



Annual Review 2008—2009

advice, information,
direct payments support
& user involvement services for
disabled people in Lambeth

independent living for disabled people

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DASL is an independent charity established in 2001, working with and for disabled people in the London Borough of Lambeth

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Website : www.disabilitylambeth.org.uk

Registered Charity No. 1087399
A company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales, No. 04214688

Auditors :

Hilary Adams Ltd
Chartered Accountants & Tax Consultants
91 – 95 High Street
Herne Bay,
Kent, CT6 5LQ

Bankers :

National Westminster Bank plc
504 Brixton Road
London SW9 8EB

OUR CORE VALUES

All people who use our services deserve to be treated with respect and to have their abilities and experiences valued.

We will work with disabled people in a way which will empower them and encourage them to develop skills and confidence to deal with their own affairs, but we will also offer appropriate ongoing support for those people who need it.

All disabled people have the right to live their lives free from discrimination and we will challenge and take positive action to overcome this wherever it impacts on our users and members.

Disabled people have a right to high quality services which are independent of funders and others who may seek to influence our organisation in ways which are not in the interests of our users.

Our users and members have the right to be consulted and involved in developing our organisation and in shaping the services we provide.

Our core services should be free to all individual users and to any organisations working in the interests of local disabled people.

Chair's introduction

I am pleased to introduce DASL's Annual Review which covers the financial year 2008-09 and also summarises our work to date in 2009. After several years on DASL's Committee this was my first as Chair and I have enjoyed the role, whilst being acutely aware that this is perhaps the most challenging period for the voluntary sector that any of us can remember. We expect the impact of cuts in public spending to be serious from 2011 and the 'Personalisation' agenda presents risks to the future of some of our current services as well as offering new opportunities. This year, we have invested time in developing our business planning and in tendering for new services. As ever, DASL's record of working constructively with the Lambeth voluntary sector and with our statutory partners has gone far beyond what we

are funded for. I feel we make a contribution of great value to the life of the borough. My thanks are due to the staff and volunteers and to my fellow trustees



Ebenezer Akinsanmi

for their hard work on behalf of DASL. We were saddened by the death of David Hart in August this year and I would like to put on record our appreciation of his campaigning work for disabled people in Lambeth over the past decade. I extend my best wishes to our members and service users for the year ahead : we will continue to provide the best support we can to all who need us.

Director's report

DASL is now in its 9th year and we see daily evidence of the need for our services and of the important role they play in the lives of many disabled people. The funding climate remains very difficult for key services such as advice and, as I write, we have considerable uncertainty in the year ahead in a number of areas. We are actively working with other organisations to develop partnerships which we hope will increase the chances of Lambeth voluntary groups winning funding over the next 2 -3 years to deliver



David Strong

services such as support brokerage. Encouragingly, we have recently been awarded the three year contract to develop the new Lambeth Carers Hub as part of a consortium led by South Thames Crossroads and including also Age Concern Lambeth

and we look forward to making this an invaluable service for carers.

We continue to work actively to support the voices of disabled people and to represent their interests at a strategic level. In 2009 we have been very involved in the development of Lambeth's new strategy for people with physical and sensory impairments, served on both the Council and the voluntary sector's Self Directed Support Boards and on the Steering Group of Lambeth LINK. In 2010 we expect to use our position as Lambeth's leading user-led disability organisation to push forward the development of a Lambeth Centre for Independent Living.

Finally, my thanks to all our staff and volunteers for their work this year and to our experienced Committee for all the time and support they provide.



John Martin dedicated advice and information service for disabled people.

In 2008/09 we experienced an ever increasing demand for our advice casework and have responded by providing the service to 18% more people with no significant growth in resources. As usual, key benefits including Disability Living Allowance, Incapacity Benefit and the new Employment & Support Allowance, debt problems, community care rights, charitable grants and accessing disabled people's transport benefits were our core business.

Since July 2009 we have added more

Some facts and figures for April 2008 - March 2009 ...

- We answered 1,024 information and general advice enquiries. These came from 906 people (down 20%).
- Our website was used by an average of 739 unique visitors each month (33% up).
- 283 people received advice casework (18% up). They were helped with 665 different legal problems (31% up).
- £450,000 was raised in annual sums of new or increased benefits for clients (21% up).
- We published five issues of our *Mole* newsletter which went to over 250 DASL members, almost 100 organisations and all Lambeth councillors.

capacity by becoming one of the advice agencies working with Lambeth Council on the 'Every Pound Counts' benefits take-up campaign. Our EPC Worker, Sami Basha, has been energetically helping over 60 disabled and older people and carers to ensure that they are receiving the correct level of benefits and to claim those to which they are entitled

Our Information Service continues to be a vital part of what we offer. Although use of our telephone Enquiry Line has declined

for the past 3 years and this was also true in 2008/09, over the past 6 months we have reversed this trend and numbers are picking up encouragingly,

partly as a result of the outreach which our Information Worker, Vasiliki Boutopoulou, has been developing to promote the service. Our website goes from strength to strength and we have received many positive comments about its value as a source of information on disability.

In the year ahead our priorities include:

- Passing our next Community Legal Service Quality Mark audit
- Securing funding to re-establish our generalist advice worker post
- Starting up the Carers Enquiry Line, website and newsletter as part of the Lambeth Carers Hub consortium
- Making sure that the needs of disabled people are fully reflected in the new Lambeth Information, Advice and Advocacy Strategy which is being developed as I write.



Direct Payments Support Service

Another eventful year for the Direct Payments Team. Our contract with Lambeth Council was extended by a further year and now runs until June 2010. We are thinking hard about how we go forward beyond this date, using the experience our service has built up over the last ten years to ensure that users have access to good models of support brokerage services as Self Directed Support is rolled out by the Council. We will work closely with other local voluntary sector organisations and the Council to try to achieve this.



Margaret Farrell

Direct Payments User Group

The User Group which is facilitated by DASL has met 6 times since June 2008 and has proved to be popular with Direct Payments users and their families, with attendances of 25-30 people. The meetings have provided an opportunity for people hear about the latest developments in Lambeth and to put questions directly to council officers from both the Adult and Community Services and the Children and Young People's Services teams. In



addition, invited speakers have led lively discussions on a variety of topics including personal assistant training, peer support, the physical and sensory impairment strategy and Self Directed Support.

Personalising services

I have served with DASL's Director on the voluntary sector's Self Directed Support Shadow Board. Whilst our own application for funding to develop support brokerage as one of Lambeth Council's 18 month pilot projects which commenced in November 2009 was not successful we nevertheless expect to work closely with the organisations which were and with other local voluntary groups over the coming year. We are involved in the Personal Health Budgets pilot for people with mental health problems which is being led by NHS Lambeth and I have been active in the past year on the London Self Directed Support Forum's planning group which has organised a number of successful events.

A snapshot of the service ...

- 129 new clients were referred to DASL between April 2008 - March 2009 (previous year 98).
- We provided casework support to 328 clients (previous year 217). Of these, 200 were female, 128 male.
- At November 2009 a total of 369 people received their services through Self Directed Support. 225 were people with physical and sensory impairments or older people receiving Direct Payments. 50 were parent carers using Direct Payments. 49 adults with learning disabilities were using Direct Payments and 31 were on the In Control programme. 4 adults with mental health problems and 5 adult carers received a Direct Payment. 5 people had Personal Budgets.

User Involvement Service for Disabled and Older People



Richard Farnos

DASL has continued to work closely with Age Concern Lambeth to make a success of this joint post which was created in April 2007 to work across the two organisations. Since joining DASL in August 2008 I have developed a range of work both with people with physical and sensory impairments and with older people. I have been active on both the relevant Partnership Boards advising colleagues on how to make user engagement more effective and supporting user representatives to carry out their role.

Lambeth Disability Strategy

During the past year DASL has played a key role in the development of Lambeth's new Joint Strategy 2010 – 2015 for People with Physical and Sensory Impairments aged 18 - 65. At the deliberative stage of the strategy in July I worked with Council colleagues to consult disabled people in a range of groups including Headway, Latin American Disabled People's Project and Lambeth Resource Centre. The formal 3 month consultation is now in progress until early February 2010 and I will be visiting community groups throughout January to make sure that disabled people who are often excluded from these important initiatives have a chance to make their views known. We all hope that Lambeth will have in place a vibrant and effective five year strategy by the Spring.

Making services better

Supporting user involvement in commissioning and service review is a vital part of the project. We work with Council and NHS Lambeth officers and voluntary sector partners to ensure that service users have a chance to influence how existing services are assessed and new ones are planned. In the past year this has included:

- Working with a group of older people to carry out interviews with service users as part of a review of the Intermediate Care Service
- Advising the Transforming Community Equipment Services Board on how to make the proposed new 'retail model' for smaller items of equipment and other aspects of the programme accessible to users.

Supporting user-led forums

An important aspect of my role is to provide advice and support to disabled and older people to set up and run their own groups. I have continued to work closely with the established Lambeth Older People's Forum and in April 2009 helped to start up a new Lambeth Pan-Disability Forum which we hope will develop into a real focus for people with all types of impairments to come together to share experiences and campaign for improved services. It has already made its mark by organising election hustings and a meeting on the new disability strategy and will have an important voice on key issues such as a Lambeth Centre for Independent Living and Lambeth Council's new Single Equality Scheme in 2010.



Lambeth & Southwark Stroke User Involvement Network

This was the first year for DASL's newest service which came about when the three year Stroke Modernisation Initiative in Lambeth and Southwark ended in March 2008. Our role is to coordinate and develop a Network for people living with stroke in the two boroughs. The Network quickly built up a membership of over 250 including some carers and professionals and had a very successful launch event. Our first Coordinator, Deborah Sowerby, who was appointed in August 2008, developed some valuable ideas in discussions with our core group of peer supporters before she left in July 2009. We will be recruiting to this post again early in 2010 and taking forward these ideas, particularly to develop a menu of activities, peer support groups, social meetings and volunteering opportunities including befriending. We also want to do more of the things which worked well in 2009. This included organising meetings for Network members to give their views on important issues such as the design of stroke services across London and a project commissioned by Lambeth PCT through which Network members interviewed people with stroke to get feedback on the Early Supported Discharge service. We also hope to develop a good relationship between the Network and Lambeth's new Stroke Care Advisory Service which is to be provided by the Stroke Association.

Network Launch event

The highlight of the year was the launch event at the Coin Street Community Centre in February. Nearly 50 people living with stroke and carers from the two boroughs and a similar number of professionals came together for a day of discussion, information sharing and entertainment. Many valuable ideas came out of the day, both about what people thought of services and about how they wanted the Network to develop.



The Peer Support Scheme

The Peer Support Scheme aims to offer support *to* people who have had a stroke *by* people who have had a stroke. A group of 15 people have committed to sharing their personal experience and understanding with others, both one to one and in groups.

Some are already experienced peer supporters; others have been trained and are beginning to



meet their first 'partners'. We have not made as much progress as we had hoped in delivering one to one peer support over the past year. We are exploring how we might work more closely on the scheme in 2010 with colleagues at Connect, the national aphasia charity, and also at the types of settings where it will work best.

The Network aims to make a difference in the lives of people affected by Stroke.

The role of the Network is to create opportunities for volunteers to participate in:

- ❑ Providing peer support to individuals, families and groups
- ❑ Influencing policy development and service provision
- ❑ Raising awareness and understanding of stroke.



Trevor Critchley

This has been my fourth year as DASL's treasurer and it has been one in which we have needed to give more thought than ever to the short and medium term future in terms of our strategic direction, our business planning and our assessment of risk and how to reduce this. A number of our current contracts with Lambeth Council end in 2010 and we are seeking clarity about what will happen to these while also looking into fundraising options for those parts of our advice service for which current trust funding ends next year.

We feel we have a good understanding of the potential impact of the 'Personalisation agenda' on our organisation and our users. Through our relationships with other Lambeth voluntary organisations, we have the chance to work collaboratively to redesign some existing services and develop new ones and our involvement in the successful Lambeth Carers' Hub consortium will give us vital experience in developing and delivering services through partnerships.

I would like to thank all our other funders, listed below, for their essential support. I am also grateful to our excellent auditor, Hilary Adams, for her usual thorough work on the financial statements. Please contact the DASL office if you would like a copy of the full accounts which includes the directors' report.

On the financial results shown by the accounts we had a satisfactory year with small surpluses on the two Council contracts which we successfully provided against our service specifications. We have carried forward as restricted funds a total of £58,193 which is made up of some of our charitable grants and funding which is earmarked for specific projects which we plan to carry out in 2009/10.

Funders

Our work is made possible by support from our funders :

April 2008 – March 2009
(last financial year)

Lambeth Council Adults' & Community Services, Lambeth Primary Care Trust, City Bridge Trust, The Rank Foundation, Guys' & St Thomas' Charity

April 2009 to date
(current financial year)

Lambeth Council Adults' & Community Services, NHS Lambeth, City Bridge Trust, The Rank Foundation, Guys' & St Thomas' Charity, London Catalyst



Sheltering from an unsettled financial climate ahead ?!

Hardy DASL staff take cover on a wet day in July at Lambeth Country Show

Management Committee

(December 2008 – November 2009)

Officers : Chair : Ebezener Akinsanmi
Vice-Chair : David Hart (until August 2009)
Treasurer : Trevor Critchley
Secretary : Michelle Esezobor

Members : Ameena Berkowitz - Boz Borowy - Isabelle Clement - Judy Fink
Susan Hamilton - Burhanettin Ortancil

Staff and volunteers (December 2008 - November 2009)

Director David Strong

Advice Service Manager Robin Ramsdale (until February 2009)
John Martin (from June 2009)

Information Worker Vasiliki Boutopoulou (from August 2008)

Advice Worker John Martin (until May 2009)

Every Pound Counts Worker Sami Basha (from July 2009)

User Involvement Worker Disabled & Older People
Richard Farnos

Stroke User Involvement Network Coordinator
Deborah Sowerby (until July 2009)

Direct Payments Service Manager Margaret Farrell

Direct Payments Workers Lucy Morley Williams
Kate Walton
Nick Tomkins (until February 2009)
Joseph Healy (from February 2009)

Advice & Information Volunteers

Leila Ghartey - James Kearney - Fay Gordon
Veronica Ribeiro-Accouche - Grace Atoo -
Emma Davies - Brenda Collins



Summary of accounts



Statement of Financial Activities Year ended 31st March 2009

	Unrestricted Funds 2009	Restricted Funds 2009	Total Funds 2009	Total Funds 2008
	£	£	£	£
Incoming resources				
Donations and grants	-	164,808	164,808	144,424
Lambeth funding contracts	267,736	-	267,736	169,825
Investment income & Other income	3,015	-	3,015	3,781
Total incoming resources	270,751	164,808	435,559	318,030
Resources expended				
Charitable activities	234,596	106,615	341,211	298,909
Governance costs	5,086	-	5,086	4,624
Total resources expended	239,682	106,615	346,297	303,533
Net incoming resources (net income for the year)	31,069	58,193	89,262	14,497
Total funds brought forward	158,185	11,944	170,129	155,632
Total funds carried forward	189,254	70,137	259,391	170,129

Balance sheet 31 March 2009

	31.03.09		31.03.08	
	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets :				
Tangible assets		906		481
Current assets :				
Debtors	100,447	-	39,257	
Cash at bank and in hand	170,055		178,076	
	270,502		217,333	
Creditors : Amounts falling due within one year	12,017		47,685	
Net current assets :		258,485		169,648
Total assets less current liabilities :		259,391		170,129
Funds :				
Unrestricted funds		189,254		165,235
Restricted funds		70,137		4,894
Total funds		259,391		170,129

Note : Full accounts for the year ended 31st March 2009, including the reports of the directors and the auditor, are available on request from the DASL office.