



## Case study

### **Business Disability Forum conducts Whole Systems Review of disability performance at Scope**

Business Disability Forum (BDF) was commissioned by Scope to conduct a 'whole-systems' review of its disability performance using BDF's Disability Standard management tool. The whole systems review is part of BDF's comprehensive consultancy offering and is designed to deliver systemic improvement across all areas of an organisation - helping businesses to embed disability best practice as part of a whole strategic approach.

## The project

The project was led by Brendan Roach, Senior Disability Consultant at BDF who worked with a steering group of nine key leads at Scope. The review was prompted by Scope's own Exemplar employer of disabled people project, which aims to improve their performance as an employer of disabled people. This project is evidence of Scope's commitment to achieving best practice and becoming a disability-smart business.

Speaking about this project, Mary Walsh, Diversity Consultant at Scope said:

"As a pan-disability charity, it is Scope's aim to become an exemplar employer of disabled people in order to attract the best people to work here. We wish to ensure that Scope inspires disabled employees towards a fulfilling career and to create an inclusive environment where disabled people have the same opportunities as everyone else."

In order to help them realise their ambition, Scope completed BDF's Disability Standard self-assessment evaluation, an online management tool designed to help businesses measure and improve on performance for disabled customers, clients or service users, employees and stakeholders. Participating organisations rate their performance against ten key areas of the business. These are as set out in Table One below.

**Table one: The ten areas of BDF's Disability Standard**

Commitment	Products and Services
Know-how	Suppliers and Partners
Adjustments	Communication
Recruitment	Premises
Retention	ICT

Mary Walsh said:

"We went to BDF as we knew they had the skills to help us identify what we're good at and where we need to improve. The Disability Standard has been a great tool to give us an objective view of our whole organisational approach to disability equality and as a result, we have been able to prioritise key issues to change in order to make a big difference."

## The process

BDF held an initial workshop with a working group of designated leads in order to introduce the Disability Standard and ensure that leads were confident and knowledgeable about disability both in relation to their role and in compiling the submission.

During the submission process, BDF provided telephone and email support throughout, advising on best practice and providing solutions to any queries. Following on from Scope's submission, BDF reviewed Scope's self-assessment and produced a written report outlining key recommendations and a detailed and tailored Disability Action Plan that can be implemented across the organisation.

Mary Walsh said:

"We started off with a workshop delivered by Brendan Roach in order to build consensus around the need to improve and to share the responsibility for building an inclusive environment with the whole organisation, rather than it just sitting with HR. This is important to drive cross-functional and sustainable change."

Upon completion of the project, Brendan delivered a thorough debrief for Scope's steering group discussing where the organisation is performing well and how improvements can be made.

Brendan said:

"We applaud Scope's ambition to achieve disability best practice and were delighted to learn that Scope is embracing cross-functional focus and delivery. In doing this, Scope recognise that becoming an exemplar employer of disabled people requires the input of colleagues working across the organisation from learning and development, recruitment, ICT and everything in between."

## Findings

The review highlighted a wide variety of good practice at Scope. For example, a number of Scope's communications campaigns that have been developed to raise effective awareness of disability. One example includes the ['End the Awkward'](#) campaign, where Scope in collaboration with Channel 4 created a series of films, blogs and articles about disabled people's experiences. Scope ensured that its 'End the Awkward' films were produced in a variety of accessible formats, including audio descriptions, open captions and BSL.

Scope's recruitment practices were identified as other areas of disability best practice. Disabled people are actively encouraged to apply for roles in the organisation and they have undertaken work to ensure the website and online application process is as accessible as possible.

Scope also encourages new members of staff to provide feedback regarding their experience of joining the organisation. This takes place three months after the employee has started their role and is used to improve services for new and existing members of staff.

Commenting on these examples of best practice, Brendan Roach said:

“Our review highlighted a number of excellent examples of where Scope has made a range of adjustments in order to enable disabled candidates and employees to work to their full potential. These examples demonstrate that Scope’s work to become an exemplar employer of disabled people is starting from an excellent base.”

## Conclusion

In undertaking this review, Scope has communicated a strong, positive message to the workforce that it wishes to take steps to understand and remove disability-related barriers to disabled employees and customers or those with a long-term injury or health condition. BDF has played a key role in helping Scope to work towards its ambitions of becoming an exemplar employer of disabled people.

**Ends**

**For more information about BDF's consultancy packages, visit:**

<http://www.businessdisabilityforum.org.uk/advice-and-publications/consultancy/>

**For more information about the Disability Standard, visit:**

<https://members.businessdisabilityforum.org.uk>

**To view Scope's End the Awkward films, visit:**

<http://www.scope.org.uk/awkward>