

## Chair's report

On behalf of my fellow Trustees I would like to introduce this Annual Impact Report to give an overview of the great work the organisation has undertaken for the 12 months to April 2009. Particularly I would like to thank all of the Trustees for the significant amount of additional work and valuable time they gave last year in undertaking to make the transfer of DAD becoming a Company Limited by Guarantee and a registered charity. Trustees made the considered decision that in the best interest of the organisation it was not viable to wait for the new Charity Incorporated model to become available and that to protect the interests of DAD and prepare the organisation for developments in contracting and changes to funding streams it was necessary to make the change. All of the Trustees also committed to remain with the organisation through this period of change and become Company Directors, a very different undertaking in many ways, and as Chairman I appreciated that support and the continuity it has given the new company structure.

Members, staff and volunteers also actively supported the changes, attending consultation events and reading papers. The process was supported throughout by Dickinson Dees Solicitors whose advice and expertise was invaluable. Particularly I would like to thank funders who enabled grants and agreements to be smoothly transferred to the new company.

As a new Company since the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2008 DAD has continued to thrive, constantly undertaking new work, ensuring that the organisation is often ahead of changes locally and nationally. National recognition of User Led organisations and their value to the local community, that DAD has campaigned for over 20 years with colleagues in the disability movement, is very welcome. As a User Led organisation that meets the Department of Health criteria as a Centre for Independent Living DAD is now aiming to support the development of other user led groups across Darlington and Tees Valley.

Gordon Pybus, Chairman

# Promoting Equality

The key change to DAD's structure in transferring to be a Company Limited by Guarantee was the re enforcement of control of the organisation by disabled people. The Memorandum and Articles of Association for the new company now ensure a 75% controlling majority by disabled people.

A great deal of DAD's work throughout the year is ensuring that the involvement of disabled people is wide ranging to promote equality.

Work that promotes disability rights includes the work undertaken with the local authority to implement their duty under the Disability Equality Scheme, continually supporting and monitoring Disability Impact Assessments often involving many peoples skills and knowledge from across the organisation from Dimensions and Direct Payments to our Children and Young Peoples service (ChYps).

The Disability Equality Scheme steering group and the Disability Impact Assessment sub-group has worked on the Corporate Plan, Children and Young Person's Plan, Telecare, Local Development Framework, Supporting People, Carers Strategy and Disabled Children's Strategy. This work has been fundamental in ensuring equality for disabled people and the Local Authority is to be congratulated for it's commitment to the scheme.

Disability Equality Training continues to be delivered to support the Disability Equality Scheme and to promote the Social Model of disability. Disability Equality is also delivered through a range of play training provision by a qualified trainer who also works nationally for 'KIDS' inclusive play organisation. Student social work placements from local universities have also enabled the promotion of the Social Model to future Care Managers.

Disabled people and carers have been involved and supported in a wide range of strategic planning groups such as Mental Health Local Implementation Group, Learning Disability Partnership

Board, Carers Strategy Group, Physical and Sensory Impairment Development Group and Disabled Children's Strategy Group.

DAD has benefitted from the national training for Citizen Leaders in the transformation of social care and as a direct result DAD has been involved in the development of the national Resource Allocation System for personalisation of social care.

In preparation for the transformation of Social Care DAD has been developing its capacity to have a future role in support planning and brokerage. Supported by a Capacity Builders grant under the Improving Reach programme DAD has been able to increase its capacity through the development of Information Technology and finance systems, training and outreach work.

This work will also enable support to be given to small and developing User Led organisations, in Darlington and across Tees Valley, interested in supporting people in a variety of ways to benefit from the opportunities that personalisation will bring.

Working with National Centre for Independent Living (NCIL) to facilitate the involvement of Experts by Experience in the inspection process for the Commission for Social Care Inspections has also led to a closer working relationship with NCIL and involvement in the changes effecting User Led organisations.

DAD's involvement with the wider voluntary sector has enabled disability issues to be raised in a range of discussions such as the development of commissioning and procurement, the national performance indicator framework and the local compact review.

Sustainability has also featured in many Trustee debates and planning over the year and particularly Trustees are identifying that work already started in some areas of the organisation, focusing on involvement of younger disabled people, needs to be given a strategic role to ensure the continuation of DAD's work into the future and secure the work conducted by the wide range of projects managed by DAD and described in detail on the following pages.

# Access Interest Group

## Aims

- Highlight good practice around access issues.
- Involve disabled people in the work of the Access Interest Group.
- Raise access issues and concern with planners and providers.
- Promote the Disability Discrimination Act and other legislation.

## Impact

- Supported disabled people to challenge discriminatory practice under the Disability Discrimination Act.
- In response to requests from parents of disabled children, worked with Darlington Borough Council and Darlington Primary Care Trust to set up a working protocol for Speech and Language Therapies in schools.
- Worked with Licensing and Highways Departments to regulate pavement cafes and goods on the pavement.
- Worked with Darlington Borough Council Estates to set a new protocol to replace BV156 (access to Council premises by disabled people).
- Continued to address access issues for local public buildings including the Dolphin Centre, Arts Centre and Railway museum.
- Successful in having the problems of cycling on pavements in the Town Centre highlighted and included in the Local Motion Enquiry Group report.

- Provided training for staff and members of Darlington Borough Council on the Disability Equality Scheme and the importance of impact assessments.
- Continued to chair NHS South Durham Wheelchair Services User group, which influences the development of wheelchair and related services.

### **Aims for next year**

- Highlight good practice around access issues.
- Involve disabled people in the work of the Access Interest Group.
- Raise access issues and concern with planners and providers.
- Promote the Disability Discrimination Act and other legislation.
- Support disabled people to challenge disability discrimination
- Participate in and influence Disability Impact Assessments.

# Carers Support Service

## Aims

- Raise awareness of the Carers Support Service and encourage 'hidden carers' to identify themselves.
- Provide support to carers through the provision of information, advice, 1:1 meetings and groups.
- Maintain and increase the number of carers on the Carers Register to get an accurate picture of carers in Darlington.
- Encourage and support carers to monitor and shape local services and planning through consultation and involvement.
- Improve the quality of service through involvement in Darlington Carers Strategy and by delivering training on carers' awareness and assessments to Care Managers and other professionals.

## Impact

- Provided 1166 carers with regular information and access to advice and support through the Carers Register.
- Developed the 'Memory Café' group for carers of people with dementia and Alzheimer's in partnership with Darlington and Teesside Alzheimer's Branch and continues to run the group after the Alzheimer's Branch workers secondment ended.
- Secured funding for complimentary therapy sessions for carers on a Saturday.
- Negotiated a beginner's Internet course for carers with Age Concern and organised activities for carers to have a break.
- Created the first two modules of a 4 module Carer Programme, specifically a Carers check with a Carers Support Worker looking at all aspects of the caring situation

- Maintained Carers Support notice boards in GP surgeries; Broadcast information in surgeries using JAYEX electronic strips and through Power Point presentations.
- Distributed posters to school staffrooms throughout the Borough, alerting staff to the possibility that they might be carers.
- Raised awareness of carers issues throughout the year, including interviews on local radio and articles in the press, West End Directory and Citizens Guide.
- Increased the project's understanding of Personalisation by having a Carer Support Worker placed with Direct Payments for three months, cascading information to the rest of the team.
- Continued to influence local strategies for carers through membership of the Carers Strategy Steering Group, Mental Health Local Implementation Group and sub groups.

### **Aims for next year**

In addition to carrying forward the aims from this year, the Carers Support Service intends to:-

- Develop additional Carers Programme modules.
- Secure ongoing specialist support for the Memory Café.
- Secure future funding through the forthcoming tendering process to allow the service to continue and develop further.

# ChYPS (Children and Young Peoples' Service)

## Aims

- Support disabled children and young people to access play and leisure opportunities.
- Ensure that disabled children and young people are involved in developing play and leisure across Darlington.
- Disseminate information about play and leisure to parents.
- Provide Inclusive Play training to providers.
- Support play providers to improve access to their services.
- Ensure inclusive play is placed high on the agenda for strategic planners and funders.

## Impact

- Supported 18 children to access mainstream provision. 6 of these were supported individually in a setting of their choice. A further 14 were supported to attend their local Childrens'Centre after school club.
- Provided 1115 hours of support to enable children and young people with complex requirements and / or behavioural impairments to enjoy play.
- Worked with local partners, including Youth Services to identify and address some of the barriers to engaging with young people with complex requirements.
- Produced a newsletter for parents containing information about DASH, ChYPS and other local services and wider support.

- Trained 246 people externally and 90 people from DAD in inclusive play practices, reflecting local providers' commitment to inclusive play, and their acknowledgement that the project was best placed to provide the training.
- Developed an Inclusion and Participation group, members of which have had an input into external planning of local play spaces and advising on accessibility.
- Shaped the development of inclusive play through involvement in the Play Partnership. As a result, inclusive play for disabled children is one of the top priorities on the Play Strategy.

### **Aims for next year**

- Secure funding to enable the work to continue as the Big Lottery funding comes to a close.
- Set up and facilitate a Disabled Children and Young People Forum to build on the work of the Inclusion and Participation group.
- Continue to explore funding options for the Bridging work supporting disabled children and young people into the play or leisure setting of their choice.
- Develop a comprehensive training matrix for internal and external use.
- Develop an inclusion support service, providing support workers for children and young people wanting to access play and leisure using a Direct Payment.

# DASH

## Aims

- Provide inclusive play opportunities for disabled children living in Darlington and the surrounding districts.
- Provide play in an enriched, fun environment, providing challenge and opportunities to ensure that all children and young people who use DASH enjoy themselves.
- Continue to support other mainstream play and leisure settings in working towards inclusion.

## Impact

- 181 children registered to use DASH services.
- Provided around 4,500 hours of inclusive play care through three schemes to children and young people aged between 3-15 years.
- Met the staff qualification standards required by OFSTED including the new Early Years Foundation Stage criteria.
- Continued a successful partnership with the Coleridge Children's Centre, supporting the development of their monthly after school service and a Fun day.
- Delivered, on behalf of Darlington Borough Council's Childcare Development Team Inclusive Play training for every childcare provider, nursery and playschool in Darlington.
- Continued to provide high quality training for DASH staff and volunteers, covering areas such as Safeguarding, Non Violent Crisis Prevention, Risk Management, First Aid, Planning for Play and Inclusive Play practices.

- Developed new skills within the team by enabling the co-ordinator to complete Play Ranger and Playing with Elements training.
- Continue to influence the national Play agenda by attending regional and national meetings.
- Raised the profile of DASH by delivering a session to KIDS Regional Network meeting on 'Inclusion in practice'.

### **Aims for next year**

- Continue to work towards developing Inclusive play provision for children aged 3-16 years.
- Continue to support other mainstream play and leisure settings in working towards inclusion.
- Create and develop further staff training opportunities in relation to Continuing Personal Development, Playwork Principles and the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements.
- Engage disabled children and young people in participation activities.

# Dimensions Disability Initiative

## Aims

- Continue to develop as a user led initiative.
- Promote the Social Model of Disability and a positive image of disabled people.
- Promote self progression and inclusion in respect of education, training, leisure, voluntary experience and employment.

## Impact

- 51 members accessed Dimensions over the year.
- Continued to successfully support members to set personal objectives through the development of Personal Development Plans.
- Examples of goals achieved include:

Completing courses ranging from independent living to mathematics.

Planning social events.

Researching disability related issues.

Addressing emotional issues.

Improving confidence and self esteem.

Supported a member to deliver 1-1 sessions to members on how to use Braille alphabet.

- Undertook a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis with members as part of a larger process influencing the business plan, aims and objectives for the coming year.
- Organised several workshops and training events with members including an introduction to Self Directed Support.

- Challenged discriminatory practises including access to a course and Ambulance Service transport.
- Produced a report regarding the proposed changes to the 'Charging for Non-Residential Care Services document. This report was used to inform an impact assessment and the formal Social Service Department report.
- Initiated a pilot study which involved individual members bringing their own Personal Assistants from Direct Payments to support during their time at Dimensions.
- Participated in the Disability Impact Assessment process for Darlington Borough Council which included identifying the positive and negative impacts on disabled people regarding the future of domiciliary care.
- Supported members to attend consultation meetings with the Patient Advice Liaison Service (PALS) to provide feedback of individuals experience.

### **Aims for next year**

- To ensure that Personalisation and the 'self directed support agenda' remain key issues in the development of Dimensions Disability Initiative.
- To develop additional disability related courses and secure funding for additional learning opportunities.
- To focus recruitment, particularly targeting 18-25 year olds.
- To promote self progression and inclusion in respect of education, training, leisure, voluntary experience and employment.

# Direct Payments Support Service

## Aims

- Provide support to people who use or are considering using a direct payment.
- Provide flexible and responsive support to enable service users to manage their direct payment and achieve control and choice over how they live their lives.
- Promote service user involvement at all levels in the development of direct payments.
- Promote and support equality of access to direct payments.

## Impact

- Increased the number of people supported to use a Direct Payment from 171 at the start of the year, to 222 after 12 months.
- Increased the number of adults with a learning disability using the service by over one third to 66 and almost doubled the numbers of parents of disabled children receiving support.
- Provided a regular peer support group.
- Supported people to look at disability related expenditure as part of the financial assessment process.
- Developed a lead worker system whereby each direct payments service user is allocated a named member of staff to deal with any difficulties which fall outside the key roles e.g. recruitment, payroll.
- Improved office practices, including introducing a duty system and call logging system.

- Worked in partnership with Adult Services to develop a 'framing day' which will look at how self directed support is going to be developed in Darlington in the future.
- Enabled over 70 disabled people and carers living in Darlington to engage in the development of self directed support through two User Involvement events.

### **Aims for next year**

In addition to carrying forward the aims from this year, the project intends to-

- Register with the Care Quality Commission as an employment introduction agency.
- Increase involvement of both service users and the Support Service in the development of Adult Social Care's Personalisation agenda.
- Extend Peer Support and user involvement in general.

# Equal Access to Information and Advice

## Aims

- Improve access to information and advice for disabled people about their rights.
- Involve young people in developing the Information services to ensure the delivery of age appropriate and targeted information and advice.
- Improve access to rights based information for parents of disabled children.
- Enable the Local Authority to increase their understanding of meeting the needs of disabled people when developing policies and procedures.
- Provide training and awareness-raising to DAD advice workers and other partner agencies on delivering quality advice services to disabled people.

## Impact

- Supported 51 people to make choices and decisions through rights based information enquiries covering a range of subjects such as access, adaptations, community care, mobility and transport.
- Undertook in depth casework, alongside the lead for the Access Interest Group, with 19 people on Disability Discrimination Act issues, leading to successful outcomes.
- Mapped existing sources of support for young disabled people, and began the process of recruiting 'young ambassadors'.

- Supported several DAD led consultation events by producing information in a variety of formats.
- Worked with other staff and volunteers to review internal information for the organisation, increasing DAD's ability to produce information in accessible formats.
- Delivered 9 roadshows in the form of presentations and workshops to impairment specific groups.
- Influenced the development and delivery of local information provision by playing an active role in several networking information and advice groups in the Borough.
- Worked in partnership with parents and the Children's Trust to make a successful funding application to Together for Disabled Children to support the development of a new Parents Forum in Darlington, to be led by parents.
- Held a Parents Forum event in February attended by over 50 parents, at which Children's Services and Primary Care Trust signed their commitment to the Every Disabled Child Matters Charter.

### **Aims for Next Year**

In addition to carrying forward the aims for this year the project intends to-

- Further develop opportunities for parents of disabled children to receive good quality information by supporting the work of the new Parents Forum.

# Information Project

## Aims

- Provide high quality information and advice on a wide range of subjects, to meet the needs of disabled people and carers.
- Enable disabled people to independently access information, increasing choice and control.
- Monitor and update the Information Guide.

## Impact

- Responded to 791 enquiries during the year; the most common enquiries centred around equipment, mobility and independent living.
- Continued to work in partnership with the Citizens Advice Bureau to provide twice weekly welfare rights outreach advice sessions for disabled people and carers.
- Updated monitoring systems and developed new database for managing enquiry statistics.

- Provided information at 5 external events including

Cameo Club

Parkinson's Disease Awareness Day

Older Person's consultation day

Tea dance / Gold event

Charities market event

- Provided targeted information to disabled people and carers attending a number of DAD activities including the Scooter and Wheelchair Awareness Day, Carers Week and User involvement events.
- Worked closely with the Shopmobility service to ensure that enquirers receive the best possible service. This included

devising and delivering training for front line staff on information provision and reception.

- Continued to work closely with DIAL (Disability and Information and Advice network) as they merged with SCOPE.

### **Aims for next year**

In addition to continuing the aims from this year the project intends to-

- Revise its delivery mechanisms and staffing structure to make best advantage of recent and existing funding opportunities.
- Review the appropriateness of its current Quality Standards in light of the changes in the Community Legal Service's Standards and DIAL's merger with SCOPE.

# Shopmobility

## Aims

- Increase independence and choice by providing the free loan of electric wheelchairs, scooters and manual chairs for anyone with a mobility impairment to shop and use the facilities of Darlington Town Centre.
- Provide information for customers including Wheelygood – the interactive access map for the Town Centre.
- Continue to promote the Shopmobility Service.

## Impact

- Service used over 4000 times during the year.
- 320 people used Shopmobility for the first time; for some this was the first time that they had been able to shop or visit the Town Centre.
- Measured continued improvements in the service through a survey, which indicated that 87% of customers surveyed assessed the premises and facilities available at Shopmobility as very good or excellent. 95% of customers surveyed felt the staff were very good or excellent and 100% would recommend the service to other people.
- Updated database, with over 2000 customer's details registered.
- Ensured that disabled people had access to information and advice by managing a range of enquiries, signposting individuals to other DAD projects, and to external agencies.
- Targeted promotion of the service following a postcode mapping exercise.

- Continued to update the Wheelygood website, showing physical access to shops in the Town Centre.
- Held a Scooter and Wheelchair Awareness day to enable people owning or interested in purchasing equipment to try out scooters and wheelchairs safely in a test track, with information available and enquiries answered.
- Launched a successful 'Go Slow' campaign to raise awareness of the dangers of speeding in scooters, which was picked up by local and regional press.

### **Aims for next year**

In addition to carrying forward the aims from this year, the service intends to-

- Increase its use by people outside Darlington using publicity. (local papers, posters etc).
- Purchase new equipment to meet the increase in demand for the service.
- Finalise completion of customer database.
- Continue to deliver and promote a high quality service to new and existing users.
- Update the Wheelygood website.

# Volunteer Project

## Aims

- Recruit, train and support volunteers with appropriate skills and experience and ensure these are used to best effect to enhance the work of DAD.
- Improve user involvement, independence and choice by recruiting and supporting disabled people as volunteers.
- Identify and meet the training needs of volunteers.
- Produce and distribute promotional material.
- Place volunteers appropriately across DAD, and externally.
- Recruit, train and support sessional volunteers to support the work of DASH.

## Impact

- Recruited 20 new volunteers during the year.
- Supported DAD's work by maintaining a bank of 88 regular volunteers to work across the organisation, and by recruiting and placing over 40 seasonal volunteers for DASH play schemes.
- Acknowledged the immense value of volunteers to DAD by holding a Volunteer recognition evening at which volunteers were presented with certificates to mark their achievements.
- Completed the portfolio of evidence required to enable DAD to apply for the Investing in Volunteering standard.
- Promoted volunteering opportunities for disabled people at a 'Breaking Down Barriers to Inclusion' event.

- Assisted Diabetes UK with their family fun day in April.
- Continued to develop positive links with Darlington college and Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form by attending volunteering events at both establishments.
- Attended a Youth Service's 'Click in the Park' event to promote the benefits of youth volunteering.
- Continued to support inclusive play by providing volunteers for the monthly Coleridge Centre's after school service.
- Secured funding from Opportunities for Volunteers to enable elements of the project to continue.

### **Aims for next year**

- Recruit, train and support volunteers with appropriate skills and experience and ensure these are used to best effect to enhance the work of DAD.
- Improve user involvement, independence and choice by recruiting and supporting disabled people as volunteers.
- Develop and deliver a programme of training existing and new volunteers, encompassing a range of skill development, confidence building and understanding of issues affecting disabled people.
- Recruit and train young people (aged 16-25) to act as 'buddies' or young mentors for other volunteers and young people accessing DAD's DASH holiday play schemes.
- Increase the number of young people recruited throughout the year to support the work of DASH.

# Experts by Experience

## Aims

- Recruit, train and support people who use services – Experts by Experience – to participate in Inspections for the Commission for Social Care Inspectorate (CSCI).
- Undertake inspections alongside inspectors and provide appropriate reports.
- Develop the role of Experts by Experience locally and nationally.

## Impact

- Completed 36 inspections. These involved looking at 26 residential services for people with a learning disability, 6 domiciliary care providers, and 4 mental health service inspections.
- Completed 4 thematic inspections focusing on safeguarding.
- Recruited two Experts by Experience to assist inspectors on mental health service inspections.
- Supported two experts who attended a consultation event in London on the Department of Health's new regulator, the Care Quality Commission.

## Aims for next year

- In addition to continuing the aims for this year, the project will also respond to any changes in service required by the new Care Quality Commission as it takes over the responsibility for inspections.

Darlington Association on Disability would like to thank  
Members, Staff, Volunteers and Supporters for  
ensuring DAD's continued success

**With thanks also to all our Funders:**

Big Lottery Fund  
Commission for Social Care Inspection  
Darlington Borough Council  
Darlington Primary Care Trust  
Home Office  
Children in Need  
Capacity Builders  
Durham County Council  
Change Makers  
Affinity Healthcare  
Moorlands Surgery  
National Centre for Independent Living