

Did you know that just 16% of Autistic people are in full-time paid work? Contrast that to 80% of non-disabled people in work and you see why the disability employment gap is a major problem.

People with Autism can have difficulty with social interaction, communication and imagination. While the spectrum has a broad range, many Autistic people have to struggle with daily challenges that many of us would never even think about. Hypersensitive hearing could make a busy waiting area unbearable. Confined or dark spaces can make a grown adult close down. Even the feel of certain clothes or materials can lead to a volume of internal noise that could render a great mind overwhelmed, and many do have great minds.

With Autism often being non-physical, too many people are unaware of what it looks like or the advantages employing Autistic people can bring. The answer is they look no different! Many of the greatest minds of all time such as Mozart, Lewis Carroll, Michelangelo, Chaplin, Einstein, Newton and Darwin have all been retrospectively diagnosed with Autism. With 1 in 100 people estimated being Autistic in the UK, who knows how many of these potential geniuses remain confined to their homes?

While charities work hard on this issue locally, truthfully we know far too little on Autism as too little data exists. This needs to change. Additionally, with the Government committed to halving the disability employment gap, we need to do more to raise awareness of this hidden issue.