

Learning Disability Development Fund (LDDF) Progress report



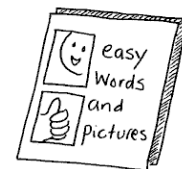
Name of project: The Link Group

Project Lead: Sarah Pickard

Sub Group overseeing project: Chairs Planning

Project Targets from original bid:
These are the things Speak Out will do with money.

- **Link group:** We will continue to support a group of people with learning difficulties to take part in Partnership Board meetings. We will support people to understand Valuing People Now, what Partnership boards do, and what their job is.
- **Checking:** We will check that the Partnership Board is making change happen and doing what it said it would.
- **Sharing views:** will present the film or report from each Big Meeting to the Partnership Board. They will make sure that the views of people with learning disabilities are heard by the Partnership Board.
- **Big Meetings:** the Link Group will listen to everyone's views. They will tell people about the work of the Partnership Board.
- **Co chair support:** We will give regular support to the co chair to help them plan the agenda at the chairs planning meetings, and to chair the meetings.
- **Sub Groups:** We will help the sub groups plan services based on what people in the advocacy

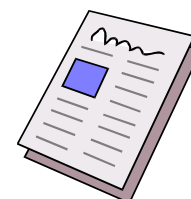


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groups network think and experience

- **Help the Partnership Board:** The Link Group will continue to remind the Partnership Board and sub groups to make meetings easier to take part in.
- **Regional and National Learning Disabilities Forum:** the Link group will develop links and share information with the Partnership Board.
- **Network News:** Link Group will tell others about Partnership Board work using Network New



How the project will do this work:

- 3-6 people supported to be part of Link Group
- Link group attend 6 Partnership Board meetings and 6 Big Meetings, and present views of each.
- Link Group give feedback after each Partnership Board meeting on how easy it was to take part.
- Link Group report on Partnership Board work in Network News.
- Work with sub groups to help them get views on services from the Advocacy Groups Network.
- Co chair to be supported at Chairs planning meetings and to chair Partnership Board meetings
- Speak Out staff give views on draft policies or plans.
- Advocacy Groups give views on draft policies or plans.
- Speak Out staff attend most Partnership Board and some sub group meetings.

How much 2009/10 LDDF money the project gets: £15,000

Name of person completing this report:

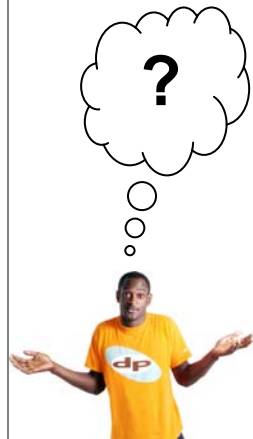
Sarah Pickard

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What the project has done in April through July 2009:

- Group membership remains at 7 people.
- The Link Group has attended 2 Partnership Board meetings and 2 Big Meetings. They have told the co chairs group that the Partnership Board is not working well for them as they do not understand a lot of what is said and do not feel they can participate in much of the meeting. A meeting has been set up in September between the Co Chairs group and the Link group to try and improve the situation. The Link group is planning to run a session at the next Partnership Board to find ways to improve the Partnership Board for all attendees.
- The Link Group has identified that whilst feedback goes to the Partnership Board from the Big Meeting/advocacy groups sometimes it is hard to tell what the Partnership board is going to do with this information and it sometimes feels like it gets lost. This is particularly true about info which is general and not about individual situations (ie the general need for people to get better support in relationships) Speak Out and Naomi have agreed that the Partnership Board will clearly tell the Link group what is being done about their feedback. This can then be reported back to the Big Meeting.
- The Link Group has been very involved in the work going on about complaints and choices in homes. They have met with senior



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social workers to discuss what the Community Learning Disability team have done to improve the quality of care in residential homes. They have also spoken to many people in the Advocacy Groups Network as this issue seems very important to many people.

- Link group got LDDF funding to work in homes with residents on choices, control and rights. Work happening between September and December.
- Link Group members have attended and given their views to the Health sub group and Regional Health Quality Forum, the council Scrutiny Committee, LDDF information session and Community Safety information session. They voted on how LDDF money should be allocated.
- They have written articles in 2 network news

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What the project has done August through November 2009

- There are currently 7 people in the Link Group.
- Link Group has attended 2 Big Meetings and 2 Partnership Boards. The Big Meeting ran workshops on 'My Ideal Home' and 'Money' and has fed back what people with learning disabilities think about these subjects.
- The Link group told the Partnership Board that lots of people with learning disabilities never carry money with them. This stops them from unplanned trips out with day services and being able to buy an item when they see it. Some people feel in control of their money but others said that they want more control.
- The Link Group visited 6 homes to find out if residents are able to complain if they are unhappy with the service they get. They have also asked if people are empowered to make choices and decisions in their homes. They will write a report and feed it back to the Person Centred Approaches group in the new year.
- The group met with the Chairs Planning group to talk about how easy the Partnership Board is to understand and to take part in. They agreed to try out some new ideas at the next 2 meetings in order to make the meeting easier.
- Members of the group have contributed to writing articles in 1 Network News.

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What has the project done December through March 2010

- There are still 7 people in the group who have attended 2 Big Meetings and 2 Partnership Boards and have represented advocacy groups and members of the Big Meeting. Issues include work and planning what they want to talk about in the coming year.
- Members of the Link Group have met with the Employment Team. They fed back the views of the Big Meeting and agreed what the work plan in line with Valuing Employment Now. They have agreed to work more with the team in future.
- The main issues for people regarding employment are: understanding the benefits system and work, changing the public's attitudes to people with learning disabilities working, making sure people get good support from places such as the government, helping employers understand how to support people with learning disabilities, getting good quality job training
- Members of the group attended the Person Centred Approaches sub group to tell them about their work in homes around rights and complaints. They found a very mixed picture. Group members were very impressed with some houses which clearly felt like homes. Others, they thought, were too big so people did not get a say in how their lives are run. The sub group might want the group to do



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more work in the future on this.

- Members of the group attended the interview process for the new manager of Learning disability Team. They listened to presentations by each candidate and marked each one accordingly.