



Association for Real Change  
Northern Ireland

**Impact Report 2016/17**

# What is ARC

Did you know?  
ARC NI was  
established in 1999

Association for Real Change (ARC) aspires to drive real change that puts people with a learning disability at the centre of decision-making, and in the heart of their communities. ARC is a membership organisation supporting anyone who is involved in the planning or delivery of support or services for people with a learning disability.

## We believe that those who plan and deliver support for people with a learning disability should:

- be supported in developing person-centred values and models of support
- have access to the knowledge, experience and skills they need to continually learn, reflect and improve what they do
- be supported to work in partnership with each other, setting aside commercial interests for the benefit of the people they support.

## The ARC NI Family

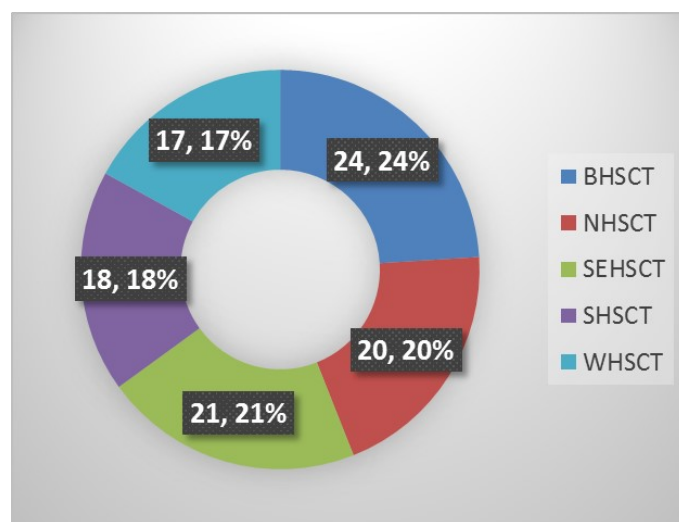
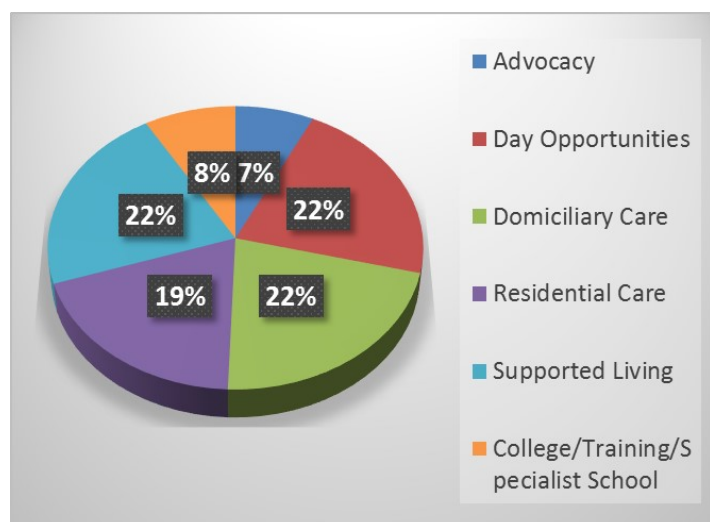
ARC NI supports providers from all sectors, including large and small, local, NI-wide and UK organisations. In 2016/17 ARC NI continued to support its 36 members from the previous year, with an additional two organisations joining us, Extra Care and Potens.

Did you know?  
In a recent survey,  
95% of ARC NI  
members felt the  
membership fee  
represented good  
value for money.

Did you know?  
ARC NI  
membership has  
grow year on year  
from 2014.

We have enjoyed working with our members and always look forward to welcoming new organisations into the ARC family, offering them both operational and strategic support.

As highlighted below, our members operate across NI and offer a wide range of services.



# Support & Develop

**Did you know?**  
73% of providers stated that we have been very effective in supporting the learning and development needs of their workforce.

We said we would support workforce and develop the continual improvement of practice to help individuals and organisations to reach their potential – and we did.

## Training

We delivered 57 courses and supported 811 learners, representing an increase of 32% of workforce reached, in comparison to 2015/16. Some of our courses are specifically to address standards as required by regulators such as NISCC and RQIA. Other courses are opportunities to further professional knowledge, expertise and overall practice.



*“The 3 Rs was a great course, especially encouraging the need for personal reflection on management style.”*

**Rhonda Murray, Castlevew PNH Ltd**

## New courses introduced in 2016/17 included:

- How to Communicate Sad, Difficult or Break Bad News, including Bereavement to People with a Learning Disability
- Meeting the Needs of Carers
- Mental Health & Learning Disabilities (NICE guidelines)
- Understanding Self-Harm & Supporting People with Learning Disabilities who are at Risk.

*“Very well prepared and knowledgeable trainer and presentation of course was very varied, using useful and appropriate examples of strategies and therapy.”*

**Lynette McLaughlin, SHSCT**

**Did you know?**  
ARC offers a Disclosure Service and in 2016/17 NI processed 686 checks, bringing reassurance to organisations.

## Adult Safeguarding

In response to the new joint departmental regional safeguarding policy and operational procedures, ARC NI supported the sector by facilitating 4 learning events called ‘Adult Safeguarding Champion – Exploring the Role in Practice’, co-facilitated by the Health & Social Care Board.



# Connect & Liaise

We said we would lead and facilitate conversations, networks and partnerships, which generate new ideas and solutions – and we did.

Did you know?  
6 external  
speakers  
attended our  
workstream  
meetings.

## Honest discussions in safe spaces

Our workstreams create a safe and respectful place for peers to discuss challenges they face in responding to the demands within the sector, explore practice and shared learning opportunities, and strategize solutions. In 2016/17 issues covered included the regional roll out of Self-Directed Support (SDS), the Code of Practice and Regulations supporting the Mental Capacity Act and cost efficient e-learning platforms/products.

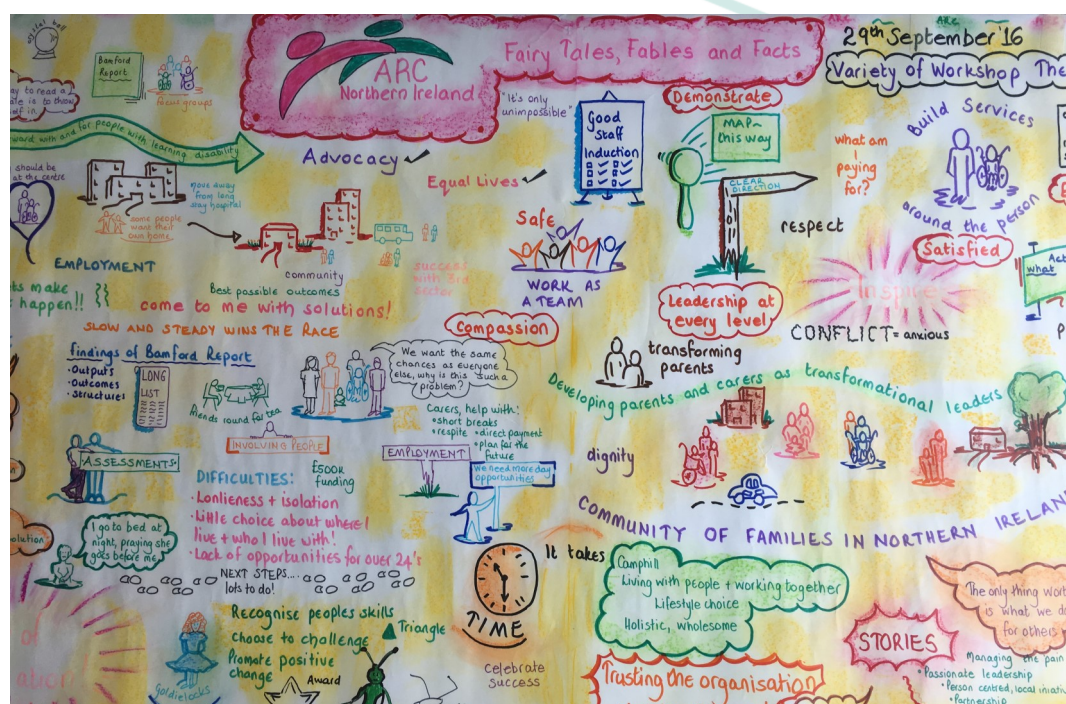
*"We have availed of good networking opportunities with other voluntary organisations and statutory agencies at meetings convened by ARC NI. The conference was an excellent vehicle for connecting with peers and other stakeholders." Dolores Finnerty, Caring Breaks*

## The Learning Disability Conference of the Year



ARC NI facilitated 216 stakeholders coming together in a 2 day conference to discuss 'Fairy Tales, Fables and Facts: Bamford Vision, where are we? The Minister of Health opened the conference followed by a number of speakers including the Department of Health and RQIA. Delegates also had the opportunity of participating in 2 of the 10 workshops offered, facilitated by a diverse range of organisations.

Did you know?  
93% of conference  
delegates learnt  
something new that  
could inform their  
practice and 83%  
made new connections



# Influence & Voice

We said we would champion the voices of providers and people who use services in order to influence change – and we did.

## Did you know?

In a recent survey across the membership, 77% stated that ARC NI have been very effective in increasing the voice of the sector with relevant policy & regulatory decision makers.

## Lobbying

ARC NI in collaboration with its members met with various decision makers over the past year to discuss challenges and present potential solutions. Issues included National Living Wage and its impact on night time support; financial pressures faced by the sector and the correlation to regional uplifts; and the opportunities and solutions to reform adult social care.

*“ARC NI has done a great job representing our sector over the past year, especially with regard to major issues we are facing such as NLW and sleepover rates. I feel that the relevant departments are more aware of us as providers and more willing to listen to us, thanks to ARC NI.”* **Scott Shively, L'Arche**

## Representation

ARC NI actively supports the 'All Party Learning Disability Group' since its formation, participating in the Planning Committee and encouraging providers to attend and show support at Stormont.



ARC NI represented the sector at 17 externally facilitated meetings, including those by NISCC regarding social care workforce, Health & Social Care Board regarding regional day opportunities, Public Health Agency regarding Learning Disability Health and Well Being, NIASP regarding the oversight of regional safeguarding policy and practice; and NIPEC regarding Strengthening the Commitment to Learning Disability Nursing.

## Did you know?

ARC NI increased our reach through Twitter by 40% to 1,106 followers and the likes of our Facebook Page by 22%.

ARC NI submitted a total of 5 responses to public consultations representing the sectors views in a collaborative response. This included the NI Executive's Draft Programme for Government, whereby ARC NI showcased a number of members' models/ approaches to support, that could enable the achievement of positive outcomes for people with a learning disability.



# Influence & Voice—TILII

## Telling It Like It Is

Supported by the Belfast, and South Eastern Health & Social Care Trusts, our TILII groups are adults who are experts by experience, keen to ensure the voice of people with a learning disability is represented and heard.



They undertake a number of roles including facilitating training to the sector on understanding the needs of people with a learning disability; respond to public consultations and meet with various stakeholders including departments and regulators as a turn to expert by experience group.

In 2016/17, TILII met with a range of stakeholders and gave feedback on a number of initiatives including Queens University exploring how to better measure quality of life; our service regulator RQIA consulting on an accessible questionnaire; and the Department of Health's Review of Bamford.

TILII delivered induction training to 28 Health & Social Care staff within the Belfast Trust. They also co-delivered training to social care workforce on the importance of advocacy; and a further 24 long-term unemployed individuals inducting them to the work of the social care sector as part of the 'Getting Started' project.

TILII also played an instrumental role in the ARC NI conference, including co-chairing, collating evidence for the evaluation report, and reporting about it interviewing delegates and speakers.





# Influence & Voice—TILII

## Roving Reporters

In 2016/17, ARC NI and TILII discussed how important it is to celebrate the good work going on in communities as we rarely hear about this. TILII wanted to meet with people in local communities and report on important news. As this was a new skill set, ARC NI developed a capacity building plan which included support from The Down Recorder, to support TILII members learning more about the role of a journalist and how to present news reports. TILII Roving Reporters began on their journey—and they didn't stop all year!



TILII interviewed 51 professionals in various disciplines and over 30 people with a learning disability, culminating in 11 Roving Reports sharing topics relevant to the learning disability sector and wider community. They are in the midst of producing their annual newspaper, showcasing summaries of all the reports produced. These are also on the [ARC NI TILII Webpage](#).



# Projects—GETTING STARTED

## Getting Started

The Getting Started Collaborative was an 18 month project, identified to address recruitment challenges as faced by the wider social care sector. The project offered participants who had been unemployed or economically inactive for at least 6 months, the opportunity of taking part in a pre-recruitment 8 week training programme, with a guaranteed interview with a provider who had real vacancies, upon successful completion.



Funding was secured from Ulster Garden Villages, with a contribution from Bombardier. Ingeus also provided funds in kind, through the use of their facilities.

The results of the project were positive.

*“I have been a single mum on benefits all my life the Getting Started programme gave me the confidence and skills I needed to successfully get a job as a support work it has changed my life for the better thank you.” - Pauline White*

**73** participants took part in the training programme.



The outcomes achieved were high with 73% of participants successfully completing the course and achieving a qualification (European Care Certificate). An evidenced outcome was 50% of participants' securing employment, and of this 80% was within the health & social care sector.

**53** participants successfully completed the course.

**47** participants attended interviews.

**19** participants completed a successful interview and were offered employment.

**10** participants completed the course and were unsuccessful at their interview however, secured employment in the care sector.

**7** participants have secured employment in other industries.

ARC NI used the evidence of this project to inform its response to the Department for the Economy's public consultation regarding 'Apprenticeship Levy' in Northern Ireland.

ARC NI's Getting Started project was also referenced within a scoping paper commissioned by Social Care Institute for Excellence, 'Building the future social care workforce: a scoping study into workforce readiness, recruitment and progression in the social care sector'.



# Projects continued—OPTIO

## OPTIO

OPTIO, our ESF funded 3 year project is an access programme empowering people with a learning disability to plan for employment through exploring enterprise.

Initiated in 2015 and supported by the Belfast Health & Social Care Trust, and East Belfast Enterprise, Stage 1 offers innovative teaching on the concept of enterprise and Stage 2 expands upon the participants' knowledge and encourages their participation in co-designing and delivering an Enterprise Challenge.

In 2016/17, 23 adults with a learning disability engaged across 3 groups with 61% progressing to co-design and deliver 3 enterprise challenges, raising a total of £491 net profit. This money is reinvested back within the groups to continue with their entrepreneurial activity. Furthermore 48% of participants secured accredited qualifications.

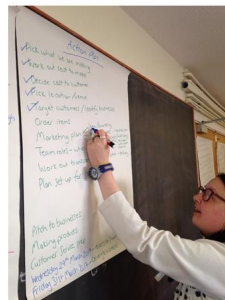
OPTIO utilises a diverse range of tools to capture participants' individual journeys and distance travelled as well as, evaluating and improving the project delivery. The strongest area of impact in soft skills development through the OPTIO project is in relation to aspiration (83%) and confidence (61%). What is clear is that societal barriers continue to be perceived by participants after completion of the project. ARC NI is considering how it can build the capacity of the sector, to ensure sustainability of the achievements this project has made.

Finally, the project underwent 2 inspections this year, the Education Training Inspectorate on behalf of ESF Managing Authority; and OCN, due our centre status. Both inspections proved positive, reporting good standards of provision.

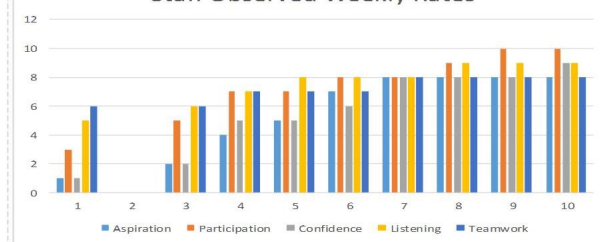
### CASE STUDY—CHRISTINE

Hello, my name is Christina. I am 36 years old and I was really nervous about doing the OPTIO project. I actually said I wasn't going to do the course and wouldn't go to the second week. I had zero confidence in myself because I didn't think I was good at anything. I also didn't think I could learn about enterprise. My support staff chatted to me and said I should go for a couple more weeks. I didn't miss another week! I loved the course, and I did really well, my confidence grew really quickly in the group. I talked about myself and things that I like, and was encouraged to look at all the things I am good at.

I loved planning our business in Stage 2! We called our enterprise Loughshore Crafty Creations (LCC) because we are down by the water. Before OPTIO, I would wait for other people to speak but I had lots of ideas for all of our business and talked non-stop! I worked online to find different items we needed and picked a beautiful design of business card.



Staff Observed Weekly Rates



Being on OPTIO meant that we went out into the community and talked to businesses about buying the products we make. I also did a pitch to a business which was a bit scary, I would never have done something like that before, and would always say no to something new but I was really friendly and really liked it! We also had a launch day for LCC at Forestside.

After OPTIO I now feel I can do more with the right support and I have completed an OCN Level 1 Award in Vocational Skills. I am keen to make Loughshore Crafty Creations a really good business and we have already used some of the profit we made to take a stall at the Balmoral Show which is a really big event in Northern Ireland. My hopes for the future – to work in a shop and I believe I can with the right support.

# A thank you to our...

## MEMBERS

Apex  
Autism Initiatives  
Belfast Health & Social Care Trust  
Camphill Community, Clanabogan  
Camphill Community, Glencraig  
Camphill Community, Mourne Grange  
CAN  
Caring Breaks  
Castlevue Private Nursing Home  
Cedar Foundation  
Centre for Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities  
Conerstone Care 212 Ltd  
Derg Valley Care  
Enable NI  
Four Seasons Healthcare  
Friendship & Caring Trust Ltd (FACT)  
Health Matters (Health & Safety) Ltd  
Inspire Wellbeing  
Kilcreggan Homes Ltd  
L'Arche Belfast  
Livability  
Mainstay DRP  
Mencap NI  
MindWise  
Northern Health & Social Care Trust  
Northern Ireland Institute for the Disabled  
Parkanaur College  
Positive Futures  
Potens  
Praxis Care  
Presbyterian Council for Social Witness  
South-Eastern Health & Social Care Trust  
Southern Health & Social Care Trust  
The Beeches Professional & Therapeutic Services Ltd  
The Croft Community  
Triangle Housing Association  
Ulster Supported Employment Ltd (USEL)  
Western Health & Social Care Trust  
Willowbank

## PEOPLE WHO HAVE SUPPORTED US

Belfast Health & Social Care Trust  
Bombardier  
Department for the Economy  
Department of Health  
East Belfast Enterprise  
European Social Fund  
Health & Social Care Board  
Ingenus  
Modern Office Supplies  
NI Housing Executive, Supporting People  
NISCC  
RQIA  
South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust  
Ulster Garden Villages

## VOLUNTEERS

Agnes Lunny, Chair of ARC NI  
Sean Fox, TILII



# Plans for 2017-18

## Our UK Strategy

ARC UK Strategic Leadership Team undertook a review of ARC's strategic plan, early in 2016. The final draft of the ARC UK Strategic Vision 2016-2020 was approved by the UK Board of Trustees in December 2016 and is available on [ARC NI's website](#).

### In 2017-18 ARC NI aims to:

- support and develop a confident and competent workforce working in services
- enable the connections between organisations, across the learning disability sector and with all other relevant stakeholders
- lead and facilitate solution focused discussions with policy makers, commissioners and regulators of Social Care.

### Examples of our planned activity for 2017/18 includes:

- extending our training and support function to offer assessment and accredited courses
- facilitating workstreams to collectively tackle issues relating to the sector
- establishing a peer network for Adult Safeguarding Champions, in partnership with NI Adult Safeguarding Partnership (Health & Social Care Board) to address challenges and identify solutions during the 1st year of implementation
- enabling TILII to support their peers through training and consultation
- raising the profile of the sector highlighting positive news, including Learning Disability Pride; Learning Disability Week etc.
- representing the sector at meetings with decision-makers, presenting solutions and collaborative opportunities.



#### ARC UK Strategic Vision 2016-2020

##### ARC's Vision

Real change that puts people with learning disabilities at the centre of decision-making, and in the heart of their communities.



##### ARC's Values

We believe that people with learning disabilities:

- ✓ should be listened to, respected and treated equitably
- ✓ should be fully included in all decisions that affect them
- ✓ should be involved in the planning and delivery of support services
- ✓ can become self-advocates and lead real change in their services and communities

We believe that those who plan and deliver support for people with learning disabilities:

- ✓ should be supported in developing person-centred values and models of support
- ✓ should have access to the knowledge, experience and skills they need to continually learn, reflect and improve what they do
- ✓ should be supported to work in partnership with each other, setting aside commercial interests for the benefit of the people they support

##### ARC's Mission

The Association for Real Change is a membership organisation supporting anyone who is involved in the planning or delivery of support or services for people with a learning disability.

Our work also benefits people with other support needs such as autism, mental health issues, long-term health problems and physical and sensory disabilities, and we are therefore committed to sharing our learning and experience across all sectors. Our strategic vision is written at a time of austerity, which is impacting heavily on supported people throughout the UK. Never has our work been more challenging or important.

##### ARC's Strategic Aims

###### 1. Support and develop

We will support and develop the continual improvement of practice to help individuals and organisations to reach their potential.

###### 2. Connect and Liaise

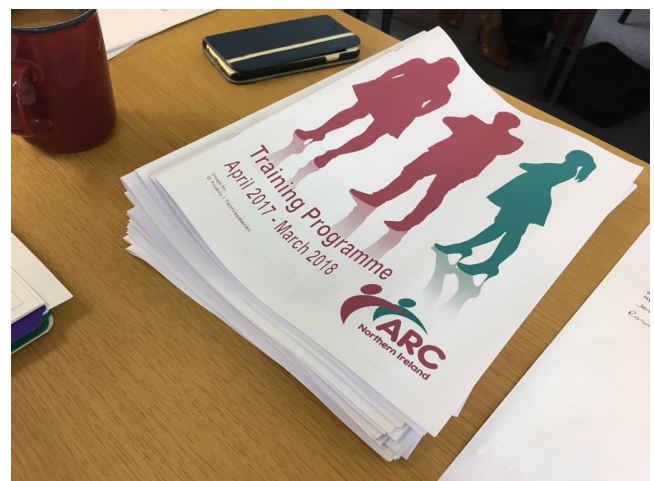
We will lead and facilitate conversations, networks and partnerships, which generate new ideas and solutions.

###### 3. Influence and Voice

We will champion the voices of providers and people who use services in order to influence change.

###### 4. Financial Sustainability

We will remain sustainable within a financially constrained sector and relevant to changes within the external environment.



## Association for Real Change

Association for Real Changes operates in 4 countries in the UK.

You will find more information on how the strategic vision is being delivered across the UK, as well as information on how to join or support our organisation, on our websites.



[www.arcuk.org.uk](http://www.arcuk.org.uk)



[www.arcuk.org.uk/scotland](http://www.arcuk.org.uk/scotland)



[www.arcuk.org.uk/cymru](http://www.arcuk.org.uk/cymru)

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