



Passionate
about
possibilities.

Annual Report 2022

- supporting and connecting local people





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Thank you to all our 2022 funders and donors

A message from our Chief Executive Officer

Welcome to our Annual Report in a year when we emerged into the light after the challenges of the last two years! It was with great sadness that we lost our Chair, Glen, a stalwart at DIAL for many years, first as a volunteer and then a trustee, before becoming chair. His loss will be felt by all that knew him.

We also bid a fond farewell to our long-standing Business Development Manager, Jill after 21 years of dedicated service. Our thanks and best wishes go to Jill and her family for a long and happy retirement!

We have restructured our Management Team and welcomed new staff including Aimi, our new Social Inclusion Worker, Charlotte our new Volunteer Training and Support Officer and Eleanor who will shortly join us as Marketing & Communications Officer. Congratulations also to Nicola who was rightly promoted to Business Support Officer.

We have had new investment in new services including South Yorkshire Community Foundation Green Social Prescribing to launch Green Connections and North Area Council to support our social isolation service, Connect Together. The National Lottery supported us to start a new journey of recruiting apprentices to fill the skills gap in the advice sector over the coming years.

We have worked closely with Barnsley Council, Age UK Barnsley and Think Local Act Personal to deliver Co-Production workshops with local disabled people and carers in order for them to influence new ways of working and co-design a new vision for Adult Social Care in Barnsley.

My grateful thanks as ever to all staff, trustees and volunteers. As Isaac Newton once said "I have seen further because I have been standing on the shoulders of giants"



A message from our Chair of Trustees

I am proud to welcome you to our Annual Report. That I should be doing this is, of course, tinged with sadness following the loss of our long-standing chair, Glen Gascoigne. His contribution to DIAL will be greatly missed and I hope that I can live up to Glen's example.

2022 has, thankfully, been a more "normal" year, with our staff and volunteers able to again meet face-to-face with people who need our services. However, it's pleasing that DIAL has learnt lessons from the pandemic, too, continuing to adapt ways of working to meet demands. Our staff and volunteers deserve huge credit for this, and for the resilience they have shown in challenging circumstances.

The new trustees appointed in 2022 are certainly contributing massively to moving DIAL forward, bringing new skills, ideas and connections that can be used to develop services. At the same time, the new staff appointments we have made will greatly strengthen DIAL's ability to support the local community. Those demands are only increasing with the current cost of living concerns that people have, and I'm pleased that DIAL can do its bit to provide access to support. Equally pleasing is the feedback from service users that shows how well-regarded DIAL is.

I am pleased that partners want to involve DIAL in the design of services for people with disabilities. This, and the continued success in funding bids, shows the value of the work done by DIAL, not just in 2022 but over recent years.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to delivering our services and to everyone who has supported us over the last year.





About DIAL

Our aims

- To improve access to information, advice and guidance so disabled people, their families and carers have increased understanding and are better informed to make choices
- To increase access to opportunities for disabled people, their families and carers to achieve their potential
- To reduce social isolation of disabled people, their families and carers
- To increase the opportunities for disabled people, their families and carers to have healthy lifestyles

Our vision

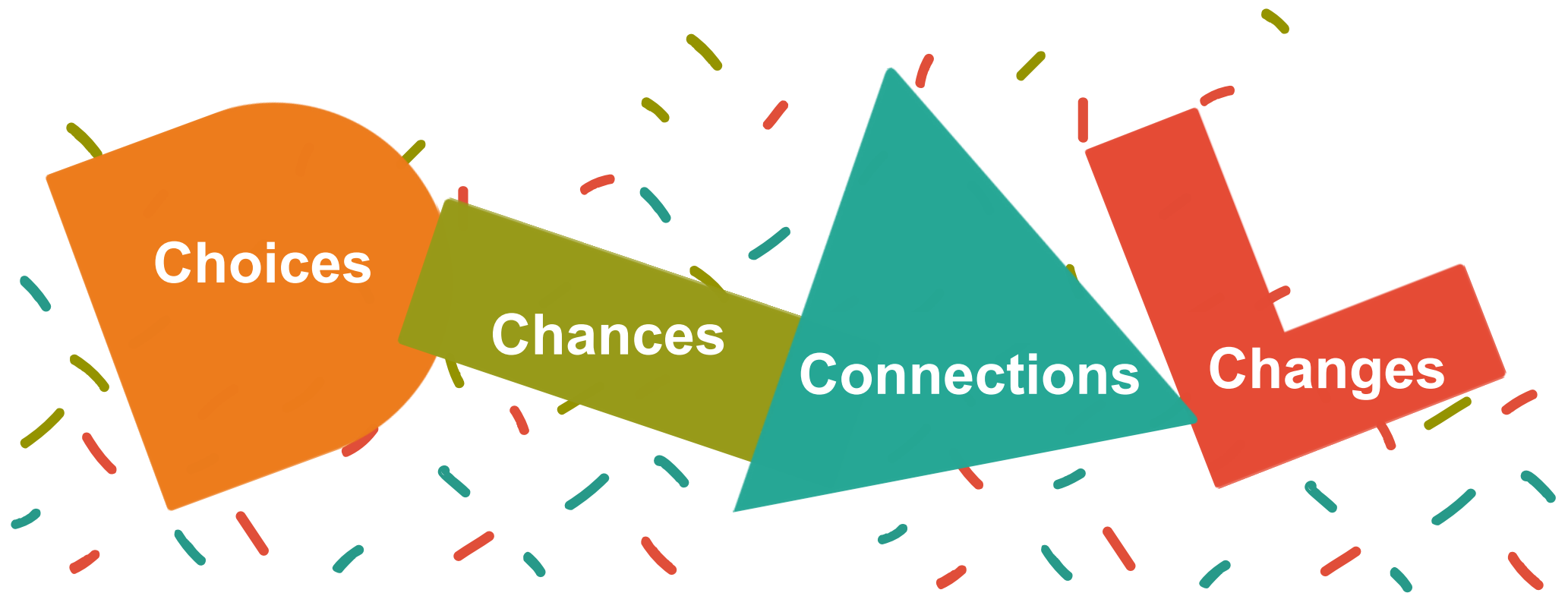
A Community that is truly inclusive

Our mission

To support and empower disabled people, their families and carers to address poverty and social exclusion and improve their health and wellbeing



DIAL Services and Achievements



Choices – Our information and advice services

- **Advice line**
- **Welfare Benefits Support**
- **Community Outreach**
- **Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS)**
- **Warm Connections**

Our 2022 achievements

- We were re-awarded the Quality Performance Mark for excellence in delivering our Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS)
- Our advice team were re-awarded the Advice Quality Standard for delivering excellence in advice
- We continued to receive funding to deliver our outreach services from: Penistone Area Council, Dearne Area Council, Central Area Council, North Area Council and Royston Ward Alliance
- We secured £196,339 in funding from The National Lottery Community Fund to support our Advice Line, increase volunteering opportunities and to provide apprenticeships
- We were able to launch Warm Connections borough wide in June, focussing on an energy advice service, thanks to the Energy Redress Fund
- We supported 4,670 local residents with advice and generated £5.1 million in unclaimed benefits
- We delivered 75 winter warm packs to Penistone residents
- Our ICAS service has had 109 referrals this year and 2736 individual contacts have been made

Central Area Outreach Case Study

Before DIAL

Mr B is a 55 year old man who had mental health issues for many years. He lived with his elderly mum and was her carer. She had recently passed away and this had worsened his mental health issues. He was getting help from bereavement counselling and this was helping a little, but he was still very depressed and had very little motivation. His counsellor advised him to make a claim for Personal Independence Payment.

Advice provided by DIAL

Mr B came to see us at our outreach at Kendray and we helped him to complete the PIP2 form. Mr B contacted us a few months later to tell us that his claim had been refused. We booked him an appointment at our outreach in Kendray to help him with a letter for Mandatory Reconsideration of the PIP decision. He contacted us again a few months later to inform us that the Mandatory Reconsideration had also been refused, despite him sending further evidence from his bereavement counsellor. We saw him again at Kendray outreach and helped him complete the SSCS1 form to ask for an appeal. We went through the case with him, and the response from PIP, and it was clear that the DWP had not made an accurate assessment of how Mr B is affected by his mental health issues. The DWP seemed to believe that Mr B was bereaved but did not have severe mental health issues. We restated the case and explained why we disagreed with this opinion.

After DIAL

The PIP decision was overturned at appeal and Mr B now receives standard rate daily living of £679.90 a month.

Mr B said, "I was very upset when my PIP wasn't awarded, it looked like they didn't believe anything I told them. The help I got from DIAL was brilliant and I am very pleased that I was eventually believed by the judge at tribunal."



Chances - Our learning and involvement services

- **Volunteering**
- **Training**
- **Trusteeship**

Our 2022 achievements

- 14 volunteers helped deliver our services. They helped out on our advice line, delivered winter warm packs and supported our advisors at outreach
- 3 volunteers are back in the community, helping out at our weekly outreaches
- 5 new trustees were recruited, representative of the community we serve
- Our volunteers contributed over 873 hours to DIAL
- We celebrated Volunteers Week with a garden party at Locke Park and gave each volunteer a 'thank you' goody bag
- The value of volunteer work is estimated at £11,960



Volunteer Case Study

Mrs E made contact with DIAL about volunteering in May 2019. Mrs E had an interest in providing volunteering support in Finance to help her increase her knowledge, support her training and increase employment opportunities.

During her time with DIAL, Mrs E volunteered two hours per week to provide support, initially, to the CEO and then to a newly appointed Finance & Monitoring Officer. In addition to learning how to use DIAL's financial software package (QuickBooks), her tasks included the input of income receipts, supplier expenditure and staff and volunteer expenses to the Financial System. Mrs E also completed a number of periodic bank reconciliations and support in updating monthly figures from reports generated in QuickBooks to the Management Accounts.

Despite the challenges of the lock-down situation in the Covid crisis, Mrs E maintained her commitment to DIAL, she was always responsive to communications with an eagerness to support remotely if this was possible. She was committed to DIAL, always attended on the days that she had offered to volunteer and was willing to learn new things to help in developing her skills and knowledge. Mrs E participated in relevant training and attended volunteer meetings to receive updates about DIAL and to provide an opportunity for volunteers to discuss challenges and future opportunities.

Mrs E has used her experience at DIAL to secure two part-time paid opportunities at Disability Sheffield and with the High Green Development Trust. We at DIAL, wish Mrs E all the very best in her future endeavours.

Mrs E said "I would like to take this opportunity, with great sadness, to say that I won't be able to continue volunteering at DIAL. I will miss you all, but I won't forget the help that I had from DIAL. DIAL opened a door that I thought never existed on my journey. Thank you for believing in me, you always had confidence in me and always encouraged me. Without gaining the experience at DIAL, I would not have been able to get the jobs I'm working on now."

Connections – Our social inclusion services

- **Connect Together**

Our 2022 achievements

- 85 people attended our Connect Together events
- Over 70 safe and well check calls to members
- 10 monthly events
- 17 social groups
- We gave away approximately 33 slow cookers at our Crisis Support Sessions
- We gave away Christmas goody bags which included Christmas cards, puddings, crackers, decorations and chocolates
- We held four 'Grab a Gift' gift swap events



Connect Together Case Study

Stanley and Pearl were an unmarried couple both in their 60's. Stanley had several health conditions and mobility issues meaning he relied heavily on Pearl to provide care and take him out to appointments. As well as providing care for Stanley, Pearl has her own health issues and works part time on a market stall. All these factors impacted on their ability to socialise, making them more socially isolated. We contacted the couple and arranged a home visit to discuss Connect Together in more detail.

At the home visit, the couple were both very open and honest about how isolated they felt, especially since Covid. We explained that the aim of Connect Together was to help those that are socially isolated feel more included in their community, provide a safe place to meet new people and make friends, learn new skills, and share experiences.

They attended their first session and both really enjoyed it and engaged well. Stanley said that he felt in touch with a lot of inner feelings. However, before the next session, Pearl contacted us to let us know that Stanley had died suddenly at home. We told Pearl to take her time before returning to the group.

We kept in touch with Pearl over the telephone. In these conversations, Pearl disclosed that she was struggling for money, as she had not received any SSP from her employer, was not claiming any form of benefits, and was struggling to pay her rent and bills. We informed Pearl of our outreach in her area, and referred her to a benefits advisor. A couple of weeks after Stanley's funeral, Pearl said that she would like to start attending the group again. We gave her the details of a Cost of Living support event that Connect Together was running. Pearl attended the event and reconnected with old friends, despite being nervous about it being a larger group.

Since then, Pearl has returned to work on a part time basis and continues to engage well with Connect Together and other group members, and regularly attends coffee mornings. By attending Connect Together Pearl has made new friends and reconnected with old ones, she has felt supported and valued, gained the confidence to attend a bereavement support café, and feels less isolated.

Changes

Changes – Our healthy lifestyle service

- **Green Connections**

Our 2022 achievements

We held 25 Green Connections sessions, including:

- Nature walks around Locke Park, Worsbrough Mill, RSPB Old Moor Wetland Centre and Elsecar Reservoir
- Historical exploration and talks at Barnsley Heritage Site and Sandal Castle
- Horticulture activities at Owd Martha's Yard and the YMCA garden
- Nature inspired poetry writing and art

We carried out over 40 hours of safe and well checks, calling clients on a weekly basis





Green Connections Case Study

Mr H came to Green Connections (GC) as a self referral. He previously attended Men Utd and wanted to build on the circle of friends he'd acquired. He experiences many physical challenges which impact on his mental and emotional wellbeing.

Mr H attends the GC sessions centred around horticulture activities as and when doctors and hospital appointments allow. He is open about his struggles yet maintains a sense of humour that brings a certain uniqueness to GC activities. His vast and interesting life experiences means he is knowledgeable in many things, in particular local history and heritage. He is a wonderful orator and teller of tales, much enjoyed by the group. When Mr H can't attend, he is missed by the others.

In recent weeks Mr H's life took an unexpected turn impacting further on his mental and emotional health. In a conversation with our GC facilitator he said, "I can't see a way through this, what's it all been for? I should be enjoying my 60's!" Mr H talked at length about his situation, becoming quite emotional and verging on panic attacks as his breathing became laboured, something he experiences on a day to day basis. Having just moved into a home more suited to his health needs two days prior to his life changing, much of his concerns centred around the benefits he received and if he would be allowed to remain in his new (yet unfurnished) home.

Our GC facilitator made calls to other members of the DIAL team who specialise in benefit support. Within the day, many of Mr H's questions were answered; he was signposted and registered with a number of support agencies locally and he had spoken with colleagues from DIAL who had reassured him that there was in fact 'a way through this'. Mr H now has the appropriate agencies, and individuals within those agencies, walking his journey with him.

In a recent conversation with our GC facilitator, Mr H's demeanour had changed for the better. He often champions our work and does his utmost to recruit at every opportunity; his brother is now a recently signed up member of the group.

This case study illustrates the importance of multi agency, collaborative working, the role the third sector plays within our communities, and the need to continue to explore innovative ways to seek out those that will benefit from our services most. Mr H said that engaging in GC activities has helped him to get more support for the challenges that he faces and that he feels more confident that his situation can and will improve.

Challenges

Volunteering with DIAL

This year we recruited our new Volunteer Training & Support Officer, Charlotte Sykes, who started with us at the beginning of September.

A big thankyou to our 14 volunteers who contributed 873 hours of support to their communities by telephone and in the community, delivering winter warm packs and supporting our advisors at outreach.

We celebrated Volunteers Week this year again by hosting a garden party at Locke Park. We enjoyed a picnic buffet and each volunteer took home a thank you gift bag.

We provided First Contact training in November for volunteers, as well as regular safe and well checks.

The value of volunteer work is estimated at £11,960

"I'm in my second stint as a volunteer. I started just before the first lockdown in the role of First Contact then over the last few months I moved into the role of outreach. I came back as I needed something to do after taking early retirement due to ill health and feeling that I needed to give something back to the local community"

Glen

"I choose to volunteer to pay back the wonderful support that DIAL gave to me when I needed it. Thank you to everyone at DIAL"

Anne

"I have been helped by DIAL in the past and again more recently. I wanted to give something back"

Linda



Services

A Spotlight on **Warm Connections**

The current cost of living crisis and high inflation means a larger proportion of people's income is going towards their energy costs. Our Warm Connections case workers are needed more than ever to ensure that people do not get into debt and can efficiently and economically keep their homes warm. Our core aim is to prevent cold homes which can, and does, lead to poor physical and mental illness.

We work one-to-one with clients, either over the phone or in their home. Over this past year we have offered advice to tackle fuel debt, talked to energy suppliers on behalf of customers, applied for discounts and grants and helped clients to maximise their income via government cost of living payments.

We continue to work with partner agencies locally and borough wide in a coordinated approach to support the residents of Barnsley - this includes attendance at events.

"I was worried about my energy debt and had just not paid anything for quite a while, since our local Post Office closed...with the help of DIAL's Warm Connections, I am now paying a regular affordable amount which includes something towards my debt. This is a big relief to me. It was affecting my health"

The social return on investment is £58.70 for every £1 invested

We delivered 75 winter warm packs to Penistone residents

We have helped over 140 clients access Warm Homes discounts

We attended over 10 events between June and December, promoting the Warm Connections service as well as DIAL as a whole

Energy Redress Scheme

A Spotlight on **Connect Together**

From our 2022 Service User Consultation survey, over 70% of respondents said they wanted us to provide social groups where they could meet people and learn new skills; over 90% said they wanted to improve their mental wellbeing. Our Connect Together service aims to reduce social isolation by providing social groups which meet the needs and wants of our clients, which is why we have established crafting groups where attendees can learn new skills, as well as coffee groups where people can talk and share in a safe environment.

Our service is for residents who live in the North area of Barnsley. As well as our various social groups and regular safe and well calls to members, we also hold monthly events. This year we ran four Crisis Support Sessions where we gave away slow cookers and other winter warm items. For Christmas, we held gift swap events and a Christmas Giveaway event where attendees took home Christmas goody bags.

We have established fruitful working relationships with venues and community centres in the North, providing groups and events to meet the needs of their residents. We will continue to promote the service throughout the area via our professional contacts, social media and distribution of leaflets.

**"I'm very happy,
thank you for a
good session today"**

**"I really enjoyed the
meet up; it brought
out a lot of inner
feelings"**

**"Looking forward
to coming again"**

"Very enjoyable with lovely people, a welcoming safe place to meet together and make new friends. Aimi is lovely and very friendly and welcoming"

Making a difference

- what our service users have said

*Almost 100% of clients said the person they spoke to on the Advice Line had the knowledge required to deal with their enquiry

“ [Advice was] absolutely brilliant and couldn't have been any better. 110% [happy with advice]. Definitely without question [would use DIAL services again] ”

“ The contact I have had with Jeff has led to getting support in other areas of my life. Staff at DIAL have helped me through a very difficult time in my life, I am very grateful ”

*80% said they felt empowered after using the outreach

“ Very impressed with service. I had a call back within hours with all the advice and information I needed at a difficult time. Thank you ”

*100% said the person they spoke to was friendly

100% gave our ICAS service a satisfaction level of 10/10

“ A really great [Connect Together] session today; looking forward to coming again! ”

*100% would use our outreach services again

“ I thoroughly enjoy meeting up with Green Connections. We see some locations that I normally wouldn't go to, which is great ”

“ Without DIAL's support I would be lost! Keep up the great work, you're all amazing ”

*Almost 75% said that they felt more empowered after speaking to someone on our Advice Line

Financial Position

Total Income for
2021-2022 is

£296,283

The Board has reserved £72,218 in
unrestricted funds to meet 3
months salary and running costs

And a £10,000
contingency in the event of
an emergency event

Total
reserves:
£136,644

Reserves help to cover
future running costs in the
event of a lack of funding

The Board set aside
£49,646 as Infrastructure
Development Fund

Total expenditure
for the year 2021-
2022 is £278,621

We received
£1,346 in Public
Donations



Thank you to all our 2022 funders



We also received funding from:

Royston Ward Alliance
Postcode Neighbourhood Trust
Shaw Lands Trust
Arnold Clark & Partners
Public Donations



Energy
Redress
Scheme





'Supporting and connecting local people'



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