

International Day of Disabled People 2023

Evaluation Report

February 2024



Transformation, Innovation and Inclusion

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Background

International Day of Disabled People (IDODP) is a Global Day of Recognition created by The United Nations which takes place every year on 3 December. The annual observance of this day aims to promote an understanding of disability issues and mobilise support for dignity, rights and wellbeing of disabled people.

It was launched in 2019 to coincide with the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy that came into being in June that year.

IDODP is recognised by the British Government as an important part of our UK Disability Policy. Our current Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work is Miriam Davies. The principles of IDODP are Celebration, Learning, Optimism and Action.

Since 2019, Forum Central have worked in partnership with The Disability Hub at Leeds City Council to host the 'Leeds for All - International Day of Disabled People'. 2023 saw the event being hosted for its 5th year.

Leeds for All History

The Disability Hub at Leeds City Council worked in partnership with Forum Central to organise the first ever International Day of Disabled People Celebration Event, in Leeds, in December 2019 at Leeds City Museum. The brand name 'Leeds for All' and logo was created.



2019

The theme of 2019 was 'The Future is Accessible'. The event focused on bringing people, organisations and communities together with the aim of celebrating the achievements of disabled people in Leeds.

2020

The team continued celebrations in 2020 during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The Leeds For All event became a week of accessible, online, live and at home activities to keep people with disabilities connected. It created, '**A space for celebration, reflection, connection, acceptance and challenge.**'

2021

In 2021 the week-long celebrations went hybrid and were live streamed from Leeds City Museum as there was a resurgence of COVID-19 at that time which meant people couldn't attend in-person events. The theme was '**Leeds for All - Recovery from COVID-19.**'

2022

2022 saw the IDODP event being scaled down to a one-day event consisting of a Marketplace, mainly due to limited staffing and a need to bring it back to scope. The theme was '**Making Invisible Disabilities Visible**', thus widening inclusivity to neurodivergent and/or autistic people.

Small Grants Activities 2022

The first year that the IDODP Small Grant Funded Activities ran. Micro grants were given to a selection of small community led organisations, to open up new avenues and attract fresh audiences. It helped organisations to achieve both these objectives successfully and the activities ran from December 2022 - January 2023. Eight organisations were involved, and each received £250 each to hold an activity or mini project that was additional to their normal work.



You can read about the highlights of each of the previous four events by scanning the IDODP event reports:



[2022 Report: IDODP Not all Disabilities are Visible](#)



[2021 Report: IDODP Leeds for All Recovery from Covid -19](#)



[2020 Report: IDODP Goes Online](#)



[2019 Report: IDODP The Future is Accessible](#)

Executive Summary

Overall 380 people attended the IDODP Celebration Day on 30 November 2023, which was a great success, not discounting the 28 stallholders and their volunteer helpers. It included a wide variety of people with lived experience from learning disability, sensory impairment and autism support organisations and as individuals, as participating and active citizens of Leeds.

The Small Grant Fund reached 511 people at community-based events that were held around Leeds. These were organised and run by 12 different organisations who were awarded a small grant to contribute to their IDODP celebration activity or event. Further information is in the Small Grants section with evaluation summary.

The two halves of the whole IDODP '23 project therefore influenced and allowed around 900 people to be included in its extended pan-disability scope which for a one-off annual project shows valuable and extensive results with collaborative and partnership building spinoffs that collaboration vs working in silos brings.

The far-reaching vision of IDODP combines fully with that of the Better Lives Strategy to 'support every person to live in a place they call home with people and things they love, in communities that look out for one another, doing the things they love'.

The IDODP Celebrations Day combined with the Small Grant Funded Activities supported organisations to reach new audiences, network, build new partnerships and strengthen old ones. It allowed people to:

- Access relevant information and services.
- Look at their current and future wellbeing and try new activities.
- Connect in-person with 'thriving communities' and join in or join up.



Photos used in this report are all from the IDODP 2023 event.

With thanks to Cheryl Ferris-Stewart for many, but not all, of the photos.

IDODP '23 not only provided a focus for community engagement but also supported getting people's voices heard and influencing change.

The Disability Hub

The annual IDODP Marketplace event has a large reach, and is an important place outside of The Disability Hub meetings where direct engagement can happen between Leeds City Council and disabled people. The Disability Hub works with organisations and speaks directly with disabled people to get their views on how the Council can make Leeds a more inclusive city across all aspects of their services.

The support and promotion of third sector activities by enabling and facilitating such key annual events is a priority of the Equality team and something which they seek to do across all protected characteristics. As well as this, the IDODP Celebrations link into key strands of Leeds City Council strategies such as the Best City Ambition and Better Lives Strategy.

It also increases public awareness of the contributions the Council makes to the disabled infrastructure in Leeds.

It is a significant partnership event for the Equality team, Forum Central; its members and members of the Leeds for All steering group. The Disability Hub supports third sector partners in organising the IDODP Celebrations with input from the steering group.

The Leeds for All Team

The ethos of the Leeds for All team and steering group in 2023 was to be innovative, creative, and to foster a learning culture where co-production and co-design were central to project planning. For example, the two new Mini-Highlights videos that were produced extend the range of scope for post events engagement by allowing people to view and listen to summaries of IDODP '23. Both videos are Audio Described to be accessible for blind and visually impaired people. This has been a learning curve and helps demonstrate best practice in the pursuit of accessibility for the Disability Hub and Forum Central going forwards.

Delivering to the theme of 'Transformation, Inclusion, Innovation' in turn allowed us all to work together to try new approaches and ideas, which are evident in the overall success and reach of 2023 and associated positive feedback.



Highlights Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RdM0hTQ1cxw>

Audio Described Highlights video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RdM0hTQ1cxw>

'Transformation, Inclusion, Innovation'



Event Summary: IDODP 2023

This Leeds for All IDODP event happened for the 5th year in succession, giving it the feel of an established programme, again held at Leeds City Museum. The theme of 2023 was 'Transformation, Inclusion and Innovation'. The main thrust of the event was for it to be larger in terms of more stallholders, more activities, greater public attendance and a greater cross-sector Marketplace.

This event also had the addition of facilitated and accessible activities run by Yorkshire Cricket, Active Leeds, Yorkshire Dance and The Feel Good Circus. The activities gave the event a more holistic and vibrant feel as attendees could take part and interact with each other. The IDODP marketplace and activities were free to attend. Attendees did not have to go through a booking process. People coming to the Celebrations Day came in and stayed for as long as they wanted, using the space for networking, socialising and learning about new organisations.

This year there was an intersectional approach to the organisation of the event under the theme of 'Transformation, Inclusion and Innovation'.

Funding and Figures

Leeds City Council Contributions

A generous contribution of £3450 MICE funding from Councillors representing wards across Leeds was provided for IDODP.

MICE provides an allocation of funds for locally determined projects to be used for qualifying proposals by Ward Members. The MICE funding for IDODP was provided with contributions from 24 councillors which supported the small grants scheme that funded 12 projects.

The Adults and Health Directorate at Leeds City Council contributed £1,000 for the IDODP marketplace event in the Museum which included support with costs for performances and interactive activities on the day.

The Children and Families Directorate contributed £350 towards speakers fees and performance activities. Both Directorates were keen to show their support for IDODP given their important work to support disabled people across Leeds through their services.

The Leeds City Council Equality team also contributed £1,000 towards the overall costs for the event including an 'IDODP event arch' for the stage area which will be used for the event in future years.

Thanks to the generous contributions of Elected Members the small grant funded model has also given participating organisations enough capacity to run additional and very successful community-based activities around IDODP in both 2022 and 2023.

Forum Central contributions

Dedicated planning, administration, design, coordination of the IDODP event and grants was delivered by Forum Central. The Forum Central Partnership contract covers the staff team members responsible for the successful running of this event. Volition is the Forum Central Partner organisation and registered charity which is the employer of the four staff members whose involvement was worked out to be the equivalent to £3,500 in terms of staff resource.

Disability Hub Contributions

The Disability Hub is one of the Council’s Equality Hubs. It supports Council engagement with a wide range of Leeds citizens so they can feed into the decisions it makes. Leeds City Council Equality team staff members contributed to the preparations and promotion of the event, as well offering support on the day.



Event Activity and Delivery

Steering Group

The Leeds for All team recruited a steering group, by inviting a range of organisations, each with a focus on a different impairment or condition, to volunteer. Steering group meetings took place once a month from June till November, for 1-2 hours. The steering group had 10 members from both third sector organisations and the Disability Hub at Leeds City Council. Steering group members helped input on activities, layout, accessibility and with the promotion of the event. It illustrated a cross-sector and pan-disability approach with organisations representing support and activities, offered by and for, people with both visible and invisible disabilities, people with learning disabilities and/or autistic people.

The steering group did not partake in the grant panel for the Small Grants Fund. This was so that they could also apply for the funds if desired, and not be excluded by conflict of interest.

Stallholder Information

Stallholder Virtual Information Session

An information session for stall holders was held 14 days before the event so that room layout, arrival/departure times and other necessary information could be given to the people hosting stalls on the day. It included a Q&A session where stallholders could clarify anything they needed to, this resulted in a problem free set up and smooth running of the marketplace on the day. 16 stallholders attended the briefing session.

Stallholder Information Pack

This was emailed out to all stallholders after the information session. It included the following:

- IDODP poster and social media flyer
- Broderick Hall Stalls layout
- [Programme of the day](#)
- [Event Access Guide](#)
- [Venue Access Video](#)

Stallholders were asked to contribute to promotion in the run up to the event.



Accessibility

Venue Tour Access Video

Our learning disability team made a visit to the museum to create an accessibility video, with subtitles. This showed where the various entry/exit points were to the building, where activities were located, how to use the lift, and where accessible and changing places toilets were located too.

The video can be viewed on YouTube: [IDODP 2023 Access Tour of Leeds City Museum](#). It got 120 views and 4 likes (as of January 2024)

It proved to be a very positive aid according to attendee feedback.

Feedback from Kenneth at Asking You!:

"I think that video is amazing, great idea to show everybody where the lifts are before they get there, where the ramp is and how to access everything before they get there, I think that's brilliant!"

Sight Guides

Forum Central held a training session prior to the event so that on the day there were 4 Sight Guides present at the marketplace to be on hand if needed. Staff also wore Hi-Viz gilets to make them visible to anyone who wanted help or information during the day. All volunteers had attended an in-house information session and a health and safety talk at Forum Central as part of their training.

BSL Interpreters

This year because we had both a marketplace event and activities, we had 2 interpreters from Leeds City Council who provided adequate support for the Opening Speeches, the Well-being Session for the Deaf community and for any individual requests in support for networking. The BSL Interpreters were identified to people at the start of the event and were visible throughout the day to support both the marketplace and the Adapted Activities.

Easy Read Programme and Welcome Table

An [Easy Read programme](#) was produced and shared to explain what was happening at the event, including who the speakers were, and where and when activities were taking place. Hardcopies of the easy read programme were available for attendees who needed them at the Forum Central/Leeds Disability Hub welcome table.

The welcome table also provided handouts/leaflets from disability led organisations on health, transport, and employment initiatives.

Further considerations

Risk Assessment

A thorough listing of all activities and stall holders was compiled which clarified to organisers details of the space in the main hall and illustrated what stallholders were intending to do on the day.

Room Layout – Map

There were 3 large scale A3 printouts of the Broderick Hall layout showing where each organisation’s stall was located for people to refer to.

Feedback Post box

A red and gold post box (cardboard) was positioned by the Broderick Hall main doors and the welcome desk and captured valuable feedback from attendees. We asked how the content of the day and their interactions with organisations and activities had inspired them or influenced them to connect with new organisations. And if it had inspired or enabled them to try something new to add to their daily routines or changed their outlook on improving their wellbeing and social connections. Further information about event feedback can be found in the data analysis section of this report.

Signage

The museum is a multi-level venue with many steps and every attempt was made to make accessing the different activities in the museum as easy as possible. Large arrows and directions were posted at strategic points and museum Visitor Assistants and Forum Central Volunteer Staff (wearing hi-vis jackets) were placed along corridors, at entry and exit points, downstairs and in the main hall.



Communications and Marketing

Brand Development

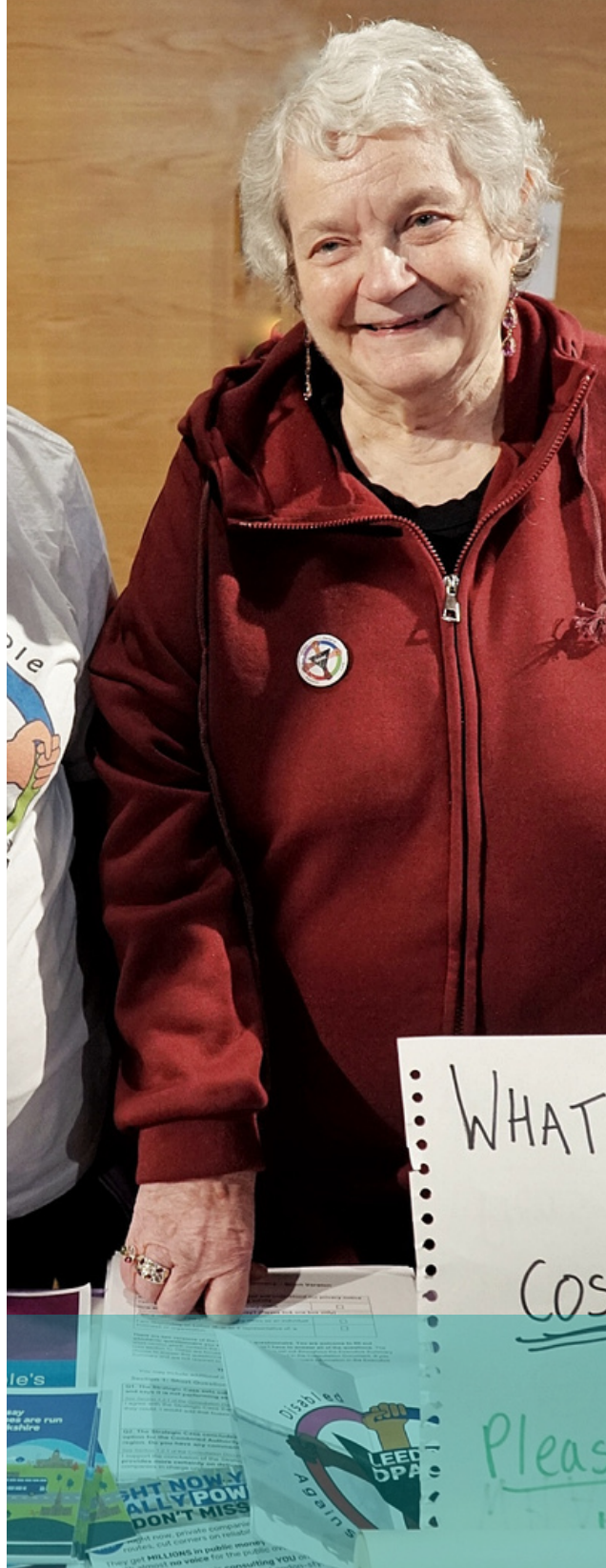
This year the branding of IDODP was developed to give it a more up to date look and feel. Introduction of the teal colour was done a combination of the Forum Central specialism colours of cyan for Learning Disability and green for Physical Sensory Impairment (PSI) to reflect the cross-specialism approach of this event. It is also part of Leeds City Council's colour palette.

Promotion

The event and small grants fund was promoted widely by Forum Central and Leeds Disability Hub through direct email, online via social media (Facebook and Twitter) and on the websites of Forum Central, Doing Good Leeds, Eventbrite, Leeds Inspired and Leeds City Museum. Posters were displayed at venues and workplaces around the city centre. The Forum Central team shared it by word of mouth at Network meetings and with contacts, as well as via a direct calendar invite. Stall holder organisations were also encouraged to promote the event to their service users and people they support.

The guest speakers and activities were a fantastic promotional tool and were highlighted as key reasons to come along. As was the fact that it is a free event with Quiet sensory room and BSL interpreters.

This event brings organisations, partners, commissioners and funders together as a leading community event and was promoted as such.



The following assets were produced and shared as part of a communications plan:

- Press release circulated to local and regional media contacts.
- A4 poster available for organisations to download for display in their offices and venues, and hand delivered to some locations.
- Social media graphics shared on Forum Central and Disability Hub accounts and available for organisations to download for use.



- Email signature added to all of the Forum Central staff members' email signatures to ensure the event's recognition by member and partner organisations.



All of the resources and information about the day, including links to youtube, were available on the IDODP 2023 webpage on the Forum Central website.

Facebook Activity

Several posts were shared on [facebook](#) in the run up to the event. A small-scale targeted ad with a budget of £8.00 was used to boost the event post on Facebook. This was useful because the organic reach of Facebook is limited. It reached 706 people, 25 people responded that they were interested and 10 people said 'going'.

X (formerly Twitter) Activity

X (formerly Twitter) is Forum Central's main social media channel. Our audience consists of mainly third sector organisations and employees. 16 posts were made on the Forum Central account in November to promote the event which generated a lot of interest. The Disability Hub and Stallholder organisations were also actively posting on X about the IDODP event in the run up.

Three Forum Central posts on the day totalled 1968 impressions and 163 engagements. The highest achieving post was of a quote and photo of Jodie Boyd-Ward speaking at the event, which has been seen by 953 people (impressions) and received 62 engagements; 8 of which were retweets and 32 were likes. It read:

"Leeds is my city, this is my home now... It doesn't matter what barriers you think are in the way - there is a right outlet for you and Leeds has been amazing in helping me find mine"

Great to hear from Jodie Boyd Ward - her story and how sport has been her saviour #IDODP2023"



"Leeds is my city, this is my home now... It doesn't matter what barriers you think are in the way - there is a right outlet for you and Leeds has been amazing in helping me find mine"

Great to hear from Jodie Boyd Ward - her story and how sport has been her saviourer #IDODP2023



11:29 am · 30 Nov 2023 · 953 Views

Activity Alliance, the provider of the table ping pong activity, posted:

"It's great to be a part of today's International Day of Disabled People event in Leeds.

We're here alongside organisations from across West Yorkshire sharing the work we do to close the activity fairness gap. #LeedsForAll"



The Marketplace

Councillor Kevin Ritchie: *"I thought the day was excellent, the programme varied and interesting. The joy of the participants downstairs during the various activities was a pleasure to see. The range of stalls and quality of information was first class too"*

The Marketplace had 29 stalls which were hosted by organisations from the third and public sector. See the full [list of stallholders and information about their organisations](#). The demand from organisations requesting stalls was high this year and we had to operate a waiting list. There were 10 organisations on the list, but pleasantly, no organisations dropped out on the day of the event.

The range of organisations ensured various disabilities could be represented and provided a variety of engagement opportunities, which gave the Marketplace a good buzz and ensured it was well attended throughout the day.

Stalls were planned out around the room and grouped together with a learning disability and a physical and sensory impairment theme to make the hall more accessible and to make it easier for organisations to network as well. This resulted in initial conversations and possible new partnerships being made. People were able to meet and share useful information about services, activities, groups, and support options that their organisations offer.

Stall holders



Association of Blind Asians (ABA)

Dedicated to providing advocacy and support for the blind BAME community

**The
Advonet
Group**

Providing Independent Advocacy

Advonet

Providing statutory and community advocacy and related services that promote empowerment and inclusion



ASCENDANCE.ORG.UK

Ascendance

A creative charity dedicated to health and well-being, offering dance classes and performance opportunities that are inclusive for all.



Aspire

The primary aim of the service is to reduce the duration of untreated psychosis and support recovery, positive mental health and wellbeing for all service users



Being You

Being You Leeds provides groups, activities and training and awareness sessions for community wellbeing across Leeds.



CHANGE

CHANGE is a Learning Disability Rights charity and part of the Advonet Group, a leader in Advocacy services in Leeds



DeafBlind UK

Deafblind UK helps people who are deafblind to live with their condition and to build their confidence and independence.



Deaf EXperience (DEX)

DEX is a charity which campaigns nationally to improve access to education, wellbeing and quality of life for deaf and hard of hearing young people.



Disabled People Against Cuts (PPAC)

DPAC is an organisation based in the United Kingdom for disabled people and allies to campaign against the impact of government spending cuts on the lives of disabled people.



Hollybush

Hollybush in Kirkstall is an environmental volunteering centre. Our volunteers help to manage green spaces across Leeds and beyond. We welcome people of all backgrounds and experience.



Leeds Autism Services

LAS is a charity dedicated to creating a more autism friendly society by promoting understanding and acceptance of autistic people.



Leeds Disabled People's Organisation (LDPO)

LDPO believes in striving to create a safe and accessible space that empowers and connects all disabled people to come together, to connect socially, discuss disabling social barriers and build connections with each other in the city of Leeds.



Leeds Health Awareness

Leeds based community programme helping to raise awareness of and prevent long-term conditions across Leeds.



Leeds Hearing and Sight Loss Service

Providing a comprehensive range of specialist support services for Leeds residents aged 16+ who are deaf, hard of hearing, sight impaired, severely sight impaired or deafblind.



Leeds Involving People (LIP)

LIP represents the independent voice of people through the promotion of effective involvement. We involve the community in the development of health, social care and community services by ensuring their opinions and concerns are at the centre of decision making processes.



Leeds Society of Deaf and Blind People

Our single objective has been to respond to the expressed needs and aspirations of Deaf, hard of hearing, DeafBlind, Blind and partially sighted people in Leeds.



Leeds York Partnership Foundation Trust (LYPFT)

Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust is the main provider of specialist mental health and learning disability services in Leeds. We also provide specialist services across York, the Yorkshire and Humber region, and some highly specialised national services.



Linking Leeds

The Linking Leeds Social Prescribing service operates out of Community Links with a consortium of local partners deliver the service. We work alongside Leeds City Council and Leeds GP Confederation.



Mindwell

MindWell is the mental health website for adults in Leeds. It's funded to bring together information from the NHS, Leeds City Council and the third sector into one 'go to' place.



outside the box
MORE THAN JUST A CAFE
Registered charity 10206

Outside the Box

This charity is dedicated to community action, supporting people who have a learning disability and to re-investing any profits we make back into our local community.



People in Action

We work with learning disabled and autistic people to support happy, healthy and independent lives.



People Matters

We create opportunities for people with learning disabilities and other hidden disabilities who experience disadvantage to be more independent and ensuring that each person's needs are met



Purple Patch Arts

We exist to provide innovative, inclusive, creative learning opportunities that improve the lives of learning-disabled and autistic adults by expanding their understanding and engagement with the world.



Pyramid of Arts

Our goal is to help people with a learning disability to discover the arts and to develop their talents to become world-class artists. We also disrupt the social and institutional barriers that prevent them from being recognised, supported and celebrated.



Special Autism Services (SAS)

Specialist Autism Services delivers a strengths based Autism specific personalised learning programme, to develop social, communication and employment skills which empower our members to engage with new opportunities, make informed choices, achieve their goals, maximising independence and inclusion.



Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB)

We are leading the creation of an accessible world. A world where everyone can participate equally is a better world for everyone.



Through the Maze

Through the Maze is an information and signposting service in Leeds for adults with learning disabilities, family carers and professionals.



West Yorkshire Combined Authority (YWCA)

We work across West Yorkshire to develop and deliver policies, programmes and services which directly benefit the people of West Yorkshire



William Merritt Centre

We offer impartial advice and assessments for people of all ages living with a disability or long-term condition to help them achieve greater independence and fulfilment.

Interactive Stalls

This year's theme also included innovation. Many stallholders provided interactive elements to their stalls. Here are some examples:

MindWell's Give a Hoot Campaign held a creative wellbeing station where people with disabilities made 36 owls with a focus on their hopes, dreams and expectations for the future of Leeds. The owls will be displayed during April and May at Leeds Playhouse as part of the Mindwell 1001 Stories event.

RNIB and Leeds BID had interactive equipment on their stalls for attendees to try out and experience which proved popular and aided conversation.

Pyramid of Arts also held an activity on their stall making Pyramites, which attracted high levels of participation. A stop motion video was produced from people's figurine creations.



Illustrations

Tom Bailey, a Leeds artist, sketched 14 cartoons about the aims of people with lived experience when he asked individuals the question: 'What is important to you?' He then listened to them and drew the sketches on an iPad which connected as large scale visuals on the 3 ceiling mounted screens in the Broderick Hall Marketplace.

The results were impressive and gave people a chance to look at what others were saying in a visual format, more understandable and more immediate.

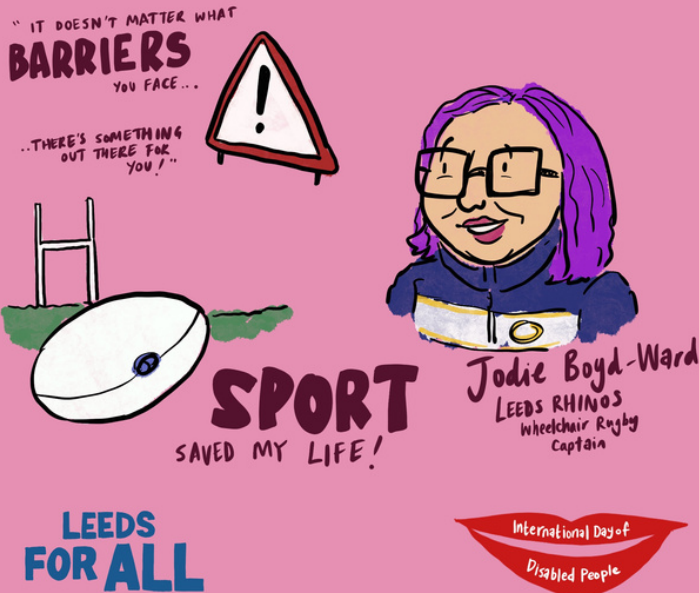
Topics that were important to people in their lives covered:

- Being employed and being able to work from home.
- Having BSL translation where and when needed.
- Having access to easily digested information.
- Being accepted and listened to - having a voice.
- Engaging in sport and being able to access paths and parks.
- Having friends and keeping pets.

"WHAT'S **IMPORTANT** TO US?"



"WHAT'S **IMPORTANT** TO US?"



"WHAT'S **IMPORTANT** TO US?"



"WHAT'S **IMPORTANT** TO US?"



"WHAT'S **IMPORTANT** TO US?"



Being accepted in more inclusive communities and a more inclusive society were the takeaways. It was great for people to see this instant artwork as it built a visual account of the day for those with lived experience.

The sketches will be used in further event publicity and campaign work. Unfortunately, the sketches weren't accessible to people with visual impairments at the event. An action for future events is to make any visuals accessible by audio means also.

SignHealth Wellbeing Workshop

A wellbeing workshop run by Sign Health for the Deaf community was held in the Marketplace area at lunchtime. It was delivered in BSL by Sarla Meisuria, founder of Deaf Options, and founder of the first Asian Women's Deaf Association in 1992. The presentation covered mental health and self-care for the deaf community. It was well-attended by approx 10 individuals and received positive feedback.

[Watch Youtube video of participant feedback in BSL](#)

BSL Feedback

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I5_3Qak8c-Q



Guest Speakers

The event was officially opened by The Lord Mayor of Leeds, Al Garthwaite. Further to this, we had opening guest speeches from Geoff Turnbull, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager from the Leeds City Council Equality Team, and Councillor Kevin Ritchie, Disability Champion and Lead member for the Leeds Disability Hub.

The event also had two motivational guest speakers with lived experience of physical disabilities this year who had championed themselves in local outdoor disability sports. They were Jodie Boyd Ward, Captain of Leeds Rhinos Wheelchair Rugby Team and Craig Crimes, Director of Experience Community CIC which enables wheelchair users to access the countryside and advocate for inclusive pathways.



Facilitated Activities

Activities were held in a large downstairs room in the Museum called the Thoresby Room and included drop-in sessions run by local organisations who specialise in facilitating adapted movement and sports. They were held by:

- Ross from Active Leeds - table ping-pong (21 attendees)
- Shakil from Yorkshire Cricket - table cricket (14 attendees)
- Ione from Yorkshire Dance - free movement (34 attendees)
- Jem from The Feel Good Circus - circus skills (28 attendees)

All activities were adapted to be accessible for disabled people. Each activity was popular and well attended. Anyone could attend any of the sessions, the only stipulation being that if you normally had a PA attend class with you, then people were asked to do the same for the activities at IDODP. People were notified in advance of this which worked well.





Sensory / Quiet Room

The sensory/quiet room was a space for anyone to use but was implemented after feedback from autistic people/organisations the previous year. The room was run by Leeds Autism Services and some of the sensory items were provided by Leeds City Museum, so that anyone requiring space and silence could go there and interact with the environment of coloured lights, a darkened room, and light censored toys. It was also well attended, it saw 35 people use the room throughout the day and its inclusion in the 2023 programme was based on attendee feedback from 2022.

The Small Grants Programme

The small grants fund was run for the second year and featured returners from 2022 as well as new groups representing both people with Physical and Sensory Impairments and Learning Disabilities. Applicants were chosen by a panel (Forum Central and The Disability Hub) that kept their activities close to the theme of Transformation, Inclusion and Innovation. Applicants could apply for up to £350.

- Total number of applicants: 27
- Number of successful applicant organisations: 12
- Total number of participants included over the whole of the 12 activities: 511

Advertising and Selection

The Small Grants Fund was advertised broadly across the sector throughout September 2023 using Forum Central and The Disability Hub's websites and Forum Central Member Networks. A final deadline for receipt of applications was set for 8th October 2023. All completed applications went to the Disability Hub to be collated and the Grants Panel then met on 30th October 2023 to decide on which applications were successful in getting funding. Grants up to a max of £350 were allocated and the organisations were informed by the end of the first week in November 2023 as to whether they had been successful or not.

Successful organisations were chosen according to whether they fulfilled the IDODP 2023 themes of Transformation, Innovation and Inclusion.

Two of the Small Grant Funded Activities took part in the IDODP Marketplace Day. They were the Leeds Bereavement Forum Death Cafe in the museum cafe and DEX Ltd who had a marketplace stall with their Wheel of Fortune activity.





People in Action also held their Leeds Talent show after the IDODP event on that evening making it a full day of celebrations in Leeds.

The Small Grants contribution provided BSL captioning on their Leeds Talent live stream video:

[Leeds Talent - Youtube video link](#)

The majority of the other Grant Funded Activities were held throughout Leeds during December 2023 and January 2024 by organisations at their bases, with Forum Central or Leeds Disability Hub visiting to experience the activities and join in where possible.



Small Grants Fund Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yw7i7IgwFl8>

Audio Described Small Grants Fund video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l5e7Mzz1dQw>

Summary of Small Grant Funded Organisations

Canal Connections CIC

An inclusive social project, bringing nature and awareness of local waterways to communities and groups. Grant money spent on Happy Wednesdays Project.

This project aimed at people with learning difficulties and other disabilities: taking them out on a canal boat, offering them the chance to get out and about, combating social isolation and improving on valuable life skills. We also aim to provide and promote the chance to engage with the wider community and improve the health and wellbeing of participants.

Craft Conscious Café CIC

The group is for people with disabilities and chronic illness including those who want support with their mental health. Art and craft activities are used to improve wellbeing and provide a supportive and safe space to share lived experiences. They help people feel less isolated, learn about resources that can enhance physical and mental wellbeing and challenge any learned behaviour.

They had a hybrid meeting in January using art and craft activities and discussion to explore how disabilities and chronic illness have changed and affected their lives, and to discuss resources. Discussion was around 'triggering activities' in daily life and what changes people could implement. Hybrid meetings are good for people who don't feel well enough to attend in person so they can join in the arts sessions without being seen by other members.

DEX Ltd.

Deaf Experience Limited is a charity that supports deaf young people between the ages of 11 > 30 years to meet each other and share their deaf experience.

DEX bought a dry-wipe 'wheel of fortune', to initially use on their IDODP Marketplace Stall. Participants won prizes, DEX stickers and info leaflets in a recyclable paper bag. The interactive nature of the game acted as a quick ice-breaker and supported lots of attendees to have the confidence to come over to speak to facilitators.

Different relevant questions can be written on the board depending on the outreach activity, all questions will be related to the barriers deaf young people face and will ask for their input about how they can be overcome. Information will be collated using pictures, video clips and quotes to share during and after the event to celebrate the contributions of deaf young people.

GFS Community Enterprise

The Old Fire Station in Gipton is a thriving community hub. A space where people can come to access support, socialise and have fun. Providing opportunity for children and young people, adults and older people to maximise their potential to improve their well-being and quality of life under one roof.

Their Open Day which was held in January was an interactive and informative celebration of disabled people in East Leeds. It brought together local organisations that support those with additional needs, from fun adapted sports and crafts to practical everyday help. Communities took part in fun activities and raised awareness of services available to them in the area. There were speeches and refreshments too.

Harehills Park Bowling Club

In late December the club showcased their adapted equipment with demos for people with disabilities. But the main feature this year was to hold their newly invented Black-Out Bowls Tournament that provided an opportunity for people with visual impairments to play alongside other members. It proved to be a very successful initial event that the club is going to develop more widely around the national bowling circuit. Refreshments were provided by the club.

Leeds Bereavement Forum

This is a small charity, which works to develop and improve bereavement services in the city by signposting service users, providing training, information and events to support professional development and identifying any gaps in bereavement support. Leeds Bereavement Forum campaigns to help people talk more openly about dying, death and bereavement and to make end of life plans. It also works in partnership with Dying Matters.

They held a Death Café at the IDODP marketplace event where people gathered to eat cake, drink tea and discuss death. Death Cafés are an international movement dedicated to encouraging discussion about death and dying in a relaxed environment. It was a welcome opportunity to ask any awkward questions people wanted to ask.

Leeds United Foundation

Supports young people aged 8 - 16 years old with mixed disabilities including amputees, Cerebral Palsy, ADHD and Autism. Many of them can't access basic mainstream football and some have had negative experiences with other teams.

The group meet once a week for an hour-long football session where they can enjoy playing football in an inclusive environment without judgement or barriers.

The sessions were held at LU training grounds at Thorp Arch with current players showcasing skills in a coaching session demonstrating how consideration and innovation can make sport accessible for all.

Children with disabilities from local schools and community groups were invited to train with players to encourage them and build confidence. There were little challenge stations to highlight the obstacles people with disabilities face daily. Players told real life stories to show the positive change to their confidence and ability since attending the sessions.

Macular Support Group Leeds

A small group local to Crossgates which gives social support and information about central vision loss for people 65+ years old. They meet on the 1st Monday of every month and invite guest speakers to give ideas and share innovation around the latest developments to help members with visual issues. It also helps prevent social isolation for older people with visual impairments.

The Christmas Macular Spectacular – a special Christmas social with seasonal refreshments was held in December. There was a demo of shopping and delivery robots by a local firm. There was also a Secret Santa with gifts and raffle for party goers, their carers and family members. Travel expenses were met for people coming to the event as transport costs can be the overriding issues for non-attendance.

People in Action

This is a charity supporting learning disabled and autistic people to live happy, healthy and well-connected lives. They offer one-to-one support, as well as learning courses and social groups.

The grant was spent on providing live captions for their show 'Leeds Talent' that took place on the Leeds for All IDODP Marketplace Celebrations Day. The captions made the livestream accessible to the live audience but was also available via a QR code.

Leeds Talent is an annual fixture in the learning disability and autism sector, and every year it gets a little bigger. In the past it has always been a part of Learning Disability Week, but in 2023 it was part of the city's IDODP celebrations. Until now we have not had any specific support for people with sensory impairments. Including captions in the 2023 show helped us to improve its accessibility, making it something for everyone!

Spider-Y The Home Of Wheelchair Sports In Leeds

Spider-Y runs wheelchair basketball and other disability sports in Leeds and enables disabled young people, with their friends and relatives, to enjoy and to benefit from involvement in appropriate sports. It promotes opportunities for people with disabilities to enjoy participating in sport locally, nationally and internationally. Our wheelchair basketball team (Leeds Spiders) is based at Morley Leisure Centre and has helped people with disabilities in Leeds participate - in total more than 20 of our grassroots players have gone on to represent their country in disability sport.

In late November we hosted a 3-hour wheelchair basketball 'try out' session for new people. There was also a full wheelchair basketball game demo by Leeds Spiders Wheelchair Basketball Club. The club's chairman gave a talk on the barriers people with disabilities face in daily life and provided advice for people with a disability to gain employment and stay in work.

Swarthmore Education Centre

Swarthmore is a centre for lifelong learning, who works with many different groups of people and strive to make education accessible for all. They hold regular workshops and courses in the centre and also deliver accredited courses here.

They delivered a 4 hour long print session which was open to all. It was held in their accessible café space (open to the public as well as Swarthmore users).

There was a variety of pre prepared lino blocks which participants used to make their own print, greetings card or gift tags. There were also easy safe print tiles on which people designed their own patterns and motifs. The session was drop in so anyone could leave at any point they wanted to or use the café facilities and come back.

As the event was held in the café there was space for people to freely move around, sit down and chat – so the session included a social element too, it also allowed time for prints to dry before taking home. Staff were on hand to chat to visitors and new people and talked to them about Swarthmore facilities and services too.

YAMSEN: SpeciallyMusic: Yorkshire Association for Music and Special Educational Needs

This charity provides and promotes high quality musical activities and tuition for adults and children with a wide range of additional needs. They recognise the contribution that music plays in people's lives, especially for those with difficulties and disabilities.

They offer choirs for those with learning difficulties, deliver music and multisensory projects and organise CPD workshops for people who work with participants. Members belong to music organisations like Music Mark, MEC and Making Music. They work in partnership with Aspire CBS to ensure that their participants also have the opportunity to take part in musical activities. (45 regular Aspire customers each year)

The grant money was used to cover transport costs of minibuses and taxis to their 3 Christmas Choral Events. In 2023 the cost of minibuses increased significantly, and they weren't able to cover transport costs for these 3 very popular events. The events gave opportunities for choir members to perform in public, transformative for them in raising self-esteem and confidence with excellent feedback from audiences. The events further supported inclusion in the community. This included the Christmas Fair at Hillside, the Christmas Tree Festival at St Matthews Church (Chapel Allerton) and the annual Christmas Concert at Pudsey Town Hall.

Evaluation of Small Grant Funded Activities

Each participating organisation was asked to fill in an individual Evaluation Form which was read by all partners at Leeds for All. They were asked about the following points:

- Lessons learned from holding the event.
- Steps they will take as a result of being part of the scheme.
- Whether or not they used Social Media.
- If they would like further connection with Forum Central (if not already).

A Summary Chart of Completed Activities was then drawn up in which organisations fed back on all four points listed.



Feedback

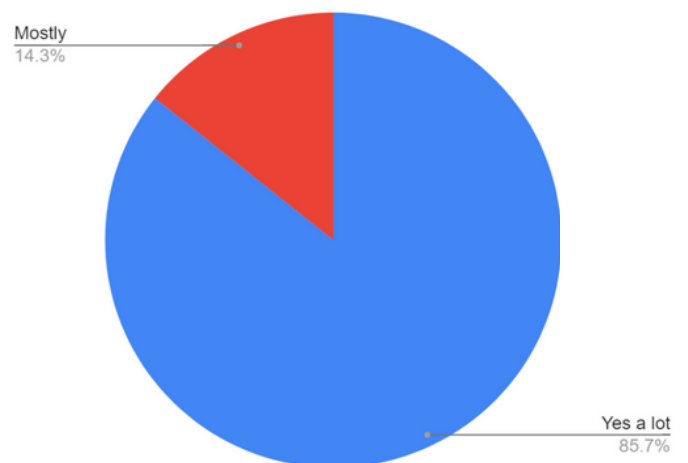
People attending the Leeds for All IDODP 2023 event and stall holders had the opportunity to feedback formally in the following ways: in person posting of an Easy Read feedback form and a digital version of the feedback form. Some people attending the event, including Forum Central member organisations and partner organisations chose to give feedback informally via email, after attending the event.

We received feedback formally from 36 attendees and 13 informally via email. Please see the data analysis below, for an overview of what went well and what could be better for future IDODP events.

Quantitative Data

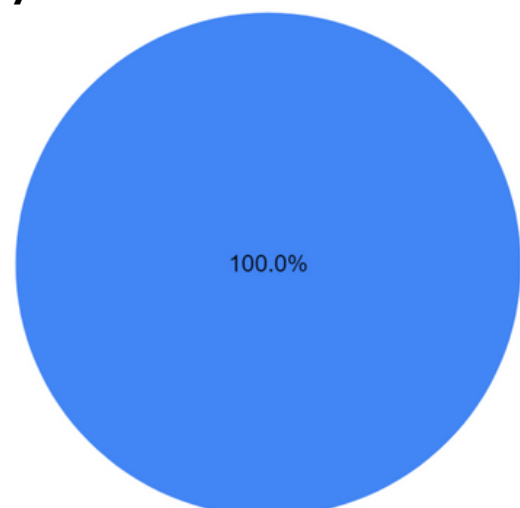
The feedback form asked attendees, “did you enjoy the event today?”. 35 of the 36 respondents answered this question, with 85.7% responding with “yes, a lot”, 14.3% responding with “mostly” and none reporting “a little bit” or “no”.

Figure 1: Did you enjoy the event today?



Attendees were asked “was the event accessible for you?”. 36 attendees answered this question and 100% said yes.

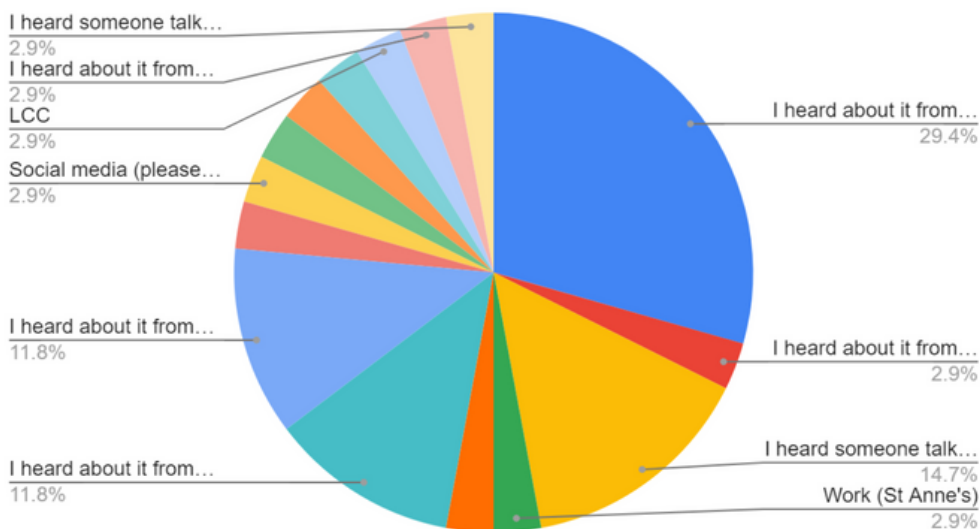
Figure 2: Was this event accessible for you?



Attendees were asked in follow up to this question, “if no, please tell us what to improve”. After selecting no, the attendee responded with: “but the steps could be a problem for many people”.

Attendees were asked "how did you find out about this event?". 34 of the 36 respondents answered this question. The majority of attendees heard about the event via Forum Central (44.1%). 20.6% of attendees heard about it from another charity/organisation, 17.6% heard about it from Leeds City Council, 17.6% heard about it from someone talking about it and the following methods of recruitment were all averaged at 2.9%; social media, poster, email from equality department LCC, work (St Annes), google neurodiverse events, colleague, blank entry submitted, LCC, Leeds Sensory Service.

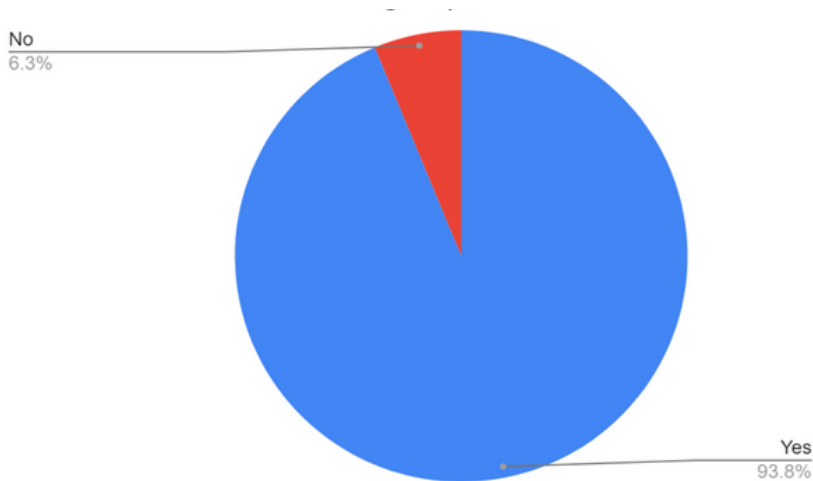
Figure 3: How did you find out about this event?



Attendees were asked "has this event made you think more about your wellbeing and how to connect with other groups?". 32 of the 36 respondents answered this question. 93.8% of attendees responded with "yes" and 6.3% attendees responded with "no".

Attendees were asked in a follow up question, to please expand on this answer. 21 attendees answered this question. The findings are included in the qualitative data section.

Figure 4: Has this event made you think more about your wellbeing and how to connect with other groups?"



Qualitative Data

“What did you like about Leeds for All 2023?”

35 of the 36 attendees responded. Attendees reported that there was a range of activities, opportunities to network, well organised, the event was informative and brought the community together. The quotes below illustrate some of the examples.

Attendees reported:

“This has developed so much since last year, very engaging!”

“It was a truly inclusive event that had a lot to offer the community of Leeds with options for using services and engagement. It also gave us the opportunity, as a charity, to share our services and make links to other charity groups who we could work with.”

“The variety of stallholders and the speeches. Great networking opportunities and felt very inclusive and like a community.”

“Lots of attendees throughout the day, we got a lot of enquiries. We also made some great connections with other stall holders.”

“The variety of services that were there, meeting a variety of different people and being able to network with other agencies.”

“Friendly people - well organised, lots of info!”

“Very informative! Really enjoyed the varied info and Mindwell making an origami owl :)”



“What did you not like about Leeds for All 2023?”

25 of the 36 respondents answered this question. The feedback will be used to improve future Leeds for All events.

This feedback highlighted a gap, in particular around accessibility for those with a hearing and/or sight/sensory impairment. The Leeds for All planning team has highlighted this too and will aim to work more closely with organisations working with this community, to improve access for future years. Forum Central provided staff who were trained as ‘sight guides’ but better identification of those people is needed for future years. The Leeds for All planning team also provided two British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters for the entire day, but this was considered not sufficient, either due to the number of people who used BSL or the lack of signposting to available BSL interpreters/how to request translation.

The planning team has also highlighted, along with feedback from previous years, around the ‘echo’ that exists in the Broderick Hall, due to the shape of the room. This can be difficult for many people. The layout of the museum itself on multi floor levels does not benefit movement especially for wheelchair users or those with a visual impairment – a single level and more accessible location would be preferable for future events with a mixed/pan disability focus.

A final, key improvement for next year, will be to improve access to stalls. Some respondents noted that whilst the layout of the room was better than the previous years there were still improvements to be made, to allow more space for people to look at stalls.



Please note, 5 of the respondents reported “nothing”.

Comments from attendees:

“Hard to navigate the stalls as sight impaired.”

“The venue is quite echoey.”

“Can be a bit difficult to access some stalls.”

“I hope to get more BSL interpreters next year”.

“Acoustics in the hall made it hard to hear the speeches.”

“Layout of the marketplace could have been a little more spread-out and less claustrophobic.”

“It was very echoey in parts and hard to hear the speeches being in the main hall with the stall holders.”

“Has this event made you think more about your wellbeing and how to connect with other groups?”

21 of the 36 respondents answered this question. Attendees reported:

“We met lots of potential new groups, and were able to welcome new participants into our session.”

“Providing staff with resources to support patients.”

“Building on existing connections.”

“How to better support others and raised awareness of what’s available.”

“So much information available to help people connect.”

“10 for signposting people”

“Became more aware of groups I was unfamiliar with before.”

“Come to make contacts for our own events.”

“How we need to consider inclusion in everything we do”.

“Talking to different organisations helps signpost to patients.”

“I have made some really good links with people that came to see us on the stall and also other stall holders who would like to work together.”

“The event was great for networking with other organisations and threw up lots of potential opportunities for collaborative working.”

“Do you have anything else you would like to tell us about the event today? For example, things that could be improved.”

16 of the 36 respondents answered this question. Attendees reported:

“Loved it”

“The one of multiple zones has been fab. We love the new format in the hall.”

“Advertise the event more.”

“Well organised. Friendly, supportive staff.”

“Really lovely and enjoyable event. Varied too!”

“It’s a good way for professionals to connect/network.”

“Really amazing, bringing together of people - thank you.”

“Speakers separate so can hear better.”

“I think the speeches were easier to hear last year as they took place at the entrance. This year people kept arriving during the speeches and the noise grew louder and louder.”

“More opportunities to be a guest speaker. More break out spaces for organisations.”

“Maybe put up a poster at the entrance telling people which workshops are on, where they are and at what time so that people know where to go. You may have had this and I did not see it.”

Finally, attendees were asked “do you want to be emailed with updates about IDODP 2024 or similar events? Write your email address below to sign up to the mailing list.” 15 attendees responded with their email address. Data for this question will not be provided in this report or the appendices, in order to adhere to GDPR.

If you’d like to see the entire redacted dataset please contact
hello@forumcentral.org.uk

Email feedback

Further feedback arrived via emails. A selection of these responses follows:

Royal Mencap’s ‘My Community’ project attended IDODP:

“We had a stall manned by one of our community connectors. At the event, Maisie met and spoke to Alex Toothill from Outside the Box, after finding out what they do, she arranged for us to meet. That meeting happened on 17 January, and we are now working on how we can connect up with their participants and potential combine on a project together.”

Involvement Co-ordinator at DEX Ltd:

“It made us realise that not a lot of other services are aware of us or that we are based in Leeds, the event definitely got us out there! We connected with Space2 at Gipton Fire Station with regards to doing an art project with our young people and we contacted Metro about their new Orange Wallet scheme for people with disabilities. We are now distributing the wallets to Deaf young people across Yorkshire who have a free bus pass. I have also contacted Mindwell about partnership work around deaf awareness and access.”



Information Officer - Through The Maze - Connect in The North:

“I had several conversations about easy read and accessible info at the event. These included discussions with people doing broad public engagement that wanted to start improving accessibility for people with a learning disability (eg. in relation to transport changes in Leeds) and a couple of health professionals starting research projects. One of the health professionals also linked me to another researcher at Leeds University, with whom I have had a discussion about inclusion in research she is proposing to develop guidelines on inclusive participation in medical research (again, her scope is very wide, and so I was able to help fly the flag for making sure people with a learning disability are included). Just today I have followed up with the researcher to link her to Purple Patch's Purple Research Group, which has prompted me to send this feedback.”

On our stall, we spoke to 64 people. This led to us adding two or three entries to our website from links we made, as well as some signposting and a lot of promoting our service.

So, my headline feedback is that it was a great event, especially for reaching people we might not connect to in other parts of our work that have a narrower learning disability focus.”

Autism and Learning Disability Digital Inclusion Coordinator - Pyramid/100% Digital Leeds:

“I found the International day of disabled people a really vibrant and inclusive event where people with learning disabilities were able to have their voices heard while also finding out more about what is happening in the City of Leeds. It was wonderful that we were able to have a stall at the event, where one of our members led an activity to gain feedback from attendees with and without learning disabilities. Opportunities like this give our members confidence and show them that their work is valued.

As a professional, the event was wonderful as it gave me a chance to network and to make new connections. For example, I met members of the Leeds city council Highways and Transport team who are looking to make their work more inclusive for people with learning disabilities. The team have since joined the Autism and Learning Disabilities Digital Inclusion Network, and we are now looking at ways in which we can support one another moving forward. Joint working like this enables organisations to reach more people with learning disabilities in an efficient and accessible manner.”



In Conclusion

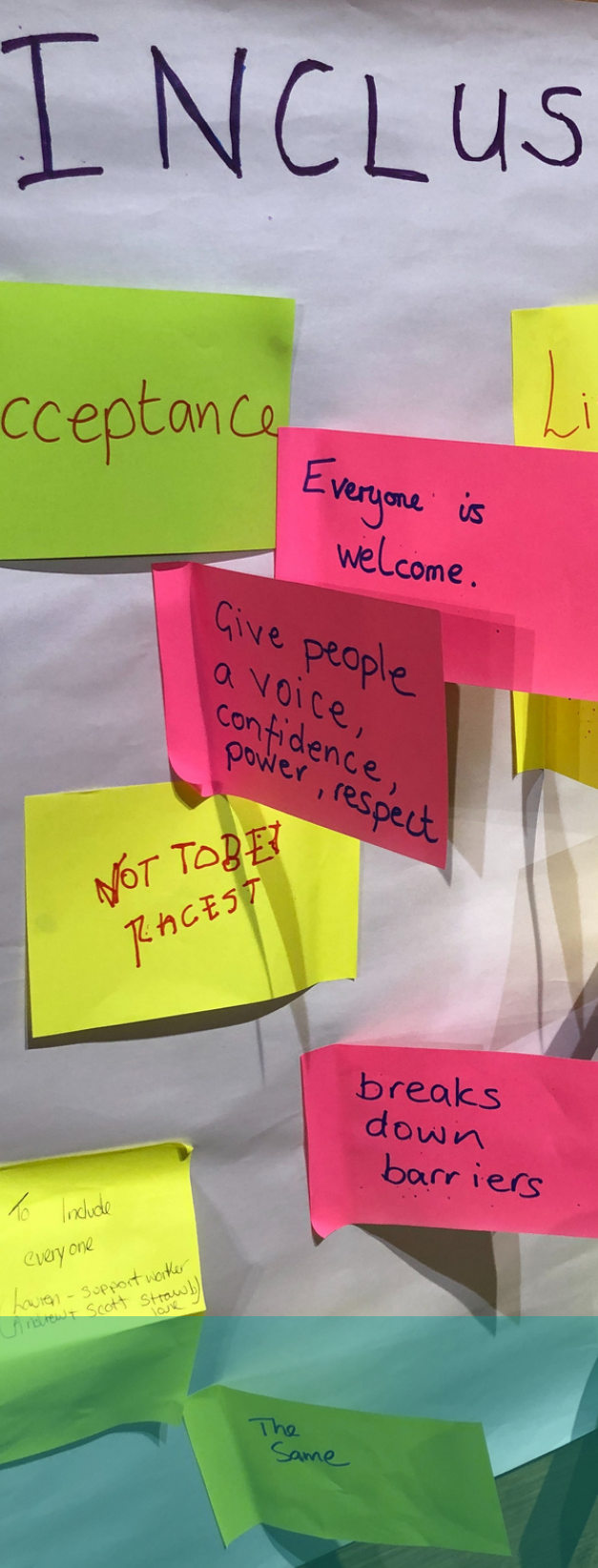
The 2023 IDODP Marketplace Event was a great day of celebration; far more extensive and wider reaching in terms of relationship and partnership building than its predecessors in 2020-22. This was not only because the Covid pandemic and lockdowns had effected and drastically reduced in-person contact in those years, but in 2023 because the Forum Central Learning Disability and Physical and Sensory Impairment Teams had worked on this as a collaborative and developmental project it resulted in a far greater reach.

The combination of the Celebrations Day and the Small Grant Funded Activities in 2023 also had a very beneficial spin off of creating new interest in Forum Central's Specialist Networks. Within the Forum Central IDODP team itself more accessible formats and content have been produced, to include new audiences and more people with lived experience. This in turn will widen the scope of how Forum Central reshapes its view on accessibility for its future developmental work with organisations in Leeds.

Recommendations

- To hold a more community based IDODP Celebrations Event in future
- To make the IDODP Small Grants Fund a central part of future plans
- To consult earlier with the IDODP Steering Group over major decisions
- To build stronger engagement with Hearing and Sight Impaired people
- To have basic BSL training available pre-event for all Leeds for All staff
- To further develop Leeds for All accessibility strategies





Reflexive Statements

Helen Brand, PSI Development Worker (Volition, Forum Central):

Working on the IDODP 23 Project as a team has really benefited the way we have been able to create what was a pan-disability programme this year. Everybody brought their creative skills to the table and I think we all feel proud of the way the event and the grant funded activities were received by organisations and local communities. The final report, easy read report and highlight videos show real allround collaborative quality.

Dominique Burley, Senior Development Worker - Learning Disability Network (Volition, Forum Central):

It was great to co-produce International Day of Disabled People 2023 with a variety of Forum Central members, partner organisations and people with lived experience. This year's event had a buzz in the air, with lots more stalls and activities. I felt that we built on the feedback from last year to make this year's event more accessible and engaging. I feel that for future years, we need to continue to build on feedback. To make a pan-disability event accessible, in an often inaccessible world can be challenging, but it is possible if we continue to co-produce future events and share learning and best practice.

Susan Morrell, Leeds CIL (Leeds Centre for Integrated Living), spoke about her personal highlights of being a Steering Group member: 'Interacting with people from different organisations, working in a mutually supportive atmosphere, the involvement and support of Forum Central and Disability Hub members who could carry out tasks and find resources to help 'get things done' and make the project a success.'

LEEDS FOR ALL

International Day of
Disabled People



Max Conway, Admin and Communications Officer (Volition, Forum Central):

I took part in the Mental Health workshop, presented entirely in BSL. As I do not have a hearing impairment, I required a BSL interpreter for this workshop. It was an incredibly eye-opening experience and showed how difficult it can be to follow multiple conversations with only one BSL interpreter.

It highlighted to me the importance of having a BSL interpreter present because without them, I wouldn't have been able to take part. It also showed how we must try and not talk over one another or have multiple people talking at once in a meeting, as it is difficult for the interpreter to follow everyone at once.

I have also created the highlights videos for IDODP 2023. I was very keen to make sure these videos had an audio described version. Because how can we as the IDODP team advocate for the Disabled people of Leeds, if they are excluded from our content. We must go the extra mile to ensure all content is accessible to everyone.

Jenny Bull, Communications Manager (Volition, Forum Central):

It would be fantastic if more people disabled people knew about this event and the support on offer which it showcases. This is an increasingly important annual city-wide event. More lead-in time and budget would enable us to promote it further. The reach seems to be growing year on year because word spreads - let's keep up the great work. Producing materials in an accessible way does take more time and resource but that's not an individual's fault or problem - being able to receive and understand information is fundamental for independence and choice. Forum Central is advancing its learning of this so we can share best practice with colleagues and partners.

Thanks to everyone who came along and took part in IDODP 2023.

Thanks to the stall holders and grant holders and to the Leeds for All steering group members:

- ABA (Association of Blind Asians)
- LDPO (Leeds Disabled People's Organisation)
- Leeds Involvement
- Leeds City Council (Access, Equality, and Special Services Departments)
- Leeds Autism Services
- LCIL (Leeds Centre for Integrated Living)
- Volition, Forum Central

The IDODP 2023 Evaluation Report is available in the following formats:

- Word document with photos and appendix
- Formatted pdf (this document)
- Easy Read pdf

Videos:

- [The Marketplace Event Highlights Video](#)
- [Small Grants Programme Highlights Video](#)
- [Audio described Marketplace Event Highlights Video](#)
- [Audio described Small Grants Programme Highlights Video](#)



Forum Central is the network of health and social care third sector organisations in Leeds.

We advocate, represent and amplify the voice of our 300+ members - made up of voluntary, community, social enterprise and faith organisations.

We are committed to ensuring the least heard voices of the sector are fed into decision making. We work to ensure sustainability and equity for the sector.

Forum Central is a partnership delivered by the independent charities Volition and Leeds Older People's Forum. Forum Central is a partner on the West Yorkshire NHS Integrated Care Board and has strong relationships with statutory and third sector partners across Leeds and West Yorkshire.



This report was prepared by Forum Central on behalf of Leeds City Council Disability Hub and the Leeds for All Team

February 2024

