

“Tell me and I’ll forget. Show me, and I may not remember. Involve me and I’ll understand”

- Native American Tribe

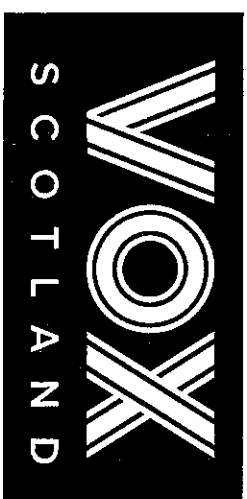
Promoting Justice, Human Rights and Social Inclusion

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Last October we delivered the Fifth Diversity and Mental Health “Moving Minds” event, this is a day of events and activities held at Kelvingrove museum and art galleries as part of the annual Scottish Mental Health Arts and Film Festival. The event has attracted many new partners over the year and has become one of the 3 key annual events that the Museum hosts. According to the museums own figures we had over 500 people taking part in the activities on the day. We have already planned the sixth Moving Minds day which will be open the mental health arts and film festival 2014.

Thank you

We very much hope you will continue to support VOX is its aim to increase the opportunities’ to contribute positively to changes in services and society!



VOICES OF EXPERIENCE

**Annual Report
2013-2014**

Foreword, Joyce Mouriki, VOX's Chairperson

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VOX has had another busy and productive year, one which has been full of opportunities to use your views to influence how services and society develops to take into consideration the voice of people who have mental health problems.

We continue to develop opportunities for your views to make a difference, to do this we have attended a range of strategy and planning meetings to develop services which reflect your views. One area of work where we have done this is through the patient safety programme where we have made sure that perception of safety is captured from the patient point of view.

We are further developing our work around diversity issues continuing to supporting community leaders rather than carrying out the work ourselves. We have also started working as a delivery partner with 'see me' to try to make sure people with mental health problems are at the heart of the way in which Scotland's anti-stigma campaign develops.

We have hosted the international initiative for mental health leadership working with a number of members and group members on the topic of human rights, and have utilised a range of ways to share good practice. Finally we continue to respond to the Scottish Government and have attended the health and sports committee to give evidence as well as representing your views in a number of policy responses including the mental health bill and the public bodies working together consultation.

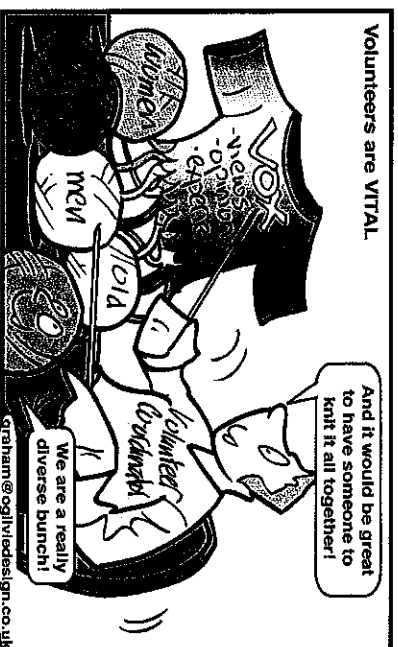
I would like to warmly welcome Graeme Bowman, VOX's senior development officer to the staff team. I would like to thank Derek Barron who has been replaced by Maria Docherty as our nursing advisor and Lisa Archibald who served on the VOX board at the start of this year until New Zealand claimed another of our VOX activists. Finally I would also like to thank everyone who has been involved in VOX in the last year, particularly our members who have given their views and positively influenced services and society.

VOX's chairperson

Joyce Mouriki

Background to VOX

Volunteers are VITAL



The need for a way to bring together the voice of mental health service users in a meaningful way was explored at an Open Space Event which was held in Dundee in 2004.

The event was attended by 102 service users from across Scotland and as a result of the ideas shared, a clear mandate was given to the steering group to develop a national member's led organisation at a national level.

The Scottish Government Mental Health Division in recognition of the need to have a national voice agreed to fund VOX during its development period. VOX was launched in December 2006, and has since been developing and growing to become an inclusive and sustainable organisation. On the 25th of June 2010 VOX became a company limited by guarantee with charitable status. This year we took over responsibility of our day to day budget and have set up an accounting system. We have a clear plan and will be

opinions, perspectives and experiences.

What we do

We are a national mental health member's led charity and we work in partnership with mental health and related services to ensure that people with mental health problems get every opportunity to contribute positively to changes in the services that serve them and society more generally. VOX has individual, group and associate membership.

Objectives

VOX's objectives are as follows;

- To develop, support and sustain an accountable, national organisation of and for, people who have or have had mental health problems.
 - To be a source of information, support and guidance in developing the capacity of people who have or have had mental health problems to participate in civil society and in the development of services which they may manage.
 - To offer a structure for people to communicate with each other and other organisations, so that they can exchange
- VOX produces information and opportunities to allow individual and group members to have their voices heard, and it is a chance to hear about and influence a range of work across Scotland in relation to mental health. VOX also send out weekly updates to members which includes news and events in Scotland. In addition to this we produce a Diversity e-Bulletin looking at mental health from diverse community perspectives.
- VOX also arranges consultation events and focus groups, developing opportunities to allow people to have their say on specific topics. We like to balance out our focus between members' priorities and the policy direction at the time.



Who's involved?

Member Directors

- Joyce Mouriki
- (Chairperson)
- Francis Fallan MBE
- (Vice-Chairperson)
- Dougie Pickering
- (Secretary)
- Gordon A. Johnston
- (Treasurer)
- Colin Murchie
- Tracy Laird

Non Member Directors

- William A Davidson
- Richard E Norris
- Dr. Alison Thom

We also have advisors who we seek support and advise from on specific topics.

- Ronald A Franks, Legal Adviser
- Derek Barron June 2014/Maria Docherty, Nursing Adviser
- Kate McCormack, Social Work Adviser

VOX Staff Team

- Wendy McAuslan
- Graeme Bowman
- Mahmud Al-Gallani
- John Steel

- VOX Development Coordinator
- VOX Senior Development Officer
- VOX Diversity Coordinator
- VOX Administration Officer

Most importantly – VOX's members!

**“Darkness
cannot drive out
darkness; only
light can do that.
Hate cannot
drive out hate;
only love can do
that”.**

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

Your views have shaped how VOX develops

We continue to ensure that at our members meetings, you have the opportunity to set VOX's priorities, remember it's your organisation not ours!

At the VOX AGM which took place during September 2013, we discussed a range of topics including your views around Scotland anti-stigma campaign, the benefits system, spending cuts, diversity issues and hate crime, the views you gave helped to shape the way in which we have engaged with a range of policy issues.

In January 2014 we held the winter festival meeting where we gathered your views on some key policy developments such as the new mental health bill which was being developed. The bill is mainly around what happens when someone is subject to compulsory treatment.

So what have we done?

- The mental health bill - We produced a members response to the mental health act consultation, followed by an evidence based policy response
- Stigma – See Me - VOX is a delivery partner with the Re-founded See Me. We have helped to support a large conference held in Dunblane and we have assisted in establishing a range of new developments to make sure those with mental health problems are central to the campaign.

- The benefits system - We are continuing to try and progress equity by challenging the way in which those who have or have mental health problems are viewed, this has been weaved into a number of our policy responses.

- Spending Cuts - In particular, we have raised our concerns around the implementation of self-directed support (SDS) with the health minister and Scottish government officials; we hope this will lead to more considered approach by local councils.

- Hate crime - We have started to raise awareness of mental health hate crime this has included an interactive workshop presented to a range of delegates from the police service and the Crown Officer and the Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS)
- Diversity Issues - We have a wide range of work which develops capacity to have a voice for Black and Minority Ethnic Women, those who have experienced domestic abuse, young people, those in prison and those with a dual diagnosis. We know that some groups are less likely to get involved in having their voice heard in relation to mental health, this allows us to more fully understand and progress our organisation in a way which reflects a wide range of views.

**“It would be possible
to describe everything
scientifically, but it would
make no sense; it would
be without meaning;
as if you described a
Beethoven symphony
as a variation of wave
pressure” - Albert Einstein**

**We share good
practice with others,
locally, nationally and
internationally**

Another key objective for VOX is to help improve the quality of services that people who experience mental health problems encounter. VOX therefore works to share examples of good practice with individuals, group and associate members.

VOX has started planning an event which will take place in October to bring together collective advocacy organisations to develop a hub for shared learning and support so we can all hopefully improve our ability to provide an effective and influential voice across Scotland.

VOX (in partnership) hosted international guests to take part in an exchange visit as part of the International Initiative for Mental Health Leadership (IIMHL) looking at human rights and patient safety issues. This included hearing from The mental welfare commission the Scottish Human Rights Commission and the Mental Welfare Commission as well as a range of our own member organisations e.g. PLUS in Perth and the mental health network Greater Glasgow and other speakers to understand the picture in Scotland in terms of how those with a lived experience of mental health problems steer and get involved in a wide range of initiatives. Furthermore we provided opportunities for six individuals to attend the IIMHL

conference which took place in Manchester during May 2014, this was a fantastic chance to learn from other countries and share the good practice which takes place in Scotland.

We also supported two members to attend the 15th European Symposium on Suicide and Suicidal Behaviour in Tallinn.

Capacity Building for Individuals, Groups and Organisations

VOX continues to build the capacity of individual service users, groups and organisations.

Training - In April we held three training sessions aimed at our group members to provide training which they had previously identified as being areas they would benefit from. This included; Research skills, Community development, Co-production and Evaluation (LEAP evaluation methods). The training was attended by 15 people.

Aberdeenshire - We have held six sessions in Aberdeen to assist in building capacity to have a voice in the area. At present we are looking to support a more sustainable approach and hope to be able to continue to involve those who wish to be heard from Aberdeenshire.

Moray - In October we are coordinating (alongside a range of partners) a coming together event in Moray, again we hope to invigorate the individuals who are passionate about the issues to develop a mechanism to be heard

A conversation with a wise person is worth ten years study of books

Chinese Proverb

Improving Services

VOX sits on a range of groups whereby collaborative working helps to ensure that service users' views are taken into account, this includes;

- Royal College of Psychiatrists
- Scottish Governments groups to progress a range of commitments in their mental health strategy, e.g. common mental health problems, the role of carers (from a service user's perspective) and human rights
- A large piece of work we are co-managing is commitment 1 in the Scottish Governments mental health strategy. This is a ten year review of mental health services, and we are assisting in ensuring that people with mental health problems are at the heart of the visits taking place across Scotland.
- The Scottish Patient Safety Programme
- Mental Health Cross Party Group
- Mental Health Tribunals System (service users and carers group)

In order to improve services we have had a range of ways of influencing and making sure your views are heard including;

- Continuing to support the implementation and further refinement of the Patient Climate Tool (in Patient Safety (emphasising the perception of safety' from the patients perspective)
- Writing an article on the tribunal system for Scotland's annual report (based on survey responses from our members on how they feel the tribunal system has developed).
- Developing a response to the public bodies working together consultation paper (adult health and social care integration).

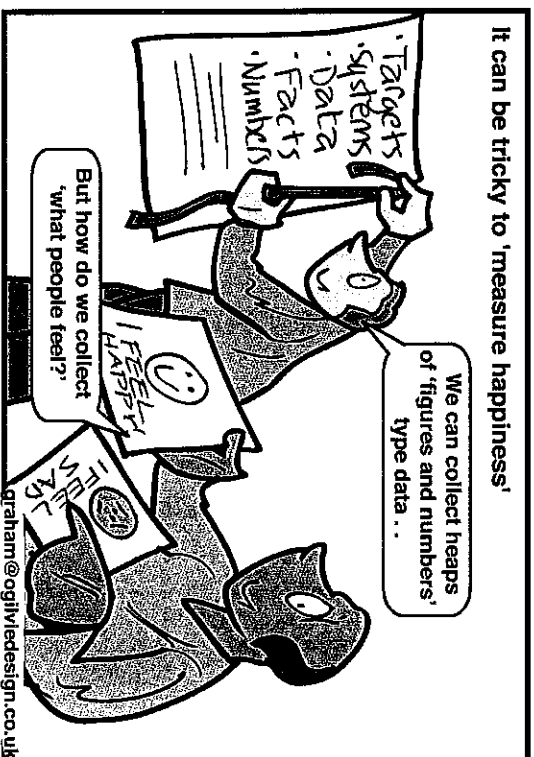
Awareness Raising

Through Facebook, twitter, Friday bulletin, stalls at events, and the mental health arts and film festival events we have utilised a range of methods and engaged with a large variety of individuals and organisations.

This has included awareness raising on diversity issues as part of the mental health arts and film festival to over 500 people. We raise awareness of opportunities (e.g. consultation, creative engagement, training opportunities etc.), to get involved and have members voices heard to over 4000 people through our individual, associate and

group members.

We have just refreshed our logo which represents our increased independence, and are in the process of refreshing our website so we can raise our profile to make sure our members views are given the importance they deserve.



Measuring Outcomes in Mental Health

We have continued to be involved with health care improvement Scotland to share our members' views, focusing specifically on the Mental Health patient safety climate tool. The tool aims to view safety from the patient's perspective.

VOX has started to look from an internal point of view about how we measure our own outcomes as an organisation, to do this we have developed something called a logic model. We hope this will lead to us being able to become more effective and focussed on capturing where we are making a difference.

Undertaking Research/ gathering evidence

This year we have started to consider the issues our members raise from a human rights perspective. Some of the work we have carried out has included pulling together the articles within human rights legislation, and how our members experience these rights.

A presentation on some of the findings was presented to a number of Scottish government officials (based on desk research) this provided a great starting point to develop further work. We also carried out focus groups to work together with our members and others to start to develop a shared understanding of how and where human rights and mental health come together.

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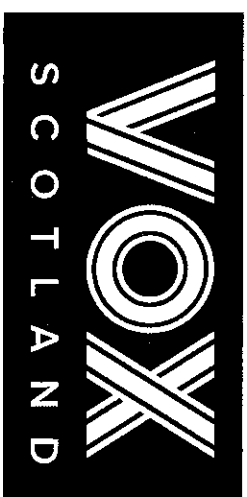
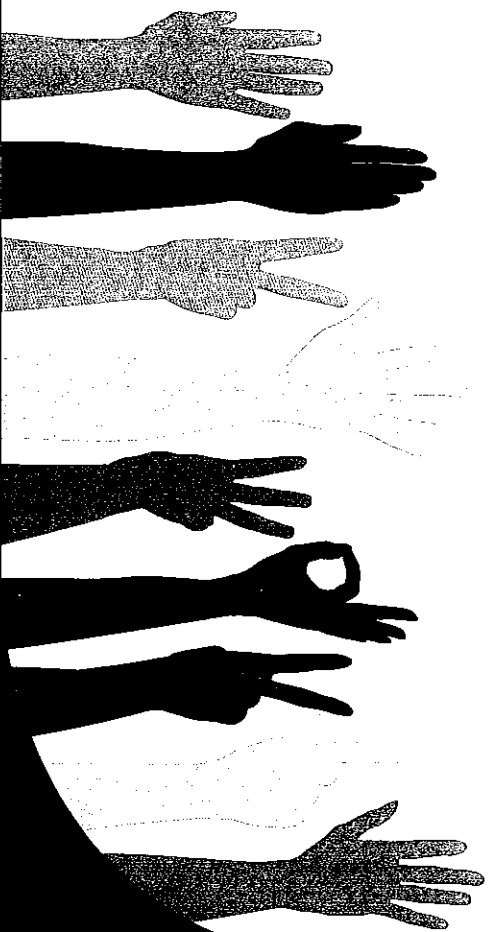
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