



Self-directed Support Way to go!

We have taken control of our lives, you can too!



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Foreword

This is a great book – not just a great read, but a great book.

Fourteen young people and their families have all participated with immense enthusiasm and commitment in the project behind this book. They have shown how the spirit of Self-directed Support can change lives, of whatever age.

There has been much criticism over the way the introduction of this new method of supporting people has involved social work departments reassessing people; and such reassessment leading to less support being given. But these stories have shown that such reductions are more to do with the financial climate of local authority cut backs, than the introduction of Self-directed Support. When Self-directed Support is adequately funded, people, like these fourteen young people, can lead the lives they want to lead – with freedom, dignity, choice and control.

These fourteen stories are inspirational and should be a must on any young disabled person's reading list. They show what can be achieved, given the right amount of support; and what should be achieved for others thinking of living the life they want to live.

Each one of these young people and their families must be congratulated in what they have done, despite their own difficulties, and society's reactions to those difficulties. They should also be warmly thanked for letting the readers of this book into their lives.



Dr Jim Elder-Woodward, OBE,
Chair, Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living

Stuart's Story



Hi, my name is Stuart. I left school at 17 and was working as an apprentice car mechanic until I was involved in a car accident and woke up four months later in the Southern General Hospital.

I was then transferred to a centre where I had 11 months of rehabilitation before returning home.

Before the accident I was out and about a lot and played five-a-side football regularly, but the accident left me much weaker physically and the experience knocked my confidence. When I first got home I struggled to even go out of the house at all and lost contact with my friends. The accident changed how I view things. Now I think your life is a pack of cards - you get dealt the hand you get.

It's not in my nature to just give up so I started to plan how I could boost my recovery. Although the rehabilitation process was difficult at times, it all gradually came together.

I knew that getting fit would help my health and boost my confidence.

However, there was a problem to overcome: I needed some assistance at home to get up in the mornings and to get out of the house.

Photos were provided courtesy of the Herald and Times Group.

Social Work Services arranged for a Cordia worker to help me in the mornings and I still receive this support. I first met Jim when he was employed by an organisation to provide my social support. After a while, things changed within the organisation so I decided to choose a direct payment which allowed me to employ Jim as my personal assistant (PA).

Jim helped me to go along to a gym and I got involved with Glasgow Life's 'Live Active' scheme which helps people get into exercise. At the gym I worked with an instructor who, after a while, challenged me to compete with him in a rowing time trial. I didn't beat his time on that occasion! However, I really enjoyed the exercise and with Jim's support, I joined the adaptive rowing team at the Scottish Rowing Centre at Strathclyde Park.

Jim has now been working for me for 5 years. Being in control of my support and having a good relationship with my PA has really boosted my confidence as I am the boss!

Jim provides support to enable me to attend rowing training twice a week. My health and stamina have improved, I have made new friends and I love the challenge of competitive sport. I have had some success too. In the Scottish Indoor Rowing Championships in 2013, I won a silver medal and in 2014 and 2015, I won gold! Also I now go on occasional trips to the cinema and recently enjoyed my first try at go-karting.

My long term goal is to get a job and I am now beginning to take steps to find out what opportunities might be available to me. Life's not perfect but I feel more healthy and confident. I am only 26 years old with my life ahead of me. I want to make the most of it and it is so important for me to be in control of my future.



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Michael's Story

Hi, I am Michael and I am going to tell you about my journey, through Project SEARCH, to achieving full time employment.

I first learned about Project SEARCH when I was a student at Cardonald College. Project SEARCH is a partnership between Strathclyde University, City of Glasgow College, Glasgow City Council Supported Employment Service and Autism Network Scotland and is open to young people between 18-25 years.

I applied and soon had interviews with both Strathclyde University and the NHS. The interview was in two stages and I learned about what would happen in the course, met with other interns and had the opportunity to ask questions about the course.

I started the course in August and although I found it tricky getting to know the other interns, it didn't stop me from starting conversations and as time went by, we got to know each other.

The course runs for one year and during that time I completed three work placements. Most of the tasks to begin with were preparing for the placements, but I also felt confident enough to join some committees, particularly the newsletter and Facebook committees- the first time I had ever used Facebook!



As the time passed I continued to learn new job search skills and I became more confident about my abilities. Soon my first placement came along as an administrative assistant in the university. At first I was nervous but, with support of my workplace buddy from Project SEARCH, I soon learned the tasks and got to know the staff.

My second placement was working as a commis chef, again with a buddy for support. I was very unsure about this placement as it was a whole new experience for me and I was really nervous because I was trying to do the tasks exactly the way the chefs wanted, but after a few weeks I got a

For more information about **Project SEARCH** contact:
Scottish Commission on Learning Disability
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bit better at working in the kitchen. I really liked talking with the chefs, to begin with I just listened to their conversations, but later I felt confident enough to join in and really enjoyed speaking with them, except when they joked with me about getting a girlfriend!

For my final placement I chose to be a customer adviser in The Centre for Sports and Recreation. I surprised everyone by learning how things worked really quickly. I really enjoyed working there because I like to be kept busy. It taught me to interact with new



people and I was really pleased to hear that my colleagues thought I was a good intern.

At first I was looking for jobs as a retail assistant, but my Project SEARCH buddies suggested that I look for administrative assistant jobs as I have excellent computer skills. I had been searching for many jobs and went for some interviews. At first when I didn't get jobs I was losing confidence, but the Project SEARCH team kept my spirits up.

Finally success! I am now working full time as an administrative assistant with Glasgow City Council, Social Work Services Finance. When I first started



I was supported by a Project SEARCH buddy, but within two weeks I felt confident about the tasks I was expected to do and I now just have occasional visits.

I like my job, I have supportive colleagues and thanks to Project SEARCH I have also made friends with the other interns and we meet up socially.

I enjoyed my time at Project SEARCH and appreciate the support they gave me. I wish future interns all the very best.

Michael was supported by Project SEARCH. He does not have SDS, personal budget.

Stephanie's Story

Jackie (Mum): When I look at Stephanie now, I can't believe how ill she was. In 2007 when Stephanie was 10 years old, she suffered a brain haemorrhage.

She was in a coma for three months and in hospital for a year. She missed a great deal of schooling and had to re-learn how to do just about everything. She needed a lot of support and during her years at school, her dad Gary, and I provided all her day to day physical and medical care needs ourselves. We asked for a small amount of support from Social Work Services, and although it was agreed, we never actually received it as the paperwork was lost!

When the time came to think about what Stephanie would do after leaving school, we decided that we had to support her to be more

independent. While attending an open day at Stephanie's school, we met a Social Work Services, Local Area Coordinator (LAC) and, with her support, things really took off.

Stephanie: I appreciate all the support that my mum, dad and sister, Danielle give me, but I wanted to be more independent when I left school. I was assessed for Self-directed Support and was offered a budget. I chose a direct payment as I wanted my family to arrange the support that I needed. The Local Area Coordinator also supported me to visit lots of different places so that I could decide what I wanted to do. I decided how



I wanted to spend the money and the Local Area Coordinator helped me to make a support plan. She was a brilliant help!

I now have a very busy week. I go to college two and a half days. I love arts and crafts, particularly making greetings cards, so I go to an arts project in the city centre twice a week. I go to a club one evening a week and a young persons' activity group one day a week. I also love cats and I have just started a college placement at the local Cats Protection League rescue centre. I hope that, if they are happy with my work, I might be able to continue there. I chose to have

support workers from an organisation as I need a lot of medical support and the organisation provides all the medical training the workers needed to support me. However Mum and I are thinking that at some point in the future I might change to employing personal assistants (PAs).

I don't do everything with my support workers. I am a big music fan and go to lots of concerts with my sister Danielle who is my "concert buddy". I also go out to the cinema, bowling and parties with friends. Due to my medical condition I can't eat or drink (I am fed by tube) and also I have a tracheostomy, but I don't let these things stop me partying! Dad built me this amazing summer house at the bottom of our garden where I spend a lot of time just hanging out with my friends. Mum even phones me first to let me know if she wants to pop in. My parents respect my privacy.



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Jackie: Gary, Danielle and I are so proud of Stephanie's achievements and we are confident that there are more to come!



Georgia and Nancy's Story

My name is Nancy and I am mum to three daughters. My middle daughter Georgia is 18 years of age and has complex needs. This is our story.

Georgia enjoyed school and regularly attended a project in our local area that involves young people in music, visual arts, drama, and film. Georgia's last year at secondary school was an anxious time as I had very little information about what opportunities existed for school leavers. I wanted her to build on what she had learned at school and become more independent, just like her sisters, but at her own pace.

The only support we had received, from Social Work Services until then, had been during a period of ill health that I experienced. Cordia came in to help Georgia to get up and ready

for school and again at the end of the day. However, I still supervised their support - I admit that I was reluctant to trust other people to look after her. It wasn't until after Georgia's final school meeting, before leaving school, that I was contacted by a Social Work Services Local Area Coordinator.

She met with us and outlined some possible options. We agreed that Georgia was not really ready for college so we visited a council day centre, but there were very few young people there and the activities were not geared towards young adults.



We then visited a centre run by a voluntary organisation. Almost as soon as we walked in I could sense a positive response from Georgia. It was bright, busy and lively and there were young people there. Georgia now goes to the centre five days per week and is involved in a variety of activities. In the six months she has been attending, she is doing more and more for herself, communicating more and is helping to do small tasks to help at home, like setting the table. Although Georgia liked school, it was always a bit of a struggle to get her up in the morning, but now she is up and ready in plenty of time. Georgia has very little speech

so she communicates her feelings in her actions and it's so important to be clear that she is happy. Also I trust the staff at the centre and that is progress for me!

We had applied for Self-directed Support and Georgia was awarded a budget to cover the day centre and transport. I intend to opt for a direct payment so that I can manage Georgia's budget myself, but first I need to be granted Financial and Welfare Guardianship, which I am currently applying for. In the meantime Social Work Services pay the bills from Georgia's budget. Georgia shares a taxi to and from the centre with two other young people and they pool their budgets to share the cost.

Having a child with a disability means it is sometimes difficult to spend the amount of time I would like with my other children. Georgia seems very happy at present and her time at the centre allows me to spend time with my other daughters when they have days off work, or at school holiday time.

This benefits all of us as a family.



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Cailean's Story

My name is Cailean. I am 19 years of age and my ambition is to be an actor. I have just completed a Performing Arts course at Coatbridge College and at the moment I am studying Radio and TV Broadcasting at Cumbernauld College - I am pursuing my dream!

Tricia (Mum): I knew nothing about Self-directed Support until a friend who is active in a partners and policy group told me about it and I also saw how well a friend's daughter was doing thanks to having a direct payment. I wanted Cailean to do what he wanted to do and he wanted to go to college, but as Cailean is on the autistic spectrum I knew he would need some support. A direct payment seemed to be the perfect option as Cailean needed his own personal assistant

(PA). It took a long time to get Self-directed Support, but I received great assistance from take ctrl: South Lanarkshire who speeded up the process.

Cailean: I interviewed four people who had applied to be my personal assistant (PA) and I chose Sandra because we got on from the start and I felt very comfortable with her. Sandra supports me to go to and from college and if I have any difficulties with some of the college paperwork she supports



me with that too. Sandra also helps me to learn my lines and prepare for performances. I am really enjoying my Radio and TV Broadcasting course as there is so much variety. I am learning presenting and voiceover skills as well as script writing and I like working as a team with my class mates.

Sandra (PA): I get great joy from watching Cailean's progress through his college courses. My aim is to do such a good job that Cailean doesn't need me anymore!

Cailean: I love every aspect of performing. In my spare time I write and create ideas for movies. In 2011 I wrote my first live action movie called "Ben Jones." Ben is a type of secret agent who solves mysteries. I then completed "Ben Jones 2: Taken."

Tricia: The family all got involved in acting, directing and editing

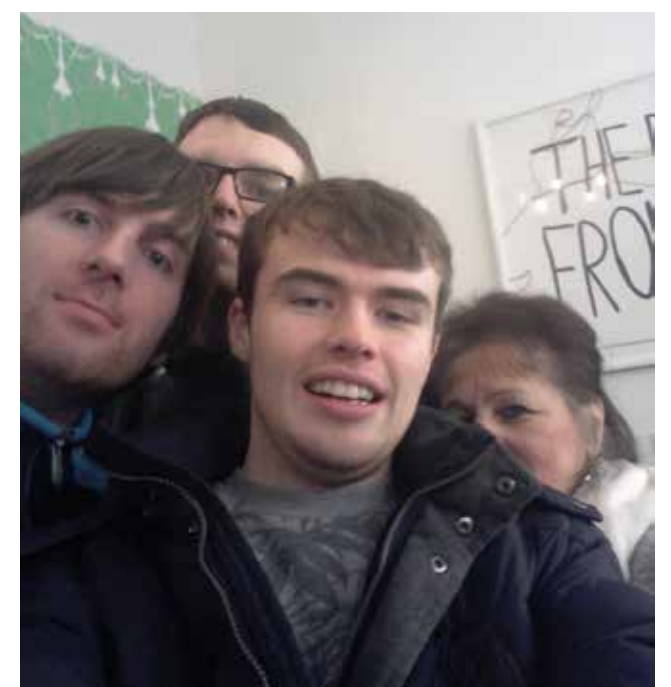
To see Cailean's movies on YouTube search "dogfish wee movies"

Or www.youtube.com/watch?v=KMb1DJcDNKU for "Ben Jones."

"Ben Jones" and we had a hilarious time filming. We then organised a premier at The Glasgow Art Club and Cailean impressed his audience with an entertaining and action packed movie.

Cailean: I have also had extra roles in "Waterloo Road" and some TV adverts. Recently I won a Glasgow Film Theatre "Wee Movies" award, in my age category, for an animated film called "Dogfish." As well as performing, my other interests are swimming and going to the gym to keep fit. As we have just moved house, my brother and I go out and about to get to know the area, including the odd pub lunch. I also like visiting new areas to scout out locations for future filming.

Tricia: As a mother you never stop worrying, but I feel now that something has been lifted from me. Cailean now has the confidence to go out and do different things. He has ambition and is keen to be independent.



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Cailean: Watch out - in the future you might see me on a screen near you!

Heather's Story

My name is Heather and I would like to tell you what I am doing to get the life I want.

At the moment I live with my Gran in the North West of Glasgow. I left school in 2009. My ambition is to be a medical administrator so I decided that gaining appropriate qualifications was the best way to start. I went to Anniesland College and gained an HNC in Administration and IT with a specialisation in medical administration.

I did have some doubts about whether or not employment was for me because I am in hospital a lot and was unsure if I could keep a job. However, I was told about the Employability Award training scheme which helped me get ready for employment. When the course finished I decided I wanted to try employment, so I applied for the

Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living's Open Door programme. I was offered a placement as a receptionist with GCIL where I completed 11 months work placement and I am currently applying for part-time work with the support of the GCIL job club. The placement increased my confidence in dealing with people face-to-face as well as on the phone. I even spoke at GCIL's AGM this year and to over 120 people at an event in the SECC.

My main interests are swimming, shopping and gymnastics. I have been involved in gymnastics for 15 years as a gymnast and then as a coach for two childrens classes, specialising in rhythmic gymnastics. In 2013 I gained my Level 1 coaching certificate to



qualify as a coach and this involved a practical exam as well as developing a lesson plan. In the future I hope to gain the Level 2 qualification.

Until now all the practical support I needed was provided by my Gran, but I wanted to be more independent as I hope to get my own flat some day. I contacted Social Work Services and asked to be considered for Self-directed Support. I wanted a direct payment so that I could have support to get up in the morning and not have to rely on Gran. I also need support to go swimming and to return home from evening coaching, which can be particularly difficult in the winter.



I met with a social worker who worked with me through the whole process and I got a direct payment more quickly than I expected. For me it was a very straightforward process, but I know that not everyone is so lucky!

I chose a direct payment so that I can employ my own personal assistant as I don't want different people that I don't know coming in to help me with personal care tasks. I am currently recruiting someone with the support of a GCIL Support Team adviser.

GCIL Housing is also helping me to apply to local Housing Associations for a flat in my area.



I haven't achieved all my ambitions yet, but thanks to the fact that I can choose the support that's best for me, I'm well on the way!



Gary's Story



“A cracking Airdrie entrepreneur has defied health problems to create his own eggcellent business” declared the headline in the Airdrie and Coatbridge Advertiser.

Gary: Yes that's me. I have a free range egg business called "Gary's Eggs." I have 130 chickens and sell around 300 eggs a week to family, friends, neighbours and voluntary organisations.

Agnes (Mum): Gary lives with epilepsy, experiencing several seizures every day. He also has a learning disability, ADHD and Autism. For most of his education he attended an Additional Support for Learning school. After leaving school Gary completed a life skills course at college but due to his complex needs we knew

that it would be difficult for Gary to get a job after college although that's what he wanted.

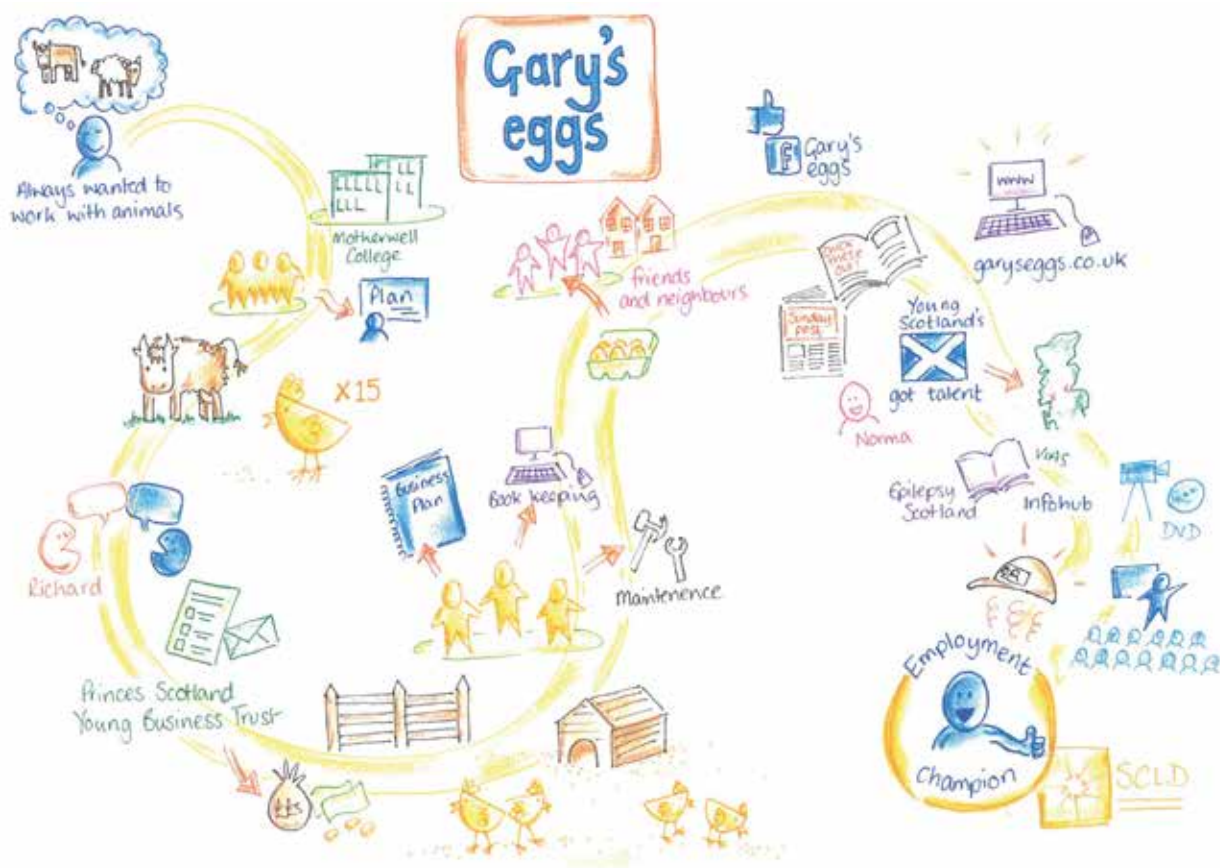
I did a person centred planning course through my work and very quickly I realised that what I wanted for Gary was different to what he wanted. It is Gary's hopes, plans and dreams that are important and as a family we were committed to supporting him to achieve his ambitions.

Gary loves animals and it was clear that working with animals would be something that he would really enjoy. Thanks to a job coach who had been



working with Gary we began to think about the possibility of Gary starting his own business. As we have a farming background the idea of working with animals was a real possibility and slowly but surely "Gary's Eggs" was hatched. With the help of Gary's job coach an application was submitted for a Princes Scottish Youth Business Trust starter grant and the rest is history. We started with 15 chickens and this has risen to 130 give or take a few that have ended up as "chicken pie" for a rather determined fox!

Since 2005 I have managed a direct payment. With this budget we employ five personal assistants (PAs) who support Gary both with the business and to get involved in leisure activities.



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The Parliament congratulates the 22 year old entrepreneur, Gary Hadden from Airdrie, on his successful start up business, Gary's Eggs, and wishes Gary, his hens and his business all the best for the future.

Excerpt from a Scottish Parliament Motion tabled on 27th June 2013

Gary: My PAs Alan, Fiona and John help me to check on the chickens each morning, feed them, collect, clean and box the eggs and then deliver them to customers. Each week John and I count the money earned and take it to the bank. Every year we buy new chickens, but we also have something called an incubator and we can now hatch chicks ourselves. I hope I will be able to keep going with my business for a long time to come and perhaps get even more chickens.

I like doing lots of other things and my PAs support me to visit my friends and family. I enjoy going out for dinner, cinema, bowling and golf and sometimes my PAs help me go shopping and make dinner for my mum and dad.

Recently we went away for a weekend and visited Cadbury World and the Harry Potter Studio Tour. It was really cool and we had a great time. I would like to go back again.

I love my job and my chickens, working outdoors, meeting my customers and counting my money, which I use to buy more chickens.

I've even had a mention in the Scottish Parliament.



More information about Gary's Eggs can be found on Facebook

Greg and Louise's Story

My name is Louise and I am mum to Greg who is 18 years old. Greg has a rare chromosome disorder and one of the main consequences of this is that Greg has general learning difficulties.

Amongst other things, he struggles to process information easily, although over the years, he has developed great coping strategies, so it's not always apparent whether Greg is or isn't following.

Throughout Greg's schooling, we never sought any support because my husband, Greg's brother and I felt that we could provide all the support that Greg needed. However we knew that when the time came for Greg to leave school, we would need

to contact Social Work Services for support. We were allocated a social worker who visited us on five or six occasions to assess Greg's needs. He spent time getting to know Greg, learning about his interests, finding out what Greg would like to do and what he would be capable of doing, and generally guided us through the Self-directed Support process.

The process took some time, but Greg was allocated a budget and then he met with a number of agencies



before deciding which one we wanted to provide his support.

Three and a half days a week, Greg attends college, which he manages without support. His two support workers assist Greg to get involved in a variety of activities. They support him to help out at a local charity once a week, go to a gym to work out and have a swim and sauna. When the weather is good, they go out on their bikes to local parks as he enjoys being outdoors. Greg also attends a dance class which he loves. Greg has his free bus pass so he can travel with his support worker on public transport to activities, at no additional cost. Last but not least, on a Friday evening he goes out for tea and then to the pub for a ginger beer. Nothing gets in the way of Greg's Friday night out!

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It's a constant steep learning curve for us all and it's scary, but really it's that or stand still - and that isn't an option, for any of us.

When Greg first started college, we worked over a number of weeks to teach him to travel independently and he is now able to travel to and from college on his own. It doesn't always go smoothly - he has missed his stop and he did get on the wrong bus one day, but he phoned to tell me. I was very proud of the way he handled what could have been a very upsetting situation for him. That was real progress.

I now look beyond what we do for Greg and consider what Greg needs and might want. We still struggle getting our heads around him going out with a support worker rather than being with us, particularly on Friday evenings, but we are very conscious that he needed to be away from us doing things with other folk of his own age. It has also given my husband and I the opportunity to enjoy a couple of hours out on a Friday evening again, which is very welcome.



Currently, we use support workers from an organisation and while we're pleased with the support workers, one down side that we're aware of is that eventually they move on to other jobs or study and Greg has to get to know new workers. I have given thought to employing personal assistants for Greg, but I'm not sure how ready we are for that yet, and I don't feel the timing is necessarily right for that change. I appreciate though that there are organisations like Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living that can help if we do want to change. We're not ready to take that leap yet, but it's reassuring to know that having a direct payment gives us the flexibility of being able to change

our arrangements in the future, if we feel that this would be better for Greg. Although we worry, we are so pleased to see how Greg's confidence has grown and that he is happy and active. We've seen so much change, in all our lives, over the past few months as we've moved into a different phase. What I've really appreciated is the importance of letting go (a little!) and giving Greg a bit more freedom to progress, but also to make mistakes sometimes. It's a constant steep learning curve for us all and it's scary, but really it's that or stand still - and that isn't an option, for any of us.

Mahesh's Story

Mahesh: I have always loved sport. When I was growing up in India, near Dehli, I especially loved cricket. It was my passion.

Now that I am here in Scotland I get involved in sports that don't rely so much on good weather, although I did brave the Scottish weather at school by joining the cross country team!

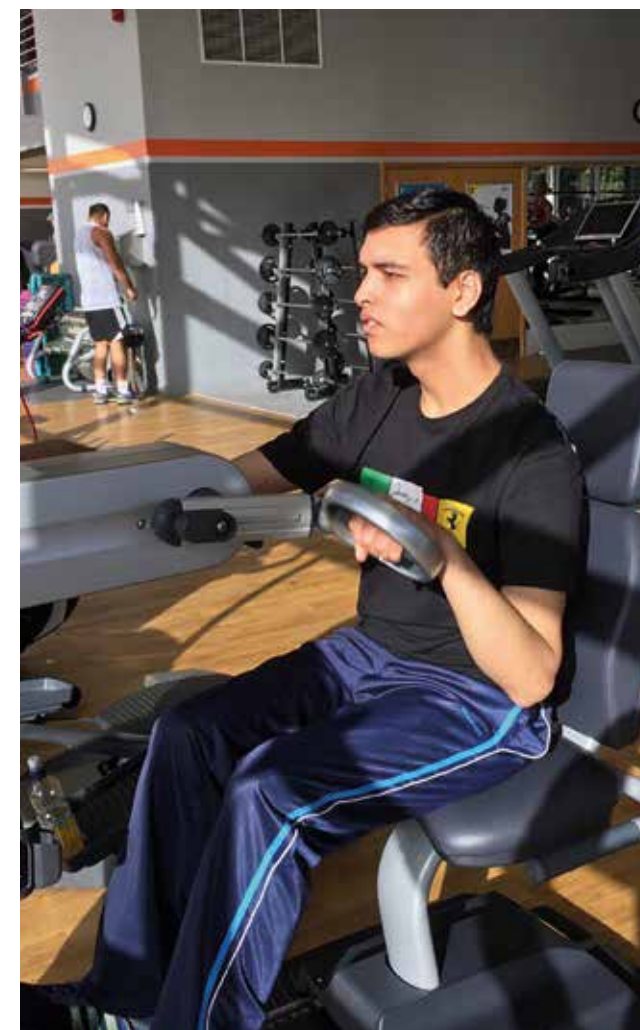
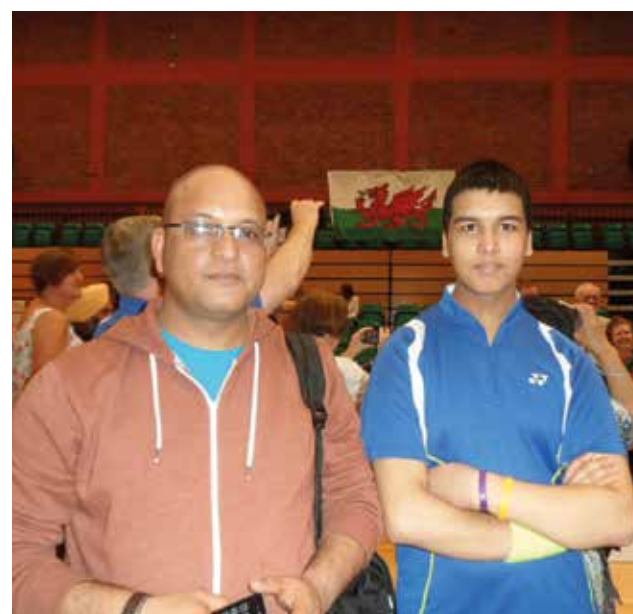
Mindutt (Dad): My sons and I have lived in Scotland since 2009. For the first few years I did not know anything about what Social Work Services could offer. I first heard about Self-directed Support when I attended an Education Services event in the City Chambers. I received a great deal of helpful information there and although it was all a bit overwhelming at the time, it did help

me to think about the support that Mahesh might need in the future. Once I had contacted Social Work Services, our social worker from Adult Services, who was very helpful, guided me through the process until we received a Self-directed Support personal budget for Mahesh.

Mahesh: I am now 19 years of age and I attend Glasgow City College two and a half days a week. This year I am studying Personal and Social Development Level One and I hope to go on to study Level Two next year. This will include learning skills that might help me to be employed in the



future. My support worker helps me to travel by bus to and from college. He helps me while I am at college too. I have made new friends there and I go with some of them to my local gym once a week. I go to a club on a Friday and enjoy meeting up with other club members. I enjoy playing games on my Xbox and going to M&Ds. My favourite sport at the moment is badminton. I play every week at a local club and I am involved in both singles and doubles matches. In 2013 I was awarded the Mary Russell trophy which is given to the person who has made most progress in the sport. I really enjoy playing in competitions



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My ambition is to be a sports coach. I'm sure that will not be a surprise to anyone reading this story!

and I have travelled to many places to play. There are four big competitions every year in Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland. In Cardiff last year, I won a gold medal in the singles competition and this year in Motherwell, my doubles partner and I also won gold. One of the things I enjoy most about the competitions is that my Dad comes with me and cheers me on. My ambition is to be a sports coach. I'm sure that will not be a surprise to anyone reading this story!

Mindutt: It is very reassuring for me that Mahesh is well supported at college and that there is someone with him

who Mahesh trusts and who is trained to manage his seizures. My working hours do not often allow me to do regular activities with Mahesh so it is very important to me that I am able to spend time with him by taking him to his competitions. I hope at some point in the future to take a break with Mahesh and travel to a yoga centre in India. These centres offer a holistic approach to wellbeing through yoga, meditation, vegetarian diet, sleep and relaxation techniques. Scotland is our home, but I would like Mahesh to also experience more of his culture and language of origin.

David's Story

Hi, I'm David, I am 22 and am living independently with support thanks to Self-directed Support.

Michelle (Aunt): David has great memories of his early childhood and the fun times he had with his gran, aunts, uncle and cousins who were all a great support to him. Unfortunately circumstances changed and, because of David's needs, in addition to the family support, some extra support from organisations was required.

When David became 18 he felt ready to move from where he was living. David was allocated a social worker who helped to find the type of accommodation and support that would meet David's needs. Everyone in the family wanted David to have a

home where he would feel supported, happy and settled. It was a very gradual process and David, his dad and I were involved at every stage. After a while a flat was identified which is managed by a local care organisation where David would share with another young person. Before moving in, the staff from the flat visited David to get to know him and David visited the new flat.

David: I was excited about moving into my own home and I was pleased that my family were helping me to find the right place as they are very important to me. When I found out I



might be sharing with someone who I already knew, I was really pleased as we get on! I went shopping to choose the furniture and all the other things for my bedroom and it is decorated the way I want.

My support worker and I worked out a plan for what I would do after I had moved in and I talked about my interests and what I wanted to do. I have now lived here for four years and I do lots of different things. Some I do on my own and some things I do with my support worker. I am seriously into music and everyone is impressed by my knowledge. If you want someone on your quiz team who knows about music, I'm your man!

I go to drumming lessons once a week in town. My support worker used to go with me, but now I can go myself and I

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If you want someone on your quiz team who knows about music, I'm your man!

just text to let them know when I have arrived and when I'm coming back home. I DJ twice a week at a local club for people with disabilities. I organise all the music and shop for quiz prizes.

On a Friday night I go into town with my friend for a drink and we go to our favourite music pub. We both need some support so we just share a support worker. Best of all, I go to a lot of concerts at the Hydro. I have seen everyone from Def Leppard to Paul McCartney. I usually choose to go to concerts with my family. I even took my Aunt Michelle to see The Corrs for her birthday.

Of course I also help to look after my home, so during the week I will go out with my support worker to the supermarket. I help to tidy the flat, particularly my own room, and wash



my clothes. I have tried my hand at a wee bit of cooking and I am learning to look after my money and plan what I want to spend. On Sundays I like to spend time with my dad so he usually comes over to my flat and we just hang out together. I also enjoy time with my aunts and cousins and I love chatting to them about the fun times I had when I was wee. Sometimes I help my flat mate with some of the things he has to do.

Phyllis (Support Manager): David has quite complex needs. When he first arrived he was shy and found it very difficult to communicate with people. We are all amazed and delighted to

see how many skills he has learned and how much his confidence has increased. The fact that he was willing and able to tell his story for this book is a demonstration of that.

Michelle: The family is very protective of David and we are so pleased that the personal budget that David was allocated through Self-directed Support allowed Social Work Services to purchase a service which is tailored to his needs. We as a family really appreciate all the support that has helped him to get to where he is today – a happy and contented young man.

Jonathan and Belinda's Story

Hi, my name is Belinda. My husband Dennis and I are parents to Jonathan and his brother Ryan, who both have autism and complex needs.

Jonathan is my older son and he left school in May 2015. My younger son Ryan is still at school.

Jonathan has lots of interests. He enjoys keeping up to date with the news and weather on his iPad and he is a great fan of cooking programmes on TV. His favourite is Mary Berry and his top recipe is chocolate cake! He likes to help with small tasks around the house. When Jonathan was younger he went to respite on a regular basis and he liked to help the staff with the breakfasts for the other young people. He likes listening to

music, singing, going out for dinner and to the cinema. Jonathan is a talented artist and he had one of his paintings featured in the Glasgow City Council Education Services Calendar when he was only 9 years of age. We are very proud of his artistic abilities (see over page).

As the time drew near for Jonathan to leave school, we became very concerned about his future. We did not want him to be at home all the time and be isolated from opportunities and friends, but my younger son has very complex needs



and his care takes up a great deal of our time. It was a worrying period.

We got in touch with Social Work Services to apply for Self-directed Support and a social worker carried out an assessment of Jonathan's needs. He was then allocated a budget to pay for his support. Social Work Services look after Jonathan's budget, but he chooses what he wants to do. We were allocated to a Local Area Coordinator who arranged visits to different places so that Jonathan could make choices. She then helped us to draw up a support plan for him. It is important to Jonathan to know in advance what he will be doing, so creating a clear plan for him was very important.

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For young people who attend an Additional Support for Learning school, it is really important that they have the opportunity for local friendships.



Last summer was difficult as Jonathan did not have activities arranged for him and he likes to be out and about. However, he started a college course at the beginning of August 2015 and now has an active and varied week. He attends the City of Glasgow College three days a week. He is involved in a personal development course and will soon be moving to new state of the art college premises in the city centre. In addition to college, Jonathan takes part in a gardening project one day a week, attends a young persons' activity group once a week and a club two evenings a week where he meets up with his friends. He finally chills out at weekends!

This year he is going with a group of other young people on two short breaks to Blackpool and Craig Tara.

The evening club was set up and is run by a group of parents including myself. We set it up because at the time, there were very few opportunities for young people with learning difficulties in the local area. For young people who attend Additional Support for Learning schools it is really important that they have the opportunity for local friendships. I am also on the board of the school attended by Jonathan and his wee brother, as I feel it is important to support the work of the school.

We are pleased that Jonathan now has an interesting and varied programme of activities. In a few years time we will have to go through it all again with Ryan!

Cheryl's Story

Hi, I'm Cheryl, I am 22 years old and my ambition is to get a job.

Since I left school, all my energies have been going into learning the kinds of skills that will help me to get into employment.

First of all I studied employability skills at Glasgow Kelvin College. As well as the course subjects, I had a number of work experiences. Also, thanks to a personal budget through Self-directed Support, I have been able to actually buy the support of an employability worker. I talk to my support worker about my ambitions and he arranges work experiences for me and supports me to learn the job tasks.

One of my placements was in a day centre for older people. My job was to help the staff there and work with the clients to ensure their happiness and comfort. While I was there I organised an activity where I manicured all the ladies nails, while chatting to them and listening to their stories. The ladies really enjoyed the session and so did I!

Another of my placements was in a local charity shop. (The organisation that supports me and some other young people, worked as a team and actually took over the charity shop one day a week.) We ran the shop on that day and we had responsibility



all the jobs required to run the shop properly including checking stock, arranging window displays, serving customers and asking customers for comments.

My most recent placement was in a food bank. I worked there for four to five months and helped out with lots of different tasks, in particular sorting the donations and packing bags which are given out to people.

All these placements have helped me to try out different things and learn new skills. This has helped me to decide what I want to do in the future and I have also gained confidence, as I now have more skills to offer.



“

I have been hoping to get a placement in a nail bar as my ambition is to work in the beauty business.



I can also now travel myself, as long as I have support to get to know the journey first.

My main interest is singing and my family and friends tell me I am pretty good! I sing in a band who got together as part of a project based in a music studio in Glasgow. During the project we practiced every week and then played a live showcase gig at The Garage night club in town at the end of March. There was a big crowd there so I was a bit nervous but I sang two songs as lead vocal and it was brilliant! I hope we will stay together as a group and do more gigs. I have also written two songs and want to do more song writing.

I like spending time with my boyfriend Joseph. We met when we were both working in the charity shop and we have a great time going out with friends or I will go over and hang out at Joseph's house.

I have been hoping to get a placement in a nail bar as my ambition is to work in the beauty business. The placement hasn't happened yet, but I am very excited as I have just been offered a place on a manicure and pedicure course at a therapy academy, and I will have all the support I need.

I'm on my way!

Chris's Story



Chris: *My parents always encouraged me to “think big” and that’s what I did when it was time for me to think about what I would do when I left school.*

My family wanted me to go to my local school instead of an Additional Support for Learning School. Thanks to the support of my school and my friends, I had a good time at school.

Janice (Mum): We didn’t need any support for Chris when he was at school, but when it was time for him to leave and plan his future, we wanted him to be as independent as possible and we did not want him to have to depend on his family. He is entitled to his own life. Thanks to some wonderful support we received from a worker who is employed by

a local disability organisation, we successfully applied to the local authority for Self-directed Support. Chris received a personal budget in the form of a direct payment, which I manage on his behalf. However, the decisions are all his.

Chris: My dream was to have a job, just like my brothers, and earn my own money. I like to be out and about and spend time with my friends, particularly my good friend Sara, who I met at a local club I attend. But more of that later!

Janice: Initially we used Chris’s Self-directed Support to employ Lisa, who helped Chris find employment and supported him to work. At the time, Chris was also at college studying business administration.

Chris: So what do I do now? Well, thanks to my support worker and my family, I now have a very busy life! I work one morning a week at a local whole food shop where I help with customer services and sometimes I work in the café. As the shop is near where I live, I just walk there and back by myself. I also work for the NHS as an admin assistant in a health centre two days a week. I love working as I am learning lots of new skills and earning my own money.

I have personal assistants (PAs) to support me and two of them are my friends from school, including one who

was my support buddy when I was at school. They are the same age as me and we enjoy the same things.

When I am not working I go to the local gym to keep fit, I like going to watch the football team I support and I also like watching basketball, snooker and meeting up with my friends.

I am a member of a club called Forever Friends and we do lots of different things. The activities are planned by group members and the support workers help us to organise the activities and outings. We meet in a local centre, but we usually don't stay there long as we like going out to different places like the cinema, for a meal or to the pub. We go away for weekends as well. We have been to Kielder Outdoor Centre and this year we are going to Blackpool for a few days. I'm really looking forward to that.



“

It is important to think “out of the box.” Nothing’s impossible.



Lauren's Story

Hi, I'm Lauren and among other things I am a RaceRunner. RaceRunning is a new disability sport in which children and adults compete with running bikes on an athletics track.

RaceRunning is becoming more popular all the time and now about 11 other countries are involved in the sport. My most recent RaceRun was at Glasgow Green when I ran in the Sport Relief Mile event. I was trying to beat my own personal best time, however there was just one problem, spectators kept stopping me to ask questions because they had never seen a race bike before!

But let's go back to the beginning. When I was younger I got a few hours support to help me at home as my brother also has Cerebral Palsy and

my parents had a lot of caring tasks. When I was a teenager I didn't always want to stay in the house. I was planning what I wanted to do when I left school and wanted support for college and to go out more. We applied for Self-directed Support and I chose a direct payment because I wanted to choose the workers who support me, particularly with my personal care. The main problem with the application was how long it took to get a direct payment, but it was worth the wait.



I now have 5 part time personal assistants (PAs). My PAs support me to go to Glasgow Clyde College 3 days a week where I am studying for an HND in Business Administration. My studies are really important to me. I would like to concentrate on Marketing in the future and I hope I might progress on to university. One of the best things about having PAs is the flexibility, e.g. I had to prepare a college assignment over a weekend recently so couldn't go out as I usually do. After a chat with my PAs we agreed a change of time for my support. It is all about come and go.

I am involved in voluntary work with a charity one day a week, I'm a leader with the local Rainbows and a member of the senior section of the local Guides. I have been to London, Paris and Barcelona with the Guides and this summer I will be going to Cologne. I am able to do all this thanks to the support of my PAs.

My family are really great too. They support me to race train three times a week, cheer me on at local competitive events and this summer I am competing in the European RaceRunning Championships in Denmark. I also enjoy going to concerts, gigs and the theatre. In fact, I'm never in!!

I couldn't do any of these things without the support of my family and my PAs. It did take a long time for me to feel confident enough to be the 'employer.' I kept asking the PAs "do you mind?" or "would it be ok?" It also took time to build up trust with new PAs I didn't know. However I worked hard and learned that you can have good relationships with your PAs but still be "The Boss". A couple of my PAs were friends before they became PAs so they are a similar age to me which I really like, particularly when I am going out socially - we all blend in!

Having PAs has literally changed my life. I don't think I would be nearly as confident as I am now if I had not had the opportunities to do all the things that I enjoy and challenge me.



“

*I enjoy
challenging me.
I would say
GO FOR IT!*



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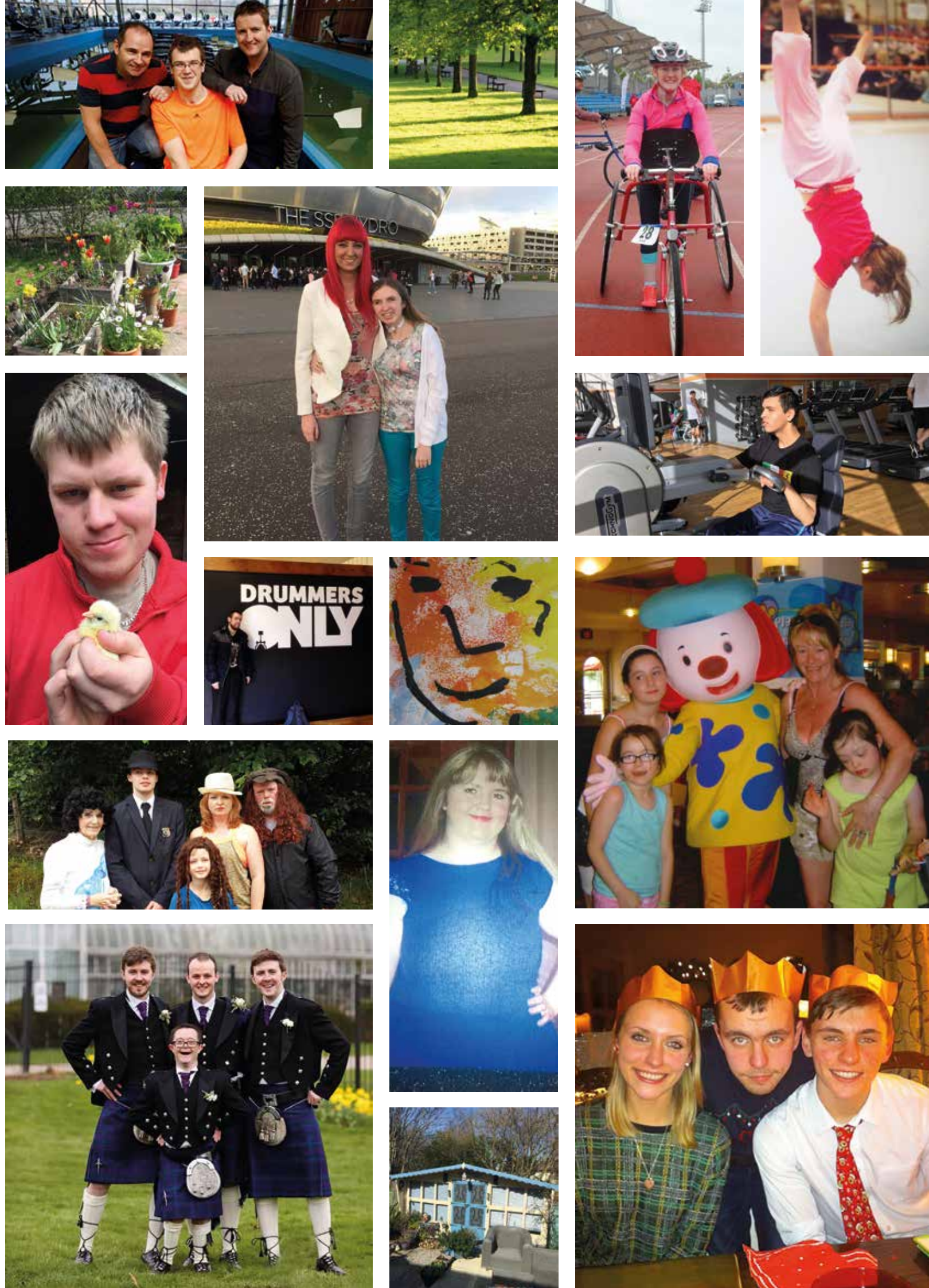
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