

Lambeth Centre for Independent Living (CIL)

The Accord Centre at 336 Brixton Road is home to the Working Group of the Lambeth Centre for Independent Living. This group comprises representatives from Disabled People's Organisations and officers from Lambeth Council's Active Communities Team. The group was established in 2010 to find out what disabled people want from a CIL in Lambeth.

Centres for Independent Living (CILs) aim to support and empower disabled people to be equal citizens with independence, choice, control, rights and full participation in economic, social and cultural life. There are a number of CILs already running in many parts of the country. They use the 'social model of disability' to identify disabling attitudes and barriers, and work to remove them. They are voluntary organisations that are developed, managed and controlled by disabled people. The CIL model complements Lambeth Council's vision of a Co-operative Council where the local community becomes actively involved in planning, developing and delivering the services they want to see provided.

The organisations involved in the CIL Working Group include: Disability Advice Service Lambeth (DASL), Alliance for Inclusive Education (ALLFIE), People First Lambeth, the Lambeth Pan-Disability Forum and Lambeth Accord.

Between November 2010 and March 2011 the Working Group organised a varied consultation programme which engaged with disabled people, carers and community organisations through a series of events, consultation questionnaires and an on-line survey.



Some of the participants in a CIL consultation event at DASL's AGM, December 2010

When the consultation ended the Working Group looked at people's feedback and found that:

- Disabled people are overwhelmingly in support of a CIL in Lambeth that is open to people of all ages and all impairments, as well as carers and allies of disabled people (those who identify with an oppressed group and support them in their struggle to bring about positive change).
- The great majority of people want the CIL to have a democratic structure and to be managed, controlled and developed by disabled people.
- There was also support for the CIL to employ disabled people as workers.
- The preferred location for the CIL was here at Lambeth Accord at 336 Brixton Road.

The services that people most wanted to see provided included:

- Ø Information and advice
- Ø Campaigning for disabled people's rights
- Ø Advocacy
- Ø Support with personal budgets including recruiting and training personal assistants
- Ø Consulting and involving disabled people in the design and monitoring of services
- Ø Support brokerage
- Ø Assistive technology and equipment for everyday living
- Ø Access audits
- Ø Support for young disabled people and training and support for their parents

A number of other services receiving support ranged from disability equality training and counselling to social activities and an internet café.

The Working Group is now looking at the funding opportunities available for the various services. While it is doing this the first project of the CIL, a **One Stop Shop for Disabled People**, has been set up at the Accord Centre with funding from Lambeth Council.

One Stop Shop for Disabled People

The One Stop Shop will open in early 2012. It is based in the reception area at 336 Brixton Road opposite the main reception for the building. The One Stop Shop is a new drop-in service which enables an accessible, expert and joined up service to be provided to disabled people. It offers:

- Ø Information, initial advice and signposting to deal with a wide range of telephone and in-person enquiries from disabled people, older people and carers
- Ø Liaison with relevant organisations (most of which are in the building) to refer clients for advice / advocacy / casework appointments where needed
- Ø Specialist information and advice sessions provided by voluntary and statutory partners which would be invited to use the facility to promote and deliver their services to potential new clients
- Ø A 'shop window' for the organisations based at the Accord Centre to provide information about their services and for representatives of the CIL to engage with disabled people about the development work which it is doing
- Ø Improved information display facilities for organisations within the building and for other providers in the borough wishing to promote their services
- Ø Internet access for members of the public to search for their own information
- Ø Individual support to access and navigate the Lambeth Social Care Portal (*Your Care, Your Way*) and other web-based resources to enable people to locate services and make contact with them
- Ø Regularly updated 'what's on' information of interest to disabled people
- Ø A booking facility for events and activities in which organisations in the building and their partners are involved.

This service is coordinated by Lambeth Accord and DASL and includes staff and volunteers from a number of organisations in the building.

We would like more disabled people to get involved in the One Stop Shop as volunteers. We will provide training and support to volunteers and also reimburse reasonable travel and subsistence expenses.

If you are interested in finding out more about volunteering in the One Stop Shop for Disabled People please contact David Strong at DASL Tel: 020 7642 0040, email david.strong@disabilitylambeth.org.uk or Elaine Aherne at Lambeth Council Tel: 020 7926 4704, email eaherne@lambeth.gov.uk



Volunteers preparing the One Stop Shop for opening