

ASC Quests Overview

...the journey so far

January 2024

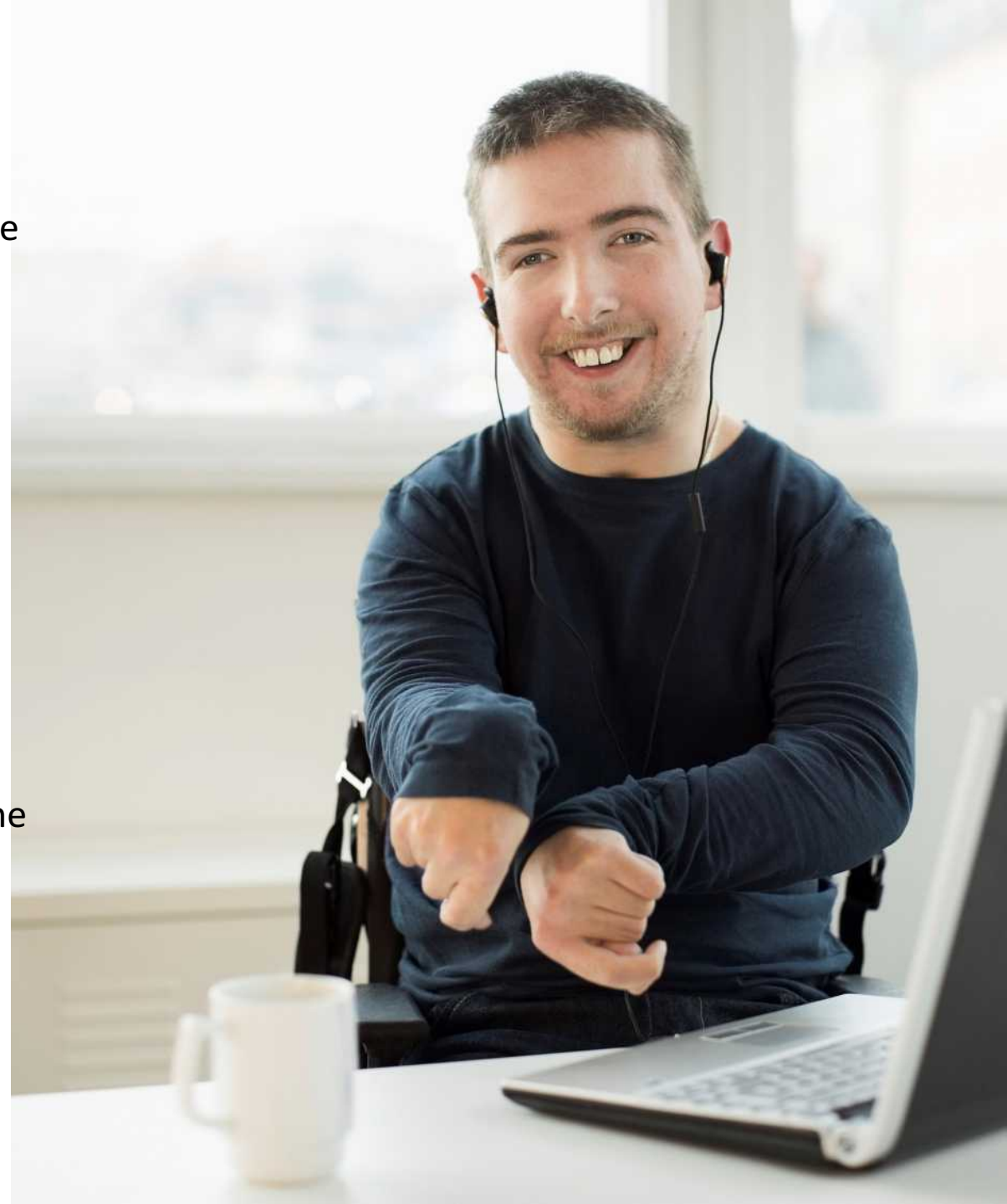
What are the ASC Quests?

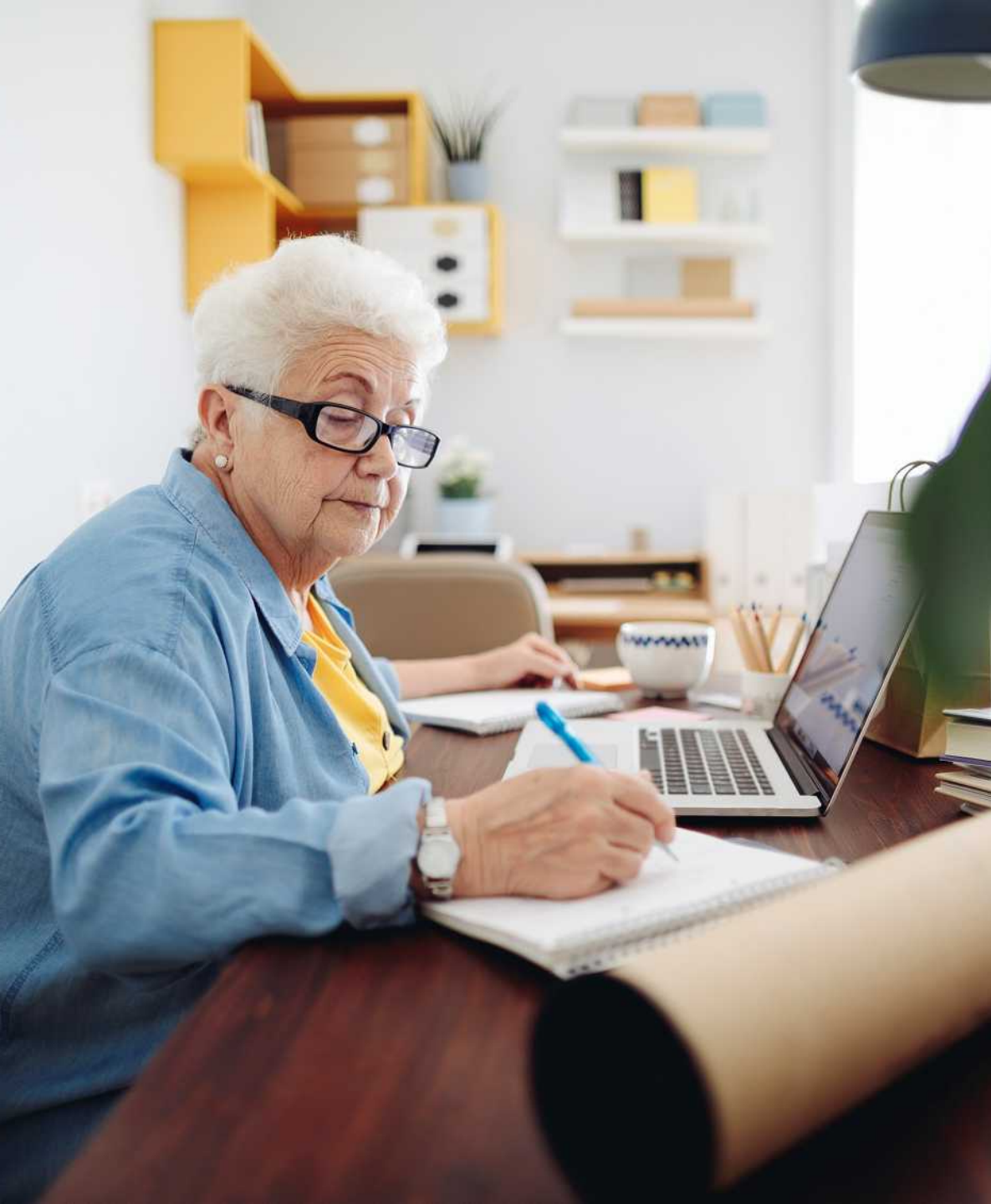
In 2020, ECC commissioned Involve to undertake an independent review of our equality, diversity and inclusion policies/practices. The output was key 10 recommendations, fully endorsed by the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT).

One of the recommendations was a commitment to set up listening forums to allow Senior Leaders across ECC to understand the workforce's experience.

In response during 2021 Ault Social Care (ASC) set up the Quest Programme as a way to hear equality, diversity and inclusion issues/opportunities from colleagues within the function.

- Each Quest last around five weeks
- Up to ten volunteers are released from their usual duties to become Questers
- Questers investigate issues that are important to both them and colleagues
- At the conclusion Questers present their findings and recommendations to the Adult Leadership team and Corporate Leadership team





Which quest have taken place?

Four quests have taken place so far:

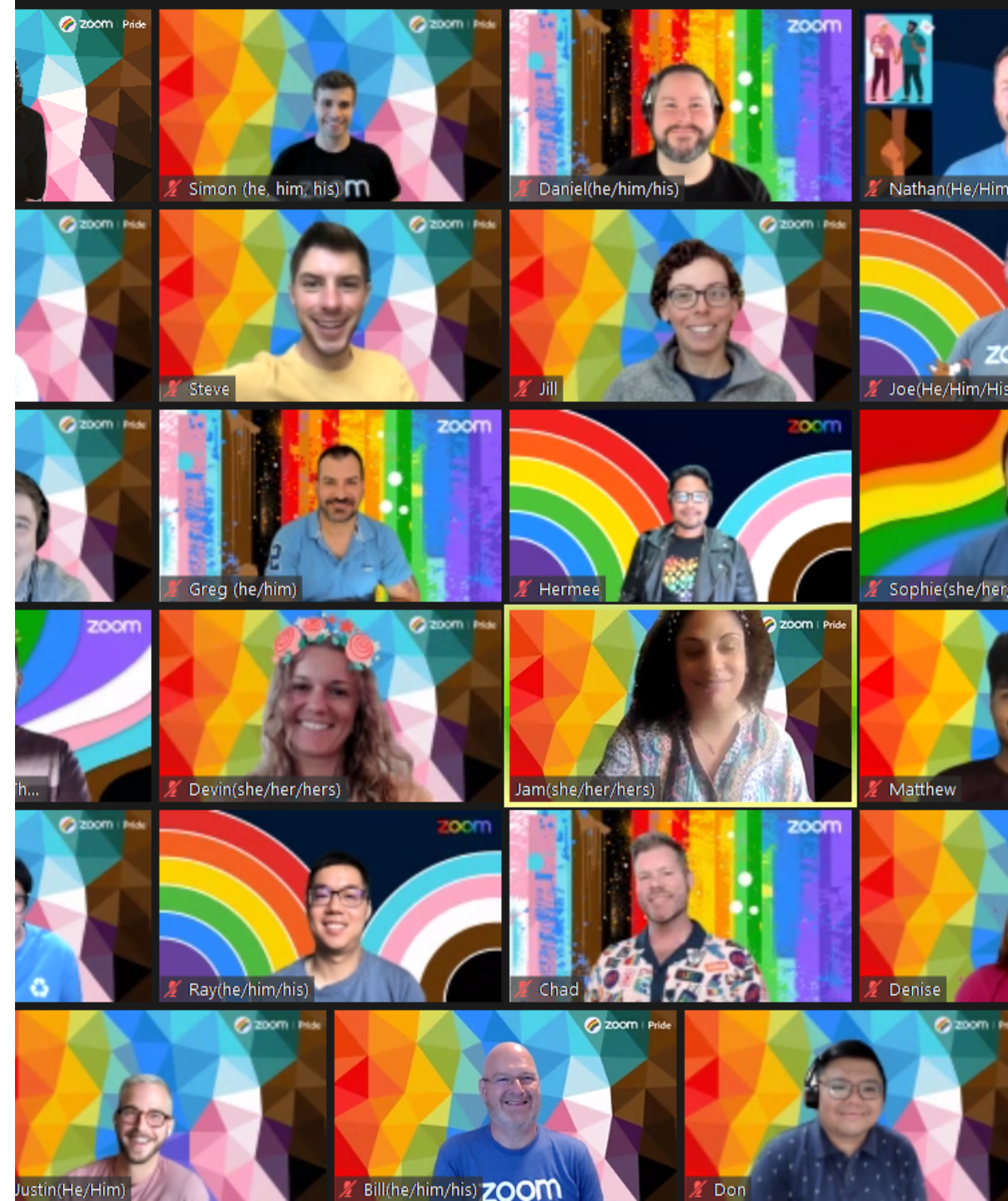
- **Race:** October - November 2021
- **Disability:** June - August 2022
- **LGBTQIA+:** November – December 2022
- **Age:** May - July 2023

At least one further Quest is scheduled in for 2024 and will focus on **Mental Health**.

Common themes across all Quests

Common cross-cutting themes were identified across the Quests which have taken place so far;

- Policies
- Language & Culture
- Education & Training
- Recruitment, Retention & Progression





Quest work to date

Race Quest (Lead - Phil Chiza)

- **AYSE:** Programme Review, Actions Agreed, Training on antiracist practice for NQSW.
- **Reverse Mentoring:** Pilot Completed, Update to ALT, Ready to roll out to ASC.
- **Diverse Interview Panels:** Six-month Pilot launched in August 2023.
- **Black History Month:** Celebrations organised at County Hall
- **Podcast:** Recorded with Community Care Live for Black History Month
- **Mosaic:** Upgrade to provide more ethnicity options linked to National Census data



Disability Quest (Lead - Rachel Reeves)

- **Accessibility:** Agreement that all ECC buildings will now be audited for disability access and visit.
- **People Policies:** Significant improvements to how Access to Work (national scheme) is delivered at ECC, Input into the Wellbeing & Time-Off policies, Development of a Disabled Employees policy is underway.
- **Technology:** Improvements made to speed up issue resolution
- **Networking:** Questers working alongside the Disabled Employees Network on Personal emergency evacuation plans, communication etc.

Quest Work to date

LGBTQIA+ Quest (Lead – Jonathan Gatefield)

- **Pride Lanyards:** Make the pledge - Wear it with Pride campaign.
- **Training:** LGBT Training from The Kite Trust, Allyship Workshops for Leaders, Promotion of National Inclusion week.
- **Gender Natural Toilets:** Installed at Rowan House.
- **Mosaic:** Upgrade to provide Gender, Pronouns, Display & Registered Names, Sex as Per Health System.
- **Event:** Colleagues volunteered at the ASC ECC stall at Basildon Pride, to showcase how ECC is an inclusive place to work as well as promoting services & a range communication aids.

Age Quest

- **Live Events:** The Questers have presented initial findings.
- **Intranet:** Implemented a direct phone number for 'Pensions' IAG.
- **ALT:** Presented Quest findings on 5th July 2023.
- **CLT:** Will present Quest findings on 19th December 2023.

Further to all the areas mentioned, Questers have been: collaborating with the Employee Networks, Workforce Ambassadors & ASC EDI Steering Group; delivering LearnFest Sessions; working alongside ESCA to develop training; & researching other LA's approaches.





The Quest Network

A newly formed Quest network has been established to

- Learn how the recommendations are being progressed,
- Learn work undertaken by Quest Leads at events, training and meetings,
- Discover any new developments affecting our ASC workforce ,
- Feedback & support as Workforce Ambassadors.
- Link closely with the organisation-wide lead for EDI (Faizal Hakim) to align with the ECC EDI strategy.

An Inaugural network meeting took place on 13th November 2023. Jonathan Gatefield & Rachel Reeves are the network Co-Chairs.