

GATESHEAD

PEOPLE



Our **Group.** Our **Rights.** Our **Say.**

Annual Report

2009

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"Hello everyone, my name is Phillip. I'm the chairperson for Gateshead People. Welcome to our Annual Report

This year we held elections for 4 positions on our management committee. As usual this involved a lot of preparation work where we talked about what jobs people would be asked to do and the skills they would need to do these jobs.

This year our committee made a big decision about the one of the jobs on the committee. We decided that Secretary post was a really difficult post to fill as not many people in our group can read and write. We were finding that our staff were doing lots of the work around this job.

The committee decided to change this post to 'Newsletter Officer'. This person's job would be about making sure our newsletter was put together and sent out every 2 months.

Our committee is now:

Chairperson – Phillip Mote



Vice Chair – Sandra Quinn



Treasurer – Christine Atkinson



Events Officer – Steven Regan



Fundraising Officer – Frank Gallagher



Newsletter Officer – Janet Hall



Network Officer – Steven Stuart



Committee Member – Audrey Wilkes



Money Report



At the start of last year we had **£6204.72** in our bank account.

We got:

£36,341 from the Northern Rock Foundation.



£1159.24 from Gateshead Council.



£250 payment for work that we did.



We spent:



£21,114.64 on our staff's wages.



£4594.18 on transport.

£1220 on printing, photocopying and stationery.



We paid **£1200** to Your Voice Counts to help us pay and manage our staff.





We spent **£782.40** on our alarm,
internet and telephone bills.

We spent **£502** on training.



We spent **£339.86** on refreshments.



Finally we spent **£854.17** on smaller things including cleaning, insurance, and postage



At the end of the year we had £9010.65 in our bank account. Some of this money will go to paying December's bills.

What we've been doing this year:



"This year I started to help out at the Guidepost. I joined Nexus' Buddy scheme and now I travel independently to Gateshead People, Guidepost and my job at the Scope shop. I'm also the newsletter officer on Gateshead People's committee.

I helped to organise our trip to Kielder. I rang up and booked the rooms. I also help go to the shops for Gateshead People on a Wednesday morning.



I helped Gateshead People to fundraise for a video camera and a computer with a touch screen that we can all use.



I heard about Gateshead People at the Guidepost Drop In. I've made loads of friends and done interesting stuff like helping to run workshops. In November I was voted in as Gateshead People's chairperson.



I helped Gateshead People to campaign about college courses for people with learning disabilities. I'm learning how to use our camera to make films.





My job is to make sure the room is tidy after our meetings.

I helped to set up and run the drop in at Gateshead and the new one in Blaydon. Its my job to collect Gateshead People's post.



I've helped to run workshops as part of our college campaign. My job was to run the ice - breaker. I'm also on Gateshead Peoples committee.



I'm Gateshead People's Treasurer. Its my job to write the cheques and keep the accounts up to date. I'm also Gateshead People's rep on the Learning Disability Partnership Board and the partnership boards rep for the Regional Programme Board.



I'm the Vice Chair for Gateshead People. I run the meetings when Phillip isn't there.





This year I started to walk to Gateshead People and the Men's group on my own. Its my job to set up the room on a morning before our meeting. I wash the dishes and get the tea and coffee things ready.

I really enjoy coming to Gateshead People and the men's group. I like seeing everybody.



As well as meeting every month to make big decisions about our group the committee also went away to Kielder to do some team building and planning for the future.



We talked about how to help the committee stay strong, what training people wanted to help them get better at their jobs. We talked about what our support workers do for us and what we could start to do for ourselves. We looked at what works well about Gateshead People and what we want to get better at and we made some plans for the next year.



We have had a busy year at Gateshead People this year. Attendance has been good to our weekly meetings and this year **20 group members** have attended Gateshead People.

Events

We attended several conferences this year including launches for **Valuing People Now** and **Valuing Employment Now**. We attended the **UCAN film festival** and an event held by **Inclusion North** to explain the Department of Health D.E.S. that referred to people with learning disabilities.

We continued to attend the **Regional Forum for People with Learning Disabilities** as well as an awareness event held by

Talk 2 Us and **Equal People**, two learning disability groups from South Tyneside. We attended two events held by **Gateshead Council** one to look at a vision for personalisation for Gateshead and one to look the best ways to involve service users in making personalisation happen in Gateshead. Finally we attended **Your Voice Counts** conference '**Your Voice Your Town**' at the **Sage**.

Learning Disability Partnership Board

We have continued working with Gateshead's Learning Disability Partnership Board. We sit on four sub groups **Choice and Control**, **Housing, Workforce Planning**, and **Fulfilling Lives and Employment**.

As part of our work with **Choice and Control** we have sat on 2 working groups; one to look at supporting advocacy services in Gateshead and one to look at the training needs of staff who work with people with learning disabilities around key government documents such as **Valuing People Now** and **Putting People First**.

We have also helped the Person Centred Planning Facilitators to think about accessible ways to promote their service and we hope to help them to design and deliver some training about what a person centred plan is to people with learning disabilities in Gateshead starting at some point next year.

We are in the middle of doing a big piece of work with the **Fulfilling Lives and Employment** sub group around what people with learning disabilities in Gateshead do during the evenings and at weekends.

We have already started to do some research to find out what people in Gateshead do at the moment, what they would like to do and what stops them from doing the things they want to do.

So far we have sent out questionnaires to professionals and into to 2 day services. We have also run 2 sessions as part of Learning Disability week at Gateshead Civic Centre. These were attended by **50 people**. We designed a workshop that used a mixture of drama games and exercises and graphic facilitation to explore what a good evening/weekend looks like and the kind of activities that people want to do. (see examples of the kind of evidence we gathered below)



We are also now working in partnership with **Beacon North East**, a project based at Newcastle and Durham Universities that aims to increase the universities engagement with the community.

Beacon have ring fenced some money for the Evenings and Weekends working group to continue our research using a variety of creative and inclusive methods (e.g. film, drama workshops). They have also teamed us up with an academic, **Dr. Se Kwang Hwang**, who is helping us to develop the research further. Gateshead People members are working directly with Dr Se Kwang to make this happen.

Involvement

The partnership board asked Gateshead People and Gateshead Forum to look at better ways of involving people with learning disabilities in the work of the partnership board.

Gateshead People members visited Partnership Boards in Durham and Newcastle to see how they involved people. We then held 2 sessions with members from Gateshead Forum, the partnership board, and Gateshead Council to come up with ideas about the best way to involve people in Gateshead. We presented our recommendations to the partnership board and are waiting for them to take them forward.

Campaigns

As well as supporting a number of national campaigns such as **'Changing Places'** our main campaign this year has again been our **'College Campaign'**.

We are concerned about access to education for people with learning disabilities and pathways to employment. Building on the DVD we made last year about cuts to college courses we are now interested to know what people with learning disabilities think are the barriers to getting job, what help they know about that is available and where the gaps are.

We have designed a workshop to explore this practically with people and we have just begun touring this around

groups, daycentres and community bases in and around Gateshead.

We did our first workshop at **Winlaton Base** and it was attended by **8** people.



We also set up a video diary room at **Valuing Employment Now** launch to gather some more information from the people with learning disabilities who attended about access to employment.

As a result of this campaign work we also sit on **Learning for Living and Work group** at **Gateshead College** which we have continued to attend.

Training

As well as our College Campaign workshop we also delivered a workshop at Winlaton Base about speaking up for yourself and about what a self advocacy group does. This session was attended by **8** people.

We ran **5 sessions** at Dryden Road school to **8** young people with learning disabilities. Our training team Training for Change talked to about their experiences of growing and

up and becoming independent and helped the young people to think about what they wanted to do in their lives as they became adults.

We worked with Jill Collerton, a Speech and Language Therapist who works across Gateshead and South Tyneside, to deliver a learning disability awareness session to Newcastle University students. The students were 3rd year BSc Speech and Language Sciences students, and and 2nd year MSc Language Pathology. In total we worked with **42 students**.



In partnership with **Talk 2 Us**, a self advocacy group based in South Tyneside we designed and delivered some learning disability awareness training for South Tyneside council which was attended by staff from the council as well as independent providers. The training was attended by **14** people. As a result of our initial support Talk 2 Us are now delivering the training by themselves in South Tyneside.

We also ran a drama session that explored communication and speaking up for yourself for a **Community Links** group based at **Allerdene Community Centre** in Gateshead. The session was attended by **9 people with learning disabilities**.

This year our staff did **first aid, graphics and risk assessment training**.



John Soulsby spent **6 weeks** with us over the summer. He worked with everyone at Gateshead People to teach us how to use the new computer we bought last year. Each person now has their own account and the computer that is set up for their needs. John also worked with everyone to use the computer to find out about things they are interested in.

Guidepost Drop In

It has been a very busy year for Guidepost. The drop in that we help to run has gone from strength to strength. **140 people** used the drop in this year and we set up a number of important partnerships:

Gateshead Health Trainers now drop in to Guidepost once a month to run health walks and to offer health checks.

Community Links have now started to bring their volunteers in to support the running of the service. Guidepost has been supported **7 volunteers** who support people who drop in to go out and access opportunities in the community. Community Links support and manage the volunteers and provide their volunteer expenses.

Rob Hindhaugh from the **Community Road Safety Team** at the council has worked into to Guidepost throughout the year to offer support around road safety. He has trained one of the people with learning disabilities who helps to run Guidepost to deliver some CD rom based training to people who use the service and he has worked with the volunteers who take people out from Guidepost to identify some key routes that are safer for vulnerable people.

Irene Storey and **Richard Hicks** from **Nexus' Travel Buddy** scheme have worked into the Guidepost throughout the year and have supported several people who use the service to travel independently including one Gateshead People member, Janet who helps to run the drop in and now travels to and from Guidepost independently as well as to travelling to Gateshead People, Marquis Way day centre and her voluntary job at Scope without support. This is a massive step for Janet and has increased her independence significantly.

Your Voice Count's Low Level Information and Support Brokerage Worker drops in to Guidepost on a weekly basis to offer support to anyone who doesn't qualify for services under 'Fair Access to Care'.

Several organisations have used 'Guidepost' as way to let people with learning disabilities know about what they do. These have included **Northumbria Police**, the **Fire Service**, and **Gateshead Council's Person Centred Planners**.

The learning disability partnership board in Gateshead used Guidepost to launch it's **Employment Pathway** document.

Lots of people have benefited from using Guidepost in a variety of different ways whether it be getting support to fill in a form, being supported to enrol on a college course or simply making some new friends. Here are 2 examples of how Guidepost has helped people:

- Phillip, who did not access any other service started using Guidepost in September after his mother picked up a leaflet. He is interested in gardening work and previously had a number of placements, which did not last due to lack of support. Guidepost have supported him to become a volunteer with Community Links and he now volunteers to work with people on a gardening project. Through Guidepost he started attending Gateshead People and is now our Chairperson.
- Another man who lives alone was brought to Guidepost by his homecare worker as he wanted to meet people and make friends but could not travel independently. Following support from the Buddy Service and the Road Safety Team he now travels independently to use the drop in every week.

We are now helping to run a second Guidepost in Blaydon Youth club again partnership with Gateshead Council. This Guidepost is open all day on a Fri. Gateshead People members who run the Gateshead drop in are now teaching people with learning disabilities from Winlaton Community base how to set up and run a drop in. Please find attached a copy of the PATH that Gateshead People's worker completed with Guidepost Blaydon team.

Guidepost Blaydon opened officially in Sept and since then **71** people have dropped in.

Men's Group and Women's Group

Our men's group has continued to meet monthly this year. We have done a mixture of social activities such as going to the pub and having DVD and games nights and session that explore what it means to be man with a learning disability living in Gateshead. These have included sessions on men's health and drama workshops.

We also started to run a women's group this year. This group also meet monthly on a Thurs evening.

This year the group has done:

line dancing, an alcohol awareness workshop, had a manicure evening, been bowling, held a music session, a smoothie making session, a quiz night, been to the cinema, been to the Krokodile Club (a club night run by and for people with learning disabilities and their friends), had a karaoke night and been for a Christmas meal out.

Other Work



Helen Sowerby a graphic designer came in to do some work with us around designing a new logo. She came and did 2 sessions with us. We told her all about who we are and what we do and she helped us to find a design that we were all happy with.

We looked over our agreement with **Your Voice Counts** for the service they provide us. Along with Pat the chief executive and Brian the chair of the board of directors we rewrote some of the document.

This year we have produced **4** newsletters.

We helped Your Voice Counts to with their 'Our Town' consultation. We held a mapping day where people we're asked to design their dream town. It was attended by **45**. We also visited a group called **Liberdade** (6 members). Over **5** sessions we filmed them designing and making a detailed map of their dream town. We filmed all these sessions and the resulting DVD was shown at Your Voice Counts 'Our Voice, Out Town' conference.



Number of people we have worked with:

Gateshead People members: 20

Men's group: 11 (of which 4 people are not regular GP members)

Women's group: 16 (of which 12 people are not regular GP members)

People with learning disabilities:

Evenings and weekends session: 50

Winlaton Base college campaign session: 8

Winlaton Base self advocacy session: 8

Community Links Group Alleredene: 9

Guidepost Gateshead: 140

Guidepost Blaydon: 71

Mapping Day and Liberdade sessions: 45 + 6

Children with learning disabilities:

Dryden Road School: 8 young people (5 sessions)

Students:

Newcastle Uni students: 42

Student placements: 4

Professionals:

South Tyneside learning disability awareness session: 14 people

Next Year

One of big aims for next year is to go and talk to other learning disability groups around the region and to visit other partnership boards. We want to learn from what other people are doing and share the ideas that have worked for us.

We are hoping to do some more work with Talk 2 Us about designing and delivering training for people with learning disabilities.

We will continue to work with the Beacon Project, Dr. Se Kwang Hwang and other members of our partnership board to research into evenings and weekends opportunities for people with learning disabilities.

Our Committee have each set targets for themselves for next year:

Frank (Fundraising officer) – We will help Frank to organise 4 fundraising events next year. The first one will be in March. We will talk about this at the next committee meeting.

Steven S (Network officer) – Steven will help to arrange visits to other groups like ours next year. The first one will be arranged for Feb. We will visit Sunderland People First. We'll talk about it at the next committee meeting.

Sandra Quinn (Vice Chair) – It will be Sandra's job to do the 'Working Groups' bit on our agenda.

Steven Regan (Events Officer) – Steven’s job will be to organise a team building day in April for all of Gateshead People. We will talk about this at Feb committee meeting.

Phillip (Chairperson) – Phillip will run 1 committee meeting without Dave or Alex to help. We will try to do this in June.

Christine (Treasurer) – Christine will try and explain the money to the committee without Dave’s help. We will try this at Jans committee meeting.

Audrey (Committee member) – Audrey will do a ‘problem box’ to find out what people want help to speak up about.

Janet Hall (Newsletter Officer) - Janet will try to put out a newsletter once a month. She will interview a group (i.e. guidepost, com links etc) each month.

In the new year we will be helping to set up and run a new Guidepost drop in at Rowlands Gill Library. This will run weekly on a Weds afternoon. Janet Hall and Steven Stuart have agreed to do this work.

We will continue our ‘College Campaign’ work and have already booked in sessions with several community bases and day centres in Gateshead. We will also be working partnership with Equal People an involvement group in South Tyneside to talk to the big employers in the region and gather peoples experience of trying to get a job and of employment in general.

We have arranged to run 2 more speaking up sessions with Community Links early next year and we are hoping to develop and deliver training for people with learning disabilities around what a person centred plan is and how it can make a difference in someone’s life.



If you would like a DVD copy of this report please contact Dave or Alex:

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