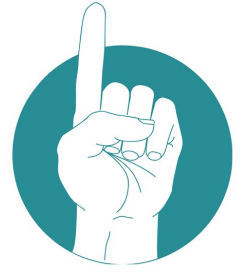


People First (Scotland) Newsletter



Spring 2018



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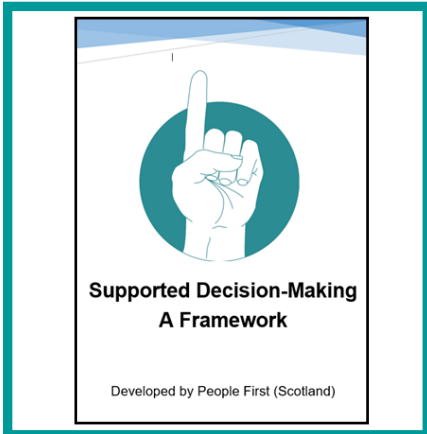
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With thanks to Malcom Cochrane for some of the photos of members and the board of directors.

Law and Human Rights Group



Last year, Steve Robertson and Idem Lewis did a presentation for the independent chair of the Adult Protection Committees, about the group's Framework for supported decision-making. The Chairs were very impressed with the presentation and the framework. They asked to read what People First will say about the Scottish Government consultation about the Adults with Incapacity Act.



The Adults with Incapacity Act is the Law to do with Guardianship. The Government wants to make some changes to it and have asked everyone who is interested to say what they think. This is called a consultation. The Law and Human Rights group will send answers to the Scottish Government. We hope that local groups will also respond to the consultation.



The Law and Human Rights Group have developed a decision making game called 'Decisions, Decisions, Decisions!'. The game has been played at some of the local groups and members said that they find the game very interesting and many found it fun to play. The game is designed to get people thinking about how we make decisions and what kind of support we need to do this.

Supporting Offenders with a Learning Disability



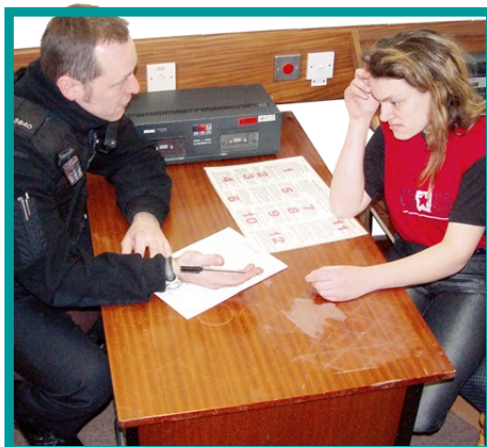
On 20th February, Allan Speirs and Steve Robertson from the SOLD Group did a presentation to the Parliamentary Cross Party Group on Learning Disability at the Scottish Parliament.

Allan and Steve spoke about all the barriers people with learning difficulties face in the justice system.



They said that people with learning disabilities need support with communication and understanding from when they are arrested right through to the end of the court process. This would help make it fairer.

Allan and Steve also said that people need support to help them avoid getting back into trouble. This support needs to help them stay safe, have somewhere to live, get their benefits sorted out and hopefully find a job.



They told the group that many people with learning difficulties do not get enough support in the justice system. It would be good if judges could insist that the support is provided. The Cross Party Group said that they are going to write to the Justice Minister about what Allan and Steve told them.

Website Group



J.P.Morgan

The Website Group began meeting in June 2017 with the goal of making improvements to the People First website. It had been a long time since members had the chance to come together to look at the website.

Since then, the group have benefited from a group of employees at the bank J.P. Morgan. Through its Force for Good program, employees help to build technological solutions for social good organisations. This means that employees have volunteered their time to help build a new People First website.



Despite some communication challenges between the website group and the volunteers, we have made great progress and are nearly halfway through the project.



By Summer 2018, we expect to deliver a website that is accessible and easy to use. It will be accessible on computers, mobile phones and other devices.

Know Your Rights! A message from



Every person has human rights. Rights are to protect you and make sure that you live a good life. In 2009 the UK government agreed to something called the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

The Convention tells governments what they have to do to make sure people with learning disabilities get the same rights as everyone else.

The Convention lists your rights and calls them Articles. Here are some of the rights you should know about. Sometimes they are taken away from people with learning disabilities using Scottish Laws.

EQUAL RIGHTS



Article 5: Equality and Non-discrimination

People with disabilities should not be treated badly because of their disability. At the moment this is not happening for people with learning disabilities because you have the label of "Mental Disorder".



Article 9: Accessibility

The Government has a duty to make sure that places and services people use every day are easy to use. For example, transport and public buildings like hospitals and libraries. It's also about having information you can understand.



Article 12: Equal Recognition before the Law

People with learning disabilities should never have their right to make their own decisions taken away from them.

This right can be taken away if you get put under a Guardianship order. Sometimes staff and family also make decisions about you.



Article 13: Access to Justice

People with disabilities should get the support they need in the Criminal Justice system. The Supporting Offenders with Learning Disabilities Project does a lot of work on this. There are still people with learning disabilities who do not get a fair trial.



Article 14: Liberty and Security of Person

People with learning disabilities should not get locked up or be controlled just because they have a disability. This can happen to people with learning disabilities under the Mental Health Act and the Adults with Incapacity Act.



Article 23: Respect for Home and the family

Children should not be taken away from their parents just because their parents have a disability. It is still very hard for parents who have a learning disability to get enough support to look after their children .

Talking about voting



National Consultation



The Scottish Government want to make changes on how elections work in Scotland. They wanted to hear people's views on how elections can work better and be more accessible to everyone.

A small group of People First members met at the national office to look at the Electoral Reform consultation. Member representatives came from Edinburgh, Midlothian, West Lothian and Glasgow.

The group answered questions on:

- How often elections should be held
- Who runs elections
- Who can register to vote



The local People First groups have also been discussing how to make elections work better for everyone. People First has submitted a response to Scottish Government based on the members' views.

Local area news



Glasgow



We recently carried out two training sessions for Rape Crisis staff in Glasgow. Members of the women's group identified the issues that are very important for women with learning disabilities and gender based violence – which is violence against women .

Some of these include, advice on protection and safety, information about domestic violence in easy read formats as well as, relationship and legal advice.

The training went really well. The staff who attended were eager to learn and really listened to what we had to say. Their comments about the training were very positive.



Roxanne Flannagan, Glasgow member, said, “There were over 30 staff involved & we got the chance to talk about the issues that are important to us. Staff said it gave them a better understanding of the difficulties we face. This is the first time I have been involved in training with People First, I was nervous but I felt so proud of myself after it.”



Local area news



Midlothian



As part of Equal Midlothian Week and in partnership with Midlothian People's Equality Group, we held a demonstration of the Decision Making Game: Decisions, Decisions, Decisions.

Richard McGheechan welcomed everyone to the event and introduced Lisa, National Development Worker, who spoke about the game and how it had been developed by the Law and Human Rights Group.



The game created lots of debate about how it is important to make your own decisions but it is ok to ask for support or advice. Some people asked their team members for advice and then thought about whether they agreed with it and then made their own decision.



Members said that making an informed decision is important but this doesn't always mean you have to do it on your own. In the past, many members have been told what to do by other people. It is hoped that, by playing the game, members can be supported to make their own decisions.

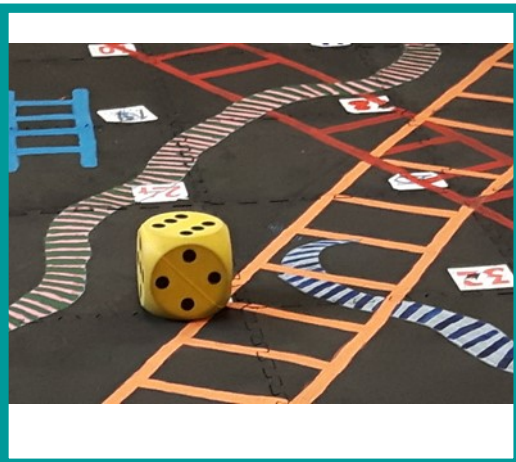
Local area news



Edinburgh



We have started a new series of local events based in North West Edinburgh. Each event will focus on a different topic that is chosen by us. We hosted the first small event on Friday the 16th of March at Stockbridge Library.



The topic of the event was 'My Support'. We talked about what good and bad support looks like and how support services can get better. We shared our experiences in a discussion and took part in a giant game of Snakes and Ladders!



We agreed that it is important that you decide what you do with your support and how you spend your money. New staff should get to know us before they start and we should always know who is on the rota. We should get the right support to live our life how we want it and not be held back because services are short staffed.

Contact Information



If you would like more information about People First (Scotland) groups then please contact the National Office in Edinburgh. You can find the contact details below.



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Photos on Page 2 were created in partnership with Police Scotland.