

Friendship Club

People First Dorset provides a social network for 500 adults with learning disabilities, which offers friendships and social inclusion:



1000 participants
500 regular members



160 events
across Dorset



300 supporters
50 regular volunteers

Achieving significant social and health outcomes:



Increased integration
reported by
100% carers/professionals
95% members



Reduced Depression
reported by
95% members



Improved caregiving
reported by
68% of family carers

And providing considerable cost savings:

75% of professionals reported that Friendship Club reduces the need for statutory support, such as:



Reduced GP
at a cost of **£122 per hour***



Reduced community nurse
at a cost of **£34 per hour***



Reduced occupational therapist
at a cost of **£30 per hour***

And generating its own income:



£12,000
donations



£8,000
member subs

*Global Value Exchange

Friendship Club

Social inclusion is the foundation of 'self advocacy', or people with learning disabilities speaking up and leading change.



Self advocacy ensures that our views are heard by decision makers and that appropriate public services are available.

Self advocacy in Dorset can be integrated:



The Dorset Learning Disability Partnership Board presents our views to decision makers and different service providers.



People First Dorset's Forum provides self advocacy training, collates views and consults members.



People First Dorset's Friendship Club provides a huge arena for speaking up, building our confidence and communication skills.

Friendship Club

We're continuing to innovate in order to meet the needs of people with learning disabilities and to secure a sustainable future for the project:



Social Value Task Force

Contributing to the development of a task force for Dorset that will embed social value in public sector commissioning and promote the role of the social economy.



Corporate partnerships

Some companies sponsor events or various projects and we continue to welcome and create new partnerships with a variety of local and national businesses.



Community giving

Sponsored events, becoming a Mayor's charity, donation boxes in public venues, and other activities are all contributing to our costs and raising our profile.



Developing partnerships

Developing our relationships with commissioners, councillors, local trusts and establishing partnerships with other charities (e.g. community credit scheme)



Publicity and promotion

First weekly column in a UK newspaper written by adults with learning disabilities. This raises awareness of learning disabilities and the Friendship Club.



The Friendship Club is run by People First Dorset, a user-led charity for people with learning disabilities. We support each other to speak up and lead change, which is also called 'self advocacy'.

www.peoplefirstdorset.org.uk