



Confident, Connected, Contributing

Annual Impact Report
2015 - 2016

GDA
Glasgow Disability Alliance
Confident, Connected, Contributing

Susan's story

Susan's story is typical of many GDA members. Throughout this publication we follow her journey, as she discovers GDA, builds her confidence, makes connections with others and begins to contribute her lived experience. Her journey begins:

"I was perfectly 'normal' until I broke my back in an accident. I spent years trying to mentally, physically and emotionally comprehend what had happened to me, which resulted in me going down a very dark road – I was suicidal. One summer's day in 2015 I was 'Googling' information and by chance found GDA. It took some weeks before I felt able to make the initial contact. Sceptical would be an understatement of what I felt, having read everything about GDA and their work and what I 'imagined' the reality would be. I was WRONG! Everything GDA says it does, I have found to be true!"

Contents

Introduction: GDA the community	2
Key Stats 2015 - 2016	3
Convenor's Report	4
Chief Executive's Report	6
Learning: building confidence, making connections	8
Learning together: keeping active	10
Future Visions: choice, control & independent living	12
Future Visions: personal journeys	13
Celebrating GDA: Confident, Connected, Contributing	14
Keeping connected: engaging disabled people	16
Are you being served? Contributing lived experience	17
Building a Fairer Scotland	18
Community Empowerment: building capacity & voices	19
Drivers for Change: building contributions	20
Connecting with partners: working together for better services	22
Connecting with partners: inspiring change	23
Conversations for Change: Glasgow Independent Living Strategy	24
Staying connected: accessible information and communication	25
Finance report and statement	26
Moving forward	28
Thank you	29



Introduction: GDA the Community

GDA is a vibrant disabled people led organisation with 3200+ members by end of March 2016. We are the biggest community led groundswell of disabled people in Scotland and consider ourselves an excellent example of a community of interest. Our mission is to build the confidence, connections and contributions of disabled people, recognising and building on talents and strengths. GDA supports disabled people to participate and be leaders in their own lives, connecting with each other and with opportunities and contributing to families, communities and wider society. GDA works with disabled people of all ages and with any type of impairment.

“GDA is taking a “community of interest” based approach to tackling isolation, poverty, disadvantage and inequality. This is a very different but equally vital approach compared with more routinely funded placed based approaches which have been found to fail equalities groups.” **Assist Social Capital, 2016**

We deliver opportunities ranging from fun, introductory learning to build confidence and self-belief, through to more intense coaching and programmes, which enable increased knowledge, skills, capacity and progressions. Referrals and connections to appropriate services and support beyond GDA are made. GDA’s methods enable multiple opportunities to ‘test the waters’ and progress to better outcomes including increased control and choices, more active participation, enhanced connections, improved health & wellbeing and strengthened resilience.

“GDA are the most inclusive and progressive organisation with disabled people at the heart of their purpose, values and ethics. If they say they can make something happen in a positive way for a disabled person, they will move mountains to do so. They don't just have a mission statement on the wall- they live it every day and every way. GDA is a community of disabled people and we belong and matter.”

GDA member, Peter, 67



“I was really keen for my daughter to get involved with GDA and meet others in her own situation, so I was very pleased when she joined up and started going along to all the learning and events. I've seen a complete change in her. She has a much clearer idea of what she wants in life and knows where to get the support she needs to make that happen.”

Janice, mother of young disabled person

Key Stats 2015-16

- **1226** disabled learners supported from age 14-102
- **5885** learning opportunities – an average of 4.8 per person
- **655** new members engaged
- **Over 1700** disabled people supported to attend events
- **80** learning tasters delivered
- **16** longer term programmes
- **10** certificated courses completed
- **25** events held with and for disabled people
- **12** partnership events delivered
- **12** community clubs supported
- **200+** disabled people received coaching
- **1000+** disabled people brought together with services
- **15+** Peer Support networks supported
- **300+** website updates
- **1418** Facebook likes
- **2877** Twitter followers
- **8** Newsletters
- **12** E-Bulletins sharing learning and information
- **Over 100** partnerships serviced

“GDA understands the importance of participation and regular, repeated interaction that facilitates the creating of reciprocal relationships. To achieve this, members are able to choose to take up opportunities to interact with others through multiple forums that offer the chance to build relationships with people in similar circumstances. Crucially GDA also enables disabled people opportunities to become active in forums where they meet others who may think very differently from them.” **Assist Social Capital, 2016**



Convenor's Foreword



I am once more thrilled to introduce GDA's Annual Impact Report for 2015 -16 which follows 10 years of funding and demonstrates delivery of remarkable outcomes, with and for disabled people in Glasgow.

This is evidence that, with choices and practical support as well as opportunities to connect with others, disabled people's lives can be and are, amazing.

Year on year the challenges increase for disabled people with welfare reform impacting more drastically and services being reduced. This has meant a steady focus on steering the organisation and I am very proud that GDA has managed to secure increased resources, building on solid evidence of the value of our work. We have not been complacent and our success has spurred the Board and CEO to continue our focus on strategic planning, improving our Governance, increasing stakeholder engagement, exploring further income streams and sustainability.

GDA is leading the way in showcasing a growing movement for change with disabled people at its core. Our programmes, information and activities to deliver our mission and build connections, confidence and contributions have resulted in disabled people increasing connections, finding voices and leading their own lives, with more choices and more resilience to face challenges.

GDA is itself led by disabled people which means we understand and empathise. Our relationship with members is reflected back as one of

trust and respect because they know we listen and act on their behalf. As always, the Team and Board have regular input from members and learners who report that they have made positive changes as a result of being involved.

Sometimes seemingly modest progress is made but no less impressive because increases in self-confidence lead people to try more and achieve more than they ever thought possible. Results are outstanding: from getting university degrees, volunteering and securing work, to simply being more confident within your own life, doing more courses and meeting new people: because that's where participation starts!

A recent Evaluation which interviewed 25 members, found, *"a high level of trust in the organisation, demonstrated through their deep connection with GDA, with each other and with the activities and programmes. The trust is based on the shared values and identity, on knowing access needs will be met and on an intense sense of connectedness, community and cohesion. As a result, the collective social capital of these groups and of GDA becomes an asset in itself."*

Assist Social Capital 2016

This result is a combined effort and I would like to thank my supportive, committed and hard-working Board colleagues; I also commend and thank the exceptional efforts of our committed and dedicated staff team and in particular Tressa, our CEO, for implementing our values with integrity and a human led approach to leadership; to our members who are our whole reason for existing and our ongoing driving force, and to our funders who continue to believe in and support our work. These include: the Big Lottery, Glasgow City Council, Glasgow

Transformation Fund and the Scottish Government.

A special thanks too to our members who have fundraised on our behalf and to those who work so hard for our cause. I look forward to continuing our work and building on all of these strengths – on GDA as an asset in itself – with the backing of over 3000 members, with all their talents, to take forward our vision for a future where disabled people participate in their own lives, families communities, workplaces and wider society.

Angela Mullen • Convenor



GDA Board

Convenor

Angela Mullen

Vice Convenor

Iain Montgomery

Treasurer

Morag Mackay

Vice Treasurer

Jim Berrington

Member Directors

Steven Andrew, Alan Dick, Bridie Gallagher, Hugh John Glancy, Alan MacDonald, Billy McFarlane, Maureen McHugh

Chief Executive's Introduction



I am delighted to report GDA's significant successes over 2015-16, given throughout this report. Our intention is to bring to life the breadth and depth of GDA's work. This year we have focused on delivering our mission of building confidence, connections and contributions, supporting 1226 disabled learners from age 14-102, recruiting 655 new members and enabling over 1700 to attend events.

We have encouraged people to raise aspirations, recognise their talents and build on strengths. We have created **5885** individual opportunities for disabled people to connect to each other, to services and opportunities delivering 80 tasters, 16 longer term programmes and over 30 events. We have also supported 12 community clubs where people meet, connect and get support and vitally, start to take control and contribute by running their own clubs.

Positive outcomes have been rich, diverse and abundant and disabled people have shown that they can participate and be involved as well as give something back, if they have the right support to do this. Examples include disabled people running their own clubs, starting new groups, peer support networks, volunteering, being involved in their community either at GDA or locally where this is accessible and participating in shaping services and policy so that these better meet needs. Two excellent examples are GDA's Purple Poncho Players and Drivers for Change Network. GDA's mission has been delivered broadly around 5 critical and interrelated building blocks which increase disabled people's life chances, raise awareness and tackle inequality.

These include: engaging disabled people; delivering programmes of learning, development, voices for individual participation and policy development; providing accessible information, signposting and access to services and partnerships & Coproduction: working together, working differently, being leaders and demonstrating innovation and a culture of learning. Simultaneously we have developed GDA's own health by building the capacity of the Board and Team in relation to governance and sustainability.

The outcomes of programmes and activities have been remarkable and greatly enhanced this year by additional grants from the Scottish Government which increased investment in GDA and disabled people by a third. This was both welcome and greatly needed at a time when disabled people are being adversely affected by the crushing impact of welfare reform, hate crime and cuts to services. This has enabled our work to bring expert lived experiences and voices together with planners, policy and decision makers and we have contributed to shaping National policies around Democratic Renewal, Healthier Scotland, Human Rights (UNCRPD), Social Capital, Community Capacity Building, Health & Employability, the

Community Empowerment Act, Health & Social Care and Social Security devolved powers.

At a Glasgow level, disabled people's voices and lived experiences have shaped policy and service responses of Community Planning, mitigating Welfare Reform, Health and Social Care, Community Learning & Development, Resilient Glasgow, Poverty Leadership Panel, Third Sector Forum and Executive Group and Glasgow's Independent Living Strategy.

GDA has raised awareness and appreciation of approaches which are built on human rights, community development and recognising strengths.

A special thanks and acknowledgement to GDA's exceptional team. A member recently described the GDA Team as being willing to move mountains if they can help a disabled person and I can testify to that. Thanks to our funders who

continue to invest in and show confidence in our work, and to our fantastic, skilled and dedicated Board for continued support, and direction. Thanks too to our wonderful partners as disabled people need a range of accessible services and supports to live the lives they choose.

My personal thanks to our Convenor Angela for her wise counsel and guidance: this is always available and supportive, no matter the time or circumstance. A particular thanks to Lynne from Thrive for support around innovation and sustainability. Above all, thanks to our members who inspire us every day and remind us of our purpose. I look forward to continuing our work, delivering our vision with and for disabled people towards greater equality in Glasgow and Scotland.

Tressa Burke • CEO



GDA Staff Team

Linda Algie	Finance Manager (p/t)	Noreen Paterson	Development Officer
Allan Barr	Administrator	Sylvia Pearson	Development Officer
Tressa Burke	Chief Executive	Marianne Scobie	Depute CEO
Ruth Hart	Administrator(p/t)	Brian Scott	Development Manager
Alison Hill	PA to Chief Exec (p/t)	Sandra Stuart	Development Manager
Isla McIntosh	Development Co-ordinator		

Shirley Bradley (Admin & Comms), Fiona McCann (Admin temp) and Laura Quinn (Office Manager) left GDA during the period of this report. We thank them for all their hard work and service to GDA and wish them well.

Learning: building confidence, making connections

Learning: Key Stats 2015 - 2016

- **1226** individuals took part in learning
- **5885** learning opportunities – an average of 4.8 per person
- **80** short courses
- **16** in-depth longer programmes
- **10** certificated courses
- **2** “Activate” programmes with Glasgow University
- **25** events for disabled people
- **12** events for partner organisations
- **11** PPP drama performances
- **200+** individuals received coaching
- **Youngest learner was 14, oldest 102 years old!**



Building confidence: Susan's story

GDA's fully accessible learning is open to disabled people of all ages. Making learning free, fun & accessible is a key way to build confidence.

“My first course was in first aid. Although I was told transport and lunch would be provided, I was still sceptical. Without transport I could not have attended this course nor any of the other courses. The class consisted of people of different ages, from different places, and with a variety of impairments. We all had limiting factors, but there was learning and laughter in abundance. Getting the right support gave me confidence in myself and confidence in GDA.”
Susan



Short Course - examples

- Advocacy intro
- Aromatherapy
- Bead craft
- Chair based exercise
- Confidence building
- Emergency first aid (certificated)
- Employability confidence
- Facilitation skills
- Fly tying
- Happy feet
- Healthy eating & cookery
- I-Pad basics
- Local history
- Meditation & mindfulness
- Mosaic making
- Music day
- Reminiscence
- Screen printing
- Social reporting
- Speaking up, speaking out
- Tai chi
- Understanding money
- And many more...!

Building Connections: Longer term learning programmes

Our longer term programmes provide opportunities for disabled people to build strong peer support networks, join together with common goals and participate in quality personal development programmes, many with life coaching elements. This year GDA ran 2 Activate programmes in partnership with Glasgow University, plus 16 longer term programmes. Here are three highlights.

Urban Past: exploring past, present & future



GDA worked in partnership with “Scotland’s Urban Past” to deliver a fantastic programme with young disabled people. Over several months, the young people developed research, filming, photography, recording, communication and artistic skills, while learning about their community and its history.



“We explored what life may have been like in the past for young disabled people and we found out about social history and geography. I hated history at school but this was so interesting!” Clare, 21.

“I loved going out and about, taking pictures and learning about parts of Glasgow I didn’t know about.” John, 17.

“Making our own connections maps was great fun.” Elizabeth, 18.

Steps to Excellence for personal success



Steps is a personal development programme that challenges thinking and helps develop more positive thought patterns. With lots of self-reflection, it encourages groups to support each other to move out of their comfort zones in a safe way. There are lots of fun activities and participants learn various new tools for coping with difficult situations. Steps promotes goalsetting as a way to move forward.



“I was terrified coming along to Steps, but as soon as the tutor started I was completely at ease. The group were so friendly and we had lots of fun. We helped each other and kept in touch to give support with our goals and stay connected.” David, 37.

I-Pad for beginners



GDA has invested in technology to support learning for disabled people, including a set of i-Pads. Working together with Glasgow Life tutors, we developed a programme of learning about the basics of communicating electronically, researching information, online shopping and staying connected to family and friends. With the introduction of many online-only services, GDA members felt they were in danger of being left behind, particularly our older members.



“I made my first Skype call to my grandchildren in England and it feels fantastic to be able to stay in touch more easily with my family.” Ian, 68.

Learning together: keeping active



Sports Day for Young Disabled People – in partnership with Inclusive Futures

Around 100 young people from all over Glasgow came along to the Emirates stadium for an Inclusive Futures Sports Day. Young people were supported to take part in 6 different sporting activities, a teambuilding game, plus they heard an inspirational speech from a local Paralympian.



Many of the Inclusive Futures sports coaches are young disabled people. They were able to support participants to take part and learn about a variety of sports many had never tried before. We were lucky enough to have a BBC film crew come along and the day was featured on the news as part of a Commonwealth Games Legacy feature a few weeks later.



“The sports day was brilliant! I loved getting the chance to try new things and seeing so many young disabled people together was amazing. I’m going to find out what’s on at my local sports centre and see if I can join.” Steven, 24.

Community Connections: “Star clubs” for older disabled people

Many older people are very isolated, lonely and bored. GDA works with 12 local housing associations, sheltered housing complexes and community centres to provide support, learning and opportunities for older people to connect with each other and their community. We help groups learn how to set up and run their own club if that’s what they want, plus give support to open a bank account and apply for their own funding. We are repeatedly told that Star Clubs are a life line.

“I don’t get out very often, so going to the club helps me stay connected with life outside my flat. I was so lonely before I started coming along.” Doug, 74.

Typical “Star Club” programme:

- Aromatherapy
- Chair based exercise
- Community supports
- Confidence booster
- Crafts
- Healthy eating
- Home safety
- Relaxation
- Reminiscence
- Simple cookery
- Tai chi
- Trips out and about



Learning in the Community: Getting out and about

With 5885 learning opportunities, there has been lots of learning on offer, and much of our learning has taken place within interesting venues all over Glasgow.

This year we have been encouraging disabled people to explore the great outdoors. We know that fresh air and gentle exercise helps to keep us well and happy. However, many outdoors activities are not accessible to disabled people and many GDA members told us they would love support to explore the fantastic outdoor spaces across Glasgow. We worked closely with Urban Roots, the 7 Lochs Project, Glasgow Life, Scottish Disabled Fly Fishing Association and Cowan's Law Fishery, to create a range of exciting and accessible outdoors activities that disabled people could enjoy. We have many photos to prove that most of our outdoor activities took place on lovely dry days, so even the



Outdoor activities

- Building campfires
- Campfire cookery
- Chopping logs
- Exploring via accessible pathways
- Fly Fishing
- Foraging for food
- Spotting and photographing wildlife
- Tai Chi on Glasgow Green
- Trekking in the woods

Exploring Glasgow

- BBC Scotland
- Emirates Stadium
- Kelvingrove Museum
- People's Palace
- Platform Glasgow
- Riverside Transport Museum
- Science Centre
- Tramway

"I didn't imagine I'd ever be exploring the woods in my wheelchair, never mind chopping up logs and cooking on a campfire. I don't think my family will believe me when I tell them!" Michael, 48.

"The support we got to do the fishing was brilliant, including meeting other disabled anglers. I can't thank GDA enough for all their work in putting this course together. The best time ever!" Idrees, 26.

"I used to love going out into the countryside with my children but as I became more disabled that stopped. Now I've been here, I've found somewhere I can bring my children and get out and have fun together as a family again. This will make a huge difference to my whole family." Jane, 53.

Future Visions: choice, control & independent living

Future Visions is funded by the Scottish Government's Self-Directed Support Strategy Fund. Future Visions was developed building on learning from our very successful SDS Road Testers project. Our three key aims for the project are:

1. To increase knowledge about independent living by providing clear, accessible information about opportunities to access Self Directed Support and other services.
2. To enable disabled people to build skills, confidence, and personal capacity so they can make more informed choices about independent living and the support they need to live independent lives e. g. Self-Directed Support.
3. To enable public partners to hear directly from disabled people about the barriers they face and support partnership work to develop solutions to these barriers.



Many disabled people do not have choice and control in their day to day lives, and do not get the support they need to take part in everyday activities.

Future Visions supports disabled people to take back choice and control in their life through learning, life coaching and getting the support necessary to participate.

"The storytelling session was brilliant. It was so much fun and helped me realise how much I have to say that's worth sharing."

"I've done more, been more places and met great people. Future Visions was amazing. It will really help me move on in my life."

Each participant is supported to develop their own personal project. Supported by the Development Officer and other project staff, they are provided resources including personal assistance, transport, equipment and funding. Participants also receive learning and support to tell their own personal story to enable us to reflect and share learning from the project more widely. A key element of Future Visions is coaching to raise aspirations towards personal goals and learning about and accessing "Self-Directed Support" and other services that enable choices.

Sharing learning

To share learning from the project as widely as possible, we deliver presentations, run masterclasses (read more on pages 22 +23) and produce booklets, like this one for young disabled people and their parents. In addition we publish a regular series of e-bulletins on key independent living issues sent to 3000+ subscribers.



Personal journey: Irene

It's often overlooked that disabled people can be carers too. *"Future Visions provided Personal Assistance support that enabled my husband and I to go out and about as a couple, rather than "carer & cared for". We went on the tour bus, went for lunch, dinner and had great days out, including a trip to Inverary – something we'd always wanted to do but couldn't due to lack of support. Future Visions rebuilt my confidence and I found out loads of useful information about self-directed support that may help us in the future. It was so good to connect with each other, with the city and with life again. I also liked the learning sessions which gave me time for myself to meet new people, make friends and learn new skills. **The life coaching was really helpful indeed. We both got a new lease of life!"***



Personal Journey: John

Before I joined Future Visions I was isolated, lonely and very depressed. In fact, I felt my life was not worth living. My first course was STEPS and then I got a place with Future Visions. The 1-2-1 coaching was fabulous and I felt that my personal burdens had been lifted off my shoulders. The group sessions were friendly, with a great atmosphere, and mutually supportive. Everyone quickly opened up to each other so we could relax and be ourselves. My personal project involved getting out and about with support – I went on the bus tour, to concerts, museums and had so much fun. Getting personal assistance was the difference between getting out and about and staying a virtual recluse.

I'm feeling so much more confident and have made friends. I even spoke to a new Future Visions group, along with Nasim and was able to tell them that GDA is the best thing that's ever happened to me!



Personal Journey: Nasim

I had absolutely no confidence and was very anxious due to depression and various physical impairments. I was so nervous about joining in with any group situation, but I felt reassured by GDA so thought I'd risk it. Very quickly I felt at ease and the personal coaching really helped me overcome a lot of my anxiety. I'd always wanted to go swimming but could not face going alone, but with the personal support via Future Visions, I started going to "aquafit" classes. I've seen amazing health benefits and my mood is so much better too. I get less pain, I'm getting up earlier and have so much to look forward to.

I can't believe that after a few months of getting the right support, I was able to give a talk with John and Eileen about my experiences to a whole new group of Future Visions people!

"Meeting other young disabled people has been life changing."



"GDA is a community I can actually belong to. Wonderful!"



Susan's story:

"GDA does not solely exist to provide some courses or advice, they can change lives, they challenge stereotypes. I have not met, heard or researched a similar group that exists – I have found nothing. On a personal level I feel truly lucky that I 'found' GDA. I am no longer in a dark place, I laugh, I feel whole again. I have met new friends. My next step will be to find a funded PhD. I couldn't have said that a couple years ago. GDA is not a faceless organisation, the staff individually make GDA special and in turn support / help disadvantaged people. This is what makes GDA so special."



This investment in social capital delivers significant added value, a powerful example of how to deliver services through effective collaboration. GDA has significant preventative impact making it a highly cost effective organisation,"
ASC, 2016.



Contributing

"You lose your voice – you get stuck in a rut and you lose other things.

Coming to GDA gives you your voice back. Being part of this group of members changes your beliefs – you realise that anything is possible with support."

Sharon, 37

"GDA has always given me the right support to do my best"

"Without GDA, I'd be stuck in the house, doing nothing"

Connected

"I felt like my life had ended when I became disabled – I had little friends, no support and didn't have a clue where to begin. It took a lot of encouragement from GDA before I agreed to come along to a course. However, once I got in the door and saw I wasn't the odd one out, I relaxed and it was amazing how being together with similar people in similar situations gave me a more hopeful outlook". Alan, 47.

Keeping Connected: Engaging Disabled People

GDA Events: Key Stats 2015-16

- **25+** events
- **12** partnership events delivered
- **Over 1700** people participated
- **Over 1000** disabled people brought together with services



GDA engages disabled people in a variety of ways. We listen to the realities of barriers faced and the impact on disabled people's lives. We learn and plan actions together to feed views back to others. Frequently, we bring disabled people and planners, policy makers and disabled people together.

Health & Social Care Integration

A change in the law means services must now be joined up, so they can all work together to provide the right support at the right time, to improve our lives – and there is less money to go round. With that in mind GDA has run a number of events over 2015 and 2016 involving **over 1000 disabled** people in total in the Glasgow Strategy to integrate Health & Social Care services.

Integration was the focus of two major GDA events and was considered by others e.g. Drivers for Change Network. GDA captured experiences, views and suggestions and fed these back, describing what matters most to disabled people.

We outlined specific actions which disabled people told us would help them to live full, independent lives:

- ✓ Cut out bureaucracy and red tape
- ✓ Invest in / commission lower level, preventative support e.g. social connections, learning, self-advocacy and capacity building.
- ✓ Implement Self Directed Support meaningfully for disabled people.
- ✓ Change cultures to enable more flexible and responsive services.
- ✓ Dis-invest in services which are not well rated and do not offer flexibility.
- ✓ Abolish community care charges.
- ✓ Invest in working with others e.g. transport, housing, Glasgow Independent Living Strategy.
- ✓ Coproduce with disabled people and their organisations e.g. GDA.
- ✓ Invest in independent advocacy.

"The support needed is to flourish. It's not just survival. It's to feel alive – not just be alive." Alice, 62.

"Self-Directed Support should bring a feeling of empowerment... Instead I get enough support to be washed, dressed and fed – no more than I'd get in a nursing home. How can I participate in my community if I'm not even fully participating in my own life?" Bob, 49.

Are you being served: contributing lived experience



We work together with disabled people, building capacity, providing access and support and listening to their voices. We want to know what does work and what solutions might look like. Disabled people are best placed to know what works for disabled people. This is not something which can be “done” to people. It’s about how we do this, together.

Drawing on what disabled people told GDA, we outlined a vision of the outcomes which health and social care services should contribute to. Disabled people want services to support them to have:

1. Better health, improved wellbeing and independent living
2. Increased social connections and improved relationships with others
3. Increased opportunities to get out and about, participate & contribute to their communities, families and social, economic and cultural life, with support
4. Greater choices and control over their own lives and the support they receive
5. More financial resilience, live free from poverty and have access to financial information and advice

Get appropriate services at home to enable me to continue to live at home.

3. GONNAE JUST LISTEN

ENSURE OLDER ADULTS WHO ARE SUPPORTED IN CARE HOMES ARE ASSISTED TO FULLY ACCESS COMMUNITY SERVICES

Themes contributed to through lived experience of disabled people

- ✓ Independent Living
- ✓ Raising aspiration & visioning goals
- ✓ Community Empowerment Act
- ✓ Social Capital
- ✓ National Standards for Community Engagement
- ✓ Sports and Health
- ✓ Health and Social Care Integration
- ✓ GDA Members and GDA Business
- ✓ Lifelong Learning & Participation
- ✓ Fairer Scotland
- ✓ Human Rights – (UNCRPD)
- ✓ Older People specific issues
- ✓ Younger Disabled People specific issues
- ✓ Health & Employability
- ✓ Employability including Access to Work, social enterprise and self employment
- ✓ Parents of young disabled people
- ✓ Poverty Truth Commission
- ✓ Health & Welfare Reform
- ✓ Welfare Benefits and Advice
- ✓ Social Security & Devolved Powers
- ✓ Resilient Glasgow
- ✓ Hate Crime

Building a Fairer Scotland

The Scottish Government asked communities across Scotland: What needs to change to make Scotland a fairer place to live?

GDA asked over 500 disabled people and the responses we got were incredible – people shared their experiences of the enormous barriers in their lives and came up with powerful ideas and solutions for equality for disabled people in a fairer Scotland.



"We're asking for fairness, respect, equality, dignity and autonomy – the principles behind human rights. We want to have the same choice and control over our lives as any other citizen. We want to work with the Scottish Government and others to make this a reality. For us this is the very essence of a "Fairer Scotland", Steven, GDA Drivers for Change

Priorities to make Scotland Fairer

Key concerns fed back echoed those around Health & Social Care Integration and demonstrated that services, supports and opportunities must be better joined up to deliver a fairer Scotland.

- Fairer Social Security System
- More accessible housing
- More accessible transport
- Improved, flexible and responsive social care and health services
- Access to justice
- Employment and employability support
- Accessible education & lifelong learning
- Access to social participation and connections including community facilities
- Peer Support from other disabled people and capacity building
- Being supported to contribute
- Being treated with dignity and respect
- Having choices and control in our lives



*BSL Version, Easy Read + accessible formats
Accessible METHODS of
eng't - venues, timings, support
eg transport, PAs, information
Get it right for disabled people
= getting it right for everyone*



Community Empowerment: Building Capacity & Voices

Disabled people frequently lack self- determination, the chance to participate – even in their own lives and the chance to contribute. This means that building disabled people’s skills, strengths, capacity and voices to participate has been more important than ever during 2015-16 and why we’ve delivered 5885 learning opportunities.



The Community Empowerment Act became law in 2015 offering opportunities for disabled people and other communities to influence the things that matter most to them.

There were Glasgow and National conversations in abundance around themes such as Fairer Scotland, Health and Social Care, Human Rights, Poverty, Social Security and many more.

GDA have responded by supporting over 1200 disabled people through learning and over 1500 through events, to build their skills, confidence and capacity to contribute to participative democracy.



Disabled people’s priorities include the need to be recognised as a community, *“People have asked why we want recognition as a community of interest and not just to be part of our local communities – well it’s for the same reasons that LGBT people wanted Equal Marriage and not just civil partnerships – because they weren’t equal and it didn’t go far enough. And neither do local communities. We want to have access to both, but while we can’t access the communities on our doorsteps, we’ll come together – in a different way – to form our own communities through GDA.”* Chris, DfC.

GDA has also created opportunities for disabled people’s voices to be heard. We have worked closely with Scottish Government and others to produce guidance for Community Planning Partnerships around community participation and co-production, focusing on prevention and tackling inequalities. We have also worked in partnership with the Scottish Community Development Centre on revising the National Standards for Community Engagement to ensure that these take account of all citizens including disabled people and those from Equalities Groups.



GDA Drivers for Change: Building Contributions

Drivers for Change is an active network of GDA members using their expert lived experience to work with others towards disability equality and to secure human rights. More than 80 disabled people are members of the Drivers for Change network and are supported by GDA to work with others towards improvements in attitudes, policies and services.



Building confidence and connections to boost contributions requires:

- ✓ Peer support from other disabled people
- ✓ Information about rights
- ✓ Briefing papers
- ✓ Knowledge of priorities from disabled people
- ✓ Links with and speakers from other organisations
- ✓ Connections to opportunities outside of GDA
- ✓ Media training to learn how best to share experience and deal with biased media
- ✓ Practical support such as transport, PAs, venue and other access

DfC network has had a variety of training sessions including:

- ✓ Media skills training
- ✓ Telling your story
- ✓ Equalities and Human Rights training
- ✓ Benefits and Welfare Reform training
- ✓ Social Media
- ✓ Ipad and IT training
- ✓ Campaigning and lobbying
- ✓ Facilitators' training
- ✓ Briefing sessions ahead of consultation events
- ✓ Activate with Glasgow University (this has grown DfC massively!)



Disabled people's voices, through Divers for Change and GDA's wider member involvement have reached far and wide. The Drivers have fed views, suggestions, lived experiences and ideas for solutions into many themes and in many ways:

- ✓ Building Connections - East End
- ✓ Resilient Glasgow
- ✓ Hate Crime Action Group
- ✓ Radio Interviews
- ✓ Social Capital Research
- ✓ Website and GDA branding
- ✓ Human Rights
- ✓ Welfare Reform
- ✓ Care Charges consultation
- ✓ Glasgow City Council budget
- ✓ Manifesto development sessions
- ✓ Scottish Government focus groups
- ✓ Audit Scotland Social care research
- ✓ Young People as facilitators
- ✓ Community correspondents
- ✓ Social Security devolved powers

Peer support becomes a stepping stone for members to become active participants in the policy making decisions which affect their lives - to persuade those in power to do things differently, to listen to disabled people's voices and in turn to improve better policies and services." **Assist Social Capital Evaluation, 2016**

"I like to be well informed so getting briefing papers and information well in advance – in an accessible format – is really helpful and helps me contribute."
George, 38



Susan's story

I went to a few briefing meetings about the local and Scottish government budgets. I was asked if I would go along to represent GDA at a local public meeting. I was nervous but it was such a great opportunity and I was proud to be asked. GDA supports us to take the lead, whether that's in our own life, standing up for ourselves, or within GDA. I know that my skills, knowledge and expertise are valued. Now I'm giving back."



Connecting with Partners: Working Together for better services

Over 2015-16, GDA shared learning with over 500 staff from agencies, worked with partners across a range of events, jointly delivered events and learning and acted as advisers on strategic working groups. We also referred disabled people to partner organisations to ensure they get access to the right support. Having built the capacity and confidence of disabled people, they are better positioned to contribute their lived experience. It is also necessary to build knowledge and capacity of decision makers so they better understand and can make improvements for disabled people.

An excellent example of this is a series of Masterclasses delivered by GDA and the Purple Poncho Players, with funding boosted from a Scottish Government grant. The project, **“Building Resilience, Inspiring Change”** aimed to tackle negative stereotypes, build resilience and inspire change amongst voluntary and public sector agencies.



“Getting sick, having a disease and becoming disabled – I thought that was the end of my life and it was all over. I lost all my courage, my confidence and thought my life was over. Joining GDA and the PPPs changed all that. I’m now a contributor- a friend, a mentor and active volunteer in my community – in GDA.” **Rose, PPPs**



“I was absolutely blown away by the PPPs – articulate, powerful, moving and inspiring. I want to immediately change things to make them better for disabled people- not just because it was moving but because these are basic human rights.” **participant of Masterclass**



“GDA’s approach to ‘shared power’ engenders positive reciprocal relationships, reinforcing the values of the organisation and leading to a strong network of confident, active and trusting individuals.” **Assist Social Capital, 2016**

Connecting with Partners: Inspiring Change

The Purple Poncho Players are GDA's theatrical wing of Drivers for Change. They use comedy, music, poetry and drama to share key messages about disabled people's everyday lives and the issues that matter to us. Supported by GDA and with development and capacity building support from a professional creative team, the PPPs have been working harder this year than ever before, rehearsing powerful new material to raise awareness and inspire conversations for change – and inspirational they were!

Direct feedback from partners confirms increased understanding of disabled people's issues, including barriers. Partners also express improved confidence in personal and organisational capacity as well as increased motivation to remove barriers and create more accessible services and supports.



- 4 PPP development days
- 11 PPP performances
- 30+ PPP rehearsals



"The Forum has enjoyed working in partnership with GDA for a number of years. As well as working at a strategic policy level on the big issues including welfare reform and reshaping care for older people our members were also lucky this year to benefit from a 'bespoke' GDA Masterclass. The feedback we received from members on the Masterclass was phenomenal!"

Colleen Rowan, Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations Council 2015

GDA acts as a conduit supporting disabled people to directly come together with agencies e.g. Community Planning Partners from Glasgow, Employability partners, learning agencies, Glasgow City Council and Scottish Government around developing new social security powers. *"Hearing directly from disabled people really made them think about how their own associations' deliver services for disabled people."* **GWSFHA**

Celebrating good practice: Glasgow Life

A group of Glasgow Life staff made an action plan at their Masterclass to open up their 'mystery shoppers' scheme to include GDA members. GDA staff are now working with Glasgow Life staff to develop an accessible programme to enable GDA members to take part in training to become 'mystery shoppers'. Glasgow Life have set aside an access budget to support this.

"It was great to speak freely to discuss barriers that may affect disabled customers and employees then work with the GDA staff to develop some great ideas about resolving some of these. We left with a positive action plan and we can implement a few things immediately!"

Glasgow Life staff member

Conversations for Change: Glasgow Independent Living Strategy

Working alongside partners, progress with the Glasgow ILS over the year has included:

- Facilitated workshops and events to explore barriers and innovative solutions.
- Establishment of working groups to drive forward progress.
- Building skills, knowledge and capacity of disabled people to contribute experience.
- Building skills, knowledge and capacity of partners to understand and respond.
- Bringing together disabled people and partner agencies to explore solutions together.

"Our Vision is that by 2026 Glasgow will have evolved into a fully inclusive and accessible city where disabled people are able to achieve independent living. To achieve our vision we will work together and take action to bring change across the whole system, to remove disabling barriers and make independent living a reality."

Extract from Glasgow ILS Vision Statement, signed by ILS partners.

Case Study: Partnerships for Change

- ✓ 3 Independent Living Masterclass events were designed jointly and delivered to staff within Wheatley Group, Glasgow Life and Glasgow & West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations.
- ✓ Over 160 staff attended.
- ✓ Purple Poncho Players performed and GDA also presented expert input.
- ✓ Each agency had input from a senior officer.
- ✓ GDA facilitated workshops to explore opportunities for improvements in service design and delivery, building on good work already underway within agencies.
- ✓ GDA collated and analysed workshop materials and delivered feedback to senior management teams in each organisation.



Programmes meaningfully involve disabled people, build on their strengths and increase connections to have more control over their own lives and to understand and shape wider services which support them and improve their lives,"

Assist Social Capital, 2016

Staying connected: Accessible information and communication

Key Stats 2015 - 2016

- **2877** Twitter followers
- **2523** Tweets
- **1418** Facebook likes
- **4000+** incoming calls
- **PPP** short film produced
- **30+** information stalls
- **8** newsletters sent
- **3600+** on postal mailing list
- **12** e-bulletins sharing learning and information
- **50+** stall holders at various events
- **20+** media appearances/articles



Supporting parents & carers: "Transitions" event

We held a "transitions" event for parents and carers to enable them to access information, support and advice about independent living and SDS, which included:

- 86 parents/carers of young disabled people.
- 55 professionals from a variety of agencies.
- 27 info stalls from local and national organisations.
- 11 round table discussions.
- 4 discussions groups led by young GDA members.
- chill-out zone (massage, aromatherapy, mini-facials)



"Meeting GDA's young members was inspirational!"

"Best event of its type we've ever been to."

"A one-stop-shop event is a welcome break from the daily struggle to find support."

Removing barriers to information and learning

GDA provides all information in a variety of accessible formats. We remove barriers to participation by providing free personal assistance, transport and communication support at all of our courses and events. We contact participants to check access needs, remind them of their taxi times and send letters confirming all arrangements.

Our members tell us that they greatly value our total commitment to accessibility. *"I feel safe with GDA as I can trust them to provide great access"* Clare, 22



Financial Report 2015 • 2016

GDA has been grateful to attract and increase income by more than 30% compared with last year's, as seen by the total income of £836,740. This increased confidence in investment has been incredible during challenging times and is due to GDA drawing on disabled people's lived experience to make a compelling case about need. Funds have been invested from Big Lottery, Scottish Government, Glasgow City Council and Glasgow Transformation Fund. Details are opposite under 'Income'.



GDA has rigid protocols in place for financial management including policies for Delegated Authorities, a Reserves Policy and a Risk Register. Regular budget and resources meetings as well as Board reporting enable finance to be discussed and scrutinised at various levels.

A Financial Statement is presented opposite and full Audited Accounts are available on request. These comply with SORP (regulations for statement of recommended practice for charities).

GDA has worked hard to make sure that disabled people benefit most from our projects and programmes. Almost all GDA staff engage in direct delivery of programmes and support for disabled people. For example, administration staff undertake extensive event management support to ensure that disabled people have the necessary access and support to participate. GDA premises are also used for direct delivery of programmes.

Expenditure totalled **£842,040** and analysis shows that **GDA spends 80.35% on direct delivery and only 19.65% on infrastructure/overheads.**

This is based on apportioning staff delivery time, premises for direct delivery and office costs which contribute to delivery.

GDA provides a fabulous return on investment: with **1226** individual participants taking part in **5885** learning opportunities, unit costs were **£142.28** per learning opportunity.

This year, as part of our commitment to sustainability, GDA generated 3% of funding through partnership working, donations and consultancy to increase income and broaden our funding base. GDA will strive to secure ongoing investment for the future for vital programmes and supports with and for disabled people.

Morag Mackay • Treasurer

Financial Statement

Income & Expenditure Statement

1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016

Income

£

Big Lottery Pathways for Change (Restricted Funds)	315,274
Big Lottery Development – (Restricted Funds)	50,000
Other – Partnership Working (Restricted Funds)	10,246
GCC – IGF (Restricted Funds)	74,000
GCVS Transformation Fund – Health & Social Care (Restricted)	48,496
Scottish Government – Self Directed Support (Restricted Funds)	118,842
Scottish Government – Mitigating Welfare Reform (Restricted)	44,620
Scottish Government – People & Communities (Restricted Funds)	123,500
Scottish Government – Equality Fund (Restricted Funds)	50,000
Refunds	204
Donations	1,558
Total	£836,740

Expenditure

Staffing	323,754
Premises & Overheads	89,635
Access Facilitation	165,405
Programme Costs	225,336
Governance & Legal (Including Movement in Accruals £1800)	8,949
Big Lottery – Development	19,996
Capital	4,000
Sundries	2,051
Depreciation	2,914
Total	£842,040

Net expenditure (5,300)

Moving Forward

GDA continues to grow and attract new members demonstrating an ongoing need for delivering accessible supports including peer support and a sense of community. Looking to the future, we will continue to support disabled people through our programmes to enable increased choices, opportunities and improved lives.

In these extremely difficult times, we know more than ever the need to build personal resilience through increased confidence, building connections and supporting vital contributions.

We also recognise the role of services in supporting disabled people and will ensure that people are skilled and confident about contributing their lived experience, ideas and voices so that policies and services better meet their needs. We will work with the **Scottish Government on devolved Social Security powers**, which offers an opportunity to design more dignified and respectful processes.

The **Vision Statement for Glasgow's Independent Living Strategy** will launch later in 2016. GDA will continue to work alongside GCIL and partners to increase their understanding of disabled people's issues and find solutions to barriers and blockages. This will result in better design and delivery of services that support independent living.

We look forward to working in more depth with several of our learning programme partners e.g. in local communities with sheltered housing providers, Housing Associations and public agencies. We are developing a wider range of intergenerational learning and will take every opportunity to create cultures of learning and peer support.

GDA is continually reviewing, planning and developing our programmes of learning and support for disabled people. We frequently ask members and partners for feedback and greatly value their ideas. We are working towards **rebranding GDA with a new logo and website** – a major piece of work to help our Communications Strategy and sustainability. In addition we are planning two short films about our work with young disabled people and our Future Visions project. We will involve disabled people in these developments and look forward to sharing these in the near future!

Organisational sustainability is an ongoing focus. We continue to explore a broad funding base, wide stakeholder support and models of income generation. We will remain true to equality, community development and human rights principles and be always mindful that our most sustainable asset remains: - the increased confidence, connections and contributions of disabled people themselves.



*The social capital generated is evidence of GDA's success in enabling its members to build on the confidence they obtain by being part of a larger network of people with shared understanding. This sense of taking control and having resilience is fundamental to GDA's successful model which enables participants to access support and opportunities to improve their lives. **Assist Social Capital, 2016.***

Thank You

GDA board, members and staff would like to thank and acknowledge the following:

For large projects and one-off funding:

Big Lottery, Glasgow City Council, Scottish Government, Transformation Fund.

For ongoing support, partnership and allies:

There are many supporters and too many to mention by name: many thanks and appreciation to all partners, supporters and allies who are greatly valued.

Special thanks to...

- Purple Poncho Players who give enormous amounts of their time, energy, commitment and personal stories, all of which are invaluable to the creation and production of their wonderful performances.
- Learning tutors and partners who deliver taster courses and programmes to build the capacity & confidence of disabled people.
- Sandy Nelson, George Drennan, Nadia Drennan, Simon Bain, Peter Patterson Janice Keddie, Scott Fleming and Thrive for support and professional expertise.
- Our fabulous PAs who make our learning, events and programmes accessible, running smoothly for learners, members and partners.
- Baubles, Bangles & Beads, Marlene McCrorie, Margaret Sinclair, Waitrose, Lenzie Bowling Club and Queens Park Parish Church for kind donations.
- Jenny Speirs, a fabulous artist and illustrator who worked with us to create a range of wonderful GDA illustrations (like the one below!).

And finally...

...thank you to our members who support us to be a strong collective voice for disabled people in Glasgow.





Glasgow Disability Alliance

Confident, Connected, Contributing

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