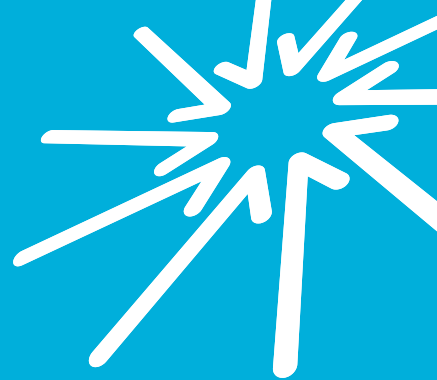


SCLD News

In focus ...



Edition 2 • 2014



Also inside...



scottish
consortium
for learning
disability

Building respect in the
Scottish community



[A Guide to Voting](#)



[Referendum Workshops](#)

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In this edition of SCLD News we are focusing on the independence referendum. We will give you information about voting so that you are registered to vote on 18th September. We will give you information about where you can go to find out as much as you can to help you make a decision about how you are going to vote. We will also show you examples of workshops that have got people talking about the referendum, which is a very useful way to help you make up your mind.



We have created a page on the SCLD website which brings together links and resources about the independence referendum. You can access it here:

www.sclد.org.uk/indyref



Editorial

The independence referendum on September 18th is a very big moment for everyone in Scotland. That includes people with learning disabilities and their families. At the moment both the UK parliament and the Scottish parliament make important decisions that directly affect their lives. Broadly speaking, health and social care is devolved to the Scottish parliament and welfare is the responsibility of the UK parliament. Both of these issues matter hugely to people with learning disabilities and their families.

But these issues are just part of the picture because just like everyone else, people with learning disabilities have different views on a wide range of other issues – from the economy to defence to name just two. And those views, amongst other things, will influence how people decide to vote.

There are no right or wrong answers for people with learning disabilities and their families. But there is one thing that matters to everyone and that's being part of the conversation – and of course voting on the day itself. Getting involved in the conversation isn't always easy though, because there is so much information out there and much of it is complex.

That's why it's so vital that learning disability organisations have been creating opportunities and organising events for people with learning disabilities and their families to talk about the issues with representatives from both the Yes Scotland campaign and the Better Together campaign.

In this edition of SCLD news we report on some of those initiatives – organised by our partners at Key Community Supports and Enable and our friends at the Learning Disability Alliance Scotland. We have also included lots of information about where people can find out more about the issues, from both campaigns and from the political parties. Most importantly we have provided practical information on the referendum and how to vote.

Of course it's not just for learning disability organisations who have to make sure that people with learning disabilities are able to take part – it's everyone's responsibility to make sure their views and those of their families are sought and heard.



Chris Creegan

Scotland's Future is Our Future



This year Scotland has a big choice to make. We have to choose if we want Scotland to be an independent country or not. We will choose what we want to do by voting in a referendum. A referendum is a vote where people are asked one question. They can either vote yes or no.

The referendum question you will be asked in September is:

Should Scotland be an independent country?

You will be asked to vote either **yes** or **no**.

If most people vote **yes** Scotland will become independent. This means Scotland will no longer be part of the United Kingdom (UK).

If most people vote **no** Scotland will stay as part of the United Kingdom with England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Campaigns

There are 2 main campaigns that have been set up since we were told about the referendum. They are called Better Together and Yes Scotland.



The Better Together campaign think that Scotland is a much better country as part of the United Kingdom. They think that becoming independent is a big risk for Scotland and that Scotland is more secure being part of the UK. They say that we have a strong Scottish Parliament that makes important decisions about schools, hospitals and jobs. They think that we should continue the success of the Scottish Parliament, rather than putting the success at risk through separation.



The Yes Scotland campaign says that Scotland would be a better country if it was independent. They say that it would be better if decisions about Scotland's future are made by the people of Scotland. They say that most people in Scotland did not vote for the government that we have in Westminster but this government can make decisions which have a big effect on communities in Scotland. They believe that a yes vote will give the people of Scotland the government they choose.

A Guide to Voting



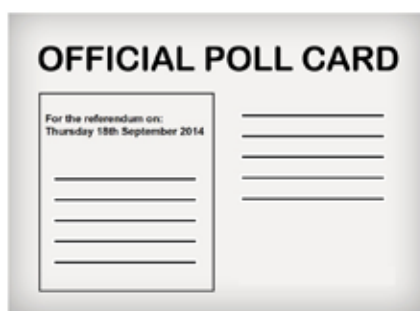
Registering to Vote

To vote in the referendum you will need to be aged 16 or over on 18 September 2014 and living in Scotland. You must also be a British, qualifying Commonwealth or European Union citizen.

If you want to vote, you must be registered to do so by 2nd September 2014. If you are not registered yet, follow these 6 easy steps :

- Go onto the website www.aboutmyvote.co.uk and register online, then print off the registration form and fill it in.
- If you are a young person aged 16 or 17 on the date of the referendum you can also vote and you will need to register at www.aboutmyvote.co.uk too. You have a special form to fill in, so look for the Young Voter Registration Form.
- Make sure you sign your form and send it to your local Electoral Registration Office. If you fill in your postcode on the www.aboutmyvote.co.uk webpage it will tell you where this is.

Okay, I've Registered – How Do I Vote?



You will receive a card through the post usually about a month before the voting date. This will tell you where and when to go and vote – this is called your polling card and the place you go to vote is the polling station. Usually the polling station is a school or a council building near where you live.

Go to the polling station at a time which suits you – it will open from 7am until 10pm. Don't leave it too late though because once the doors shut at 10pm, you won't be allowed in to make your vote.

There will be people sitting inside the polling station who will ask you for your name and address. You can take your polling card with you if this is easier, but you do not need to as you can just tell them your details. They will check that your name is on the electoral register and will give you a ballot paper.



Take this ballot paper into a polling booth so you can mark your vote on it. The reason you go into a booth is so you can vote in private and other people can't see what you are voting for. The ballot paper for the Independence Referendum will have one question on it and that will be **"Should Scotland be an independent country?"**

You can answer either "Yes" or "No" to this question by marking a cross "X" next to the answer you want.

BALLOT PAPER	
Vote (X) ONLY ONCE	
Should Scotland be an independent country?	
YES	<input type="checkbox"/>
NO	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you make a mistake or damage your ballot paper, take it back and the staff will give you a replacement. When you have marked the paper with your vote, come out of the polling booth and put your paper into the box on the table – the staff there will help you if you need assistance. Put the ballot paper safely in the box, that's it – you have voted!



Are there other ways to vote in the referendum?

Yes, sometimes people might not be able to get to their polling station. This might be because of things like:

- they will be on holiday on 18th September
- it is difficult for them to get to the polling station

But that is OK, there are other ways that you can vote and make sure your voice is heard in the referendum.

You can apply for a postal vote

This means that your ballot paper (the one you need to make a cross next to "yes" or "no") will be sent to your home address.

How do I apply for a postal vote?



You need to go to:

www.aboutmyvote.co.uk/register_to_vote/postal_vote_application/postal_vote_application.aspx

On this website you will be able to download a form to apply for a postal vote. The website will ask you to put your postcode in. This is to make sure you get the right information for the area you live in. Print out the form, fill it in and then send back to the address on the form.

Important!

If you want to use a postal vote you must send back your form by **5pm on Wednesday 3rd September!**

What happens next?



You will be sent your ballot paper through the post.

Once you get your ballot paper through your letterbox you need to send it back with your vote on it by a certain date. The information you get with your ballot paper will tell where you need to send it to and when you need to do this by.

Make sure you leave plenty of time to send back your ballot paper, because if the local election office doesn't get it in time your vote won't be counted.

Voting by proxy

This means that you have asked someone you really trust to go to the polling station and make your vote on your behalf.



How do I apply for a proxy vote?

On the About My Vote website you can download a form:

www.aboutmyvote.co.uk/register_to_vote/apply_to_vote_by_proxy.aspx. There are different forms for the reasons you might be applying to vote by proxy.

Some of the reasons might be:

- you are a disabled person and it is easier for someone to go to the polling station on your behalf
- your job means you will find it difficult to get to a polling station
- you work for the army or other military services

You need to click on the reason that fits your situation best. You will need to print out the form, fill in the details and send it back to the address given.

Important!

If you want to use a proxy vote you must send your form back by **5pm on Wednesday 3rd September!**

Who can I choose to be my proxy?

To be a proxy voter the person must meet the same conditions as someone who has the right to vote:

- over 16 years old on or before 18 September 2014
- a British, Irish, other European or qualifying Commonwealth citizen

They must also be willing to be your proxy voter, so it's really important that you talk to them about this before you put their name down on the form.



Being a proxy voter

A proxy voter must put your decision on the ballot paper. It is really important that if you are going to ask someone to go to the polling station for you that you trust them and are sure that they know what your decision is.

I have a welfare guardian, can they vote for me?

Your welfare guardian can only vote for you if you have applied for them to be your proxy voter. You need to make sure your guardian is really clear about how you want to vote.

Where can I find out more?

There is a lot of useful information and contacts later in the newsletter where you can find out more. The About My Vote website is a really good place to get information about your rights as a voter and what the law says about voting. If you do not have access to the internet contact your local Electoral Registration Office, you can ask at your local library for the contact details of you local Electoral Registration Office.

Making Your Mind Up

Ian Hood from The Learning Disability Alliance Scotland has been going around the country talking to people about the referendum, we asked him to write about this for SCLD News....

On September 18th everyone in Scotland gets to have a say on whether they want Scotland to be an independent country or not. It's a big decision and every vote will count. People with learning disabilities will be a part of deciding what happens.



The Learning Disability Alliance Scotland has been going round Scotland speaking to lots of people about what the referendum is all about and talking about the big issues people are thinking about. Three co-trainers – Ewan, Paul and Idem – have been helping us do this.

It's been fun with lots of questions to think about. Everyone gets a voting handset, just like in "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire" and the answers come up on the screen.



We have videos to help people hear what the politicians think. Paul and Ewan went up to the Scottish Parliament and interviewed Jackie Baillie MSP from Labour who runs the Cross-Party Group on Learning Disabilities and Joan McAlpine MSP of the SNP, whose sister has Down's syndrome. After the video, everyone gets to vote on who they agree with most.

We have also used a video camera to record what some of the people who came to the workshops think themselves. We gave people plenty of time to speak and we have kept a record of everything that people have said about why they would vote Yes or No and what they would like more information on. Here are some of the things that people said at the workshops:

- Independence is an opportunity for a fairer system of benefits
- Scotland needs the support of the rest of the UK for financial reasons
- One person's voice would be bigger in an independent Scotland
- Scotland might not have the resources to be independent

In fact there was so much more said that our Stronger Together groups in Glasgow and Stirling produced a new Easy Read pamphlet with "More Information" on the big questions that people had. It won't tell you what to think but you can read it decide for yourself what to do in September. You can get all the pamphlets and videos we use and even instructions on how to run your own workshop if you go to our website and click the big banner at the top. www.ldascotland.org

Key Community Support's Workshop



On the 27th March in KEY's office in Glasgow, The Advisory Group and KEY's Politics Group hosted a workshop, facilitated by the Learning Disability Alliance Scotland to help people understand what the Referendum on Independence was all about. Alongside some great videos

of people interviewing politicians and saying what their issues were, people got the chance to think about what changes independence would bring. Thanks to interactive voting pads, everyone got a chance to say what mattered most to them.

There were representatives from Better Together and from Yes Scotland who brought along lots of information for people to take away. After the general information of the workshop, people got a chance to put their questions directly to campaigners from both sides of the debate. The main issues that people were concerned about were: the changes to benefits brought about by the Welfare Reform Bill, cuts in services, employment opportunities for people with disabilities and the rise in poverty.

It was a really exciting afternoon and the debate continues to be a focus in The Advisory Group (TAG) branches up and down the country and on the TAG Facebook pages. The afternoon ended with people having a chance to secretly vote on the question: Should Scotland be an Independent country? You can find out the results on the TAG Facebook page: www.facebook.com/theadvisorygroup

Resources

We have selected some resources on the referendum that you may find useful. You can also find all of these links on our website at www.scld.org.uk/indyref



About My Vote:

To vote in UK elections and referendums you need to be registered to vote. The About My Vote website talks you through how to register: www.aboutmyvote.co.uk

Aye, Naw, Mibbe Hub:

This website is an online hub for information and resources on voting for young people: www.ayenawmibbe.org

Better Together:

Better Together is the lead campaign for voting no in the referendum. You can find out more information from them here: www.bettertogether.net

Learning Disability Alliance Scotland:

Learning Disability Alliance has made a pamphlet about the referendum and they also have resources to run your own workshop: www.ldascotland.org

Yes Scotland:

Yes Scotland is the lead campaign for voting yes in the referendum. You can find out more information from them here: www.yesscotland.net

Scotland's Referendum:

This is the Scottish Government website about the referendum: www.scotreferendum.com

Scotland's Future - Easy read:

The Scottish Government have produced an easy read of 'Scotland's Future' which is their guide to an independent Scotland.

You can read it here:

www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0045/00450681.pdf

SCLD Round Up



As part of a working partnership with NHS Inform, SCLD have been delivering Easy Info Zone Roadshows throughout Scotland. We have been providing accessible information in an enjoyable and informal way, engaging with people with learning disabilities, their families/carers and service providers. The latest

roadshow was held at the Dovecot Studios in Edinburgh on Thursday 24th April 2014. It proved to be very popular with over 60 attendees who, after a short presentation, offered lots of inspiring ideas and suggestions in taking forward the plans for the Easy Info Zone in connection with the NHS Inform website. It's amazing how many people have such interesting and exciting ideas! Thank you to all who contributed. It wasn't all work however as a few attendees can testify... with a masterclass on Salsa lead by Mo Suliman one of the NHS Inform Working Group members.

Thanks also to the local organisations that helped make the event a great success! Visit the Easy Info Zone here: www.easyinfozone.co.uk



National Gathering of Local Area Coordinators

This year's National Gathering of Local Area Coordinators (LACs) was held on 26th March in Edinburgh.

The day was facilitated by Simon Duffy from the Centre for Welfare Reform and the theme was 'Strengthening Local Area Coordination in Scotland'. The LAC National Reference Group delivered a presentation on their current work around what a healthy life means to them, which received very positive feedback from the LACs. There were also presentations from the Scottish Government, COLSA and the Glasgow Centre for Population Health, as well as afternoon networking and discussion sessions for the LACs. You can download all the presentations from the day from the SCLD website:

www.sclد.org.uk/news-events/news/2014/local-area-coordination-national-gathering-2014



Disability Hate Crime Conference – Midlothian

After four “Facilitating Effective Communication” courses, eleven workshops and four conferences, the Scottish Government funded Disability Hate Crime project arrived at its very successful finale on 15th April in Midlothian in front of an audience of 80 people.

As with all the previous events in Inverclyde, North Lanarkshire and Glasgow, Midlothian gave a wonderful welcome to SCLD and

Q Fusion Theatre group when they arrived in Dalkeith to perform the play “Who Do I Turn To ?” to a very appreciative audience. In true forum theatre style, audience members were encouraged to shout out ways that the lead character, Amanda, could challenge what was happening to her in order to keep safe and enjoy her independence.

There was always at least one suggestion made at a performance that no-one had come up with before, and at Dalkeith’s conference it was the “Thistle Travel Card”, which people in South East Scotland can obtain from SEStran (www.sestran.gov.uk) and use to show bus drivers that they need assistance or more time to board the vehicle. People thought this was such a good idea that it was discussed at the Disability Hate Crime National Steering Group and group members agreed to check if their local authorities had something similar.



It was a great day in Dalkeith, and although it’s always a shame when something ends, we are delighted that during this project over 817 people attended a hate crime workshop and/or a conference with 127 people being trained as facilitators.

In addition, SCLD and Q Fusion worked with East Ayrshire Council in March and April, as they were keen to run their own forum theatre programme for their citizens. We enjoyed going down to Kilmarnock to train 17 facilitators. This was followed by workshops and a conference in Kilmarnock and Auchinleck. In total 103 people attended the workshops and the conference. The independent chair of the Adult Protection Committee said the drama had been the most powerful way of getting a message across that he had seen in his 25 year police career.



The Hate Crime project has been made possible by the fantastic partnership working between SCLD and the local authorities who joined the project. This includes Q Fusion Theatre Company and our own amazing sessional actors, Police Scotland and most of all, the people who

came to the workshops and conferences who have contributed so positively and passionately to getting the message out there that Disability Hate Crime is wrong, it is a crime and you don't have to put up with it. Thanks also to Central Advocacy Partners who produced the easy read guide about hate crime and how to keep safe.

You can report a Hate Crime as follows:

- By Telephone **999** if it is an emergency or **101** for a non-emergency
- In person at any police station
- On the Police Scotland website www.scotland.police.uk
- Call Crimestoppers on **0800 555 111**

Visit a Third Party Reporting Centre where you see this sign



eSAY Survey

The eSAY project produces annual statistics about adults with learning disabilities known to local authorities in Scotland. Statistics are numbers which tell us more about a group of people. This information is collected on behalf of the Scottish Government. We would like to find out more about the people who use the statistics and what they use them for. We would also like to let more people know about the statistics and to find out what people

who do not currently use them would like them to be used for in the future. To help us to do this, we have made a survey. We would really appreciate it if you would take the time to fill it in. You can find the survey here: www.surveymonkey.com/s/3NQNMQ9

If you would like to get in touch to tell us what you think instead, please contact Claire Stuart on 0141 559 5720 or email claire.m@sclld.co.uk



Coming Up

Easy Read Basics – 11th June

This is a practical course which goes through all the steps involved in creating easy to understand information. How to format easy to read information, how to use words, pictures and photos in easy to understand information. What you learn on the day you can put into practice the next.



Graphic facilitation – 26th June

Graphic facilitation is a one-day training course to give you the skills you need to create a visual representation of any meeting in real time. Our experienced trainer, Clare Mills will show you how to communicate effectively with individuals and groups in a creative, inclusive and memorable way.



Learning Disability Awareness 1/2 day Workshop - 8th July

This course will provide a basic introduction to learning disability and is packed full of interactive exercises. By the end of the course you will:

- Value the experiences of people with learning disabilities
- Appreciate equalities issues
- Know how to respond to people with learning disabilities

You can find out more about the above courses on the SCLD Website:
www.sclid.org.uk/what-we-offer/training/upcoming-courses

Or call John Somerville on 0141 559 5720

Reaching the Goal of 100% Employment - June 24th



This training is a combination of lessons learned from Project SEARCH sites that consistently reach 90 – 100% employment for their interns. Find out more and book online here:

www.sclid.org.uk/news-events/events/2014/reaching-goal-100-employment

With thanks to Young Scot for their information about voting. Thanks to Photosymbols, Ian Hood and Kirsten Knox of KEY Community Supports for images used.

SCLD...

Working together for a more inclusive Scotland

What we do at SCLD:

- Information and Events
- Training and Consultancy
- Research and Policy
- Employability
- Statistics about people with learning disabilities in Scotland
- Sharing and developing good practice



If you would like any more information about our work or you would like to speak to a member of the SCLD team, please get in touch with us:



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You can get this newsletter in different formats