***Banking Matters to* Me**

The experiences of people with a learning disability seeking to use banking products and services

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Why is banking important?

- for most of us part of everyday life
  have bank accounts
- if we have a job, buy or rent a house,
  pay bills; save for special things
- 1 in 12 households in the UK lack access
  to a bank account

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Why the research project?

- there are around 1.5 million people with a learning disability in the UK
- many don't have bank accounts or are finding banking difficult

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Why the research project?

- lack of a bank account can be a barrier to employment, increase vulnerability to loss or theft

- refusal of products or services

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Why the research project?

- benefits needing to be being paid in
- wanting to get a job, buy or rent a house
- pay for support

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Social Care Policy Agenda

- I want to live life my way
- I want more control over day to day things
- I want more say in where I live
  and who supports me
- I want more opportunity for work, leisure
  and citizenship
- I want a secure future

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Banking & Finance Agenda

- We need to make a *profit*!
- We have to meet our *targets*
- We have developed a range of *products*
- We have to compete in the *marketplace*

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What did we do?

- asked people to visit banks
- asked friends, families & supporters about their ‘stories’
- talked to other organisations about banking, disability and financial inclusion
- talked to banks about what they think they do

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What did we find?

- ✓ Some banks were really good

- Other banks were not so helpful

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Key findings – important things to think about:

- ***Face to Face contact with a customer advisor***
- ***Attitude and approach of bank personnel***
- ***Understanding learning disability***

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Key findings – important things to think about:

- ***Accessible information***
- ***Checking identity***
- ***Use of PIN numbers***

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Key findings – important things to think about:

- ***Availability of aids and adaptations to assist with banking***

- ***Physical access to buildings and their facilities***

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Key findings – important things to think about:

- ***Consistency of response***
- ***Capacity to manage an account***
- ***Personal Account Information***

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Getting to know each other better - thinking about what we have in common:

- inclusion - financial and personal
- fair treatment
- respect
- safeguarding from abuse
- regulation

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Treating Customers Fairly - aims

- Help customers understand features, benefits & risks of financial products
- Minimise sale of unsuitable products
- Plug gaps in staff training and awareness

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Banking Code

- help me to choose products & services which meet my needs
- give me clear information about my account, terms and conditions
- be flexible about documents to prove my identity

BUT nothing about adjustments for my disability!

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Responding to the Challenge!

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The challenge for people with a learning disability:

- get to know more about money, banks and banking
- be willing to ask for help
- stand your ground over issues such as ID, capacity, advice & guidance

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The challenge for families and supporters:

- support the person to understand about banks and banking
- at the bank support, and check out that the person understands, but don't answer questions for them!
- be ready to challenge false assumptions about capacity and ID
- be ready to engage with bank staff about the issues which really matter

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The challenge for professional advisors:

- be prepared to promote what you can offer
- don’t make assumptions about a person’s learning disability - take a bit of time to get to know them.
- be ready to turn to their family or paid supporters for help.
- be willing to share your expertise with others and work together for solutions.

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The challenge for banks and financial services:

- *think about some easy changes you can make:*
  - information about establishing identity
  - advising customers about alternatives to PIN
  - information about aids & adaptations to help

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The challenge for banks and financial services:

- work through the implications of the legislation
- include information about learning disability in staff training
- signpost on company intranets to further help
- include people with a learning disability as advisors and trainers

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The challenge for banks and financial services:

- think through the potential for increased business
  - there are increasing numbers involved
  - many in the future might have significant funds

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Where next?

- Making Money Easy - website & picture bank
- Training materials for people with a learning disability and their supporters
- Information and resources for advice workers
- Promoting the issue amongst professionals

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Is there an alternative?:

Do Credit Unions or similar ‘micro-credit’ organisations offer a real alternative to traditional high street banks?

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