

Scottish Commission for
People with Learning Disabilities

Annual Review 2022-23



Intro from CEO and Chair

Throughout 2022, The Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities (SCLD) has continued to deliver our strategy and redefine ourselves as a [Human Rights Defender](#) organisation. Our business model has transformed beyond all recognition and our work is fast paced, challenging, and impactful for individuals, organisations and society. Whilst it is difficult to single out any one achievement in the last year, we were particularly pleased to be chosen to take part in the United Nations Universal Periodic Review of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in Geneva. We also celebrate the appointment of our own Rapporteurs and the commencement of their work to change Scotland for good.

Our focus has been on developing individual lived experience led approaches; a board of people with lived experience to work with Scottish Government on the Human Rights Bill, a team of Rapporteurs whose aim is to change the perceptions in society, a board of Digital Navigators whose focus is digital transformation for people with learning disabilities.

Concurrently, we have also developed networks of practitioners and family carers in positive behaviour support and campaigned to reduce restraint and seclusion in Scotland.

Our Board, staff team, Rapporteurs, advisors and volunteers have worked hard to ensure the progressive realisation of human rights for people with learning disabilities in Scotland.

Everything we do is underpinned by the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Defenders, and we strive daily to live up to the high standards detailed in the Declaration.

In 2019, the UK Government stated that Human Rights Defenders are defined by what they do, not who they are, and we agree! Our work stands testament to living this truth. Human Rights Defenders are needed now more than ever. We must do everything we can to ensure that there is no weakening of commitments to the progressive realisation of Human Rights both in the UK and in Scotland.

The refocusing of our role to that of a Human Rights Defender has not been easy or without challenge, however it has been essential. Given the serious violation of human rights people with learning disabilities face, it is critical we work together across Scotland to challenge these abuses.



We therefore want to thank the many people with learning disabilities who co-create and guide all our work. Their experiences have set the priorities for our strategy and delivery plan for the years ahead. They will be the judges of our impact, our successes and our failures. It is individuals with learning disabilities who must experience change if we are to honestly claim to be a rights respecting nation, and that is our ultimate goal.

Our much-needed work depends on partnership: we would not have been able to deliver everything detailed in this report without the ongoing support the Scottish Government, Delivering Equally Safe, Inspiring Scotland, many other public agencies, university partners and the dozens of NGOs and civil society organisations we work with. Thank you!

With the above in mind, we have proudly launched our strategy overview for 2023–2026, which can be seen on page 6

Eddie McConnell, Chair SCLD
Charlie McMillan, CEO SCLD

**Make a career of humanity.
Commit yourself to the
noble struggle for equal
rights. You will make a better
person of yourself, a greater
nation of your country, and
a finer world to live in.**

Martin Luther King



Who are we?

The Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities (SCLD) is a pioneering Human Rights Defender organisation focusing on empowering people with learning disabilities to live the life they want. “Human Rights Defender” is a term used to describe people who, individually or with others, act to promote or protect human rights in a peaceful manner.

As a Human Rights Defender we focus and anchor our organisational development on ensuring that everything we do empowers people with learning disabilities and those who support them to make real and tangible changes to their lives using a human rights framework.

In Geneva at the United Nations as part of the Universal Periodic Review of the UK Pre-session, we raised significant Human Rights concerns we had consulted on in relation to:

- Learning Disability in Scottish Mental Health Legislation
- Torture, Cruel, Inhumane, Degrading Treatment or Punishment of People with Learning Disabilities
- Equality and Non-Discrimination, with a focus on Gender Based Violence and Hate Crime

SCLD were successful in making 3 recommendations in the Universal Periodic Review, 2 of which have been supported by the UK government and will be reported on in the next reporting cycle.

As a delivery partner of Scottish Government, a driver for change on the UN Human Rights agenda, and an international partner of the International Initiative for Disability Leadership and Inclusion Europe, SCLD has a range of projects that promote or protect the human rights of people with learning disabilities.

The policy and legislative landscape in Scotland is complex and is developing continually and our main areas of focus continue to be the development of the Scottish Human Rights Bill (which will set the context for human rights incorporation in Scotland) and the Learning Disability, Autism and Neurodiversity (LDAN) Bill which should ensure accountability and enforcement of specific duties to ensure people with learning disabilities in Scotland have their human rights respected, protected and fulfilled.

Continuation of the status quo for people with learning disabilities is not acceptable and there is a significant body of evidence to support this need for change. Another key focus will be in developing our response and challenge to the Scottish Mental Health Law Review’s proposals that people with learning disabilities should continue to be included in the provisions of this legislation.

However, each of these developments brings with it the need for consultations relating to people with learning disabilities.

The development of the Human Rights Town app has been significant in SCLD's journey, with its role in capacity building for people with learning disabilities both in terms of co-creating the app and also developing the skills and knowledge to become individual human rights defenders in their own right. This led to facilitating a group of people with learning disabilities to advise the Scottish Government as it creates a new Human Rights Bill for Scotland.

We have been joined on this exciting journey by existing Human Rights Defender organisations including the Human Rights Consortium Scotland and Together (Scotland).

SCLD has been able to further amplify the views of people with learning disabilities in the development of the LDAN Bill, the Scottish National Action Plan for Human Rights Leadership Panel and the Scottish Government Human Rights Bill Governance and Engagement Advisory Board.

I would again like to put on record my sincere gratitude for your continued, positive engagement on the development of the Human Rights Bill. I want to make sure that we can build on the open and thoughtful approach to these discussions going forward.

Christina McKelvie, Minister for equalities and older people 2018-2023



Vision and mission

Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities



Human Rights Defender

Why do we exist?

Our vision is of a Scotland where people with learning disabilities live full, safe, loving and equal lives.



Our theory of change

We will achieve our vision through influencing the development of policy, practice and legislation.



Focus

- Human rights
- Leadership
- Evidence



Our Networks



Our outcomes:

- 1 People with learning disabilities have increased confidence about what they can achieve using their voice to influence change, participate and lead.
- 2 Practitioners and service providers learn from shared experiences resulting in delivery of improved services informed by human rights standards, data and evidence.
- 3 People with learning disabilities are involved in the development and improvement of strategies and solutions which take into account their human rights, needs and aspirations and improve national and local policy, including legislation.

People with learning disabilities have increased confidence about what they can achieve using their voice to influence change, participate and lead.

**Congratulations
Leeanne Clark!**

30 UNDER 30



Human Rights Defenders



Include For Good (IFG)

Include For Good (IFG) was launched in 2022 and exists as a catalyst for true change through bringing together a dynamic process of conversation and engagement between people with learning disabilities (Rapporteurs) and those who have influence and power in Scotland. It is a pioneering programme that is truly 'Rapporteur' led with a view to transforming conversations into actions that bring about systemic and sustainable change across all sectors in Scottish Life for people with learning disabilities.



Because we have invested in this ground-breaking project from our reserves to date, the diverse range of Rapporteurs are free to truly develop this as they wish to make the changes they want to happen. Include for Good's aim is to shift the power balance to people with lived experience of learning disabilities

Highlights 2022

10 Rapporteurs have come from all over the country to meet 4 times. Their involvement has started to transform their lives and how they see themselves, leading to independent travel, higher self-esteem, more confidence and ability to apply for other work. Whilst still in the development phase, they have met with the Minister for Mental Wellbeing and Social Care, Kevin Stewart, with the aim of starting to approach leaders from the private and public sectors to discuss themes that are most important to them including Relationships, Housing, Travel and Employment.

and change society's view of the status, value and contribution of people with learning disabilities.

The Rapporteurs are paid advisers to the organisation and have co-created IFG with the Board Chair and senior staff.

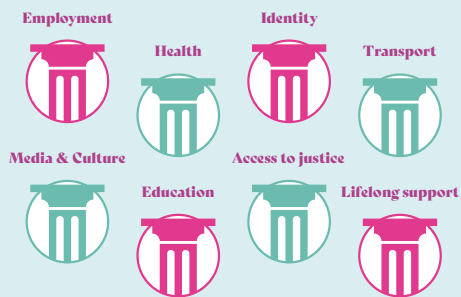


Include For Good (IFG)

Impact

- “Gaining independence has presented new challenges”
- “It’s about risk taking and being supported to take risks”
- “I love making changes for other people and in their lives”
- “It’s been a journey of a lifetime”
- “We trust SCLD. They actually listen. They back up what they say with action.”
- “We feel appreciated, valued and are treated the same as everyone else”
- “I have learnt that it is important to hear others’ stories because they might think differently
- “With IFG we have had freedom, flexibility and control – that’s what it is all about”

The 8 Pillars of Include For Good



**Include
For Good**

Our Future Leaders (OFL)

Our Future Leaders (OFL) is a leadership course for people with learning disabilities. Developed in partnership with Inspiring Scotland, the course is designed to help participants become leaders and develop the skills and tools to make the choices that are going to help them live healthier, happier and more fulfilled lives.

Over twelve sessions, participants learn about different types of leadership, identify their own leadership style and strengths, learned about charity finances, managing stress, social media to bring about change, and activism and campaigning. Each participant has a sponsor – someone who knows them well and helps them to reflect on how they apply the learning to their own life. Graduates from previous courses help deliver each new course and/or become sponsors.

Highlights 2022

2 courses delivered this year with 30 graduates in total

Impact

- “I’ve definitely noticed a difference in how I work and deal with difficult situations”
- “Since completing the course, I’m now the assistant coach of the local boccia team. I’m also trying to get my local authority to develop a service that would allow my brother to come back home. They have said they will be doing that. That will be good when he comes home.”
- “I’ve gone on to be vice-chair of People First, and I’ve started a mainstream training course”



International Initiative for Disability Leadership (IIDL)

IIDL is hosted by SCLD in Scotland and aims to share knowledge and learning about leadership practice globally. We want to increase the profile and an understanding of international issues in Scotland, as well as share our learning with the rest of the world. This includes partaking in knowledge exchanges with host countries across the world both online and in person and sharing and learning best practice on an international stage.

IIDL Scotland is sponsored by the Scottish Government and is the first country to focus on people with learning disabilities. As part of this work, we are members of the Global Leaders Advisory Group and Cameron Smith, our development worker is a member of the Inclusion Advisory Group, which meets globally every two months. Cameron is able to draw on his personal and professional experience to advise on what works.

Highlights

- We co-ran a series of webinars on employment (attended by international audiences from Canada, USA, New Zealand, Australia, England and Scotland) and shared the Best Practice work that SCLD does in Human Rights Leadership
- We helped organise and attended GLE Dublin 2022, where two of our lived experience leads hosted two workshops in partnership with Inspiring Scotland on leadership, and Fraser of Allander Institute on a review of supported employment
- You can see the podcast SCLD recorded on the Dublin Exchange [here](#)



Practitioners and service providers learn from shared experiences resulting in delivery of improved services informed by human rights standards, data and evidence.



Restraint Reduction Scotland (RRS)

Restraint Reduction Scotland works collaboratively with families and professionals across health, social care, children's services, education and criminal justice services to eliminate the misuse of all forms of restraint and restrictive practices in Scotland. RRS is delivered by SCLD on behalf of Scottish Government.



Highlights 2022

We now have 122 members from across Scotland aiming to progress 3 key themes; culture change, workforce development and monitoring and data collection. We have completed our move to the new identity – including a ministerial launch at the start of the year (March 31st, 2022). Membership continues to grow in support of our challenging and much needed agenda – across sectors and groups of people. 4 full network meetings are held each year focussing on a specific theme – this year including Trauma and Older People's Experience. We are increasing our profile and impact through speaking at national groups and conferences.

Another great Restraint Reduction Scotland network meeting today! Thank you to Sarudzai Mutebuka and Alison Thomson from University of Stirling for their excellent presentation on the use of restraint and restrictive practices in older people's services. To join RRS, please email rrs@scl.d.co.uk. You can find out more information [here](#).

Social media post, 23.03.23

**Thank you to
Sarudzai Mutebuka
and Alison Thomson**



Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) Community of Practice Scotland

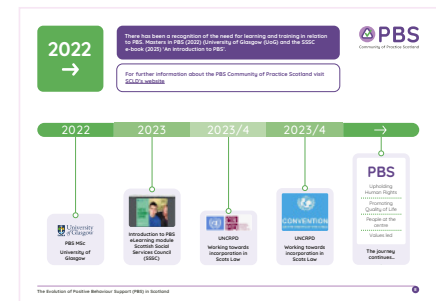
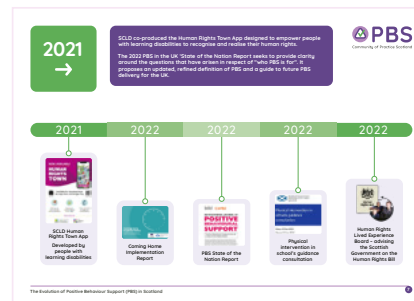
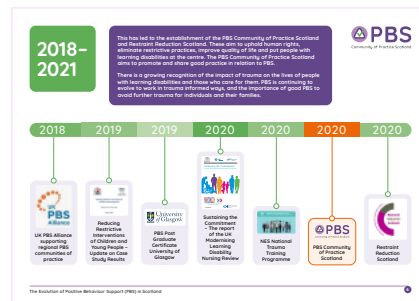
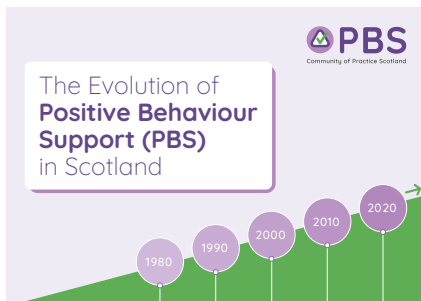
Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) Community of Practice Scotland supports the implementation of PBS in Scotland. The aim of the PBS Community of Practice is to develop best practice for those supporting people with learning disabilities. We know that all behaviour is communication and the appropriate support at the right time will help people to thrive, be happy and fulfil their potential. PBS supports human rights and promotes respect, dignity, inclusion and a life without unnecessary restriction. PBS means treating people equally and working in partnership with people with learning disabilities and their families. Ultimately, the aim of PBS is for people with learning disabilities to live without unnecessary restriction, good practice is shared, and policy is influenced. The PBS Community of Practice Scotland is delivered by SCLD on behalf of Scottish Government. To join the PBS Community of Practice Scotland, click [here](#).



Highlights 2022


Currently we have 440 members and our webinars have reached over 1500 practitioners throughout Scotland. These focussed on defining and implementing PBS, PBS and quality of life, and PBS workforce development. We have also developed a smaller network of Chief Executive and Senior Leaders.

- “I found both the social validation/contextual fit and the working with family really made me stop and question how I approach the whole subject” (participant in webinar)
- “Just really lovely to hear real examples from teachers and family” (participant in webinar)



People with learning disabilities are involved in the development and improvement of strategies and solutions which take into account their human rights, needs and aspirations and improve national and local policy, including legislation.

Decision Making Guidance for Adult Disability Payment



What do Learning Nurses do? Find out more here! Register for our online event 3 May, 4pm-5pm

HEARD, NOT MORE.

International Human Rights Day 10 December



ThisIsMe22 Watch the final campaign video



Scottish Learning Disability Week Monday 1 - Sunday 7 #Leadtochange #ScotLDWeek23

OUR FUTURE LEARNING




New report available Solving the Human Rights Puzzle



Get Involved Pack now available! Leadtochange ScotLDWeek23



Digital Transformation Check out what our board members are saying!



Digital Transformation We want to hear from you!



Register now for online events!

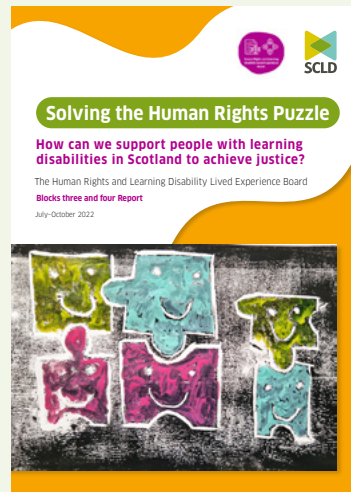
Human Rights Lived Experience Board

Human Rights Lived Experience Board is an inclusive platform that supports people with learning disabilities to speak out and push for positive change. We can only influence policy development by creating the space where people with learning disabilities can develop and improve strategies and solutions which take in to account their human rights, needs and aspirations. People with learning disabilities can be excluded within the development of legislation that impacts their lives, their wellbeing, and their opportunities. This exclusion is often based on the belief that people with learning disabilities need other people to speak for them.

With Scottish Government developing the Human Rights Bill for Scotland, SCLD and other organisations were approached to help make the Bill work for people whose rights are most at risk. The Lived Experience Board for people with a learning disability and those who support them met online to talk about issues relating to living with a learning disability. We use these discussions to come up with recommendations to help the Scottish Government make a Human Rights Bill that works for people with learning disabilities.

Highlights

Two ground-breaking reports were co-created and published, “The Right to be Heard” and “Solving the Human Rights Puzzle” which are available in [standard](#), [Easy Read](#) and audio versions.



Gender-Based Violence Project

The overall aim of the project is to uphold, protect and raise awareness of the human rights of women with learning disabilities who have experienced gender-based violence (GBV) so that this group of women can live full, safe, loving and equal lives. It is designed and delivered in partnership with People First Scotland's Equally Safe Group. This will lead to both learning disability services and universal gender-based violence services providing more accessible, holistic and effective support to women with learning disabilities who experience GBV. This year, in partnership with People First (Scotland) we have established the Equally Safe Group – run by and for women with learning disabilities affected by or with an interest in GBV. It offers peer support and confidence building for members as well as ensuring their voices are heard at a national level.

The Equally Safe Group has helped members to try and move on, be open about personal experiences, and to help others. For so long we have been on our own and not able to talk about this. But now we get to speak with others with experiences like ours. If we're on our own, others will need comfort and support too. This is what is keeping us working and why this project is so important.

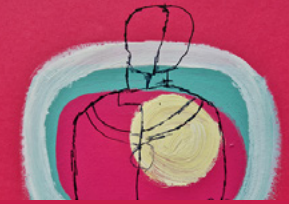
Members of the Equally Safe Group

Highlights

- Scotland's Gender-Based Violence and Learning Disability Conference March 2023. Download the event snapshot [here](#).
- Report published – [Unequal, Unheard, Unjust: But Not Hidden Anymore](#). This report proposes a way forward in Scotland to achieve lasting change
- One of our participants has published a book about her experience of Gender-Based Violence and the care system and was awarded a Young Women's Movement 30 under 30 award from the YWCA

Scotland's Learning Disability and Gender-Based Violence Conference 2023

Workshops from



New report!

UNEQUAL, UNHEARD, UNJUST: BUT NOT HIDDEN ANYMORE.

Women with Learning Disabilities' Experience of Gender-Based Violence in Scotland

Digital Transformation

The Digital Transformation Project has been commissioned by Scottish Government to investigate the inequalities that persist with our current use of digital in Scotland. People with learning disabilities are some of those whose human rights are most at risk through digital exclusion, digital poverty, and data poverty. Despite this, very little has been done to date to understand what type of technologies and adaptations are needed and wanted to ensure people with learning disabilities are able to seize the digital opportunity.

SCLD is keen to make sure that the project is meaningfully led by people with learning disabilities, which is where the Digital Navigator Board comes in. Made up of 15 people with learning disabilities and 5 family carers who are all at a unique stage in their digital journey, the Board not only steer the project, but have received training to allow them to be co-researchers and undertake a lot of the exploratory work for the project.

Highlights

- Digital Navigator Board recruited, made up of 15 people with learning disabilities and 5 family carers/supporters
- 10 Digital Navigators being trained to undertake co-research with peer groups



EXPERT Group

We are proud to facilitate an Expert Group which has 12 participants from across Scotland and is supported and facilitated by SCLD staff.

The Expert Group meets every 2 months and provides an advisory role to staff from the public sector who wish to include and involve people with learning disabilities.

The Expert Group has been consulted by a wide range of organisation throughout the year including the new Social Security Agency for Scotland, various Scottish Government Teams and the Mental Health Review Team.



Scottish Learning Disability Week 2022 – Human Rights

SCLD hosts Scottish Learning Disability Week, a hybrid celebration of people with learning disabilities. Last year's theme was 'We all have Human Rights' and included online events with partners and participants.

Highlights

We held a range of online events with partners across Learning Disability Week, including the launch of Include for Good. 580 participants attended the online events (an increase of 30% from 2021). 500 of our Get Involved Packs were ordered and used across Scotland – these provide a wide range of resources for people who wish to become involved in the week. The packs also contain an invitation to host conversation cafés focussed on human rights and what they mean for people in their day to day lives. The pack generated significant levels of engagement across Scotland. As well as social media coverage, we also received widespread media coverage including The Nine, STV North and Press and Journal who published an article from Rapporteur Sandy Stark.

HUMAN RIGHTS TOWN

**Our app launched
23.08.21 and
had 23,000+
downloads in 2022!**



Finance and Governance

Finance 2022/23. It has been another challenging year for the Scottish voluntary sector, which means that those whose rights are most at risk need more support than ever as they experience increasing levels of discrimination and hardship in their day to day lives. We are grateful to our partnership with Scottish Government for its continued funding as well the support of Inspiring Scotland, Delivering Equally Safe, and our university partners. Thanks to our Board's robust oversight of our finances, a streamlined delivery team and a more focused strategy, we were able to weather the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the energy crisis whilst at the same time investing substantially in our most pioneering programme yet, Include For Good. As a SCIO (Charity No SCO32846) we have a committed and passionate Board of ten trustees and office bearers, three of whom have been appointed this year. Each have experience in the sector and/or personal experience of learning disabilities. A special thanks to Jan Savage, Kenneth Watt and Fiona Whelan for coming on board and committing to helping SCLD go from strength to strength. Our Board continues to grow and develop over time and 2022/23 has seen it engage whole-heartedly with our Rapporteurs. This process will undoubtedly lead to further change for the organisation.

- You can download the annual accounts [here](#)
- You can download the EDI statement [here](#)
- Find out more about the [Trustees](#)

Acknowledgements and thanks

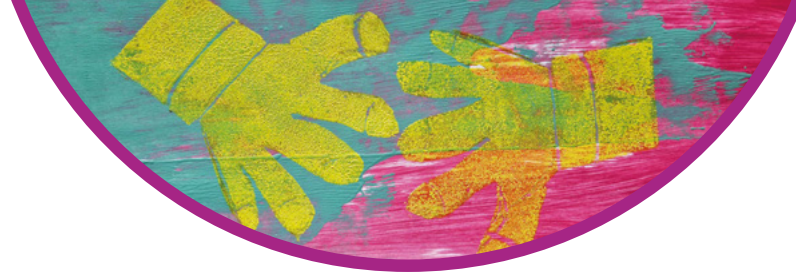
We would like to extend a huge thanks to all of those people with learning disabilities who support us, and all of our partners, without whom we would not be able to do what we do.

“Where, after all, do universal human rights begin? In small places, close to home – so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the neighbourhood he lives in; the school or college he attends; the factory, farm or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman and child seeks equal justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere. Without concerned citizen action to uphold them close to home, we shall look in vain for progress in the larger world.”

Eleanor Roosevelt

Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities

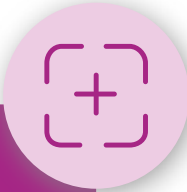
Human Rights Defender



Our vision is of a Scotland where people with learning disabilities live full, safe, loving and equal lives







We influence the development of policy, practice and legislation and are respectful, inclusive, collaborative and pioneering



We focus on:

- Human rights
- Leadership
- Evidence



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www.scl.org.uk





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