

Chairperson's Report
Disability Resource Centre
Service Users Committee

SC017575

I'm Paul Roderickson and would like to welcome everyone to this year's Annual General Meeting. Since 2020 I've been more involved in the Service Users Committee.

In recent years, it has been an absolute privilege to be Chairperson. I want to take the time to thank everyone who has been involved in making this organisation successful. It's still running after over 30 years. We are the link between service users, carers and staff.

We are here for all service users and can highlight issues and problems independently. Within the Service Users Committee and the DRC, we are careful not to forget the need to celebrate the many positive experiences we have shared.

We are representing all service users at the Disability Resource Centre. We understand that we face a climate of change, with an emphasis on needing to make savings to services. More than ever, our views and experiences are needed. Sharing and learning from our own determination to keep on going is important. We are making a positive difference in the community. This leads us to the main themes the Committee has prioritised and the direction we have chosen to take.

We continue to have a staff team at the Disability Resource Centre who are committed and keen to support us, to co-work and develop the service. At this point more than ever significant cuts to public services are being discussed.

Before I outline details of the work we have been involved in over the last year, I'm keen to highlight several **Aims and Objectives** and **Powers** in our Constitution.

- **To promote the benefit of all people with a physical or sensory impairment who are Users of the Disability Resource Centre**

The Committee responds - *"We are inclusive and will encourage and support everyone who attends"*.

- **To ascertain and co-ordinate, on a regular basis, the views and wishes of all who use the Disability Resource Centre.**

"The Committee liaises with members of staff and the management. Committee members can be approached with sensitive matters and with permission, in confidence, will take any concerns with the management team".

- **To encourage the involvement of the Users in self-development opportunities.**

"Participation in groups, access to training, peer-support and development projects".

- **To provide social, educational, and cultural activities**

“The Committee provides additional resources for groupwork materials and equipment for the third sector organisations based at the Disability Resource Centre”.

- **Promote interaction between generations.**

“We are keen to be inclusive and enable people of all ages to become involved and ensure representation”.

- **Promote and carry out, or assist in carrying out, research, surveys, and investigations relevant to the aims and objectives of the Users Committee**

“We work together to make an impact and share our findings”.

- **The Committee promotes work being carried out in surveys and consultations.**

“We investigate information and consult with service users before we make applications to trusts and grant giving bodies”.

We're planning to develop more in terms of supporting people who rely on attending the Disability Resource Centre. Thanks for contributing to the Committee. It's been established for more than 30 years now. We intend to continue highlighting difficulties in the community and work with our partners to represent our views and promote accessibility.

Mental health and wellbeing concerns have become more comfortable to discuss in appropriate settings. We learned recently that Engage Renfrewshire has awarded the Service Users Committee a Grant for a new Peer Support Project. The funding application was made to the Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund. This is going to make a significant difference to our membership and potentially informal carers and family members.

We appreciate that the potential for skills and learning experiences around peer support is high. The successful application **Disability Resource Centre User's Committee**, to the value of **£3500** for the period to 31st January 2026.

We hope that this will be an exciting starting point for new participants. As a pilot project, this is a fantastic opportunity for us. It's going to be a wonderful experience for people to learn new skills and explore the benefits of peer support.

Although we still need to identify a facilitator, we are confident that they will structure and guide the way the sessions are planned. The DRC as links with some talented people who previously collaborated in community workshops and peer support projects from previous years.

The Committee members and Ordinary members worked in collaboration. We are determined to have our voices heard this year. People were generous with their time and demonstrated absolute dedication to working together. Informal carers and family members also assisted and are discussing different perspectives and experiences.

Vicky Campbell was nominated as Treasurer again last year, and Ann Wiggins continued as the Committee's Secretary. As part of a team they have both worked hard behind the scenes to fundraise and motivate people into action. I would like to thank Vicky and Ann for their efforts.

Nowadays, people talk of the importance of lived experience. Shared insight can help to create positive outcomes. During the Covid-19 Pandemic, our insight was stark. Relying on care to get

by it limited our independence. As people relying on care and accessing services, we identified with many who were able to share personal experiences. They described feelings of isolation. For the majority, Digital meetings didn't replace relationships with people who may be facing anxiety and concerns about the future.

The challenge for this Committee was to help people to regain confidence in their abilities and re-establish links in the community again.

The staff at the Disability Resource Centre have continued to show their support. Claire Graham, Senior Business Support and Irene Macneil, Manager attend meetings regularly. Joe McAdam, DCO and Mary Christison, Senior DCO have liaised with other groups in the Centre to highlight developments and plans for groupwork equipment and organising social events.

A Coffee Morning was organised by the Committee last year. It was an amazing success, with home baking, and raffle prizes. The knitted crafts were beautifully made by some of the Committee members, namely, Vicky, Karen and Marjory. We noticed that Ann has terrific expertise in sales!

Joe McAdam – our digital expert, guided the Committee to help source digital supplies, ink, paper etc. The Committee have supported groups and service users with investing in equipment in the past. Many people benefit and use the equipment and materials in groups. The support is appreciated by service users and staff.

The grounds at the Disability Resource Centre are huge and we've always relied on the small group of people volunteering to keep the raised beds in good order and grow vegetables. The Service User's Committee has recently funded timber and materials for outdoor work. The gardening group, with their dwindling number of volunteers worked together to replace raised beds and make the space as accessible and safe as possible.

Since April 2025, prior to the AGM in June, several public consultations were organised by Renfrewshire Council. Public meetings took place in a variety of venues throughout Renfrewshire. Representatives from the Users Committee attended the consultations at various locations or responded online.

An important meeting was held at the Disability Resource Centre as part of the consultation process. Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership has had to put forward difficult options for local communities including cutbacks to Adult Services. The Users Committee are grateful to everyone who has contributed since the consultation process started.

We look forward to continuing to develop our commitment to represent all service users, family members and acting as a support network in the community.

Paul Roderickson

Chairperson

Service User's Committee

74 Love Street

Paisley

PA3 2EA.