



Learning for Empowerment



Annual Review 2008 • 2009



Glasgow Disability Alliance
Equality, Rights and Social Justice

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Introduction – About Glasgow Disability Alliance

Background

Glasgow Disability Alliance is a membership-led organisation of disabled people and groups in Glasgow. Membership currently stands in excess of 550 including 34 groups led by disabled people as well as individuals, by far the biggest groundswell of disabled members in Scotland. Established in 2001, our mission is to act as the collective, representative voice of disabled people, promoting equality, rights and social justice.



Learning For Change

GDA provides information, advice, accessible learning and opportunities for involvement in decision making, with and for disabled people in Glasgow. 'Learning For Change' provides a range of accessible lifelong learning courses so that disabled people can build confidence and skills and reach their full potential.

GDA also provide advice, information, training and consultancy for organisations and agencies, sharing disabled people's experiences and helping with engagement of disabled citizens as a route to improving access to learning and services in a wider sense e.g. colleges, social work, health.

We act as a voice for disabled people and more importantly, support and encourage disabled people to develop their own voices to become citizen leaders.

GDA is a catalyst for change, working in partnership to promote equality and inclusion and improve the life chances of disabled people.

Values

GDA believes that disabled people are disabled by barriers in society which has not planned for their inclusion. Disability is not about impairments or medical conditions. It is a complex social problem which requires joined up working to remove barriers so that disabled people can take part in the full range of life opportunities.

GDA is committed to challenging discrimination and building the skills and confidence of disabled citizens so that they are empowered to have dignity, freedom, choice, control over their own lives. This is called independent living and GDA works in partnership as part of the Independent Living Movement in Glasgow and Scotland.



Convenor's Report

I am proud to introduce my 4th Annual Report as Convenor of GDA. This details considerable achievements over 2008-9 and I hope that you will enjoy reading about many of these throughout this Report.

During the last year, GDA has been strident in achieving success, working together with disabled people and partner organisations to ensure that disabled people can learn for fun, for life, for building skills & confidence to make decisions and choices in their lives.

It has been a pleasure to watch GDA strengthen its valuable partnerships, develop its learning and engagement to and with disabled people and offer information and support to agencies. The completion of our external evaluation was well received by the Board of GDA and I am delighted to report that, "GDA has become recognised as an effective and constructive mechanism for consultation with and representation of disabled people," PZA, 2008.

GDA has continued to represent the issues of disabled people in a myriad of ways and central to this has been building effective leaders amongst our own community. Read more about this throughout!

We have continued efforts to ensure sound governance and provide direction to GDA, making sure that the organisation is run properly, and ensuring induction and ongoing support to Board members, "It has invested time and effort in training and development of members, and in the development of policies and procedures ...these not only strengthen governance but also contribute to the strength and consistency in decision-making," PZA 2008.

I believe that the increase in GDA's membership - now over 500- demonstrates a groundswell of support within the disabled peoples' community and I thank our members for their continued involvement. I must also acknowledge and thank the staff of GDA "A key strength of the organisation is the staff...they have managed to exceed the expected outputs of the project. The combination of skills, commitment and additional hours has contributed to the success, " PZA. I am exceptionally proud of this and thank them on behalf of the Board.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our funders, namely Big Lottery, GCC, Lloyds TSB. Thanks also to those who supported us by awarding GDA one-off grants. Sincerest thanks also to my friends and colleagues on the Board who have worked together, always as a team, striving to achieve the best for GDA and improve the lives of disabled people in Glasgow.

Angela Mullen
Convenor



Director's Report

It is with pleasure that I report on GDA's excellent progress over 2008-9. Our services and activities to support disabled people and organisations providing learning and services to disabled people have matured and developed. This is partly due to the success of GDA's relationships with both disabled people and partner organisations alike.

Significant developments are abundant and one example is our partnership with Ashcraig Secondary and The Pacific Institute: we have worked with 32 young disabled people to increase their skills and confidence and help them plan for their future. More of this later! There has been remarkable success in helping disabled learners to move onto other opportunities and this is explored in our case studies inside. Learning has truly been used as a route to empowerment in the last year and the example of GDA's Campaign Action Group is evidence of this at pages 12 & 13.



GDA's events have attracted staggering numbers of disabled people and we have engaged over 700 people through accessible learning and events. This has been enhanced due to the provision of access support. Our high number and quality of partnerships has expanded and we have continued to influence learning providers, by working in partnership and increasing availability of appropriate learning opportunities for disabled people.

A particular highlight was the production of our Partnership Testimony. This calls for an acknowledgement of the necessity of partnership working in achieving full human rights and independent living for disabled people. It also highlights the benefits of partnership working for everyone and GDA's role as a catalyst for change.

GDA's Charter of Rights was produced by involving over 500 disabled people in a series of events and this will be used as the basis of a Manifesto for the European Elections this year.

Key challenges for GDA will be to find sustainable funding sources to enable us to continue to deliver learning and opportunities for involvement of disabled people. Although this is realistically within a context of diminishing funding for voluntary the sector, I am confident that we will build on our success and harness the support of our members and partners to seize opportunities.

On behalf of the Team, our thanks to the Board for their continued support and wise direction. My personal thanks to our Chair, Angela for her steady and supportive steer, to the funders who continue to support our work, to the staff for, as ever, exceptional efforts and commitment and to our ongoing partners who support us. Above all, thanks to our members who work with us to make Glasgow a more inclusive place where disabled people can freely learn, volunteer, work, socialise, be involved in their communities and live.

Tressa Burke, Director

Communication

Good communication is vital for placing our issues in the public domain and creating a strong and effective community of disabled people. GDA members, organisations, agencies and the wider movement are kept well informed in a number of ways including: regular mail distributions, 'The E-Word' Newsletter, GDA's website, Roadshows, piggy backing other events, radio interviews, word or mouth. There is also a high level of information distributed via phone calls, drop-ins and emails with between 50-70 enquiries per week.

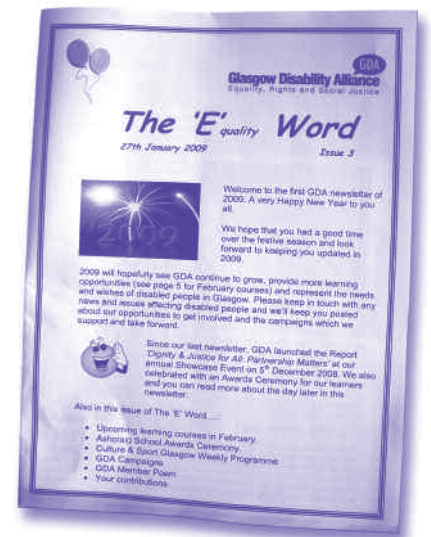
The E-Word

In response to increasing demand, our Newsletter The E-Word has been distributed over the year, providing members and interested supporters with invaluable information relating to key issues for disabled people, services available to reduce inequalities, training opportunities and events.

Communication with Agencies

GDA is regularly contacted and asked:

- For disabled people's opinions on a specific subject
- About how best to involve disabled people using our Toolkit
- To advocate for a disabled person or learner
- About learning opportunities for disabled people
- About how disabled people can get involved
- About funding for courses and equipment
- To take part in a consultation
- About social work services
- About transport, equipment and independent living
- About disability equality training and other GDA consultancy services



Communication methods for influencing agencies include:

- Providing information
- Sharing Good Practice
- Contributing to Policies
- Taking part in advisory/working groups
- Supporting practitioners who serve disabled people
- Advice on involving disabled people e.g. GDA Toolkit & related training
- GDA and other 'Showcase' events
- Partnership working
- Speaking at events
- Delivering courses in partnership
- Responding to consultations
- Supporting disabled learners
- Training in Disability Equality
- GDA publications e.g. Manifesto

Involving disabled people in GDA

Learners Reference Group

“The Learners Reference Group evidenced the high level of commitment and engagement of the group members and the extent to which they felt that GDA had responded to the issues which they had raised in relation to the development of learning opportunities and especially in relation to addressing access needs”, from PZA, External Evaluation, Sep. 2008.



Learners Reference Group

“Nothing About Us Without Us!”

GDA has involved disabled people at every level of the organisation and GDA is itself OF disabled people, FOR disabled people and WITH disabled people. From staff members to the Board, from reference groups and focus groups, to events and trainers, GDA strives to involve disabled people. The Board provides the strategic direction while the Learners Reference Group is involved in advising the staff team about the barriers they face and the solutions to these.

During this year, the Learners Reference Group were instrumental in coming up with the idea for the Partnership report and this was echoed by the Learning Providers Group. The LRG have shared ideas and experiences, reflection, analysis and critical thinking to help GDA deliver Learning For Change.

Listening to Feedback from Disabled People

“GDA has made considerable effort to provide evidence of impact on learners”, PZA External Evaluation, 2008. Every learning event is evaluated on the day and progress is followed up after 13 weeks with each learner. This is to track if the learner has moved on to other learning or training, or is interested in further learning with GDA.

GDA has also commissioned a considerable number of pieces of work (by external bodies) to check that what we are doing is valuable for disabled people.

We now have a body of publications which provide evidence of impact including: Personal Journeys - a series of case studies on learners; Focus Groups with GDA learners carried out by external consultant and published; Report on the Coaching for Change course; Interim and Final evaluation of the first 2 year project; GDA Toolkit; GDA Partnership Report.

Project Performance 2008-09

“The outperformance of targets reflects the exceptional levels of promotional activity that GDA has carried out in order to access disabled people from across the city and other equalities networks.

Agencies commented on GDA’s preparedness to share its experience and knowledge with other organisations, for example by participating in working groups, advisory groups and other strategic forums. Although the organisation has a very small staff team, GDA was perceived as a very ‘outward facing organisation’,”PZA, External Evaluation 2008.

Achievements May 2008 to March 2009

Disabled Learners	295
Number of Learning Opportunities	38
Learning Partnerships to improve learning and services	54
Staff from learning organisations trained in Disability Equality Training	70
Organisations trained in Disability Equality Training	9
Number of disabled people accessing further opportunities	85
Recruitment Events to engage disabled people	21
Number of disabled people supported to influence services Including formal planning structures	34
Number of capacity building events and opportunities	32
Number of disabled people consulted about services	143
Number of disabled people engaged at events	780
Number of young disabled people engaged in learning	32
Number of learners awarded formal qualifications	61
Total Membership	564

Learning Opportunities

PZA Consultancy carried out an external evaluation in 2008 and found that:

The project has outstripped its output targets for engaging disabled learners, engaging learning providers and engaging in strategic forums. The evidence from the evaluation shows that the project and the organisation has had a considerable impact on individual learners, has increased the provision of learning opportunities for individuals, has influenced both learning providers and other strategic and policy forums. It has also provided opportunities for individuals to participate in civil society.

IT Internet & Email x 5	Emergency 1st Aid x 3	Food Hygiene x 3
Personal Safety x 3	PX2 x 2	IT Digital Camera x 2
Relaxation x 2	The 'N' Factor	Confidence Building
Drumming	Glass Painting	Effective Thinking
IT Movie Making	Sign Language	Campaign Media
SQA Numeracy Nautical College	Aromatherapy x 2	Governance Training x 2
'Go For It'	Numeracy & The Environment	STEPS
The 'N' Factor Progression	Board Management Finance	Leadership Course

"GDA gives us the building blocks to becoming more confident, trying more, achieving more and being more!" (GDA Learner)

Ashcraig Secondary School

Reaching Young Disabled People

Over 2008, GDA has worked in partnership with Ashcraig School and the Pacific Institute to deliver personal development and motivation courses to 5th and 6th year pupils at Ashcraig School in Glasgow.

32 young disabled people completed the 'Go For It' and PX2 courses leading to better skilled, successful and confident young people. The courses have played a role in empowering them to contribute effectively to society as citizens, taking responsibility for their own futures.



The Course

The courses help with effective thinking skills for all aspects of life and aims to raise self esteem. This has helped the young people to move out of comfort zones,

provided internal motivational skills, helped them to identify who is in control of their lives, and encourage them to unlock potential and plan for their futures.

Furthermore, it has explored notions of freedom, choice and control and has provided connections between young disabled people and the wider disabled people's movement.



Benefits of the Partnership

Young people and teachers at the school reported positive changes in concentration, behaviour, expectations and aspirations. They reported that the course was stimulating, increasing knowledge, skills and self-awareness.

GDA are currently exploring opportunities to develop this work to include teachers and parents as they play such an influential role in the lives of young disabled people.

Celebrations of Learning!

The course was celebrated with an Awards Ceremony on 15th December 08.

Councillor Rabbani presented certificates to the young people.

Head-teacher Maureen McGeever announced that the young people and teachers at the school had reported many benefits and paid tribute to the innovative partnership with GDA and the Pacific Institute. Pamela Duncan from GCIL spoke about Direct Payments and opportunities for self directed support.



Influencing Change

TPI has responded positively to requests for materials in accessible formats e.g. for visually impaired young people. Adjustments have been made to course timings and pace to suit the needs of all involved. This is an example of GDA working in partnership to reduce barriers to participation, broaden choice and help young disabled people develop themselves so that they are better equipped to deal with future challenges.

Evaluation by Young People

The young people gave their opinions on a “Menchie Wall”.

Goal setting!
To go with own judgment, not what people tell you

If you want something, just do it!

I have learned it's up to me

Helped me move out of my comfort zone at school and look at college

It's helped my social life

It was fun!

Blind spots can affect you by not seeing things that are there

People always look at disabled people and think they cannot do things- they should not judge a book by its cover!"

I'm not going to let anyone stop me from doing what I want to do

I realised what was holding me back is me and will use it a lot as I get ready to leave this school and go into the outside world.

Need to keep practicing it

Can all of the school go through it?

Learning For Change – Volunteering

Lilian celebrates volunteering!

Lilian has been a disabled person all of her life. She has experienced many barriers to learning and to working but has always wanted to do both.

“If it wasn’t for GDA I’d still be sitting at home depressed and bored. I knew that I wanted to give something back after I had so much support from GDA. I would never have gone into learning if all the support hadn’t been in place – transport, accessible materials, personal assistants – this has moved me on so much and my life is fuller and better for it!”



Lilian’s Learning Journey!

“I have taken IT starting with a wee taster to a 30 week course with GDA and Momentum. I have also done the Numeracy course and learned about reading weather and railway maps. I’ve done Personal Safety & Confidence Building which was wonderful. My confidence has increased so much and I’ve learned new skills and met wonderful people through GDA. This has given me the confidence to move into volunteering 1 day per week at the Citizen’s Advice Bureau and 3 days a week in my local hospice shop.



Volunteering Makes A Difference

Volunteering contributes an enormous amount to Scottish life and benefits the communities in which we live. Volunteers help the organisations and people they work with contributing their time, talents and energy while developing skills. There are also strong links between volunteering and civic participation. Volunteering is estimated to be worth over £1.8 billion to the Scottish economy and the importance of this is recognised by the Scottish Government’s Economic Strategy.

The future is bright for disabled people in Glasgow with the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games offering new opportunities for volunteering. GDA has already begun discussions about the role which disabled people can play as volunteers with Glasgow City Council’s Equality Commission including Councillor Archie Graham who is the Convenor of the Commonwealth Games Committee.

Learning For Volunteering & Work



Positive about Volunteering

James Shanks has taken part in learning with GDA which has included accessing a course in Healthy Eating at Glasgow Metropolitan College and successfully achieving his Food Hygiene Certificate. This has helped him in his role as a volunteer worker at Scotia Clubhouse Café where James prepares and cooks food as part of the Team.

“I really enjoy working at the café. All the staff are very helpful and friendly.

It has been a great experience for me. The course with GDA has helped me in this role and I feel like I’m doing something useful”.

“The skill and effort shown by James has impressed us all and we are able to enjoy his culinary creations as well as looking forward to future treats. Since joining Scotia Clubhouse, James has become an integral part of the team”, Iain Stirrat, Project Worker at Scotia Clubhouse.

Positive about Employment

Tracy Duffy is 39 years old and has never worked although she is desperate to!

“I left special school with no qualifications and really lacked confidence in my ability. I’ve been on courses with GDA and the way they organise them takes all the stress out of it- you know the taxi will turn up and there will be access and a PA. I’ve also been supported by Wellbeing to develop skills in admin. After doing the STEPs course with GDA, I’ve got the confidence to start work and have just secured a work placement.

I’m ready for action and feel that I’ve got options and a future ahead of me for the first time. GDA has changed my life and works closely with other disability organisations like Wellbeing, which makes things easier. They help you to make connections, find out options and believe in yourself.”



Learning For Empowerment: Campaign Action Group

GDA's Campaign Action Group is made up of members who have come together over the issue of independent living. They have a huge amount of personal experience and expertise and understand the need for access to a broad range of services to enable disabled people to fulfil their potential. CAG members have a wealth of experiences of the barriers which currently prevent this.



CAG at Scottish Parliament

"It's impossible to choose what you want to do and when you want to do it when you can't access transport and have no personal assistance. You also need information about your rights and GDA have been critical in telling us about these and giving us access to learning to make sure that we have the knowledge and confidence to use our voices," CAG Member.

CAG have found that services don't meet needs adequately or don't communicate enough with each other. Furthermore, CAG accepts that people and organisations have worked hard over the years but they strongly advocate that more must be done.

CAG consulted with GDA members at the Learning Festival 2008. Over 350 people took part in the exercise to help CAG come up with their priority actions for the way forward. As a result, the CAG is focused on access to information, advocacy and learning. They are working to build alliances with other groups of disabled people, politicians and networks related to independent living.

GDA's Campaign Action Group have taken courses including citizenship, STEPS to Excellence, Media & Human Rights. CAG have represented disabled people at a number of events with:

- Scottish Human Rights Commission
- COSLA
- Scottish Government
- Independent Living in Scotland
- NHS Planning and Rehab Group
- Commonwealth Games



CAG Group at Training

Campaign Action Group: Independent Living



Minister Alex Neil addressing the ILIS Launch

The Campaign Action Group have met with a number of people and networks connected to their theme of Independent Living. An important relationship has been developed with the Independent Living in Scotland Project (ILIS) which is run by a steering group of disabled people and hosted by the Equality & Human Rights Commission. GDA's Director sits on this Steering Group to represent GDA and its members.

The ILIS Project was launched in March 09 and members of the CAG went through to Edinburgh to support this. ILIS will strengthen the independent living movement in Scotland and will work with GDA and other disability groups which are already focused on independent living.

Choice, control and freedom are key themes which are important to disabled people as they are often frustrated by a lack of control over their own lives.

GDA will continue to work with ILIS and our key partners in Glasgow including GCIL to promote independent living to disabled peoples' organisations, policy makers and service providers.



Expert Panel chaired by Shereen Nanjiani



It is GDA's ambition that the CAG will have an important leadership role to play in informing other disabled people and in influencing policy makers and service providers about the needs and rights of disabled people to achieve independent living.

CAG Member asking question at launch

Evaluation of GDA – What others say



Week by week we increased our knowledge of shock tactics to improve our personal safety. Pam and Kate with patience, took away any worries and fears that we might be unable to protect ourselves, while preserving our dignity.

Now I look forward to Mondays and with the rest of the class so keen, we enjoy our numbers adventures. Thanks to our tutors Alison, Sharon, and Eileen.



External Evaluation

In 2008, PZA Consultancy conducted an external evaluation, speaking to GDA learners and partners and found that “Increased confidence and self esteem and consequently improved motivation and increased access to further learning and wider civic opportunities,” PZA 2008

- “Its really made a big difference not having to do it all on my own ...the contact with other disabled people is supportive and empowering”
- “The most important thing is their (GDAs) belief in you – it spurs you on”
- “It’s made me think about what I can do”
- “I’m now using my Learning Account to go on with sign language”
- “It’s brought out the best in me”
- “I didn’t know I could learn”
- “I have found out about all different ways to get my voice heard like community councils!”

Evaluation of GDA – What others say

“Learners also commented on GDAs role in ‘changing the way people think’ and ‘educating the educators’. They could see that GDA had influenced provision and improved the services that other providers delivered for disabled people.”



“I found this course very interesting and extremely useful. I learned how to send and receive emails, something I did not know how to do before. I would like to take what I learned further.”

“People from our project have come to GDA training courses and come back raving about how good it was” (Member organisation)

“It’s stimulated that side of me that’s about what I can do, rather than what I can’t do.”

Working with GDA gets us listened to.”

“The good thing about GDA is that it works in partnerships with colleges and others – so it’s helping to develop awareness and change things for us in the outside world”



“Another critical success factor in the delivery of the project is the strength of Glasgow Disability Alliance. It is not only the investment in ‘good governance’ which makes a GDA strong organisation, but also that it has a shared vision and values. The organisation operates from the basis of respect for the individual, and these values are apparent in the operation of the board, in the delivery of the services to members and in its partnerships with other organisations.”

“GDA gets the basics right – it’s membership driven, it listens and it acts on people’s needs – it’s trusted by its members and its partners alike.”

GDA Showcase Event 2008

On the 5th December at the Radisson Hotel Glasgow, GDA launched the Report '**Dignity & Justice for All: Partnership Matters**'. This event brought together disabled people and agencies, highlighted experiences of disabled people's barriers to human rights and independent living and promoted innovative solutions based on best practice examples.



Main hall at Showcase

The event was a huge success and over 300 people attended including disabled people and officers from key public and voluntary sector organisations from across Glasgow and Scotland. GDA was overwhelmed by such a positive turnout and the Board and staff would like to thank everyone who supported the Showcase, including the high profile speakers listed opposite.

Councillor Irfan Rabbani said,

"This event is about the many achievements of disabled people in Glasgow. Too often the focus is on impairment or medical condition instead of understanding the barriers disabled people face.

This event launches another important GDA Report - "Dignity And Justice For All-Partnership Matters" which raises awareness of the importance of partnership working in overcoming these barriers and empowering disabled people to have control over their own lives."

Keynote Speakers

Dr Richard Light,
Campaigner on the UN
Convention on the Rights of
Persons with Disabilities

Sandra White, MSP, Scottish
Parliament Equal
Opportunities Committee.

Councillor Irfan Rabbani,
Glasgow City Council,
Executive Member on
Equalities.

Chris Oswald, Equality &
Human Rights Commission

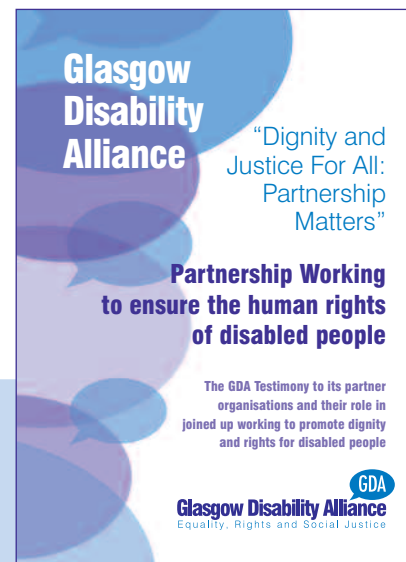
Margaret Doran, Executive
Director for Education and
Social Work, Glasgow City
Council.

Angela Mullen,
GDA Convenor.

Tressa Burke, GDA Director.



GDA's Report "**Dignity & Justice for All: Partnership Matters**", highlights that the key to meaningful and successful learning is that agencies work together to ensure independent living: this empowers disabled people to have control over their own lives and fulfill their potential. The wider message is that disabled people have a right to independent living.



"Independent living means disabled people of all ages having the same freedom, choice, dignity and control as other citizens at home, at work and in the community. It does not mean living by yourself or fending for yourself. It means rights to practical assistance and support to participate in society and live an ordinary life,"
(Scottish Alliance on Independent Living, 2008).

The event celebrated with an Awards Ceremony to acknowledge the achievements of Learners who completed courses since May 2008.



MSP Sandra White & Councillor Rabbani, presenting learners with certificates.



A major focus of the Day was the encouragement of practical action by agencies to help challenge inequality and promote full and equal participation in social, educational, cultural, economic, civil and political life.

Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning sent a message of support for the day:

"I am sorry that I am not be able to attend today's Showcase event however, I would like to offer my congratulations to all of the individuals involved in the learning opportunities that you provide, with special praise for those who have won awards. Enjoy your success. I would also like to reinforce this Government's commitment to developing policies in partnership with disabled people and organisation like GDA. I wish you all a successful day."

Learning Festival 2008

We were delighted that the Minister for Disabled People launched the 2008 Learning Festival at the Thistle Hotel on 29th May.

“I am astonished at the wonderful turn out; the work the Glasgow Disability Alliance is doing means people want to come along and I want to congratulate them”, Anne McGuire MP.

Over 350 people attended and the learners expressed their joy in meeting people, and participating in exciting workshops. A good time was had by all!



Workshops

- Confidence Booster
- Drumming
- Sign Language
- Movie Making
- Relaxation
- Glass Painting
- Digital Camera
- Effective Thinking

Stallholders:

- Learn Direct Scotland
- Glasgow Access Panel
- Business Gateway
- Glasgow Metropolitan College
- WEA Scotland
- Momentum
- Inclusion Scotland
- John Wheatley College
- Wellbeing
- Glasgow's Women's Library
- RND Scotland
- Scotia Clubhouse
- Caledonian University
- Strathclyde Fire & Rescue
- Skill Scotland

“GDA is good at partnership working – they don't just want us to provide courses, they consult with us on what learners want and give us access to their vast membership”.

“Very few organisations from the public or voluntary sector continually achieve such spectacular results as Glasgow Disability Alliance. The registration of over 350 disabled people and their supporters for their 2008 Learning Festival shows that disabled people in Glasgow have an appetite for learning and more importantly, that they will pursue this if they are confident that travel and personal support needs are met.

GDA are to be commended and congratulated for their efforts in leading the way and showing that promoting equality and rights for disabled people is achievable,”

Councillor Irfan Rabbani

GDA's Charter of Rights

Background

Over 2008-09, GDA have been involving our members about a Charter of Rights for disabled people. We have done this in a number of ways including:

- GDA Learning Festival 2008 where it was agreed that Independent Living should be the key theme
- GDA's Showcase event 2008 – participants worked on a list of rights which they thought fundamental
- GDA's Learning Reference Group
- GDA's Campaign Action Group
- At an event in partnership with Skill's Development Scotland & Inclusion Scotland, including young disabled people from Cardonald College



GDA Workshop on Charter of Rights at Showcase event 2008

Over 500 disabled people have taken part in asking GDA to work with others to make these rights a reality:

- Accessible information which is readily available
- Advocacy and working towards self-advocacy
- Peer support including from organisations led by disabled people such as GDA
- Full access to the environment around us
- Fully accessible and affordable transport
- Technical aids, equipment & technology
- Accessible and adapted housing
- Personal Assistance
- Inclusive education including lifelong learning to build confidence
- A decent income including state benefits for those unable to work
- Equal opportunities for meaningful employment and training for work
- Accessible and inclusive healthcare for physical, emotional and mental health
- Communication support
- Meaningful opportunities for civic and political participation, citizenship & involvement in decisions which affect our lives

Community Involvement – disabled people influencing policies

Scottish Government Housing Proposals

In June 2008, GDA was asked to carry out a consultation and involvement exercise by the Scottish Government in relation to proposals around assisting with repairs, improvements and adaptations for disabled owners living in private sector housing.



Reducing Barriers to Involvement

GDA demonstrated its commitment to implementing the National Standards for Community Engagement in carrying out this piece of work. The methodology used fitted with GDA's own "Top Tips Guide" to involving disabled people using the National Standards for Community Engagement and reducing barriers.

Findings

Participants welcomed some of the proposed changes and also the Scottish Government's approach in using GDA to carry out engagement with disabled people. However there were many issues and evidence given that disabled people are not catered for, even in their own homes. It was felt that there is a long way to go with issues raised including:

- Ramp into house and access to front door; lack of turning space;
- Grants are required for home owners needing adaptations- these are requirements and shouldn't be considered to be "improvements";
- Lack of help for those living in tenements as access is in "common area"
- Community Care Charges at a personal cost and doubly so if housing related charges are to be applied for extensions or aids/adaptations;
- Hidden costs of disability & related poverty affecting ability to pay for these;
- Assessment of needs, role of assessor and gate-keeping of social work;
- Need for better information about getting adaptations
- Support for proposal for Scottish Government to set up special lending unit

"It was interesting that when they made wheelchair Barbie, she didn't fit into Barbie's house. To me, this is just a reflection of where we are with housing for disabled people."

focus group participant

Community Involvement – disabled people influencing policies



Skills Development Scotland

On 26th March 2009, GDA ran an event in partnership with SDS & Inclusion Scotland. This was called: ‘Access to Learning and Work – How Can We Help?’. The event had 3 main aims:

1. to find out what disabled people need to learn and work
2. to tell people about changes in the law that affect benefits
3. to ask what should be included in GDA’s ‘Charter of Rights’ so that learning is supported by access to a whole range of services promoting choice, control and empowerment.

Speakers & workshops included:

- Councillor Ruth Black Deputy Executive Member for Social Care and Equalities
- Tressa Burke, Glasgow Disability Alliance
- Maggie Kelly, Poverty Alliance
- June Jones & from Skills Development Scotland
- Bill Scott from Inclusion Scotland

“GDA is the sort of organisation we want to work with again. They have been fantastic.” Skills Development Scotland.

Outcomes

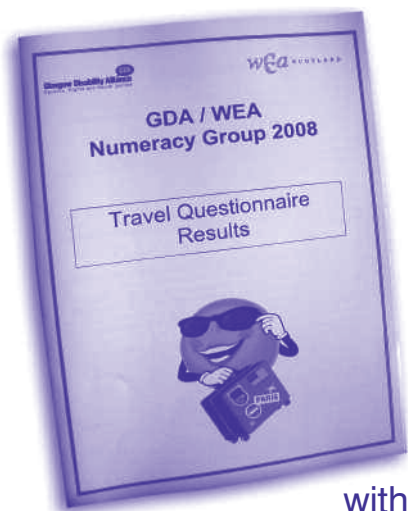
- SDS to have 4 roadshows across Scotland for disabled learners, including disabled young people.
- SDS to work closely with disabled people’s organisations
- SDS to plan for and organise all access needs for participants
- SDS to consider how to involve disabled people and orgs longer term
- SDS to Improve equal opportunities of their own organisation with internships developed for disabled people.

“If everything was run like today, more people could participate.” event participant.

“Good to see SDS involving GDA in the planning and running of the event. This gave me confidence to come along as I knew everything would be in place”

Influencing Learning Providers: Learning for change

“The most significant impacts have been seen in instances when GDA has worked in partnership with organisations to deliver learning opportunities. There is evidence that the developmental process has increased availability of appropriate learning opportunities for disabled people and increased the capacity of providers to deliver appropriate learning,” PZA, External Evaluation, 2008



Numeracy Course

“WEA has welcomed and embraced the opportunity to work with GDA. Partnership working offers all of the agencies involved an insight into barriers faced by disabled learners and the opportunity to work together to overcome these barriers: this provides learning experiences which accommodate needs and interests of learners. We will continue to develop and support learning opportunities for disabled learners and look forward to working together with GDA in the future,” WEA.

Learners carried out a survey about holidays and produced a Travel Booklet.

Personal Safety for Disabled Women: Wise Women Daisy Project



Personal Safety Participants with Joanne and Lorna from Wise Women

GDA worked with Wise Women to help them develop an accessible project to promote a flexible and open approach to working with disabled women. This included drawing up a realistic budget and project plan which enables dignified and respectful access to their service. 3 Personal Safety Courses have been delivered and participants have commended as an outstanding success.

“The benefits of this partnership have included direct and immediate access to disabled women and details of other disability organisations. GDA have a practical understanding of access needs and a sophisticated analysis of issues and barriers affecting disabled people. Similarly, Wise Women have a high level of knowledge and expertise of work around violence against women. The ultimate benefits are of course the increased knowledge, skills and confidence of disabled women in relation to their personal safety.” Frances Monaghan, Manager, Wise Women

Influencing Learning Providers: Learning for change

“There is also significant evidence that GDA has increased the capacity of learning providers through strategic involvement. A number of agencies commented that the quality of their partnership with GDA was perceived to have contributed to the success in the delivery of learning opportunities, and to the development of new opportunities for learners and for GDA.,” PZA, External Evaluation, 2008

Case Study: Food Hygiene Certificate

Summerston Day Centre contacted GDA and asked for a tailor made Food Hygiene course to help their service users get skilled up for voluntary or paid work.

Barrier: They had found existing courses to be too fast and inaccessible for their learners.

Solution: GDA carried out research and discovered that Momentum had designed a much more accessible course.

Together we produced a timetable over 4 half days instead of one full day. This was delivered to service users in Summerston and Killearn Day Centres and we are delighted to say that 11 disabled people gained a full certificate.

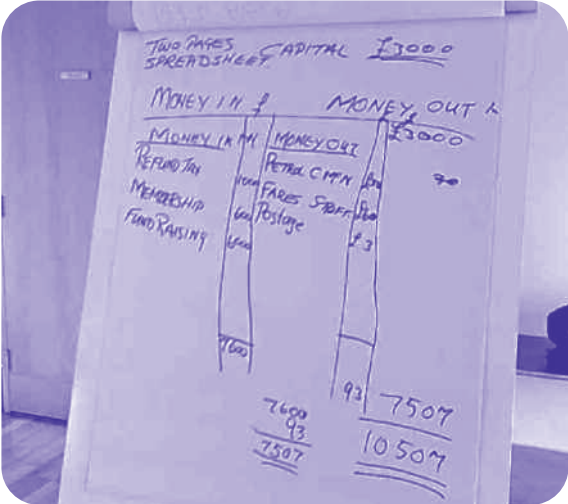


Confidence Building: CSG East Community Learning & Cardonald College

A Committee Skills Course was offered to GDA’s membership and networks and was delivered in St Mungo’s Museum where 12 people took up the learning.

GDA worked with Community Learning and Cardonald College to ensure that transport and other access needs were covered by them.

“Another positive benefit was that Community Learning gained a deeper understanding of working with disabled learners: the course raised a number of issues on how to make learning truly accessible and we resolved this as we went along,” Community Learning Officer.



Learning Provider Reference Group

Purpose

In 2008-9, GDA's Learning Providers Reference Group met to share best practice, develop opportunities for partnership working and plan ways of better involving disabled people in learning. A particular focus of the years was the input of LPRG members into GDA's Partnership Report which highlights that learning depends on access to a whole range of services and supports for disabled people. We call this, "independent living" and this relies on agencies working together.



What LPRG Members say

The LPRG functions as a mechanism for bringing together individuals with an 'equalities' remit within the colleges in Glasgow and key voluntary learning providers and agencies. The External evaluation found that,

"There is a high level of buy-in to the Learning Providers Reference Group. Interviews with members of the group underlined the high value they placed on attending the engaging in the group, "The fact that we keep on attending means that we find it useful". Members described the value of the LPRG as:

- Networking between providers;
- Keeping up to date on the range of provision across the city (and identifying gaps)
- Keeping up to date with new developments/issues in the field of disability
- Sharing good practice between providers; and
- A source of expert information and advice on disability issues.

"Although I know about disability issues, my involvement with GDA has helped in refining my awareness. I get kept up to date on issues and developments. Attending the LPRG has provided me with lots of practical ideas for engaging with disabled people. As a result, our practice is more inclusive" (policy maker within learning organisation).

"We know more about what's on offer across the city, so get better at planning services for our clients" (Voluntary sector provider)

"For us, it makes other agencies more aware of what we offer and helps with connectedness" (College)

Disability Equality Expertise

“GDA is recognised as an ‘expert’ in the field of disability equality and a key influencer of policy and practice,” PZA, External Evaluation 2008



Langside College

GDA works with learning providers in a range of ways to build their capacity and skills to respond to the changing needs of disabled learners. The aim of this is to assist providers towards becoming more flexible, accessible and disability- equality focused and therefore improve access to their learning for disabled people. One tool for doing this is our Disability Equality Training.

“The course has helped me to understand the barriers that disabled people face on a daily basis - I have now incorporated this knowledge and awareness into our annual induction programme for new trainees”

Over the last year, GDA has provided Disability Equality Training to 9 organisations and 70 staff

PZA conducted an online survey with participants of DET:

- 69% of attendees had identified actions which their organisation could take to reduce barriers for disabled people
- 77% of attendees had shared their learning within their organisation
- 92% had identified actions which they themselves could take to reduce barriers for disabled people.

“The DET training has made a considerable contribution to building understanding of the social model among providers, to raising understanding of access issues for disabled people, and raising capacity of individuals to develop responses,” PZA, 2008



Financial Report 2008-09

GDA has effectively maintained financial stability during 2008-09 regularly

reviewing the cash-flow position, the risks and the expenditure against the planned budget.

The overall financial position of GDA was stable with restricted reserves at 1st April 2008 of £35,198 and unrestricted reserves of £24,818. The unrestricted reserves were a requirement of the Big Lottery as GDA had to prove that we could generate this amount per year, on top of our Big Lottery Grant.



During this financial year income received was £245,678. Expenditure was £239,832 which left surplus for the period of £5,846. The balances carried forward at 1st April 2008 contributed to the income for this financial year.

Funding was generated from multiple sources with both large scale and smaller grants comprising the funding cocktail. These can be seen opposite on page 28 under “Income”. A Financial Statement has been presented opposite and full Audited Accounts are available on request and at GDA’s AGM.

The balances carried forward at 1st April 2009 are restricted reserves of £55,615 towards our multi-annual project and unrestricted reserves of £8,266.

For 2008-9 our funders included the Big Lottery Grant which runs from May 2008 until April 2011. Other funders include: Glasgow City Council, Section 10, Corporate Equalities and Community Safety Services, Lloyds, Glasgow Community Planning, Scottish Community Fund, Skills Development Scotland and Strathclyde Police.

GDA has tracked all income and expenditure in relation to activities and our audited accounts display this, in compliance with SORP (regulations for statement of recommended practice for charities).

Finally, GDA generate a small amount of income and will continue these efforts towards our ongoing sustainability.

Morag Mackay
Treasurer

Financial Report

Income & Expenditure Statement for the period 1st April 2008 to 31st March 2009

INCOME	£
Big Lottery	£194,795
GCC - Section 10	4,900
GCC - Equalities	10,000
GCC - Community Safety	2,000
Police	500
Lloyds	6,340
Glasgow Community Planning	3,000
Scottish Community Fund	5,000
Skills Development Scotland	2,000
Other Income:	
Donations	4,008
Interest Received	868
Income Generation	12,267
	<u>£245,678</u>

EXPENDITURE	
Staffing	£103,295
Staff Training	2,262
Staff Travel	2,639
Sessional	4,628
Recruitment	2,000
Subsistence	5,049
Beneficiary Travel	5,799
Access Needs	6,293
Marketing	25,422
Training/Consultancy	34,350
Repairs & Maintenance	889
Audit/Legal	2,185
Publications & Subscriptions	408
Premises & Overheads	24,370
Administration	15,422
Board Expenses	1,619
Sundries	1,182
	<u>£237,812</u>
Capital	2,020
	<u>£239,832</u>

Surplus for period £ 5,846

Future Plans

The first year of our new Strategic Plan has gone well. In the coming year GDA will continue to:

- Provide information, advice, & accessible lifelong learning courses so that disabled people can build confidence, skills and reach their full potential.
- Provide opportunities for involvement in decision making
- Provide advice, information, training and consultancy to organisations and agencies, sharing disabled people's experiences and helping with engagement of disabled citizens as a route to improving access to services
- Build an even stronger voice for disabled people and more importantly, support and encourage disabled people to develop their own voices to become citizen leaders.
- Be an effective catalyst for change, working in partnership to promote equality and inclusion and improve the life chances of disabled people.

GDA will build on success and develop models, partnerships and approaches that have worked well and made positive changes for disabled people. We will also continue to involve disabled people, our members and our partners in planning the way ahead.

Who's Who: GDA Board and Staff

Convenor

Angela Mullen

Vice Convenor

Marianne Scobie

Treasurer

Morag MacKay

Vice Treasurer

Jim Berrington

Member Directors

Alan Dick

Frances Farrell

Peter Hope

Susan Murray

Des McCafferty

Alan McDonald

Co-opted

Billy McFarlane

Iain Montgomery

Staff:

Director

Tressa Burke

Senior Development Officer

Linda Algie

Admin & Communications Officer

Shirley Coull

Gratitudes

GDA would like to thank and acknowledge the following:

For project funding:

Big Lottery, Glasgow City Council, Lloyds TSB

For One-off Grants/Contributions:

Glasgow Community & Safety Services, Glasgow Community Planning, Scottish Community Fund, Skills Development Scotland, Police.

For ongoing support & confidence in our work:

Glasgow City Council Corporate Equalities Team.

For partnership working on specific pieces of work:

Ashcraig Secondary School, AMG, BBC Radio Scotland, Cardonald College, Culture & Sport Glasgow, Kate Chambers Associates, Equality & Human Rights Commission, Glasgow Community Planning Partnership, Glasgow City Council Community Learning, Development & Regeneration Services & Social Work Services, Glasgow Science Centre, GCVS, Glasgow Metropolitan College, Glasgow Equalities Partnership, Glasgow Nautical College, GCIL, Inclusion Scotland, Independent Living in Scotland Project, John Wheatley College, Langside College, Momentum Scotland, NHS Greater Glasgow & NHS Scotland, St Andrew's Ambulance, Skills Development Scotland, Scottish Human Rights Commission, Scottish Government, South West Regeneration Agency, South East CHCP, SCVO Building Bridges Project, Stow College, Wise Women, Wellbeing Initiative, Workers Educational Association, .

Many thanks for the much appreciated support from:

Councillors Irfan Rabbani & Ruth Black, MSPs Bill Kidd and Sandra White, MSP Frank McAveety, MSP Patrick Harvie, Fiona Hyslop, Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning, Alex Neil, Minister for Housing & Communities, Nicola Sturgeon, Deputy First Minister.

A special thanks to:

Ashcraig Secondary: Mrs McGeever, Mrs Whyte and all of 5th & 6th year, Anne Brannan and The Pacific Institute, Julie Christie at Parkhead Citizens Advice Bureau, Carole Ewart of Ewart Communications, Linda Wilson and Quarriers, William at Leonard Cheshire Disability Citizenship Academy, Etienne at Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living, Charlie at Glasgow Access Panel, Fiona, Paul and Sara at PZA. Paul Goldie, Eric Paget & Tricia Fossett at Culture & Sport Glasgow, Community Learning, Stephen Kidd and Stephen Brookes at Momentum Workability, Colin Baird, Caroline Martin and Derek Kelter at Momentum Scotland, Frances at Wise Women and all our PA's.

GDA

Glasgow Disability Alliance

Equality, Rights and Social Justice



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