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ASSOCIATION FOR REAL CHANGE  
(ARC NI)

## GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER

Our vision is to achieve real change that puts people with a learning disability, autism, or other additional support needs at the centre of decision-making, and in the heart of their communities.

We believe that achieving our vision depends on everyone working together, sharing ideas, experiences and learning from each other.

What makes us different is the way we work – by exploring ‘how can we help’ and asking ‘if we should help’.

There are many people that know about us and the work we do - but there are many that don't.

Never have we had to work harder to bring people together to make sure the voice of people with a learning disability is heard, regardless of who we are.

The first newsletter has been created to help people learn more about us, think about how they can join in and if there is something we should be doing more of?

The people in ARC NI are:

- Leslie-Anne Newton NI Director;
- Stephen Walker Office Manager;
- Louise Hughes TILII Coordinator;
- Charlotte Smith TILII Project Officer; and
- Telling It Like It Is (TILII) – a group of 55 experts by experience. These advocacy groups are in Bangor, Belfast/Lisburn, Downpatrick, Enniskillen and Muckamore Abbey Hospital.

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### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

The history of ARC	2
What does ARC do?	2
Meet & Greet Corner	3
Up and coming events	4
TILII Translates ...	4
Feature .....	5
Useful information.....	6

### FEATURE ARTICLE

- The importance of planning



## WHAT DO WE DO?

ARC NI is hard to explain but our job is to try to make the lives of people with a learning disability better. We do this through:

- delivering training to people to help them think about the way they support people with a learning disability
- sharing information in ways that it can be understood by everyone, so people know about important issues that affect people with a learning disability
- holding meetings and helping people in different jobs to listen and understand the experiences of people with a learning disability and work together to improve the lives of people with a learning disability in Northern Ireland.

So for example, between April-June 2022:

- We delivered 34 training courses to 403 people that work in services supporting people with a learning disability.
- We developed a total of 18 [accessible pieces of information](#), 11 Easy Read documents and 7 TILII TV films.
- We had 113 meetings which helped 1,319 people talk and listen to issues that affect people with a learning disability.
- We replied to a public consultation about the change [\(reform\) that is needed in adult social care](#) and explained that people with a learning disability can use adult social care from the age of 18 and so change needs to meet the needs of young people as well as older people.



### The history of ARC

We were founded in England in 1976.

ARC became a registered charity in 1982. It moved into Scotland in 1998 and Northern Ireland in 1999.

Following the Department of Health in England adopting the term 'learning disability' ARC was renamed to the Association for Residential Care in 1989. In 2002, the most recent change in organisational name reflects the major policy changes in social care in that ARC (which is how it is known) now stands for the Association for Real Change.

ARC has a Board of Trustees, made up of people across the UK, including a person with lived experience.

In NI, our founding Trustee, Agnes Lunny is the longest standing Trustee of ARC. She has been supporting ARC for 23 years.



**MEET & GREET CORNER** - In every edition of our newsletter we plan tell you a little more about the people in ARC NI.

We start with Leslie-Anne Newton, NI Director, who helps services, government and people with a learning disability by listening to everyone, understanding the things that are difficult and helping people work together to make them better. Leslie-Anne's first job after studying was as a Crisis Advocate in England, supporting people with a learning disability. She then worked in children's services.

She came home to Northern Ireland in 2006 and joined ARC NI in 2014.

**3 truths and a lie - but which is fiction? –**

- *Leslie-Anne was a 'spotter' for Jeffrey Archer at a charity auction;*
- *Leslie-Anne had over 100 bunnies as a child;*
- *Leslie-Anne has met Bono.*

**Find out the answer in next edition**

**Leslie-Anne Newton**



**What people like and admire about me...**

I listen to what everyone has to say.  
I am good at solving problems.  
I don't sit around, I get things done!  
I tell the truth and don't hide when there is something difficult to say.  
I like having a laugh and a bit of fun!

**What's important to me...**

Fairness and being treated the same as everyone else - respect.  
Being able to have open and honest chats with people who have different views.  
Using each other's skills, knowledge and experience to work together.  
My family - husband, two fab children and my dog Amber.  
Hugs from my kids, my weekend walks and wine time!

**How best to support me...**

Tell me as much information and allow me the chance to understand where you are at.  
Allow me time to reflect (think) but help me stop overdoing it.  
Forgive me if I get things wrong or if I'm grumpy.  
Remember that if I don't show my feelings, it doesn't mean I don't have them.  
Give me a giggle!

**MEET SOME OF OUR TILII MEMBERS IN THE NEXT EDITION**

## UP AND COMING EVENTS

### What training does ARC NI offer?

To see a list of all the courses we offer in 2022/23 download the [calendar](#).

You must [book](#) to attend.



- Induction: Supporting People with a Learning Disability' – co-delivered by experts by experience (TILII), this training is aimed at newly appointed or relatively inexperienced staff, working in the learning disability sector. **7th September, face to face, 10am-4pm**
- Senior Managers Network. **22<sup>nd</sup> September, 10am-12pm, virtual via Zoom**
- ARC Annual General Meeting. **28th September, face to face, 10am-12pm**
- Registered Managers Peer Network – **11<sup>th</sup> October, 10am-1pm, virtual via Zoom**
- Mental Health & Learning Disability' - Covid has affected people and their mental well being. The course will raise an awareness of mental illness, its effects on people with a learning disability and provides a basic introduction to assessment and interventions. **12<sup>th</sup> October, 9.30am-12.30pm, virtual via Zoom**
- Adult Safeguarding Champion Peer Network – **2<sup>nd</sup> November, 10am-12pm, virtual via Zoom**
- Workforce Development Network – **8<sup>th</sup> November, 10am-12pm, virtual via Zoom**

## TILII TRANSLATES - ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION

TILII Translates is an advocacy group of people with a learning disability. We are trained in making information easier to understand.

We

- translate your documents into Easy Read and plain English
- check and approve your Easy Reads; and
- make easy to understand films, from information you give us.

Our Easy Reads and films help people

- to be more independent
- to be more involved in their local communities
- to have their voices heard.

If you would like to find out more, please email [tiliitranslates@arcuk.org.uk](mailto:tiliitranslates@arcuk.org.uk)

### TELL US:

Should we have future newsletters also available in Easy Read?



## FEATURE ARTICLE - The importance of planning

Life is full of change and that can be scary for all of us –starting in a new place, making new relationships, a change in our money, getting older. But if we don't try to plan and take decisions based on what we like, or want, it can hit us harder.

For people with a learning disability it can be harder still because there are many people to involve, their family carers, staff in services supporting them etc.

*“Without leaps of imagination or dreaming, we lose the excitement of possibilities.”*

In 2014, a training manual was created to help staff work with family carers called '[Preparing for the Future](#)'. It provides staff with a guide to help family carers explore and make a future plan for their loved one and looks at:

- Circles of support, person centred planning and emergency planning
- Signposting housing and support options
- Making sound financial and legal decisions
- Direct payments.

There is also support through a charity called [VELA MICROBOARDS NI](#). They can provide a facilitator to help establish a group of family and friends who help a person plan for a better future and make that future a reality.

Most recently, an [Advance Care Planning policy](#) for adults (aged 18 years and over) in Northern Ireland is being developed to support a person to have greater choice and control over decisions, including plans for their future care and treatment. This is very important if the person becomes unable to make the relevant decisions for themselves at any point.

Advance Care Planning provides the opportunity for adults who wish to do so to:

- think about what matters to them;
- then tell people who are important to them;
- discuss it with those who provide care, support or treatment;
- write it down and share it;
- revisit the conversations and decisions, make any changes, and then share again.

'TILII Translates' were delighted to help the Department of Health to explain this difficult area, by making 5 short films to explain the areas of the policy. These will soon be launched and will help us all begin to think about how to plan for ourselves, and the people we support.

So whether you are a:

- staff member - you can start thinking about how to support a person with a learning disability and their family members to plan; or
- family carer who doesn't know where to start - hopefully you understand who to contact.

This will give hope to people with a learning disability that what they imagine can become a reality.



## LINKS TO OTHER HELPFUL INFORMATION

The All Party Groups on Carers and on Learning Disability will hold a joint session focused on the [restoration of day services](#), respite and transport provision on 14 September, 1-2.30pm. People must register to attend by clicking on the link:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/joint-meeting-of-the-apg-on-carers-and-apg-on-learning-disability-tickets-396509509617>

The National Autistic Society are interested to hear from autistic adults (18+) living in the Northern Trust Area who wish to join an online social group. The group will meet every fortnight online for six months. For more information please email:

[christina.curran@nas.org.uk](mailto:christina.curran@nas.org.uk)

The Mental Capacity Act DoLs [newsletter](#) is available.

Chair of Muckamore Abbey Inquiry has provided an [update](#) regarding progress and hearings.

The Department of Health has published [April-June's](#) information collected from health and social care (HSC) trusts on the number of and the amount paid by direct payments, broken down by HSC trust and client group.

The Department of Health published an [Emergency Care Plan](#) for Carers.

Carers NI is keen to hear your views by 9<sup>th</sup> September in their '[State Of Caring Survey 2022](#)' which will ask carers to tell them what life is like now, and what needs to change.

The Northern Ireland Assembly Commission is consulting on its new [draft Equality Scheme](#).

*Did you know you can search all questions relevant to learning disability asked by Members of the NI Assembly, to all Ministers:*

<http://aims.niassembly.gov.uk/questions/search.aspx>

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