

Disability



**Annual Report
2016**

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Disability



Inclusion, Independence and Choice for Disabled People
Our Vision: To be the best resource on disability in the
North.

Chairman's Introduction



This has been a big year of change and development for Disability North. Diane Cowen our longstanding and highly valued CEO has moved on being replaced by Dr. Victoria Armstrong. She has brought with her a new and exciting vision for our future.

At Disability North we have been working both with and for disabled people in the North East for over 30 years. In these continuing challenging economic times Disability North is providing more guidance, advice and support to disabled people than ever before.

In achieving this it is vital we continue to act as a 'service user-led organisation' in that the vast majority of trustees identify themselves as disabled. Their input fundamentally guides and develops the work of Disability North as we help to build not only equal opportunities but more positive attitudes towards all disabled people.

Disability North therefore continues to play a significant role in disabled people's lives in the region. Every year I feel more honoured to be part of this organisation and feel immensely grateful to all the staff for their positive hard work.

Dr. Toby Brandon Chair, Executive Committee Disability North

Chief Executive's Overview



I am delighted to introduce our latest annual report as a way to celebrate our successes and look forward to the future. This last year has been a positive one as we continue to provide essential free information and advice services to disabled people and their families in the North East Region, particularly in relation to welfare rights, independent living, and direct payments. In doing so we continue to do our very best to fulfil our mission- promoting inclusion, independence and choice, to and for disabled people.

In July 2016 I took up the role of Disability North's Chief Executive Officer. The success of the last financial year is credit to Disability North's previous Chief Executive, Dianne Cowen, who did a great job of maintaining a substantial proportion of our statutory funding. This coming year our grant from The Big Lottery Reaching Communities Programme comes to an end, yet the health and social problems caused by 'welfare reforms' increase. I am acutely aware of the need to diversify our income streams, and explore ways we can raise much needed awareness of the work that we do to ensure we fully participate in addressing the contemporary challenges facing disabled people and their families.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our funders, sponsors, and donors, and our partners and collaborators. Thanks must also go to Disability North's staff, volunteers and trustees who have made me feel so welcome over the last few months, and who work hard to ensure we continue to deliver a high quality service to disabled people and their families.

I'm looking forward to developing the work of Disability North, working hard to secure much needed funding, but also to ensure we are 'fit for purpose' during this time of change, and that we can confidently say that we are the North of England's best resource when it comes to issues relating to disability.

Dr Victoria Armstrong , Chief Executive Officer

Treasurer's Report



We have again had a successful year financially as well as operationally, running at a healthy surplus, further increasing our unrestricted reserves and exceeding our planned reserve balance. 2016/17 is forecast to also return a surplus, albeit much reduced from 2015/16.

We have set aside a further £20,000 in addition to the £50,000 from 2015 to give a total special reserve fund of £70,000 to make much needed repairs and improve the structure, Infrastructure, and internal facilities of the Dene Centre building. Some of this work has already been instigated and others will be progressed throughout the next twelve to twenty four months with any unspent funds being returned to general reserves.

As always though the near future holds some uncertainties in regards to funding from Local Authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups as they continue to go through large scale changes and budgetary pressures. Further into the future, we do not yet know, nor indeed do our funders, how Britain's removal from the EU will affect finances nationwide. EU funds being withdrawn from national and local budgets will cause realignment of priorities and spending requirements within all sectors, it is difficult to imagine that our income streams will be unaffected and this will likely form one of the major challenges to overcome over the next two to five years.

We are however in an excellent current position financially, which will give us the time to adjust to any changes while continuing to fully meet our aims and objectives. I remain confident that with the continued excellent work by management and staff that we can meet and overcome these challenges.

Disability



Executive Committee

T. Brandon	Chair
M. Macourt	Vice Chair
S. Knox	Treasurer
D.W. Jenkins	Company Secretary
A. Scott	Vice President
A. Blackburn	Trustee
J. Ayton	Trustee
O. Veldhuizen	Trustee
R. Abrahams	Trustee
T. Williams	Trustee
S. Wheatley	Trustee



Main Achievements 2016

Disability North Service Team have been contacted by over 6000 people

We have represented 139 at benefit appeals, with 80.57% success rate

£19,716,001 has been accrued in benefit awards

180 independent living assessments were carried out.

The team has had 664 Direct Payment referrals. 380 budgets were completed for both adult and child services

334 people were employed as Personal Assistants

We passed the Advice Quality Standard Audit

We conducted 32 Outreach events including work with Holme House Prison in Stockton, RVI Cardiac support group, MS Society, Arthritis Care, Alzheimer's Society, Community Stroke Team and the Hendon Young People Project.

Sheila Rzepcynski left the Disability North Service Team. Keith Moore took over as Service Team Leader and Jane Grayloo is now responsible for Independent Living. Jane Kirkham joined the Direct Payments Team.



Main Achievements 2016

Victoria Armstrong replaced Dianne Cowen as Chief Executive.

The Finance & Office Team welcomed Katie Boyden as Finance & Payroll Assistant to replace Stephen Riddell, and Jo Watson replaced Heather Williams on the reception team.

The Marketing and Events Team continue to build on the success of the move of the NAEP Annual Conference to Chesford Grange Hotel and Conference Centre with another successful NAEP Conference. This was the eighth time we have delivered the Conference and the feedback from delegates and exhibitors was extremely positive.

The rebranded DNEX Exhibition took place at Newcastle Racecourse on the 21 and 22 September. Post exhibition evaluation shows that the exhibition is perceived extremely positively amongst exhibitors and visitors.

The Marketing and Events Team generated over £41,000 from funding bids.

£13,750 of income was generated by Disability North Events through hire of the Conference Room and Nicklin room.

Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016

This Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Designated Funds £	2016 Funds £	2015 Funds £
Income						
Donations and legacies	3	33,530	-	-	33,530	19,441
Income from charitable activities		227,693	192,024	-	419,717	430,257
Income from other trading activities						
-Commercial trading operations	15	114,392	-	-	114,392	125,105
-Other trading activities	5	89,547	-	-	89,547	109,732
Investment income	6	1,525	-	-	1,525	1,813
Other income		6,608	-	-	6,608	10,105
Total Income		473,295	192,024	-	665,319	696,453
Expenditure:						
Cost of raising funds						
-Commercial trading operations		101,358	-	-	101,358	109,571
-Other trading activities	5	11,647	-	-	11,647	23,373
Expenditure on charitable activities	7	308,279	184,472	10,017	502,768	510,732
Total Expenditure		421,284	184,472	10,017	615,773	643,676
Net gains/(losses) on investments		(845)	-	-	(845)	1,435
Net income/expenditure		51,166	7,552	(10,017)	48,701	54,212
Transfer between funds	21	(20,000)	-	20,000	-	-
Net movement in funds		31,166	7,552	9,983	48,701	54,212
Reconciliation of funds						
Total funds brought forward		328,883	26,715	296,805	652,403	598,191
Total funds carried forward		360,049	34,267	306,788	701,104	652,403

*This Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All incoming resources and resources expended derive from continuing activities.

Consolidated Balance Sheet

AS AT 31 MARCH 2016

CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2016

	Notes	2016 £	£	£	2015 £
Fixed Assets					
Tangible assets	14		253,535		265,978
Investments	15		29,458		30,303
			<u>282,993</u>		<u>296,281</u>
Current Assets					
Stocks			300		300
Debtors	16		168,443		109,531
Cash at bank and in hand					
Charity's own funds			363,309		360,411
			<u>532,052</u>		<u>470,242</u>
Liabilities					
Creditors: amounts falling due Within one year	17		(113,941)		(114,120)
			<u>418,111</u>		<u>356,122</u>
Net Current Assets			<u>701,104</u>		<u>652,403</u>
Funds of the charity:					
Restricted funds			34,267		26,715
Unrestricted funds			360,049		328,883
Designated funds			306,788		296,805
			<u>701,104</u>		<u>652,403</u>

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with section 398 of the Companies Act 2006 and section 138 of the Charities Act 2011. These accounts are prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act relating to small companies and constitute the annual accounts required by the Companies Act 2006 and for circulation to the members of the company.

Meet Our Team

Chief Executive

Victoria Armstrong



Disability North Service Team (DNST)

Keith Moore



Leigh Chaffey



Disability North Service Team (DNST)

Jane Kirkham



Jane Grayloo



Julie Turnbull



Disability North Service Team (DNST)

Vici Richardson



Gill Edger



Adam Saunders



Meet Our Team

Disability North Service Team (DNST)

Steve Forster



Jay Thacker



Finance and Admin Team

Emma Dixon



Finance and Admin Team

Lynne Waggott



Katie Boyden



Jo Watson



Finance and Admin Team

Val Graham



Marketing and Events Team

Caitlin Hunter



Kevin Wright





Comments from our Service Users

“ I was really anxious, but the person I saw really put me at ease and he could not be more helpful. I can’t thank you enough”.

“ As a result of your advice I was able to purchase the most appropriate chair to meet my needs”.

“ It has been a great comfort to get help and support from your organisation. I could not have managed the claim form without you”.

“ The advisor was patient, supportive and nothing was a problem. Thanks for all your help”.

“ I was able to buy all the equipment I needed as a result of your help with my forms”.

“ I would highly recommend Disability North to anyone needing help and advice with disability issues”.

“ Your help made the benefits system less daunting”.

“ Great service, excellent staff, long may it continue”.

“ Your help for my appeal was invaluable and I could not have done it without you”.

“ Thanks for helping to win my DLA appeal and for the great report you wrote. I can’t tell you how much difference this will make for us as a family “.

“ It means so much having your guidance and support. Thank you “.



Comments from our Service Users

“Thank you for your help support and kindness “.

“Thanks for all your support and assistance with the application and appeal. Successful outcome”.

“ Thank you for coming along to speak to the MS Society about Disability North. You were brilliant “.

“Thanks for your help and expertise with my PIP application. It means so much having guidance and support “.

“ Keep up the great work. I will definitely be using your service again in the future.”

“The staff were lovely. Felt so comfortable talking to them. Thank you “.

“ Without help from your wonderful staff I would be lost. Thank you so much for all your help “.

“ Very helpful, and staff very friendly “.

“ I am in a much better place as a result of the help I have received. I can't thank your organisation enough “.

“ I don't know what I would have done without the amazing advice and support from Disability North “.

Disability



Disability North

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