



Centre for
Independent
Living CIC

An Introduction to SPECTRUM

SPECTRUM Centre for Independent Living (also known as SCIL) is an organisation of Disabled People firmly rooted in the British and international Disability Movement. Born of the civil rights campaigns that shook the western world during the sixties, the guiding principle being that disability issues are human rights issues. We work to the Social Model of Disability which defines disability in terms of negative attitudes and discrimination caused by society failing to meet the needs of people with impairments.

We are a non-profit making Community Interest Company (CIC); have a membership comprising 'full members' (Disabled People) and 'associate members' (non-disabled allies); and are fully accountable to our membership.

We are committed to the principle of equality of opportunity, recognising that people are oppressed and can experience discrimination on the grounds of class, age, gender, transgender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, religion, belief; as well as impairment.



The centre is run by and for Disabled People to promote the meaningful inclusion of Disabled People into the community. By 'Disabled People' we refer to people with a physical, sensory, intellectual, psychological, emotional, or any other hidden impairment. We therefore include people with learning difficulties, mental health system survivors, cancer survivors and those living with HIV/AIDS.

Our aims are:

- to provide a means by which Disabled People can take control over their own lives, achieve full participation in all spheres of society, and effect changes in how they are viewed and treated
- to provide encouragement, assistance, advice, support and facilities to individuals or groups wishing to live independently, and to raise the expectations of Disabled People, individually and collectively, and ensure that their voices are heard

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

Our principle roles are to provide 'user led' services which are progressive and promote Independent Living; and campaign for the civil and human rights of Disabled People.

We believe that many of the services traditionally provided for Disabled People have resulted in segregation and disempowerment, creating systems which actually increase passivity and dependence. We work to create real opportunities for Disabled People to live independently and participate in the community. Our services are directed at empowering and enabling Disabled People to live the lifestyle of their choice, and to have the same opportunities that non-disabled people take for granted.

Our philosophy is that all individuals can live independently in the community. People who need support for everyday living can be independent if they have choice and control over the way support is delivered. We assist Disabled People to overcome the barriers which are preventing their independence. The most important thing we do is to help Disabled People realise that independence is not a matter of doing everything for yourself but of having choice and control over your life and a say in what happens to you.

SPECTRUM has become increasingly important and influential in supporting, informing and assisting Disabled People to live independently; and in advising on the development of progressive social policy solutions with local and central Government.

Disabled People have identified **twelve basic rights** which must be met before they can live independently, take control of their lives and enjoy equality with non-disabled People. The twelve rights are:

an accessible environment	an adequate income
accessible public transport	equal opportunities for employment
technical aids/equipment	appropriate and accessible information
accessible/adapted housing	advocacy/self-advocacy
personal assistance	counselling
inclusive education/training opportunities	appropriate and accessible health care provision

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)

SPECTRUM's History—30 Years and Counting

The Early years: We were born as Southampton Centre for Independent Living at a public meeting held in Southampton in November 1984 when a group of Disabled People met to set up one of the first Centre's for Independent Living in the country. Until the early 1990's, SCIL was essentially a dedicated group of volunteers, who worked hard making itself known, campaigning and gaining representation on influential bodies.

In 1987, SCIL gained office space in Canute Road, Southampton. However, in 1990, we became 'homeless' due to accommodation and resource difficulties. These problems led SCIL to rethink its strategy. We decided to assume a dual role; our services to Disabled People remaining free to Disabled People, but a significant change was introduced to develop income generating support services, and the introduction of fee paying services to professional, statutory and commercial enterprises.

During 1991, SCIL received two large grants to finance the appointment of our first full-time Co-ordinator and develop Disability Equality Training. This enabled SCIL to spend time and energy developing policies and structures to ensure the efficient running of SCIL and to demonstrate our values, principles and accountability to members; this gave us a sound foundation from which to grow.

The Middle Ages: The Northlands Road years: A move to Northlands Road in 1992 enabled SCIL to expand our services quickly, identifying opportunities to provide services that support Disabled People to live independently via Direct Payments type schemes. We developed consumer based auditing services, personal development training, and a range of training and consultancy services aimed at local authority staff and businesses. We also continued to campaign locally and nationally on disability issues and to further the demand for civil rights. We gained recognition for the role we played, and our ability to effectively represent the views of Disabled People.

By 1997 we had 8 staff. However, by 2004 this had increased to 24. We were bursting at the seams in Northlands Road; necessitating the next stage of our development.

Modern Times: The Unity 12 years: In 2005 we purchased, renovated and moved to our current office premises in Rose Road which we called Unity 12. This enabled us to embark on a new and exciting development in our history. We set-up Unity 12 CIC as the holding company to manage our property on our behalf. We own Unity 12 in partnership with the Disability Advice and Information network (DAIN). We have undergone 2 major refurbishments of the ground and first floor and have created fully accessible conference facilities,

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

meeting rooms and office space that we lease to like minded organisations who are actively promoting Independent Living opportunities for Disabled People in the community.

In 2013 we rebranded ourselves as SPECTRUM Centre for independent Living (See separate fact sheet for why we did this)

SPECTRUM has had to weather difficult political as well as economic climates, shrinking and growing accordingly. However, SPECTRUM has cemented its reputation locally, regionally and nationally as one of the most respected, influential and innovatively proactive User-Led Organisations in the UK. SPECTRUM now regularly advises ministers and senior politicians in both local and central Government.

SPECTRUM currently provides the following services:

- Training, consultancy and advisory services to public, private and third sector organisations
- Personal development opportunities for Disabled People
- Direct Payments, Self Directed Support services for Disabled People
- Facilitation of co-production opportunities with Disabled People
- Personal assistance register
- Student social work placements
- Mentored support for Disabled People
- Advocacy support for Disabled People
- Supporting others to develop new ULO's and encouraging users to be involved the policy and service developments
- Accessible conference and meeting facilities (via Unity 12 CIC)
- Personalised care packages for Disabled People using NHS Continuing Care funding (via our subsidiary, SCILCC CIC)

The Future: Throughout our history we have succeeded where other ULO's have not by maintaining clear aims, values and principles; by being pragmatic and innovative; and by leading from the front on ULO developments and issues we feel strongly about.

We will not rest until we achieve our aims that Disabled People should be enabled to live independently and enjoy the same choices, control and opportunities that non-disabled people take for granted.

Visit our website for more information: www.SpectrumCIL.co.uk

Think you know Disabled People ... Think again