



Working Lives: A research project about day centres and jobs for people with learning disabilities

This is an easier to read booklet that goes with research report 203

You can listen to the CD on its' own, or you can look at the booklet at the same time



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Working Lives: A research project about day centres and jobs for people with learning disabilities

An easier to read booklet about some research carried out for Department for Work and Pensions and Department of Health

By

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This easier to read booklet was made by the Norah Fry Research Centre and Swindon People First

Getting a job



**This is a made-up story.
But it could be real.**

I am Janet.



I go to a day centre. I've been going there for 10 years.



**I said to the staff at the day centre:
'I want a job.'**

Someone from an employment agency came to see me. An employment agency can help find you a job.



I said: ' I am not happy here all the time. I want to work'.



Then I went to the employment agency.



The job coach sat down with me. A job coach helps you find the right job for you.



**She showed me different pictures.
And information about jobs.**

I chose the type of job I would like to do.



I wanted to work at a vet's.



**The job coach phoned round.
She looked for a job for me.**

She took me to the vet's. I talked to the animals.



The vet said I could have an interview for a job.



The job coach helped me get ready for the interview.

I went for the interview. I felt a bit nervous, but it was OK.

Hooray! I got the job.



I am happy, but I would like to get a better job.

**When my job coach comes next time,
I will tell her that I'd like to work
more hours.**

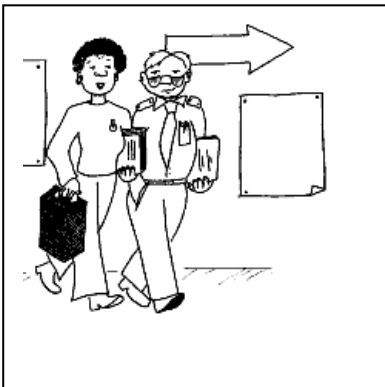




That was Janet's story about getting a job.



Now we are going to talk about the research project.

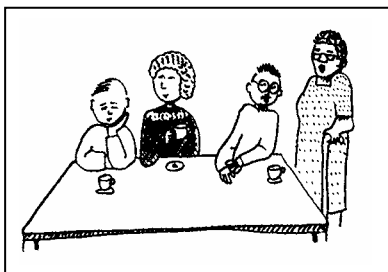


This looked at lots of people's stories about work.



What was the research about?

It was about getting a job.



Researchers talked to lots of people with learning disabilities who went to day centres.



They asked them about jobs.

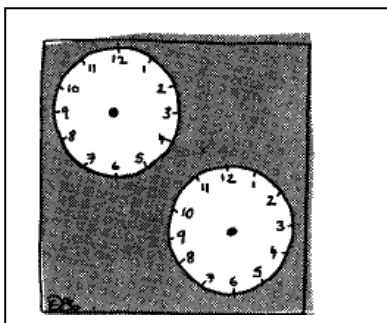


In this part of the booklet you can read about what they found out.



**What did people say
about their jobs?**

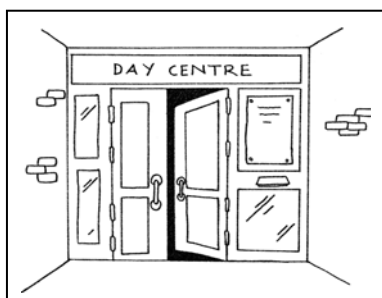
Very few people with learning disabilities have jobs.



Most people who had jobs worked for less than 5 hours each week.



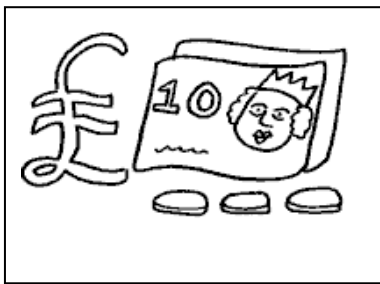
The jobs they did were mainly catering, cleaning, shop and office work.



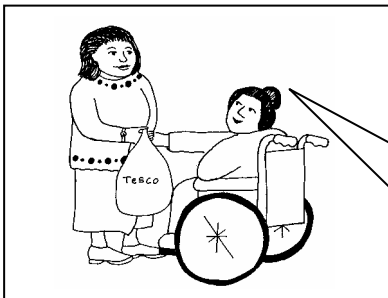
Staff in the day centre sometimes helped them get their job. Many of the people who worked still went to day centres.



What else did people say about their jobs?



People had low pay. Some people got less than the national minimum wage (£4.20 per hour). Many only earned £20, and this did not affect their benefits.



A few people did voluntary work. They did not get paid.

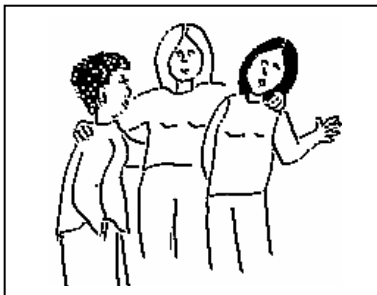
Some people do voluntary work because it is something they care about



But work placements can be easy labour. They give you all the rubbish jobs, then they don't take you on.



What did people think about day centres?



People liked day centres, because they got new skills, met friends and made decisions.



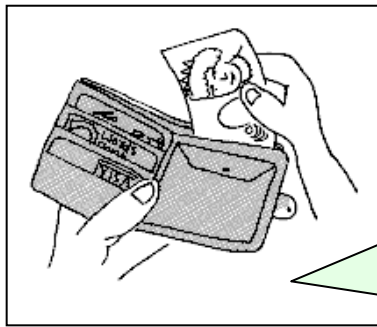
But they also said that day centres were boring and stressful, and they got bossed around.



They didn't like some of the other clients.



What did people like about work?



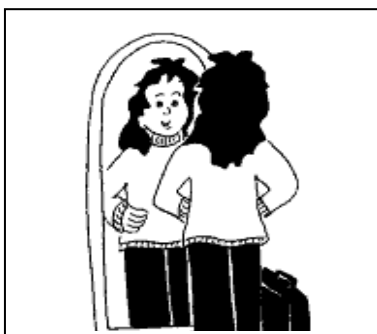
People liked getting money.

If you didn't have money, you'd end up on the street. You can't do nothing on fresh air!



People wanted to keep busy.

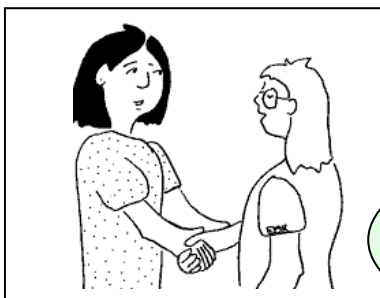
Time goes quicker when you're working.



People liked being independent.

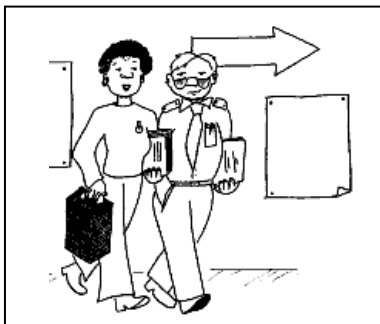


What else did people like about work?



Friendships were good.

It makes you feel happy inside, because you've got someone to talk to.



People liked helping others and doing something important. It felt like 'real life'.

I am proud. It's about the way people treat you, with respect.



People who had jobs wanted to keep on working. Sometimes they wanted to get a new job.



What did people not like about work?



Some people thought their job was difficult.



Some found their job boring, or dirty. They didn't like doing the same thing again and again.



But on the whole, people put up with the problems, so that they could keep the job.



Were there other problems about working?



Some people didn't know how much they were able to work without losing their benefits.

I have to watch my money, because if I worked too many hours they would take some of my benefits.



But a lot of people wanted to be paid more. Pay was important to them.

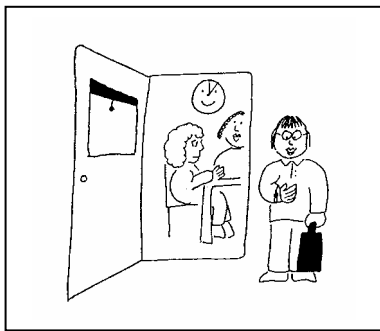
I think you should get paid more. What's the point of you going all the way there for a pound?





What did day centre staff say about the skills people needed for work?

Day centres believed that people needed lots of skills to do a job.



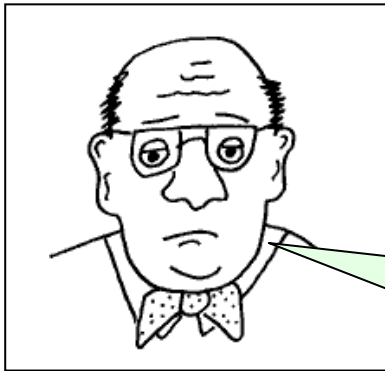
They said that people must be flexible, adaptable, on time, and lots of other things....



Day centre staff thought that people with high support needs could not work.

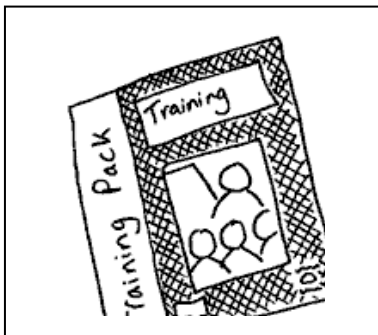


What work training did people get in day centres?

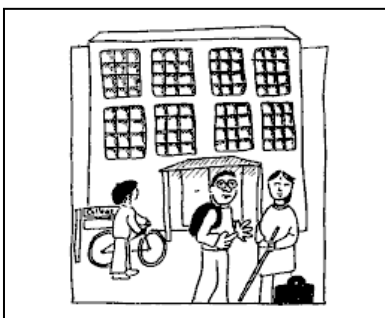


Most centres said that they only did general training – not special training for work.

It has been a mistake trying to do too much ourselves.



In some centres, people worked in the centre, or on work projects. They did work training too.



Some centres did not waste too much time doing training. They were more likely to send people out to other places, like colleges, for training.

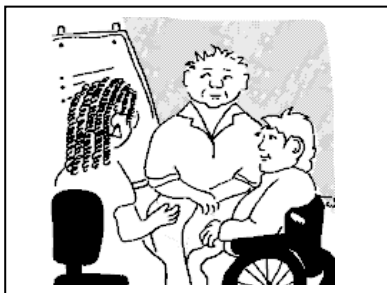


How did people get their jobs?

People often thought of getting a job for themselves. But also...



Employment officers at day centres helped some of them to think about finding a job.



Employment agencies also gave them information and helped them to find jobs.



What did day centre staff say about how they helped people get jobs?

There are 3 main ways day centres help people to get jobs.



A few day centres had employment officers. They helped people at the day centre to find the right job.



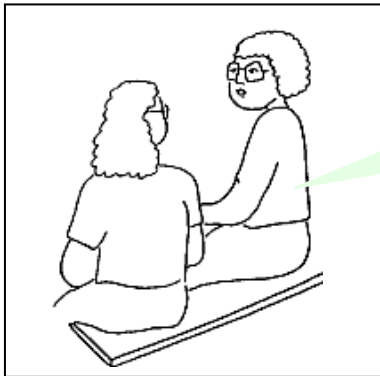
Some centres had workshops or other places where people could work. They also worked with employment agencies to find jobs for people.



Some centres just did social and education activities. People went to employment agencies to find jobs.



What support did people get in their jobs?



People should listen to what I say.

Most people said they got the right amount of help at work.



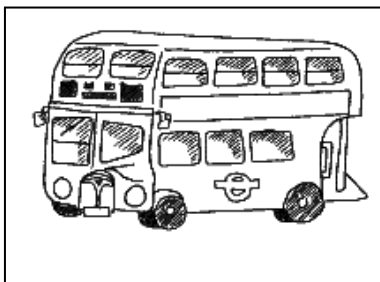
People got most help from the others they worked with. But they also said they got support from their day centres, or from employment agencies.



Some people said they would like more help sorting out problems, learning the job or finding a new job.



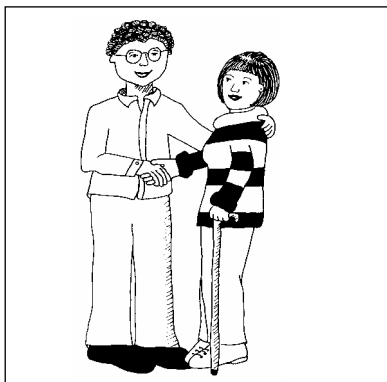
How did support staff try to help people to work?



Day centres helped the person learn how to get to their job. They did social visits, and they got to know employers.



They said people who had jobs came back to the day centre to see their friends.

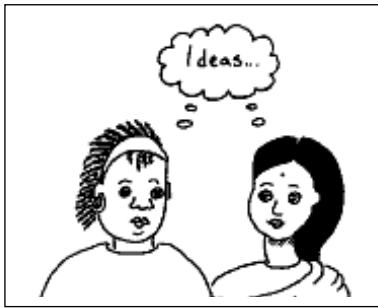


Supported Employment agencies taught the person how to do the job. They kept on supporting, as long as needed.



Supported employment sounds interesting. What is it all about?

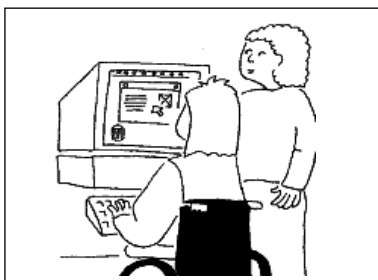
Supported employment agencies have job coaches, to help people find a job and do well in their job.



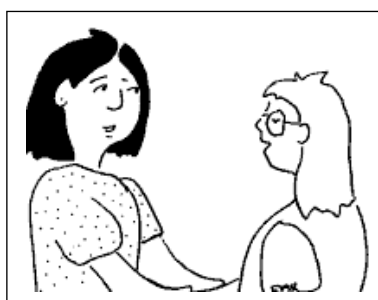
The job coaches talk to you. They help you think about what skills you have and what you could do.



They work with employers and find the right job for you.



They break down the job into small steps, so that people can learn.

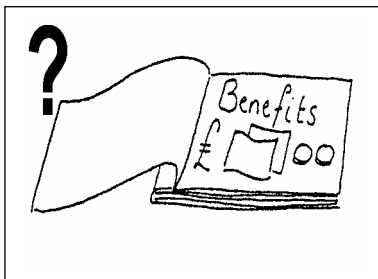


Job coaches also help the co-workers and the employer to give good support.



What stops people getting jobs?

These are the barriers that people talked about:



Getting a job often causes problems with benefits.



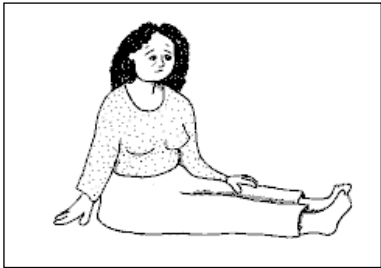
Sometimes other people do not respect people with learning disabilities.



People don't know what jobs there are. They are not told about jobs.



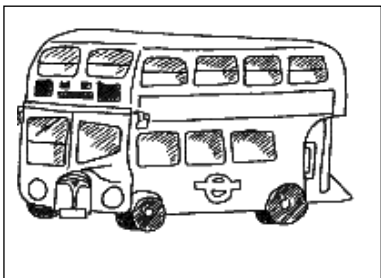
What else did people say about what stops them working?



People have no confidence in themselves. They wonder whether they could do a job.



There is not enough training and support to do the job.



They need transport to get to work.



Why did day centres have problems getting people into jobs?

They all agreed that people losing benefits was the biggest problem.



Day centres also said they have not got enough staff, or staff with the right skills.

There is not enough money.



The Government tells them to do lots of other things, as well as get people jobs.



There is too much paperwork.



What else did day centres say about the problems?



There is lots of unemployment in some areas.



Some carers and parents may not like people to get jobs.



People don't want to lose their friends in the day centre.



So, if there is all this support – are they all working together?



Very few day centres worked with programmes like WORKSTEP or with job centres.



Some day centres did work with supported employment agencies.



The supported employment agencies worked with employers. They tried to work in partnership, but often did not have enough money.

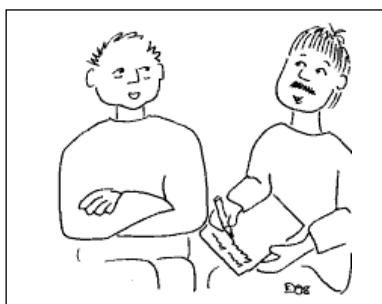


What does all this mean?

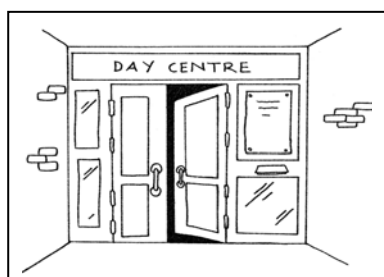
There are lots of barriers that stop people getting jobs. It is also very hard for them to learn about real jobs.



Benefits are a big worry. Income Support is very important to most people, and they don't want to lose it.



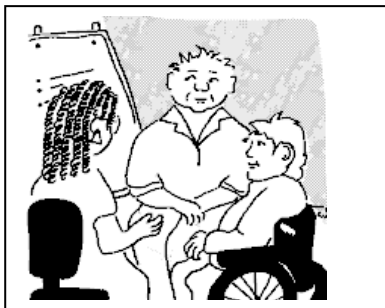
Everyone needs to believe that people with learning disabilities can get jobs if they have the right support – at the right time.



If day centres change the way they think, so will service users and carers.



What should happen now?



Day centres should work more with employment agencies.



Staff in day centres could learn about matching people with jobs. They could also learn more about what employers need.



Large employment agencies should support new agencies. Employment agency staff could also be paid to work with people in day centres.



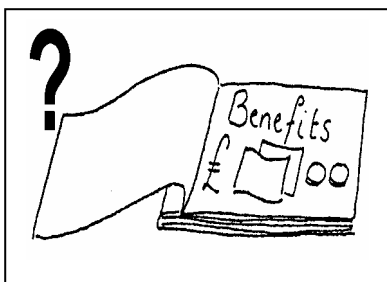
What will make these changes happen?



Supported employment agencies need more money. They need to do more courses for other staff, so they get better skills.



People with learning disabilities who have got jobs can show others that it is possible.



We may need to make changes to benefits.

That is the end of the research report.

The people who worked on this project

Lots of people from different research centres, went to day centres and employment agencies to ask questions.

Here are some of them:



Steve Beyer

Bob Groves



Justine Schneider

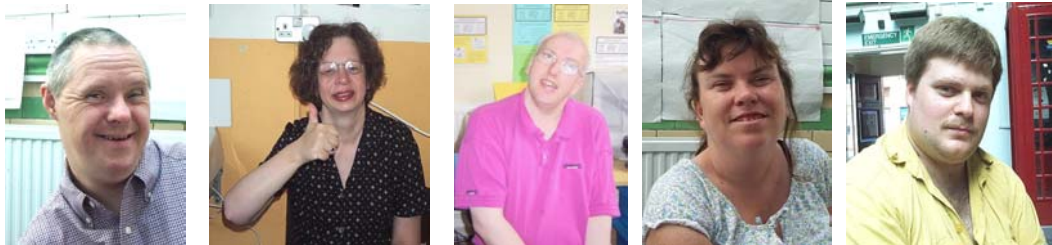
Ken Simons also worked on this project. He believed in the rights of people with learning disabilities to get jobs.



Very sadly, Ken died in January 2003. We hope people will remember him when they read this report.



Val Williams and Beth Tarleton
worked with



Swindon People 1st

They helped to plan the questionnaires.
They wrote this summary.

Two people from the National Forum have also given
advice.

Our thanks to CHANGE, who drew the pictures used in
this report.

Do you want to get a job?

By Swindon People 1st

You will need to think about:



What kind of job do I want?

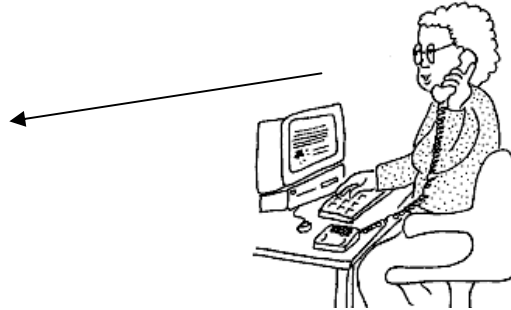
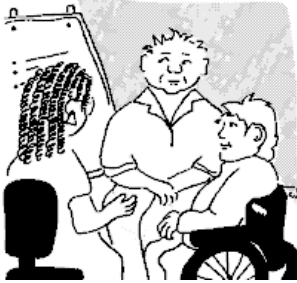
You could get a member of your family or your social worker to help you think about work.



How will I get a job?

- If you go to day services, ask them how they help people get jobs.
- They may have an employment officer.

- Ask if your day centre works with a supported employment agency to get people jobs.



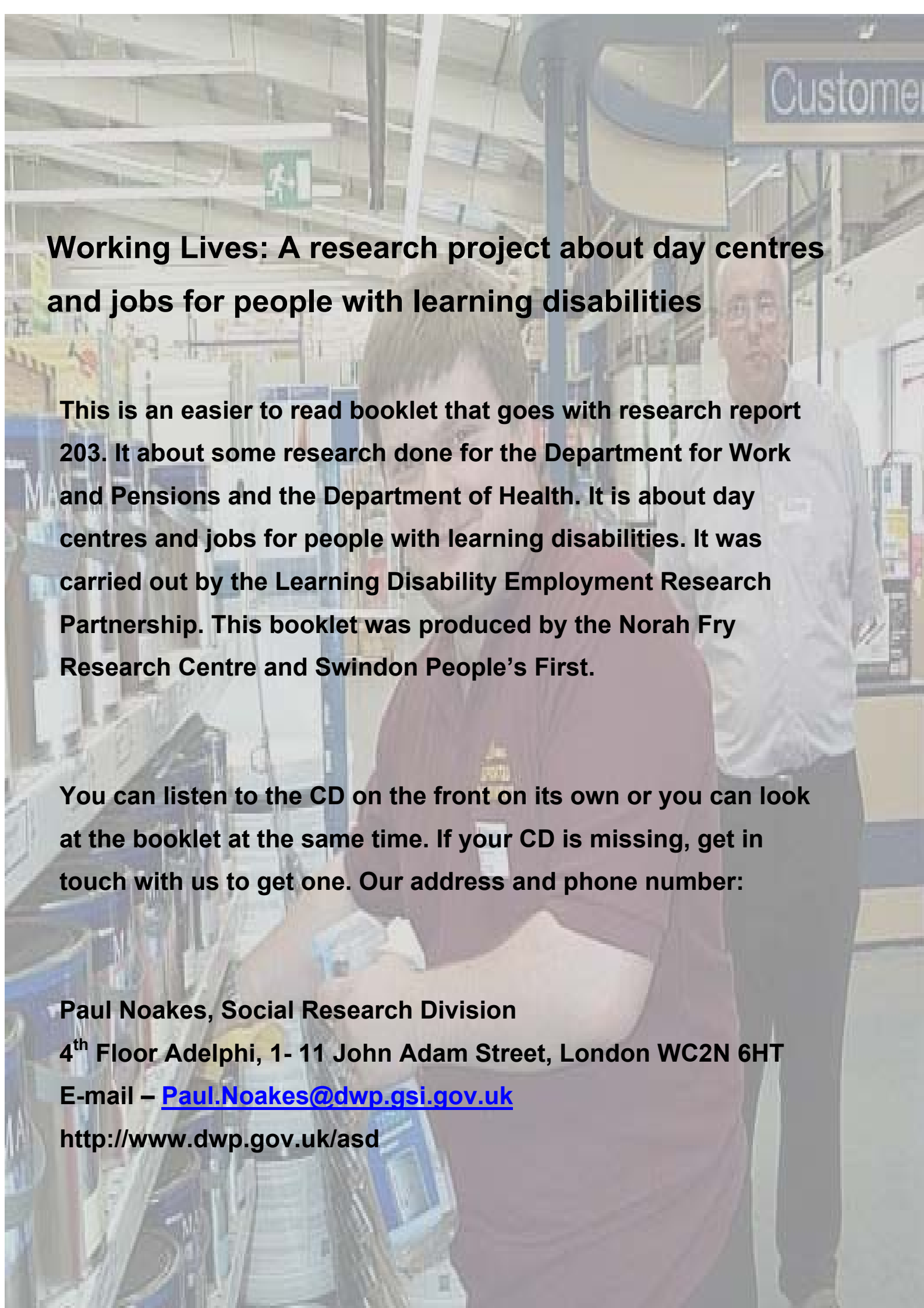
You can contact a supported employment agency yourself.

You can ask the Disability Employment Advisor at the Job Centre.

You can also ring the Association for Supported Employment, to find out where your nearest supported employment agency is.

The number is **0 1 8 2 9 7 4 0 3 9 1**

**Good luck from everyone at
Swindon People 1st!**



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This is an easier to read booklet that goes with research report 203. It about some research done for the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department of Health. It is about day centres and jobs for people with learning disabilities. It was carried out by the Learning Disability Employment Research Partnership. This booklet was produced by the Norah Fry Research Centre and Swindon People's First.

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<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd>