



Share

Go Anywhere, Do Anything

Year Two

April 2015 - March 2016

In the second year of the Go Anywhere Do Anything Project we have grown from strength to strength, working with more volunteers and members than ever before to ensure that people in our community have improved access to the best of London.

Go Anywhere, Do Anything is a user led project that provides opportunities for adults with learning disabilities to access sports, leisure and arts in London. The project is supported by volunteer social buddies and two part time members of staff, Joseph and Leanne. All of our activities take place over evenings and weekends, offering our members opportunities to develop a social life outside of traditional 9-5 services. We are committed to offering people with learning disabilities equal opportunities to stay up late and have fun in the city.



Activities and outputs

This year we have supported 47 adults with learning disabilities to choose, design and attend 43 days out across the capital. We welcomed 10 new members this year, which means that news of Go Anywhere, Do Anything is spreading positively. Our dedicated social buddies have volunteered nearly 600 hours of their time to support our members in the last year, an increase of 160 hours on last year. We have successfully recruited 17 new social buddy volunteers, bringing our total number of active volunteers to 28. In this year's anonymous volunteer survey, all respondents said they enjoyed volunteering and looked forward to the events. We welcomed Joseph Fitton, a passionate Londoner and professional advocate, to our staff team, and said goodbye to Jenny Ash, who won't be leaving the team completely and instead will be continuing as a volunteer.

This year, we've been to 7 different plays and musicals, and to 5 different museums and exhibitions. We've been to 8 of London's biggest tourist attractions – such as the Shard and Tower of London. We've also enjoyed 12 different sporting activities; we even saw Rooney make history at England Vs Switzerland at Wembley! We've also been to a festival and to a concert at the o2. We've seen some box office hits at the cinema and been clubbing twice. We've also enjoyed other leisure activities, such as going out for dinner with friends.

We have run 10 steering group sessions with small and large groups of adults with learning disabilities. People have been forthcoming in telling us all about what they want to do in and around London.



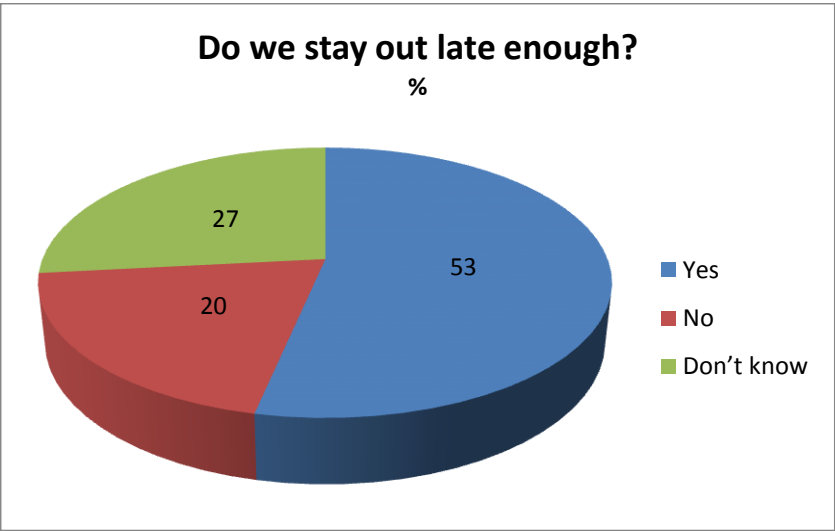
What difference have we made?

Go Anywhere, Do Anything has been instrumental in supporting adults with learning disabilities to enjoy greater access to London. The project answers a need within our community. People want the same from life as everyone else, and this includes being able to do things which make life more enjoyable and meaningful. Unfortunately, it's often difficult for people with learning disabilities to just get on and follow their interests. We find that a lot of our members need that extra bit of support to enable them to get places and be safe in the community. We are making things possible for people, that they wouldn't otherwise get to experience at all, or without the support of a paid carer or family member.

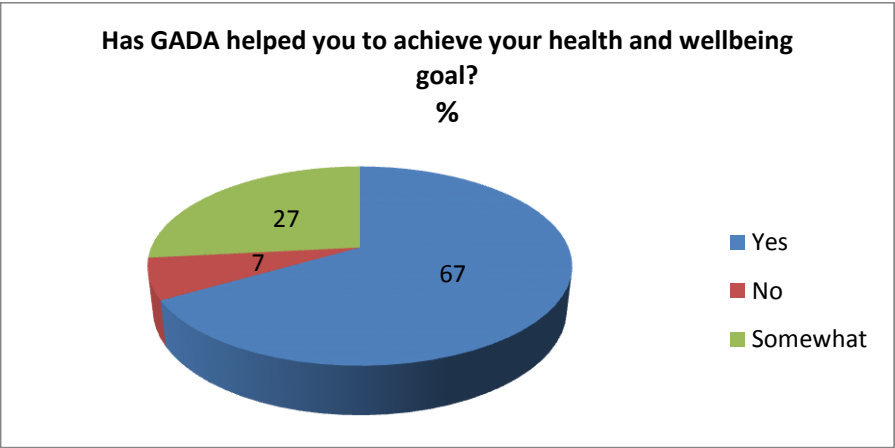
Our aim is to encourage independence and choice. Our project is user led, which means that our members make the big decisions- i.e. where we go and what we do. We facilitate this through regular steering group meetings, during which our members are able to have their say and determine our bi-monthly schedule of events. This year we ran 43 days out across the capital, 12 more than last year and 8 more than our target of 35. We now have 28 volunteers, 8 more than target, with a satisfaction rate of 100%, as opposed to our target of 95%.

47 people have been paired up with a social buddy during the year, 22 more than target. 17 individuals have enjoyed 5 or more events; unfortunately this is 8 below target. The other 8 individuals have attended 3 or 4 times. We'll talk more about why we think this is the case, later on in the report.

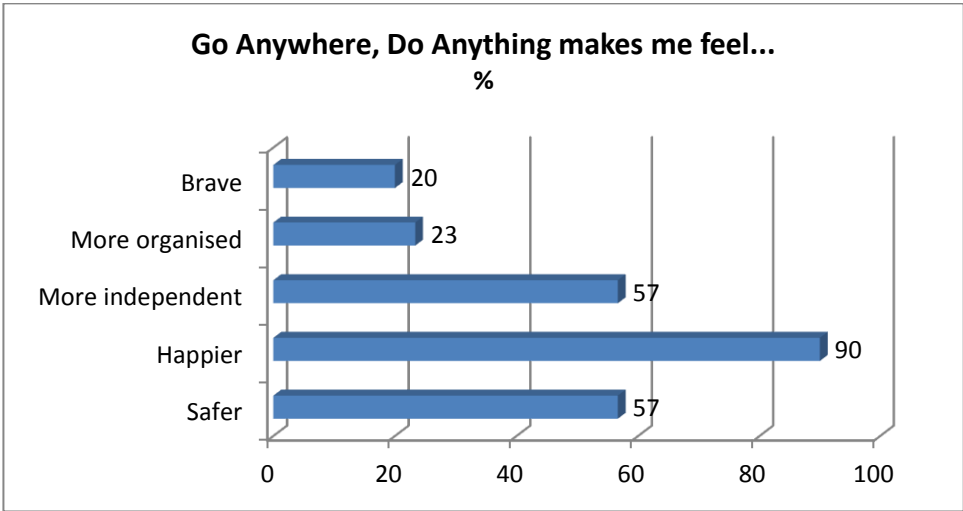
In our most recent survey, we asked 30 of our members to tell us how the project made them feel. 100% reported feeling more confident in accessing arts, sports and leisure events. 53% of people have reported that they are staying out as late as they want to at night, 27% weren't sure as haven't been on evening trips and 20% of those that have would like to stay out later - this is a development area and something we need to get better at in year 3!



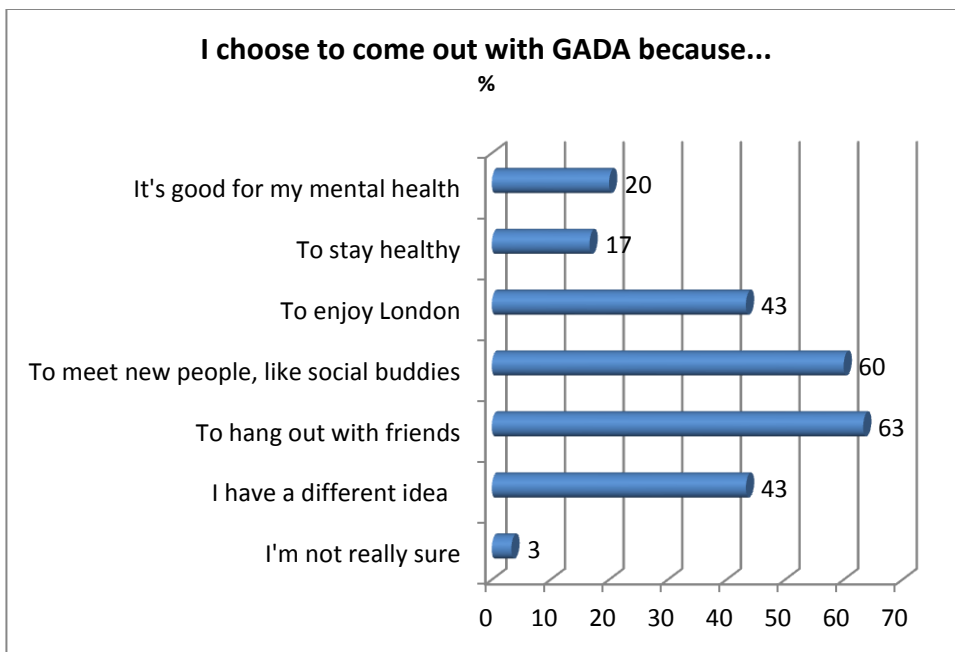
30 people have set themselves health and wellbeing goals that we will help them to achieve over the coming year. Of the 20 people that set health and wellbeing goals last year, 15 are still engaged with the project and 67% of those have reported that they've met their goal. 27% of people had met part of their goal, and 1 person felt they didn't attend enough trips to meet the goal yet.



90% of our members say that Go Anywhere, Do Anything makes them feel happier. 57% also said it makes them feel more independent and safer.



The most popular reasons for members signing up are to meet new people, spend time with their friends and enjoy London. Members also had their other ideas about why they signed up and these included staying active, to have fun and to see new things.



30 people have said that Go Anywhere, Do Anything makes their life better and have told us 2 or more reasons why – this exceeds our target of 25. 5 pairs have documented their activities in the recent short video we made all about Go Anywhere, Do Anything. We've also written articles to promote the project both on our website and for the local community, and were recently featured in Brightside magazine (extract below).



Case study - Edmund

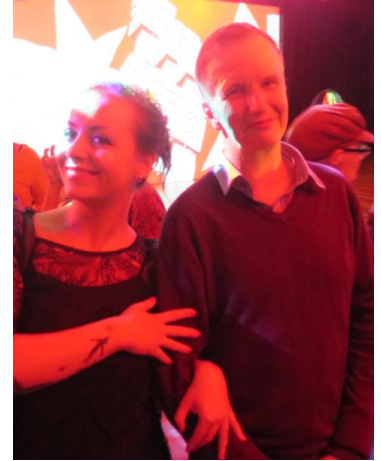
Edmund joined Share in 2014, and studies life skills with us. Edmund was very shy when he first arrived, and a bit hesitant to join in, but since being involved in Share and the Go Anywhere, Do Anything project he has grown in confidence, made new friends and is trying lots of new activities.

His family was a little concerned that he might find the trips out to central London daunting, but he has impressed everyone by his will to do more and go further and further afield. Edmund has been on ten trips with Go Anywhere, Do Anything so far, including adventures up London's Shard building, to watch Cricket at The Oval, see the animals at London Zoo and he'll soon be off to see Little Mix at the O2. He notes that his favourite trip so far was a trip to The Beautiful Octopus nightclub at the Southbank Centre. Edmund said he enjoyed dancing and meeting people, and continued to dream about being on the dance floor following the event. Afterwards, he said, 'That was fun, I would do that again', adding that when he got home he 'needed a cup of tea and a piece of cake!'

Despite his quiet voice, Edmund has a lot to say and is now the first to say hello, making his presence in the room known and telling everyone stories about his holidays and days out with Go Anywhere, Do Anything. On one trip, we were really impressed when Edmund was courageous and assertive enough to challenge our bill when we were overcharged in a restaurant. At first, he thought he was too shy to talk to the waitress, but he did a great job and we got our money back!

Edmund is very close with his sister, Christine, who told us:

"Edmund's confidence has increased a lot since coming to Share and being part of Go Anywhere, Do Anything. Before coming to Share he was pretty much house bound, he only ever went out if it was with family members. He was very shy, and often looked down and wouldn't make eye contact with people. Since coming to Share, he's really started to realise what is out there for him and he just loves it. He loves socialising and meeting new people now. He holds his head a bit higher and doesn't shy away from going places, like he used to. He doesn't stop talking about what he has been up to and what plans he has. I think if he could, he would sign up to every trip you run. It's been really fantastic for him; he is like a different person."



Edmund, with social buddy Aleks at a recent club night on Southbank



Edmund with sisters, Eileen and Christine



Feedback from those who have benefited

As a user led project we are driven by the feedback our members give, so we conduct regular surveys to find out what people do and don't like. In our most recent survey (March 2016) our members said some very positive things and below are some of the comments we received:

- My life has got better
- My life feels different, I'm meeting lots of new people
- I like to keep myself busy and like to hang out with friends
- Staying indoors is rubbish!
- I like driving my wheelchair around
- I'm on top of the world
- I've got new friends
- It's nice to treat myself
- My life is more fun
- I have got to meet new people
- I am able to do more
- I have got to do things I wouldn't normally do
- I have been able to watch sports I like
- I have been able to see and do new things
- I have a different experience than I'm used to
- I am smiling and giggling more
- I'm more independent
- I liked going out to the nightclub, let's do it more
- I get to go out more; being stuck at home staring at the wall does my head in!
- I feel more independent
- I know how to go to new places once I go once
- I'm gaining confidence
- I got myself a diary to put trip dates in
- I feel wonderful
- I know how to get along with many more people and go places
- Once I've been somewhere once, I know how to go again
- It's lovely, it makes me feel good

You can watch 5 pairs of social buddies and members talk about their experience of Go Anywhere, Do Anything in a short film that we made here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yJmjR0I6E5w>

In our most recent volunteer survey, we asked our volunteers what they most enjoyed about volunteering with us:

- It's such a good day out with amazing people... Afterwards I'm left feeling on top of the world! The chats I have with Share members are great, and every trip I have been on has been buzzing with happiness and positivity.
- Getting to know new people, helping out in the community, exploring London, being involved with a team & feeling valued.
- I absolutely love it - so much so, I will chat about the trips to anyone who will listen afterwards!
- I think it is run brilliantly. I'm always telling people how enthusiastic and attentive the GADA staff are!
- There is so much information and ways to give feedback. Superbly efficient and great ideas too.

- I've enjoyed getting to know new people, helping out in the community, exploring London, being involved with a team & feeling valued.

Our 28 active social buddies:



What have we learnt?

We have learnt that there is a huge demand for more services like Go Anywhere, Do Anything in our community. We knew the project would be popular, as it resulted from feedback we had received from our community survey, however we never dreamed it would have quite the demand it does.

We are oversubscribed on almost all of our trips, to the extent that we are now running volunteer led trips to meet demand. We were targeted to support 30 people in year 2, however without any real marketing; we have had 47 people interact with the project – 57 in total over the two years. Some try out a trip here and there, others are more regular attendees. This project has achieved the success it has, with only one full time equivalent staff member. It's exciting to imagine what more we could do for people in our community, if we were able to grow the Go Anywhere, Do Anything team.

We feel that we have developed a project model which could be franchised out to other local community groups, and we could train them in how to run their very own Go Anywhere, Do Anything. We would absolutely love to grow this project further and provide more and more opportunities for adults with learning disabilities. There will always be a demand for projects like Go Anywhere, Do Anything, and the first two years of this project has proved that we must continue to run this project, even after funding has finished in April 2017.

We have continued to experience very positive attitudes towards inclusivity. We have received lots of support in the form of discounts for entry and free carer/PA tickets. This has helped us to do more, and has been very helpful to our community who are generally on a low income. We've found that volunteers don't claim back travel expenses as much as we had anticipated. A lot of our volunteers work in central London during the week, and some have a freedom pass of their own, so they do not incur any travel costs to support the project.

As noted in last year's report, we have continued to see that a lot of our members rely on others for support to travel and socialise. There has been an increase in the number of our members that own a mobile phone, since they have begun to socialise without family, this is helpful in staying safe. There are still many who do not have a

mobile phone, or don't turn on their mobile phone. Despite this, the way that people maintain friendships and make plans to socialise in the community largely remains dependent on other people. A lot of our members have difficulties with literacy and thus often need support to make a phone call or send a text message or email. Few people have a social support network that they are able to contact without the support of another person.



What worked well?

From the beginning, our recruitment of volunteers has been a huge success. One of the first things we did, when we found out we had been successful in receiving funding, was to jump on a train to Brighton to meet with Paul Richards, the Director at Stay Up Late (a project which inspired us to create ours). We had a great meeting with him to learn how the Gig Buddies project runs and how they made their project a success. We spoke a lot about the importance of a thorough induction, something which we have instilled into our joining process. He shared some of their training resources which helped us to develop an interactive 3 hour session that is compulsory for all new social buddies to attend. Since the beginning of the project, we have run 5 different induction sessions and we now have 28 active volunteers.

In our recent anonymous volunteer survey, each respondent said they looked forward to attending trips and said they received the support they needed. All of our volunteers are happy in their volunteer role and felt that we provided enough information beforehand and that the trips were well organised. Everyone also felt appreciated and treated with respect, and to top it all off, all of our volunteers said they hoped to volunteer with us for another 6 months or more! Our volunteers support the trips to be a success, when we ask members about whether they enjoyed trips, they often mention that they enjoyed being with the social buddies.

We asked one of our newest volunteers, Karen, to tell us about her experience so far.

“Incredible! My time with Share is really quite amazing. I have met some beautiful people who make each trip brilliant. There is a wonderful caring atmosphere and after each trip I am left buzzing from spending time with some incredible people, doing some great things. I really look forward to every trip and have loved forming relationships with everybody involved. (I love it so much that I feel like I have had a very selfish volunteering experience so far!).

Go Anywhere Do Anything has an incredibly positive impact on its members. I have buddied up with some members multiple times and I can see how they have changed and become more confident and talkative as time has gone on - It is great to see more and more personalities emerging over time. To have the opportunity to be yourself, laugh and be happy in a non-judgemental, caring and supportive environment can only have a positive impact.



Karen with member Angela at Madame Tussauds

The environment of Go Anywhere, Do Anything, allows members to accomplish new things, form friendships and be more independent, whilst managing fears or apprehension which may arise in doing those things. What could be better for anyone's wellbeing than spending time with people who want to share new experiences with you and have fun doing so?!"



This year we have provided more opportunities to engage with sports and healthy living

Key achievements

We've had a number of achievements within Go Anywhere, Do Anything that we are incredibly proud of. We like to think that Go Anywhere, Do Anything has revolutionised the way we work at Share and engage with the people we support. As a user led project there is a drive to be flexible, responsive and committed to partnership working with our stakeholders. We have led the way in producing easy read documentation which has now been implemented across the whole of Share. We have provided information which contributes to each of Share's Outcomes Star reading, as well as their reviews with their social workers. We have put some of the lessons learnt in our 'Life skills' classes to use, giving people the real life experiences they talk about in these sessions.

There is a high demand from people with learning disabilities wanting to explore London and socialise. As mentioned earlier, we are oversubscribed on most of our trips. Whilst we were setting up the project, we had hoped that our volunteers would have the confidence and desire to eventually start run their own activities, without staff support. We are lucky enough to have attracted a fantastic group of people, most of whom are happy to do exactly that. This year, 10 activities have happened without any staff support, compared to 2 at the latter part of last year. This is a great achievement and has allowed us to offer more opportunities for our members, thus exceeding our target, yet again. We received fantastic feedback from them in our anonymous satisfaction survey. Our volunteers are a real asset to Share, and without them, we couldn't do what we do – we can't thank them enough.

This project is all about social inclusion and integration, and the model works brilliantly, bringing those with learning disabilities together with those who don't have them, through shared interests. People are enabled to enjoy mainstream activities along with everyone else. As well as having fun, members are developing social skills and improving their independent travel and living skills, being more aware of how to manage everyday transactions and negotiating London's transport network. People are following the interests that they're growing through the project in other aspects of their learning, such as in their computer training classes. Members are able to converse more widely about a range of subjects and experiences.



What hasn't worked as well as we'd hoped?

Our interactions with members happen very regularly, but do not always take the form of a formal 'steering group' meeting. To make the project run as smoothly as possible, we try to plan in advance and therefore produce a schedule of events. This helps us to organise support, book tickets and make plans. The project does have an element of being quick to respond, and if we hear about something great that is coming to an end soon, we'll always strive to arrange a trip at short notice. An example of this could be a recent trip to Kew Gardens Orchids festival, which we found out was due to come to an end in two weeks. Within a couple of days we had social buddies to support the trip and the members who wanted to go had their plan for the day.

This means that the steering group normally gets together 8-10 times a year. At these meetings, we discuss what members would like to experience in the coming months. We ask people to think about their own preferences, as well as what they think other members would like. We usually only record and minute these formal meetings, and don't tend to record all interactions we have with members. In year 3, we'll aim to try and record each interaction we have so we can better evidence the time we spend talking to members in a more informal way.



Challenges

Anyone with a learning disability is encouraged to sign up to come out, and this year we've continued to build very trusting relationships with family and care staff. Having positive interactions with family and care staff make the project a joy to work on, especially when we receive positive feedback from them. However, it is the case that some of our members still do not come out as much as they'd like to, and this is often due to resistance from family. More work needs to be done to support family members who are fearful or worried about the person they support being out and about. This will always be a challenging area and we hope that with Joseph, who is a professional advocate, joining the staff team, we will be able to better tackle some of these issues.

The project is popular and we are often asked 'what's coming up next?', 'can we please go here?', or "why don't we go back there again?". This is all fantastic and exactly what we love to hear; however unfortunately we, like all other charitable projects, have a limit on the resources available to deliver the project. A lot of our members want to enjoy trips into the capital several times every month; however if we offer places to these individuals each month it will mean that others miss out and our budget is exceeded. It is very difficult to meet demand. This year we were targeted to support 25 individuals, to enjoy at least 5 events each. We have failed to meet that target, as we have put less emphasis on how many times someone had interacted with the project, and instead embraced their interaction and supported them to develop their confidence in accessing the community. In the latter part of this year, we decided to introduce a cap, which means that, come next year, we may be more equipped to meet our year 3 target of supported 30 people to attend 5 trips each. This is something we could struggle with, as we do not want to hold back our enthusiastic members, but at the same time we do want to encourage new members to join and thus need to have space for them.



Where are we featured?

Our work is fully documented on our website, which is regularly updated:

<http://www.sharecommunity.org.uk/independent-living-wellbeing/go-anywhere-do-anything>

We often use Twitter and talk about Go Anywhere Do Anything on Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/sharecommunity>

<https://twitter.com/sharecommunity>

We were featured in the Brightside magazine in November 2015:

http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/11150/brightside_november_2015.pdf

Our short video about the project, can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yJmjR0I6E5w>



What are our plans for the next year?

Over the next year we aim to run 45 activities, a lot of which we hope will be volunteer led. We hope to support 40 people to access the project, ensuring that 30 people enjoy at least 5 events each. We'll aim to maintain our high levels of volunteer satisfaction and ensure that we have 20 active volunteers at all times. We will aim for 40 people to report feeling more confident in accessing arts, sports and leisure events and that they are always staying out as late as they want to at night. We'll support 40 people to work towards personal health and wellbeing goals and hope that 30 people will report improvements in 2 or more aspects of life. We will commission an independent evaluator to evaluate the project success and we will develop a plan for how to sustain and develop Go Anywhere, Do Anything, after the funding ends.



Environmental Impact

We try to be as environmentally friendly as possible within Go Anywhere, Do Anything. Share is currently implementing a Digital Development Strategy, which will encourage the whole organisation to become more confident to do things digitally, thus reducing the need for paperwork. Most of our documentation, within Go Anywhere, Do Anything is already paperless; we try not to print unnecessarily. If we do print, we will print double sided and recycle paper, waste and cartridges where possible. We travel using public transport and only travel by taxi if absolutely essential, which is rare. We try to conserve energy by ensuring that our computers are turned off when they are not in use, and are put to 'sleep' mode when they haven't been used for a while. We use as much natural light as possible, and we do not use air conditioning.



Monitoring Framework

How many people have benefited this year?

- 47

In which Greater London borough do our members live?

- Wandsworth – 96%
- Merton – 2%
- Lambeth – 2%

What age group(s) are our members?

Age group	%
0-15	0%
16 - 24	15%
25 - 44	49%
45 - 64	30%

Not known	6%
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What gender are our members?

Gender	%
Female	60
Male	40

Closing thoughts

Again, we cannot thank the City Bridge Trust enough for recognising the voice of people with learning disabilities who asked for improved access to London’s cultural opportunities by investing in the Go Anywhere, Do Anything project.

This year the project has grown from strength to strength and it has been a pleasure to see people’s confidence grow. The feedback we have received has been hugely encouraging, and gives us a fantastic base from which to continue to develop the project and improve our service. We are greatly looking forward to the final year of funding ahead.