
A FAIRER SCOTLAND FOR DISABLED PEOPLE



**Our Delivery Plan to 2021 for the
United Nations Convention on the
Rights of Persons with Disabilities**



**One
Scotland**
Scottish
Government

'Glasgow Disability Alliance wholeheartedly welcomes the approach of the Scottish Government to planning policies and more importantly, delivery, which improves the lives of disabled people.

This Delivery Plan is a great starting point on which to build to ensure that services support disabled citizens to be in the driving seat of their own lives – something they cannot routinely take for granted due to disabling barriers.'

Tressa Burke
CEO Glasgow Disability Alliance

'The Scottish Government Disability Plan is much needed and the particular commitments around both establishing a strategy to tackle social isolation and loneliness and funding opportunities for disabled people to volunteer are backed by thousands: disabled people want to contribute and be part of our communities and yet we are not even able to be the main drivers of our own lives at times. We are frequently isolated and lonely with no great sense of meaning or purpose. I firmly believe that with the right support and connections, we can make our important contributions.'

Susan McGinley
Disabled person, GDA Drivers for Change

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Ministerial foreword



Over a million disabled people contribute to Scotland's communities and add talent, diversity and richness to our society. Yet so many people are still unable to make their contribution or live their lives as they would want because of the barriers in their way. Our homes, our transport, our workplaces, our public services and our local environments are all too often designed or operated in ways that can exclude disabled people. Inaccessible communication, negative attitudes, low expectations, discrimination and inequality impact in ways which interact and affect the chances of disabled people – even to have social connections and human interaction. This can lead to isolation and loneliness. And too often, unless we face these barriers ourselves, we do not notice they are there or understand the impact they can have. So our job is to work together to remove those barriers. That is what this Delivery Plan is focused on doing.

This is a job for all of us. It also matters to all of us because a fairer Scotland can only be realised when we secure equal rights for everyone. When we do that, the lives of each one of us will be richer, more fulfilling and more secure. The Scottish Government recognises that we can only find effective solutions to the problems and barriers faced if we draw on the lived experience of disabled people, and work with disabled people to develop our policies and approach to find ways of solving problems and dismantling barriers.

We are not starting from scratch. There have been significant advances in areas such as Self-directed Support, in supporting people with autism and dementia, in strengthening Building Standards and in our recognition of British Sign Language. We also continue to support important measures such as concessionary travel, tackling social isolation and building capacity and resilience. But it is still not nearly enough. We need to increase the pace and depth of change if there is to be a real transformation in the lives and experiences of disabled people.

Many of us will develop impairments through ageing or accident or ill-health and there is much that can be done to support people to continue to live their lives to the full. We want to ensure that all disabled people can be supported to live and work in a place and in a way they choose.

The UK Government has embraced austerity economics, abolished the Independent Living Fund, cut employability programmes, and pursued changes to our welfare state which have resulted in the UN declaring in November 2016 that there was evidence of 'grave or systematic violations' of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – articles 19 (independent living), 27 (work and employment) and 28 (social protection).

The Scottish Government has already taken action to respond to these harmful policies. We are mitigating welfare cuts with funding of £100 million a year. This includes fully protecting households from the bedroom tax – 80% of which have a disabled adult. We set up our own Independent Living Fund to ensure disabled people would not be disadvantaged and went further to open the Fund to new applicants. And we have stated our strong commitment to support disabled people through a social security system based on dignity, fairness and respect. The new 'socio-economic duty' too will require strategic decision-making by public authorities to take account of, and take steps to address, the economic disadvantage experienced by particular groups, including disabled people. And while we do not have all the powers or levers in our hands to address all the unfairness that has been created, we must do more with the resources and the powers we do have.

Set out in this Plan are the steps we believe we need to take towards realising the five longer-term ambitions. It reflects our consultation and engagement with disabled people about how to reduce barriers, tackle inequalities and secure equal enjoyment of their rights as set out under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. We have high ambitions for the changes we want to see. We make no apologies for this. Disabled people have the right to no less. But we also know that the scale and extent of change necessary for real transformation in the experiences of disabled people will take concerted action over this Parliamentary term and beyond. And it will need all of us working together over the long term. Working with disabled people and the organisations that represent them, we have identified the specific actions we will take over the next five years to make significant progress towards these longer-term ambitions. The direct involvement of disabled people is essential as we implement these changes and we will continue our strong collaboration, with early engagement around priorities and timing.

We need to make our principles come alive in all that we do and couple them with our determination to make a real, positive difference to disabled people's lives. Our goal is nothing less than for all disabled people to have choice and control, dignity and freedom to live the life they choose, with the support they need to do so. As the First Minister said:

'We need to redouble our efforts to tackle inequality head-on, and ensure everyone has the chance to realise his or her full potential.'



Jeane Freeman
Minister for Social Security

Foreword by Dr Jim Elder-Woodward OBE



**The great Mahatma Gandhi once said:
'The future depends on what we do in the present'.**

It is the case, for example, that the bright, rosy future depicted by the good intentions behind many pieces of domestic legislation and international conventions quite often play out very dimly in the day-to-day lives of many disabled people.

Whether or not the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) will be any different will (to paraphrase Gandhi) depend upon what we do today. And by 'we,' I mean everyone involved in the lives and futures of disabled people, of all ages; be they politicians, civil servants, professionals, local government officers, carers (both formal and informal) and of course, we, disabled people, ourselves.

The Scottish Government – and the Equality Unit in particular – has made a sterling start in preparing this Disability Delivery Plan. They have involved everyone described above in its development – including disabled people and their organisations. With such involvement from the outset, I hope that those who have helped to develop the plan will be motivated and committed enough to deliver it.

I am indeed honoured to have been asked to write this foreword to the Scottish Government's Disability Delivery Plan; and wish to thank everyone who has contributed to it for their hard work and commitment. But, to everyone charged to take this Delivery Plan forward, I urge you to remember Mahatma Gandhi, and turn it into a Plan which will deliver; for what good we do today, will transform the lives of disabled people tomorrow.

Dr Jim Elder-Woodward OBE
Independent Chair
Scottish Independent Living Coalition

Introduction

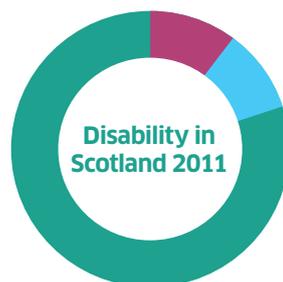
This Delivery Plan is part of our programme for a fairer Scotland. It has been shaped by the experiences of disabled people and the insights of disabled people's organisations. It has been informed by the evidence and consultation on the draft disability delivery plan and by the Fairer Scotland conversations. It is built around five longer-term ambitions and a set of ninety-three actions. These are specifically focused to secure the next step in transformational change that is required and can be taken over the lifetime of this Parliament.

The Delivery Plan sets out the Scottish Government's approach to policy for disabled people. It is based unequivocally on the social model of disability as opposed to the medical model, which lays the blame on the impairment, rather than on society's inability to provide for their needs, rights, and aspirations. It is also rooted firmly in the UNCRPD and in the aim of the independent living movement, which is that disabled people can live the life they choose, participating equally alongside other citizens in their families, communities, workplaces and wider society, with the support they need.

The Scottish Government also has a number of associated strategies related to specific populations e.g. the Keys to Life, Scotland's learning disability strategy, the Scottish Strategy for Autism and our forthcoming British Sign Language National Plan. Much related work is already underway or planned, for example the review of care charges, a new accessible travel framework and a new mental health strategy. All of these, together with the actions in the Fairer Scotland Action Plan, will improve the lives of disabled people in Scotland. These strategies are referred to in actions and also reflected in the section on work already underway. The Disability Delivery Plan, however, sets the overall direction of travel for the Scottish Government over the lifetime of this Parliament.

This Plan will drive transformational change to improve the lives of deaf and disabled people in Scotland. Working to meet our international obligations under the UNCRPD, it will ensure that we make progress towards the day when all disabled people are able and supported to live their lives with freedom, choice, control and dignity. Throughout the lifetime of this plan, we will ensure that we measure our progress in ways that ensure we are truly accountable to Scotland's disabled people.

1 in 5
(20%) of people living in Scotland had a long term limiting health problem or disability.



- 80% no limiting health problem or disability
- 10% limiting health problem or disability (limited a little)
- 10% limiting health problem or disability (limited a lot)

Source: Census 2011

Shaping the Plan

The ambitions we all have for a future fairer Scotland need us to work together – public, private and third sectors with disabled people and the organisations that represent them and communities.

Across the Scottish Government, we are committed to strengthening relationships with Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) and a range of delivery partners. We will work collaboratively with them to advance disability equality.

COSLA (Convention of Scottish Local Authorities) has been a close partner in the work around independent living for disabled people. We welcomed their delivery plan on disability published in response to the UNCRPD in December 2015.

We are determined to be the most open and accessible government Scotland has ever had. We worked to ensure that the consultation on the draft plan, launched in September 2015, reached those who do not normally engage with government or whose voices are seldom heard. We provided funding to DPOs to engage with disabled people across Scotland about this Plan and we have used their feedback to strengthen it.

The five ambitions draw on early work around the outcomes and [Our Shared Vision for Independent Living in Scotland](#) that was jointly developed with disabled people and the organisations that represent them, COSLA and NHSScotland.

Disabled people are the experts on what needs to change. It is important that relationships are built between those who design and deliver policies and services and the people who will experience those policies and services. We know that by involving disabled people and drawing on their experience, insight and skills, policies and services can be more responsive and better able to meet people's needs. In the consultation on the draft delivery plan, we were keen to find out the views of disabled people on areas where poor service design and delivery were having a negative impact on their lives so that we could make important changes. DPOs which are run by disabled people, with disabled people and for disabled people, helped us to gather these views and the feedback has also helped to inform this Plan.

From our dialogue with disabled people and organisations that represent them it is clear that there is strong support for efforts to achieve a fairer Scotland. They have told us that whilst there is a need to identify specific actions and initiatives to support and remove the barriers that disabled people confront, it is crucial that disability equality runs throughout the Fairer Scotland Action Plan and all other strategies designed to advance fairness, equality and human rights. We agree with that. These Plans are aligned and we will work to ensure that they remain so in delivery. We will work with disabled people and the organisations that represent them to ensure that we measure our progress in a way that they can hold us properly to account, throughout the lifetime of this Plan.

'It is essential that we maintain our focus on the rights of disabled people and what we can proactively do to realise those rights in this context. It is also essential that we work closely with disabled people and Disabled People's Organisations to empower them to help shape these decisions and reshape our services to better meet people's needs and improve outcomes.'

Cllr Peter Johnston
COSLA Spokesperson for
Health and Wellbeing

'It is vital that action to make disabled people's human rights a reality is led by us, disabled people ourselves. Only we know first-hand what needs to be done.'

Dr Sally Witcher OBE
Chief Executive, Inclusion Scotland

Defining disability

The social model of disability

This Delivery Plan supports the social model of disability, which was developed by disabled people: activists who started the 'Independent Living Movement' (ILM).

Unlike the medical model, where an individual is understood to be disabled by their impairment, the social model views disability as the relationship between the individual and society. In other words, it sees the barriers created by society, such as negative attitudes towards disabled people, and inaccessible buildings, transport and communication, as the cause of disadvantage and exclusion, rather than the impairment itself. The aim, then, is to remove the barriers that isolate, exclude and so disable the individual.

Language which is inclusive of all

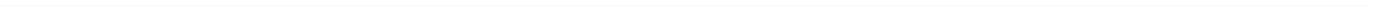
By using positive and empowering words we can change the way people see disability. Negative language carries many messages; it categorises, labels and stereotypes. It can demean and devalue; it can dehumanise, exclude and disempower. There are many examples of misused language, which debases disabled people and is outdated and offensive. To remove the barriers created by negative language, we need to use and encourage appropriate language. Different countries have different guidelines. In some countries, the term 'people with disabilities' is commonly used. In Scotland, the term 'disabled people' is preferred. In other countries there isn't yet a word for disabled.

Language can also be positive, reinforcing the positive message of inclusion, defining a disability tool/phrase by 'what it does' rather than 'who it is for'. 'Disabled parking' is increasingly known as 'accessible parking'; disabled toilets are increasingly referred to as 'accessible toilets'.

All disabled people

If we are to achieve our aim of full equality and human rights for disabled people in Scotland, then we must take account of all disabled people, including disabled children, young people and older people. We also have to understand how other characteristics such as age, sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, transgender identity or being a Gypsy Traveller can impact on a disabled person's experiences and use this understanding to shape our actions. And we must be aware of the particular issues affecting disabled people living in rural or island communities.

Opinions about identifying as 'disabled' can also vary between individuals or groups. For example, most deaf people who use British Sign Language identify themselves as a linguistic or cultural minority rather than as disabled people.



A large graphic consisting of the numbers 5, 9, and 3 in a white, bold, sans-serif font with a thick outline. The numbers are set against a solid teal background. The '5' is on the left, the '9' is in the middle, and the '3' is on the right. They are all connected by a thin white horizontal line.

**Five ambitions
Ninety-three actions**

Five ambitions

This Plan is built around five key ambitions and a set of ninety-three actions to be undertaken in this Parliamentary session.

Our five ambitions

- 1 Support services that promote independent living, meet needs and work together to enable a life of choices, opportunities and participation.**
Health and social care support services are designed to meet – and do meet – the individual needs and outcomes of disabled people.
 - 2 Decent incomes and fairer working lives.**
Making sure disabled people can enjoy full participation with an adequate income to participate in learning, in education, voluntary work or paid employment and retirement.
 - 3 Places that are accessible to everyone.**
Housing and transport and the wider environment are fully accessible to enable disabled people to participate as full and equal citizens.
 - 4 Protected rights.**
The rights of disabled people are fully protected and they receive fair treatment from justice systems at all times.
 - 5 Active participation.**
Disabled people can participate as active citizens in all aspects of daily and public life in Scotland.
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Our ambition: Support services that meet disabled people's needs

Actions

Support Services are designed and delivered to support all disabled people to live the life they choose, to have control, to make informed choices and to have support to communicate this when needed at every stage of their lives.

In the Scotland we want:

- **Disabled people can participate as active citizens in all aspects of daily and public life.**
 - **Support for independent living for disabled people of all ages, with increased say over how that support will be managed and provided.**
 - **Delivery of high quality health, social care and third sector services, with services working together to remove the barriers faced by disabled people of all ages.**
 - **Increased opportunities for disabled people to be fully involved in the design and delivery of services.**
1. **We will continue to support our transformational approach by investing in Self-directed Support.** The Social Care (Self-directed Support) (Scotland) Act 2013 introduced a new approach which gives adults, children and carers more choice and control over how their care and support is delivered. Our ambition for Self-directed Support goes beyond services being person-centred: it is about true choice and control to enable everyone to have more control over their lives, with greater choice and opportunity.
 2. We are working with local authorities, providers, disabled people and other partners to deliver **reform to adult social care**. This will consider the commissioning of residential care and the role of new models of care and support in home care. This will enable progress towards our aim to end 'time and task' based care and shift to **care that focuses on achieving independent living** for people who use social care services. In the summer of 2017 we will also consult on the terms of a future review of long-term care capacity. The voices and experiences of service users, including disabled people and the organisations that represent them, will be at the centre of these reforms and will shape planning and implementation and improve outcomes.
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Actions

- 3. Building on the contribution of ‘Our Shared Ambition for the future of social care support in Scotland’**, we will continue to engage with disabled people and carers to develop a set of outcomes we wish to collectively achieve. This will include whether new models of delivery are required to achieve these outcomes within a challenging financial context.
 - 4.** We will work with COSLA and with disabled people and the organisations that represent them to identify ways of **improving the portability of care packages** where a disabled person moves between local authority areas.
 - 5.** Building on the successful establishment of the new Scottish Independent Living Fund (ILF), through which we have safeguarded the support packages that Scottish disabled people were previously getting from the ILF towards meeting care and support costs after the scheme was scrapped by the UK Government, we will launch **an ILF scheme for new users**. On top of the £47.2 million a year for support of the scheme’s 2,700 existing Scottish users, **a further £5 million a year** of new funding will be available. We are developing the new scheme in co-production with disabled people, carers, representative organisations and local authorities. The new users’ fund will open within the next year, to make the right support available to allow disabled people to live a fuller, more rewarding life. This will include support to access social connections and opportunities which enable a life of meaning, purpose and belonging.
 - 6.** By spring 2018 we will have new **National Health and Social Care Standards** in place which put human rights, dignity, compassion and wellbeing at the heart of all health, social work and social care services across Scotland. The standards will focus on improving services and delivering person-led outcomes for all. This will make a material difference to how services for disabled people are delivered and assessed.
 - 7.** £3 million has been committed between 2015-2018 to fund the **Active and Independent Living Improvement Programme** which finds innovative ways to help disabled people lead healthy lives and stay in their own homes. The programme is focused on the contribution of Allied Health Professionals (including physiotherapists and occupational therapists) and in 2016-2018 it will prioritise work with children and young people, helping people get into or remain in work, supporting people with dementia, people who have musculoskeletal conditions, people who experience frailty and are at risk of falls, as well as supporting people with their overall health and wellbeing and anticipatory care.
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8. The **'Our Voice' programme** will support disabled people to engage purposefully at individual, community and national level to improve health and social care services (2016-2017).
9. Our **'Routes to Inclusion' project** provided valuable feedback from disabled people about what is important to them, and how they want to be engaged. We will share the project findings with the Health and Social Care Joint Integration Boards to help them establish effective engagement with disabled people about their health and social care in their local areas.
10. We will **commence the Carers Act** on 1 April 2018 so that carers of disabled people and disabled people themselves will be better supported.

Mental health

11. In December 2016, we will publish the next **Mental Health Strategy** which will set out our **10-year vision** for transforming mental health in Scotland. The Strategy will be built around a lifespan: start well, live well, age well. Early intervention will be central, with a focus on child and adolescent mental health, and we will continue our emphasis on improving access to mental health services, so that people can 'ask once and get help fast'.
 12. We will **support the integration of mental and physical health treatment** so that we achieve parity of esteem and reduce stigma. We have announced an additional **£150 million** for mental health services over five years, part of which will support access to mental health services.
 13. We are committed to a review that will consider whether the provisions in the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) 2003 Act should cover people with learning disabilities and autism.
 14. We will **empower disabled people to know and claim their rights** following the changes in the Mental Health (Scotland) Act 2015 by promoting independent advocacy and advance statements, alongside a rights-based approach in the statutory guidance on the use of mental health legislation to be in place in 2017.
 15. We will work with disabled people and the organisations that represent them to develop changes to the **Adults with Incapacity Act**, in relation to deprivation of liberty, and to assess compliance with UNCRPD by 2018.
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Actions

16. We will review policies on **guardianship** and consider circumstances in which **supported decision making** can be promoted.

Learning disabilities and autism

17. **The 'Keys to Life'**, published in 2013, is a 10-year strategy to improve the quality of life for people with learning disabilities. With a £7.7 million investment we are improving learning disability services in Scotland. The strategy's implementation plan sets out four strategic outcomes which relate to the UNCRPD: 'A Healthy Life'; 'Choice and Control'; 'Independence'; and 'Active Citizenship'. The delivery of the Strategy is being taken forward with a wide range of partners in the statutory and third sectors and is focused on phased priorities targeted at each of the four outcomes. We will begin work early in 2017 to review progress and identify priorities for the next phase of implementation.
 18. We will work across the Scottish Government to ensure we gather data on the services used to support those with learning disabilities to ensure the services they need are delivering the best outcomes to support independent living.
 19. The **Scottish Strategy for Autism** is a 10-year strategy (2011-2021) that aims to improve access to integrated service provision, highlight good practice, and build capacity and awareness of autism in services to ensure people with autism are understood. We will begin work early in 2017 to identify gaps and priorities for 2017-2019.
 20. We will work **with schools, local authorities, health and social care partnerships, further and higher education institutions and employers to improve the lives of young disabled people. This includes points of transition into all levels of education – primary, secondary further and higher – education and employment.** We will be mindful of young people who have faced structural inequalities and complex barriers that result in lack of employment. We will ensure that supports are in place so that they can live a life of equal participation, with the support they need. We will embed the Principles of Good Transitions, which have been endorsed by 30 multi-sector organisations in Scotland and prioritise person-centred, coordinated support.
 21. **We will take forward** recommended solutions from the findings of the Complex Care project by March 2018. We will explore alternative solutions to out of area placements and delayed discharge for people with complex care needs. We will involve people with lived experience and their carers.
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- 22. A National Framework for Families with Disabled Children and Young People** will be produced and implemented to improve the outcomes of young disabled people and ensure they are getting the best provision and support possible. We will work closely with disabled children, young people, their families and the organisations that represent them in the development of the Framework. The timescale and format of the Framework will be informed by an engagement process taking place in early 2017.
 - 23. A local support and information network** for parents of disabled children will be piloted from November 2016 to April 2017 and the learning materials for the pilot will be collated to demonstrate a model of parent engagement and participation that can be replicated throughout Scotland.
 - 24. Our refreshed action plan on internet safety will be published by March 2017**, which will fully consider the issues affecting disabled children in the online world. In addition to this, consideration will be given to how we can effectively address the issues affecting disabled adults online.
 - 25. An enhanced learning and development framework for foster carers** will support them to develop and enhance skills to care for all children, including disabled children, looked after in foster care.
 - 26. The Student Award Agency Scotland (SAAS) will work in partnership with disabled students and stakeholders to deliver an increasingly accessible application process**, including improved advice and guidance, for all students with additional support needs, including disabled students.
 - 27. From 2017 the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) Outcome Agreement guidance will require colleges and universities to produce an Access and Inclusion Strategy** that defines their inclusive practices and the impact this has on learners. As part of this work, SFC expect colleges to evidence how they use funds to support students with educational support needs, including disabled students, to ensure they have an equal chance of successfully completing their programme of study. This approach will gather outcomes by type of disability which will enable SFC to directly target interventions if required.
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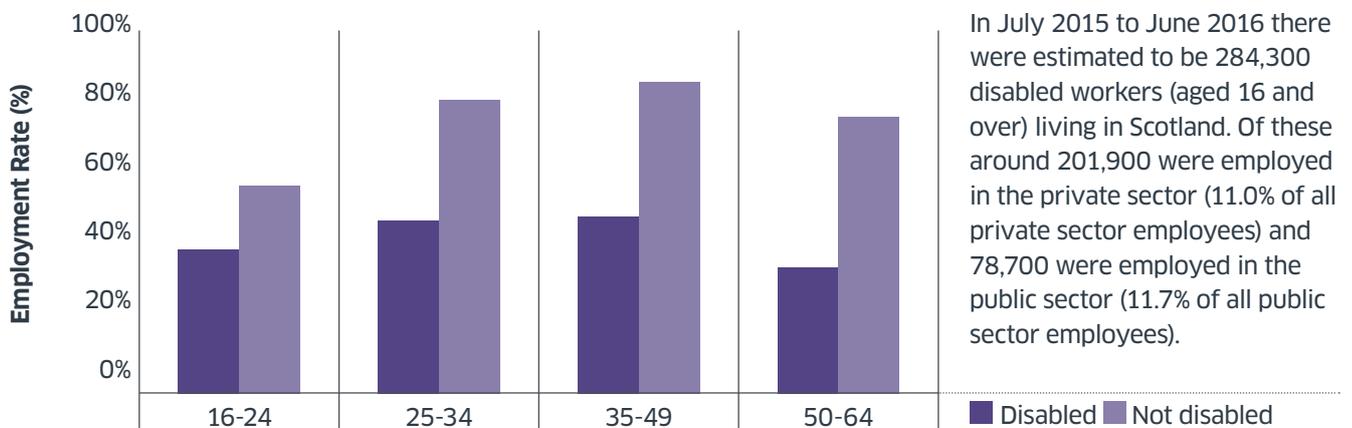
**Our ambition: Decent incomes
and fairer working lives**

Actions

Disabled people are able to participate fully in education and paid employment enabling their talent and abilities to enrich Scotland. Disabled people are supported through transitions in their lives e.g. from school to work. Poverty is addressed for disabled people and their families and Scotland's social security system is built on the principles of fairness, dignity and respect. This approach reflects the principles set out by the Fair Work Convention in their Framework and supports the ambitions of Scotland's Labour Market Strategy.

In the Scotland we want:

- **Disabled people are visible and participating within communities, learning and education, volunteering and employment.**
- **Equal opportunities for disabled people in education and employment.**
- **Greater understanding and a positive attitude amongst employers and educators to disabled people.**
- **Improved awareness and understanding of discrimination, prejudice and barriers faced by disabled people including the physical environment, stigma and negative attitudes.**
- **Benefits delivered in a way that is rights-based and helps meet the additional living and mobility costs of disabled people and treats them with dignity and respect throughout the process.**



Source: Annual Population Survey (APS), Jul 15-Jun 16, ONS

Actions

Employment

- 28.** We will reduce barriers to employment for disabled people and **seek to reduce by at least half, the employment gap** between disabled people and the rest of the working age population. Together with disabled people, their organisations and other key stakeholders we will develop this action in more detail, including a timetable and plan for achieving the reduction.
 - 29.** Disabled people are 20% of the population, but make up only 11% of the private sector workforce and 11.7% of the public sector workforce. **We will consult with DPOs and public sector bodies around setting targets to redress this imbalance.**
 - 30.** We will pilot a **work experience scheme specifically for young disabled people** aimed at improving their transition into permanent employment and removing barriers they can face finding employment.
 - 31.** We recognise the success already achieved by **Project SEARCH** in enabling young people with learning disabilities and autism to secure sustainable employment. We will **explore opportunities to promote the Project SEARCH model** as we develop plans for greater alignment of learning and skills provision.
 - 32.** We will **actively promote the Department for Work and Pensions' Access to Work scheme to employers and disabled people to ensure a higher uptake and use of the scheme in Scotland.** This includes, for example Fit for Work Scotland and Healthy Working Lives, as well as to other partners including organisations supporting disabled people. For devolved services from 2017, providers will be required to ensure that disabled people are supported to claim and receive the Access to Work funding they are entitled to so that they can sustain employment.
 - 33.** When people become disabled or develop health conditions while in employment, early action may help them sustain work. We want to improve the support that disabled people and people with health conditions in Scotland can access to help them stay in, or return quickly to, fair work. As part of this, we will explore innovative ways of **integrating health, disability and employment support in Scotland**, to ensure that people can find their way quickly to the tailored, person-centred support they need.
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- 34.** We will improve the employment prospects of disabled people, through newly devolved Scottish **employability programmes**. In April 2017 we will introduce a **one year transitional service** for disabled people to provide continuity of service for those who need it most. Called 'Work First Scotland', it will deliver employment support for **up to 3,300 disabled people**. From April 2018, a new devolved programme will take a voluntary and person-led approach to ensure that disabled people are offered support which is appropriate and built upon guaranteed service expectations from providers. Disabled people engaging with the programme will receive **high-quality pre-employment support** which identifies and develops their strengths and assets while focusing on sustainable employment outcomes. Through the commissioning of this programme in 2017, we will ensure that appropriate specialist provision is in place to deliver these ambitions.
- 35.** Disabled young people will be supported through the **Developing the Young Workforce** Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy. In partnership with local authorities, colleges, employers and Skills Development Scotland, the focus of the Strategy will be on removing barriers to open up the range of opportunities for young people and prepare them for employment are aligned with labour market opportunities.
- 36.** We will remove the barriers that have previously prevented young disabled people entering Modern Apprenticeships (MA), through the implementation of **The Equalities Action Plan for Modern Apprenticeships in Scotland**. The five-year plan includes specific improvement targets for MA participation by disabled people, including part-time and flexible engagement, to be achieved by 2021 and Skills Development Scotland will report on these annually.
- 37.** Effective immediately, we will **provide young disabled people with the highest level of Modern Apprenticeship funding** for their chosen MA Framework **until the age of 30**.

'As an equal opportunity employer we welcome applications from disabled people as our workforce should be a reflection of the diverse range of customers we serve. We have always found that our disabled employees add as much value as any of our employees and by making a few practical adjustments can easily accommodate any specific needs they may have.'

Anna West
HR Manager, CMS Windows Ltd

Actions

38. For the first time, from April 2017, Scottish public authorities will publish information on **equal pay policy and occupational segregation for disabled people** as part of the public sector equality duty.
 39. Building on a pilot programme being delivered by SCVO and Inclusion Scotland in 2016-17, we will deliver a **disability internship programme**, providing disabled people with 120 employment opportunities in the third and public sectors and in politics, over the period 2017-2021.
 40. A two-year **NHS internship programme for disabled graduates will be delivered** in partnership with NHSScotland and the Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living Equality Academy from 2016-2018. We are undertaking ongoing evaluation with disabled people to develop options for the longer term.
 41. A **Learning Disability Employment Programme** will be delivered by NHSScotland in 2017 with tools and guidance to support Health Boards to increase the number of people with learning disabilities employed by them.
 42. The **Scottish Business Pledge** and other employer networks will be used to raise awareness of the skills and capacity of the disabled workforce and their positive impact on company productivity and profitability.
 43. We will continue to promote the **Supported Employment Framework** and model for disabled people to learn on the job with support from colleagues and a job coach. We will require providers of future employment services to offer a diverse menu of options including supported employment.
 44. We are backing **supported businesses** to increase their sustainability particularly through procurement, coordinated business support, and business engagement. Scottish Government (SG) and our enterprise agencies will be working with supported businesses in identifying areas of support that could be accessed to help them flourish and become more sustainable.
 45. Social enterprise demonstrates a more inclusive way of doing business, by promoting equality and tackling discrimination. In December 2016, **we will publish a 10-year Social Enterprise Strategy** which will raise this ambition even higher, providing a framework for action planning in 2017. In the first of these action plans we will agree measures to **stimulate pre-start activity, increasing the number of disabled social entrepreneurs**, and explore creative ways to enable Scotland's social enterprises to **employ more disabled people**, including the use of targeted wage incentives.
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- 46.** We will stimulate more inclusive **pre-start activity** for social enterprise and work with partners **to increase the number of disabled people establishing micro and social enterprises.**
- 47.** We will provide funding during the current parliamentary session to **enable more disabled people to volunteer** and increase the numbers of disabled people taking up volunteering opportunities. In most cases, taking up a volunteering opportunity will not have an impact on disabled people's entitlements to benefits but we will work with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and key stakeholders to ensure that this is better understood by disabled people and others.
- 48.** The **'Carer Positive'** scheme complements the Fair Work agenda by encouraging organisations in Scotland to have fair and flexible working practices for employees who are also unpaid carers, and to help ensure that carers can return to and remain in work alongside their caring role. We will increase the use of Carer Positive so that more employers sign up to the scheme.
- 49.** We will hold a **major congress on disability, employment and the workplace** and will engage with partners, employers, the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC) and Disabled People's Organisations during 2017 in shaping its focus.

'We strongly believe in, and drive a culture of, fairness, inclusiveness and respect throughout our organisation. One of the ways that shows itself in practice is the practical support we offer our disabled employees including those who become disabled. That includes making changes in the workplace so they can continue in the job, and offering support from occupational health, medical and mental health professionals. This is the right thing to do and works for us as employers, giving us an exemplary retention and productivity record.'

Gavin Money
Commercial Director, Barr Environmental Ltd

Actions

Social security

Over this parliamentary term, we will take on new powers over some areas of social security. We will take into account the responses to our consultation and engagement activities on building a new social security system for Scotland. These will be used to take forward areas of improvement in our system so it works for disabled people. As a start we have made the following commitments:

- 50.** With our new powers we will establish a **social security system** that treats people with dignity and respect while applying for, being assessed for, and receiving disability benefits. All of the engagement the Scottish social security system has with those applying for benefits will embody this approach, including communications, accessibility and in appealing decisions.
 - 51.** We will introduce a **Social Security Bill** during the first year of this Parliament, laying the foundations for a Scottish social security system that treats people with disabilities with dignity and respect.
 - 52.** We will maintain **disability benefits** and ensure they are not means tested.
 - 53.** We will **provide information in a range of accessible formats** to help people understand the system to guarantee that **disabled people are not disadvantaged by communication barriers**.
 - 54.** We will set up **Social Security Experience Panels** to involve at least 2,000 people who have recent experience of receiving benefits to help to design and test the new system to ensure it works for them. When we set out our guiding principles for social security, we said that we would put the user experience first, and that our system would be designed with and for the people of Scotland. We are committed to making the Experience Panels accessible, giving as many people as possible the opportunity to take part.
 - 55.** A **Disability and Carers Benefits Expert Advisory Group** will be set up to provide recommendations and guidance on aspects of assessments including how often they should be. It will also look at eligibility criteria, as well as longer-term and lifetime awards.
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- 56.** We are committed to using our new powers under the Scotland Act to effectively **abolish the bedroom tax**, and in the interim we will continue to provide funding to fully mitigate its impact; supporting over 70,000 households, an estimated 80% of which contain at least one disabled adult.
- 57.** We will extend **winter fuel payments** to families with severely disabled children by 2020.
- 58.** We will **increase Carer's Allowance** so that it is paid at the same level as Jobseeker's Allowance, an 18% increase which will see eligible carers receive around £600 more each year.
- 59.** We will **increase Carer's Allowance for those looking after more than one disabled child** and we are working with carers and carer organisations to consider a change to the eligibility criteria for Carer's Allowance to better meet the needs and aspirations of Scottish carers.
- 60.** We are working with young carers' organisations to consider the introduction of a **Young Carer's Allowance** as part of a package to provide extra support for young people with significant caring responsibilities.
- 61.** We will continue to invest in the **Family Fund** to provide direct grants to low income families with severely disabled children to assist with a wide range of needs from essential support equipment, to computers, white goods and family breaks.

Social security is a hand up - not a hand out. It should provide the basis from which we can all participate and contribute to society but when you're treated like a scrounger and benefit cheat, it knocks your confidence and wears away your self-esteem. Disability hate crime has sky-rocketed in the last few years, as we've been stigmatised and demonised by UK politicians and much of the media. This Disability Plan, together with the new social security system is a chance to put right some of the wrongs and treat people better.

Chris Baird

Disabled person, member and campaigner, Purple Poncho Players



Our ambition: Places that are accessible to everyone

Actions

Disabled people can live life to the full in homes and communities across Scotland, with housing and transport and the wider physical and cultural environment designed and adapted to enable disabled people to participate as full and equal citizens.

In the Scotland we want:

- **Greater and more meaningful involvement by disabled people in designing policies and services.**
 - **Disabled people to benefit from increased availability of affordable and accessible housing to support people to continue to life independent lives.**
 - **Increased availability of accessible and inclusive transport and services.**
 - **Increased awareness of the additional barriers living in rural or remote areas can bring for disabled people.**
-

Actions

Housing

- 62.** We will work with local authorities, disabled people, and other stakeholders to ensure that each local authority sets a realistic target within its Local Housing Strategy for the delivery of **wheelchair accessible housing** across all tenures and reports annually on progress.
- 63.** We will ensure that the grant subsidy arrangements for the **Affordable Housing Supply Programme** do not prevent specialist housing identified by local authorities as a priority from being built.
- 64.** Research, involving wheelchair users and homebuilders, into **creating tailor-made wheelchair accessible homes** from mass-market new homes will identify issues and costs surrounding such interventions.

'Accessible housing is the cornerstone of independent living. Without an accessible home, it's clearly impossible for many disabled and older people to live as equal citizens – to work, to play, to have relationships, to be active members of our communities and all that follows from that: in other words to do all the things non-disabled people take for granted.'

Etienne d'Aboville
Chief Executive, Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living

- 65.** We will work with health and social care partnerships, disabled people, local authorities and the housing sector to develop guidance for housing and care providers on **timescales for installing adaptations**. We will begin this work in 2017.

Transport

- 66.** Through our **Accessible Travel Framework**, developed with disabled people and transport providers, we will:
- Develop our **Accessible Travel Hub** – accessibletravel.scot – that aims to draw together up-to-date information about all aspects of transport accessibility in a one-stop-shop so that everyone can learn from good practice, make connections and share their work.
 - Scope requirements for **training with disabled people and transport providers/operators** covering awareness of hidden impairments and ways of communicating, including basic BSL phrases.

- Explore ways of making disabled people more aware about how they can influence **decision-making in transport**.
- Specify and agree **common standards of service for disabled people** if their public transport journeys are disrupted.
- Produce information about **bus layout designs which improve accessibility**, identifying specific changes and how they benefit people with different impairments.
- Develop a comprehensive source of **accessible information** about purchasing tickets for a multi-modal journey, including pricing and concessions.
- Research the current content of transport providers' customer surveys and co-produce a set of standards for surveys and other **feedback mechanisms**, like mystery shopping.

67. We will publish a consultation on **improving parking** before the end of 2016 which will invite views from disabled people and others on how we can improve the laws on parking to restrict people parking on pavements at dropped kerbs and double parking. A Bill and supporting guidance paper will follow setting out how local authorities implement and enforce parking, including disabled parking spaces, across Scotland.

Culture and leisure

- 68.** A **new help guide from VisitScotland giving practical advice to businesses and setting out key accessibility** hints and tips will meet the needs of disabled people attending events.
- 69.** **Scotland's heritage is an important part of our identity, and disabled people should have equal access to it.** We will improve physical and online access to the historic environment and collections by 2019 so that more disabled people can enjoy their heritage.
- 70.** Creative Scotland's **future plans, and revised Equalities Outcomes – to be published in April 2017** – will be informed by their review of equality, diversity and inclusion in the arts, screen and creative industries.
- 71.** We will ensure barriers to accessing and participating in Scotland's culture are broken down. The **new Cultural Strategy** will be owned by the people of Scotland and will be co-created with practitioners and cultural delivery bodies across the sector.

Actions

Sport

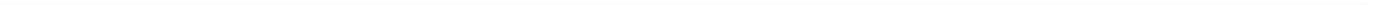
- 72. Disabled people's participation at all levels of sport and physical activity** will increase through an action plan developed in partnership with disabled people through a new Equality in Physical Activity and Sport Forum by 2019.
- 73. sportscotland** will invest in disabled people and athletes **and ensure that the needs of disabled people and athletes are addressed** through investment to Scottish Disability Sport, Active Schools Network, the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Olympics and Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.
- 74.** A new **parasport facility** for Scotland in Inverclyde, with an **investment of £6 million**, is being built to **promote the inclusion of disabled athletes in sport**. All building work will be completed by the end of March 2017. Scottish Disability Sport are now working with 31 governing bodies and local authorities across Scotland to improve access to sporting facilities for all disabled people.

Rural and Island communities

We know that some of the barriers that impact on disabled people's lives are heightened in rural areas. Many of the actions in this plan will make a difference in rural as well as urban Scotland.

The Government is committed to bringing forward an Islands Bill, which will contain a provision to island-proof future legislation, policies and action plans. In the spirit of that forthcoming legislation, we have consulted specifically with the relevant local authorities across Scotland with responsibility for island communities to identify any potential negative impact from the plan, and will continue to review this as we move forward with implementation to ensure that there is no detrimental impact on our island communities

- 75.** We will deliver a workshop with Local Action Groups through the Scottish Rural Network to develop and stimulate new ideas for improving the life chances of disabled people in rural areas.
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Our ambition: Protected rights

Actions

Scotland's justice system is equipped to meet the needs of disabled people in a fair and inclusive way. Disabled people are confident that their rights will be protected and they will receive fair treatment at all times.

In the Scotland we want:

- **Disabled people to be treated as equal citizens within all elements of the justice and tribunal system, with full access to the physical environment, advocacy and support, information and advice, and communication support.**

- 76.** Fees for **employment tribunals** will be abolished, when we are clear on how the transfer of powers and responsibilities will work. We will consult with disabled people and other equality groups to identify the particular barriers that they face when raising a claim at an Employment Tribunal.
 - 77.** We will **work with disabled people's organisations and Police Scotland to encourage greater reporting of disability hate crimes** and to further the implementation of the recommendations of the Independent Advisory Group on Hate Crime, Prejudice and Community Cohesion.
 - 78.** As part of the process of implementing Equally Safe, our strategy to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls, we will engage with the disabled people's panel to identify specific actions to support **disabled women and girls who experience gender-based violence.**
 - 79.** We will work together to explore how the justice system could better understand and **respond to individuals with autism** as they interact as witnesses, victims, suspects or offenders.
 - 80.** We will work with partners, including disabled people and the organisations that represent them, to identify **negative impacts on disabled people of the current legal aid framework for contributions** and develop options for change and make any legislative changes required.
 - 81.** **From 2016**, the seven main criminal justice organisations will publish their most important pieces of information in **alternative formats**. An online secure website will be developed to provide **fully-accessible case information** for victims and witnesses.
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Actions

- 82.** The seven main criminal justice organisations will carry out site audits of their buildings to identify any **physical access barriers that need to be removed**. This information will be available on each organisation's website from 2016.

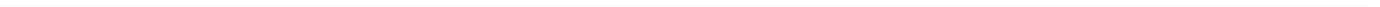
'Negative attitudes continue to impact on the lives of disabled people in Scotland. We find that most disabled people have experienced some form of stigma or discrimination. This ranges from relatively minor incidents to more serious cases of harassment and bullying. Shockingly, the number of disability hate crimes reported also continues to increase. Some people feel that attitudes have improved over the years, while others are more sceptical. Certainly, there is still a long way to go to change attitudes.'

Layla Theiner
Disability Agenda Scotland (DAS)

- 83.** We will continue to work with the Law Society of Scotland to encourage the **promotion of specialism in disability discrimination law** and will promote awareness of such activity.
- 84.** The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) recognises that those **most vulnerable to fires are predominately elderly individuals or people with significant health or mobility issues**. SFRS will aim to focus the delivery of its preventative activities, including the Home Fire Safety programme, on those people and will work closely with partners within the health and social care arena to achieve this.

'Scotland wants to be a fairer nation. That won't happen until disabled people have equal access to justice, including access to legal remedies for the discrimination they face. Without it alienation, denial of rights, discrimination and poorer life chances will prevail. Disabled people still face barriers when accessing civil justice remedies including a lack of support and advocacy, a lack of capacity and will in the legal profession and many disabled people and parents of disabled children simply don't have the energy. Perhaps worse of all, there is a strong sense of fear about complaining and taking action in case things get worse. Everyone in Scotland needs equal access to justice and the barriers must go now.'

Heather Fiskin
Project Manager, Independent Living in Scotland





5

Our ambition: Active participation

Actions

Disabled people participate as active citizens in all aspects of daily and public life in Scotland. Information and communication is accessible and inclusive; barriers experienced by disabled people including negative attitudes, stigma and discrimination, are understood and addressed and disabled people are involved in shaping their lives and the decisions that impact upon them. Social isolation is reduced for disabled people.

In the Scotland we want:

- **Disabled people to be empowered through peer support and learning and development opportunities to participate fully as active citizens.**
 - **Increased understanding of disabled people's needs throughout civic society.**
 - **Communication to be accessible to, and inclusive of, all.**
 - **The barriers facing disabled people to be known, understood and addressed.**
 - **Disabled people to have access to relationships and connections which support them, and increased resilience to cope with challenges.**
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Actions

Participation

- 85.** We are determined to increase representation of disabled people in our democratic institutions. Our **Access To Elected Office Fund (Scotland)** is supporting those who wish to stand in the 2017 local government elections by helping to **meet the additional costs disabled people face when seeking election**. We will use the evaluation of the 2017 fund to make any necessary improvements to ensure it works for disabled people and **will continue this fund for the Scottish Parliamentary elections in 2021**.
- 86.** Our **current record level of investment** in supporting the capacity of Disabled People's Organisations will be maintained during the lifetime of this parliament. Through this programme of work, we will explore how disability impacts **different equality groups** and what this means for our policies, services and communities.
- 87.** Local authorities have been asked that at least 1% of their budgets are subject to Community Choices budgeting and we will actively encourage local authorities to ensure that **disabled people can play a full part in the participatory budgeting process**.
- 88.** We will publish a strategy in 2017 to tackle **social isolation and loneliness**, which is informed by disabled people and seeks to tackle the specific barriers to developing social and community connections that disabled people face.
- 89.** We will actively promote a new **Inclusive Communication** hub across the public sector in early 2017, providing advice and practical assistance. We are also taking forward a programme of work on Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC), which is focused on the provision of communication equipment and support.

'We firmly believe that the consistent adoption of "inclusive communications" in all aspects of our lives can be transformative for everyone involved. It is key to liberating and embracing the talents and contribution of disabled people in Scotland while also challenging and changing the attitudes of non-disabled people.'

Andy Kerr
CEO, Sense Scotland

- 90.** Through our Scottish Approach to Service Design initiative we will work with disabled people, organisations and experts in design to ensure that the methods and tools used in **digital public services** allow disabled people to participate on a fair and equal basis in the design of those services. This work has already begun and we aim to publish guidance iteratively through 2017-2020. Initial guidance will be published in early 2017.

- 91.** We will publish the first ever **National Action Plan on British Sign Language** in October 2017, which will improve access to information and services for our citizens whose first or preferred language is BSL.

'The passing of the BSL (Scotland) Act will lead to the creation of the first BSL National Plan so that the deaf community in Scotland will be seen as active citizens in Scotland. With BSL, we are equal and a valued citizens in wider society in Scotland.'

Avril Hepner
British Deaf Association Scotland

- 92.** In 2017, we will highlight the barriers to inclusion that disabled people face, with a particular focus on employment, in the next phase of the **One Scotland Campaign**.
- 93.** Through our public appointments improvement programme, we will drive forward activity to **improve the diversity of Scotland's boardrooms**, including outreach activity with disabled people and minority ethnic communities.

'I remember being in residential care; being put in a queue to go to the toilet; being forced to eat something I hated; being given help by someone I disliked intensely; and being told when to go to bed. Now, I live in my own home, having retired as a senior social work manager. I decide who should provide the practical support I need. I am also part of the civic and cultural life of my local community. Without the years of campaigning alongside other disabled activists for such a lifestyle, I'd probably still be isolated back in that queue to go to the toilet.'

Dr Jim Elder-Woodward OBE

'In recognising the importance of promoting equality for all and in particular for those who face daily discrimination due to disability, South Lanarkshire Council has taken the step of creating a spokesperson for disabled people. This elected member role ensures that consideration of the views and needs of those facing some of the greatest challenges in our communities is at the heart of our decision making process.'

Councillor Gerry Convery
South Lanarkshire Council spokesperson for disabled people and Chair of Finance and Corporate Resources Committee

Measuring progress

Next steps

We will host a roundtable discussion early in 2017 with disabled people and the organisations that represent them, so that together, we identify our first priorities for action and our timescales. This reflects the strong collaboration we have had to date, and our intention to continue to work with disabled people to identify solutions and make real, measurable progress.

Reporting on progress

We will report on progress through:

- a) the UN Committee for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for the periodic examination of the UK in 2017;
- b) the Fairer Scotland progress report to be published in 2019; and
- c) the Mainstreaming Equality Report also due for publication in 2019.

We will ensure that there is opportunity for disabled people to hold us to account on progress with this Plan by:

- Establishing disabled people's panels covering each of the ambitions in early 2017. These will provide expert advice from disabled people and the organisations that represent them to inform implementation of key actions, and to agree how progress will be measured.
- A survey of disabled people in mid-2018 to gather evidence of the impact of our actions.
- Annual Disability Summits, to look at progress.
- A Major Disability Summit to be held in 2020 which will look ahead to the next parliamentary session.
- The panels, survey and results of the Disability Summit will feed into a progress report to be laid before Parliament in early 2021 to determine where we need to focus our efforts in the 2021-2026 parliamentary session.

We will work closely with disabled people and the organisations that represent them to develop the detail of our approach to measuring progress, including the design and delivery of the survey, the panels and the summit.

Work already underway

2016 is the 20th anniversary of the Disability Discrimination Act and marks 10 years since the UK adopted the UNCRPD. This Delivery Plan is rooted in the UNCRPD and recognises that the human rights of disabled people must underpin all of our activity across the whole range of policy and legislation which affects disabled people. We have used the Convention as a lever for change since it was ratified and will continue to do so.

We have made progress since these landmark events, and this Delivery Plan builds on the firm foundations of work already underway. The Delivery Plan also provides the connection between these different areas of work and establishes the overarching ambitions of our work on disability issues and our use of the social model of disability.

Support Services that meet disabled people's needs

We have already developed a number of relevant strategies for example on autism, dementia, learning disability, sensory impairment and carers. These are designed to improve the services available to disabled people and to promote independent living. This Delivery Plan is strongly aligned to the Fairer Scotland Action Plan, which is focused on tackling inequality and creating a more inclusive Scotland. It is also closely linked to the Scottish National Action Plan on Human Rights.

We are determined to address the inequalities experienced by particular groups. We have invested £5.4 million over two years to improve learning disability services in Scotland. In the area of mental health, we have taken action to improve access to treatment; reduce waiting times; and improve the workforce. NHSScotland's expenditure on mental health has increased by 3.4% since 2011-2012 and represents 12% of total NHS spending. The British Sign Language (BSL) (Scotland) Act 2015 is now being taken forward with a national action plan to be published in October 2017. This will set out our strategy for promoting and supporting BSL and our expectation of what other public bodies should do to ensure greater equality for people whose first or preferred language is BSL.

We are supporting disabled children and young people and their families from birth, through school and into the world of work. The Getting It Right for Every Child framework ensures that all services and agencies working with disabled children deliver a coordinated approach that is proportionate and timely. National guidance for education authorities will improve the school experience and outcomes for disabled pupils. Additional Support for Learning ensures every pupil receives support to suit their circumstances.

Decent incomes and fairer working lives

We are developing and promoting supported employment – a place and train model which enables people to learn on the job with support from colleagues and a job coach.

We are doing all we can, within the resources and powers we have, to help disabled people who are disproportionately affected by welfare reform. We invested around £296 million over the period 2013-2014 to 2015-2016 to limit the damaging effects of the cuts and changes being imposed by Westminster and to mitigate the bedroom tax.

The Welfare Funds (Scotland) Act 2015 came into force in April 2016, placing the Scottish Welfare fund into law and putting a duty on each local authority to maintain a welfare fund. Priority will be given to applicants with additional needs, including disabled people and those with terminal illnesses. And in relation to equality for disabled people in the workplace, the Supported Business Framework will continue to ensure that these businesses can thrive and provide employment opportunities for disabled people.

We have safeguarded support for 2,899 disabled people across Scotland, by setting up a new Independent Living Fund for Scotland, from 1 July 2015 when the UK Government scrapped their fund. In addition to protecting the funding for existing users, we are providing an extra £5 million of funding in 2015-2016 to open the fund to new applicants. The Self-directed Support (SDS) Act and the 10-year SDS Strategy backed by £46.2 million over five years (2011-2016) will give disabled people greater control over their lives.

Places that are great to live in

We are taking action and providing investment to remove barriers and improve access to housing and transport. We are testing fundamental changes to the delivery and funding arrangements for housing adaptations which will help shape new guidance.

Improvements in building standards are helping to address accessibility issues when new building work takes place, although much more needs to be done to ensure existing houses and other buildings can be accessed by all.

We are investing heavily in accessible transport solutions and looking at disabled parking within a wider review of parking generally. Concessionary travel is now a well-established practice across the country.

Opening up access to Scotland for disabled tourists has been underway for some time. Tourism is an important global market and provides benefits to disabled Scots also.

Protected rights

Equally Safe, Scotland's strategy to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls, is considering specific actions to address the issues facing disabled women and girls. We will be engaging with Disabled People's Organisations as part of this work.

The Equality Act 2010 provides protection for disabled people experiencing discrimination and in Scotland we have developed strong duties on public authorities to support their work on advancing equality. These help to ensure that the decisions taken by public bodies are fair and that equality is considered fully as part of business and service delivery. The next reports on progress are due in April 2017 at which time public bodies will also be refreshing and publishing their equality outcomes.

The Human Rights Act 1998 is an important piece of legislation for disabled people. We have strongly resisted any moves to repeal this legislation and we are resolute that there should be no deterioration in the rights and protections for Scotland's people.

Active participation

We provided resources for an access to elected office fund for prospective candidates for the Scottish local government elections in 2017. We want to build on this work to ensure Scotland's elected officials more closely reflect the diversity of Scotland. Further, we have provided funding for internships with all the political parties and are encouraging parties to become more aware of the barriers disabled people face and to address them.

Much has already been done to change the way we work in government. We are focused on getting the best outcomes for people and must engage those with lived experience if policies and programmes are to be as relevant and effective as possible. This approach is particularly relevant as we develop Scotland's new social security system – a system we are determined should be based on dignity and respect. **Going Further: Scotland's Accessible Travel Framework** is a positive example of disabled people and their representatives helping to shape the agenda and producing the results. 'Nothing About Us Without Us!' is the basis for the co-production with disabled people in Scotland.

The actions set out in this Disability Delivery Plan are complementary to these and many other programmes of work already underway which have a positive impact on disabled people. In some cases there is potential for these programmes to do more or work differently, so that they better meet the needs of disabled people and we will look for opportunities to make these changes.

So while there is much more we need to do in the current parliamentary term and beyond to create a fairer Scotland for disabled people across Scotland, we are building on firm foundations. Our ambitions are long term but the actions here that we will take forward, together with the wide range of existing work, will make a real difference. We will continue to work with disabled people to ensure they hold us to account.

'We've still got a long way to go in terms of achieving full equality for disabled people but let me tell you, having lived through the past decades with my disability and witnessing how far we've come so far, I couldn't be prouder to call Scotland my home and I'm full of hope for the next generation.'

Jen Robertson
Disabled person, Ayr



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