



**User-Led Organisation  
Wave 2 Site  
Recommendations**

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**A Summary of the  
Recommendations from All  
of the Products Produced  
by SCIL as part of our ULO  
Development Work during  
2009-2010**

# ULO Learning Product Recommendations Summary

**Organisation:** *Southampton Centre for Independent Living CIC*

**Name of report:** *A summary of the recommendations from the products we produced as a ULO Action and Learning Site*

**Summary of report:** *The aim of this report is to consolidate the recommendations from all of our ULO products into one document for ease of reading. These recommendations will be prioritised and then properly resourced to ensure SCIL implements the learning from our research.*

**Contact details for further information:**

Telephone: 023 8033 0982

Minicom: 023 8020 2649

Fax: 023 8020 2648

Address: Unity 12, 9-19 Rose Road, Southampton. SO14 6TE

Email: [Info@SouthamptonCIL.co.uk](mailto:Info@SouthamptonCIL.co.uk)

Visit our website for more information of our ULO work and SCIL in general:  
[WWW.SouthamptonCIL.co.uk](http://WWW.SouthamptonCIL.co.uk)

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## Summary of Product Aims:

- **Product 1 - LGBT Diversity Toolkit:** *A Diversity Toolkit – Focused on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transsexual Groups (LGBT)*
- **Product 2 - Supporting Carers:** *A Carers Toolkit – How Can ULO's meet the different needs of Disabled People and Carers?*
- **Product 3-4 Decision Making in ULOs:** *A toolkit to enable the active involvement of constituents in decision making of ULO's. **NB: This product consists of a FULL report and a SUMMARY report***
- **Product 5 - Building Sustainability Through Personal Development:** *Demonstrating how ULO's build sustainability through human empowerment and personal development.*
- **Product 6 - Becoming and Staying Tender Ready:** *Becoming & staying tender ready: Understand tendering regulations and how to optimise your uniqueness.*
- **Product 7 - Website and Information Development for ULOs:** *Developing website and other Internet information resources to enable ULO's to communicate better.*

## **Product 1 - LGBT Diversity Toolkit: Recommendations**

1. Develop a diversity image bank which ULOs can use in leaflets / publicity to illustrate the diverse range of service users that may benefit from their support.
2. Develop a comprehensive section in the induction pack to cover diversity issues covering language, harassment and hate crime, cultural considerations.
3. Consider expanding current mandatory Disability Equality Training provided to all personnel to include all 7 equality strands
4. Develop specialist diversity networks across ULOs in order to share good practice and offer specialist advice. This may be of particular benefit to developing ULOs or ULOs in rural areas where diverse communities may be less apparent.
5. Develop a training pack that focuses specifically on issues arising from multiple oppression.
6. Update SCIL's equal opportunities monitoring form to include section on religion / belief.

## **Product 2 - Supporting Carers: Recommendations**

1. SCIL's current model of working in partnership with a Carers-led organisation to enable it to deal with potential conflicts of interest between Disabled People and Carers, evidently works and is considered a model of good practice. Both organisations would benefit from developing this working arrangement and considering widening the relationship to including with Carer-Led organisations (particularly young Carers groups in the future.

2. In terms of project management, better care should be taken to allocate work in accordance with individuals experience, skills and abilities, to boost motivation.
3. Consider timescales for extra work, and how this will fit with existing workloads.
4. For small projects (this one totalled 70 hours expected work), I question the value of attending the overall project steering group in terms of time management, empowerment and good usage of time for those involved.

## Product 3-4 Decision Making in ULOs: Recommendations

This workstream prioritised their recommendations into 5 areas, as per the following 5 pages:

### 1. Involvement:

Priority	Recommendation	1(easy) to 5 (hard)
One	Proactive approaches in ensuring groups facilitated by SCIL are kept informed of SCIL's current work/activities. Ensure groups are made aware of membership availability and the MC role.	<b>1</b>
Two	SCIL to ensure that the necessary resources are in place to facilitate the active involvement of all it's constituents in it's work and decision making processes i.e. Friendship Club and volunteer meeting places that serve their purposes.	<b>2</b>
= Three	Offer Personal Development with Disability Equality Training to constituents to equip them with the knowledge to make informed decisions based on social model and Independent Living principles and the confidence to become actively	<b>3</b>

	involved with the organisation.	
= Three	Improve upon SCIL's supervision procedures for MC, staff and volunteers in particular relation to identifying training and development needs and opportunities.	<b>3</b>
Five	Ensure SCIL identifies in their induction procedures what all staff and volunteers need in terms of baseline skills i.e. IT.	<b>1</b>

## 2. Information/Communication/Outreach:

Priority	Recommendation	1(easy) to 5 (hard)
One	Ensure the continued use of the telephone, letter writing/audio transcription and personal contact etc. as not everyone has access to computers and high tech communication methods.	<b>2</b>
Two	Proactively 'outreach' to service users about the work of the organisation (services and activities), any support available to access them and how they could get involved.	<b>1</b>
Three	SCIL to make information provision more effective throughout the organisation and externally, by knowing it's constituents, and offering a range of communication options, leading to a 'culture' of good information provision.	<b>3</b>
Four	For SCIL to always feedback to constituents when they have been asked to be involved with any work of the organisation i.e. this research. This values their work and informs them of how their views have led to change.	<b>1</b>
Five	Regular seminars for constituents on current issues/policy changes	<b>2</b>

### 3. SCIL Membership:

Priority	Recommendation	1(easy) to 5 (hard)
One	Use the building more effectively by holding open days and inviting the community in to visit us.	2
Two	For the membership secretary to be more than an administrative role but a proactive role that seeks to increase the membership and deal with membership issues and communications.	4
Three	Annual General Meeting (AGM), ensure the members have all the information to elect the MC. Provide 'pen picture' with biography and picture prior to the AGM and enough information to make an informed decision about the potential nominee.	1
Four	To hold regular open meetings on specific topics to encourage membership consultation on important issues of the day affecting SCIL.	2
Five	Membership 'induction' process from telling people about the work of the organisation in the first instance and what SCIL has to offer them and then the organisation, instead of just sending out the constitutional documents (need to be in a language accessible to all), to ensure that new members get to 'know' SCIL!	3

### 4. Vibrant Management Committee:

Priority	Recommendation	1(easy) to 5 (hard)
One	Recruit more people onto the MC with the skills to undertake the role. Consider recruitment process rather than whoever wants to join the MC can approach.	4
Two	For SCIL to review the whole structure of MC meetings i.e. timings and length of meetings.	4
Three	For the MC to identify training opportunities in relation to their specific duties of governance, in	4

	addition Leadership and Management training.	
Four	For the MC to draw up a strategic plan for the next 3-5 years, involving all its stakeholders, set priorities from the plan for all the organisation to follow so that the organisations future direction is mapped out. Bearing in mind that interim plans would need to be an option.	5
Five	Ensure members actually know what the MC role entails so that they can make an informed decision about joining or not i.e. produce a 'fact-sheet'/leaflet outlying the role of the MC and its responsibilities and circulate to members.	1

## 5. Making decisions about SCIL's finances:

Priority	Recommendation	1(easy) to 5 (hard)
One	Need a proactive Treasurer to guide the organisation and the MC in particular in making financial decisions.	4
Two	Ensure the membership is given clear information about the current sources of funding and how money is being spent in the Annual General Report.	1
Three	MC, staff to take responsibility to inform those working on the accounts for the specific information they require making specific financial decisions.	1
Four	Training to relevant staff on generating financial reports from the current software.	2
Five	Consider using the Treasurer or other trainer to teach constituents the principles of understanding the accounts information.	1

# **Product 5 - Building Sustainability Through Personal Development: Recommendations:**

## **Learning Outcomes and Products**

These are many and it will be difficult to capture them all at this point as more time is need to assimilate the paperwork, people's experiences etc. there is still considerable follow-up work in order to develop a resource pack and toolkit that captures this learning and makes the next stage even more productive.

We have to maintain the Forum, part of whose work will be to sustain the interest and progress of young people.

## **DVD**

The weekend was filmed by film makers, it is currently being edited and finalised. This will be produced for all the participants and copies for our use in promoting personal development as a way forward for young Disabled People.

They also provided the young people with two cameras to make 'video diaries'. Footage will be captured from this too!

## **The Premiere**

We are planning a viewing of the film to happen late April/early May to which we will invite all potentially interested parties to celebrate what the young people did and look forward to the future.

## **Learning all round and positive outcomes for all**

That if such a successful and beneficial experience can come out of something planned under so many constraints, what couldn't we do next time around?

Everyone learnt from the project – beginning to now (we are not at the end) – and have been empowered enough YDP to want to do more which should be a fantastic opportunity for these people, and for SCIL. A win-win, which is what it is all about!

Effective project management and team work – out of which, some planning tools and processes will be developed.

Last minute changes – the need for contingency plans, but also evidencing that people generally have skills that can be called upon to deal with unexpected matters, and it is my belief that some people experienced

problem solving for real and this is part of personal and professional development.

The mechanics e.g. insurance, CRBs, bookings etc. – these are the time consuming and troublesome issues – a checklist with a time line will help with this but also people with specific roles and responsibilities need to be developed for future events.

Catering – lots of lessons learned. We bought too much food for a start! If we are to self-cater we need to consider it more as a feature, than as part of the routine.

Activities – more consideration and negotiation required with venues.

Personal development is not really just about the input it is primarily about the quality of the whole experience and relationships created during the process. Most of these are 'soft' outcomes which are difficult to measure, but have the long-lasting impact. As I reflect and remember my own youth as a very disempowered young Disabled Person, I was reminded of similar events I had attended, which were not run and controlled by Disabled People, and how fundamental these were to my development. How much greater will the impact be for these young people to know that they too, tomorrow, can be the leaders?

### **Yesterday, today, tomorrow and the day after**

*"We learn, when we respect the dignity of the people, that they cannot be denied the elementary right to participate fully in the solutions to their own problems. Self-respect arises only out of people who play an active role in solving their own crises and who are not helpless, passive, puppet-like recipients of private or public services. To give people help, while denying them a significant part of the action, contributes nothing to the development of the individual. In the deepest sense, it is not giving but taking - taking their dignity. Denial of the opportunity for participation is the denial of human dignity and democracy. It will not work." Saul D. Alinsky, (1971) 'Rules for Radicals'*

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This message awakened many Disabled People in the eighties and nineties to their cause.

For me it remains the fundamental truth that we, and all those that purport to support our empowerment, need to recall. Without self-determination, emancipation and empowerment will remain a dream. The set might change and the costumes differ but the plot stays the same, while the actors read the script and dutifully follow their cues.

Unless and until the actors improvise, change their roles, relationships indeed the story itself...

What we believe that we are doing is small but significant, providing opportunities for people to stop and dare to try!

We have many ideas of how to take it forward. These include developing a programme of annual events which could be promoted as alternatives to 'respite' as well as opportunities for developing the confidence and ability to live independently both in relation to our definition, choice and control, and to the more traditional approach, the physical, financial and social skills set required to manage a home and day to day living.

## **Product 6 - Becoming and Staying Tender Ready: Recommendations**

1. Create and disseminate a clear strategy for future resourcing of SCIL with clear position on tendering.
2. Test and improve the checklist.
3. Resource the further development of this piece of work to develop a practical toolkit and its maintenance.
4. Establish and resource a systematic review of all governing documentation, policy and procedure and all financial and legal processes and related documentation to enable up to date information to be readily available for tendering.

## **Product 7 - Website and Information Development for ULOs: Recommendations**

**Development of an Intranet:** SCIL could improve the information provision for staff, volunteers and members through the development of a mini-intranet. An intranet would work as an online server for people to gain access to induction packs, policy & procedures, expense forms, timesheets, SCIL's promotional material and anything else staff and volunteers might find useful, but would not be relevant to general visitors to the main website.

**Specialist / Premium content:** SCIL could consider developing specialist content for members, or maybe others, which was only accessible via a password. This would give SCIL the opportunity to develop premium content to encourage more people to become members.

**Better website design skills:** More staff to go onto website design courses, this will increase the knowledge base and supply the organisation with a broader range of opinions and ideas.

**Better graphics:** Investigate commissioning graphics for main buttons / links.

**Encouraging staff to undertake one-off project work:** Staff members to think about how much time they can dedicate to extra project work, from a personal point of view there can be conflict between a current role and extra project work. Staff to be more aware.

**Centralising core information:** The introduction of one place where core information and non confidential data to be keep is essential.

**More website interactivity:** The website and information provision should keep on progressing, by making the website more interactive.

**Social Networking:** SCIL currently uses YouTube and Facebook on a limited basis and Twitter not at all. Explore better use of these and other social networking opportunities to improve involvement opportunities.