

News from the Jersey Employment Trust

What they say...



It's not just about the pay, it's also about keeping active. It can be a scary place, being out of work. Being at home is not what I want. You don't want to live life on income support. I look forward to the focus of work.

JET client David Harburn



I believe diversity and inclusion bring real strength to any workplace. When people from different backgrounds, experiences and abilities work together, it creates a more dynamic and engaging environment. Everyone brings something unique to the table, which often leads to more creative thinking, better problem-solving, and a stronger sense of teamwork.

Former Jersey Post HR partner Robyn Pestana



I would ask all employers to approach with an open mind and kindness. Many clients are facing challenges you can't see – unseen disabilities, personal struggles, or complex circumstances behind the scenes. Watching someone's journey – no matter how long it takes – is a privilege and humbling, too.

JET employment co-ordinator Mel Therin

Full charge ahead on solar-panels project

By Jersey Employment Trust fundraising and relationships manager **Caroline Spencer**

SIXTY solar panels have been installed on the Acorn Reuse donations building – and they are going to fuel Acorn's new electric vans.

Acorn, which aims to be carbon neutral

by 2030, already has solar panels on its café roof which have been delivering savings since 2021.

Acorn executive adviser Steve Pearce said: "Ultimately, the project contributes to Acorn's financial and environmental sustainability. This will better enable us to focus our funds on our charitable purposes, providing work and training for Islanders who have a disability or long-term health condition."

"We have worked with Acacia Ltd to carry out an assessment of all of Acorn's impacts on the environment and society, both negative and positive. By installing more solar panels, we can increase our production and consumption of renewable energy and reduce our carbon emissions. The additional electricity generated will be used to power lighting and heating, as well as to charge two new electric vans."

"We were happy to work with SunWorks

again, and we are incredibly grateful to the Roy Overland Charitable Trust for backing the project."

Two new Renault electric vans will be seen on Island roads for deliveries and collections. One has been jointly funded by the Association of Jersey Charities and PwC, and the other by the Jersey Community Foundation.

In addition, the charity secured funding from the Robert Hall Foundation for the installation of a new charging point on their Trinity site.

Mr Pearce said they were very grateful for the generosity of funders: "We couldn't do it without them. Solar energy contributes to Acorn's financial and environmental sustainability and enables us to focus our funds on our charitable purposes, providing work and training for Islanders who have a disability or long-term health condition."

SunWorks solar surveyor Ben Spencer-Newman added: "We have installed 60 JA Solar panels, each rated at 455 watts. Factoring in historic consumption data, we expect annual savings of more than £3,000 with a maximum potential of £5,900 at current energy rates."

"For comparison, Acorn café building saves around £9,500 a year and uses over 70% of the energy it generates from the sun."

"These installations deliver significant savings for the charity and protect it against rising energy costs for decades, while supporting its environmental ethos."

A look back at 2025...

IN NUMBERS

- Number of referrals supported during the year: 514.
- New jobs so far this year: 109.
- Out of the new jobs sourced, 46% were permanent.
- New referrals to the Employment Service and Acorn Training & Development: 162.
- Total jobs supported in the year

- (includes new jobs + those being retained with our support): 228.
- New work experience: 53 placements.
- 12-week project blocks: 289.
- Volunteering in the community: 61 placements.
- 34% of clients report mental health as their primary disability. 22% have an autism spectrum condition.

'We continue to need to champion the rights of people with disabilities'

IN March we launched a JET Ambassadors programme in memory of our late colleague Dean Lowe.

Over 17 years with JET, Dean worked tirelessly to champion the rights of Islanders who have a disability or long-term health condition. More than anything, he wanted JET to be a household name, because it would make conversations with employers easier, open more doors, and ultimately be of benefit to our clients, many of whom continue to face barriers and stigma in the workplace.

Our 20 JET Ambassadors represent many different sectors of Jersey, and include employers, former clients and HR professionals. What unites them is their shared passion for what JET does, diversity and inclusion, and breaking down barriers in society.

In his keynote speech, Kenan Osborne said: "Dean envisioned a future where all disabled Islanders who want to be employed can find meaningful work. We hope this Ambassador programme goes a long way to realising that dream. Diversity and inclusion needs to be at the heart of every business strategy, not an afterthought."



■ Kenan Osborne: "JET should be at the forefront of your mind when reviewing inclusion policies in relation to disability"

range of opportunities for clients, including jobs, work experiences and job tasters, is needed more than ever.

"We continue to need to champion the rights of people with disabilities and we still need to advocate for diversity and inclusion," she said. "JET should be at the forefront of your mind when reviewing inclusion policies in relation to disability, and how best to implement reasonable adjustments and offer employment opportunities."

"I want to express a heartfelt thank you to employers, industry leaders and funders who continue to support what we do. We appreciate and understand the challenges of the employment landscape, but there are many talented and skilled individuals that need a chance."

"We would also like to thank all our staff, volunteers and clients, as well as members of the public who continue to support us."



■ AFM managing director Dave Webb



We believe that everyone should have access to meaningful employment opportunities, whatever their circumstances.

AFM managing director Dave Webb



■ Abigail McDermott and Izel Smit (PwC), Andrew Lewis (Association of Jersey Charities), and JET trustee Matt Tabb with the new electric van that they have jointly funded for JET

Highlights of the year...



■ Christian Basilio

'Proving that I am able'

A YOUNG man who has autism who had no art skills six years ago is flourishing as an artist.

Christian Basilio started upcycling at Acorn in 2019. We noticed the change in him after we ran a creative arts project in 2023 in partnership with the Harbour Gallery, with support from the Government of Jersey's Connect Me funding.

Christian has blossomed, he is better able to regulate his emotions, and his confidence has grown. Art has given him a positive direction and focus for his life.

Christian said: "Coming to Acorn helped me because I wanted to show I could do something. Art is my favourite thing. I've found my own style, and I will carry on doing what I'm doing and keep getting better. In the past people have called me lazy or slow. It was like people saying I am not able. I've proved to me that I am able."

What they say...



The impact of JET is both profound and far-reaching. As a parent of a son with autism, I have witnessed firsthand the transformative difference JET makes in the lives of neurodivergent individuals and their families. Their encouragement and opportunities are truly life-changing.

JET Ambassador Kenan Osborne



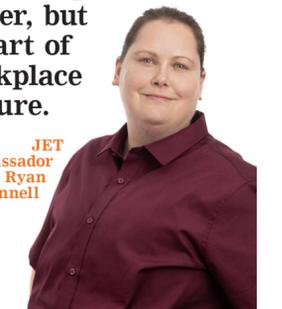
JET are very supportive. They help you in the working environment and help with anything else you struggle with. It makes a big difference to me.

JET client Ewan Le Masurier



For neurodiverse people to truly succeed in the workplace, they need to be honest and open about their skills and challenges. And they can only do this when the workplace is safe for them. That means a workplace where diversity and inclusion is not just some words in the yearly training, or on an inspirational poster, but is part of workplace culture.

JET Ambassador Ryan O'Connell



'I hated being out of work'

IN September 2023, Jan Cork was knocked off her motorbike on her way to work. Once she was ready to return to work, she needed room for a mobility scooter.

As she applied for jobs, she found that many employers couldn't allow for her disability until, that is, she arrived at Amalgamated Facilities Management Ltd (AFM). She was taken on as a customer service adviser and it was as if it was made for her. AFM's premises in St Helier Business Park at La Pouquelaye already had an access ramp to the front door, disabled toilets, and an open-plan office big enough for Jan's mobility scooter to navigate.

"I hated being out of work," she said. "My employment co-ordinator was always there. I don't know where I'd be without her."

'Truly life-changing'

A FAMILY man who has been agoraphobic for 20 years says that working with JET has been truly life-changing. Chris (47), who now works at Jersey Post, suffered from severe anxiety and panic attacks.

"I felt like I was barely surviving," he said. "My wife and two children were my only connections to the world. I only ventured out to my local shop, which was just a two-minute walk away, and that was about it."

"I contacted JET because I needed to take what I perceived as a risk, and it was one of the best decisions I ever made. With the support of JET, I was welcomed into Jersey Post, working with some of the best people. I am the happiest I've been in many years. I now venture out

more and have made many changes in my life that I would never have imagined in the last 20 years."

Robyn Pestana, then Jersey Post HR partner, said that Chris's progress since July 2024 had been nothing short of remarkable.

"To see how far he's come in such a short space of time is truly inspiring. His growth in both confidence and capability has been one of the most impressive transformations I've witnessed during my time at Jersey Post."

"Working with Chris is a powerful reminder of why our partnership with JET is so important. It demonstrates how, with the right support and opportunity, individuals can truly thrive."