

Disabled Peoples Forum Notes in Brief



6th October 2006

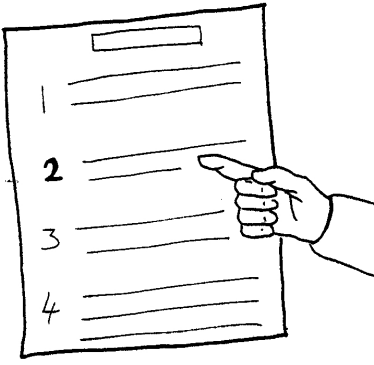
The Disabled Peoples Forum is an independent group run by disabled people for disabled people.



About 40 people came to the first meeting held at the Priory Street Centre on 6th October.

At this meeting members of the forum talked about how they thought the forum should be run.





These are the things people thought were most important.

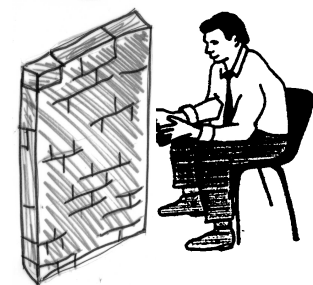
1) The Forum works well with decision-makers to change the way they do things.

You said:

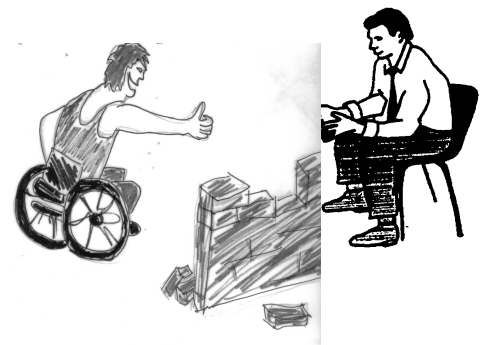
- This is important because without this, we will not make a difference



- It's difficult to get people to understand the issues and to get to the people who make the decisions



- Disabled people can help decision-makers by offering their skills, experience and what they know to help make changes



2. The Forum has the views of as many disabled people as possible feeding into it.

You said:

- This is important because people need to understand other disabled people's needs



Aspie = Asperger's Syndrome

- It's difficult to get people involved and to get people to realise how important it is



- The forum meetings need to be accessible, held at different times and on different days and advertised as widely as possible.



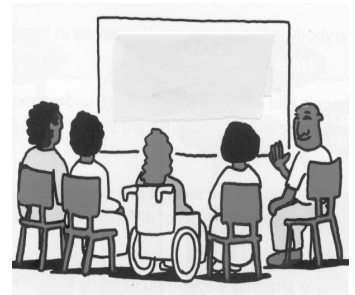
3) The Forum talks about things that are to do with disabled people and that are important to them.

You said:

- It is important that disabled people set the agenda at the forum, not the council or anyone else



- It's also important that everyone has a say at the forum and gives ideas of things they would like to talk about



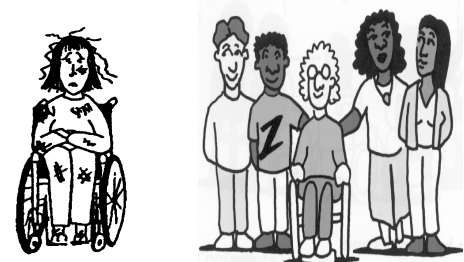
4) The meetings and events are friendly and make you feel welcome.

You said:

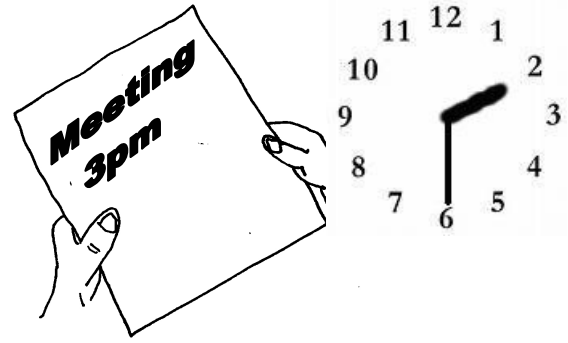
- This is important because it helps to make the atmosphere more open and less intimidating. This makes it easier for people to share their views



- Some disabled people are shy and on their own



- The meeting room should be accessible and it should be open for half an hour before the start of the meeting so people can get there early and mix



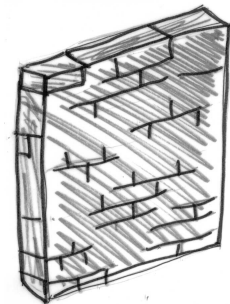
5) Disabled people know what it being talked about and how to have their say

You said:

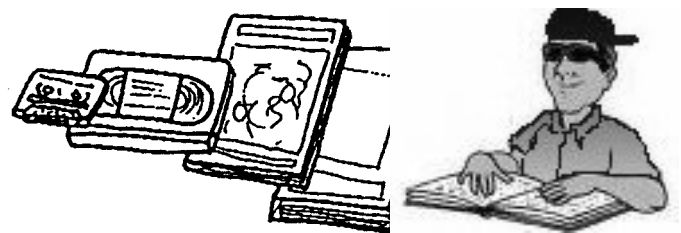
- This is important to encourage people to join in



- It's difficult to reach everyone



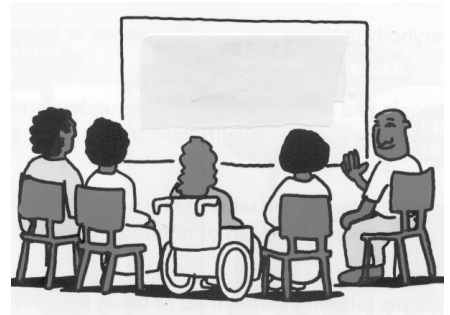
- Information, such as a newsletter, should be available in different formats and people should be encouraged to tell other people about the forum.



6) The Forum representatives must understand about and be able to talk about issues affecting all disabled people, not just one disability.

You said:

- It is important that disabled people work together as one group



- It is also important that the representatives know what they are talking about



- Members could sign up to a statement that sets out the main purpose of the forum and that everyone should respect each other's views.



When will the forum meetings be held?

Members talked about when would be the best time and day of the week for the forum to meet.

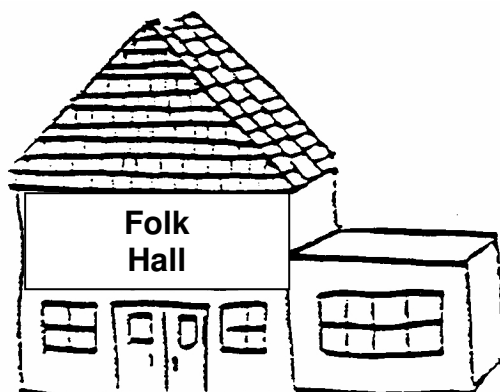


Monday, Wednesday and Friday got the most votes.



Most people preferred to meet at lunchtime or in the afternoon.

No one could agree on just one day or one time and so it was agreed to hold meetings on different days and at different times. This way everyone will be able to make at least some of the meetings. Everyone also voted that the forum should meet four times a year.

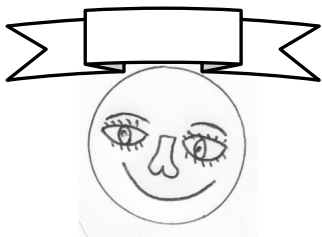
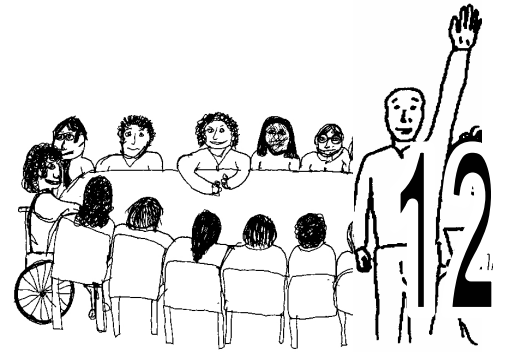


The Folk Hall in New Earswick and the Priory Street Centre were suggested as venues for the meetings.

Steering Group and Representatives

The forum will be run by a steering group of people. This will be temporary at first so that the next meeting can be organised and run.

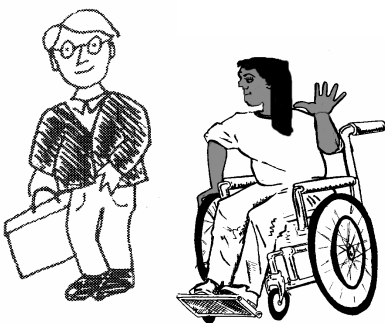
Twelve people volunteered to be on the steering group.



They are:

David Brown
Fiona Walker
Ann-Marie Mitchell
Jim Sams
Karen Wilson
Glynis Garner

Lynn Jeffries
Alison Wilde
Alison Cowen
Steve Loftus
Shaun Lavery
Andy Pollin



There will also be two representatives that go to the council's Social Inclusion Working Group on behalf of the forum. One of these will be a man and the other will be a woman.

The Social Inclusion Working Group is a mixture of councillors and people from different communities in York. It looks at issues that affect not just disabled people but:



Black and minority ethnic people



gay, lesbian, transsexual and bisexual people



men and women

older and

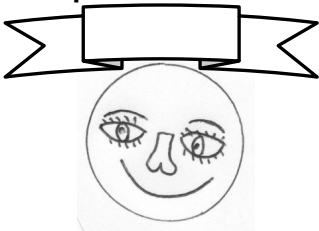
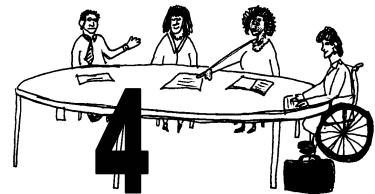


younger people



people from different religions

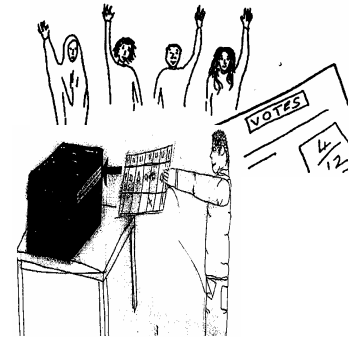
Four people volunteered to be representatives.



They are:

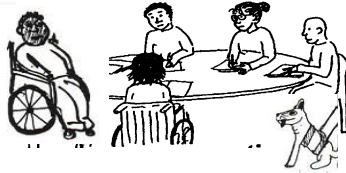
- Fiona Walker
- Karen Wilson
- Glynis Garner
- Steve Loftus

The steering group will involve members in voting for which of these volunteers will be the representatives.



What happens next?

The steering group will organise future meetings of the forum.



The steering group will organise the election of the representatives to the Social Inclusion Working Group. They will contact you with details of the next meeting.

