

Charter for Involvement



ILF Scotland's Action Plan

Background

The Charter for Involvement was written by members of the National Involvement Network (NIN), which consists of a group of people who get support from different social care organisations across Scotland. The National Involvement Network wrote the Charter because it believes that:

- everyone isn't asked their views;
- everyone isn't involved; and
- everyone isn't getting the support they need to be involved.

The first Charter, first written in 2009 and updated in 2019, builds on the learning from the first version and takes account of changes to legislation and policies that affect people who get support, like Self-Directed Support. You can find the full Charter for Involvement here: [Charter for Involvement • ARC Scotland](#)

What is the aim of the Charter?

The Charter for Involvement shows how people who use support services want to be involved:

- in the services they receive;
- in the organisations that provide services; and
- in wider communities.

The charter is for anyone who receives support and covers all abilities, age, gender, race, colour, sexual orientation or religion.

Why is the Charter important?

The Charter is important as it sets out how disabled people can be involved in organisations. In addition, it provides organisations with an opportunity to better involve people in decisions about how they deliver their services. Other reasons the Charter is important include:

- It goes along with the principles and important recommendations in The Keys to Life and the Scottish Strategy for Autism.
- It fits in with the four main priorities in the Scottish National Action Plan for Human Rights (SNAP).
- It fits in with Human Rights legislation – especially the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Disabled Persons.
- It goes hand in hand with the Care Inspectorate.
- It matches the values of choice and control in Self-Directed Support. It encourages people to be in charge of their own support so they can live the lives they want.
- It gives an example of how people who need support can become leaders.

ILF Scotland and the Charter

The Chair of Independent Living Fund (ILF) Scotland's Board, Susan Douglas-Scott, signed up to the Charter on behalf of ILF Scotland. By doing this, ILF Scotland has confirmed that we:

- agree with the principles and Statements in the Charter;
- will put the Charter principles and Statements into practice;
- will work in partnership with people who use our services to check how the organisation is doing on a regular basis;
- will make sure that all the workers in our organisation know about the Charter;

- will draw up an action plan that will show how we will improve involvement in line with the Charter principles and Statements; and
- will discuss progress against this action plan with the ILF Scotland Recipient Advisory Group and the Northern Ireland Stakeholder Group.

The ILF Scotland Charter for Involvement Action Plan

ILF Scotland's Strategic Plan 2020-23, 'Hope & Ambition' sets out our vision that all disabled people, and those with a long-term health condition, can access what they need to lead an independent life. In working towards this, we aim to listen to and understand the needs, hopes and aspirations of disabled people.

Our mission is to support disabled people, empowering them to lead their fullest lives. As part of this, we commit to doing our best for our recipients, to encouraging recipients to take the lead in identifying their needs, hopes and aspirations. We have also committed to ensuring we provide our recipients with appropriate information to allow them to make informed choices, have control of their own lives and be included in communities of their choice.

This Action Plan will help to achieve this and is in line with our strategic principles of listening to disabled people and putting them at the heart of our decision-making processes and working with those with lived experiences of disability to develop our services.

As an organisation, we sincerely value the involvement of our recipients in our work and we listen and identify opportunities for improvement. We believe that we currently demonstrate a high level of compliance with the Charter Statements set out below but we are always keen to improve so this Action plan focuses on areas where we can build on our current good practice and make it even better. We co-produced the Action Plan with disabled recipients and their representatives via the ILF Scotland 2015 Fund Advisory and Stakeholder groups.

The 12 Charter Statements

The Charter consists of 12 Statements that align with human rights principles. Most importantly, the Charter aims to ensure that organisations listen and respect the people who use their services. The statements are:

1. We must be at the heart of any assessment that identifies our desired outcomes.
2. We have the right to live our lives independently.
3. We must be involved in our communities.
4. We must be able to speak about how our support is working for us and what could be better.
5. We must be able to choose the people who assist / support us.
6. We want to give information and training to staff at all levels.
7. We want to be involved in drafting policies that affect us and making them easier to understand.
8. We want to be involved in decisions made by ILF Scotland that affect us.
9. We want to be involved in events run by ILF Scotland.
10. We want to be involved with advocacy, peer support and rights groups.
11. We want to be involved in local, national and international campaigns.
12. We have the right to make formal complaints if we need to.

ILF Scotland Charter for Involvement Action Plan

1. We must be at the heart of ILF Scotland assessments that identify our desired outcomes.

Our fund recipients told us:

We must know what a 'person-centred plan' is and how this relates to our reviews.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- ensure that our fund recipients are at the heart of our assessment process, and that they lead the process of developing the independent living outcomes we support through our funding;
- provide staff training on person led approaches;
- review the "Your Responsibilities" Guide and associated leaflets/online guidance;
- consider implications for how we gather feedback from recipients; and
- ask recipients if they would like a copy of their ILF Scotland assessment and record their wishes to ensure future compliance.

Our fund recipients told us:

We should have information about our 2015 Fund award that is easy to understand, accurate and up to date.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- review ILF Scotland award letters and calculation sheets;
- use plain English at all times and have easy read and other accessible formats where appropriate;
- consult Stakeholder/Advisory group members on any revised documentation; and
- take account of recipient's preferred communication channels i.e. post, email, etc.

Our fund recipients told us:

At our ILF Scotland review meetings, we must always be listened to and respected. The review should focus on our:

- needs, preferences and wishes;
- support plans;
- abilities, talents and skills;
- risks, challenges and barriers; and
- ability to exercise real choice and control.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- record how ILF funding is being utilised relative to the recipient's wishes;
- record unmet need and consider how we will use this information;
- amend the assessors' report based on feedback;

- fully discuss and record Independent living outcomes;
- explore and record risks to achieving independent living outcomes and, where appropriate, raise with Social Work; and
- hold staff awareness sessions for the revised Policy 41 – Use of Funding.

Our fund recipients told us:

We must understand any changes to our awards following an ILF Scotland assessment.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- make sure our assessors summarise any changes at the review meeting and that the offer letter is clear about such changes.

Our fund recipients told us:

Where we have capacity, but need someone to help us to manage our award, we can choose who that person is (where the law allows it).

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- raise awareness of the role of the Award Manager and the support that is available for this through our newsletter;
- develop training for Award Managers; and
- run a pilot training session with ILF Scotland staff and stakeholder members.

Our fund recipients told us:

We are able to change how we use our ILF Scotland funding between reviews to allow us to achieve our independent living outcomes in the best way possible.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- revise its Use of Funding policy and update the 'Your Responsibilities Guide' and Award Manager training to include changing how recipients can use their funding.

Our fund recipients told us:

We should be given appropriate notice to prepare for ILF Scotland assessments / reviews, which should always be planned and reviewed at a pace that suits us, and we should be told when our plans will be completed.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- ensure that reviews happen on time (within the limits of our control) and with sufficient notice for the recipient;
and
- have ongoing engagement with HSCP/Trust to try to achieve this, including timely receipt of care schedules.

2. We have the right to live our lives independently.

For the purposes of this Charter, independent living means all disabled people having the same freedom, choice, dignity and control as other citizens, at home, at work and in the community. It does not necessarily mean living by yourself or fending for yourself. It means rights to practical assistance and support to participate in society and live an ordinary life.

Our fund recipients told us:

We have a right to live our lives the way we choose and must get the help we need.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- offer choice and control over how ILF Scotland funding is used within the constraints of our policies and the law.

Our fund recipients told us:

- We must get the help we need if we want to be actively present in our community. This could be through shaping our community council / access panels, employment, voluntary work, training or education.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- ensure that our fund recipients are at the heart of our assessment process, and that they lead the process of developing the independent living outcomes we support through our funding;
- consider stakeholder attendance at SW ILF Scotland lead meetings; and
- signpost recipients based on their interests.

Our fund recipients told us:

We must have a choice about who we live with / who lives with us.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- Revise Policy 19 – Independent Living.

Our fund recipients told us:

We must be in charge of decisions about keeping healthy.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- ensure that this forms part of a recipient's review.

Our fund recipients told us:

We must have the right to privacy in our lives, including in our ILF Scotland reviews.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- ask recipients during the review if they have sufficient privacy in their lives; and
- offer an opportunity to speak privately to the recipient as part of the visit.

Our fund recipients told us:

We must decide about any say any person has in our review.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- ensure Assessors are up to date on legal capacity training.

Our fund recipients told us:

We must have the option to get help if we need it to manage and control our ILF Scotland award, including employment and financial advice. We should be signposted for other money advice to the appropriate services.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- ensure recipients are aware of relevant finance/award management support organisations who can help;
- where recipients already use a finance/award management support organisation, we will ensure they are happy with the service they receive; and
- consider the recipients benefits, and make referral for professional advice where deemed necessary.

Our fund recipients told us:

We must have control about choosing the people and services we pay for using our ILF Scotland award

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- ensure that our fund recipients are at the heart of our assessment process, and that they lead the process of developing the independent living outcomes we support through our funding.

3. We must be involved in our communities.

It is our right to be treated the same as everyone else.

Our fund recipients told us:

We must have the choice to participate in, at a time of our choosing:

- our communities;
- to go to the same places that other people can choose to go to;
- to take part in the same groups that other people can choose to take part in.

We must be able to go to these places when we want, and come back when we want.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- Assessors will continue to enable recipients to access social integration in communities through reviews;
- Assessors will signpost the recipient to the appropriate resource for support; and
- Revise Policy 19 – Independent Living.

4. We must be able to speak about how our support is working for us and what could be better.

Our fund recipients told us:

ILF Scotland must always listen to us, respect us and incorporate our views into practice.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- ensure that our fund recipients are at the heart of our assessment process, and that they lead the process of developing the independent living outcomes we support through our funding;
- always engage with recipients and disabled people in developing our organisational strategy and plans;
- develop a customer charter, which sets out the standards of delivery we aim to achieve;
- seek feedback from recipients in a variety of ways including feedback surveys;
- continue to keep a learning log of complaints; and
- encourage recipients to use the ILF Scotland Website, Forum and Social Media channels.

Our fund recipients told us:

Where the support we are receiving from our HSCP/Trust is not working for us, ILF Scotland support us to get the best possible outcomes from our support.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- encourage HSCP/Trust representation at every review meeting (excluding some Group 1 recipients); and

- ensure there is discussion at every review about how we can get the best recipient outcomes by working together in line with our agreement with COSLA¹.

Our fund recipients told us:

We must be able to say what we think without worrying what will happen to us.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- ask recipients e.g. through post-review questionnaires and Stakeholder/Advisory groups about their experience of engaging with ILF Scotland; and
- ask recipients for their views in general on a regular basis.

Our fund recipients told us:

If we want an advocate to help us speak about how our support is working and what could be better, we must be supported to apply for one.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- always be receptive to the involvement of independent advocates; and
- signpost recipients to independent advocacy services as required.

¹ [Joint COSLA ILF Scotland Statement](#)

Our fund recipients told us:

We must be able to change the organisation that provides our support if we want to, including the option to employ our own PAs if we wish.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- update Employer Support Information Note to ensure this is clear.

5. We must be able to choose the people who assist / support us

This includes choosing our PA / support workers, agencies and other staff.

Our fund recipients told us:

We must be able to:

- write job descriptions* and person specifications,*
- plan interview questions,
- take part in interviews, and
- decide who gets the job.

Where we are unable to do so, we must access the support we need to be meaningfully involved.

We must be able to take part in job interviews if we wish and have access to the training and support to do so if we need this.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- signpost recipients to organisations, e.g. Centres for Inclusive Living, who can help with recruitment of PAs; and
- we will discuss with recipients their involvement in staff recruitment with the provider that supports them.

Our fund recipients told us:

There must be information available in a range of suitable formats / languages that show how we can be involved in choosing the people who support us.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- help source alternative formats, including easy read if not already available; and
- explore the range of information it produces in alternative formats / languages.

Our fund recipients told us:

We must only be assisted / supported by staff/agencies of our choice (this can be PA / support staff / agency staff, AMs).

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- review the Employer Support Information Note, Your Responsibilities Guide and Self Employed factsheet; plus

- following publication of the revised Employer Support Guidance, all ILF Scotland Assessors, Caseworkers, Recipients, Award Managers and Stakeholders will receive basic online training in relation to employment guidance.

** A job description shows what things you have to do if you get the job.*

** A person specification shows what kind of person is being looked for to do the job. This could include what skills, experience and education they should have. It may also show what personal qualities they should have.*

6. We want to give information and training to staff at all levels.

Our fund recipients told us:

We must have the choice to give information and training to all new staff members and staff teams that support us.

We should have good quality care plans in place, specific to us, to ensure those assisting us meet our requirements and to assist with their training.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- issue revised Employer Support Guidance to make clear what ILF Scotland can provide in relation to staff training;
- continue to encourage input and training from recipients and disabled people to the work of ILF Scotland;
- update Your Responsibilities Guide to cover training of new staff, including specialist training; and
- consider recipient care plans at review.

7. We want to be involved in drafting policies that affect us and making them easier to understand.

Our fund recipients told us:

ILF Scotland policies must be written in ways we can understand.

Scottish Ministers determine ILF Scotland policies. However, ILF Scotland will, where we can:

- draft policies in clear, easy to read/plain English language, and, where required, in different formats.

Our fund recipients told us:

We should have the choice of inputting into relevant policies that are most important to us and get the support we need if we want help to do this.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- ensure that it obtains appropriate Stakeholder / Advisory Group input into any key changes to policy or the development of new policies.

8. We want to be involved in decisions made by ILF Scotland that affect US.

Being involved in how organisations are planned and run can take time to understand. ILF Scotland must make every effort to make our involvement work.

Our fund recipients told us:

We must have the choice to be involved in ILF Scotland's plans, strategies and policies.

ILF Scotland's management team must make the effort to make our involvement work at an organisational and Board level.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- ensure that, where appropriate, we share relevant board papers with the Stakeholder/Advisory Group for information / comment;
- continue to maintain and develop working relationships with the Stakeholder/Advisory Groups to ensure input to ILF Scotland's plans; and
- continue to engage as widely as possible, particularly in relation to new developments.

Our fund recipients told us:

We should have the opportunity to join the Stakeholder/Advisory Group.
Members of this group should input to the Board and Sponsor team through SMT and vice versa.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- raise awareness of the Stakeholder/Advisory Groups through the ILF Scotland newsletter;
- arrange for the Board and the Stakeholder/Advisory Groups to meet on an biannual basis;
- invite Sponsor Teams to attend meetings of the Stakeholder/Advisory Groups (with the Groups' agreement);
and
- ensure SMT feedback to Board and Sponsor Teams about the Stakeholder/Advisory Groups' work.

Our fund recipients told us:

Having an agenda item at meetings.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- add feedback from ILFS Board and Sponsor Team meetings as a standard agenda item on Stakeholder/Advisory group meetings.

Our fund recipients told us:

Giving presentations at ILF Scotland team or Board meetings.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- arrange Stakeholder/Advisory Group members to present to teams and board members as required.

Our fund recipients told us:

People who make decisions come to our meetings to listen to us.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- invite Ministers and Senior Northern Ireland Health Department and SG officials to attend Stakeholder/Advisory Group meetings annually.

9. We want to be involved in events run by ILF Scotland.

This includes conferences, training events, planning days and workshops.

Our fund recipients told us:

We should have the chance to propose and be involved in planning these types of events.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- actively involve the Stakeholder/Advisory Groups in the planning of any future events relating to the potential reopening of ILF;
- actively support the Groups to consider what other key events they would like to happen; and
- ILF Scotland's Engagement Officer will work collaboratively with recipients and their representatives to increase their involvement in engagement events.

Our fund recipients told us:

Events must be organised in ways we can take part in, we must get clear information about the event and support we need to take part.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- consult recipients, Stakeholder/Advisory group members, and other invitees to ensure that all information and venues are fully accessible to all.

10. We want to be involved with advocacy, peer support and rights groups.

Speaking-up groups are where people speak up for themselves and say what they want. This includes: advocacy groups, peer support groups and Charter for Involvement groups.

Our fund recipients told us:

We should be supported to participate in self-advocacy groups and have the flexibility of funding to support us.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- continue to raise awareness of our Forum and encourage recipients to engage through other mechanisms if they choose to;
- signpost to advocacy groups; and
- consider use of ILF Scotland funding to enable participation in such groups as part of the review and if requested by recipients.

Our fund recipients told us:

We must get the time and support we need to get ready for and take part in groups.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- consider whether recipients are not getting this time and support as part of the review where requested.

11. We want to be involved in local, national and international campaigns.

This includes campaigns about our local community, our Council, the environment, human rights and other world issues.

Our fund recipients told us:

We must know how to get information about local and national campaigns.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- signpost recipients to campaigning organisations for support where requested. ILF Scotland is not a campaigning organisation; and
- involve recipients in our own PR / marketing campaigns by sharing their stories, promoting independent living and raising the profile of the voices of disabled people.

12. We have the right to make formal complaints if we need to.

If we make a complaint, we want to feel “respected”, “believed”, “supported”, “taken seriously” and “reassured”.

Our fund recipients told us:

Complaints help to make organisations better.

Organisations are not doing their job properly if they do not help and encourage us to complain.

Everyone must know about the Complaints Policy and how to make a complaint and who to make it to.

We must get the help we need if we want to complain.

We must know what steps will happen if we need to complain.

We must know who will hear about our complaint.

Complaints should be kept private as much as possible.

Only people who need to know should know about our complaints.

We must get help to apply to have an advocate if we want one.

We must be told the result of our complaint and what has happened as soon as possible.

Therefore, ILF Scotland will:

- provide complaint handling training to all staff stressing the importance of encouraging complaints/feedback to improve services;
- include complaint handling in Induction Pack for new staff;
- publish shorter summary/easy read version of complaints process on website;
- ensure staff help people to understand the different stages of the complaints process and help them negotiate this;
- encourage staff to make complaining easy, clear to do and understand the procedure and resolve at first point of contact where possible.
- update all complaints correspondence to be as clear as possible;
- make sure that all documentation is accessible in different formats and languages, including easy read where possible;
- consider what online facilities we could develop as part of the complaints handling and investigating process;
- amend complaints procedure to include this as an option. Vikki Manson to action;
- develop feedback mechanisms to improve the way that we gather the views of our recipients including a freepost feedback form following review visits; and
- when required, ILF Scotland should signpost to Independent living peer support groups.

List of Abbreviations

GCIL	Glasgow Centre for Inclusive Living
ILF Scotland	Independent Living Fund (Scotland)
ILFSRAG	Independent Living Fund Scotland Recipient Advisory Group
LCIL	Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living
NI	Northern Ireland
NIN	National Involvement Network
NISG	Northern Ireland Stakeholder Group
PA	Personal Assistant
SNAP	Scottish National Action Plan for Human Rights
SPSO	Scottish Public Sector Ombudsman
SW	Social Work
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities