

# Manifesto Briefing

## **5** **Involve us, the experts in our own lives, in making post Covid-19 Scotland better for disabled people.**

### **What disabled people's lived experience tells us:**

- 🗨️ “Inaccessible systems and processes were put in place without consulting disabled people, including social distancing rules for supermarkets for people who require assistance.”
- 🗨️ “It's clear that there's no contingency plan for services for disabled people.”
- 🗨️ “Too much conflicting information. Information that doesn't consider disabled people's experiences.”

### **What disabled people want:**

- Full recognition and involvement of our Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) – organisations run by disabled people for disabled people – by decision and policy makers, those holding them to account, and by funders.
- Communicate with us and inform us in ways that are accessible to us.
- Stop stigmatising disabled people as vulnerable and problematic.

DPOs, like Inclusion Scotland are a unique and valuable source of expertise and lived experience through our membership (DPOs and individual disabled people), and our staff. We are ready to inform and work with policymakers and service providers to make change happen. In recent years however, many DPOs have been forced to downsize or shut because of cuts to funding.

As a result of our lived experience as disabled people of the barriers we face and how to overcome them, we can make a positive contribution to improving the decision-making of public bodies. If it works for disabled people, it will work for other service users too.

Disabled people are not “vulnerable”. This is disempowering language positioning us as weak and passive. We may be at risk. We may use support and have rights to it. as. But we are of equal worth with lots to contribute as workers, carers, and active citizens.

## Impact of Covid-19:

Disabled people are not just at risk from the virus. We are at risk from the actions of public bodies and others who do not understand who we are, what we need or what will work. Why? Because they have not asked us.

Respondents to Inclusion Scotland's Covid-19 Survey reported difficulties with accessing food or medicines because measures to implement social distancing rules did not take account of the needs of disabled people.

Not all information and guidance on Covid-19 has been provided in accessible formats, such as subtitles audio description, Easy Read, Braille, or British Sign Language. Disabled people are less likely to have access to the internet than non-disabled people.

In a statement on Disabled People and Covid-19, the Chair of the UN Committee on the Rights of Disabled People said, "States must ensure that disabled people, through their representative organisations, are closely consulted with and actively involved in the planning, implementation and monitoring of COVID-19 prevention and containment measures."

## Rights and Renewal:

Inclusion Scotland published a Statement on our Core Asks of policy and decision-makers, service providers, employers, retailers, academics, funders and to our broadcasters and wider society, to involve and support disabled people during Covid-19 and beyond

1. Stop stigmatising disabled people as vulnerable and problematic
2. Promote, not diminish, our human rights as disabled people
3. Involve us, the experts in our own lives, both now and when we build the 'new normal'
4. Support our national and local disabled people's organisations so that we can be involved
5. Communicate with us and inform us in ways that are accessible to us

**Visit our website [www.inclusionScotland.org/manifesto2021](http://www.inclusionScotland.org/manifesto2021) to show your support for our manifesto. Easy Read, large print and BSL versions of the manifesto and separate briefings on each of the manifesto's Five Asks are available on our website.**

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