Please find attached nomination for Inclusion and Wellbeing Competition from Southampton and affiliated offices.

In May we held a Sustainability Fashion show to raise money for Mountbatten Hampshire Hospice. All the clothing was from their charity shops and was for sale after the fashion show and promoted sustainable fashion. The event also acted as a team build for Southampton Jobcentre.

We started by offering members of the office to join a planning group.  Meetings were held virtually to include all members of staff working from home. We managed to obtain a venue in the local community which we felt was good for DWP reputation and also allowed us to hold the event outside of work hours.

Our next step was to utilise community 10k to allow a small group of staff to go to the charity warehouse to help sort clothing for the show and sale. The volunteers really enjoyed the day and have since encouraged others to get involved in volunteering.

We sent an open invitation to all MOS to be models.  Initially a few people volunteered but after gentle encouragement we had 15 people willing to help. This was a real cross section of the team, the youngest model being 21 and the oldest over 60. We had varying ethnicities, gender, physical ability and shapes and sizes! It really was a complete representation of the demographic of the office.

Next the hard work began.  Picking outfits, done from my home as I was recovering from a knee operation.  It was then a real team effort in ferrying outfits to be tried on and returning them to get a running order for the show. We really enlisted help from anyone available.

Once the day arrived, we again made use of C10k and we had to obtain special permission as the volunteering wasn’t 9am-5pm. We had MOS acting as volunteers on scene sorting, pricing, taking money. It was a lovely experience and working together outside of the office as a team really helped build relationships. The models arrived anxious and excited. Once the show neared there was a real sense of togetherness.

The show was a great success.  All the models really enjoyed the experience. The audience gave a rapturous applause. After 2 encores they were really buzzing. One model came to me afterwards and said ' I really did not think that I could do that. It was such a boost to my self-confidence thank you'. Another said that it was 'such an uplifting feeling and they were very proud of themselves and Southampton JCP'.

The event raised a lot of money, but it did much more than that.  It raised DWP reputation and brought people together. It also improved the wellbeing of many of the models, and it engendered a sense of belonging to team Southampton in the office and in the wider community.

After the event we produced a photo book for the office so we could relive the whole experience again!