



# **Scottish Disability Equality Forum**

Leading Disability Equality in Scotland

# **Annual Report and Accounts**

31 March 2016

# Directors' Report

## Introduction from Stephen Cruickshank Convenor of the Scottish Disability Equality Forum

On behalf of the Scottish Disability Equality Forum (SDEF) I am pleased to present our Annual Accounts with an overview of the activities undertaken in the year to March 2016.

I am privileged to take up the position of Interim Convenor to allow our long-term Convenor, Jackie Maceira to step down from this position and focus on his equality work with his Access Panel and many other accessibility groups. We are delighted that Jackie will remain on our board and thank him for his tireless dedication to the organisation over the last 5 years.

We also say goodbye this year to Sheila Fletcher, with sincere thanks for providing a source of strength and wisdom for the organisation during her time with us. Sheila will be greatly missed by staff and directors alike and we wish her well.

Lastly, we are looking ahead with a new CEO. Our very own Morven Brooks will be taking over the reigns from Susan Grasekamp who has been with us for the last five years and we look forward to having Morven take SDEF forwards with her energy and commitment to equality.

As always, we are grateful to the Equality Unit of the Scottish Government and the Adult Care and Support Division for their continued funding to support the work that we do. We have also enjoyed working closely with Police Scotland, Transport Scotland and various other groups and bodies over the course of this year and look forward to an exciting year ahead with more partnership working in the pipeline.

It is exciting to have watched SDEF explore new possibilities over the last year, forging new partnerships and establishing sustainable activities firmly set within the organisation's primary aims. Inclusive Communication, inclusive design and practical support in access, equality and inclusion through training and guidance are a few of the activities which have been developed for future growth into next year. With the continued dedication of our staff and directors, and most importantly, ongoing support of our members, we hope to continue to make a difference for disabled people in Scotland.

I hope you enjoy reading our Annual Report for the period 2015-2016

**Stephen Cruickshank**  
**Interim Convenor, SDEF**

# Directors' Report

The Directors present their report and audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2015.

## 1.1 Directors

The following Directors served during the year:

- Jackie Maceira
- Hector Macdonald
- Stephen Cruickshank
- Patrick McGuigan
- Alex Thorburn (appointed 4<sup>th</sup> November 2015)
- Kirsty Stein Lowe (appointed and resigned within the year)
- Sheila Fletcher (appointed and resigned within the year)
- Peter McDade (appointed 12<sup>th</sup> August 2015)
- Hope Craig (appointed 13<sup>th</sup> April 2016)

No Director had a direct interest in the company during the period.

## **1.2 STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed by the Articles of Association. The company is a charity limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £1.

### **1.3 Methods adopted for the recruitment and appointment of new Directors**

New Directors are elected by a ballot of voting members. Vacancies may be filled by resolution of the Directors.

### **1.4 Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of Directors.**

Directors are recruited in line with the terms laid out in the Articles of Association. Up to five Directors may be elected at an Annual General Meeting by voting member organisations and, save for office bearers, serve for two years at which time they will be subject to election at the Annual General Meeting. In addition, three Directors are elected by Access Panel member organisations at an Annual General Meeting and, save for office bearers, serve for two years at which time they will be subject to election at the Annual General Meeting. Office Bearers are appointed by the Board of Directors and serve until the third Annual General Meeting following their appointment.

Induction documents are issued to all new Directors, containing existing Business Plans; the Memorandum and Articles of Association; roles and responsibilities; Code of Practice for Board Members, organisational information and contact details. Directors learn about their role and responsibilities and are briefed on strategic issues affecting SDEF and the policies of the organisation. The SDEF website has a broad range of material to support Directors in their roles. There are also opportunities to engage in away-day meetings with staff, to clarify roles, responsibilities and approaches.

## **1.5 Organisational Structure**

SDEF is governed by its Board of Directors, which sets the policies and is responsible for the strategic overview of the charity. These policies are implemented by the Board. Members may also take part in the policy-making activity of the charity by passing resolutions at the Annual General Meeting: these resolutions need to be ratified by the Board before implementation. The Board meets generally six times per annum.

Responsibility for operational matters is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer within a clearly understood framework. The Board is involved in determining corporate strategy, including setting key strategic objectives and targets; making major decisions involving use of financial and other resources; and setting a framework for human resources policy.

## **1.6 Relationship between the charity and affiliates and related parties**

The charity is also the Umbrella Body for Access Panels in Scotland which advise public bodies, local councils and other agencies on matters relating to access and equality for people affected by disability. Access Panels may engage in wider community planning and advise on access in its fullest sense, including: health; transport; housing; employment; education; leisure & recreation, open space and the countryside, underpinned by the principles of Independent Living and according to the articles stated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).

## **1.7 Risk management**

A risk management system exists within SDEF which sets out the major risks to which the charity is exposed, as identified by the Directors. Directors periodically review the risks and systems. Procedures have been established to identify, monitor and manage the risks.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

### 2.1 Summary of the objects as set out in governing document

- i. to promote the benefit of disabled people in Scotland by encouraging communication between disabled people and national and local organisations concerned with the inclusion of disabled people in society;
- ii. to advance the education of the public about disability equality and accessible environments, and to effect positive change in attitude and awareness of disability.

### 2.2 Explanation of the charity's aims

The Scottish Disability Equality Forum (SDEF) works for social inclusion in Scotland through the removal of barriers and the promotion of equal access for people affected by disability. It is a membership organisation representing individuals with any type of impairment, disability organisations, groups and individuals who share our values. SDEF aims to ensure the voice of people affected by disability is heard and acted upon.

### 2.3 Main Objectives for the Year

SDEF has been involved in a large number of projects, all of which focus on the organisation's guiding principles to:

1. Promote and raise awareness of equality and access Scotland-wide.
2. Improve access to participation and engagement for disabled people in issues which affect them on a local and national level.
3. Promote action to make Scotland, Scottish institutions and services more accessible to disabled people.
4. Promote accessibility and disability equality amongst employers across all sectors, encouraging meaningful and long-term employment for disabled people
5. Build good relationships with key players in the disability field and identify opportunities for partnership working.

Below are the main areas of work delivered through funding from the Equality Unit (SDEF Core Work) and from Adult Care and Support (Access Panel Project)

## 3.0 SDEF Core Work

### 3.1 Promoting Engagement and Participation

SDEF has increased its engagement with disabled people and disability groups across Scotland. We have achieved this through the delivery of our Disability Roadshows and other Equality and Access related events.

#### Membership

During the period 2015/2016, 78 new members joined SDEF of which 27 are organisations with an interest or involvement in disability related issues.

#### Consultations

SDEF conducted the following consultation surveys and events with members during the period 2015/2016:

- Security in Scotland
- Welfare Reform Your Say
- Equality Act 2010 and Disability
- Scotland's Archaeology Strategy
- Building Standards Review
- Footway Parking and Double Parking (Scotland) Bill
- Scotrail Train Design
- General Practitioner Telephone Numbers
- Personal Independence Payment: aids and appliances
- Proposed Abolition of Social Care Charges (Scotland) Bill
- The Scottish Governments Draft Delivery Plan
- COSLA Delivery Plan 2015-2018

Consultation events were held through Access Panels on the Fairer Scotland dialogue: West Lothian Access Panel, Borders Access Panel, Renfrewshire Access Panel, West Dunbartonshire Access Panel.

### **3.2 Disability Roadshows**

During the period 2015/16, we held six Disability Roadshows across Scotland. The topics covered were Accessible Transport, Inclusive Communication, The Scottish Governments Draft Delivery Plan, Networking and Engagement and Disability Hate Crime. The events were well attended with over 130 people attending in total.

Whilst the purpose of these roadshows was to disseminate information on disability relevant topics, they were also an excellent source of new membership for Access Panels, and provided the opportunity for members of the community to speak to Local Authority officials and other relevant bodies.

### **3.3 Information and dissemination of equality, inclusion and access related materials**

Over the course of the year, SDEF developed and disseminated the following materials to its members and wider readership.

- Open Door Publications
- Monthly e-newsletters
- Spoken Word documents available online

Guides and toolkits across a number of related areas including communication, evaluation and reporting, membership and funding.

Easy Read summaries of our SDEF consultation briefings and responses are now standard for all responses. In addition, SDEF completed the following significant pieces of work.

- The Scottish Government's Draft Delivery Plan Easy Read
- COSLA's Delivery Plan Easy Read
- Transport Scotland Summit Report Easy Read



### **3.4 Improving Employment Opportunities through Equality Internships**

In partnership with SCVO and Inclusion Scotland, SDEF worked with employers to improve understanding of the barriers experienced by disabled people looking for work. We provided guidance, templates and access audits to help employers make it easier for them to employ and support disabled people.

34 disabled people secured an Equality Internship with Third Sector Employers. These included SDEF. (Our Intern is now a permanent member of staff). Support was provided to employers through meetings, events and regular communication throughout the period of the Equality Internship.

Nine interns had their internships extended to March 2016. Six interns received further opportunities for work following the completion of their internship.

SDEF also worked with Access Panels to deliver Access Assessments of those workplaces which requested them. These audits provided employers with an appraisal of the accessibility of their premises which included parking, entrance, toilets, office space and other public areas.

Part of the support offered was to inform employers of disabled people's rights and to gain an understanding of 'reasonable adjustment' and 'inclusion'.

Those who undertook the access audits felt that the information was useful to their continued efforts towards being an inclusive organisation.

Many Equality Interns who were part of the scheme reported that whilst it had been a positive experience, there is still much that has to be done to improve awareness of access and of inclusion in the workplace.

### **3.5 Development of Online 'Hubs' for easy access to information on Inclusive Communication, Equality, Access and Design, and Accessible Transport.**

SDEF has begun its work on providing easy to access online spaces which will provide information around inclusive communication, Accessible Design and Accessible Transport.

These 'hubs' do not seek to duplicate existing materials, but will signpost visitors to those websites which hold relevant information.

### **3.6a Inclusive Communication Hub – [www.includeusall.org.uk](http://www.includeusall.org.uk)**

The first of the hubs, [www.Includeusall.org.uk](http://www.Includeusall.org.uk) was completed and launched in March 2016 and has been warmly received by the public and by professionals. The Includeusall website provides information, articles, guidance and templates for individuals, staff and professionals on how to communicate more inclusively. It aims to make Scotland more inclusive in its approach to information by raising awareness of good practice in inclusive communication and accessible information.

### **3.6b Inclusive Design Hub – [www.inclusivedesign.scot](http://www.inclusivedesign.scot)**

Inclusivedesign.scot has been developed with the aim of providing information to individuals interested in accessible design, right through to professionals and planners seeking further information and guidance on planning and development, as well as examples of good practice and commitment to inclusive design.

### **3.6c Accessible Travel Hub – [www.accessibletravel.scot](http://www.accessibletravel.scot)**

Accessible Transport is vital to disabled people being able to enjoy their rights as citizens of a fair society. After a lack of job opportunities, difficulty with transport was the most commonly cited barrier to work among disabled adults in the UK.

The work of period 2015 with Transport Scotland and the Accessible Travel Steering Group on the Accessible Travel Hub is beginning in 2016 and the aim of hub is to educate staff, managers and individuals on accessible travel issues, rights and duties and also to provide local information on accessibility across all modes of transport, including buses and coaches, trains, taxis and cars, ferries, planes and community transport.

The Accessible Travel Hub will also provide ongoing updates on the Accessible Travel Plan developed in coproduction with Transport Scotland, disabled people and their groups, and transport providers and operators.

Lastly the hub will provide a contact point for disabled who wish to be directly involved in the monitoring of the Accessible Travel Plan.

### **3.7 Accessible Transport**

Following on from the events held with Transport Scotland last year on the lead up to the Summit, SDEF continued to work with other partners as part of a steering group. The aim of this steering group is to develop an Accessible Travel Plan which is due to launch in September 2016. SDEF held events, surveys and promoted the work of Transport Scotland, informing disabled people of the progress of the plan. We will continue to work with Transport Scotland over the ten-year lifespan of the Accessible Travel Framework.

### **4.0 Access Panel Project**

SDEF has continued to work in partnership with the Access Panel Network, thanks to Adult Care and Support Services who have funded this work until 2017. Further, the Equality Unit generously awarded SDEF £80,000 for distribution to Access Panels. This was distributed via an Access Panel Grant award and has provided vital financial support to panels to continue their good work.

#### **4.1 Access Panel Work**

Over the past year Access Panels have been active in the following areas:

- Education
- Criminal Justice
- Housing
- Health and Social care

Over the past year Access Panels have undertaken the following pieces of work:

- Access Audits for police stations
- Engaging with primary and secondary schools
- Worked with Historic Environment Scotland on Access Issues
- Worked with local authorities on a range of issues like health and social care, learning disability strategies, housing and planning

#### **4.2 Training Delivered to Access Panels**

- Membership Development
- Networking
- Funding
- Reporting & Evaluation
- Internal Governance
- IT Skills

The aim of this training project was to

1. Protect and enhance the work of Access Panels
2. Address and influence key access issues
3. Influence the development of policy and legislation
4. Develop key external relationships and support Access Panels
5. Support panels to identify opportunities for growth and sustainability

### **4.3 Panel Collaboration and Participation**

Our focus this year has been on improved engagement between individuals, groups and bodies to better inform local and national government of the needs of disabled people in Scotland. Both SDEF and the Access Panel project have worked together to include our members across a range of events and activities aimed at improving services for disabled people.

### **4.4 Paneltown**

We now have 15 Access Panels who have taken up the Paneltown website, strengthening the Access Panel Network by providing a universal template for panels across Scotland. This makes it easier for disabled people and other community members to access local and national information on disability and access.

## **5.0 Other Work**

### **5.1 Collaborative Work**

SDEF worked with a wide range of agencies on shared concerns. These included:

- Access Panel Network Scotland
- Black and Ethnic Minorities in Scotland (BEMIS)
- Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector Organisations (CEMVO)
- Criminal Justice Disability Project Team
- Fife Council
- Forth Replacement Crossing
- Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living (GCIL)
- Health Directorate
- Health Facilities Scotland
- Highland Council
- Inclusion Scotland
- Independent Living Fund Scotland

- Independent Living in Scotland (ILiS)
- Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living (LCIL)
- North Lanarkshire Council
- Planning Directorate
- Police Scotland
- Roads for All
- Scottish Accessible Information Form (SAIF)
- Scottish Building Standards Division
- Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO)
- Scottish Government Equality Unit
- Scottish Prison Service
- Self-Directed Support Scotland (SDSS)
- Sense Scotland
- Transport Scotland

## **6.0 ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE**

### **6.1 Review of charitable activities with a view to performance and objectives set**

The two sectors which are funded by the appropriate Units of the Scottish Government are subject to the funding conditions issued along with the annual grants. The approved Business Plans are therefore subject to a reporting structure to funders which has been complied with. Fuller detail is available in our Annual Report.

### **6.2 Investment performance against objectives**

The Charity is not involved in investment, although it has the power to make investments if the Directors see fit.

### **6.3 Factors within and outside charity control**

The Charity's activities are governed by the criteria laid down by the principal funder – the Scottish Government.

## **7.0 FINANCIAL REVIEW**

Our accountancy services are provided by Atkinson & Co Limited and take the form of an Independent Examination.

The results for the year are shown in the attached financial statements. The total of accumulated funds at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 were £58,028 (2015 - £94,411) including unrestricted funds of £57,104 (2015 - £80,649) and restricted funds of £924 (2015 - £13,762).

### **7.1 Reserves policy**

Key parts of the restricted funds are to be used for a specific purpose as laid down by the donor. If funding was lost these services would be discontinued as unrestricted income would not fund the relevant expenditure. The remaining general fund, which constitutes the free reserves of the company, represents the unrestricted funds arising from past operating results and is there to cover future contingencies which may arise through changes in funding. This would allow the charity to continue operating for a maximum of six months.

## **8.0 PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS**

### **8.1 Online Equality and Inclusion ‘Hubs’**

SDEF seeks to build upon the work begun in 2015, improving online access to information around inclusion and inclusive communication, accessible design and accessible travel.

### **8.2 Improved Support to Members**

In the next funding period, we will improve training within our own team to ensure that they are able to deliver support across a wide range of areas, including Easy Read, Access, Equality and IT/Online Support.

### **8.3 Delivery of Training Courses**

We will seek to deliver services and courses across these same areas and will prepare to deliver our Access, Equality and Inclusion course completed this year by our National Inclusion Officer, Yvonne Wemyss.

### **8.4 Research Opportunities**

SDEF will seek out research opportunities with academic partners to utilise the wealth of information and expertise within SDEF, informing equality related work.

## **8.5 Hate Crime/Social Justice**

SDEF has continued to provide disability advice and guidance on the following groups:

- Criminal Justice Disability Advisory Group
- C3 Division Expert Reference Group, providing disability related advice to Police Scotland on changes to their structure and gathering of information

Our role on these groups has been pivotal to the ongoing understanding and development of Disability Awareness, Accessibility and Hate Crime.

## **8.6 Panel to Panel Support**

SDEF will also continue to build upon existing Access Panel relationships, improving engagement between panels and their communities through the work of our Access Team. Our focus with Access Panels will be to improve support between Panels, holding regional panel meetings and creating a sustainable means of Panels supporting each other into the future.

## **8.7 Promotion of Equality**

Through various projects, we will continue to raise awareness of barriers to equality with a view to creating positive change in the lives of disabled people. We will also continue to find new ways of highlighting good practice in access and inclusion to work towards achieving a more inclusive and disability aware society in Scotland.

## **8.8 Inclusive Communication Hub**

During 2015 The Scottish Accessible Information Forum (SAIF) and SDEF formed a Consortium to develop an Inclusive Communication Hub for Scotland. The Consortium contributed with their wealth of knowledge and expertise in the development of this Hub. The Scottish Government are now supporting SDEF, SAIF and Sense Scotland to take forward the development of this Hub during 2016.

The Inclusive Communication Hub will be the first of its kind for Scotland. This will be an easy to use online tool, for all who wish to be more inclusive with the information they deliver.







## Presentation of Income and Expenditure Account

Year ended 31 March 2016

### What is an Accrual?

Accruals are adjustments for 1) money that has been earned but is not yet recorded in the accounts, and 2) expenses paid out but are not yet recorded in the accounts. The accruals need to be added by adjusting entries so that the financial statements show these amounts.

The Accruals shown below are the adjustments made when preparing the 2016 accounts.

|   | 2016            | 2015            |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|
| <b>Income</b>   |                 |                 |
| Scottish Government<br>Access Panel Grant & Section 10  | £150,053        | £160,132        |
| Donations   | £47             | -               |
| Bank interest   | £318            | £504            |
| Scottish Government<br>Equality Unit  | £145,000        | £145,000        |
| Scottish Government – NIO Post  | (£13,058)       | £52,232         |
| <b>Accrual Note:</b> There was a reduction of £13,000 of our income. This amount required reversing in the 2016 accounts, showing a negative against the NIO Post income. The amount for the NIO post was paid from reserves. |                 |                 |
| SCVO – EQUINT (Equality Internship Programme)   | £29,842         | £21,517         |
| <b>Accrual Note:</b> EQUINT delayed income - £3,000 of EQUINT income had been delayed.  |                 |                 |
| Other income  | £7,577          | £300            |
| <b>Total Income</b>   | <b>£319,779</b> | <b>£379,685</b> |

## Expenditure

|  | 2016     | 2015     |
|--|----------|----------|
| Allocated to Access Panel  | £60,294  | £80,530  |
| <b>Accrual Note:</b> Access Panel grant accrual – an accrual for two grant applications totalling £2,500 has been recognised.                    |          |          |
| Staff costs  | £176,874 | £162,662 |
| Recruitment & training   | £3,127   | £1,439   |
| Travel, subsistence & board expenses   | £14,646  | £14,154  |
| <b>Accrual Note:</b> Travel, subsistence & board expenses – around £1,600 was accrued in the 2015 accounts and was reversed in the 2016 accounts |          |          |
| Rent & service charges   | £17,744  | £17,423  |
| Insurance  | £1,900   | £1,483   |
| Telephone & internet   | £1,749   | £2,215   |
| Postage, stationery & printing   | £11,469  | £11,697  |
| Publications & subscriptions   | £1,020   | £1,416   |
| Computer expenses  | £5,279   | £2,667   |
| Advertising & website  | £639     | £2,173   |
| Sundry expenses  | £239     | £1,241   |
| Supporting disabled directors & staff  | -        | £290     |
| Consultancy  | £43,124  | £67,792  |
| NAST expenses  | £2,574   | £9,913   |
| Events   | £7,616   | £18,172  |
| Bank charges   | £4       | £14      |
| Accountancy fees   | £3,000   | £3,506   |

|  | <b>2016</b>     | <b>2015</b>     |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|
| Provision of accountancy training & interim accounts | £2,040          | -               |
| Professional fees                                    | £1,943          | £6,152          |
| Room hire & conference expenses                      | £881            | £1,628          |
| <b>Total Expenditure</b>                             | <b>£356,162</b> | <b>£406,567</b> |
| Surplus/(Deficit) for year                           | (£36,383)       | (£26,882)       |

## **Balance Sheet**

as at 31 March 2016

|  | <b>2016</b>    | <b>2015</b>     |
|--|----------------|-----------------|
| <b>Current assets</b>                          |                |                 |
| Debtors  | £4,100         | £17,290         |
| Cash at bank and in hand                       | £71,496        | £87,269         |
| <b>Total current assets</b>                    | <b>£75,596</b> | <b>£104,559</b> |
| Creditors: amounts falling due within one year | (£17,568)      | (£10,148)       |
| Net assets                                     | £58,028        | £94,411         |
| <b>Capital and reserves</b>                    |                |                 |
| Restricted funds                               | £924           | £13,762         |
| General fund                                   | £57,104        | £80,649         |
| Accumulated funds                              | £58,028        | £94,411         |

**Full financial statements which have been examined by Atkinson & Co. are available from the company on request.**