



**Financial
Ombudsman
Service**

The Financial Ombudsman Service and #PurpleLightUp

November 2021



#PurpleLightUp is a game-changing global movement led by **PurpleSpace**. It is designed to celebrate the economic contribution of employees with disabilities and is a mark of respect to the UN International Day of Persons with Disabilities every 3rd December.

#PurpleLightUp enables disability Employee Resource Groups/Networks and their employers to accelerate culture change around the world.

Organisations that participate in **#PurpleLightUp** are signalling one, or more, of the following:

- Their disability Employee Resource Group/Network matters to them and they value their leadership, challenge and innovation.
- They are an ally to people with disabilities.
- Disability is on their board agenda.



About the Financial Ombudsman Service and #PurpleLightUp



The Financial Ombudsman Service is a free and easy-to-use service that settles complaints between consumers and businesses that provide financial services. We resolve disputes fairly and impartially, and have the power to put things right. We share what we see with stakeholders to achieve fairer outcomes. We help thousands of people every week.

Our customers

In the past year, we've resolved almost a quarter of a million complaints. And in the 20 years we've existed, we've helped with over four million complaints.

Our people

3,500 staff
12 staff networks (including Enable, our disability and long-term health conditions network)
2 UK offices, in London and Coventry

Why we went Purple

We like to think big
And we like to be...

different





bold

Our employee networks



Enable is our employee network for disabilities and long-term health conditions. Enable's work is split into three strands – our work on visible difference, our work on non-visible difference and our work on cancer support and long-term health conditions.

Neurodiversity

Last year we launched our neurodiversity support group and carried on encouraging our people to talk about neurodiversity.

Members

Around 200 of our staff are members of Enable and receive regular updates.

Collaboration

Enable has been working closely with our other networks, collaborating on important issues.

Cancer

Last year we launched our cancer support group and held awareness raising events including people sharing their stories and insight.

Our reasons for going Purple

Helping to raise awareness and drive change

Promoting inclusivity

Encouraging open and honest conversations

Celebrating difference and diversity

Getting everyone involved (particularly when working remotely)

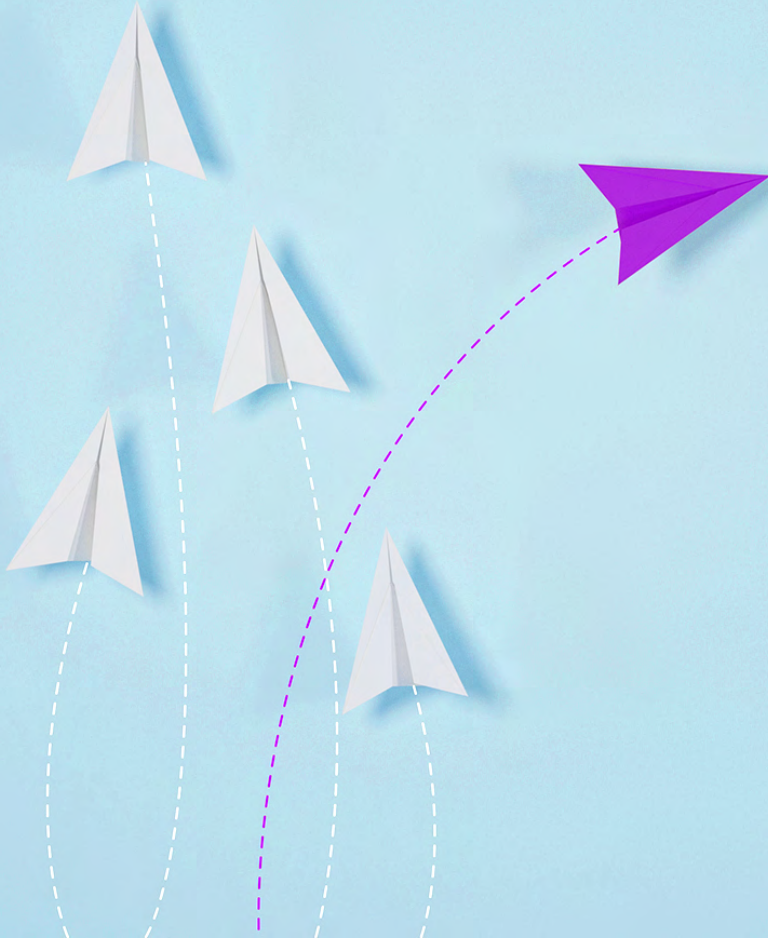
Energising ourselves as an organisation

Why we've gone Purple since 2017

We aim to raised awareness and understanding of:

- colleagues who are impacted;
- customers who are impacted;
- friends and family who are impacted.

It makes us better people, push for positive change, and means we provide a better service to our customers.



How we've gone Purple since 2017

We've been involved in #PurpleLightUp from the very beginning and we've had a similar journey to #PurpleLightUp's.

In other words, we started small – in our first year we lit up our reception – and each and every year our plans and reach have become bigger, more ambitious and bolder.



How we've gone Purple since 2017

In 2018...

we lit up our reception, we launched our workplace adjustments policy to celebrate purple talent and we held an event raising awareness of visual impairment.



How we've gone Purple since 2017

In 2019...

we lit up our reception again and invited our staff to [#wearitpurple](#) and to take to a purple catwalk we had set up in reception. Our café went purple and added purple items to the menu! We held an internal panel event raising awareness of disability and deafness, and we talked about “digital exclusion” – an issue we’re seeing in our casework.

At this event we were joined by the Head of Campaigns and Public Affairs for Action for Hearing Loss, the CEO of REAL (previously a Commissioner for the Equality and Human Rights Commission) and two of our people who also shared their stories and insight – one a wheelchair user and one a Deaf manager.



How we've gone Purple since 2017

In 2020...

none of what we'd done before was possible because of the lockdown...

But we weren't going to let something like that stop us. Instead, we planned our **most ambitious and most successful event** to date.



How we've gone Purple since 2017

We went creative and Enable put on an **eight-minute online event** in collaboration with three of our other employee networks.

We spoke collectively about what lockdown and the events of 2020 had taught us about Fairness, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. And we spoke about the opportunity to build back better – **to build a fairer, more equal and more inclusive world.**



How we've gone Purple since 2017

Both our CEO and our Chair spoke at the event – a first – as well as our senior leaders.

We created a buzz in advance of the event – themed as a **virtual flashmob** – and had **350 people** attend (over 10% of our workforce) making it **the largest online event** in the Financial Ombudsman Service's history at the time.

And that's not all...

we promoted #PurpleLightUp's 24-hour global broadcast and we turned everyone's desktop purple too.

Our approach

Why?

Our approach is to get people on board in fun, interesting and engaging ways, but ways that make people think.

People don't often associate disability and long-term health conditions with fun, but most people will have to face them over the course of their lives, whether it's themselves or their loved ones. So we do it in a way that people find helpful and real.

How?

We encourage people to share their personal stories, and share insight – being open and honest. And we encourage people to be themselves.

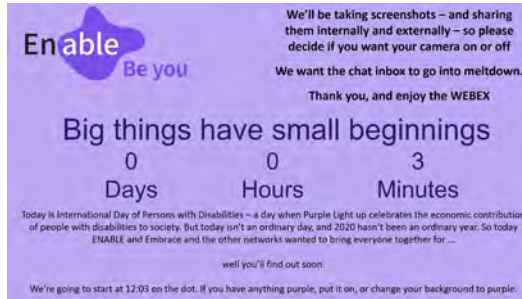
We get senior leaders involved with our events – it shows their commitment and that these issues are important across the whole of our organisation. It also reminds everyone that these are issues we care about.

We remind ourselves we're all human, with real lives.

How we went Purple in 2019 (in pictures)



How we went Purple in 2020 (in pictures)



Enable Be you

We'll be taking screenshots – and sharing them internally and externally – so please decide if you want your camera on or off

We want the chat inbox to go into meltdown.

Thank you, and enjoy the WEBEX

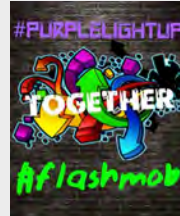
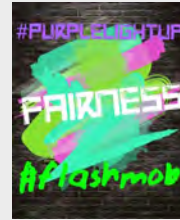
Big things have small beginnings

0 Days 0 Hours 3 Minutes

Today is International Day of Persons with Disabilities – a day when Purple Light up celebrates the economic contribution of people with disabilities to society. But today isn't an ordinary day, and 2020 hasn't been an ordinary year. So today ENABLE and Embrace and the other networks wanted to bring everyone together for ...

well you'll find out soon.

We're going to start at 12:03 on the dot. If you have anything purple, put it on, or change your background to purple.



big things have small beginnings



Celebrating the economic contribution of disabled employees worldwide

Useful numbers

IT services desk	0000
People Desk	0000
Customer helpdesk	0000
Recruitment	0000
HR Services	0000
Accessibility	0000
Security	0000
HR and HR Manager Team	0000
HR and HR Manager	0000
HR and HR Manager	0000
HR and HR Manager	0000

Strategic and organisational impact

- **We've helped** keep diversity and inclusion part of the fabric of the organisation, and high on the senior-leader agenda
- **We don't shy away** from discussing difficult things
- **Our events are eagerly anticipated**
- **We've learnt** from other organisations how to have a big impact and we share with others what's worked well for us
- **It makes us better** at our day jobs – understanding lived experiences is part of who we are
- **We publish** a diversity, inclusion and wellbeing report each year



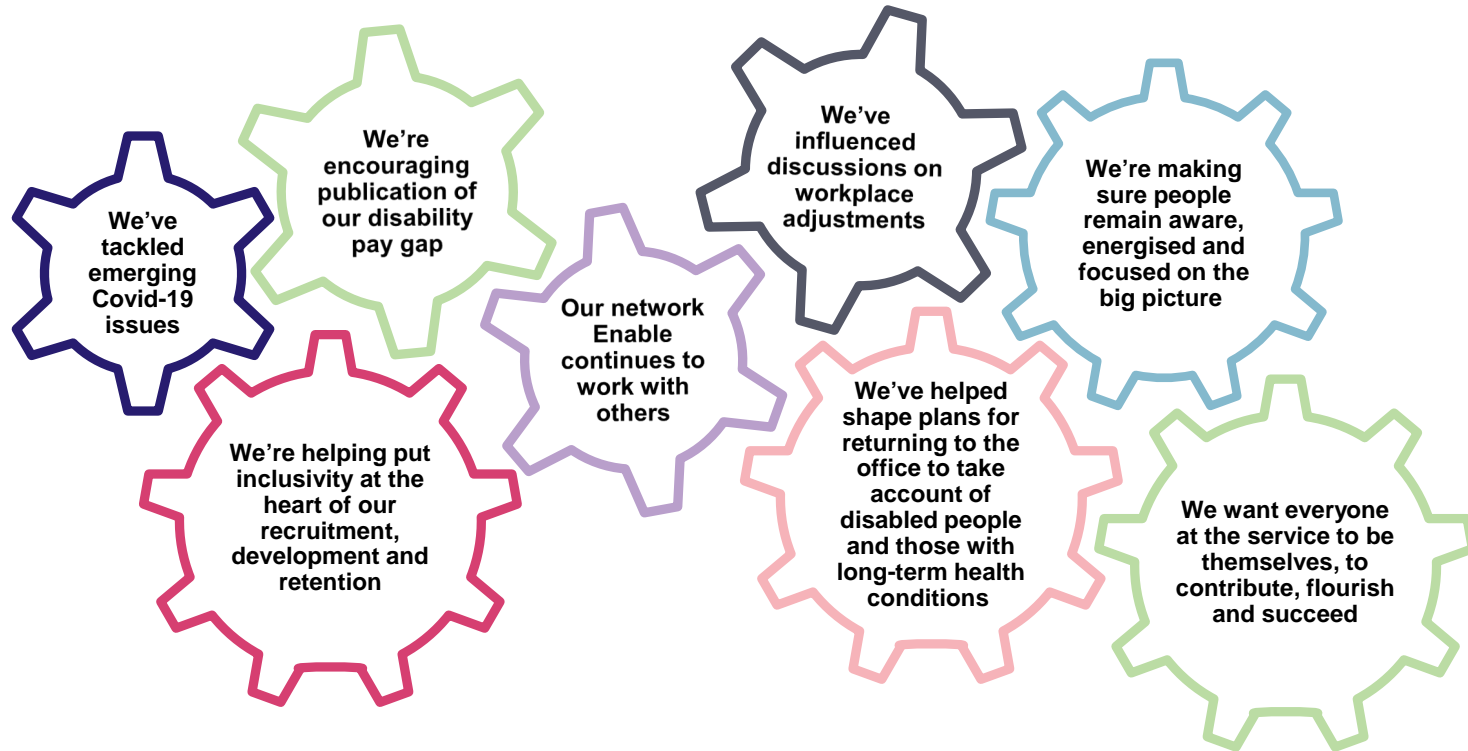


In a year where we haven't been able to get together in person, being part of **#PurpleLightUp** has been vital for helping us feel connected – like we've made a difference in a way that people will remember – and to feel like we're part of something bigger than ourselves. And it's also been fun.

Caroline Nugent

Director of HR and Enable's executive sponsor

But our work hasn't stopped there





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financial-ombudsman.org.uk

#PurpleLightUp



#PurpleLightUp: <https://www.purplespace.org/purple-light-up>

PurpleSpace website: www.purplespace.org

Email: hello@purplespace.org

Twitter: @mypurplespace

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/company/purplespace](https://www.linkedin.com/company/purplespace)

Facebook: [facebook.com/mypurplespace](https://www.facebook.com/mypurplespace)



Building disability confidence from the inside out