

Creating a Wales that values and includes people with a learning disability of all ages

Inside this issue

Influencing policy, training and events, Easy Read Wales

Engage to Change

From paid work placements to real employment

Love Life

> Meaningful relationships now!

Gig Buddies

Creating friendships

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Supporting parents to be parents



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Glamorgan Greencaps Photo by Paul Stewart-Davies

"We were pleased to appoint Martyn Jones as our new Chief Executive"

Welcome message from Phil Madden, Chair of our Board of Trustees

This year we were in full swing with our projects and this report will look at some of the highlights and achievements.

We support the Social Services and Well-being Act through our Valued Lives project by informing, training, challenging and representing, and innovating.

This year we saw the last edition of Llais. For 30 years and 122 editions, Llais has been a respected source of debate, challenging bad practice and highlighting good practice. Llais will continue online at ldw.org.uk.

Our two-day annual conference 'Love your health' was a highlight of the year, bringing many people together to have lively conversations and debate on improving health and well-being.

Our Engage to Change employment project saw impressive results with 114 young people getting paid work experience and 69 young people entering sustained employment.

Our easy read service worked to full capacity and it is pleasing to see that organisations are ensuring they have accessible information for people with a learning disability and their families. Towards the end of the year we were delighted to start our Gig Buddies project, thanks to generous funding from First Choice Housing Association. The project will help us to reach people and organisations in the community who have never experienced learning disability before. We know that to fully change attitudes in society we must work with the whole population.

Towards the end of the year we started to plan the recruitment of our new Chief Executive Officer. Trustees and staff were fully involved in shaping the post. We were pleased to appoint Martyn Jones, who previously worked at Tai Pawb. Martyn started in the role at the end of April 2018.

I would like thank the staff and trustees for their commitment and hard work in the year.



"We will place people with a learning disability at the heart of all we do"

Welcome message from Martyn Jones, Chief Executive of Learning Disability Wales

We have an incredibly exciting future and I look forward to working with friends old and new to protect the rights and promote the independence of people with learning disabilities of all ages in Wales.

I could not have been offered a warmer welcome from my colleagues and all our partners when I joined Learning Disability Wales. The passion and commitment I have witnessed since starting my role here has been incredible.

We cannot ignore the significant challenges ahead brought about by the impact of a continued policy of austerity on public services.

We also need to face the stark reality that despite the enormous efforts of many people over many years, there remains much to do to ensure people with learning disabilities have voice, choice and control over their lives and the things that matter most to them.

However, this is precisely what Learning Disability Wales is all about. We exist to dismantle the barriers that prevent people with learning disabilities from fully participating in society as valued individuals whose individual needs are supported.



Through the Improving Lives Programme there is clearly a new sense of purpose and direction on the part of Welsh Government in terms of how it intends to support people with learning disabilities to flourish throughout their lives.

Learning Disability Wales has and will continue to be central in the roll out of this new approach. We will ensure all policy and service areas understand what they need to do to enable people with learning disabilities to live a full life.

Building on a proud history, we will strengthen our efforts over the coming years to protect the rights of individuals and their carer's and families in Wales.

To do this we will work tirelessly with all our stakeholders but most importantly, we will place people with a learning disability at the heart of all we do.

Our mission is to:

Create a Wales that values and includes every child, young person and adult with a learning disability.















Our goals are to:

- Strengthen the voice, rights and status of children, young people and adults with a learning disability.
- Enhance parents and family carers' ability to make a positive contribution.
- Promote person centred services.





Ariennir gan Lywodraeth Cymru Funded by Welsh Government



Valued Lives

April 2016 - 2020

Our work is entwined with the vision of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act to promote the well-being, rights, protection and interests of people with a learning disability from birth to old age.

We are funded by Welsh Government to deliver Valued Lives, and through this we aim to make a positive difference through our four work areas:

Informing

Supporting people with a learning disability and their families to have a stronger, wellinformed voice by providing an accessible and informative communications service.

Representing and challenging

Ensuring that the voices of people with a learning disability are heard and responded to.

Training and events

Creating a skilled and knowledgeable workforce by providing a comprehensive training and events programme.

Innovating

Ensuring new or better service models are introduced for people with a learning disability.

Comments from delegates at our 2017 annual conference, Love your health.

I wish to emphasise how much of a fantastic time we had, and how many positive key points from the day we were able to take away and incorporate into our own working environments and daily routines.

Another fantastic conference by a fantastic team!

"Helping you to have a stronger, well-informed voice"

Valued Lives: Informing

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ldw.org.uk 🕴 /learningdisabilitywales

Helping you to have a stronger, wellinformed voice is central to our work at Learning Disability Wales.

So it is important that we provide you with an accessible, relevant and trusted communications service that keeps you up-to-date with the issues that matter.

This year we continued to improve our communications service by developing a brand new, responsive website that is easy to use on all devices. Our new website went live in October 2018 with many new features, including online payments for our training and events.

🕥 @LdWales

Our social media channels and e-news service are great ways to quickly engage with people. We published up-to-theminute news on Twitter and Facebook, whilst we kept e-news subscribers informed with our regular news and our Llais Update newsletter.

Llais has provided a 'voice'. In my opinion it has been the single most important chronicle of the struggles, successes and failures of the learning disability sector in Wales since 1989. I would advise anyone who wants to learn about the history of the learning disability sector in Wales to start with Llais.

Joe Powell, Director of All Wales People First



In the summer of 2017 we published our final paper edition of Llais, a bumper issue that included articles on learning disability and the arts, sight loss, mental health and co-production. During 28 years of production, we published an amazing 122 editions, providing a platform to raise debate, challenge bad practice and highlight good practice. All 122 editions were produced under the editiorial guidance of Karen Warner, our Communications Manager.

You can continue to read new Llais articles on our website at ldw.org.uk/news-policy, while we will be adding previous editions as an archive.

"We work to ensure that the voice of people with a learning disability is heard and responded to"

Valued Lives: Challenging and representing

Throughout the year we make sure that the voice of people with a learning disability is heard and responded to. We do this in partnership with other organisations, while our staff, trustees and members take an active role in meetings, networks and lobbying.

Additional learning needs reform

We have been working for several years with the Third Sector Alliance for Additional Needs (TSANA) to shape and monitor the additional learning needs reform (formerly known as special educational needs) so it provides the best opportunities for disabled children.

The long awaited Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act was published in early 2018. As of October 2018 we await the draft version of the Code of Practice that will show us how the reform will be implemented.



#4000Families campaign

We campaigned with Contact a Family Cymru and Carers Wales on the #4000Families Campaign to raise concerns on the impact Welsh Government cuts were having on the well-being of low income families with disabled children.



Access to benefits and services

We started work on producing easy read guidance and training materials for people with a learning disability to help them understand what their rights are on the new process of assessment and care planning in local authorities.

We provided information, stories and lobbied on issues such as personal independence payment, local authority cuts, employment and closure of the Independent Living Fund. We also planned our work through two meetings of our 'Access to benefits and Services sub group and worked with networks such as disabled children organisations, our members, Capita, and the Department for Work and Pensions.

We worked with the Cymorth Cymru supported living providers group to discuss the issues of costs of sleep-in judgements for supported living and the National Living Wage.

Cross Party Group on Disability

The group is a great opportunity to raise awareness and promote interests of disabled people, their families and carers with the National Assembly and Welsh Government.

This was the second year we have provided the Secretariat for the group. Three meetings were held on a variety of topics where presentations and lively discussion took place.

Topics included what does Independent Living mean in practice, getting it right for disabled children, wheelchair rugby, Remploy, petition for an Access Certificate, the impending closure of the Welsh Independent Living Grant, and progress of United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled Deople.



Better end of life care

We helped the Marie Curie End of Life Care project that is looking at overcoming barriers for people with a learning disability accessing end of life care. We assisted with advice, information, and producing easy read versions of minutes from meetings.

Personalised technology

We worked with trustees and supported living providers to look at how we can increase the take up of personalised technology for people with a learning disability so people can lead an independent life where they are in control.

Transforming care

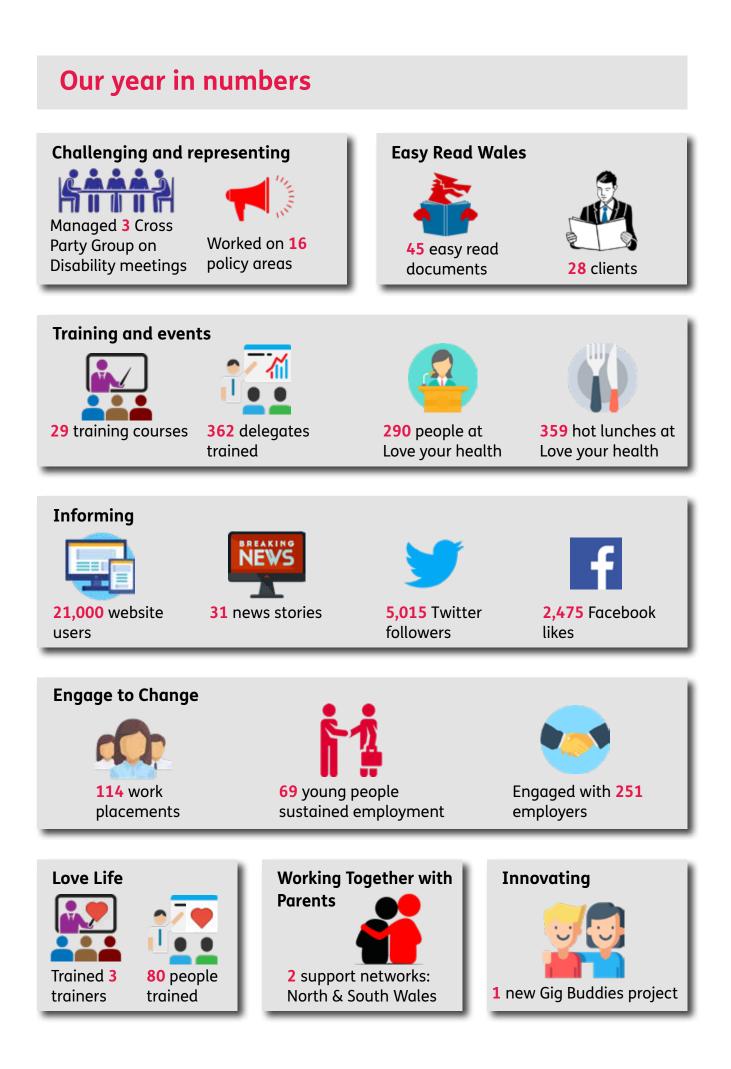
We assisted with Welsh Government's research that looked at what a person with a learning disability and their families and carers may require across their life and how these needs are currently being met. Welsh Government launched of the Improving Lives programme in June 2018.

Other work

We worked with other third sector organisations to represent and raise issues for disabled people in groups, including the Learning Disability Consortium, Disability Equality Forum and Wales Disability Reference Group.

We also assisted Welsh Government with:

- Advising on issues through the Learning Disability Advisory Group.
- Planning their evaluation of the Social Services and Well-being Act.
- Reviewing their framework for continuing health care and preparing for a new one.
- Preparing for a new Framework for Action on Independent living.
- Producing new guidance for adult placement schemes.



"A skilled and knowledgeable workforce is vital in understanding and supporting people with a learning disability"

Valued Lives: Training and events

We bring expert trainers and exciting facilitators to our events across Wales so that you can join us in changing how people work, live and think. Our events are accessible and inclusive to everyone with an interest in improving the lives of people with a learning disability. Our training programme is wide-ranging, continually updated, and competitively priced.

Annual conference: Love your health

This year's annual conference focussed on health and well-being. Over two days 290 people joined us for a lively mix of speakers, drama and interactive workshops that explored issues such as: Healthy eating; Dental health; Care bundles for adults requiring hospital care; Mental health; Hearing; Eye health; Sleep; Physical activity; Stopping over-medication.

Training and meeting room facilities

We redecorated and updated the facilities in our training and meeting room, making it more flexible for a range of different types of meetings and events.

With better refreshment facilities and more space to move around we love welcoming delegates to our new training room, and hiring it out to anyone who needs a bright space to meet in Cardiff.

Comments from delegates who attended Love your health

- Loved the theme, excellent workshops and talks, relevant and inspiring.
- Very enjoyable inclusive topics covered to highlight issues of Learning Disability in Wales.
- Lovely informal atmosphere which made it all so accessible and engaging.

"

Great participation from people of all ages.



Training

Our training programme had its most successful year so far, with 362 delegates attending 29 training courses all across Wales.

These courses included: Making Information Easy to Read and Understand; Effective Communication; United Nations Convention on the Rights of Disabled People; Personal Relationships and Sexuality; Autism Spectrum Conditions; Positive Ways of Changing Behaviour, and many more.

We also increased our in-house training services, delivering five tailor made courses to organisations and projects throughout Wales. Visit our website to see the full list of training available: www.ldw.org.uk/training-events.

Comments from delegates who attended our training

This course was very informative and useful in my work. I will approach my views on documentation and correspondence differently.
 Delegate on Making Information Easy to Read and Understand – Level 1

- The trainer had excellent communication. There was loads of discussion, video clips and links given. Very informative session.
 Delegate on Mental Health Awareness
- Trainers knowledge of the subject was excellent. Handouts were excellent, lots of examples.

Delegate on Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.

"New or better service models for people with a learning disability"

Valued Lives: Innovating

We work to ensure existing services are person-centred and always improving. In partnership with other organisations, we seek out new thinking and support new service models that enable people with a learning disability to enjoy independent lives.

Gig Buddies Cardiff / Ffrindiau Gigiau Caerdydd

Gig Buddies is an innovative befriending scheme that we have followed closely since its formation in Brighton in 2013, with a view to bringing it to Wales. Following many months of research and development, we were delighted to hear in February that First Choice Choice Housing Association had agreed to fund a pilot project in Cardiff.

Gig Buddies Cardiff matches adults with a learning disability with volunteers who share the same interests so they can go to gigs and events together. A 'gig' can be a concert or a festival, but it can also be a rugby match, a trip to a museum or theme park, or a visit to the beach whatever your 'gig' is.

With an official start date of 1 April 2018, work begun to set-up the project. This included recruitment and further developing partnerships, both from the learning disability sector and the music and arts industry in Wales.



Gig Buddies Cardiff and Cardiff People First at Pride Cymru

As well as being a lot of fun for both participant and volunteer Gig Buddies, Gig Buddies Cardiff addresses serious issues, such as social isolation and loneliness. Research has shown that loneliness is as dangerous to our health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day, while people with a learning disability can be especially vulnerable.





Festival of Voice

We were very excited to form a partnership with Festival of Voice (FoV), the international arts festival managed by the Wales Millennium Centre. Working with FoV and Hijinx Theatre we started work on staging an intervention during the festival's opening night gala, that would 'raise the voice' of people with a learning disability in the arts, and officially launch Gig Buddies Cardiff.



Hijinx: Odyssey Theatre's 'Second Star to the Right', Telemachus group, and Vaguely Artistic gig

"I'm happier that I've got a job now and I can be independent"





Gweithio mewn partneriaeth gyda Llywodraeth Cymru Working in partnership with Welsh Government



Engage to Change

June 2016 - 2021

In the second year of our employability project, 114 young people aged 16-25 have gained experience in paid work placements and 69 young people have entered sustained employment. We have engaged with 251 employers.

We continue to manage the overall delivery of the project and report to our funders, the Big Lottery Fund, who administer the funds in partnership with Welsh Government.

We also manage the project's communications activity, which includes highlighting the stories of young people who have engaged with the project.



Lliwen at work

One such young person is Lliwen from Cerrigydrudion in North Wales, who has sustained her employment at Derwydd Eggs for over a year.

Lliwen has a real passion for animals, and currently works with chickens and their eggs. According to her employer Llyr Jones, one of her strengths is spotting when the chickens are unwell and taking care of them. Lliwen was also present during lambing season, changing bedding and bottle-feeding lambs.

With support from her job coach Sioned from Agoriad Cyf, Lliwen has developed her confidence and her communication skills through her work. She and Llyr agree that she's progressed in leaps and bounds. "Lliwen has become more confident.



She knows what needs to be done; we're always giving her a bit more responsibility. I'm glad that we've taken the step and employed Lliwen."

The initial support from Sioned was intensive, and she helped Lliwen learn how to complete her tasks. But Lliwen's confidence and capability has reached such a level that Sioned has been able to taper off her support.

Llyr has been very happy with the support provided and believes that Engage to Change enabled him to employ someone with a disability. "At the beginning I was wary, not sure how much responsibility I could give to Lliwen. But Sioned was there to help and to show us the way, and it's turned out to be a great idea." He hopes to expand the farm to two sheds and extend Lliwen's hours.

"I'm happier that I've got a job now and I can be independent," says Lliwen. "I'd like to stay here with the chickens!"

Read more about Lliwen and the work of Engage to Change at the Big Lottery Fund's 'Big Blog Wales' website: https://bit.ly/2gkiT4m.

Sarah-Jayne Mawdsley has recently become an apprentice pharmacy assistant

When I was younger I had all these doctors saying to me that I couldn't do this and I couldn't do that. I was diagnosed with Mosaic Down Syndrome so that's why they were saying that I couldn't do it, but I've proved them wrong, and it just feels like I can do anything that's possible for me to do." 77



Sarah-Jayne Mawdsley



engagetochange.org.uk /engagetochangewales

@Engage 2 Change

"Improving support for parents with a learning disability through joint working with parents and professionals"



Working Together with Parents Network Rhwydwaith Gweithio ar y Cyd â Rhieni



Working Together with Parents

August 2016 - 2019

Funded by the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, this partnership project is aimed at improving support for parents with a learning disability in Wales, England and Scotland.

We have been working alongside our project partners, the Norah Fry Institute at Bristol University, and the Scottish Commission for Learning Disabilities, to improve policy and practice in our respective countries.

In Wales, we have worked with the Cabinet Secretary for Education's Expert Panel on Sex and Relationships Education (SRE), enabling us to influence future curriculums and policies around SRE for children and young people with a learning disability in Wales.

With the help of Conwy Connect, we have been able to re-establish our North Wales network. Our networks provide parents and professionals with the opportunity to discuss issues, share ideas and suggest ways to improve support.

We supported Vale Flying Start and Vale People First to develop a pilot peer mentoring project, enabling parents with a learning disability to access peer support from other parents.

In August we welcomed Welsh Government's announcement that they will commission research into looked after children, including children whose parents have a learning disability.

I helped another parent because I've been through it myself. I know what it's like.

"The greatest thing you'll ever learn isjust to love and be loved in return"Nat King Cole



Funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union



Love Life

September 2016 - 2019

Funded by Erasmus+, we are working with six partners across Europe to develop a training programme on relationships and sexuality led by trainers with a learning disability.

Alongside our partners from Austria, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, France, Slovenia and Belgium, we have been working to make the project successful in all our countries.

In November we partnered with Cardiff People First to send three trainers who have a learning disability to Rotterdam to learn the course from our Dutch partner.

Research on current provision and knowledge has been collated and will inform the training produced by the project.



Since returning from the Netherlands Love Life trainers have delivered the course to people with a learning disability, parents and support staff all across Wales.

Over 80 people have now learned about the rights of people with a learning disability as part of the training.



"People with a learning disability have a right to information they can understand so can make informed choices and have a say"

Easy Read Wales

Self-funded easy read service

People with a learning disability have a right to information they can understand so they can make informed choices, speak up, and take part in their communities. Easy Read Wales makes this possible by producing high quality accessible information for a wide range of organisations.

This year we produced 45 different types of accessible information, including policy and consultation documents, leaflets, posters, and website pages.

Our clients included 5 local authorities, 2 Public Service Boards, 5 health boards, Social Care Wales, Welsh Government, National Assembly for Wales, Natural Resources Wales and Arts Council Wales. We also provided the easy read content and videos for the DEWIS Cymru website.



Members of Bridgend People First

Members of Bridgend People First receive our easy read information and said they find it very useful.

We have been using easy read a lot to help us understand things that are happening in Wales. It is helpful because the bigger stuff is harder to read.

The pictures help us to understand what the page is about. We like to feel included. When we get given something in easy read it means we can understand what everyone else is reading.

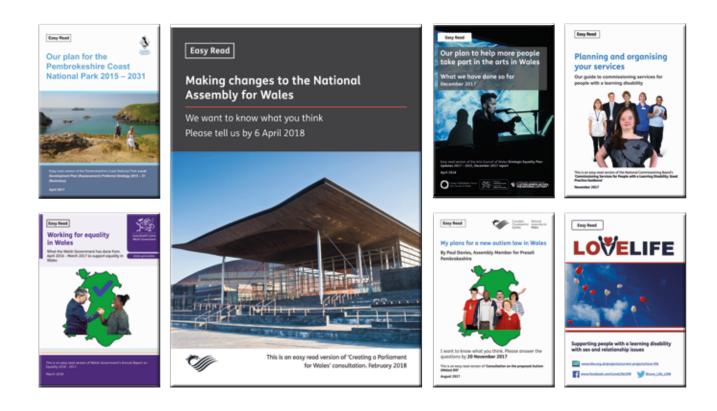


C We have worked with Easy Read Wales to produce a variety of easy read documents for our project involving people with learning disabilities.

The team are always helpful and responsive. Their service has helped us to ensure our communications are inclusive for the people involved in our project and the materials they produce have received positive feedback from many of our members.



Monica Reardon, Marie Curie



Are you accessible?

We have a range of different solutions for making your information accessible – from high standard translation and design, to training and consultancy. Get in touch for a free quote.

Phone Easy Read Wales on 029 2068 1160 or email easyread@ldw.org.uk.

Our trustees

Elected: November 2016

Full Member reps				
Community of Interest	Trustees	Representing		
Adult Providers	Mandy Evans Steve Cox (<i>Treasurer</i>)	Mirus Perthyn		
Self Advocacy	Dawn Gullis 1 vacant seat	Cardiff People First		
Parents & Carers	Jacqui Caldwell 1 vacant seat	Denbighshire VSC		
Children's Providers	Denise Inger	SNAP Cymru		
Independent / Citizen Advocacy	Helen Callaghan (Resigned 06/02/18)	Your Voice Advocacy		
Supported Employment	Kathy Rivett	Elite		
Family Support Providers	Vacant seat			
UK Links	Vacant seat			
Open Seats				
Interested individuals	Phil Madden (Chair), Steve Barnard, Mike Bosley, Caroline Byrt (Resigned 28/11/17), Dilys Price (Resigned 09/05/17)			
Advisor	Sian Owen			

Our members

	North Wales	Mid/West Wales	South Wales	Outside Wales
Full	15	10	1	2
Associate	11	6	4	0

Become a member of Learning Disability Wales

Membership of Learning Disability Wales is free. Join Learning Disability Wales now so we can work together to improve the lives of children, young people and adults with a learning disability. Phone us on 029 2068 1160, or simply join online at our website: www.ldw.org.uk/about-us/become-a-member.



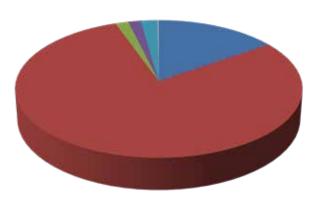
★ Working Together With Parents Network (WTWP)

Harriett Johnson Inacia Rodrigues Training Administrator Training & Events Simon Rose Manager B Sponsorship Co-ordinator Events & 1 Cheryl White Sam Jenkins Cleaner HR & Governance Joanne Moore Manager Ì Administrator Until 27/02/18) Administrator Engage to Gerraint Griffiths Change Engage to Change Project Manager **Jenna Trakins** Communications Megan Evans Engage to Change Officer Laura Davies Information Accessible Officer Communications Karen Warner Manager Gig Buddies Cardiff Information Officer Officer / Accessible Project Coordinator Communications Kai Jones (Until 15/09/17) James Crowe Director Young Person & Carers Manager / Project Zoe Richards Ian Cullimore Jennie Brereton Sam Williams Officer / WTWP* Officer / Policy Information Accessible Manager 1 **Assistant Finance** (Until 21/10/17) Officer **Business Development** & Finance Manager Lynda Morgan Finance Officer

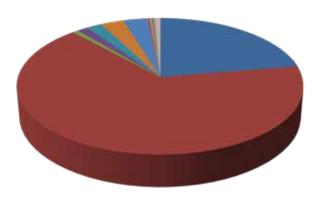
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Our staff

How we spent our money



Money we received this year			
Welsh Government Core Grant	£306,900 (15.3%)		
UK Projects	£1,591,626 (79.2%)		
European Projects	£33,218 (1.7%)		
Training & Events	£31,192 (1.6%)		
Consultancy, networks and hosted services	£41,981 (2.1%)		
Membership and publications	£112 (0.0%)		
Donations	£2,834 (0.1%)		
Bank interest	£849 (0.0%)		
Total	£2,008,712		



End of year result:

+ £6,486

The surplus is money received in advance and will be spent in the next financial year.

Money we spent this year			
Staff and travel costs	£447,489 (22.3%)		
Grants to UK project partners	£1,317,932 (65.8%)		
Grants to European project partners	£14,820 (0.7%)		
Courses and conferences	£27,247 (1.4%)		
Looking after our building	£39,529 (2.0%)		
Project events	£59,864 (3.0%)		
Running the office	£61,882 (3.1%)		
Freelance costs	£6,698 (0.3%)		
Llais and Llais Update	£3,370 (0.2%)		
Translation	£3,848 (0.2%)		
Irrecoverable VAT	£3,874 (0.2%)		
Audit fees	£4,770 (0.2%)		
Depreciation	£5,158 (0.3%)		
Trustees meetings	£5,345 (0.3%)		
Total	£2,002,226		

Keep in touch



Learning Disability Wales

41 Lambourne Crescent Cardiff Business Park Llanishen Cardiff CF14 5GG Photos on pages 2, 3, 6, 8, 10, 13, 14, 15, 26-27 by Paul Stewart-Davies, PLSS Photography; courtesy of Hijinx Theatre www.hijinx.org.uk



Find all our annual reports on our website.

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This year's annual report is dedicated to Jennie Brereton, our finance assistant, who passed away in October 2017, after a short battle with cancer. Creating a Wales that values and includes every child, young person and adult with a learning disability

Hijinx Odyssey performance of "Second Star to the Right" Photo by Jonathan Dunn Creu Cymru sy'n gwerthfawrogi a chynnwys pob plentyn ac oedolyn gydag anabledd dysgu

> erfformiad Hijinx Odyssey o "Second Star to the Right" Llun gan Jonathan Dunn