



Glasgow Disability Alliance
Confident Connected Contributing

Participatory Glasgow: Leaving no-one behind





Because our voices don't get heard, or we don't get listened to, the barriers don't get tackled – it's a cycle of exclusion.

No support to take part

No accessible info about what's happening



Participatory Glasgow: Leaving no-one behind

Communities across Glasgow and Scotland are having more say over how public money is spent.

This is known as 'Participatory Budgeting' or 'Community Choices'.

In 2018 GDA members' Action Research – **Budgeting for Equality** found that disabled people face huge barriers to taking part and having their voice heard in their local communities.

As local communities start having more say about pots of money, decisions and services, Glasgow City Council and the Scottish Government funded GDA to **support disabled people to participate and have their say** – in their **local areas** and in wider **mainstream decisions** that affect them – to help make sure **no-one is left behind**.

Since late 2018, GDA has piloted this flagship project modelling the participation of disabled people in the rollout of Participatory Budgeting in Glasgow. Over 1000 people across the 4 areas have been engaged and many more contributed lived experiences, priorities and solutions to mainstream service planning, design and reform.



*Isolated – no access
to community venues*

No transport

Ignored

Can't get out

We used our disabled people-led Community Development approach, to:

Build connections:

- Reaching out through community outreach to engage disabled people using accessible communications, marketing and events.
- Creating safe, accessible spaces for disabled people to come together with others “in the same boat” in each of the 4 pilot wards: **Calton – Canal – Pollok – Pollokshields** and across Glasgow in relation to mainstream services.
- Connecting them with local partners, services and Participatory Budgeting processes.

Build confidence:

- Disabled people require confidence and skills to participate, know their rights and have their say.
- Partners need to boost confidence to identify barriers, remove them and improve access to their services and activities.

Support contributions:

- Contributions disabled people can make to their communities with the right access and support.
- Contributions of partners and allies to removing barriers and progressing inclusion and equality, working with disabled people.



Calton, Ward 9: Tackling Child Poverty

245 GDA members live in Calton ward and throughout the project, GDA has reached out to hundreds more across the area via community engagement activities and through partnerships and network collaborations.

14 local people agreed to participate in a Local Calton PB Group to shape priorities for local disabled people. There have been 7 days of accessible meetings including a Capacity Building Programme.

Local disabled people have contributed over 525 hours to their area.

Disabled People in Calton said:

Barriers to taking part include:

- Being judged by others about being disabled
- Getting reassessed and losing my benefits
- Lack of confidence
- Inflexible care and support
- Having to pay for taxis
- Not being involved in designing services
- Not hearing about opportunities to get involved
- Speaking up time and again about the same issues and seeing no change.

What helps?

- Being taken seriously
- Having your needs listened to
- More awareness of issues facing disabled people and our rights
- Better access and information
- Being included and involved
- Getting follow up when you do speak out
- Knowing rights

"Things would be much more accessible if disabled people had a voice - but we don't get asked."



Disabled People's priorities in Calton:

- More accessible housing and money for adaptations
- Homecare/personal assistance budgets
- Inclusive education and learning
- More support for disabled people to get jobs
- Fairer benefits system and welfare rights
- Transport
- Peer support from others who understand
- Help with independent living
- Social Care and health care.

Mainstream Solutions:

Involving disabled people in tackling Child Poverty

Calton Ward's Child Poverty theme left some disabled people feeling that only parents and young people could have a say. However, as we know, disabled people's households make up 48% of all those facing poverty in the UK *: so tackling Child Poverty must include disabled people too. (*Joseph Rowntree Foundation).

Parents/carers who are disabled or have a disabled child need a whole range of barriers removed, to lift their children out of poverty:

- Accessible welfare rights support to enable uptake of benefits and entitlements: currently this need is met by Glasgow City Council and GDA's jointly delivered 'Rights Now' project delivering accessible welfare rights support across the city.
- Readily available information about rights and services available.
- Accessible jobs and employability support.
- Accessible learning and education.
- Properly funded social care support and accessible community based services.
- Suitable accessible housing.
- Inclusive accessible childcare.
- Inclusive holiday food / activity programmes.
- Accessible transport to access these opportunities.

As Glasgow's Child Poverty Action plan rolls out, involve disabled people to ensure no one is left behind.



Canal, Ward 16: Boosting Employability

We want to be recognised - value the lived experience of disabled people!

Canal ward is home to 230 GDA members.

Of the 4 pilot wards it is the only one which for many years had a local area disabled-people led organisation – previous Possil and Milton Forum – now Possibilities, with a strong legacy of supporting disabled people.

Canal Ward is also home to some of GDA's most active Drivers for Change members. After taking a leading role in our Action Research project last year, this group were well practised in reaching out to discuss all things PB with other disabled people in the area.

Through a process of GDA engagement and eliminating barriers, a Local Canal PB Group of 15 disabled people was formed. GDA ran 6 sessions including a 3 day capacity building programme, with confidence building and a specialist employability workshop for disabled jobseekers in the ward. Through these workshops local disabled people were supported to develop their ideas, engage with the wider community and gain their support, resulting in two successful PB applications – with over 700 hours contributed by local disabled people! We also worked closely with the fantastic '3Cs' citizens' panel, who asked GDA to run a focus group on participation and disabled people's priorities in the ward.

Disabled People in Canal said:

Barriers to taking part include:

- Lack of accessible transport
- Lack of Information about services and opportunities
- Excluded from some local groups
- Lack of confidence
- Social Care – 'not being able to get out and choose what you do with your time'.

What helps?

- Accessible opportunities to learn
- Having secure benefits / income
- 'Empowerment as a collective' - "Nothing About Us Without Us"
- Welfare Rights- GDA Rights Now

Disabled People's priorities in Canal:

- Transport – better access and connections ('Even MyBus is restricted by the boundaries')
- GDA satellites in local areas to get info, rights and empowerment
- Physical environment – pavements, roads, access, safety
- Better access to community facilities
- Educate employers: disability equality training delivered by disabled people/ GDA so they know our rights and their responsibilities
- Isolation – loneliness
- Information – what's going on
- Advocacy
- Volunteering
- Better attitudes
- Human Rights

All these barriers impact on your confidence – it's a vicious circle. When you're kicked to the kerb for so long you become defensive and untrusting.

While 'employability' is not within the direct grasp of many disabled people due to employer discrimination – aptly named Employer-ability – the Canal Group all highlighted the need to get out, learn and be active whether for employability, to tackle isolation, or to make contributions and fulfil your potential.

'Employability' is off-putting for lots of disabled people – you worry it's DWP and they'll stop your benefits. For a lot of us that can't work we just need support to have a life beyond staring at four walls.



The Local Canal PB Group suggested a '**Big Milton Fun Day**' – to bring together disabled people with a whole range of community groups and services, to share information, to learn in informal and fun ways and to connect – using GDA's tried and tested model of involvement.

With support from GDA staff, the group applied to the Thriving Milton PB fund, pitched their idea, and successfully secured £750 towards the event. Local Social Enterprise the Allander Group also then made a generous donation of £500 towards the event and GDA's PB Project input support to local people and organisations, to drive forward the event.



Making connections...

It was a small amount of money but we used it wisely, on something we as disabled people really needed. Imagine what we could do if they involved us in the big bucks!
GDA member, Canal





Barriers to Employability start with getting out of bed – if you don't have support. Isolation, confidence, lack of training or qualifications, lack of transport, restrictions on education...



Foodbank donation...

Through countless hours of hard work, meetings and community activism by local disabled people, backed by intensive support from GDA staff, GDA members brought together a fantastic, accessible event:

- 350+ people of all ages attended
- 18 different organisations attended with stalls and activities, promoting their services to local people.
- 6 GDA members ran their own workshops, activities and stalls.
- £336 raised through raffling donations from local businesses
- Proceeds donated to 2 local foodbanks.

Local politicians and media attended, commending the group's success – including a motion to the Scottish Parliament made by Bob Doris MP, recognising the contribution made to the area by GDA and our members.

GDA members' follow-up idea was then submitted (successfully!) to Canal's '3Cs' PB fund for £997 towards a '**Be All you Can Be**' day – looking at 'employability' in its broadest sense: learning new skills, exploring new interests and recognising the contributions disabled people can and do make to our communities, with the right support.



Feeling empowered...

'The Ripple Effect' of empowering disabled people

- Milton library: GDA's Fun Day brought lots of new people to the Library signing up as members.
- Venues we engaged with to scope out for our events have asked GDA to help them with mini-access audits.
- Organisations we connected with to spread the word have asked GDA to advise them on access improvements too.
- Many have offered to run free learning sessions through GDA for our members!

"After speaking to GDA we are definitely more aware of what it takes for disabled people to participate, and how to make our services more accessible."

GDA, our members and the 3Cs project made huge strides in Canal ward connecting people to each other, to services and opportunities.

Mainstream Solutions: Boosting employability for disabled people

Employability is a huge challenge for disabled people, who are more than twice as likely to be unemployed, due to barriers in education, the environment and workplace discrimination.

To address the root causes of the disability employment gap, GDA is working alongside Scottish Government and Glasgow City Council, ensuring disabled people's experience and voices help shape mainstream solutions to these ingrained barriers, eg:

- Co-producing a Quality Standard for employability services in Glasgow.
- Engaging with employers to raise awareness of inclusive employment.

Pollok, Ward 3: Empowering young people

People stay at home because they can't get out, and end up feeling depressed.

While 168 GDA members live in the Pollok Ward, 25 fitted the eligibility criteria for Pollok's PB project, which focussed on young people up to age 25. Following extensive engagement a local Pollok PB Young Disabled People Group was formed with 13 regular participants meeting, planning and working together to establish priorities and take these forward.

7 days of meetings were held and there was huge attendance at a voting event where members pitched ideas to a large audience at the **Big Night In**. Hours contributed by local disabled people is over 715.

Young disabled people face enormous barriers to participating, and living their lives, with choice and control. Disabled people age 16 are at least twice likely as non-disabled peers not to be in education, employment or training and this rises to 3x as likely by age 19. GDA's evidence is that by mid 20s they feel that they have no control over their life whatsoever: aspirations are low, self esteem is crushed and social connections can be virtually non existent outside of family support.

Our outreach with young disabled people in Pollok was delayed by our struggle to find a fully accessible venue anywhere in the ward – the only suitable facility is a small community room which is in constant use. Eventually we moved outside the ward to hold our meetings at Cardonald Campus.

Young Disabled People in Pollok said:

Barriers to taking part include:

- No accessible meeting space to get together
- Nothing accessible for young disabled people to do
- Attitudes
- Isolation
- Not knowing our rights
- Not having access to our money
- No transport or social care support

What helps?

- Knowing your rights
- Connecting with other young disabled people at GDA
- Seeing disabled role models at GDA – for example seeing the Purple Poncho Players
- Raising people's awareness of disabled people's rights to improve attitudes
- Access transport and support

Young Disabled People's priorities in Pollok:

- More quiet spaces with sensory equipment
- More Changing places toilets with Closimat
- Accessible parks, equipment (to hire too) and paths
- Accessible computer zones in local area
- Accessible community halls
- Support to take part
- Lowered kerbs
- Access across all of life

Pollok Youth Access Fund

Lack of access across the Pollok ward was a clear priority for young GDA members.

The group's discussions sparked the idea of an access fund – £10,000 capital money to buy and install accessibility equipment or make adaptations – to a park, IT suite or toilet facility within the ward.

A further £7,975 revenue bid was also successful: this will be designated entirely to the access and support costs of the young people's ongoing participation and leadership of the project: transport, meeting costs, personal assistance, as they meet to plan research, engage with partners, visit potential sites. Significant GDA staff resource will be otherwise committed from GDA's PB Project to support delivery of the project.



Empowering Contributions & Creating Connections:

- **Thriving Places Priesthill & Househillwood Environmental and Community Safety group:** GDA members supported to connect with this forum have helped organisers understand the need for accessible venues and transport provision – and have raised awareness for the whole group of wider barriers disabled people are facing, such as in housing.
- **Rosehill Housing** who host these meetings have now asked GDA to help them with an Access Audit and to recommend improvements. They also plan to involve young GDA members in future 'community mapping' activities.
- PB Anchor Organisation **SWAMP (South West Arts and Media Project)** enthusiastically requested Disability Awareness training for their staff and volunteers, and an Access audit on their new premises currently being refurbished into the first of Glasgow's new community hubs! They also provide GDA opportunities to promote our work through their media channels.

The project has allowed GDA to pursue and create these connections and opportunities for young disabled people to raise awareness of the barriers they face, building the confidence needed to do so - and work with people in more powerful positions, to influence change in their area.

Mainstream Solutions: Empowering Young Disabled People

To meaningfully address the root causes of young disabled people's inequality, we also work alongside Glasgow City Council and the Scottish Government to ensure Young Disabled People's voices and experiences are helping inform actions such as the Glasgow Guarantee, and UN Convention on the Rights of the Child implementation.

Pollokshields, Ward 6: Equality for Black and Minority Ethnic communities

With 121 GDA members in Pollokshields ward, we reached out through an incredible network of local organisations to spread the word further about our group. With a delayed start to the Pollokshields Ward 6 project, we hope to have even more chance to support our members' involvement as the panel and process take shape this summer.

So far we have run 5 meetings/events to build capacity around PB and confidence and skills to use voices and articulate priorities. Local Pollokshields PB Group was 18 for the first 3 meetings and settled to an average of 11. Local people have so far contributed 466 hours despite delays.

In initial group discussions, Disabled People in Pollokshields have said:

Barriers to taking part include:

- Inflexible care
- Inaccessible trains and buses
- Lack of confidence to have my voice heard
- No accessible activities locally
- Not knowing what's going on
- Isolation
- Discrimination – race related
- Human Rights not delivered

What helps?

- Transport to venues
- Materials in multiple languages
- Accessible transport provided
- GDA support and peers
- Thorough access information: how far is the walk, are there seats on the way?
- Understanding each other's cultures

I took part in a Community Council meeting – I was shushed and it really knocked my confidence – not sure if I had missed anything as I'm deaf.



Disabled People's priorities in Pollokshields:

- More accessible housing, transport, toilets, streets and pavements
- Accessible map of the area for those with mobility impairments
- More local facilities and learning activities e.g. local swimming pool
- Community activities that bring different cultures together
- More activities for disabled children
- A welfare centre – talk about problems, debt, feelings
- Fund social care so carers are less rushed and people can get the help they need.

Making Space for Thematic Communities

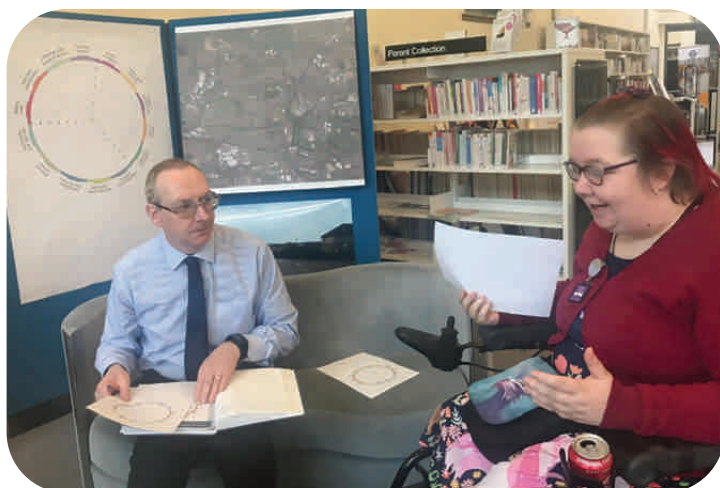
There is vital learning to be gained by contrasting place-based and thematic approaches to community empowerment.

As What Works Scotland reported: **place-based community engagement work routinely fails equalities groups and unintentionally risks widening inequalities. Marginalised groups such as disabled people are not 'hard-to-reach' but 'easy-to-ignore',** due to the additional barriers they face, and the complexity of the issues at the root of their inequality: these are intersecting barriers.

In each ward area, disabled people felt isolated and excluded from opportunities to participate, by lack of access, information, transport and support, and a lack of understanding of disabling barriers. Anchor organisations were not resourced to provide the access and support required. Only through GDA forging connections in the

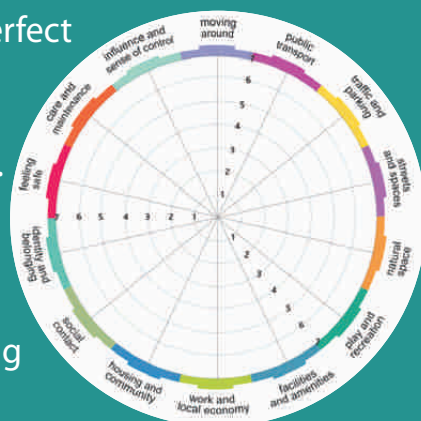
area, raising awareness, and providing vital access and safe, empowering spaces for peer-support were local disabled people able to meaningfully connect with PB processes. Connecting with disabled people's organisations has been vital for disabled people's involvement.

And connecting with disabled people is vital if participation is to reduce inequality!



NHS Scotland's world-renowned **Place Standard Tool** is a perfect example of the importance of involving disabled people to help planners and communities work together across a whole range of issues to improve health and lives in an area. When GDA members took part in a Live Demonstration of the Place Standard Tool at the recent WHO conference, it became clear that vital issues for disabled people were missing from the conversation, and as such would be missing from any actions planned as a result.

GDA will continue to work with the Place Standard team to pilot and help shape a renewed version of the tool better able to capture things like access to aids and equipment, social care, housing adaptations, and social security which impact on disabled people's experiences – their outcomes and their equality, no matter the places where they live.



Safe Spaces for Diverse Voices

You need a space where you don't have to censor yourself or leave part of your identity at the door.

GDA exists to bring disabled people together as a city-wide thematic community, creating accessible spaces for peer support, where disabled people can gain awareness of their rights, build confidence to challenge discrimination, and connect with powerholders, partners and allies, to share their lived experience and help influence change. Together we are working to create a fairer more inclusive Glasgow and Scotland, where no one is left behind.

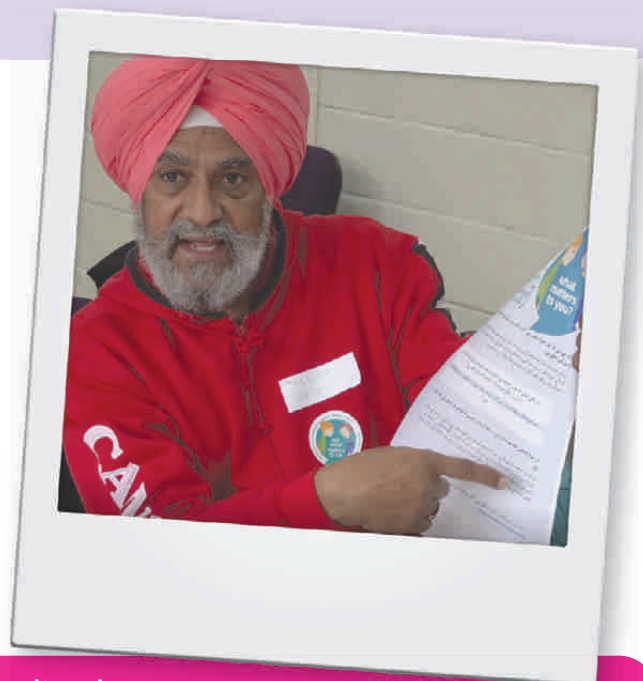
As well as allowing GDA to apply this model of involvement to the smaller, local level, the project has also enabled us to strengthen our intersectional approach to ensure that diverse disabled people of Glasgow are supported to participate and have their voices heard through:

- Our member-led LGBTQ+ Disabled People's Space
- Our BAME Disabled People's Network
- Our Young Disabled people's programmes and Young Drivers for Change
- Our disabled women's network
- Our work with older people who are disabled or have long term conditions

It's a safe environment at GDA as we're all in the same boat – all disabled, so there's no judgement. People are supportive and you can talk freely. We need more of that in our local communities

Our intersectional approach recognises that inequality is often multi-layered, and exists amongst disabled people as well as across society.

Creating safe spaces for marginalised groups to build awareness of their rights, and confidence to challenge discrimination and have their voices heard has greatly strengthened GDA's ability to respond inclusively to support the diverse needs, skills and contributions across Glasgow's 150,000 disabled people.



Safe, Empowering Spaces are vital for marginalised groups to come together, support one another, to gain awareness of their rights, build confidence to challenge the barriers and discrimination they experience which may be invisible to others – this is vital for inclusive participation. In Canal Ward the panel ran focus groups linking with groups run by and for disabled people, women, and minority ethnic people in the ward.

Working together to change things: PB the next generation

Disabled people in all 4 wards highlighted significant mainstream services as top priorities for change, in particular:

**Housing – Transport – Social Care and Services – Social Security
Accessible jobs and learning – Human Rights**

Underpinning these issues was the repeated need for Peer Support, Understanding Rights and Building Confidence – all through accessible support.

Many of the issues above would be difficult if not impossible to meaningfully address through the small grants model of PB.

GDA firmly believe that Second Generation PB, building on the Christie Principles by involving communities in decisions about wider public service reform and how all our resources are spent – will be key to empowering communities and tackling inequalities to achieve a Fairer Glasgow and Scotland.

My idea was an access fund to cover transport or equipment young disabled people might need, to gain work experience. It's too big for me to run myself, I'd need a big organisation to do it – or maybe the government. GDA member, Calton

Building towards a strategic approach to improving life outcomes for Disabled People in Glasgow, GDA continues to work closely with partners and allies across the Council, wider public and voluntary sectors, to ensure disabled people's lived experiences are helping shape solutions to the major barriers affecting disabled people's lives.

To help lay the groundwork for a Flagship Equalities approach to mainstreaming PB in Glasgow, our project enables us to connect 1000+ disabled people directly with decision makers and service leads, to share their lived experiences and help influence progress around:

Health and Social Care

- Social Care Listening event Nov 2018 brought 200+ disabled people together directly with Convenor for Health and Social Care – 137 took part in peer research to share their experiences of Social care through our survey '*How are We Doing Glasgow?*'
- 350+ disabled people came together with 35 members of the HSCP for in-depth discussions on Glasgow's Draft Strategic plan, peer-facilitated by GDA's Drivers for Change members, using GDA accessible briefings and discussion papers.



Transport and Infrastructure

- Linking 50+ GDA members directly with transport planners and decision makers from the Connectivity Commission, SPT, Transport Scotland, Directors from Neighbourhoods and Sustainability, and Glasgow's emerging Bus Partnership – to share feedback on recent developments and priorities for upcoming plans.
- Local area redevelopments: GDA members from across the city have been supported to feed into planning and design processes for Glasgow's Avenues projects, Byres Rd redevelopment, the North City Way, Yorkhill and Kelvingrove. This level of local area mobilisation is only possible due to the additional capacity and groundwork carried out as part of our Participatory budgeting project.

Accessible facilities for participation and lifelong learning

- 50+ GDA members met with representatives from Glasgow Convention Bureau and Glasgow Life representatives to share their ideas and experiences around accessing culture, leisure and sports in the city.
- Feed into developments around customer services training in businesses across Glasgow.
- Connect with Glasgow Life's Mystery Shopper programme and support continual improvement of accessibility and disabled people's participation in Glasgow's rich cultural life.

Employability and Social Security

GDA's extensive work on employability locally and nationally has been boosted by the PB mainstreaming approach, including:

- 20+ active participants supported to engage with Clyde Gateway as they shape a proposal to house Scotland's new Social Security Agency.
- 20+ participated in employability information sessions about opportunities that will be forthcoming with the new agency.
- Glasgow City Council and GDA's hugely successful Rights Now project was conceived through a participatory budgeting process via the Poverty Leadership Panel. GDA members' proposal for accessible welfare rights provision was not voted a priority issue by the wider panel. However Glasgow City Government strategically intervened to prioritise a project which addresses disabled people's widening inequality and maximise incomes to mitigate impact of Universal Credit. This is the type of approach which disabled people require to level the playing field.



Sharing the Learning

PB in Glasgow is in its infancy and we already have abundant learning to share about the successes and the challenges. There is fantastic momentum on which to build and we look forward to working with partners and allies to drive forward a flagship 2nd generation PB in Glasgow.

A transformative deliberative PB Framework, designed to tackle inequalities could be the lever we need to truly amplify the expertise of those otherwise unheard and left behind. Disabled people have much to contribute to solving the problems we face together in our city and county. Here are GDA's top ten suggestions for inclusive PB in Glasgow and Scotland:

Planning and Design:

- 1. Work with disabled people and wider equalities groups to set Equalities Outcomes for PB locally, city-wide, and nationally.**
- 2. Allow more time and resources to remove barriers:** including transport, support and accessible information.
- 3. Public Sector Equality Duty Training and Disability Equality Training for all involved in PB:** to raise awareness of rights and best inclusive practice.
- 4. Ensure PB is about improving people's lives:** use Equality and Human Rights Assessments to measure progress.

Delivery:

- 5. Identify and involve those who are easily ignored including disabled people,** by connecting with equalities community led organisations.
- 6. Empower and actively encourage marginalised voices:** Build in accessible, thematic, safe-space approaches, to empower equalities groups to contribute lived experience to PB processes.
- 7. Enable informed deliberation** based on existing evidence and principles of equality and human rights.

Learning and Culture Change:

- 8. Embed a "test and learn" culture within and between organisations** from leadership to delivery which cultivates confidence to listen, do things differently, take 'risks', and learn from mistakes as well as successes.
- 9. Resource communities of interest** e.g. disabled people led organisations to build capacity of equalities groups to participate in PB locally and city wide.
- 10. Lead the way in Second Generation PB:** continue to **test out new methods and approaches to embed disabled peoples' participation in decisions about mainstream services**, using Public Sector Equality Duty as an enabling framework including: transport, housing, urban planning, education, employability, health and particularly social care.



Applying the National Standards for Community Engagement¹

Inclusion

We will Identify and involve the people and organisations that are affected by the focus of the engagement.

Seek out disabled people and ask them how they want to be involved!

Support

We will identify and overcome any barriers to participation.

E.g. transport, support, accessible venues, personal assistance, capacity building.

Planning

There is a clear purpose for the engagement which is based on a shared understanding of community needs and ambitions.

Set goals which reflect the diverse needs and voices of the community.

Working Together

We will work effectively together to achieve the aims of the engagement.

Value disabled people's expertise, demonstrate respect and ensure barriers are removed throughout.

Methods

We will use methods of engagement that are fit for purpose.

Different people may need different approaches - be flexible and ask people what works for them!

Communication

We will communicate clearly and regularly with the people organisations and communities affected by the engagement.

Ask people what format of information they need and how they would like to keep in touch.

Impact

We will assess the impact of the engagement and use what has been learned in our future community engagement.

Ask disabled people for feedback - what works, what could be better? Were they able to participate fully and be heard? Were their voices reflect in the outcomes?

¹<http://www.voicescotland.org.uk/>



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Confident Connected Contributing

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