

Scottish Commission for
People with Learning Disabilities

Annual Review 2023-24

Our Vision is a fairer Scotland where
people with learning disabilities live full
safe loving and equal lives.



Human Rights Defender



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Introduction

Dear friends, supporters and partners,

We are pleased to introduce SCLD's impact review for 2023/24, highlighting our work to deliver on our vision and strategic priorities over the past year.

As we reflect on the last 12 months, we are struck by the profound sense of endings and new beginnings that have defined our journey. After a period of intense work and deliberations, our Human Rights Lived Experience Board came to an end, leaving a legacy of further opportunities and developments, while our work on Digital Transformation continues apace delivering exciting and innovative opportunities for people with learning disabilities in Scotland.

We faced a number of challenges this year and we have witnessed growth and progress too. SCLD believes that

the Learning Disabilities, Autism and Neurodivergence (LDAN) Bill could provide a once-in-a-generation chance to effect real change for people with learning disabilities in Scotland, and we are committed to ensuring that people with learning disabilities are included at every step in the process.

Like so many in the sector, we recognise that our operating environment remains challenging. We expect that the next few years will bring many changes, with different leaders, policies, and continued economic uncertainty but we remain confident in our ability to adapt and thrive. We are working to strengthen our strategic alliances and partnerships and be more creative and innovative in the funding we source to support our sustainability while ensuring that we continue to make a difference for people with learning disabilities in Scotland.

We are incredibly proud of our talented team's resilience and dedication over the last few years, working tirelessly with and for people with learning disabilities right across Scotland to uphold, protect and raise awareness of their human rights.

Together, we stand ready to embrace new challenges and opportunities, confident in our vision for a fairer Scotland where people with learning disabilities live full, safe, loving and equal lives.

Change is coming!



Eddie McConnell,
Chair of SCLD



Charlie McMillan,
Chief Executive
of SCLD

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Key Milestones 2023/24

-  **May:** Event at Scottish Parliament
-  **June:** Initial scoping meetings with key allies made at Parliament
-  **July – October:** Rapporteur Recruitment
-  **August:** Meeting with ScotRail
-  **October:** 3 new Rapporteurs join the team
-  **November:** Meeting with Chief Social Work Advisor
-  **December:** Board AGM
-  **January:** Care Inspectorate Webinar
-  **February – March:** Guest Speakers at Care Inspectorate events
-  **January – April:** LDAN Bill Consultation Response

Watch the presentations delivered to key decision-makers at the Scottish Parliament



Care Inspectorate

The Rapporteurs shed light on the real-life consequences of good and bad staffing in adult social care for people with learning disabilities.






Engaged with
468
staff
nationwide

LDAN response

The Rapporteurs focused on responding to 2 key areas of the LDAN Bill Consultation – Reach and Definition and Accountability.

To achieve this the team had:

-  4 Development Days
-  12 Knowledge Building Sessions
-  24 Sessions to collate and record the response



Rapporteurs Interview

**Include
For Good**

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You are part of the Include For Good team. What difference has this made to you personally?

“It is so important to make connections with the people you work with. Apart from the work, we’ve made true friendships. We have learnt from each other and support each other. I don’t know what I would do without the guys. I love having a job that allows me to use and share my lived experience. It has taken a very long time to get here.” – John G

“It has made me more independent outside of Include For Good. I am more determined and not scared about giving anything a go now.” – Sandy

What are you most proud of from your Rapporteur work during 2023 and 2024?

“The Care Inspectorate webinar and live events – we got the chance to speak our minds with the Care Inspectorate and adult social care providers.” – John K

“The LDAN Bill Consultation gave us a chance to share our thoughts and concerns with the Scottish Government.” – Rosie

What is your number one hope for Include For Good for the year ahead?

“I don’t want to lose the connections I have made. Fingers crossed we get more funding.” – John G

Getting Include For Good more out there. Trying to do something different, build another platform to get us out there.” – Sandy

What is the most urgent thing that needs to change for people with learning disabilities in Scotland?

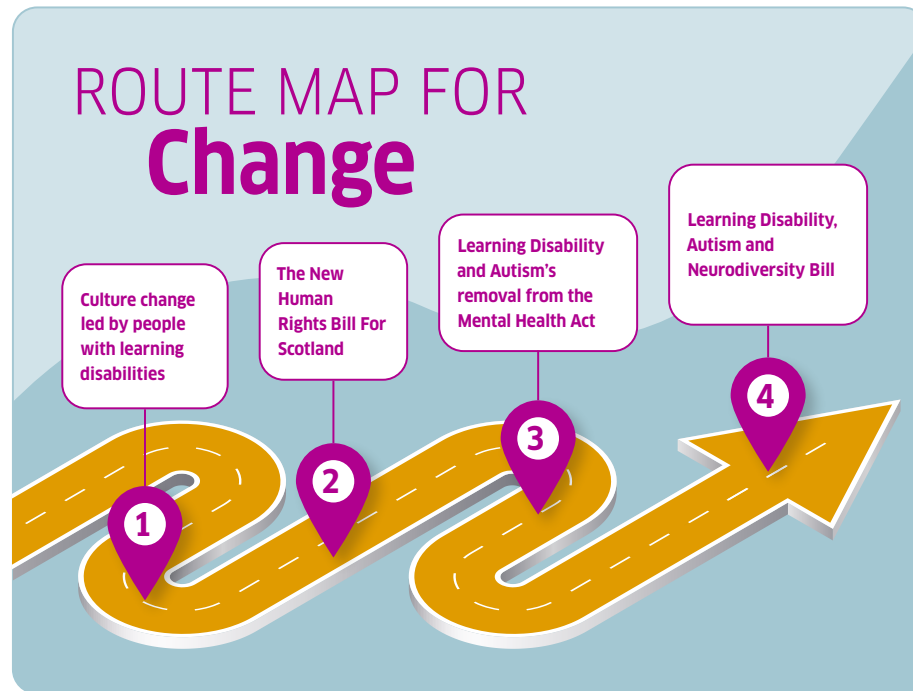
“Employers need to have a better understanding of our needs and give people a chance.” – Rosie

“The Benefits system needs to work better to make sure that people with learning disabilities are not punished for doing paid work.” – Kris

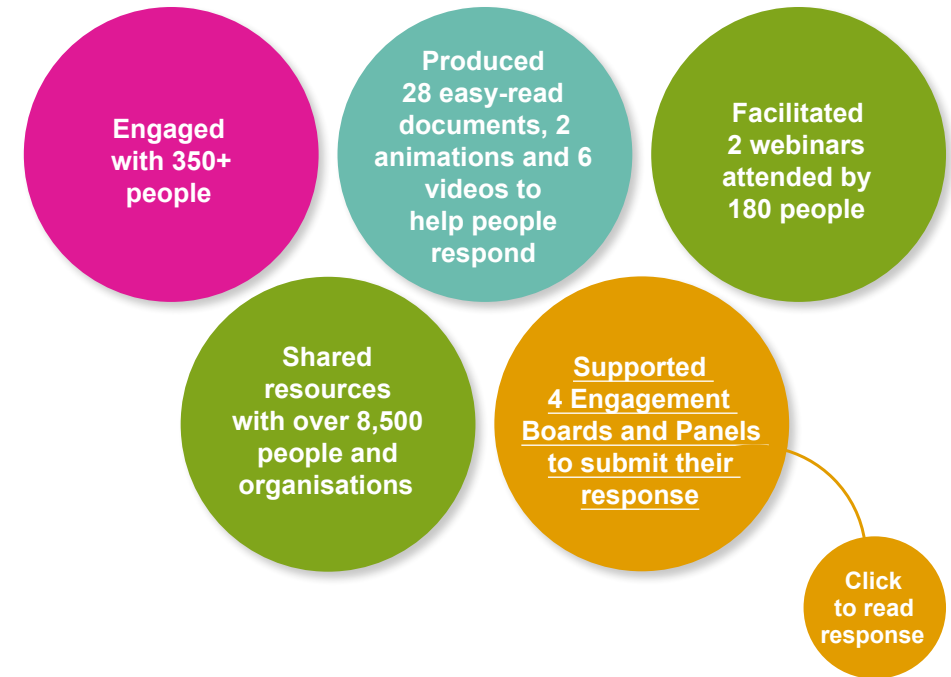


Policy and Rights

Spotlight on LDAN



SCLD created a comprehensive suite of accessible resources including six briefing papers and two videos, to assist individuals and organisations to respond to the consultation. The resources were designed to ensure people with learning disabilities and their supporters could engage effectively with the process.



The engagement not only empowered people with learning disabilities to have their voices heard but also strengthened the collective advocacy efforts across Scotland.

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Scottish Learning Disability Week 2023

Scottish Learning Disability Week 2023 focused on all aspects of Leadership with the theme #LeadToChange

You can lead to change!

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Scottish Learning Disability Week is a celebration of people with learning disabilities

This year we delivered hybrid events with:



782
total attendees



1,186

Get Involved Packs distributed across Scotland staff nationwide

Scottish Learning Disability Week 2023

Monday 1 – Sunday 7 May

#Leadtochange

#ScotLDWeek23

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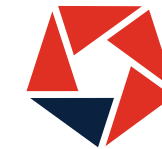
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Projects and partnerships

Financial Security

The project aims to support effective policy development for future reform of social security and social care in Scotland.

There was five initial interviews conducted to evidence the financial situation of working age people with a learning disability in Scotland and assess whether the support they, and their families/carers are able to access, adequately addresses their financial security needs and allows them to live a fulfilling life free from poverty, realising their human rights.



UNIVERSITY of STRATHCLYDE
**FRASER OF ALLANDER
INSTITUTE**

Disability and Social Justice

The Disability and Social Justice Project has been set up to address the lack of legal provision for disabled people in Scotland. Legal Services Agency (LSA) offer free monthly advice services for people with learning disabilities and those who support them. SCLD arranged and hosted 25 sessions offering easy read appointment letters and terms of appointment.



LSA Legal Services Agency
Doing the Right Thing,
the Right Way

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Our Future Leaders

INSPIRING SCOTLAND

Our Future Leaders (OFL) is a leadership course for people with learning disabilities. Developed in partnership with Inspiring Scotland and co-designed with OFL graduates the course is for anyone with a learning disability who aspires to develop their leadership skills. People who have completed the course have gone on to present at the Scottish Parliament, join the Boards of third sector organisations and gain further qualifications.

“Just because you are disabled don’t be afraid to chase your dreams. Go out and show the world you’re a fighter, fight for a job and fight for your rights. A disability won’t stop me, and I have a voice and I will let it be heard.”

Derek, Our Future Leaders
graduate 2024



Celebrating

18

new graduates

Global Leadership Exchange (GLE)



In partnership with GLE we hosted two international webinars welcoming expert speakers to provide a global perspective on the National Care Service, and an opportunity to share learnings and best practice.

“Very interesting and inspiring. For all the challenges we face it’s great to see Scotland work hard to think things through and find the best solution. In England we have a vacuum instead of leadership and so it makes me quite envious”

Participant

“I’ve just come off a call with our Board Convener and already been talking about some of the ideas I’ve taken away from the event.”

Participant

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Delivering Equally Safe

People First (Scotland)'s Equally Safe Group and SCLD co-designed and delivered Power Women!, a pioneering leadership course led by women with learning disabilities, for self-identifying women with learning disabilities who have experienced gender-based violence in Scotland.

This powerful example of women with learning disabilities empowering their peers saw participants designing their own campaigns for change, and is best illustrated in the following reflections:

“I felt great because if the course was to come around again, we could lead it in some way...I think it was brave of us all to come together and collaborate our stories”

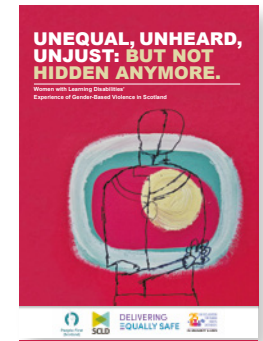
Power Women! participant, 2023

“The women on the course have worked really hard and we're so proud...We want this work to go on so people keep learning and speaking up for themselves... We want to make sure other women get this opportunity.”

Equally Safe Group member, 2023

DELIVERING EQUALLY SAFE

SCLD were also delighted to see findings from our co-produced [gender-based violence and learning disability research](#) reflected in the Scottish Government and COSLA's new Equally Safe Strategy [for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls](#). This is the first time that the unique experiences of women with learning disabilities have been recognised in mainstream violence against women and girls (VAWG) policy in Scotland.



Read the impact report here

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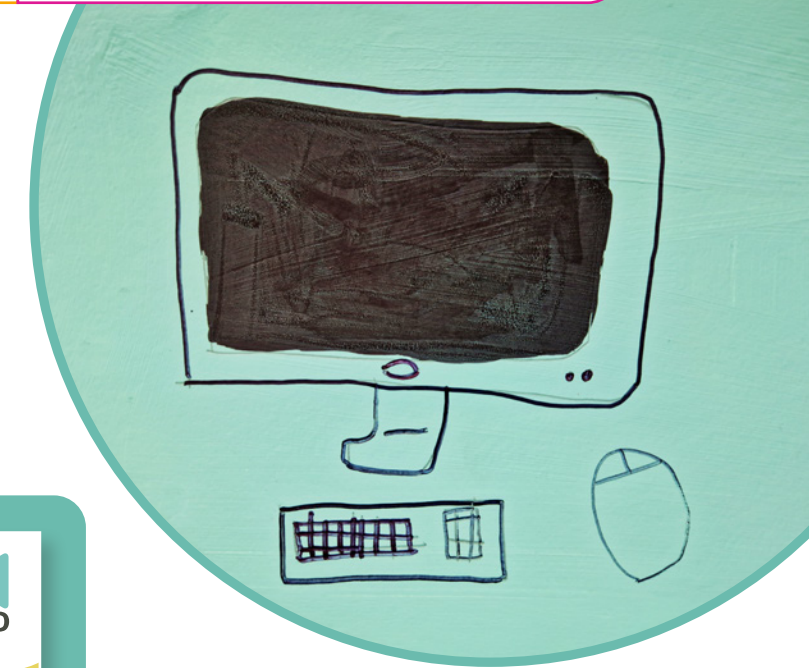
SCLD was commissioned by the Digital Health and Care directorate at the Scottish Government, to investigate how the digital transformation taking place across health and social care could be transformative for people with learning disabilities. The project took a participatory approach, recruiting and building the capacity of 19 people with learning disabilities and their carers to lead and champion the project, as well as undertake peer research to understand people's experiences of digital exclusion.

Recommendations for the Scottish Government to consider

The Digital Transformation project not only equipped participants with crucial digital skills but also fostered meaningful engagement with government bodies and stakeholders. By addressing digital exclusion and promoting inclusive technology the project laid a foundation or ongoing improvements in the lives of people with learning disabilities in Scotland

“I loved that people used their skills and knowledge to shape the project.”

Digital Navigator



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1. Scotland's COVID inquiry

The Let's Be Heard branch of the Inquiry team visited the Expert Group and heard from them about how the pandemic had affected people with learning disabilities. This evidence will inform the findings of the inquiry.

2. Learning Disability, Autism and Neurodivergence (LDAN) Bill

The Expert Group held two meetings to comment on the Scottish Government's proposals. Their comments informed SCLD's response.

3. Human Rights Bill

The Expert Group held a joint meeting with the Rapporteurs to discuss the Scottish Government's proposals. Their views informed SCLD's response, which included the strong recommendation to fully incorporate the UNCRPD into Scottish legislation.

“

You are the expert in your own experience. The SCLD Expert Group is a chance for people with learning disabilities to share their views on important issues and make a change.

”



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Positive Behaviour Support (PBS)

The aim of the PBS Community of Practice is to develop best practice for those supporting people with learning disabilities. The PBS Community of Practice Scotland is delivered by SCLD on behalf of Scottish Government. For more information or to join visit: [Positive Behaviour Support \(PBS\) – SCLD](#)



Community of Practice Scotland

520 members

Highlights:

[Understanding Positive Behaviour Support Interactive learning resource launched](#)



This innovative learning resource provides a comprehensive introduction to PBS for practitioners in health and social care who support people with learning disabilities. It will also be helpful for those working in education settings, and for family carers. This free and accessible online learning resource is the result of a collaboration between the Scottish Social Services Council and the PBS Community of Practice.

877 downloads

2,200 visits to SSSC website

248 webinar attendees

PBS submitted a response to the proposed Learning Disabilities Autism and Neurodivergence Bill (LDAN) consultation focusing on section 5 Complex Care/Coming Home. [Read the full response.](#)

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Restraint Reduction Scotland (RRS)

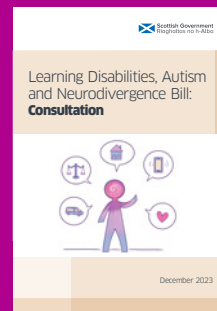
RRS's aim is to eliminate the misuse of restrictive practices in Scotland and to ensure that where these are used, they are done so safely, with respect for people's human rights, and in a culture of openness and transparency. To join RRS please sign up [here](#).



169 members

Highlights:

- RRS hosted a consultation event for 40 members and responded to Restraint and Seclusion (Prevention in Schools)(Scotland) Bill.
- RRS submitted a response to the LDAN Bill consultation focused on [section 11: Restraint and Seclusion](#). [Read the full response](#).
- Cameron Smith, SCLD's Development Worker and member of RRS attended the UK Restraint Reduction network Annual Conference with over 200 delegates. [Read Cameron's Blog for highlights](#).



Restraint Reduction Scotland Priorities

Leadership & Cultural Change

Workforce Development, Prevention & Practice Leadership

Monitoring Data & Evaluation

Thank you

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our incredible supporters, dedicated volunteers, collaborative partners, and generous funders for their commitment.



100%
Digital
Leeds

INSPIRING SCOTLAND



Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities

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