



Who we are

We are a small charity with a proud history. Established in Macclesfield in 1993, we provide holistic services specific to the needs of disabled communities across Cheshire East. Many of these people find themselves hidden from view and isolated from society, and all our resources go into combatting the risks they face.

We have a fantastic team of 48 active community volunteers that help us do this, and we provide a comprehensive package of support that includes:

- A free and confidential information service
- Computer courses and information on adaptive technology, including services for people with visual impairments
- IT and employment qualifications
- Employment support
- Access appraisals to assist with enquiries relating to the Equality Act 2010
- Welfare rights guidance
- Disability, equality and diversity training
- Shopmobility services
- RADAR keys
- Volunteering opportunities

We do not spoon feed clients or wrap them in cotton wool. Instead our aim is simple – we encourage independence by empowering them to find the voice, confidence and resilience to make positive changes in their own lives - levelling the playing field when it comes to mental health, wellbeing, employment, and inclusive opportunities.

There are exciting times ahead for the DIB, and as a local home-grown charity, we are very proud to have won the Charity of the Year Award at the North East Cheshire Business Awards. Winning this award is invaluable, and ultimately it means we can reach and positively impact the lives of more people that need it.



Our Mission

Provide services to empower disabled people, those with long term health conditions, vulnerable adults and Carers to improve their lives and wellbeing.



Our Vision

We wish to challenge and change attitudes so that society is fair and inclusive, and everyone has equal opportunities to thrive and achieve their full potential.

Our Values

In the pursuit of our mission we will work to the following values:

- Friendly - You will always be greeted with a kind face and a smile
- Independent – We will give you clear advice based on your individual circumstances
- Inclusive – We promote equal opportunities
- Accomplished – We have the skills, understanding and experience to help you
- Dedicated – We always go the extra mile
- Confidential – We treat your information with respect
- Impartial – We deliver fairly to all
- Recognise achievement – We celebrate success in overcoming barriers

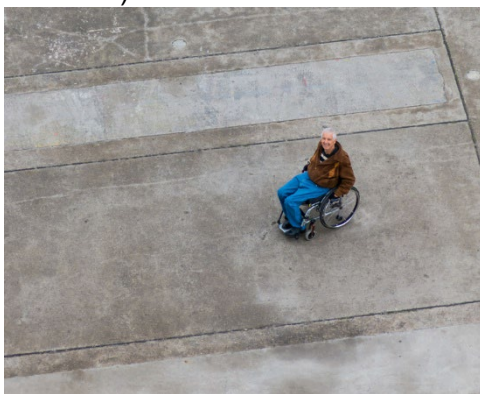
Evidence of Need

Cheshire East has a geographical area of 1,116 km² (430.89 sq. mi) and an average population of 372,700. The towns within Cheshire East we are currently covering are Alsager, Congleton, Crewe, Knutsford, Macclesfield, Middlewich, Nantwich, Poynton, Sandbach and Wilmslow. It is estimated that 17.5% of Cheshire East residents have a long-term health problem / disability and 40,003 residents are “unpaid carers” with 8,024 providing at least 50 hours care per weeks.

Cheshire East has Lower Layer Super Output Areas, 10 areas in Crewe are lower super output areas, the bottom 10% of the country and 3 areas in Macclesfield are in the bottom 3%.

Nationally statistics show:

- The Labour Force Survey shows disabled people remain significantly less likely to be in employment than non-disabled people. In 2012, 46.3% of working-age disabled people are in employment compared to 76.4% of working-age non-disabled people. There is therefore a 30.1 percentage point gap between disabled and non-disabled people, representing over 2 million people.
- Over 1 in 4 disabled people say that they frequently do not have choice and control over their daily lives. (Papworth Trust – Disability in the United Kingdom, Facts and Figures, December 2013: Office of National Statistics, Opinions Survey, 2011)
- Disabled people make up around one third of the NHS users in Britain. (Papworth Trust – Disability in the United Kingdom, Facts and Figures, December 2013: Office of Disability Issues, Accessible Information)
- 40% of restaurants and a third of department stores do not have an accessible toilet. (DWP Disability Audit December 2014)
- A third of disabled people have never used the internet, compared to just 8% of non-disabled people – a ‘digital divide’ of 25%. (Leonard Cheshire Disability: Facts & Figures 2014)
- Disabled adults are nearly 3 times as likely to have no formal qualifications as non-disabled adults, 30% and 11% respectively. (Office for Disability Issues, 2012, Measuring National Well-being Education and Skills)



In 2014 we asked over 250 of our Service Users if it was important to them to receive the services we offer from a disabled person’s organisation. 91% said that this was very important to them listing words like understanding, empathy and feel safe as important.

We service approximately 2500 people per year. We have waiting lists of the majority of our services in particular the learning provision and welfare benefits.

Overview of our Services

We offer a varied and wide range of services based in and from our Resource Centre at Pierce Street and from our Community Transport building, on Churchill Way both based in Macclesfield. Our buildings are fully accessible offering not only rooms and space for our services but opportunity for other local voluntary organisations to use our rooms for meeting and training. We also have an outreach office at Dane Plus Housing in Congleton.

Information and Advice

We can offer information and advice on a number of disability issues and if we can't help we can tell you who can!

We assist approximately 1000 people with disabilities and their families and Carers through the maze of welfare benefits and the changes that may impact on their health and wellbeing. The team also assist people who need extra assistance due to financial hardship source charitable funding to enable them to secure additional funds.

We have the Advice Quality Standard (AQS), the quality mark for organisations that provide advice to the public on social welfare issues.



Learning Centre

We offer Learning opportunities to adults over 19, offering computer and employability courses. We have a range of adaptive technology to suit disabled people. Courses offered are community learning (non- accredited designed to get people into learning) and accredited qualifications by awarding body Open Awards.

This service is contracted to Cheshire East Lifelong Learning (sub-contractor to Skills Funding Agency)

New Leaf

We are one of several organisations working in partnership with Golden Gates Housing Trust (GGHT) to support local people and residents into suitable work, volunteering opportunities, further education and training. The scheme sees the Big Lottery Fund matching funds from European Social Fund (ESF) 2014-2020, to provide joint investment in local projects that tackle poverty and promote social inclusion.

Lloyds Employment Service

This project will focus on people with a learning difficulty, mental health issue or low basic skills, working with participants on an individual basis, helping them to identify barriers, fears, needs and aspirations they may have and formulate a plan of progress. We will help in a number of ways including: CVs, job applications, voluntary placements to gain confidence, gaining qualifications – all with the end goal of finding suitable employment.

Radar Keys

The National Key Scheme (NKS) aims to provide disabled key holders with independent access to the toilets provided for them and increases the likelihood of the facilities being in a usable state. We sell Radar Keys to the public charging £3.50 if collected or £5 with post and packaging.

Appraisals of Services and Buildings for Accessibility

We offer an access and appraisal service which includes appraisal of buildings, services and websites, giving feedback on accessibility and guidance on the requirements of the Equality Act and Access to and use of buildings to Approved Document M. We provide a report with our findings. Disabled people are involved in the delivery of this service, for which we make a charge.

Volunteering Opportunities

Volunteers are an invaluable and essential part of the delivery of our services. We offer many opportunities, including for example receptionists, IT tutors. All volunteers are given training and support. Many of our volunteers gain qualifications within our Learning Resource Centre and go onto employment.

Shopmobility Macclesfield

We hire out mobility scooters, electrical and manual wheelchairs to the general public who need mobility assistance within Macclesfield Town Centre. We also offer a waiting area for users of the D&G transport service. This service is run as a contract from Cheshire East Council.

Hate Crime Reporting Centre

We raise awareness by attending local events, giving presentations and being contactable to assist individuals who wish to report a HATE Crime incident with the emphasis on disability.

Macclesfield Accessibility Group

We facilitated by the group who respond to accessibility issues in Macclesfield and aims to increase awareness of accessibility in planning and local businesses. This is supported financially by a small grant by Macclesfield Town Council.

Our Impact



We produce an annual review every year and several impact reports for our different services, which are available on our website and by request.

2017/18 overall we had the following headline impact

**Over 2000
people
supported with
information and
advice**

**Close to
£1 million
financial gains for
disabled people
and carers**

**90
qualifications
achieved by
our learners**

**24353
Website
Hits
22% increase!**

**Over 2151
Shopmobility
journeys**

**98% clients
rate us as
Excellent**

What difference do we make ?

We ask people we help what difference are service has made—this is what they told us

78 % Feel less isolated and lonely

90 % More confident and able to deal with their issue

58 % Improved Health and Wellbeing

88% Are more aware of their rights

Our Business Strategy

Our Business Strategy is to continue to strive and apply for new and innovative funding opportunities in particular searching for new tendering opportunities that are compatible with the services already provided by our Resource Centre and outreach clinics and part of the Business Strategy.

Our Disability Information Bureau Business Strategy focuses on key priorities for this year 2018-19, and in addition we have agreed longer term strategic goals to meet the challenges of the future.

Key priority areas are for 2019-20:

- DPULO: Recruit at least 2 disabled people to the Board.
- Open a Community Cars service to add to existing Shopmobility Services in Macclesfield to create a Community Transport Hub.
- Source Funding for services, in particular our Welfare Rights service and reduce budgeted deficit
- Seek further Volunteers to join the Access group and raise the profile of accessibility in the area, including working toward getting a Changing Places toilet within our premises.
- Seek Corporate partners to work with to promote disability and mental health awareness in the workplace and to increase sponsorship /funding
- Promote our online sponsorship, local giving page, so members of the local community can get involved in fundraising.

Longer Term Goals 2018-2020

Deliver a quality service for the Community of Cheshire East with a focus on disabled and vulnerable people.

- Gain at least a 95% good to excellent satisfaction rate from customer surveys
-

Help disabled people and vulnerable adults have their Voice heard and influence public attitudes and behaviours towards disability

- We will measure this by: Becoming a fully fledged DPULO (Disabled Persons User Led Organisation) with
- 50% of volunteers and staff with a disability and 75% of the Board
- Be responsive to service users and the local disabled community by carrying out surveys, focus groups, and questionnaires to collect their views and feed to appropriate stakeholders and into our annual report.
- Real life stories are used to promote the reality of disability on social media, in newsletters and to stakeholders and commissioners.

To help disabled people and vulnerable people live independently

- 10000 handbooks delivered across Cheshire East listing all local services that support disabled people and provide electronically on our website
- Offering an Information and advice service to ensure that people get the right information to be able to make choices and take control
- Promote digital inclusion by offering access to computers and learning.
- Access audits are promoted as an income stream to ensure more accessible venues and services in Cheshire East

Empower disabled people, those with long term health conditions and vulnerable people to improve their employment opportunities

- Ensure all disabled and vulnerable people using our services are made aware of learning and employment support opportunities.

- Offer accessible learning opportunities (subject to funding)
- Offer (subject to funding) employment support and mentors

Be a valued partner of choice for other organisations, helping to improve the lives of the Community of Cheshire East.

- Work with partners with common goals through services and collaboration.
- Meet or exceed contractual targets

Volunteers



We are committed to ensuring volunteering opportunities for local people. Volunteers have been a very important part of our organisation since it began.

Volunteers carry out some of the following roles:

- Welfare Rights Advisors
- Receptionists
- Data Entry Clerks
- IT Tutors

Training and CPD opportunities are essential to many volunteers who are looking to ultimately gain employment including Preparing to Volunteer qualifications, ITQ and PTLLS teaching qualifications. On average our volunteers give 403 hours per month.

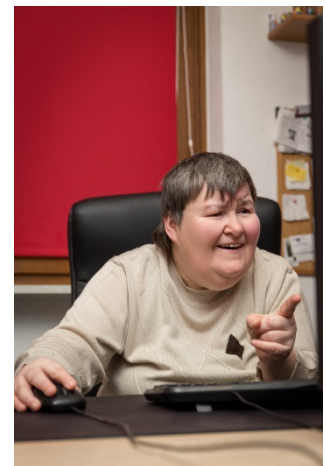
If we cost this at the living wage of £9 annually this gives a figure of £43,524 in kind.

Service User Involvement

In addition to our commitment to becoming a DPULO so the voice of disabled people runs throughout the organisation at all levels, we also ensure that all staff and volunteers are made aware of the need to maintain a listening and responsive approach and feedback people views to their line manager.

We collect Service Users views in the following way:

- Collecting feedback forms from Service Users of each service.
- Encourage Service Users to attend the Annual General meeting, become volunteers or apply for jobs as they become available and stand for election to the Board
- A volunteer representative attends Board meeting
- Hold focus groups
- Hold consultations on key issues.
- Asking Service Users their views e.g. before applying a charge for Shopmobility services in Macclesfield we consulted the users and other disabled organisations with suggestions. The feedback we gained meant we could introduce a charge



Marketing

At the Disability Information Bureau we target current and potential Service Users through:

- Promotional materials distributed across Cheshire East in (including but not exhaustive) GP surgeries, hospitals and libraries, community centres, care homes, day centres and other organisation.
- Open days and other public events, publicised through press releases to local press and radio;
- Maintaining up to date social media platforms
- Visits to statutory services, community groups and voluntary groups;
- Collaborative working with other groups;
- Maintaining our own web-site;
- Maintaining information on other key web-sites
- Working with other organisations e.g. CABx and CVS
- Corporate pack, to establish relationships with local businesses.

We also make contact with organisational stakeholders (local strategic planners and funders, operational partners) additionally through:

- Inter-agency meetings and networks;
- Occasional news bulletins;
- Information-sharing via e-mail list;
- Sharing impact statistics and feedback from Service Users

We offer promotional materials and information in a variety of accessible formats to suit different needs, and as part of our ongoing business plan will review key promotional items this year giving them a more modern accessible feel.

We have now employed a Fundraiser, and we have already secured NECBA Charity of the Year status.

Financial Control

We employ a finance officer to manage the day-to-day finances and liaise with and reports directly to the Chief Executive Officer and the Board Treasurer. Monthly financial information, accounts and summary are circulated to all Board members and directors who meet bi monthly to discuss and scrutinise the financial implications with the CEO and Treasurer. The accounts are Independently Examined annually by external auditors to meet the requirements of Companies House and Charity Commission standards.

We have an annual budget set by the CEO and Treasurer and a 3 year financial forecast.

Insurance

We have the following insurance, which is regularly reviewed to ensure it meets the needs of the organisation and contractual obligations.

TYPE	LEVEL	Renewal date
Employer's liability	£10m	31.03.20
Public liability	£10m	31.03.20
Professional indemnity	£2m	31.03.20

Quality Standards

We are the current holders of the Charity of the Year Award at the North East Cheshire Business Awards 2018.

We have the Investors in People Quality mark and the Advice Quality Standard (AQS) both National Standards and we hold the STAR standard (designed to show Excellence in Governance in the Voluntary sector).

We hold Disability Confident mark issued by Job Centre Plus. We were shortlisted for Employer of the Year from North West by the Living Wage Foundation in 2015.

We have been successfully audited by Work Programme Prime Avanta (now Peopleplus) in line with the DWP requirements in line with the ISO/IEC 27001 standard.

We have:

- Well qualified staff and volunteers who are inducted and trained in Disability Awareness, Safeguarding, Equality and Diversity and Health and Safety.
- Excellent Opportunities for CPD for staff and volunteers
- Regular Director/team meetings.
- Employment Advisors who have the Employment Related Skills level 3 qualification and tutors qualified to teach in FE.

Our Quality Assurance Policy includes the following processes and tools we use to ensure quality and continuous improvement:

- Self-Assessments Reports and Quality Improvement Plans comprising of evidence from the following:
 - Statistics of results and outcomes
 - Staff and Volunteer Feedback
 - Service User Feedback
 - Equality and Diversity Monitoring
 - Audits and Quality Checks
 - TLO and informal observations
 - Service Users complaint
 - Safeguarding, Health and Safety and Equality and Diversity
- Feedback from Stakeholders

Our Management and supervision policies ensure that all staff have appropriate supervision with their line managers on a regular basis.

In our history we have complied and passed all audits, self-assessments and reporting requirements funders have required



Our Legal and Charitable Status

We are the **Disability Information Bureau (DIB)** and are:

- A Registered Company Ltd by Guarantee in England & Wales No. – 6452443
- A Registered Charity No 1124371

Our Registered Address is:

Disability Information Bureau, Pierce St, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK11 6ER

Our Charitable aims are

1. To provide information, support and associated services so that disabled people may lead active and fulfilling lives and participate fully in society
2. To advance education by enabling people with disabilities to become more involved in the process of working towards positive change in the provision of services for disabled people
3. To advance education amongst organisations in the public, private and voluntary sectors to raise awareness, share best practice and increase understanding of the needs of people with disabilities

Our Contact Details

Our Resource centre is Macclesfield open Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm ; and Out-reach is in Congleton at Dane Housing Thursday 10am - 4pm.

Shopmobility, Macclesfield is open Monday to Friday 9:30 – 17:00

We have a general email contact, info@dibservices.org.uk and website www.dibservices.org.uk.



At DIB we offer direct face-to-face interaction on a drop-in basis and also pre-arranged appointments which include general advice enquiries, assistance to complete forms, booking of IT and Employability classes, hiring of wheelchairs and the purchasing of radar keys. We up-date and publish an annual handbook which outlines up-to-date information on Local Disability Related Organisations within Cheshire East.