

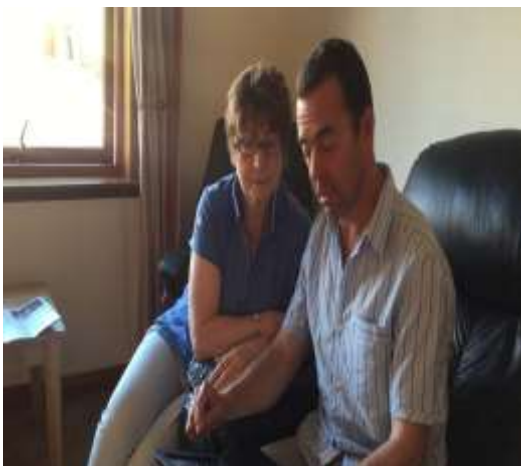


# Lead Times

December 2015

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Keeping you up to date with the latest developments  
in learning & disability



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**News from Lead**

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**Welcome to Emma Whitelock, Lead's new Chief Executive Officer**



After a national recruitment process with some excellent candidates drawn from all sectors, the Board were delighted to announce that Emma Whitelock accepted the position of Chief Executive Officer of Lead Scotland in October. Emma has developed her career at Lead over the last two decades, starting out as Learning Coordinator in Glasgow - this will be her eighth role at the charity. She is extremely passionate about the power of lifelong adult learning and the impact it can have on overall wellbeing. Emma said, "I strongly believe in Lead Scotland's vision and in the amazing team of staff, volunteers and supporters who bring it to life every day through their hard work and creative thinking. I am committed to reaching more disabled people and carers across Scotland who want to improve their lives and find their voice. They in turn become a force for positive change within their families and communities. Win, win!"

[Read Emma's interview with Third Force News about the appointment here](#)

[Read Emma's latest Improving Lives blogs here](#)

**Lead Scotland receives Investing in Volunteers Award**



We are pleased to announce we have received the prestigious Investing in Volunteers award for the fourth time to cover the period 2015-18, which marks a decade of acknowledgement in the work we do with our volunteers. We are delighted to be recognised for the importance and value we place on our volunteer workforce, whom are vital in allowing us to offer learning opportunities to increasing numbers of disabled people and carers across Scotland. George Thomson, the Chief Executive of Volunteer Scotland said, "... I have always appreciated the national exemplar you are in Scotland in engaging the whole community in volunteering. You literally see the best in folk and seek out ways by which anyone whatever their circumstances can express themselves through volunteering and bring about a lot of benefits. Well done and good luck for the next 3 years."

[You can read the full article on the Volunteer Scotland website here.](#)

### **Lead celebrates another year of service at the 2014/15 AGM**



This year's AGM took place in Perth at the Lovat Hotel, where staff, volunteers, partners and stakeholders were given an opportunity to come together to celebrate and reflect on the past year's achievements and challenges. The Dr Ethel Gray Volunteer of the Year award was won by one of our Fife volunteers, Jan Marshall, we voted in four new board members and we enjoyed presentations from a staff member, volunteer and learner about their involvement and work with the charity.

[Click here to read the full article and access our 2014/15 Annual Review and Accounts publications.](#)

### **Lead Scotland's latest consultation responses**

#### **Fairer Scotland: Employability Support**

A national debate has been happening up and down the country about what people think are the cornerstones of a fairer, more equal and more just society in Scotland, and what our ambitions should be to achieve this by 2030. As part of the debate the Scottish Government launched a discussion paper on what Employability Support programmes should look like as part of the devolved powers we will have by 2017. Lead Scotland are particularly interested in how disabled people and those with long term health conditions will be supported to develop employability skills and find sustainable work after the DWP's flagship Work Programme has failed to effectively help this group.

[Read the full article and our Employability Support discussion paper response here](#)

#### **Lead Scotland launches new Befriending Project in Fife**

After a successful funding application, we are delighted to be able to offer this vital new service in the Fife area. Volunteers will be matched with people experiencing social isolation and loneliness for a variety of reasons, including disability and long term illness.

To find out more about the project or make a referral call our new Befriending Coordinator, Louise Andree on 07950 771 875.

#### **Season's Greetings from Lead**



Lead Scotland wishes all of our subscribers a relaxing and restful break over the festive season and every success for 2016. Our Head Office will shut on 23rd December at 4pm and we will re-open again on 5th January.

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## Other news

### **Changes to Disabled Student's Allowance in England**

The United Kingdom government have announced they are going ahead with a set of changes to Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) for English domiciled students. The Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) consulted on the changes over the summer, and Lead Scotland put in a response, voicing concerns over the potential negative impact it could have on disabled students. From academic year 2016/17, English domiciled disabled students will no longer be able to access DSA for the majority of claims, and instead will need to rely on universities and higher education institutions to put appropriate support and adjustments in place. Following the consultation, BIS have made some amendments to the proposed changes, but the majority will be going ahead.

[You can read Lead Scotland's consultation response to the DSA Reforms here](#)

[Click here to read Disability Rights UK's summary of the DSA changes](#)

### **Scottish Government Announces new fund for Access to Politics Project for disabled people**

The Scottish Government have announced a new fund of £35,305 to help disabled people participate in politics. Disabled people are widely underrepresented in political parties and elected offices across Scotland despite

the fact 1 in 5 people in Scotland are disabled. The Scottish Government have pledged to ensure MSP's and Councillors more accurately reflect the diverse society they represent. Charity One in Five have been campaigning to encourage and empower disabled people to participate in politics and have created a charter that requires political venues to be accessible, materials made available in alternative formats and flexibility offered in terms of roles and responsibilities.

The Access to Politics project is being managed by Inclusion Scotland and will provide services to help disabled candidates running for any political party overcome current barriers. This will include assessment of access requirements and tailored advice about adjustments, confidence building and mentoring support. It will run as a pilot project until March 2016 in the run up to the next parliamentary elections.

[Click here to read Scottish Government's press release about the Access to Politics Project](#)

[Click here to read more about the One in Five campaign](#)

### **Skills Development Scotland launches Equalities Action Plan**

Anabelle Ewing, minister for Youth and Women's Employment, has launched Skills Development Scotland's (SDS) new Equalities Action Plan for Modern Apprenticeships in Scotland. The plan is designed to drive forward recommendations and implement actions to improve access and participation in their Modern Apprenticeship programme by a diverse range of underrepresented groups. There is a particular focus on black and minority ethnic (BME) people, gender in specific industries, care leavers and disabled people. SDS have been working closely with a number of partners and specialist organisations including an Equality Advisory Group on a consultative basis to understand the diverse range of needs, barriers and recommendations required to increase uptake for these groups. In addition, Lead Scotland have been working alongside the Equality Challenge Unit, consulting with disabled learners in order to gain an understanding of the barriers people face around disability disclosure. SDS's Equalities Action Plan lays out a number of initiatives they are implementing including establishing an agreed definition of disability, capacity building with Training Providers and a wide scale marketing campaign targeted at young disabled people.

[Click here to read Skills Development Scotland's full Equalities Action Plan](#)

### **£5 million for Disability Research on Independent Living and Learning (DRILL)**

The Big Lottery have awarded £5 million over a five year period to invest in the first ever disabled people-led research into solutions and innovations that support improved independent living and learning. DRILL is a consortium involving the four nations and Inclusion Scotland are managing the Scotland programme. The fund will be distributed to research projects across the UK and proposals will be sought from partnerships involving researchers and disabled people. Research should focus on proposals for achievable change, rather than highlighting what the current issues are, as they are already well documented. Inclusions Scotland will put out the first calls for proposals around April 2016.

[Click here for more information about the DRILL programme and to sign up to receive the newsletter](#)

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## Events, training & information

### **UK Disability History Month (22 November – 22 December)**

December marks the sixth annual UK disability history month (UKDHM) with activities and events happening up and down the country to explore the changing and current attitudes and prejudices towards disabled people, as well as examining the portrayal of disability in the arts and media. UKDHM aims to highlight the struggle for improved equality and human rights amongst disabled people throughout the decades and encourages continued activism to challenge disabling attitudes and barriers in society. The dates encompass HIV/AIDS Day, International Day of People with Disabilities and International Human Rights Day. The theme for 2015 is 'Portrayal of Disability: Then and Now'.

[Click here find out more about UK Disability History Month and details of local events](#)

### **Transitions Roadshows in Edinburgh**

Kindred, the charity that provides advocacy and information on services available to children with additional support needs, are hosting a series of transition roadshow events across Edinburgh called 'The Right Direction'. The events are aimed at young people with additional support needs aged over 14 as well as their carers/parents, and aims to explore the various education and employment options available after school. The events will also address some of the worries, concerns and questions people might have about such a daunting change in a young person's life.

[Click here to find out more about the Transition Roadshows and to book a free](#)



[place](#)

### **Enquire's Annual Conference – Positive Mental Health in Schools**

Enquire's annual conference is set to take place on Thursday 10th March 2016 in Stirling. This year's theme will be, 'Positive Mental Health in Schools: Overcoming Barriers to Learning'. The conference aims to address emerging themes and issues about children and young people's mental health and its impact on education. It will provide practitioners with the knowledge and practical tools to support pupils' emotional well-being in the schools and environments they work in.

[Click here to find out more information about the Enquire conference and to book a place](#)

### **Disability Rights UK Seeking Case Studies**

Disability Rights UK are looking to gather personal stories and case studies from people who have acquired an impairment and then returned to employment. They are particularly keen to hear about stories that have involved re-training, learning new skills or returning to education. The stories should be around 400 words and they are offering £50 Amazon vouchers for any stories that end up featuring in their guide.

[Click here to find out more about submitting a story for Disability Rights UK](#)

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