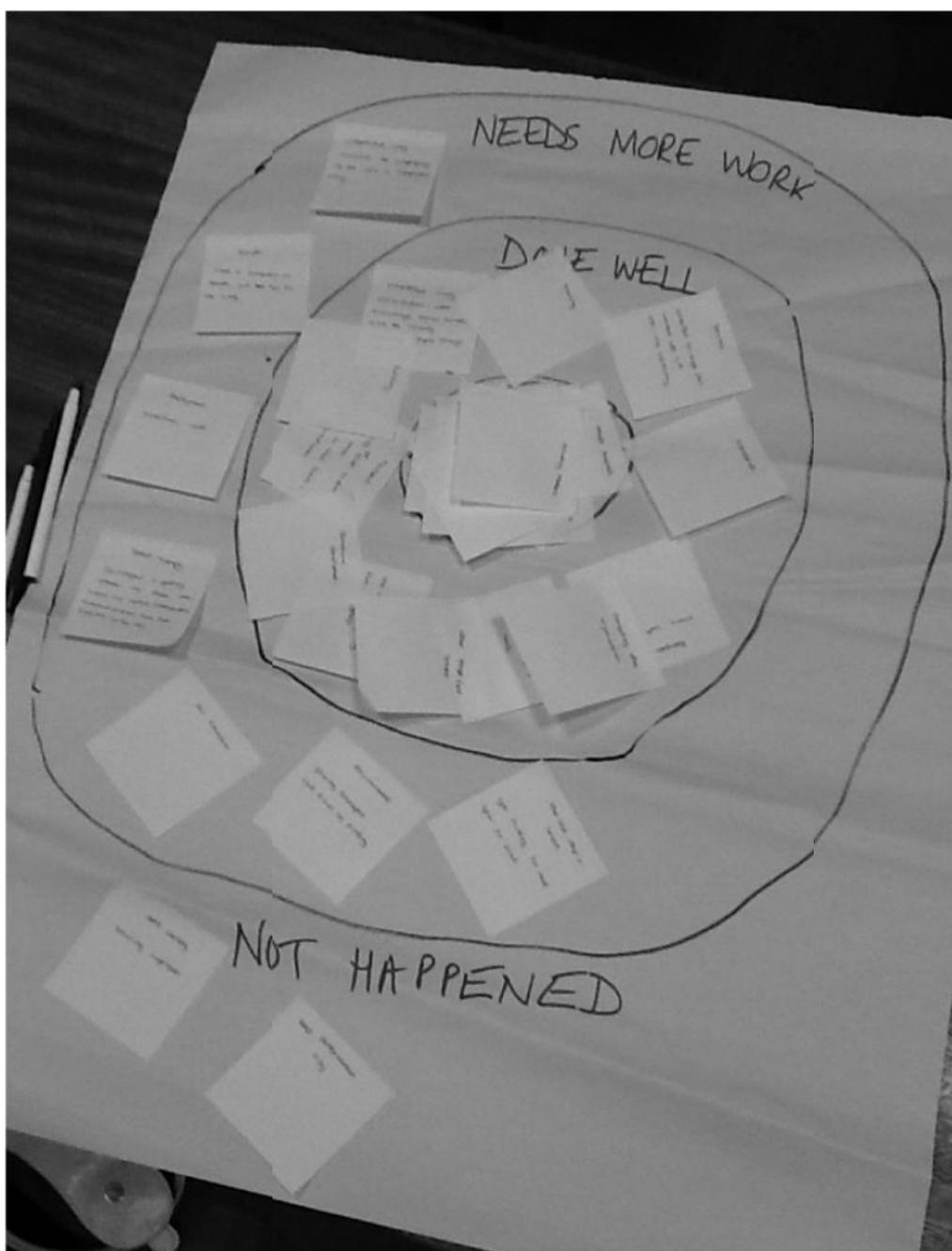


On 19th February 2013, Pembrokeshire People First held an event to ask their members how they were doing, and what they wanted them to do for the next 2 years. Here are the results.



The PPF Manifesto 2013

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Introduction



We invited all our members and other interested people to a day looking at what PPF does, has done and should do, on 19th March 2013. 27 people attended and took a full part.

We started by asking people for their views about PPF and “distance travelled” over the last 2 years:

“It was only 3 people in a cupboard. Now it’s a 2 storey building!”

“It’s grown massively and now there’s loads more enthusiasm”

“It has a much bigger voice”

“It has grown a lot and had a positive effect on R (member)”

We spent the day using various interactive activities to look at what we had done, whether we had fulfilled our previous Manifesto Commitments (from 2011) and where our members want us to go next. Of necessity, the following report is a distillation – much of the body is transcription, with comments

where relevant. The final 3 pages are a “stand alone” manifesto from the key points and main focus of the group.

A few key points need mentioning at the outset:

- Critically, although we are determinedly member-led, other factors need to be taken into account – capacity (time and staffing), funding, and what we, as a charity are constituted to do. We were careful to make our members aware of this throughout. As such, some of the manifesto requests are aspirational.
- Whilst our members have given us a mandate to continue working in 4 key areas – campaigning, training, advocacy and groups – it is striking how much overlaps. For example, independent living might be an advocacy issue, a campaign issue and something to have training on. As such, the section below looking at issues to focus on is critical.
- So much of what follows is down to awareness of what we have done – not all members know what’s going on on a day-to-day basis. This is why the theme of communication keeps coming through. It is impressive how much awareness there is
- It’s important that the “first manifesto” isn’t finished – maybe one key message is that *everything* needs more work
- Throughout the day, there was a really strong campaigns bias which would seem to link in with current recessionary times

The Findings

General Focus

We focus at the moment on

- Advocacy
- Groups
- Training
- Campaigning

We asked our members if that was still the structure they wanted us to use

100% said “yes”



To set the scene.....

“People have got happier” (over the last 2 years with PPF”

“Over the last 2 years, PPF is much more prevalent in the community and its voice is heard more and more.”

“I have changed so much since I have been coming here.”

We firstly asked the members to look back at what we have done in the last two years.

The members said these things had been done very well:

General

- Respect
- Including members
- Assertiveness

Advocacy

- 1:1 advocacy (3)
- Peer advocacy (2)

Groups

- Helped with speaking for ourselves (3)
- Social confidence (4)
- Funding for groups (2)

Training

- Respect

Campaigning

- The Campaigns Group being user-led
- Human rights

- Work on benefits
- Campaigning for more advocacy
- Campaigning for a stronger voice (4)
- Campaigning for respect (2)

Getting Stronger

- Accessible premises

The members said these things had been done well

General

- Links with services
- Friendships
- Relationships
- Social gatherings

Advocacy

- Advocacy for parents
- Need more advocacy

Groups

- fundraising for expansion
- Social gatherings
- Parents' group
- Let more people know

Training

- Training in care and support
- Training in general

Campaigning

- Health
- Relationships

- independent living
- transport (2)
- benefits (but needs more work)
- independent living

Getting stronger

- more people involved
- funding (2)
- Structural development
- Linking with other people first groups
- Consulting other organisations
- Getting more people involved

The members felt these things needed more work

General

- User led drop-in centre
- Social gatherings
- respect

Advocacy

- Peer advocacy – needs more advocates and funding

Groups

- sex education (2)

Training

- assertiveness
- to give us a stronger voice
- Independent living (2)

Campaigning

- Health (2)

- service provision
- employment and voluntary work(2)
- Need more awareness of campaigns (2)
- speech therapy – although successful in getting funding for ipads and communication tool kits
- Transport (2)
- Hate crime
- parenting
- care and support
- benefits
- Independent living

Getting Stronger

- Funding
- structural development
- Environment (2) – including sharing transport and cutting down on printing
- fundraising

Our members felt the following had not happened in the last 2 years

General

- Employing people (2)

Advocacy

Training

- Training around employment

Groups

- Sex Education
- keep Pembrokeshire tidy (3)

Campaigns

- Social networks and events
- Campaigning on respect
- Campaigning on independent living
- Campaigning on speech therapy
- Campaigning on employment (2)

Getting Stronger

- Work on the environment
- Working with training agencies

There were some areas where our members weren't sure what, if anything, had been achieved in the last 2 years. These were flagged up as:

- Campaigning on parenting
- Campaigning on speech therapy
- Don't know about funding
- Structural development



What's most important to our members

We asked what we should be campaigning on, and gave people a red dot for first choice and a green for second

	Red	Green
Housing		1
Hate Crime		
Work	2	1
Relationships		
Friends/social		3
Support	1	4
Transport	2	2
Benefits	9	3
Human Rights	2	3
Training		4
Technology		
Communication	4	
Independent living	4	4
Health		1

It's important to say that all our members felt ALL these were important - we gave them a tough choice to choose two.

It's also important to note that those who chose "human rights" did so because they felt it covered everything, rather than a narrow focus on Human Rights Act or ECHR.

Depending on how you "weight" the results, the scores are as follows

	Green and Red Equal score	Red scores 2, Green 1
Housing	1	1
Hate Crime	0	0
Work	3	5
Relationships	0	0
Friends/social	3	3
Support	5	6
Transport	4	6
Benefits	12	21
Human Rights	5	7
Training	4	4
Technology	0	0
Communication	4	8
Independent living	8	12
Health	1	1

So – by “equal” score system, the priorities are:

- Benefits (1)
- Independent Living (2)
- Support (3=)
- Human Rights (3=)
- Training (4=)
- Communication (4=)

And by the weighted system:

- Benefits (1)

- Independent Living (2)
- Communication (3)
- Human Rights (4)
- Support (5=)
- Transport (5=)

Giving us a clear mandate to focus on

- **Benefits**
- **Independent Living**
- **Human Rights**
- **Communication**

With additional priority streams of

- Support
- Transport
- Training



What specifically do our members want us to do?

Because our members had agreed that the main headings of

- Advocacy
- Groups
- Training
- Campaigning
- Getting Stronger (particularly working with others)

were still ok, we asked them to suggest activities under these headings, and also add any headings they felt had been left out. Here are the results. Please note the sections which attracted most comment was strikingly Training, along with a strong argument for schools/ college work

Advocacy

- Think it is already as good as it gets
- Mental [health?] awareness – starting off with a small group of people’s individual experiences then bring in advocacy around the group
- I think advocacy is a good thing and a big help
- People really need it
- Advocacy is brilliant – it gave me a voice to speak up for myself at meetings and to understand what was going on
- I would use an advocate when I had a problem
- I could trust an advocate
- It can turn your life around

Groups

- Dancing
- Arts and crafts
- Trips
- Drama
- More parties (joining groups up)

Campaigns

- Get advocacy to make business jobs for our members
- Training members – more advocacy work – how to turn it into a business (?)
- Improving social workers
- Getting housing and council to listen to people
- More on getting voice heard
- More bus services
- More space on buses for wheelchairs and prams
- More employment opportunities
- Benefits changes

Training

- CV Skills
- Cooking
- Learning disability awareness training
- Facebook
- Texting and gadgets [note from PAVS – Communities 2.0 could help]
- I'd like more independent living skills like cooking
- I'd like training in how to text from a phone
- I'd like to improve my English
- I'd like help to be more independent
- I'd like training in cooking
- I'd like training in computer skills
- Relationships training – particularly to get on with my family
- I'd like to do First Aid
- Anti-social behaviour training
- Sign language
- Doing own washing
- Bullying
- Abuse
- To employers to make aware of bullying in workplace of people with LD

- Support worker training (how to be a support worker)
- I think we should go to schools to give them training

Working with Other people/ organisations

- More assembly members
- Pembrokeshire College
- Other People First groups
- Schools
- Social services especially childcare
- The police
- Care homes
- Hostels
- MIND
- CTLD
- Mencap
- PAVS
- Local businesses
- Hospitals

Additional Subject Areas Added:

Work with Schools and Colleges

- More awareness and working with younger people and adults in schools and colleges
- Make sure children know about LD
- Make kids in the schools and colleges understand about people with LD
- Visit more schools and colleges
- More schools and colleges
- Neyland College
- More work in schools
- I think this work is important – but do you have the time?
- More drama ins schools and colleges

Peer Advocacy

- Find more clients (as I'm bored without one)
- More work
- Get more people involved

Other

- To inform care providers of what is available
- To start a helpline



Some Tricky Issues

1. Should PPF focus solely on advocacy?

The vast majority said “no” whilst acknowledging the importance of advocacy

“It should be all about what members want, and about the issues that are affecting them. Advocacy is a part of this.”

2. Should PPF employ members?

Again, the vast majority said “yes”. This led to a strong discussion about what sorts of jobs our members should do (the majority saying office work and cleaning); the ethical issues involved (“peer advocates should be paid just like 1:1 advocates); the importance of gaining work experience; the difficulty in funding this (suggestions ranged from more grants to specific government schemes); and the importance of taking loss of benefits into account.

“A job should be appropriate to the person, but adults with LD should be given the same opportunities as everyone else.”

It was agreed that this was too huge an issue to cover sufficiently and members asked for a separate event to explore this.

3. Is PPF truly member-led?

There was more of a spread around this – most people felt members were very involved, supporting one another, interviewing staff, being consulted on etc. The key word was “listen” – everyone felt members were listened to (which is perhaps slightly different and more realistic, in that members’ voices are part of the necessary mix including funding, capacity, staff and volunteers). One member sounded a note of caution:

“Some people’s voices are louder than others so some may miss out.”

4. Should PPF run alternative day services?

The majority said “no” initially (although this may be a terminology issue – overwhelmingly, in other sections of the consultation, people were asking for more training, for independent living skills, for more involvement etc.

The comments were varied and can’t be easily aggregated – for example:

“money would be better spent training existing day centre staff”

“No point in doing something if it’s already out there”

“Transport is key”

“A more personalised, user-led day service could be what PPF could offer”

“I’d rather have a paid job”

“Support to attend essential”

“Important that a day service didn’t conflict with the independence of advocacy”

“I would like to attend but not every day”

Again, an issue that needs much more consideration and consultation.

1

Conclusions

Our members are remarkable! They have given us a strong mandate to keep doing – and to expand – what we are doing, to become even more member-led and to focus on the issues that affect the lives of all adults with LD in our area.

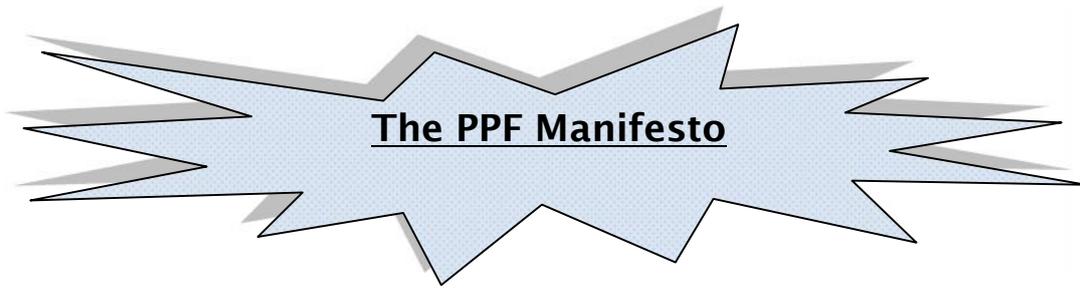
The word *independence* is a running thread through this document – independent living skills; financial independence; emotional independence through assertiveness and self-confidence; independent advocacy; the independence and strength of PPF. But, perhaps, in conclusion, it is appropriate to play with that word – this manifesto, to me, is about *interdependence* – of staff, volunteers and members; of PPF with the wider community, and, most of all, of our members with their communities as their voices grow in influence and their reach grows wider.

There follows the true conclusion – the Manifesto itself – but it's appropriate to leave the final words to a member:

“Roll on the next 2 years!”

Karen Chandler 26/3/13





In the next two years, PPF members want us to:

USE AS OUR WATCH WORDS

Respect

Confidence

A Stronger Voice

User-Led

In everything we do

We will make sure we

Let people know what we are doing

Involve members

Communicate better

Make stronger links with other people

Apply for more funding

We will focus on

Advocacy	particularly strong 1:1 advocacy
Groups	particularly using the arts and making them social
Campaigning	particularly on benefits, independent living, communication and human rights
Training	particularly independent living skills

We will continue to offer

- First class advocacy
- A range of groups
- Work with parents with learning disabilities

We will develop

- More training, in confidence, independent living skills, and training to other organisations and businesses
- Stronger campaigning with more member involvement
- More social opportunities
- Better peer advocacy provision

We will work towards

Employment opportunities

A user-led drop-in centre

Working with schools and colleges

Greater availability of support

We will not forget the things we have done well and will continue with them, especially

- Respect
- Including members
- Assertiveness
- 1:1 advocacy
- Groups
- Training
- User-led campaigning

We will try to do all these things as well as we can, within the limits of funding and capacity. We will check with our members who will tell us how we're doing.

Pembrokeshire People First. March 2013