

Disability & Inclusion Strategy

End of year report 2023 & 2024



Foreword

I am pleased to present the combined Disability and Inclusion Strategy Annual Report for 2023 and 2024. This is a reflection of Jersey's continued commitment to building a community where everyone can participate fully and equally.

The report highlights the progress we've made in embedding accessibility, showing lived experience, and strengthening inclusive practices across Government and the community. From the expansion of the "Embrace our Difference" campaign to the launch of the Video Relay Service and the development of inclusive infrastructure, these achievements are the result of collaboration, dedication, and shared purpose.

Crucially, this progress would not be possible without the work of our third-sector partners. Charities and community organisations have played an essential role in shaping and delivering the strategy offering frontline insight, supporting service innovation, and ensuring that the voices of disabled Islanders are heard and respected. Their leadership within forums such as the Learning Disability Autism Disability Cluster and their contributions to initiatives like the Jersey Community Transport Scheme highlight the power of partnership in driving meaningful change.

We have also faced challenges. The impact of Storm Ciarán, rising living costs, and service disruptions have disproportionately affected Islanders with disabilities. Yet, through adversity, the Disability and Inclusion team and its partners, across Government and the third sector, have continued to innovate, adapt, and deliver.

As we look ahead to 2025 and beyond, our focus must remain on systemic change. We must continue to embed accessibility into our services, ensure smooth transitions across life stages, and harness digital tools to empower choice and transparency.

To everyone who has contributed, whether through policy, practice, or personal story, thank you.

Deputy Lyndsay Feltham

Minister for Social Security

Introduction

This combined Disability and Inclusion Strategy Annual Report covers the years 2023 and 2024. It brings together the work of the Government of Jersey and its partners in advancing the Disability Strategy for Jersey, highlighting key developments, milestones, and challenges from both years.

Jersey's disability strategy continues to be informed by strong community engagement, detailed action planning, and the lived experience of Islanders with disabilities. The reporting period has been marked by significant achievements — including the launch of new support services, enhancements to accessibility across infrastructure and systems, and deeper collaboration with community and third-sector organisations.

This report also reflects on the findings of the 2024 Short-Term Action Plan Review process, where stakeholders assessed progress on 30 defined actions, and helped shape priorities for 2025.

Strategic Context

Decision-making on priorities within the Disability and Inclusion Strategy is guided by a structured governance framework. The Disability and Inclusion (D&I) team reports to the Disability and Inclusion Advisory Group, a high-level body chaired by the Social Security Minister. This group provides strategic oversight, advises on priority actions, and ensures resources are used effectively. It also includes representatives from both government, private and third-sector organisations, offering a balanced and inclusive perspective.

The Advisory Group is further informed by the Learning Disability, Autism and Disability (LDAD) Cluster — a forum made up of senior leaders from third sector organisations and government departments. Going forward three representatives from the LDAD Cluster will be appointed to sit on the Disability and Inclusion Advisory Group, bringing with them the latest insight from service providers and frontline perspectives.

Importantly, the strategy also embeds the voices of people with lived experience through the Validation Group — a client forum that offers a safe and structured space for individuals with disabilities, to inform decision-making. This layered model ensures that implementation is grounded in real-world insight, inclusive dialogue, and ongoing reflection.

The period of 2023–2024 has presented both opportunities and challenges.

Over the period, high living costs, the impact of Storm Ciarán, and temporary disruptions in essential services disproportionately affected Islanders with disabilities.

Despite this context, the Disability and Inclusion (D&I) team and partners continued to push forward initiatives that promote equity, independence, and community inclusion. In 2024, a more systemic and better-informed approach to progress monitoring was adopted, creating a stronger foundation for accountability and adaptation.

Progress Overview: 2023–2024

Accessibility in Built and Digital Environments

- Accessibility was embedded in major new development plans, including the GoJ offices, hospital, Elizabeth Terminal, and Waterfront projects, through D&I-led multi-disciplinary reviews.
- The gov.je website saw upgrades to its computer management system (CMS) in late 2023. Though further investment was not secured in 2024, accessibility improvements continued via easy-read standards and WCAG benchmarking.
- Jersey ranked highest among comparable jurisdictions for low-level WCAG A failures.

Community Engagement and Visibility

- The "Embrace our Difference" campaign expanded in reach, culminating in a successful 2023 event attended by over 500 Islanders and 50 organisations. In 2024, the event was held on December 3rd and was once again considered a major success. Feedback from the 55 participating organisations praised the vibrant and accessible setup, networking opportunities, and emphasis on collaboration. Suggestions for improvement included better sound quality for presentations, earlier marketing, more space between stalls, and increased interactivity. The event has become a staple in Jersey's disability inclusion calendar and will continue in a similar format, guided by ongoing feedback.
- The Hidden Disabilities Sunflower campaign continued across both years, with training of 250 GoJ staff and webinars provided to Jersey businesses with public engagement via town centre events.
- Twelve playparks were audited for sensory and physical accessibility, with initial improvements completed at St Martin's village green. Plans are progressing on several other sites including Millennium Park.
- The Government of Jersey also supported the delivery of "Ant Talks" – personal storytelling presentations by Ant Lewis, a member of the D&I team, who shares his lived experience of acquiring a disability and how it reshaped his life and career. Delivered to schools, businesses, and government departments, these talks have been consistently praised for their inspirational and thought-provoking impact. Feedback from organisations such as Andium Homes described how the talks led to staff reflecting on their own assumptions, increasing empathy, and even contributing to practical changes — such as promoting mental health training and undertaking steps toward becoming a Dementia Friendly Business.

Transport and Mobility

- The Disability and Inclusion (D&I) team supports accessibility through ongoing assessment of Trafficworx applications — Jersey's digital roadworks coordination platform. The team identifies any potential barriers caused by carriageway or footway works and signposts relevant information to disability agencies, helping them keep their clients informed.
- The Jersey Community Transport Scheme — a charitable initiative aimed at supporting Islanders with limited mobility — secured vehicles and began driver recruitment in 2024. The scheme was established with financial support from the Bosdet Foundation and is overseen by a dedicated board of directors. The D&I team continues to provide strategic input, helping to promote accessible service design and maintain engagement with disability stakeholders. The scheme will launch in 2025 with services operating across selected areas.
- The Blue Badge mapping initiative was completed in December 2024. All known public and commercial spaces were mapped, with details about location, accessibility features, and future availability as an online resource.

Health, Social Care and Transitions

- The #BeOurBest initiative continued, with accessible patient communication and engagement improvements embedded into HCS systems, including the Maxim system.
- The September 2024 workshop highlighted that the "Preparing for Adulthood" pathway and special appointment access at public offices require significant attention. These have since been prioritised for 2025.
- Safeguarding and care transition protocols for young people with disabilities remain a focus area, with continued liaison with the Safeguarding Partnership Board.
- In 2024, the Government of Jersey introduced a new Video Relay Service (VRS), providing 24/7 on-demand British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation for BSL users. VRS enables immediate access to a wide pool of qualified interpreters across healthcare, education, and other public services. This service supports flexible and remote communication, enhances emergency access, and aligns with the island's digital transformation agenda. It reflects Jersey's continued commitment to inclusive, accessible, and future-ready services.

Education and Employment

- The Inclusion Champion programme was launched across primary and secondary schools, with cohorts progressing through structured training and action planning.
- Over 30 students with disabilities participated in adapted Trident placements in 2023, with continued efforts to build this into a sustainable pathway.
- The Disability Employment Gap remained a visible issue, addressed through employer engagement events and collaboration with Skills Jersey.

Inclusion in Everyday Life (Sport, Culture, Play, Housing)

- Day service visibility for older adults increased with the rollout of the Elemental platform, although this will not be fully realised until 2025.
- Cultural organisations such as Jersey Heritage recruited access coordinators and expanded accessibility statements.
- Housing accessibility was supported through continued Andium investment in home adaptations and the promotion of accessible housing developments.

Short-Term Action Plan Review (2024)

In September 2024, a stakeholder workshop reviewed 30 short-term action plans from the Disability Strategy. Participants assessed the degree of progress for each, with the following findings:

- 74% of actions reflected positive progress.
- 24% showed minimal or no change.
- 22 actions were closed as completed.
- 8 actions were earmarked for ongoing monitoring.

Poorly scoring actions included:

- Preparing for Adulthood transition pathway
- Appointment accessibility for disabled Islanders
- St Helier road crossing accessibility

Highly rated successes included:

- Discounted bus pass (AvanchiAccess)
- Youth Inclusion Project
- Accessibility improvements at ports and harbours

New Deliverables in Motion (2025)

- **Blue Badge Digital Mapping Tool:** Completed mapping in 2024; online, printable, and app-based tools launching in 2025.
- **Inclusion Champions in Schools:** Action planning embedded in participating schools; programme continues through 2025.
- **Elemental Platform:** Online social prescribing platform set to go fully live in early 2025, with referral and data tools included.
- **Customer-Facing Staff Training** to improve inclusive practice: Steering group formed; training design underway.
- **Transition – pathway to adulthood** – preliminary discussions have commenced

Looking Ahead: 2025 and Beyond

- Broaden participation in strategy delivery, including young people and underrepresented voices.
- Ensure systemic change accompanies awareness — embedding accessibility into the design of services, systems, and structures.
- Prioritise continuity and alignment across housing, education, health, and social care transitions.
- Support the building of digital tools that increase transparency, choice, and ease of access for Islanders with disabilities.

The next phase of Jersey's Disability and Inclusion Strategy will be shaped by continued engagement, smarter data, and the lived experience of disabled Islanders.
