



Helping, Including, Valuing, Empowering  
... the learning disabled community

# Annual Report 2015



Charity number: 1126618  
Ltd. Co. Number: 6694738

**Our mission is to improve the lives and opportunities of children and adults with a learning disability, their parents and carers in South Gloucestershire, Bristol and surrounding areas.**

We will aim to do this by working with the learning disabled community in the following ways:



### **Helping people to lead independent lives.**

- Supporting people to live as they choose and to promote their independence.
- Encouraging people to play a full and active part of the community in which they live.



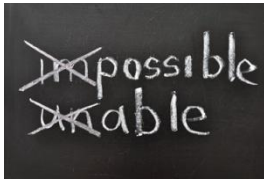
### **Including people in decisions about their lives**

- We believe that every person has a right to make informed choices and have equal access to services and opportunities.
- We will ensure that everything we do is centred around their inclusion within society.



## **Valuing everyone's contribution**

- Actively promoting the value that the learning disabled community can play within society.
- Ensuring that the management of the Hive includes the wishes and feelings of its members.



## **Empowering people to make their own choices and to have control over their own lives**

- Ensuring that people understand their choices, express their views and play an active part in the decision that affect their lives.
- Defending the rights of the learning disabled community and ensuring their voices are heard.

## Our Committees

“We continue to make progress at The Hive drop-in offering a wide range of activities. This last year we have made progress with the Gateway Award and now have members undertaking Gold, Silver and Bronze levels.

We have reinstated art sessions and added pottery. We had a most successful evening selling the paintings and pottery created by our members, which was attended by the Chair of South Gloucestershire and the Lord Mayor of Bristol. The monthly discos have also been successful.

Our grateful thanks must go to our CEO, Liz Cooke, and all our part time employees. I am extremely grateful to all of the volunteers who help each week at The Hive; without all their volunteering it would be difficult to keep The Hive open.

The executive have met regularly throughout the year, and my thanks to all of the Committee Members. We are always looking for members to sit on our Management Committee and also act as Trustees. If anyone is interested to help in either way please speak to our CEO or myself.

Finally can I thank all those organisations and companies who have supported us over the last year.” **Barrie Davis, Chair of Executive Committee**

### **Executive Committee:**

Chairman – Barrie Davis

Treasurer – Chris Read

Secretary – Dominic Box

Vice Chair – Dennis Westbrook

Member – Debbie Gully

Member – Zoe Hughes

### **Members Forum:**

Chairman – Sean Twomey

Jack Mundy

William Lake

Adrian Millar

Sarah Barnes

Sarah Turner

Luke Harris

Mike Clothier

**Our Hive Forum started in February 2015. Everyone on the Forum is a member of The Hive. The Forum meets every other month.**



“We are The Hive Forum committee and we talk about things to do with The Hive. We think about things we can do at The Hive to make it better and more fun. We also think about how we can help make more money for The Hive so we can do more things here. I enjoy being on the committee and being a chairman for me it’s like being the prime minister” **Sean**

The Hive Forum has helped create easy read documents for Healthwatch and South Gloucestershire Council.

The Hive Forum has made a number of suggestions on how to make money for the Hive like buying things to sell at The Hive like wrist bans, pens and T-shirts



Members of the Hive Forum

## Finance

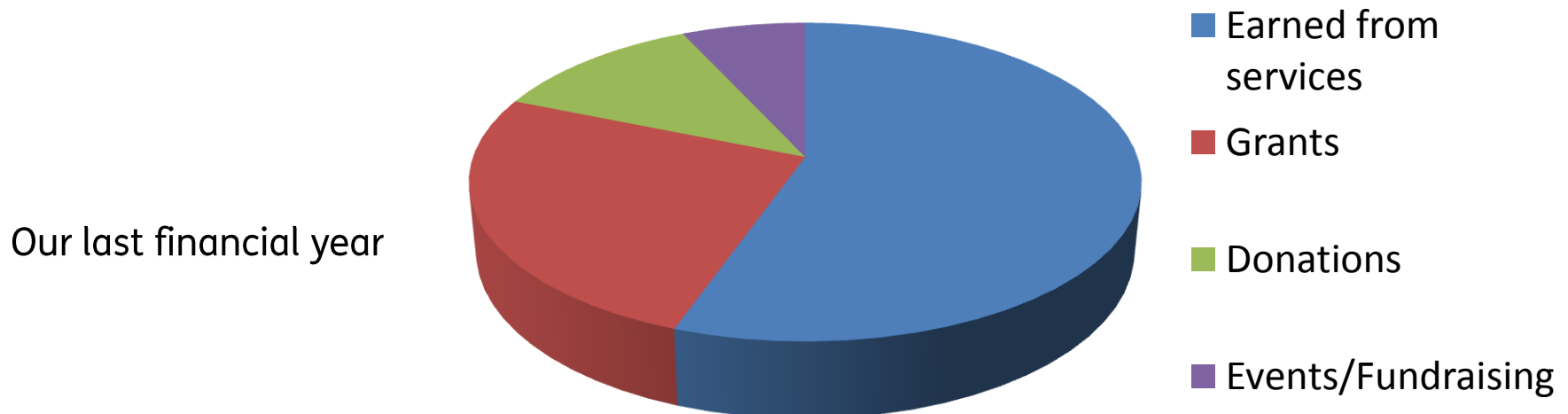
“Despite receiving some reasonably sized grants towards the start of the Advice, Information & Advocacy Service, this was soon used up and only smaller amounts were then received.

Money is beginning to be received for the services that we now provide as we have assisted Healthwatch, and our name has become known for providing accessible documents and Advocacy training.

We are still experiencing a small shortfall in funding the organisation, having total expenditure of £103,023 and receiving income of £102,700. This has put a strain on our finances which would have been worse had measures not been taken by staff and for the extra fund raising events that took place.”

**Chris Read, Treasurer**

### Where our income came from



## Chief Executive Report

“It has been another extremely busy year. Our drop-in centre and club at Alveston continue to thrive and we are amazed at how far people travel to attend the sessions.

This year we have really proved that we are ‘more than just a drop-in’ with the introduction of our Advice & Advocacy service. This has already led to some great partnership work with other organisations, such as WellAware and Healthwatch, and opportunities to provide easy-read literature and carry out consultations on behalf of other organisations.

The Advocacy has been particularly satisfying with the one-to-one support that we have been able to give to people. We ran a Self-Advocacy course which proved to be very successful and has led to many exciting opportunities for the participants. We will be building on this in the coming year by moving towards Peer Advocacy.

It has been wonderful to see all the incredible things that the participants of the Gateway Award have been taking part in, especially for the Gold Challenge where a group went away for a few days.

As always I cannot say a big enough ‘thank you’ to our wonderful volunteers. They help us in so many ways across all of our services; we really couldn’t do it without you. Also thanks to all of the staff who have worked so hard and given up a lot of their own time to support the organisation.” **Liz Cooke, CEO**

### **Advice Service:**

In the last year we have dealt with 51 requests for information; 32 for South Gloucestershire and 19 for Bristol.

Issues range from information about sports clubs to how to apply to become a British Citizen.

We have run advice sessions across South Gloucestershire and Bristol.

## Our Drop-in Centre is in Kingswood and is open five days a week

In 2015 we had 163 Drop-in members who attended 6740 times throughout the year.

“I like to come to chill out and relax. I like to make new friends.  
I like playing pool; I am very good.  
I like the discos.” **Wendy**



"I've only been coming to the Hive less than a year but I love it here. Everyone is so kind to me, I really enjoy coming here, there is lots going on and so many different things to do" **Larry**

## Our Club at Marlwood School, Alveston meets every Monday, 7 – 9 pm during term-time



“Alveston club is good I like it, we chat, play games, listen to music and sometimes do art. I like it as I enjoy myself there and I like to talk and get involved with people. The staff there are good and nice” **Ron**

“ I like to go to the club because I like to get out of the house and meet people. I like to get involved with people.  
I like the volunteers; they are nice.” **Emma**



## We have been running the Gateway Award since 2012



“I like doing the Gateway Award it gives me lots of things to do with my time. I also like getting to meet new people and I've made new friends because of it. Last year I did my Bronze award and I enjoyed it so much I am now doing the Silver award.” **Heather**

Funded by



We had 53 people taking part in the award at different levels: Bronze 27, Silver 14, Gold 12

We ran 10 life skills workshops including, personal safety, healthy eating and first aid.

We went on our first ever Gateway adventure break in June 2015 for 10 of the people who were doing their Gold award. We did outdoor games, rifle shooting, fire lighting and rock climbing. Everyone took it in turns to do the cooking and cleaning. We all had a great time.

## Our Advocacy Service started as a pilot project last year



Advocacy is about speaking out for yourself whether that's doing it yourself or with the help of another person.

We offer:



**‘Your Voice – My Voice’** is our one – to – one advocacy where a volunteer helps by speaking out for you. We have helped a number of people throughout the year helping with issues around moving house, helping at a Person Centred planning meeting and at social workers meetings.



**‘My Voice – My Life’** is our self - advocacy course; we ran our first series of self - advocacy workshops where we give people the skills, knowledge and information to speak out for themselves.

Many thanks to Bath People First, Meri Risk and Leigh Tawton for their help in putting the course together and helping to run it.

We hope to start **‘Standing Together’**, our Peer Advocacy service, during the next year.

**Our Self-advocacy course ran for 8 weeks. We are running another one starting in February 2016.**



“Advocacy helps you understand your rights. Everybody has the right to be heard.

Advocacy is about speaking up for yourself. It also means helping other people to speak for themselves.

We had to think about what we wanted our life to look like in the future and the things we wanted to do.

All the workshops have finished but we have agreed that we wanted to carry on helping each other.

We have agreed to carry on meeting up once a month to help and support each other to make choices and speak out.” **Sarah**

“Self advocacy is about learning how we can speak up for ourselves. The workshop has helped us learn what our rights are and how we can be better at speaking up for ourselves.

It (the course) was interesting, useful and fun. I learnt about how to speak up for myself.

I would like to get a house where I can live independently. I would also like to learn more about how to use my money... I would also like to learn how to drive and get a car.” **Michael**



11 people took part in our Self-advocacy course. They now meet regularly to support each other.

## HealthWatch

“I like being a Healthwatch Champion at The Hive; I enjoy helping ask people questions about their health. I have done this at The Hive and at Ashley Down College. I enjoy doing this work I have learnt lots of new things like what questions to ask and I like helping people to make their Doctors and Hospitals be better places.” **Luke**



We have two 'HealthWatch Champions', Luke and Will.

We ran two Wellbeing events during the year.

We held sexual health and mental health focus groups.

“It has been a joy to work with members of The Hive and the staff team and to learn from them how Health & Social Care services could be more accessible to people with learning disabilities.

The Hive listens to, and responds, to the needs of the people who uses its services and Healthwatch has been happy to support the development of the range of activities The Hive provides; and has enjoyed working with such an energetic, experienced and imaginative team.”

**Ellen Devine, Healthwatch Bristol Project Co-ordinator**

## Our Volunteers support us in many ways:

- at the drop-in
- at the Alveston Club
- on the Committee
- fundraising
- promoting our services

We have 66 volunteers who have volunteered over 9000 hours of their time throughout the last year.



“I feel as though I am helping out even if I am just chatting to the members or having a cup of tea with them. It gives me a boost as well. There is always lots of things going on and hopefully it helps to make the members feel special.”

**Maureen**

“I have volunteered for 2 years now – I like the people and I always leave here with a smile on my face. I might come feeling down, but I never leave feeling down. I like to feel busy; there are always different activities going on and I can be with the nicest people i.e. Drop-in members, other volunteers and members of staff” **Hank**



## We have had an exciting year of events



We now hold monthly discos at the drop-in on the fourth Tuesday of every month.



In June we took part in a sponsored Rock Climb. We climbed the same distance as if we had climbed Ben Nevis!



We held a Pamper Evening where we had massages, facials, had our nails painted, ate cake and drank wine!



In October we held our first Art Exhibition. Twenty-four people had paintings and pottery on display.

The Lord Mayor of Bristol and the Chair of South Gloucestershire Council came along.

Geoff Twentyman interviewed us and told everyone what we were doing on his Radio Bristol show.



We held a Christmas Fayre. We made lots of gifts to sell and had a Christmas Raffle.

**We have received help from many people throughout the year. Many thanks if you have helped us in any way. Special thanks go to the following:**

Baltika	The White Lion Pub, Frenchay
Kingsway Gears	Anne James
Kingswood Rotary	The Swan Pub, Hanham
New Beginnings	R & G Iles
Chris Durban Fund	Marble Supreme Ltd
RTR Foundation	The Medlock Trust
Lloyds Bank Foundation	The Union of Catholic Mothers
Xpress Car Wash Kingswood	North Avon Magistrates' Court Staff
North Avon Magistrates'	South Gloucestershire Learning Difficulties Development Fund

If you want to find out more about what we do, or have something you need our help with, here's how to get in touch!



The Hive,  
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Kingswood,  
Bristol,  
BS15 1AJ



0117 9614372



General enquiries: [office@thehiveavon.org.uk](mailto:office@thehiveavon.org.uk)

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Volunteering: [volunteers@thehiveavon.org.uk](mailto:volunteers@thehiveavon.org.uk)

Gateway Award: [gatewayaward@thehiveavon.org.uk](mailto:gatewayaward@thehiveavon.org.uk)

[www.thehiveavon.org.uk](http://www.thehiveavon.org.uk)



The Hive Avon



@TheHiveAvon

I can't tell you much my son gets out of The Hive. It provides him with a social life he wouldn't otherwise have, somewhere he feels comfortable to be himself. He's made friends! It has also given him self-confidence, and helped his social skills. He LOVES it there! I'm SO grateful that the Hive is there for him. I'm also grateful to all the volunteers who give up their time for The Hive. **Parent**

Our never ending thanks for all your unstinting efforts, endless enthusiasm, and for the wonderful warm and welcoming feeling guaranteed at every visit!

**Parent**

I personally feel that there are real benefits for people, in their physical, social and emotional health, in being able to access services provided by 'The Hive'.

**Elaine Burden, Mencap**