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# Case study

From an early age, Ben had an interest in the social care sector, as his father had managed a day centre for elderly people. However, when he left school, he wanted to work in a sporting capacity. The catalyst for Ben's career change came during a college course where he had the opportunity to support young people with learning and physical disabilities. Now, at the age of 35, Ben has gained almost 20 years' experience of various social care roles and settings and hasn't looked back.

## **Ben Rosamond**

Senior Person-Centred Planning  
Facilitator, Sunderland City Council

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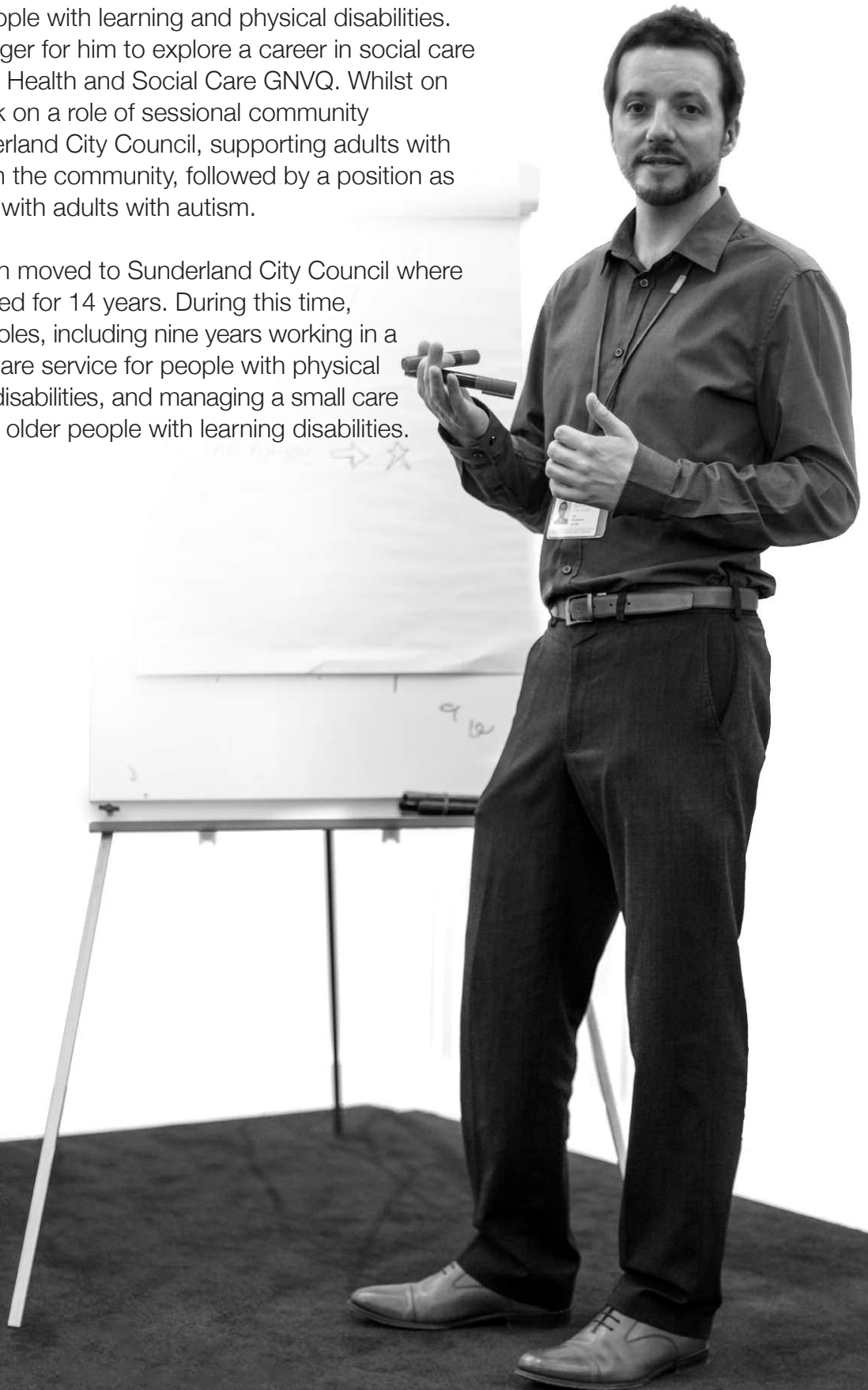
*I care...*

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## Career progression

After leaving school, Ben undertook a Pre-Uniformed NVQ course and particularly enjoyed coaching at a special needs school for young people with learning and physical disabilities. This became the trigger for him to explore a career in social care and study towards a Health and Social Care GNVQ. Whilst on the course, Ben took on a role of sessional community companion at Sunderland City Council, supporting adults with learning disabilities in the community, followed by a position as care officer, working with adults with autism.

After 12 months, Ben moved to Sunderland City Council where he has been employed for 14 years. During this time, he has held various roles, including nine years working in a short break respite care service for people with physical and severe learning disabilities, and managing a small care home supporting six older people with learning disabilities.





## A role in social care

In his current role of senior person-centred planning facilitator, Ben manages a team of six, including four facilitators and two transition nurses. His remit involves working with young people with learning and physical disabilities, aged between 14 and 25 years. Each day is varied and generally involves supporting young people and their families to create person-centred transition plans that will assist them in future adulthood.

“We create a holistic transition plan that recognises all aspects of someone’s life including their education, health, employment and friendships that will support their transition into adulthood. It also identifies the required support from health professionals, schools and agencies, for example. Sometimes we use video diaries to engage with users to find out what they enjoy.”

Ben also spends considerable time creating relationships with those groups that will have a positive impact on the lives of young people. This might involve liaising with schoolteachers, multi-agencies and community centres.

“I find the diversity of my role very rewarding. It’s great to work with young people at such an important stage in their lives, when big decisions need to be made about what their adult life might look like. Supporting them and their families to attain their goals gives me a personal sense of achievement.”

Ben often finds himself involved in additional creative projects, that have included developing a website with a group of people with learning disabilities and a software package for young people to use in schools, helping them to make decisions about their future.

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## Ongoing support

The support that Ben continues to receive has proven invaluable, from his current line manager and the learning disability social work team to a supportive network of schools and multi-agencies. Although Ben wasn't focused on further education when he left school, he has since achieved a number of internal and external awards whilst working within the industry. He has recently completed an advanced diploma, a pre-degree professional practice level course that offers credits towards a future degree.

“I've never been very academic, so surprised myself at achieving these qualifications. The college courses were more practical and so more appealing to me. They will definitely help me to progress my career.”

Ben is a strong advocate for a career in social care.

“I would strongly recommend a career in social care for anyone that enjoys working with people. There are lots of different roles in care and many that people do not immediately think of when they think about what a job in care might be like. It can be challenging as you often need to be creative and really think about how you can support a person to reach their goals. You need to be very flexible and responsive but it's very rewarding.”

For the future, Ben is keen to use his diploma credits towards a degree, but has also considered developing a social enterprise; something he feels is worth considering.

“The social care sector has given me the opportunity to work in an environment where there is a new challenge every day and where the personal rewards are immeasurable. I continue to enjoy my current position and am excited about what the future may hold.”

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