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# UK Disabled People's Manifesto:

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## Reclaiming Our Futures.

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# **UK Disabled People's Manifesto: Reclaiming Our Futures.**

The aim of this manifesto – developed by disabled people and their organisations across the UK - is to map the key principles, demands and commitments that disabled people and our allies can use in campaigning and lobbying. It calls on the Westminster and devolved Governments to recognise and act on their responsibilities in fully implementing the United Nations Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) effectively across the UK.

The manifesto uses a Social Model of Disability definition, that is: that economic, cultural and political forces work to disable people and exclude those of us with impairments or long term health conditions. We use the term disabled people in this manifesto to include those with physical, cognitive and sensory impairments, people with learning difficulties; Deaf people, deafened, hard of hearing people, mental health system users, and survivors, and others.

We recognise our commonalities in fighting for change as well as our multiple identities including: class, Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) identities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) identities, gender, age, faith. The manifesto identifies our common cause in challenging our exclusions together. It recognises that we do so in the context of our shared principles and under the banners of the Social Model of Disability and the Cultural Model of Deafness.

Our manifesto sets out our shared vision for an inclusive and equal society free from economic, social and cultural barriers. It does not claim to be exhaustive or set out extensive plans and proposals. It is rather a 'road-map' setting out a vision for real sustainable change and alternative approaches to key areas of our lives. It is a living document that will be developed in the lead up to the 2015 elections.

Disabled people are impacted by overall austerity cuts 9 times more than the rest of the population and disabled people with the severest impairments are experiencing cuts 19 times greater compared with the rest of the population. We are losing £28 billion of essential welfare support. Our local authority, social care and other support systems are in crisis, while our rights and the opportunities to exercise those rights, are under threat as never before. In 2013 we see that austerity measures are failing the vast majority of our citizens, poverty is increasing and disabled people are seeing support stripped

away as part of the imposed austerity policies. Yet, the HM Revenue and Customs estimate a 'tax gap' of £32 billion per year because of corporate tax evasion and avoidance whilst other tax experts put the 'tax gap' figure at £120 billion per year.

There are 11 million disabled people in the UK. We want to see a society that supports and enables full citizenship for all. A well-resourced and efficient welfare infrastructure is achievable. Disabled people must have the enforceable right to live independently and to live a life of full inclusion, spontaneity, choice, family, friends, education, work and community. The state must provide appropriate funding and support to enable disabled people and all people to live lives of equality, independence, and dignity.

## **Our Vision**

Our vision is a shared belief in a society based on the values of equality, and human rights, with full participation and inclusion for disabled people. To achieve this we need:

- A society where every person is valued and is recognised as contributing value
- A society that celebrates diversity
- A society that actively eliminates discrimination and exclusion to enable full citizenship

We want to see real access to equal opportunities and equal life chances. Disabled peoples' inclusion must be a right, not a continuous struggle.

## **Our Principles**

- The UNCRDP and our human and civil rights must be fully implemented, promoted and enforceable
- Disabled people must have the right to enjoy the same degree of autonomy, and control over their day-to-day lives, and their long-term futures as non-disabled people
- Legislation and policy must support an inclusive society whereby disabled people are valued citizens and members of the community

- Disabled people must be provided with the support, assistance and equipment that will enable them to participate with other citizens (both disabled and non-disabled) on equal terms, and with equal opportunities, across all areas of life.
- Disabled people must be centrally involved in legislation, policies, initiatives and services that affect our lives.

## Our Priority Demands

- **A Fully Inclusive Education System:** All disabled learners must have the legal right to attend courses in all education settings within a fully inclusive education system that meets their individual needs.
- **A Legal right to Independent Living and Self- Determination:** The creation of specific independent living law: a legal right that fully enacts and enforces, as domestic law, the UNCRPD incorporating the 12 pillars of independent living as its key goals and principles.
- **Welfare Support and Housing:** All disabled people have a right to inclusive welfare support, and housing under the principles of universal design.
- **Access, Inclusion and Full Participation for Disabled People:** The creation of legal status for British Sign Language, and disabled people's access on an equal basis with others to the environment, to transportation, justice, family life, the arts; and to accessible information/communication
- **All Disabled People have a right to Work and Employment:** A comprehensive and strategic plan of action to tackle the discrimination and exclusion disabled people face in employment and work.
- **A Disabled Person Citizen's Income:** The creation of a disabled person citizen's income that reflects the level of income that a disabled person needs to cover the additional economic, social, cultural and impairment costs disabled people experience. It should replace the plethora of different, flawed benefits that are currently in place.

- **Real and Effective Co-Production with user-led Deaf and Disabled People’s Organisations across the UK:** Ensure meaningful, well-resourced and accessible co-production with disabled people and their organisations at local, regional and national levels on all issues affecting us.

## Our Demands

### A Fully Inclusive Education System for All

Education is the key to creating an inclusive society. This can only be achieved by having one fully inclusive mainstream education system, funded by the state. An inclusive education system, allows disabled and non-disabled people to develop common and shared values through living and learning alongside each other. It’s not just disabled learners who benefit from inclusive education. ‘Without inclusive education you will not get an inclusive society.’<sup>1</sup>

#### Priority Demand

All disabled learners must have the legal right to attend courses in all education settings with the legal right to individualised support. This must include the provision of accessible information/learning resources in a range of formats, and technologies that support and actively engage inclusion for all disabled groups<sup>2</sup>, the teaching and standard use of British Sign Language by all learning professionals, and investment in teaching resources to facilitate more disabled teachers within education buildings that are accessible to all.

- All mainstream course curricula to be accessible to all disabled people including provision of adaptive learning materials and teachers, tutors and lecturers delivering inclusive lessons for all learners.
- All education assessments and accreditations are inclusive.

<sup>1</sup> “Out in the open - Manifesto for change - Tackling disability-related harassment: A manifesto for change” Equality and Human Rights Commission (autumn 2012)

<sup>2</sup> By technologies we mean any aid or practical process that serves the needs of the inclusion of an individual. For example: Easy Read, BSL, Video Relay Services / Video Interpreting Services, lip-readers, speech to text, assistive software, support from fully qualified communication support workers and so on.

- We need fair assessment and accreditation systems, which can measure an individual student's ability.
- There must be compulsory disability equality training for all education professionals and staff. Currently, education professionals are not required to learn about inclusive practice within accredited teacher training courses.

Disabled learners are the only group of people that can be prevented from participating in mainstream education due to their rights being restricted by various Education Acts (such as the 1996 Education Act, Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and “Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004”) and the Equality Act 2010. Disabled learners being placed in inclusive education has steadily fallen since 2010.

### **A Legal Right to Independent Living and Self Determination:**

There must be extensive and sustainable funding for *genuine* independent living and user self-directed support that is free at the point of need, paid from general taxation with ring-fenced funding. Funding must be at levels that enable disabled people to achieve self-determined independent living, in its widest sense as defined under the UNCRPD, with the realistic option to employ personal assistants, at an adequate wage, through the provision of Direct Payments. The level of support should be one that enables disabled and non-disabled people to enjoy the same degree of control over their lives that does not involve being forced into residential, group or nursing home provision.

#### **Priority Demand**

The creation and implementation of specific independent living law: a legal right that fully enacts and enforces, as domestic law, the UNCRPD, incorporates the 12 pillars of independent living as its key goals and principles<sup>3</sup> and ensures provision of independent living support is free at the point of need and paid from general taxation.

<sup>3</sup> See Morris. J (2003) Barriers to Independent Living; a Scoping Paper prepared for the Disability Rights Commission <http://disability-studies.leeds.ac.uk/files/library/morris-independent-living-scoping-paper-final-edit.pdf.pdf>

- A full cumulative impact assessment is carried out on the impacts of current policies on disabled people's right to independent living.
- Stop the closure of the cost effective<sup>4</sup> Independent Living Fund (ILF) and set up an Independent living task force, co-produced with ILF users, to review independent living and specifically the Independent Living Fund in order to identify how best to improve, develop and extend independent living support building on the successful model of ILF provision.
- To ensure the legal right and implementation of independent living is enshrined within all social 'care' and health legislation, principles and practice.
- Urgently review systems where residential institution charities/providers leave disabled people with limited amounts of their own money for the costs of essentials needs<sup>5</sup>; ensure those disabled people are offered alternative access to independent living in the community -as per article 19 of the UNCRPD-and are freed from institutions.
- Ensure that there is true portability of support and not just portability of assessment, enabling disabled people to move home without fear of losing their previously assessed support package.
- Enact adequate and long term funding of user-led disabled peoples organisations to guarantee they are able to continue to deliver peer led independent living support services and continue to provide advocacy and representation on independent living and disability equality issues.
- Ensure that gathering disabled people's feedback is a contractual requirement of health and social care service providers and is always used to improve the provision of these services, (to prevent the type of abuse that took place at Winterbourne view hospital). An additional safeguard must be extended to increase protection for whistle blowers in the health and 'care' sectors.

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<sup>4</sup> ILF admin and running costs are approximately 4% compared to 16% for L.A. social 'care' which many argue does not enable independent living as defined by disabled people.

<sup>5</sup> in one well known charity's residential institutions, disabled people are left with less than £24 per week to pay for any essential items, telephone, clothing, footwear, travel etc. while the institution takes the rest



## Welfare Support and Housing

We believe the state must play a crucial and active role in supporting its citizens whether at times of crisis or through on-going support to tackle poverty, discrimination, exclusion and the disadvantages of being disabled. Disabled people have a right to receive adequate levels of welfare support, including accessible social housing, that free us from poverty, ill health and exclusion and that meet the additional costs of disability and/or impairment that we face. Welfare support must be based on need and the recognition of the inherent value and human rights of every person; it must not be restricted or limited to those that are viewed as 'deserving' or productive.

### Priority Demand

All disabled people have a right to inclusive welfare support and housing under the principles of universal design<sup>6</sup>. Ensure that disabled people are provided with welfare support, income and suitable accessible housing at a level that enables independent living, inclusion and participation in the community as defined in the UNCRPD. Adequate welfare support, income and housing is not only key to ensuring disabled people's rights but also prevents escalation of need and the higher costs of crisis support including hospitalisation and emergency housing, or worse institutionalisation.

- Private landlords and social housing providers including local authorities and housing associations should develop 'fair rents' that currently exist for regulated tenants<sup>7</sup>. This provides lower rents and stronger rights against eviction.
- A strategic and sustained programme of building social housing to the standards of universal design and accessibility is carried out.
- That the unworkable and punitive 'bedroom' tax is scrapped so disabled people will not be forced to move away from their area of employment or away from their community. In addition that housing benefit is up-rated to match local rent prices and rent controls are put in place locally. This avoids money being wasted by local authorities paying for a) people to

<sup>6</sup> See <http://livableforalifetime.org/pdf/Universal%20Design%20Principles.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> See: [http://england.shelter.org.uk/get\\_advice/renting\\_and\\_leasehold/private\\_tenancies/regulated\\_tenancies](http://england.shelter.org.uk/get_advice/renting_and_leasehold/private_tenancies/regulated_tenancies)

leave the area b) paying for people to live in hotels at a greater cost to the public purse c) disabled people moving out of properties that have been adapted by them or by the local authority, or worse being offered only institutions as living accommodation.

- Ensure that disabled people including women, lone parents and parents with disabled children, BME and LGBT groups do not suffer reduced incomes under Universal Credit, as predicted; compounding discrimination and that safeguards are put in place to ensure there is no loss of income. This includes ensuring that mortgage interest payments for disabled people are guaranteed to meet the true costs of mortgages without time limit so that disabled people can stay in their homes.
- Urgently review changes to the amounts of mortgage interest to disabled claimants that have been estimated to lead to 64,000 people becoming homeless. We need fast and direct interventions to stop individual misery and higher community and national costs.
- A halt to other current welfare 'reforms' including the Work Capability Assessment, Personal Independence Payments, and benefit caps which are not working and are disproportionately impacting on disabled people - see disabled person citizens income demand

## **A Right to Access, Inclusion and Full Participation for Disabled People:**

Disabled people must have a right to live without discrimination, harassment and victimisation to enjoy equality of opportunity on an equal basis with others. These rights must include full access to the physical environment, transportation, information and communications, cultural, leisure and sporting activities, full participation in political and public life on an equal basis with others, including the right to vote and be elected.

### **Priority Demand**

The creation of legal status for British Sign Language, and disabled people's access on an equal basis with others to the physical environment, to transportation, justice, family life, the arts, to accessible information and all forms of information technology.

- There must be a commitment that disability equality, access principles and requirements are built into all awarded government contracts, at local, regional and national levels with penalties for non-compliance. In addition and integral to this all contracted agencies must provide registered and qualified BSL interpreters, and communication and access technologies<sup>8</sup> to ensure disability equality is an integral part in delivery of all government contracts.
- Ensure that the powers of the Equality Act 2010 are retained and enforced with Public Sector Equalities Duties protected and strengthened to make sure public bodies genuinely pay due regard to enacting disabled people's rights, equality and participation in society.
- The work of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) is adequately funded and that the EHRC has complete independence from government and government officers. The EHRC's Disability Committee must also be protected, and given stronger powers of enforcement.
- Encourage disabled people's participation in public affairs<sup>9</sup> with local and central governments ensuring that disabled people have equal role in decision-making, whilst ensuring that voting procedures, facilities and materials are appropriate, accessible and easy to understand and use, promoting an environment in which disabled people can effectively and fully participate in public affairs.
- The Leveson Recommendations 11 and 38<sup>10</sup> allowing 3rd party complaints must be fully implemented to ensure that the increasing false and inaccurate portrayal of disabled people in the media is challengeable and preventable.
- Develop and implement a national strategy for tackling disability hate crime (DHC) co-produced with disabled people. This should build on the EHRC's Hidden in Plain Sight<sup>11</sup> report with the implementation of the

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<sup>8</sup> Including any aid or practical process that serves the needs of the inclusion of an individual. For example: Easy Read, BSL, Video Relay Services / Video Interpreting Services, lip-readers, speech to text, assistive software, support from fully qualified communication support workers.

<sup>9</sup> Including the right to access political office [www.disabilitypolitics.org.uk](http://www.disabilitypolitics.org.uk)

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.levesoninquiry.org.uk/about/the-report/>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/legal-and-policy/inquiries-and-assessments/inquiry-into-disability-related-harassment/hidden-in-plain-sight-the-inquiry-final-report/>

recommendations by devolved Governments forming a powerful UK strategy in tackling the rise in hate crime.

- Repeal proposed changes to Legal Aid in England & Wales to ensure that disabled people and all other groups have equal access to the justice system and all are equal under the rule of law.
- Recognise and safeguard the principle of the right to family life for all disabled people, applying to whichever form of family life that disabled people may choose as part of their self-determined lifestyles.
- Urgently review health processes and outcomes of disabled people, especially those with learning difficulties and mental health service users to eliminate systematic discrimination, avoid premature deaths and inappropriate treatments in the hospital system<sup>12</sup>
- Ensure that sufficient funds are made available to enable disabled people access to sport, films, theatre and other cultural and leisure activities on a par with non-disabled people. Ensure that disabled people have the opportunity to develop and utilise their creative, artistic and intellectual potential, not only for their own benefit, but also for the enrichment of disability culture, disability arts and society, while taking full account of disabled people living in small, isolated rural communities in this process.
- Enact and maintain a fully accessible public transport system including:
  - a) At least three-quarters of UK train stations and a third of London's Tube stations are step free by 2018, including from platform to train.
  - b) All transport systems including train, bus and coach across the UK to have accessible announcements including audio-visual for next stop and final destination by 2018. This will include audio-visual information at bus stops and coach stations, and level access from pavement to vehicles.
  - c) Implementing a 'No access, no contract' clause into all public transport tenders with real consequences for companies and drivers who

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-20187273> <http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/health-news/nhs-is-failing-mental-health-patients-7857342.html>

fail disabled and older passengers. This must include recognition of access issues for those in rural areas.

d) Increased funding for localised door-to-door services and services such as Taxicard and Capital Call schemes to ensure guaranteed trips, reduced caller waiting times, and greater distance covered.

e) England: amend the Concessionary Bus Travel Act 2007 to broaden the definition of eligible journeys to allow people with complex mobility issues who cannot access public transport to use concessionary travel passes on community transport services; and for connected purposes.

f) Scotland: Section 19 services to be included in national Concessionary Fare Scheme and to attract a 100% re-imbusement of fares.

g) Recognition and roll out of successful local travel scheme ideas such as the government's mobility card scheme and the consequent importance of appropriate funding for such schemes across the UK.

h) All transport staff to be fully disability equality trained across the UK by user-led Disabled Peoples Organisations or suitably qualified disabled people.

## **All Disabled People have a right to Work and Employment**

There must be the recognition that many disabled people are prevented from gaining employment due to societal and economic barriers which are out of their control. Some of the main causes of non-employment amongst disabled people include: lack of inclusive education and training, discriminatory attitudes of employers, discriminatory employment and working practices and poor quality / inappropriate employment support. These barriers must be challenged and removed. This includes tackling the access issues that many disabled people face in the work place, training for employers, and a commitment to tackle issues that make some groups of disabled people less likely than others to be included in the labour market<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> Those with learning difficulties and mental health issues are less likely to be supported and have higher levels of unemployment despite wanting to work <http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/disability-statistics-and-research/disability-equality-indicators.php> .

## Priority Demand

A comprehensive and strategic plan of action is developed with disabled people and our organisations to tackle the discrimination and exclusion disabled people face in work and employment including: increasing quality and range of personalised support available to disabled people, strengthening disabled employees rights and tackling employer discrimination and poor practice.

- Access to Work (AtW) must be extended to include unpaid voluntary positions. AtW assessments must be carried out prior to job interviews so that disabled people know the range of support they can access at this crucial stage in finding work. The AtW scheme must be actively promoted and publicised to disabled people and employers. AtW workers must have compulsory disability equality and impairment training to improve the support they provide.
- Economic productivity must not be the only measure of people's worth and value, volunteering offers as much value to society as paid employment. While we recognise that volunteering can offer additional skills, it should not be the default option for disabled people because of our exclusion from paid work.
- There must be policy and media recognition that there will always be disabled people who are unable or too ill to work. These individuals must be supported by a publically funded system. They should not be penalised or demonised as they are currently.
- All businesses must pay a living wage<sup>14</sup> with the criteria that local authorities and funders allow those employing personal assistants to secure enough funds to be able to do this.
- A UK wide campaign on equal work for equal pay by disabled people<sup>15</sup>, this should be approached as a joint campaign by disabled people, user-led Disabled Peoples' Organisations and unions to fight for an equal pay

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<sup>14</sup> Based upon average hourly rates for the geographical region e.g. at the time of writing the living wage in London is £8.55 per hour. Outside of London the current rate is £7.45 per hour. <http://www.citizensuk.org/campaigns/living-wage-campaign/>

<sup>15</sup> See EHRC Disability Committee Priorities and work programme 2009 using Disability Rights Commission Disability Briefing March 2006 -disabled workers are paid 10% less than their non-disabled counterparts

law ensuring disabled people are paid at the same rates as non-disabled people

- Reinstatement of the requirement for councils to produce equality schemes on employment and access to tackle institutional discrimination, along with the employer liability for third party harassment of employees, work place health and safety provisions and the recently scrapped discrimination questionnaire procedure<sup>16</sup>.
- Reinstatement of the Introduction of day one protection from unfair dismissal, that is rejecting the criteria that a person needs to be employed for a minimum of two years before their rights to equality are protected and repeal of the recently introduced (August 2013) fees for taking an employer to Employment Tribunal, which price lower waged people out of access to justice.
- Employment Tribunals must enforce mandatory organisation-wide measures on preventing disability discrimination (e.g. disability equality training for all staff) in proven cases of disability discrimination. This should be substantiated by enforceable anticipatory measures to examine and remove barriers in the workplace and be applicable to all employers.
- Ensure that all government contracts, at a national, regional and local level, are only awarded to companies that are fulfilling measurable targets for the employment of disabled people.
- All employers to access training in disability equality and supporting disabled people in the workplace by an accredited user-led disabled people's organisational network at the local level<sup>17</sup>. The network will work with unions to take forward disability equality issues including legal issues and breaches of disabled people's employment rights.
- Greater onus must be placed on employers to provide paid workplace training to disabled people; this should include a commitment to employ the trained disabled person for at least 1 year. Within this there needs to be recognition on the importance of making premises more accessible, adjusting duties and hours, provision of specialist equipment.

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.xperthr.co.uk/faqs/topics/6,56/procedures-in-cases-of-discrimination.aspx?articleid=96877#96877>

<sup>17</sup> By a user-led Disabled Peoples Network we mean a locally led network using the expertise of the lived experience of disability as a central organising principle.



- Accredited apprenticeships<sup>18</sup> regulated by the standard apprenticeships England frameworks must be revised so that disabled apprentices are not placed at a bigger disadvantage than their non-disabled peers.
- Social enterprises led by disabled people should be encouraged and adequately financed by governments in an effort to develop improved employment, business and leadership prospects for disabled people.
- The reinstatement of a compulsory mandate that workplaces employ a minimum percentage of disabled people. This mandate must be enforceable with realistic financial penalties for failure to comply, and effectively monitored at local levels to avoid failures of previous schemes. Prior to this a recognition that different impairment groups have differential access to employment (e.g. people with learning difficulties and mental health users are less likely to be in employment) should be factored into any percentage mandate to ensure that all disabled people are catered for.
- Disabled people unable to undertake paid work and facing greater disadvantages in the work place must have adequate level of income provided by the disabled person citizen's income.

## **Disabled Person Citizen's Income**

We believe the state must play a crucial and active role in supporting its citizens whether at times of crisis or through on-going support to tackle poverty, discrimination, exclusion and the disadvantages of being disabled.

### **Priority Demand**

The creation of a disabled person citizen's income that reflects the level of income that a disabled person needs to cover the additional economic, social, cultural and impairment costs disabled people experience, including costs of exclusion from employment and additional living costs. It should replace the plethora of different, flawed benefits that are currently in place.

- The disabled person citizen's income should pay for the extra costs of living in a disabling society using the social model understanding of disability. It will replace punitive and flawed tests such as the Work

<sup>18</sup> See: <http://www.allfie.org.uk/pages/work/apprenticeships.html>



Capability Assessment and the new Personal Independence Payment. It will not be dependent on an individual's national insurance contributions in recognition of the disabling factors that prevent disabled peoples full employment opportunities.

- The disabled person citizen's income will replace the bewildering range of benefits and grants at present that assume that disabled people's lives can be neatly packaged into domestic, social, health, education and employment settings each with different eligibility criteria, assessments and processes.
- The disabled person citizen's income will cut the costs of an overly bureaucratic system. It should be managed via self-assessment of extra costs the disabled person experiences and not by tick box tests applied by private companies using the denigrated bio-psychosocial model.
- Disabled person citizen's baseline income should be set at a percentage level of the 'average' wage income for the geographical area in the recognition of the barriers that disabled people face in accessing paid employment. It will have additional increments dependent on the extra costs that each disabled person faces or their need/desire to employ personal assistants.
- It will include additional associated costs incurred in living with impairments or health conditions in recognition of the extra fuel, housing, clothing that would not be incurred by non-disabled people in the same manner.
- It will include additional associated costs living with impairments as a result of inaccessible universal services such as transport etc.
- A housing component of the disabled person citizens' income should reflect the extra cost involved in renting or buying an accessible home with additional rooms for disability-related equipment and assistance until such a time as there is an adequate stock of homes built to universal design standards.
- Parents with disabled children must also benefit until the child is 16 when the disabled person citizen's income will transfer to the young disabled person.

It is only through this process that any option of 'fulfilling potential' for disabled people can be achieved until the real causes and barriers of a disabling society are seriously tackled and eradicated by governments.

## **Real and Effective Co-Production with Disabled Peoples Organisations across the UK:**

Disabled people want real co-production in the development and implementation of legislation, policies, services and initiatives affecting our lives.

### **Priority Demand**

Ensure that Disabled Peoples Organisations (DPO's) and disabled people are central to all policies and discussions about us; ensure meaningful, well-resourced and accessible co-production with disabled people and their organisations at local, regional and national levels on all issues affecting us.

- All policy makers, decision makers and service providers must commit to the principle and practice of co-production and ensure that there is adequate funding to resource this through advice, advocacy and representation through the long term funding of all disabled peoples organisations at a strategic level.
- A recognition of the strategic importance of DPO's in delivering disability equality, and the provision of crucial adequate core funding support to DPO's to ensure they can continue to provide unique, peer led services and representation of disabled people's interests.
- Carry out a strategic review of the impact of tendering / commissioning and procurement practices on DPO's and the wider voluntary sector in order to address the structural disadvantages DPO's and the wider voluntary sector experience within tendering and commissioning.
- To review the implementation of the Public services (Social Value) Act and carry out research on the 'added-value' DPO's, and other user led organisations, can bring to service delivery.
- Public bodies to provide resources and support to enable disabled people to participate in local decisions, service planning and delivery

ensuring that access needs are met, including interpreting resources such as BSL, Easy Read formats and a range of other technologies to guarantee inclusive processes.

- Adequate resources to ensure the provision of free, independent advocacy to disabled people accessing services or entitlements; access to services and support must be guaranteed to all disabled people in the UK, specifically those who are seeking asylum and/or impacted by other kinds of discrimination. There must be a choice of independent advocacy support in each area.
- A new disability task force to be set up to oversee each of the manifesto demands. The task force must be led by disabled people and active DPO's. We are not suggesting a monolithic umbrella of organisations under one title, but the inclusion of discrete user-led organisations across the UK recognising geographical differences, differing viewpoints and contexts. This could work on a similar basis to the disbanded Networks of Networks<sup>19</sup>

## **Appendix: The 12 Pillars of Independent Living**

- Appropriate and accessible information
- An adequate income
- Appropriate and accessible health and social care provision
- A fully accessible transport system
- Full access to the environment
- Adequate provision of technical aids and equipment
- Availability of accessible and adapted housing
- Adequate provision of personal assistance
- Availability of inclusive education and training
- Equal opportunities for employment
- Availability of independent advocacy and self-advocacy
- Availability of peer counselling

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<sup>19</sup> <http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/odi-projects/independent-living-strategy/independent-living-strategy-projects.php#nn>

This manifesto was developed by disabled people and their organisations across the UK.

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