

Equalities Participation Network – 29 January 2026

Present: Myshele Haywood (GREC), Shola Ajide (Fountain of Love), Vivian Draghici (Mamacita Foundation), Roslynn Fowler (Aberdeen Action on Disability), Linzi Harrow (ACC), Baldeep McGarry (ACC), Ells Mchaffie (Guide Dogs), Mary Rasmussen (Guide Dogs), Allison Wilkie (Deafblind Scotland), Bertha Yakubu (African Women's Group).

Apologies: Matt Carter, Lorna Doyle, Matt Lee, Marion McLaughlin, Katrina Michie.

Topic: Updating the Community Directory

The directory was last updated in December 2024, so it's time for an update. The current version is a 10-page PDF, with groups organised by characteristic:

grec.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/aberdeen_community_groups_dec2024.pdf

There was a discussion about how well this works, and whether the new version should be organised differently:

- Everyone agreed the blurbs describing the groups are very important.
- Everyone agreed that an email or telephone number should be included where possible, especially for groups that only have a facebook page.
- The 2021 version was more of a table format, which several people preferred:
grec.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/aberdeen_equality_groups_june2021.pdf
- Some thought the new version should be listed alphabetically so groups are easier to find, while others thought listing by characteristic was also useful.
- Myshele will create both versions and see which one people prefer.

There will also be a webpage where people can search and filter by what they're looking for.

Going through the full list (over 130 groups), several were highlighted as no longer existing (Walkability, Mental Health Aberdeen), contact details were updated for others, and some new ones added (Pillar of Hope, Dystonia Society).

Roslynn to contact Men's Sheds to check the status of their groups in Aberdeen – the Ferryhill one may no longer be active.

Baldeep to write to community centres and libraries, for any groups that may be meeting there.

Linzi to contact Gaelic language groups.

Myshele to go through the list and check all the links, and ask for contact details from facebook groups. Also to contact Four Pillars re Grampian Pride, and Castlehill Housing Association re the Elderly Chinese housing project.

AOB

Taxis and Uber

Roslynn noted that Barry Coull, a taxi driver coordinator, was meeting with Aberdeen Action on Disability to discuss the issue of Uber drivers whose cars are not suitable for disabled passengers. Others noted that there are some who don't help people with mobility issues.

Baldeep pointed out that there are different rules for private hire cars, rather than taxis. She will find a contact a Licensing and clarify.

Next Meetings

Two topics for upcoming meetings are employment at Aberdeen City Council, and the ACC website – discussion about whether to combine these to cover both in February, or cover them separately over two meetings. Consensus that each is a big enough topic to warrant a full meeting.

Suggestions for Reading List & Community Calendar

Baldeep invited everyone to share:

- Suggestions for books, films, etc. about people from different groups, for a resource the Equalities Team is putting together to share with staff and the public
- Dates of community events for the ACC calendar

Mamacita Christmas Event – 25 December, meal and entertainment so nobody has to be alone on Christmas. This was the fourth year and 200-300 people attended, so they need a bigger space, which is tricky given the date. Some suggestions: asking Paul O'Connor at Inchgarth Community Centre; King's Church may have some space available; other churches?

ACC Consultations

Baldeep encouraged everyone to take part in ACC consultations where possible. Bertha said that sometimes they feel like a tick-box exercise, and Roslynn agreed, noting that often the feedback is not taken into account by decision-makers. However, everyone felt it's still important to participate.

Dates of next meetings:

February: Thursday 26 February, 4-5pm, online

Topic: Speaker from ACC HR – recruitment and retention of people in marginalised groups

March: Thursday 26 March, 4-5pm, online

Topic: Speaker from ACC Website team – feedback on new accessibility features