



Disability Wales
Anabledd Cymru

Annual Report

2019-2020

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Photographs courtesy of Natasha Hirst

Disability Wales

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Caerphilly Business Park
Van Road
Caerphilly
CF83 3ED

Charity Number: 517391

Company Number: 1998621

Disability Wales received funding
from the Welsh Government



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Strategic Aims and Objectives

Vision

Disability Wales/Anabledd Cymru is the national association of disabled people's organisations in Wales striving to achieve the rights and equality of all disabled people.

Mission

Our core role is to represent the views and priorities of members to government with the aim of informing and influencing policy.

Strategic Aim 1:

To influence policy and decision makers at all levels, through acting as an effective advocate for the views, priorities and interests of our members

- **Strategic Objective 1:**

To represent the interests of disabled people in Wales to Welsh Government and other decision makers

- **Strategic Objective 2:**

To secure rights, equality and independent living in order to improve the well-being of disabled people

Strategic Aim 2:

To develop and support the work of organisations managed and controlled by disabled people

- **Strategic Objective 1:**

To provide information, advice and support to member organisations

- **Strategic Objective 2:**

To design and deliver training and development programmes for member groups

Strategic Aim 3:

To lead and develop an effective, sustainable organisation and ensure sound and robust governance

- **Strategic Objective 1:**
To lead and manage an effective and efficient organisation for the benefit of disabled people
- **Strategic Objective 2:**
To ensure sound and robust governance of the organisation
- **Strategic Objective 3:**
To innovate, develop and deliver a range of income generating services that benefit disabled people



Values

- The Social Model of Disability
- Equality, Diversity and Human Rights
- An Inclusive Society
- Self-determination
- Beacon of best practice
- Committed to achieving quality

12 events

371 participants

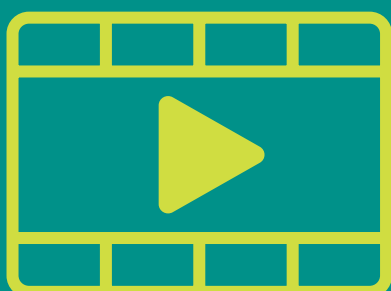
4 focus groups

23 participants



4 surveys

326 responses



International Day of
Disabled People 2019:

5 videos

7053 views

165K
tweet impressions



1 Award
Investors in People



Disabled People and Brexit: What Next?

3 Livestreamed events

981 views

3

New Full Member
Disabled People's
Organisations (DPOs)



1000

new Twitter
followers
13.2K in total



884

new Facebook
followers
4132 in total



8 student interns



Chair's Annual Review

2019-2020



Disability Wales exists to champion the rights and equality of all disabled people in Wales. As a membership organisation run by disabled people, we provide a strong voice and leadership to influence policy on the issues that matter to our members, and our member Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs).

What a different year this has been! We started off with our Board of Directors' having underwritten a deficit in our finances, and forecasting having to do that again in the financial year to 31st March 2020.

We ended with a balanced budget, as detailed in the accounts, but then the few staff we have were working from home, and the whole of our existence was seemingly in lockdown.

What happened in between? The start of the recording year in April 2019 seems such a long time ago, so much has happened in between! Staffing and Board changes, funding developments, and a different approach to working.

At DW, we have said for a long time, that we needed to learn new ways of working. With ever tighter budgeting strategies, we had done as much as we could to cut back. Project-based working has been the way forwards. We employed consultants to help us look at new and innovative ways of income generation. We have had fewer longer term projects, other than the last 18 months of the five-year DRILL programme, but an increase in the number of small-scale, more bespoke pieces of work, all beneficial in their own way, but still needing the same intensity of input, for smaller financial benefit to DW.

We continued to work with our members and held numerous workshops across Wales. We have streamlined the number of events to accomplish a wider breadth of aims, but they have been well attended and received.

We have continued to achieve widespread exposure in broadcast media, and have often been the ‘go to’ organisation for media comment when issues have arisen in relation to disabled people’s concerns, government policy decisions, or welfare reform for example. Both staff and Board members have taken part in interviews. One big area of change has been the significant increase in social media, both in a way of contacting members, but also as an ‘information tool’ in spreading the word of our day-to-day work. We have been significantly

supported in this by both Natasha Hirst, a former Board member, on a short-term contract, and by previous students who worked with us on placement.

During the year, the Board of Directors was joined after the last AGM, by Joe Powell, from All Wales People First. We welcome him and thank him for his input to the Board.

We have only had a small staff team during this time but had several successful student placements. Also, Ruth Nortey, our Policy and Research Officer,



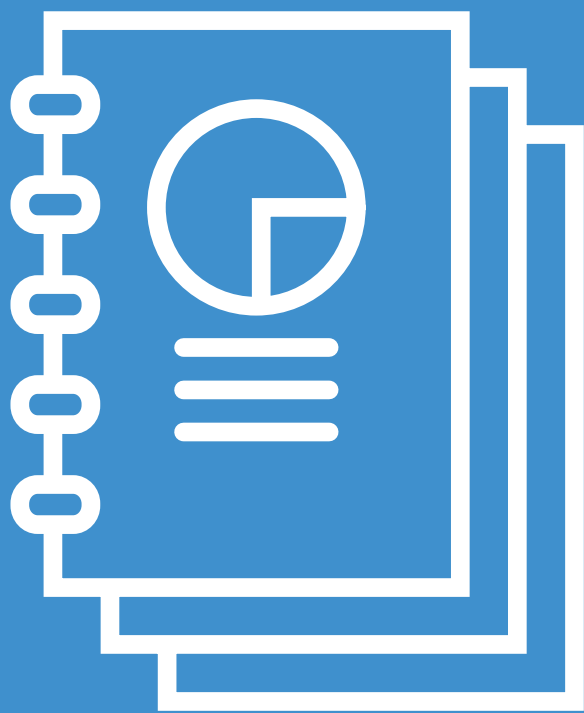
left us to pursue further academic studies, although this was a DW hosted position, so she maintained links with the organisation for much of the year.

I must say a big thank-you to both the Board and staff team for all their hard work and commitment during the year, and particularly to Rhian Davies, our Chief Executive for her ongoing support.

In conclusion, I would just like to acknowledge that we finished the year in very different circumstances. Firstly, the Covid-19 pandemic was already taking its grip, and as a Board and staff team we had made the decision for staff to work temporarily from home, prior to the official 'lockdown' on 23 March 2020. On a far more positive note, we finished the financial year on a much more secure financial footing, having been awarded additional funding prior to the year-end, that actually left the Board not having to underwrite expenditure from its reserves, but finally in a position of reporting a balanced budget. Let's all look forward to a more financially sustainable 2020.

Wendy Ashton
Chair





Treasurer's Annual Report

April 2019 – March 2020



2019-2020 started off with a standstill in terms of our Equality and Inclusion Grant of £150k from Welsh Government to meet agreed core objectives. This was to be even more tough, as a standstill budget is a cut in real terms, as costs and expenses are ever increasing, mostly by greater than inflation. However, towards the end of 2019, we were granted additional funding to support implementation of Welsh Government's Framework for Action on Disability: the Right to Independent Living.

The DRILL Programme is ongoing until the end of August 2020 and small pockets of additional DRILL funding was allocated during the year to support capacity building work in Wales. The programme has continued to be a great success with a final conference to highlight the outcomes, planned in the new financial year. We have had five research projects undertaken in Wales, the data and results from which will ultimately support our core goals, and ability to stronger evidence future funding bids for Disability Wales.

We secured a significant number of short-term projects and commissions which boosted our income, although ultimately, we aim to focus on bigger, more sustainable, and less admin intensive projects as time allows. Some of the smaller projects planned between January and March were carried over into the new financial year due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Although the range of projects and commissions have helped raise our visibility across the voluntary and statutory sectors, by far the biggest support in highlighting our work, and raising the profile of Disability Wales, has been the amount of media coverage we have attracted over the last couple of years, and more recently, during lockdown. TV and radio journalists appear to be accessing us as the 'go to' organisation in disability matters, and we have had extensive coverage across all

platforms in both English and Welsh mediums. Huge thanks must go to Miranda Evans, our Policy and Programmes Manager, for continuing to lead this.



Due to Coronavirus, our planned for Strategic Review day involving Board and staff did not take place within in the financial year under discussion, but was postponed until June 2020 and undertaken through social media platforms. The review will now be timely with regards to the postponed three-year funding cycle.

For a change, I am able to present a ‘balanced budget’ – or ‘break even’ which is most welcome! This is without having to draw on our reserves, to cover the shortfall we had predicted, and is thanks in the main, to the additional funding we received from the Welsh Government.

I have spoken over the last couple of years of the need for Disability Wales to hold reserves, and have a Reserves policy to:

- Meet our contractual liabilities should the organisation have to close.
- Meet unexpected costs.
- Replace equipment as it wears out.
- Provide working capital when funding is paid in arrears which would place DW in a position where it could bid for funding.
- Fund specific projects and activities agreed by the Board and not met by other sources of income.

Also, from time to time funding has certain restrictions which means that by law it must be held in a restricted reserves account until it is spent in line with the funding agreement.





We are holding more reserves at the end of March 2020, because we were preparing to underwrite a projected shortfall, as we received a late boost to funding, that meant we haven't needed to action this.

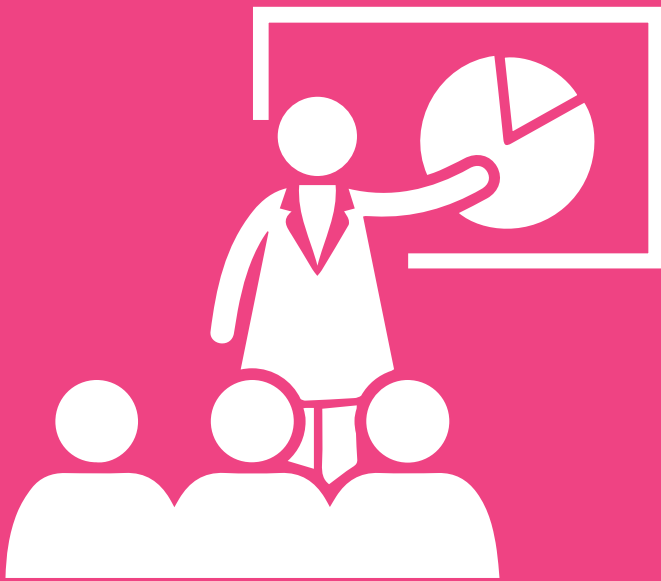
Our auditors are pleased with our current funding status, given what was projected, and are happy with the policies and procedures the

Board and staff are working to in securing alternative funding. They also acknowledge the amount of work DW has achieved with so few staff. The auditors recognise that we are striving for financial sustainability, and that as a responsible organisation we have plans in place for a viable exit strategy, should the squeeze on funding become even tighter

DW is in a much stronger position, with a far more positive outlook for the organisation. We were able to progress plans to recruit additional staff, but the interviews due to take in March were postponed due lockdown.

As always, I would once again like to thank both our Board members and staff for their commitment and endeavours through challenging times and thank them all in getting us to a balanced budget. Particular thanks go to Paula Reed, our Finance and Resources Manager, for her unstinting work in preparing the accounts and paperwork, this makes my role so much easier. I would also like to thank Baldwins, our Auditors, for their ongoing advice and support.

Mandi Glover
Treasurer



Chief Executive's Report



Disability Wales can never exist in a vacuum, external events impact not only on our organisation but on our members. Ten years of austerity has taken its toll on disabled people's incomes and rights to independent living. The past year has exacerbated the perilous situation in which many disabled people find themselves.

For much of the year Brexit dominated the political and media landscape with months of turmoil in Parliament and fractious negotiations with the EU which culminated in a Christmas General Election, paving the way to the Withdrawal Agreement. The uncertainty surrounding Brexit raised many questions for members regarding how it would impact on crucial aspects of their lives including access to health and social care, goods and services and transport and mobility.

To help answer these concerns, in partnership with the Brexit Civil Society Forum, DW delivered workshops for members around Wales involving expert speakers. Progress with producing the follow-up resources was interrupted with the Coronavirus Pandemic and the UK entering national lockdown.

The impact of Covid-19 on society overall and disabled people particularly has been profound and far-reaching. Setting ourselves up as a virtual organisation overnight, we continued to deliver our work programme, albeit focused on responding to the emergency. Our aim was to keep members informed of latest developments and equipped as far as possible to respond to the crisis. We provided regular updates on evolving government guidance, arranged online consultation events and raised members issues and concerns with Welsh Government Ministers and senior officials. Furthermore, we involved members in mainstream media stories, highlighting the serious impact of Covid-19 on disabled people.

Lockdown occurred at the end of the financial year, by which time we had delivered our work programme targets building on previous achievements. We delivered 12 events to 371 participants across Wales:

as well as Brexit, topics included the Future Generations Act (2015), the Social Model of Disability and 'Claiming our Rights', the theme of our Annual Conference attended by over 100 members and supporters. We substantially increased our reach and influence online through surveys, social media posts and livestreaming. Significantly, given what lay ahead, our annual membership survey completed by 122 members found that the overwhelming majority interacted with us digitally rather than via events and urged more opportunities for online engagement.

Nearly 1,500 new followers joined our Twitter and Facebook platforms, extending our social media reach to approximately 17.5k organisations and individuals. Over 7k viewed our five videos featuring members around Wales, commissioned to celebrate International Day of Disabled People. Livestreaming the Brexit events achieved almost 1k views.



We were delighted to welcome three Disabled Peoples Organisations into full membership, which between them reflect the diversity of the disability community: All Wales People First, Fair Treatment for the Women of Wales and Disability in Wales and Africa. AWPf nominated their Chief Executive Joe Powell to our Board of Directors who was elected at the AGM.

DW's core role is to represent the views of members with the aim of informing and influencing government policy. A key achievement was our active contribution to the publication of the Framework for Action on Disability: the Right to Independent Living. The Framework outlines Welsh Government's commitment to tackling the cross-cutting barriers to independent living, together with its renewed focus on delivery in line with the Social Model of Disability and the UN Convention on the Rights of Disabled People.

The Framework encompasses measures to tackle barriers in a range of areas including employment and civic participation as well as housing,



understand the rights that we have and that they must be respected.
Having talked about the social model and the UNCRDP I think it is only right that we pay tribute at this moment to somebody who has been a real giant a real great of the disabled people's movement.

right that we pay tribute at this moment to somebody who has been a real giant a real great of the disabled people's movement.
1945 - 2019



Disability Rights
Institute of Social Studies
University of Amsterdam



digital inclusion and access to high street services. The comprehensive nature of the Framework substantially increased DW's role in co-ordinating the involvement and input of members in its implementation. It became clear that we required additional capacity to fulfil this role and following a successful case for additional funding from Welsh Government, we appointed three new staff. All joined DW following lockdown and have worked remotely and very effectively since their appointments: Megan John, Disability Equality and Inclusion Officer, Megan Thomas,

Policy and Research Officer and Elin Williams, Social Media and Communications Officer.

Prior to her appointment, Elin undertook a virtual internship with us as one of the 8 students from various Welsh Universities we hosted through the Santander and Go Wales schemes respectively. DW has prioritised placements to disabled students as a valuable work experience opportunity. We have greatly benefitted from their skills and enthusiasm and the relationships forged have led to further volunteering opportunities, freelance contracts as well as a job.



As a Disabled People's Organisation we are committed to good employment practice. We were delighted to retain the Investors in People Award, held since 2005. The Assessor commented that our key strength is 'operating in line with our values' with scores exceeding the IIP benchmark considerably.

The DRILL Programme in Wales continued from strength to strength with key achievements including: a round table discussion between Jane Hutt AM (Deputy Minister and Chief Whip) and the DRILL Programme Board at its Cardiff meeting; the launch of the 'Working with Peer Researchers: Developing Future Strategies' research report at Disability Wales' annual conference; and a day-workshop for early career researchers on co-production in disability research, organised in collaboration with Cardiff University.

Throughout the year our small team of Directors and staff have continued to strive for the rights and equality of disabled people. Wholehearted thanks go to our outgoing Finance and Resources Manager Paula Reed for her 22 years of loyal service to DW, as well as to Policy and Programmes Manager Miranda Evans and DRILL Programme Officer Dr Jody Mellor for their unstinting commitment. Much is owed to our volunteer Board, led by Chairperson Wendy Ashton for their wisdom and dedication in directing the organisation in such uncharted times.

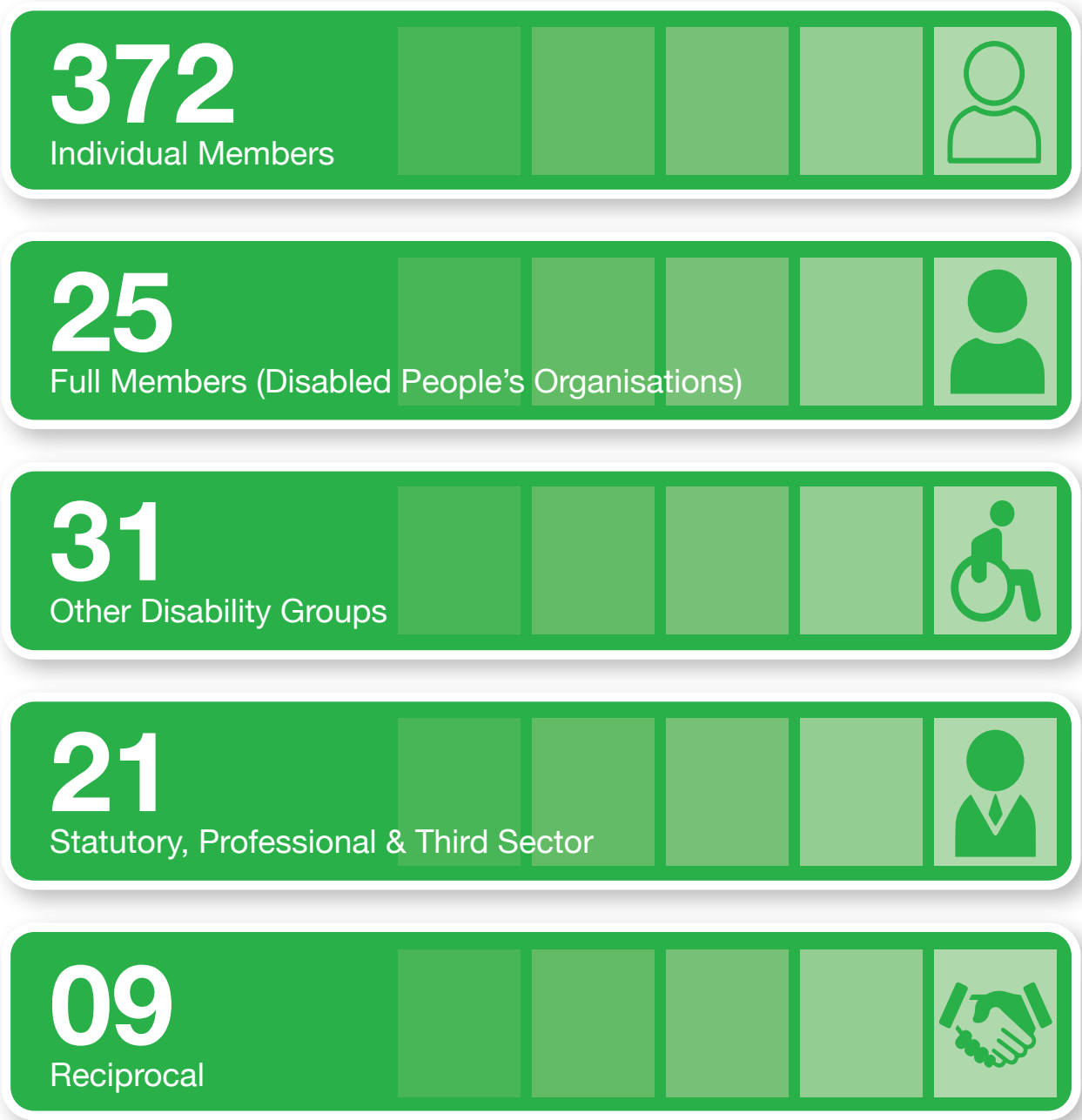
Rhian Davies
Chief Executive

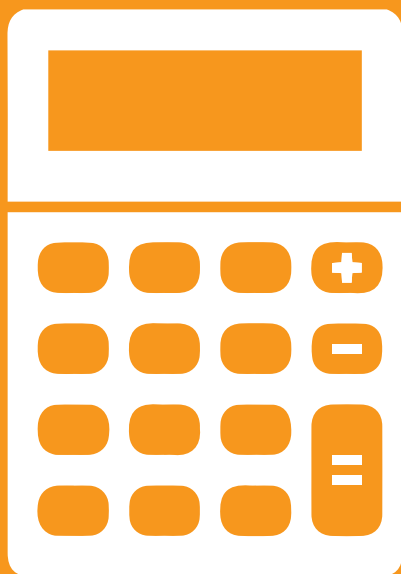


Ongoing Membership

April 2020

Membership of Disability Wales is open to all organisations and individuals who support the aims and objectives of the organisation. We strive to develop and support the work of organisations led by disabled people; advocate the views, priorities and interests of our members; influence policy and decision makers at all levels; and develop and deliver services that benefit disabled people.





Statement of Financial Activities

31 March 2020

Income and Expenditure

For the year ended 31 March 2020

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
Income			
Donations and legacies	247,054	-	247,054
Charitable Activities	5,882	142,349	148,231
Investments	1,282	-	1,282
Total income	254,218	142,349	396,567
Expenditure			
Charitable Activities	219,264	132,635	351,899
Net Expenditure			
Net movement in funds	34,954	9,714	44,668
Fund balances at 01.04.19	304,526	28,612	333,138
Fund balances at 31.03.20	339,480	38,326	377,806

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

Balance Sheet

For the year ended 31 March 2020

	2020
Current Assets	
Debtors	4,118
Cash at bank and in hand Investments	406,210
	410,328
Creditors: amounts falling due within 1 year	(32,522)
Net Current Assets	377,806
Income funds	
Restricted funds	38,326
Unrestricted funds	
Designated funds	225,130
General unrestricted funds	114,350
	339,480
	377,806



Board of Directors

Chairperson Wendy Ashton

Vice-Chair Persons Willow Holloway
Delwyn Evans

Treasurer Mandi Glover

Directors Simon Green
Kelvin Jones
Ben Morris
Trevor Palmer
Joe Powell (elected November 2019)
Mary Powell
Kelvin Jones
Ben Morris



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