

A colorful illustration of a conference setting. In the foreground, a woman with long blonde hair is seated in a wheelchair, holding a white coffee cup. To her right, an older woman with short grey hair and glasses is seated on a yellow chair, also holding a white coffee cup. In the background, several other people are depicted: a man in a light blue shirt, a woman in a red top, and an older man in a green plaid shirt holding a coffee cup. The scene is set in a room with a window and a framed picture on the wall.

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

BEING SEEN, BEING HEARD

LDE
Learning Disability England

B I R M I N G H A M 2 0 2 6

KIND SPONSORS:



MORNING AGENDA



Registration

10:00 AM – 10:45 AM

Sign in, pick your workshops and visit the Coproduction Zone



Welcome

10:45 AM – 11:00 AM

Co-chairs of the Rep Body will open the conference



Simon Bottery: Being seen in policy

11.00 AM – 11:20 AM

Keynote speech



Lord Scriven: Working to help people be seen

11.20 AM – 11:30 AM

Keynote speech



A 10 year vision for the future

11.30 AM – 11:50 AM

Co-chairs of the Rep Body will share an opportunity to feed into a 10 year vision for the future

AFTERNOON AGENDA



First workshops

12:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Attend your first choice of workshop (see below for workshop details)



Lunch

1:00 PM – 2:15 PM

Choose your hot meal then listen to The Leaping Frogs, watch The Music Man performance, an interactive live VJ set or attend a book launch!



Simba Ngwarati: My Musical Journey

2.15 PM – 2.35 PM

Keynote speech



Second workshops

2:35 PM – 3:35 PM

Attend your second choice of workshop (see below for workshop details)



George Webster: Being seen as an author

3.45PM – 4:15 PM

Keynote speech



Conference closing

4.15 PM – 5:00 PM

Learning Disability England co-chairs will summarize attendees' vision and conclude the conference

BEING SEEN THROUGH MY BOOKS

GEORGE WEBSTER



George Webster will be sharing his journey as a children's author - why he began writing, how storytelling fits alongside his other work, and what being an author means to him. His keynote speech will celebrate creativity, and sharing stories.

SPEAKER/S



George is a 23 year old BAFTA award winning TV presenter, actor, author and dancer from Leeds. He made history when he became the first CBeebies presenter with Down Syndrome, quickly becoming a fixture on the channel and securing a place in the Radio Times most influential TV personalities in 2022.

SEEN AND HEARD IN POLICY

SIMON BOTTERY



Simon Bottery, Senior Fellow for Social Care at The King's Fund, will be sharing the key health and social care policy changes that people with learning disabilities, their families, allies and supporters should know about and where members can get involved to make a difference.

SPEAKER/S



Before joining The King's Fund in September 2017, Simon spent almost 10 years as Director of Policy at the older people's charity Independent Age, researching and campaigning on issues including care home quality, unmet needs for care, social care funding and the social care workforce.

MY MUSICAL JOURNEY

SIMBA NGWARATI AND MICHAEL DONLEVY



Simba, together with Michael, will share his personal journey of being heard through music, the creative process, his hopes of bringing joy to everyone who listens, as well as his new music video!

SPEAKER/S



Simba is a musician and composer and a member of Citylit Percussion Orchestra. He works with students from the Royal Academy of Music to develop compositions and introduce them to working creatively with musicians with a learning disability.



Michael is Head of Centre for Learning Disabilities Education at Citylit and promotes creative education for artists with learning disabilities

KEYNOTE & BAND

HOW I AM WORKING FOR PEOPLE TO BE SEEN

LORD PAUL SCRIVEN



Lord Scriven will speak about his work as a reformer which took on a profound and personal urgency following the death of his nephew, Myles Scriven, in 2023. Myles, a 31-year-old man with autism and a learning disability, died a preventable death due to what a coroner later ruled as "neglect" contributed to by a lack of reasonable adjustments. He will share how he has been using his platform to expose the missed opportunities and clinical misjudgements that lead to tragedies and bring about impactful and meaningful change.

SPEAKER/S



Paul is a Liberal Democrat Life Peer . With a career spanning nearly four decades, Paul's approach is rooted in the belief that institutions must be judged solely by the outcomes they deliver for the individual, rather than the convenience of the system.

THE LEAPING FROGS BAND



The Leaping Frogs will be performing over lunch time and creating a welcoming space filled with blues, folk, mainstream rock and pop as well as original tunes.

They love to play a real variety of fab music, that brings people together and connects with people. They are an original band made up of three unique individuals that work together in social care and are passionate about ensuring that music is accessible for everyone.

SPEAKER/S



Paula is passionate about playing the Harmonica. She took up the harmonica in 2020 to get through the stress of working in social care during Covid. Paula is also Trustee at Learning Disability England.



Kevin, has been entertaining people for over 40years. He is an original singer/songwriter and absolutley loves the joy that he feels from playing with the Leaping Frogs.



Lorraine is passionate about everyone in this world having a voice and believes that through music we can all be seen and heard!

BEING WELL, CONNECTED AND HAVING FRIENDS

DIMENSIONS



The workshop will explore how people with learning disabilities can make and maintain meaningful connections as well as the barriers to this and what's available to overcome them. Will include real life stories and case studies.

SPEAKER/S



Mark Brookes has more than 30 years' experience in advocating for people with learning disabilities and autism, which he has lived experience of. He is currently Advocacy Lead for Dimensions UK and in 2020, received his MBE for his services to people with learning disabilities and autism.

MORE THAN WORDS: DEAF COMMUNICATION AND INCLUSION

CAMPAIGN 4 CHANGE



Discover how often D/deaf communication and culture are overlooked in services for people with learning disabilities - and why recognising Deaf identity is essential for truly inclusive support. Through powerful lived experiences. This workshop empowers attendees with practical Deaf awareness and offers tools to create environments where everyone is genuinely seen, heard, and valued.

SPEAKER/S



Jonathan and Shane are Deaf self-advocates and experts with lived experience, campaigning for accessibility for people who are D/deaf. They enjoy making friends and are talented actors!



Boo is a registered manager for three supported living Deaf homes and Deaf community outreach for adults who require BSL support and may have learning disabilities and additional physical needs.



Nancy is a qualified Lipspeaker, Lipspeaker with Sign and Electronic Notetaker for Deaf and Hard of Hearing adults. Nancy has set up New Forest Deaf Club and is the director of her own communications company FeelHear.

DO 'HOUSING RIGHTS' REALLY EXIST FOR EVERYONE?

ANGELA CATELY



This workshop will share a real story about someone who lost their home because they were not supported to fight for their housing rights. Together, you'll look at whether this happens to other people in England and what we can do to make sure housing rights are real and protected for everyone.

SPEAKER/S



Angela has been involved with LDE for many years and is on the Representative Body. She has worked and played alongside people with a learning disability for 40 years.

BUILDING AN ACCESSIBLE VJ INTERFACE UNDER THE STARS



Get hands-on with the interactive live VJ system they have co-developed with participants from Under the Stars in Sheffield. Find out how they built a live-visual setup for their iconic nightclub for people with learning disabilities and/or autism; try the kit and create bold visuals in minutes. No experience needed – just bring your curiosity and have a go!

SPEAKER/S



Jono has worked as a music tutor at Under The Stars for over ten years, specialising in accessibility through technology.



Ryan has attended Under The Stars sessions for many years and is a well liked and enthusiastic member of our group who loves music technology.



Mooney has been a music tutor at Under The Stars for 18 years and brings his extensive experience as a gigging musician.

GETTING PEOPLE SEEN AND HEARD IN THE MEDIA WILLIAM-BBC

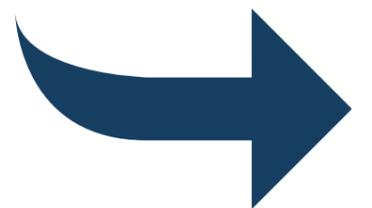


This workshop will explore William Kremer's recent work on accessible news media. He will share insights into how news might be made more inclusive for people with learning disabilities, drawing on examples from individuals and countries already doing this well. William will also present sample news pieces he created to demonstrate what accessible news could look like, and invite participants to consider how we can take action to encourage media outlets to make news more accessible

SPEAKER/S



William Kremer is a journalist and radio producer at the BBC. When he is not making programmes, he is playing with his two children, who are autistic and have a learning disability.



MAKING SURE A GOOD SOCIAL LIFE IS OPEN TO US ALL THE 'OUR SOCIAL LIVES' RESEARCH TEAM



Learn about the Our Social Lives project, led by peer researchers with lived experience of learning disabilities and autism. The project explored what makes a good social life, what gets in the way, and what needs to change. In this workshop you will hear the key learning and think about how to use it in your own life or work, while connecting with others committed to inclusive social lives.

SPEAKER/S



Rod has spent his whole working life in learning disability and autism services. He works for ARC England delivering training and leading on projects. He co-ordinated the 'Our Lives' project.



Christopher Porter is a passionate self-advocate from North Yorkshire and member of the Our Lives Steering Group. He helped shape the project by co-designing interview questions and reflecting on the findings,



Katie Peacock works alongside people with learning disabilities, supporting choice, connection and what matters to each person. Katie has been part of the Steering Group for the Our Lives project.

THE MUSIC MAN PROJECT

THE TEAM BEHIND THE MUSIC MAN PROJECT



This workshop introduces accessible music education and performance. It will include live music, real-life case studies, and practical examples of how music can be made accessible so everyone can take part and perform.

SPEAKER/S



David Stanley BEM is the Founder and CEO of The Music Man Project, an international music education charity championing inclusion for people with learning disabilities.



Philip Migliorini is a confident performer and ambassador, appearing on stages across the UK and internationally. Philip also loves DJ'ing. His journey and growth has been strongly supported by the Music Man Project.



Claire Alderton is a Global Ambassador and Soloist with the Music Man Project. Since attending, she has grown in confidence and flourished both personally and musically.



Wendy Wilson is an ambassador for The Music Man Project. She loves cooking and performing. She spreads joy and encouragement where ever she goes.

CITIZEN ARMIES

NEW PROSPECTS



Citizen Armies prove that people with a learning disability or people who are autistic can change the world and don't just have to 'connect' to community, they can create it and change it. Join this interactive workshop to find out more.

SPEAKER/S



Caroline Stone is a survivor, community activist and citizen army commander.

Tim Keilty is CEO of New Prospects in the North East.

FINDING YOUR VOICE: CREATIVE WAYS OF GETTING YOURSELF HEARD

OPEN STORY TELLERS



If you find yourself in a muddle about your rights and how to make yourself heard - this workshop is for YOU! All the words around self-advocacy can be confusing - and what about the voices of people who do not use words to speak? Get creative with Open Story Tellers as they share all the ways we can help each other find our voices and get ourselves heard.

SPEAKER/S



Joe Gilmer and Ellie Burton have been supported interns at OpenStoryTellers (OST) for 2 years and helped build creative new ways of voices being listened to both at OST and across Somerset.



Clemma Lewis has been involved with OST for over 15 years as an experienced storyteller and poet, she now works for us as Special Projects Advisor.

BOOK CLUBS: BEING SEEN, BEING HEARD, BEING TOGETHER

BOOKS BEYOND WORDS



Find out how Beyond Words Book Clubs can support deep, meaningful conversations about challenging real-life topics. This workshop will introduce you to our Book Club in a Box project a creative and inclusive approach to communication and understanding.

SPEAKER/S



Lucy Alexander is Director of Beyond Words leading the organisation's mission to empower people with learning disabilities through word-free storytelling.



Dr Andreea Deleanu works at the intersection of research accessibility and inclusive communication. Since December 2025, she has been working for Books Beyond Words, supporting the 'Book Club in a Box' project.

COPRODUCTION ZONE



The Coproduction Zone is running all day and will be located in Escape, on the 4th floor. You're welcome to drop in at any time during the day - whether you choose to visit instead of attending a workshop, or stop by as you arrive before the conference begins. Four different organisations will be sharing their work and experiences in supporting coproduction.

WIRRAL MENCAP

Their drop-in session will focus on developing coproduction with a Lived Experience Team, reflecting on what has worked, the challenges encountered, and key learning. Attendees will hear what the Lived Experience Team and all co-producers have gained, with practical insights to support effective coproduction.

SPEAKER/S



Anna is a Lived Experience Team colleague and has been a self advocate with Wirral Mencap for 10 years. Anna works on coproduction, and delivers training to professionals on how to work inclusively with people with learning disabilities.



Laura is a Lived Experience Team colleague and has been a self advocate with Wirral Mencap for 5 years. As a Parent with Experience Trainer Laura has coproduced easy read resources for parents with learning disabilities and produced and delivered training to professionals.

BILD

They will introduce their Co-production Checker, designed to help organisations reflect on and improve the quality of their co-production. They'll give a short presentation showing how it works and what "good" looks like. Come along if you want practical guidance you can use straight away to make sure people with lived experience are truly seen and heard.

SPEAKER/S



Rachel Howe is Bild's Engagement and Events officer. Rachel is passionate about coproduction and always looking for new ways to work with people with learning disabilities.



Kate Brackley serves as the Learning Disability Advisor for Bild, bringing deep insight and advocacy to her role. She focuses on promoting rights, inclusion, and meaningful engagement for people with learning disabilities across the sector.



Brooke Champion serves as the Lived Experience Co-ordinator, leading work that amplifies the voices of people with lived experience.

MACINTYRE

Join the MacIntyre team to find out and discover ways they work with everyone to make positive changes. They will share a handful of resources that they use, and will be a chance to get involved, have fun and learn at the same time. This session will showcase the importance of working together, hearing stories and importantly helping people to feel confident and be part of their everyday life and futures in a meaningful way.

SPEAKER/S



Paul Payne believes through being creative and involving people who draw on our support from the very start in advocacy and co-production projects we can create real change.



Sui Ling Tang is a passionate advocate for people who hosts her own chat show 'The Sui-Ling Show' on youtube and talks to people about advocacy and co-production within MacIntyre and beyond.



Nicola Payne has a strong interest in health and aging, and is committed to making sure people and families feel supported, informed and included every step of the way,



Meg Wilding works in a variety of areas within best practice support and is an experienced learning support worker. Meg is a proud member of The Co-Pro's - MacIntyre's "Working Together" group.



Rachel Furniss is passionate about co-production and believe meaningful and sustainable change only happen when we genuinely listen, value and work alongside people, recognising them all as experts in their own lives.



Jess Sutton is extremely passionate about lifting up Autistic voices through her work and helping Autistic people to find their own ways to make their voices heard."

CAMPBILL VILLAGE TRUST

Camphill Village Trust will share how coproduction is built into the way their organisation works. They will explain how people with lived experience are involved in decisions and shaping support across the organisation.

SPEAKER/S



Simon Milner is a Life of Opportunity reviewer for Camphill Village Trust and uses his lived experience to improve services for people with learning and other disabilities across the communities.



Paul East has lived at Larchfield Community for 10 years, he enjoys co-delivering Embedding co-production training to staff and attending regional forums and weekly co-production meetings.



Amy Dixon is a co-production lead for Camphill Village Trust, working at Larchfield and Botton communities in Northern England facilitating co-produced projects.