We were not surprised at so few people being in work. In our experience this is because of poor information and support (only about half of people in work or looking for a job had support). The survey also showed that it is because people don’t think they can work or will get a job. Fear of losing benefits is also an important reason why people with learning difficulties haven’t got a job. We were very surprised that people didn’t say more about benefits and work.

Ian Davies & Karen Spencer

We asked people who were of ‘working age’ whether they had a job. If they did, we then asked them about their job. If they didn’t have a job we asked them whether they would like a job.

- Just under one in four people (23%) said they had a job. Of these, one in four (24%) said they did not get paid for working.
- This means that about one in six people with learning difficulties (17%) had a paid job and that about one in twenty people with learning difficulties (6%) had an unpaid job.

Paid Employment

About one in six people with learning difficulties had a paid job (17%). This is much less than people in the UK in general. Figure 11 shows the percentage of men and women with learning difficulties (with high, medium and low support needs) who had paid jobs, and the percentage of men and
women in general in the UK who had paid jobs in 2004. All the figures are about people of working age.

Figure 11: Percentage of Men and Women of Working Age in Paid Work

The types of paid jobs that people had are listed below.

- Shop or warehouse for shop (19%)
- Gardener or labourer (18%)
- Catering/waiting tables (15%)
- Factory or assembly line (15%)
- Domestic work (14%)
- Apprentice/trainee (3%)
- Office work (2%)

Many people worked part time. Over one in four men (28%) and nearly half of women (47%) who had a paid job worked for less than 16 hours a week. These rates of part-time work are much greater than for men (4%) and women (15%) in
general in the UK. Figure 12 shows the percentage of men and women with learning difficulties (with high, medium and low support needs) who worked for 16 or more hours a week in paid jobs, and the percentage of men and women in general in the UK who worked for 16 or more hours a week in paid jobs in 2004.17

![Bar chart showing:]
- **High Support Needs:**
  - Men: 2% (Blue)
  - Women: 1% (Red)
- **Medium Support Needs:**
  - Men: 12% (Blue)
  - Women: 5% (Red)
- **Low Support Needs:**
  - Men: 28% (Blue)
  - Women: 15% (Red)
- **All People in the UK:**
  - Men: 65% (Blue)
  - Women: 45% (Red)

**Figure 12: Percentage of Men and Women of Working Age Who Worked for 16 or More Hours a Week and Were Paid for This**

Of the people who were paid for the work they did, approximately half (45%) earned less than £100 a week and just over four in five (81%) earned less than £200 a week. One in twenty people (4%) said that their money was not paid to them, it was paid to someone else.
Some people (16%) said that they lost some benefits when they started working. Most of them (77%) said that it did not cause them any problems.

Nearly everybody (92%) liked their job. Three in four people (76%) said they chose their jobs. One in five people (21%) said they would like to work longer hours, a few people (5%) said they would like to work fewer hours. Some people (13%) said they had been bullied at work.

We looked at whether some people were more likely to get a paid job than others. Below we have listed the things that are related to people getting a paid job. The list begins with those things that are most important and finishes with those things that are less important. People were more likely to have a paid job if they:

- Had lower support needs
- Did not have a long-standing illness or disability
- Were a man
- Lived with fewer people
- Saw friends who had learning difficulties less often
- Were White
- Lived in an area with higher employment
- Had good general health
- Saw friends who did not have learning difficulties more often

Voluntary Work

About one in twenty people with learning difficulties (6%) had an unpaid job. The types of unpaid jobs that people had are listed below.

- Gardener or labourer (24%)
Catering/waiting tables (17%)
Factory or assembly line (17%)
Shop or warehouse for shop (16%)
Domestic work (10%)
Apprentice/trainee (2%)
Office work (1%)

These are very similar to the kinds of paid jobs that people with learning difficulties had.

Most people worked part time. Nearly two out of three people (60%) worked for less than 16 hours a week. Just over one in ten people (11%) worked for more than 30 hours per week in a voluntary job.

Nearly everybody (98%) liked their voluntary job. Nearly four out of five people (79%) said they chose their jobs. One in six people (14%) said they would like to work longer hours, a few people (1%) said they would like to work fewer hours. Nearly one in five people (21%) said they had been bullied at work.

We looked at whether some people were more likely to have a voluntary job than others. Below we have listed the things that are related to people getting a voluntary job. The list begins with those things that are most important and finishes with those things that are less important. People were more likely to have a voluntary job if they:

- Had lower support needs
- Saw friends who had learning difficulties more often
- Were not poor
- Were older
Looking for a Job

If people were unemployed, we asked them why they did not have a job. The reasons people gave are listed below.

- Cannot work or nobody would employ them because they have a disability (62%)
- Attending school or college or a day centre (18%)
- Looking, but can not find a job (4%)
- Doesn’t want a job (2%)

We asked all the people who did not have a job whether they would like a job. Nearly two out of three (65%) said they would like a job.

We look at the support people received to get a job in the last section of the report.