



Three Year Strategic Plan

2022-2025

Inclusion Gloucestershire

INCLUSION
GLOUCESTERSHIRE

BIGGER DREAMS ► BETTER LIVES ► BRIGHTER FUTURES

Introduction

Since Inclusion Gloucestershire's formation in 2016, we have established a strong, thriving Disabled People's User Led Organisation, working to further inclusion and champion the voice of people facing disabling barriers across Gloucestershire and beyond. This strategy sets out our plans and vision for the next three years; a pivotal time for us as an organisation, and for disabled people as a whole.



As we emerge from a global pandemic that has disproportionately impacted disabled people¹ and shone a light on the inequalities that many have faced for a lifetime², it is so important that policy makers and organisations like Inclusion Gloucestershire are carefully planning for and navigating the coming years. We want to build upon opportunities and new ways of working that benefit people who face disabling barriers, whilst working to address the inequalities and barriers that still exist and in some cases have worsened.

¹ Coronavirus and the social impacts on disabled people in Great Britain (ONS, 2020)

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/disability/articles/coronavirusandthesocialimpactsondisabledpeopleingreatbritain/september2020>

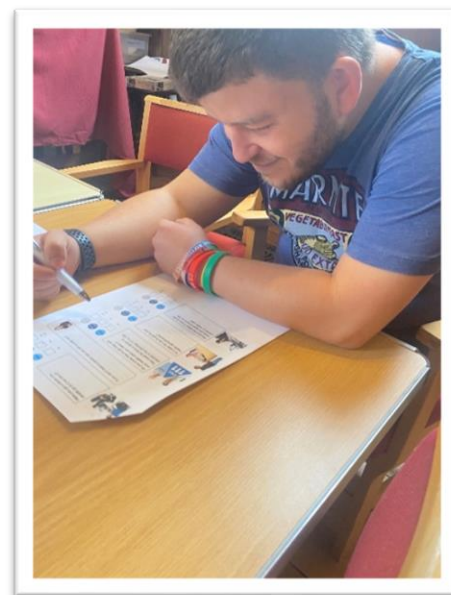
² Abandoned, Forgotten and Ignored (Inclusion London, 2020) <https://www.inclusionlondon.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Abandoned-Forgotten-and-Ignored-Final-1.pdf>

Our strategy underpins all of the work that we do, and is the guiding point for our Senior Leadership Team in steering the charity, and our staff and volunteer teams as they undertake our work.



This strategy has been informed by:

- An Inclusion Gloucestershire survey aimed at people facing disabling barriers and unpaid carers. This was open over Summer 2021 and received 136 responses.³
- Engagement with our staff and volunteers
- Priority polls undertaken by Gloucestershire's Learning Disability Partnership Board, Autism Partnership Board and Physical Disability and Sensory Impairment Partnership Board.



³ To read the report on our survey findings please see: <https://www.inclusiongloucestershire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/FINAL-Headline-Report-Sept-2021.pdf>

- The National Disability Strategy (2021) and All Age Autism Strategy (2021)

These insights helped us to identify what is really important to disabled people both locally and nationally:

- Healthcare. This was the top ranked issue in our Member Survey and featured strongly in Partnership Board priorities. We have created a strategic objective to develop our work around healthcare and health inequalities
- Leisure, social, and community access. This was the second top ranked issue in our Member Survey and features strongly in the National Disability Strategy. Within our strategic objectives we have identified how we can use training, engagement in communities and quality checking to improve access to these important parts of life.
- Independence, choice and control. This was the third ranked issue in our Member Survey and second highest ranked in the Physical Disability and Sensory Impairment Partnership Board priority poll. Our strategic aim of being the voice of people facing disabling barriers centres around independence, choice and control.
- Home and money. This featured strongly in our Member Survey, and in the National Disability Strategy. We have strategic objectives around developing our advocacy offer (which often supports people with money or housing issues), and influencing decision makers on relevant policy.
- Social care and advocacy. This was the fifth ranked issue in our member survey, and featured strongly in Partnership Board priorities. We have strategic objectives around influencing policy and government strategy, and



holding policy makers to account, as well as growing our advocacy offer with more specialist staff.

- Work and education. This was the sixth ranked issue in our Member Survey, and features in the National Disability Strategy and Autism Strategy. We have specific strategic objectives around employment support and work with children and young people.
- Increase awareness of disabling barriers. This is a key issue in the National Disability Strategy. We have identified objectives around training, raising awareness of the social model of disability, and holding others to account.



The engagement that we carried out also highlighted some aims that are important to how we operate as an organisation:

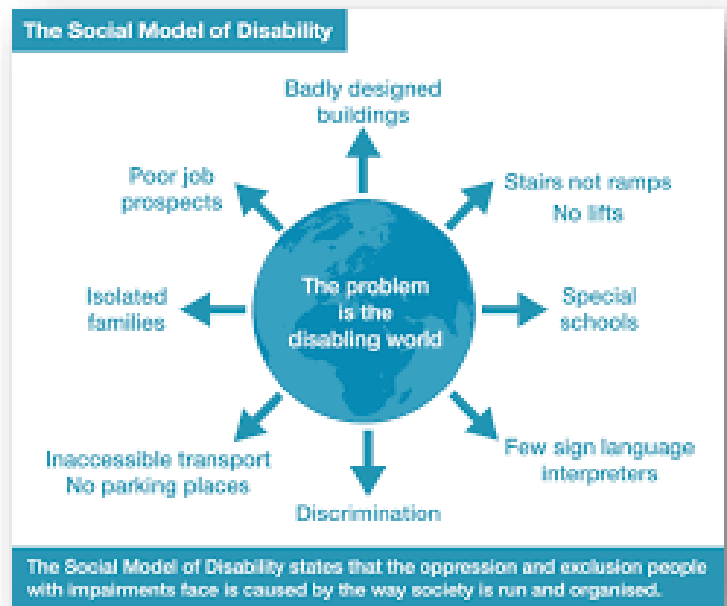
- The need to strengthen, develop and consolidate what we currently do, not losing sight of our values or members, and holding on to what makes us unique as a user-led organisation.
- The need to grow in numbers, geographical reach and diversity, as there is still so much work that we could do to further inclusion.
- The need to boost our sustainability in the current uncertain wider climate.

Definitions

Disabled People – this term refers to people who are disabled by society, or by a long term condition, and is used interchangeably with ‘people facing disabling barriers’. We recognise that not everyone who we include within this will identify as having an impairment or disability.

People Facing Disabling Barriers – we use this term to include people with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, autism, neurodiversity, mental health challenges, or sensory impairments. This term reflects the social model of disability, and includes people who may face disabling barriers but not class themselves as having an impairment or disability.

Social Model of Disability – a way of viewing the world that says that people are disabled by barriers in society, not just by their impairment or difference. Barriers can be physical, like buildings not having accessible toilets. Or they can be caused by people's attitudes to difference, like assuming disabled people can't do certain things.



Strategy – our ‘big plan’ that guides our vision and hopes for Inclusion Gloucestershire for the next three years. The priorities in our strategy have drawn upon what our members, staff and disabled people in Gloucestershire have said is important to them.

Strategic aims – we have five overarching aims, that broadly describe what we want to achieve

Strategic objective – under each strategic aim, we have strategic objectives that detail the specific work we will do to achieve the aim

User-Led Organisation – an organisation run by disabled people, for disabled people and operating to the Social Model of disability. 75% of our Board of Trustees and the majority of our staff team have lived experience of disabling barriers.



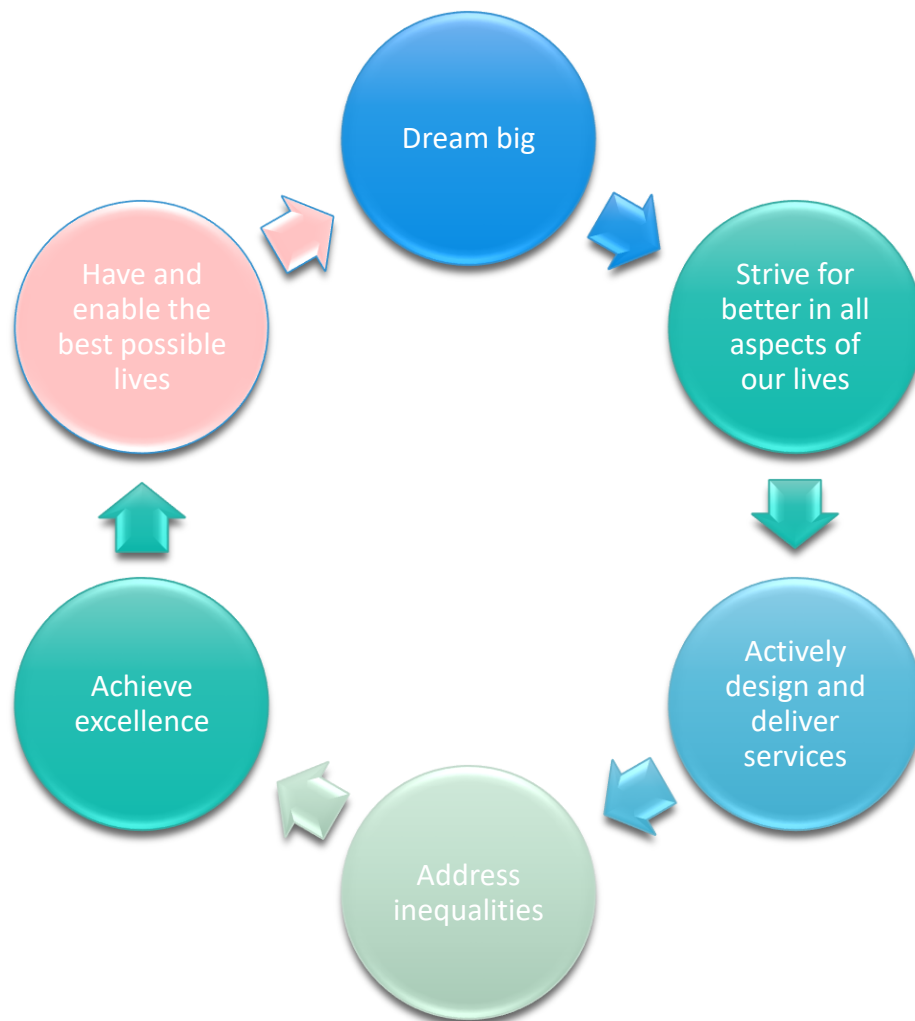
Who We Are

Our vision (where we want to get to):



Our vision is *an inclusive society that values, respects and includes people who face disabling barriers, every day and in every way*

Our mission (our purpose):





Our values



We are a user-led organisation, driven by the social model of disability, which sees people as disabled by society rather than by their impairment or difference.



We make sure everyone is meaningfully involved and included



We empower choice and control through peer leads and place experts by experience at the forefront of our delivery



We challenge when things aren't right and give people facing disabling barriers a strong voice



We believe it is right to treat people fairly and always behave in a way that is honest and trustworthy even when nobody is looking



We are a caring and professional organisation who work together towards shared goals



We work in partnership to deliver exciting new ideas and support each other, our members and our community.

The Strategy at a Glance



Our key strategic aims:



MAKE SURE THE **VOICE** OF
DISABLED PEOPLE IS LOUDER,
AND CREATING **CHANGE**



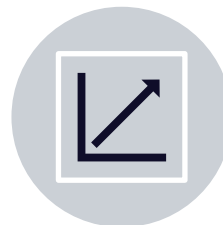
WORK **TOGETHER** TO
EMPOWER PEOPLE AND
REMOVE DISABLING
BARRIERS



BE A **STRONG** ORGANISATION



BE **SUSTAINABLE** SO WE CAN
MAKE A POSITIVE
DIFFERENCE FOR LONGER



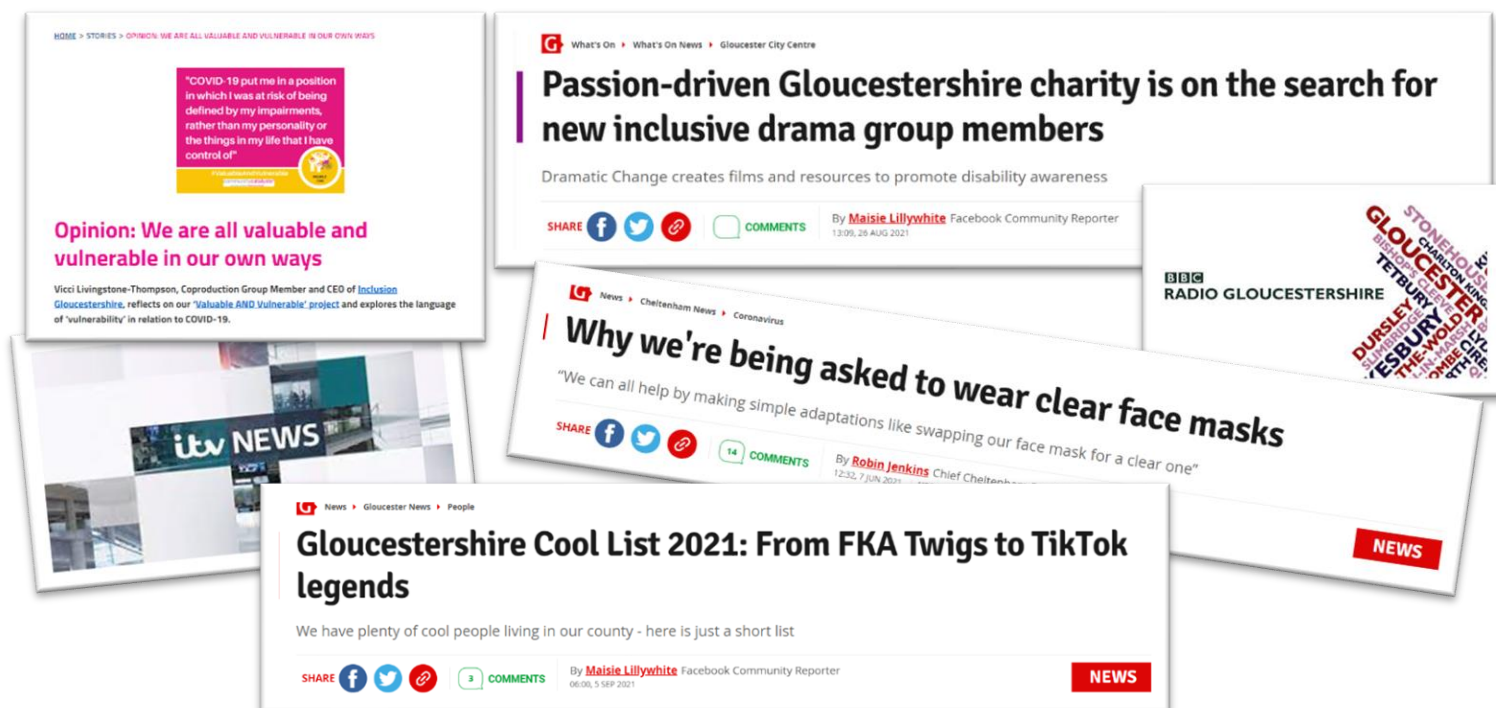
GET **STRONGER** AND **BIGGER**,
SUPPORTING MORE PEOPLE



Context

As an organisation, Inclusion Gloucestershire has developed in line with the aims of its 2018-21 Strategy:

- Increasing income by over 34% between the year 2018/19 and 2020/21, with further significant increases expected in 2021/22
- Increasing project reach to include projects spanning the South West and quality checks, films and training delivered out of county
- Building our membership and representation with dedicated offers for ethnically diverse communities. There is more work for us to do to reflect the needs and priorities of different communities.
- Developing new offers in line with identified need and demand, including an advocacy offer, more supported volunteering programmes, a larger training offer, and growth in our drama groups
- Diversifying income streams to reduce reliance on Local Authority funding, with a significant increase in grant income, and funding from health commissioners including NHS England and NHS Improvement
- Raising our profile locally, regionally and nationally (media releases below)



- Implementing strong and robust ways of working and reporting with cohesive governance from the Board and Senior Leadership Team
- Supporting and developing our staff and volunteers has been a priority as the team has grown from 40 to over 60 staff.



However, there is more work to do, and new and emerging challenges to be addressed. Some of the key influencers in the wider context include:

The impact of COVID-19

COVID-19 has significantly impacted the health and wellbeing of individuals facing disabling barriers, as well as their economic status, employment and education opportunities, and social inclusion. It has also impacted funding (creating opportunities in the short term, but likely to decrease government funding levels in the longer term), and ways of working for our staff.



- Increase in demand

With an ageing population, increasing levels of long term health conditions and disabilities, and a predicted long term mental health crisis⁴, we expect to see increased demand for our work and services. This creates risk if capacity is not funded to meet the demand.

- Wider economic impact

We have seen shrinking Local Authority budgets for several years, and expect this to continue and worsen due to increased spending during the pandemic⁵, combined with an ageing population and wider increased demand on Local Authority services. We also know that the impact on individuals' spending power, which thus influences our ability to fundraise varies with some people saving money due to decreased spending in the last 2 years, whilst others have lost out due to unemployment.

- National strategies and social care reform

2021 saw the launch of the National Disability Strategy, with 'practical steps to improve disabled people's everyday lives' and the work that government plans to do to implement these⁶. We also saw the National Strategy for Autistic Children, Young People and Adult⁷s launched in 2021, and a Green Paper paving the way for Social Care Reform. It is important for us to consider some of the key issues that will be focused on at a national level in creating our own strategy.



⁴ MIND <https://www.mind.org.uk/news-campaigns/news/mind-warns-of-second-pandemic-as-it-reveals-more-people-in-mental-health-crisis-than-ever-recorded-and-helpline-calls-soar/>

⁵ Coronavirus: Economic Impact (House of Commons Library, 2021) <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8866/CBP-8866.pdf>

⁶ The Strategy was declared unlawful in January 2022 due to a flawed consultation process. We encourage the government to meaningfully coproduce a new Strategy

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-strategy-for-autistic-children-young-people-and-adults-2021-to-2026>

- Increasing awareness of disability and mental health issues

We have seen high profile campaigns around health inequalities throughout the pandemic, an increased awareness of mental ill health due to the impacts of isolation, slightly increasing representation of disabled people in the media (although with a long way still to go), and awareness raising and training featuring in both the National Disability Strategy and Autistic Strategy. All of this creates awareness of disabling barriers and potential opportunities for disability organisations to contribute to the conversation.



Key Strategic Objectives

We have coproduced five strategic aims with objectives for each, to guide our work over the next three years.



1. Make sure the voice of disabled people is louder, and creating change

- a) Be the legitimate and recognised voice of people who face disabling barriers and have an influencing voice at the tables where decisions are made
- b) Make sure people with lived experience are central in making decisions about health and social care
- c) Develop and grow our work in specific disability areas including neurodiversity, recognising the uniqueness of certain groups
- d) Deliver training to ensure that people facing disabling barriers have safe and equal access to opportunities and services
- e) Increase awareness of the social model of disability and hold policy and change makers to account on it, challenging the status quo when it results in disabling barriers
- f) Develop and strengthen our partnerships, recognising that we can deliver more together



2. Work together to empower people, and remove disabling barriers

- a) Have the skills and knowledge internally to be recognised leaders in coproduction, supporting other organisations to work in a coproduced way, and modelling inclusion in all that we do

- b) Develop our peer support offer, recognising the value of self-advocacy and peer advocacy in empowering people
- c) Strengthen and develop our training, advocacy and mentoring offers, securing additional income streams enabling us to recruit more specialist staff and do more work to remove disabling barriers
- d) Measure, monitor and show the impact of our work, to inform our direction of travel
- e) Secure funding that meets our strategic priorities, being clear on our USP and the work that we are best placed to deliver



3. Be a strong organisation

- a) Develop and strengthen our infrastructure, recognising the limits of our capacity and building it when needed. In particular ensure that we have the right specialist skills around finance, marketing, HR, health and safety and fundraising, as well as the more specific skills needed to deliver projects
- b) Attract, support and retain a team that is happy and productive, with Inclusion Gloucestershire being a place that people want to work at
- c) Celebrate, support and champion diversity and representation within our team
- d) Extra support for staff and volunteers, recognising that some of our work can be sensitive
- e) Regular engagement with our team to ensure that our staff and volunteers feel listened to and included

- f) Develop the organisation further as a place of learning, where we develop skills and where possible progress people
- g) Be clear in our processes and systems, identifying people's roles and responsibilities within that
- h) Be brave about saying no when not able to deliver to best practice, or in line with our values
- i) Match skills with opportunities and maximise those opportunities, whilst also recognising the space for new skills



4. Be sustainable, so we can make a positive difference for longer

- a) Minimise our impact on the environment as an organisation, and ensure that disabled people are active and valued contributors to the fight against climate change, and measures to protect the planet do not discriminate against disabled people.
- b) Secure long term contracts with the Local Authority (3+ years) in our longstanding areas of work of quality checking and provision of Inclusion hubs as an opportunity to learn new skills, socialize and share their experiences
- c) Continue to diversify income streams to ensure that we are not over-reliant on one source, and grow our income generating business to sustain other areas of our work. Our ambition is to increase our fundraising and donations to receive 20% of our funding from Direct Commissions/income generation/fundraising, and no more than 50%



from Local Authority sources. The remainder would come from grants and other commissioners (largely health commissioners).

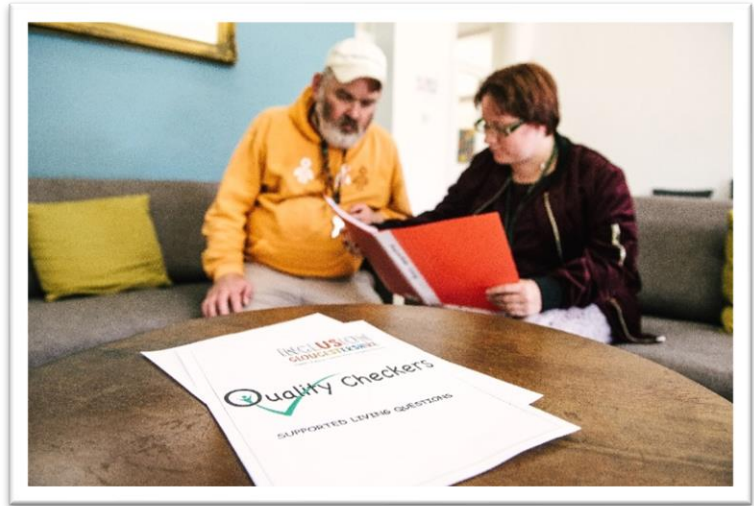
- d) Keep to a level of funding that allows us to cover overheads, and start to realise economies of scale (make savings)
- e) Ensure that projects are fully funded, and work with funders and commissioners to identify what is realistic and sustainable



5. Get stronger and bigger, supporting more people

- a. Diversify - strengthen and grow our links with and offer to diverse communities. Form strategic partnerships with organisations that have strong links to communities that we want to grow our work with
- b. Grow geographically:
 - i. Secure contracts beyond Gloucestershire and be recognised as a leading provider in Quality Checking and Training regionally and nationally
 - ii. Deliver community based services (e.g. Hubs) to individuals in Gloucestershire districts where we do not currently have a presence
- c. Grow in reach:
 - i. Develop our work around healthcare, recognising the urgent need to tackle health inequalities, improve access to healthcare and ensure that people feel supported to navigate the health system

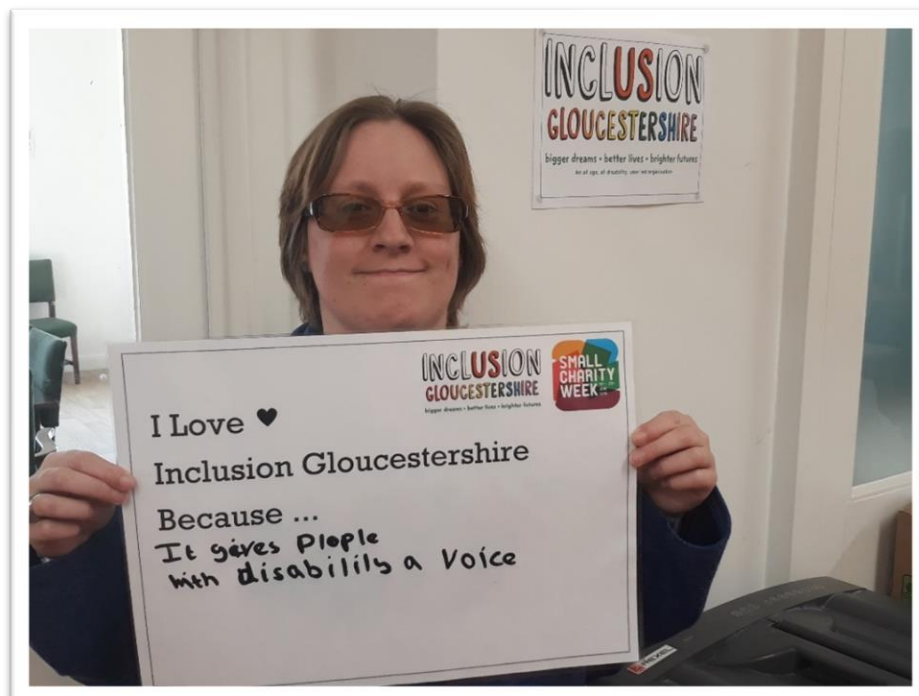
ii. Grow our Quality Checking offer into new and different settings and sectors, such as leisure, hospitality, retail and health to ensure safe and equal access to opportunities



iii. Grow our employment support offer, identifying additional funding opportunities that enable us to work in a person-centred way and links with our volunteer offer

iv. Start delivering projects aimed at children and young people, in partnership with organisations that specialise in this area. Specifically mentoring, engagement, and training offers.

d. Publicise our offer more and grow and diversify our membership to make sure that we are truly representing people facing disabling barriers



Putting the strategy into practice

It is vital that our strategy is a living document that guides all that we do. Our Three Year Strategy will be shared with colleagues, partners, funders and people who face disabling barriers to provide clarity about our aims and direction.

Each year, the Three Year Strategy will guide the content of our Annual Business Plan, and in turn each Project Plan.

We will measure our success against the strategy regularly, and will report on this annually.

Thank you

We are very grateful to everyone who has helped shape this strategy, especially people in Gloucestershire who face disabling barriers and shared with us what is important to them. We look forward to working together over the next three years to deliver our big plans!



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Find out more about us at:

www.inclusiongloucestershire.co.uk

From the Team at

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