accessibility page by pressing the tab key to navigate through links after the page loads, and then pressing the enter key on the appropriate link
- Site-wide search facilities have been implemented

#### Changing the display colour and font

Although we do not offer any alternate colour schemes to display the website, you can use the controls in your browser to change the size of the text or the colour of the display.

We work to ensure that the contrast of text and background colour combinations is sufficient and we have also ensured that information is not referenced or communicated by colour alone.

#### Links, new windows and layers

Links contain clear text and can be understood out of context for screen reader users.

Links to pages on the same website will open in the same window. Links to pages on external websites will open in a new window.

Links to downloadable documents and files will open in a new window to avoid conflicting with assistive technologies.

You can open links in a new window by using the keyboard shortcut Shift + Enter in most modern browsers. Please note: the keyboard shortcut for opening links in a new window may be different depending on the browser and operating system.

### Stagecoach mobile app accessibility

We are actively working towards increasing the accessibility and usability of our mobile apps for iOS and Android and to take advantage of the assistive features available on these platforms.

This level of information is much more acceptable in way of offering solutions and information regarding the development of further accessibility support. This in a way could act as a prime example of the progress that needs to be made by similar companies in order to make public transport that much more accessible and allow individuals with additional needs to gain more independence and further their field of available resources.



Throughout the course of this project, we were able to notice some subtle changes being made to the Bolton Local Offer website, which we have included below:

A new section has been added for the use of individuals to discover multiple different forms of employment, including but not limited to work experience, volunteering and supported internships. Areas of work focus was an area of interest which we identified as having high importance, and seeing this in place on the Local Offer website is a great step in the right direction.

## Routes into work

Information to help you make plans and prepare for work.

[Find out more](#)



## Work tasters

These are short sessions or one off visits to a workplace, so you see what a job/business does on a day to day basis. You may work alongside someone who is already doing the job to see what they do and have a go yourself. The employer may arrange for members of the team to talk to you about what they do.

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## Work experience

This is a bit like the work tasters but happens more often i.e. for a block of a week, or a day a week over several weeks. You will visit the workplace and do an agreed job. You should receive training to help you.

## Supported Internships

Supported [internships](#) give you work experience and a structured study programme. You will be supported by an education provider (school or college), your employer, and a job coach to develop skills to do jobs in a business.

They are only for young people who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). You do not need any qualifications to take part in a supported internship. There is an expectation that a supported internship will lead to a job at the end of the internship.

## Traineeship

This is a skills development programme that includes a work placement. Providers offer training to a young person to help them in to work, for example, they might help you to write a CV, support you to get qualifications, help you develop skills or knowledge to do a job. Traineeships usually last for no more than six months and are usually for young people aged 16 - 24, 25 if they have a special educational need or disability.

Moreover, information regarding the undertaking of the mapping project has been added to the section regarding Friendships, Relationships, and the community.

## Friends, relationships and community

Bolton Council and partners are working closely with parents and carers of children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND), and professionals across Bolton from statutory and voluntary sector providers, to map the activities and peer support groups that support community inclusion. These include peer support groups such as youth clubs, pony clubs, gaming groups, sports, bingo, and neighbourhood hobby or interest groups. In addition to this, the mapping process will explore working and volunteering opportunities, supporting young adults with SEND to gain experience and paid work with the appropriate support in place.

This is an exciting piece of work where we aim to unlock the potential within these neighbourhoods, recognise hidden assets and explore the barriers and gaps to more inclusive community activity and support. This information will then inform future developments and enhancement of the Local Offer in Bolton and will be published via [My Life in Bolton](#) and other accessible media.

We are committed to parents and young people within the borough, shaping the project with effective and meaningful involvement from community groups, local organisations and businesses which will lead to longer-term more sustainable solutions.

This ongoing work will also examine the role of direct payments, personal assistants, brokerage, travel training, capacity building, inclusion web, short breaks and holiday activities.

<sup>21</sup> Bolton's Local Offer – Preparing for Adulthood - [Preparing for adulthood – SEND Local Offer \(bolton.gov.uk\)](#)

## To Conclude...

Throughout the process of completing this report there was a selection of common themes which become obvious when conducting further areas of research.

The first of which seemed to be a shared point of view between parents, carers and support workers that the journey of preparing for adulthood started from the point of diagnosis. Being thrown in the deep end with an uncertain future means support is required, and through conducting primary research through anonymous questionnaires we were able to find out that these aforementioned support systems share the opinion that support levels at the point of diagnosis are insufficient. Following this, it is within our belief that preparing for adulthood should include support from earlier years, whether this be through support groups or activities that are available to SEND individuals from a young age. Due to this, throughout our mapping activity we have included all activities and provisions available within the Rumworth area, regardless of age limitation. Moreover, we believe that following the outcomes of this piece of research further investigation into the effects of preparing for adulthood earlier than in later years of high school.

Undeniably the most important finding we gained from our research is the fact that if we looked at the Rumworth area specifically by postcode status, there is incredibly little available for anyone that lives there, let alone individuals with SEND and their families. Due to this fact, for the purposes of our research we decided it would be beneficial to include within the Rumworth area as anything within a five-mile radius. The best facility that we found to be offering activities and groups was in fact Rumworth High School which is a positive in terms of accessibility for students attending and their support systems but is unfortunately not fully open and accessible to non-student members of the public. It was however a Rumworth School based activity which we chose to put forward for the opportunity to receive SEED funding. The scouts group is an excellent facility and upon speaking with members of Rumworth staff they are actually open and hopeful about extending their services beyond what is already available, with the hope of reaching more people in requirement of these types of services. Whilst the Rumworth area in and of itself is limited in terms of availability and as a consequence accessibility, the surrounding areas are richer in provisions and activities and if a successful travel plan can be laid out, this will be beneficial for SEND individuals.

On a similar point of conversation, travel opportunities via public transport are rather limited with only two buses passing through the Rumworth area. As not all people may have access to individually owned vehicles, it is important that strong connections to public transport links are available and that individuals are able to easily plan their journeys. We have been able to gain minimal knowledge on levels of accessibility on these bus services however we hold the belief that additional provisions should be put into place to assist in SEND individuals being able to effectively plan their journey and travel with increased independence. This could be done in collaboration with Transport for Greater Manchester who have claimed to be searching for ways to become more inclusive and accessible in the future.

As a whole, the preparation for adulthood sections provided by Bolton's Local Offer, the biggest gaps seemed to appear in the 'Independent Living' section as well as the 'Access to Work' section. This is a real issue as these are undoubtedly two of the most important factors for giving individuals independence, as well as providing a sense of importance. Living independently is a vital part of adulthood and whilst some individuals may not ever be at a point where they are able to live apart from family or care givers it is regardless an important topic to be taught amongst SEND individuals, providing them with as much independence as possible. Furthermore, access to work not only provides adults with a wage with which they are able to choose what they want to spend it on of our their own volition, but also a position of their own within a workplace, providing a sense of importance and individualism vital to personal identity. With this in mind, it is important to keep in mind when future funding opportunities become available that these are the areas most lacking within the Rumworth area and increasing the number of provisions available that could exist under these categories would benefit SEND individuals to a great extent.