

## Allan Barr

### Allan's Story....

Allan, who uses a powered wheelchair, applied unsuccessfully for a considerable number of jobs on leaving University of Glasgow in 1999 with a Degree in History.



He was 34 years old when he joined the pilot GCIL Professional Careers programme in 2007; never being in paid employment and lacking in self-confidence and esteem.

Allan told us *“I spent most of my time in my bedroom in my parent’s house before joining Professional Careers.”*

In April 2007 Allan was placed at Parkview Housing Association where he carried out valuable research work. GCIL provided in-work and educational support throughout the duration of his placement and by June 2009 Allan completed the Post Graduate Diploma in Housing, which he had studied on a day-release basis. Allan was also given help to sort out his access requirements, which were primarily transport to and from work. In common with many disabled people, Allan was unaware of the existence of the Department of Work and Pensions Access to Work scheme and thought he would have to fund his taxis to and from work.

Allan said *“I relished the opportunity to get into work. I feel I have been able to make use of my degree and I am an ordinary part of the team”*.

Supported by GCIL’s Housing Service Allan was able to move into his own home, employing personal assistants to enable him to live an

independent life. He gained increased confidence and self-esteem and has a vibrant social life.

At the end of the placement with Parkview Housing Association Allan commented: *“I am now looking forward to using my skills, experience and qualifications that I have gained to make a long-term career in housing”*.

Due to the success of the Professional Careers Pilot the programme was extended and Allan was happy to be interviewed for the post of Research & Marketing Trainee with TPAS Scotland. He was delighted to be offered a 30-month full time placement from November 2010 – March 2013. Allan continued to receive his access to work grant for travel and was fully supported throughout the duration of the placement by GCIL. He received training directly relating to his in-work responsibilities including attending courses on Plain English and Committee Skills.



Since then Allan has continued his professional career working full time at Glasgow Life and most recently at Glasgow Disability Alliance (GDA).