

Removing Barriers Project - Becoming a Disability Confident LEADER: Impact story - Marsham Court Hotel

“Going through the process of improving accessibility for our guests was a massive learning curve – and from a commercial side you get a lot less support, so we had to do a lot of the research ourselves. Having done that, I then wanted to look at our own employability and our staff.”



At a Glance..

- Working in partnership with CHI since 2012 (Classroom in the Heart of Industry)
- Opened doors to other organisations
- Signed up as a member of the government's disability confident scheme in 2015.

Highlights..

- 'Springboard Awards for Excellence 2023' winner in 'Business Innovation' award
- Dorset Chamber Business Festival Awards Finalist 2023 - Inclusivity & Diversity in the Workplace
- Achieved disability confident LEADER status - April 2023



What's next?

“Now that we've reached LEADER status, I really want to get out there to influence other hospitality companies. Together we can make a much greater impact than just focusing on our own business.

We need other businesses on board. We're facing a massive skills gap in our industry. But there is so much that can be done to fill that gap.”

JAMES DIXON-BOX, OPERATIONS DIRECTOR

Company background

Marsham Court is a family-owned and operated boutique hotel in Bournemouth. Several years ago, inspired by the illness of family members that highlighted the hotel's lack of accessibility, the property has benefitted from huge investment and is now recognised as one of the most accessible hotels in the UK. Being a 100-year-old building, the hotel used to be two properties now joined together and hence it has many different levels that needed to be addressed.

Today Marsham Court now provides:

- A Changing Places toilet & shower, with adjust height shower table & adjustable sink with privacy screen
- Sensory room
- 5 double bedrooms with removable ceiling hoists, profiling beds with wet rooms.
- 2 commode shower chairs with aqua straps & 2 tilting shower chairs
- Coin operated laundry facilities
- iSwim Hoist for outdoor pool with transfer board & privacy screen
- Purpose built accessible lift at the front of the hotel
- Level access to the front of the hotel terrace
- Wheelchair donated with beach and forest tyres
- Specialist Food Blender for dietary requirements
- [WelcoMe](#) app to advise us of requirements before arrival

Outcomes

Initially, Marsham Court, like so many other employers, assumed there was so much work involved in becoming disability confident & working through the tiers. How to support people; how to do it correctly; there's going to be so much work; what's going to happen if we get it wrong – were some of the many questions. Does that put many employers off? In reality, by starting to look at it, they realised that **concern is so unfounded**. It's a **lot easier** than it initially seems. And the reason it's easier is because Marsham Court Hotel have discovered there is **so much support** out there.

“I want to ensure that our standard recruitment process is accessible & that we look after our staff by providing a support structure for them – that they know it is there for them, that they understand & that they engage with it.”