

## End of Year Report June 2018 – May 2019

In the fifth year of Go Anywhere Do Anything (GADA) we have organised 69 trips in and around London, and supported 87 adults with learning disabilities and/or autism to “Go Anywhere” and “Do Anything”. We welcomed 14 new members to the project, trained 11 more volunteers and launched our new Buddyship programme. We also spent more time exploring the rest of the country, with 17% of our trips being outside of London.

### What have been the successes?

#### Harder to reach

One of the successes we are most proud of is our focus and commitment to our ‘harder to reach’ members. These are a group of people who experience complex barriers to being able to access GADA either through parents/carers being resistant, or having physical and/or mental health concerns meaning they are less likely or less able to engage, or may change their mind frequently. The team have worked hard this year to put strategies in place to overcome the barriers people face. 7 of the trips we ran this year were solely organised for these members, with 13 members attending. We will have likely exceeded our target of 15 by next year.



Figure 1: Mark and Chris living it up at a Karaoke bar!



Figure 2: Fatima and Yasmin enjoying a spot of lunch at Pizza Express



Figure 3: Vishal and Jose taking a speedboat down the Thames

## Buddyship

Another success has been the launch of our Buddyship programme. Although not initially successful (more about that later), we are now confident that this project will help us meet the demand from our members. We recruited 5 new volunteers specifically to support buddyship – these volunteers get more involved in organising trips and liaising with venues, members, and carers. If a member approaches us with a place they'd like to go, but we have no space on our regular monthly schedule, we can now approach our buddyship buddies to see if they'd like to make it happen. We've recruited volunteers who are super organised and don't mind getting involved in more of the admin associated with organising trips. This year, 7 buddyship trips happened, and next year we are aiming for around 20.



Figure 4: Claire and Gifty having a night out clubbing



Figure 5: Angela and Sophie enjoying afternoon tea at a London hotel

"I liked dancing and getting home when the birds were singing!"- Member

## Members working towards their goals

The majority of members who have attended at least 2 trips, have set themselves health and wellbeing goals. These are being communicated to volunteers so they are able to get support to meet these goals on trips. We'll survey our students next year to see whether GADA has helped them to partially or fully meet these goals. We'll also use the Outcomes Star to see what progress people have made (however this is a holistic tool and the progress can't solely be attributed to GADA). So far we have seen several members take some good steps towards their goals!



Figure 6: Andre developing his communication and tech skills by making a phone call on a trip



Figure 7: Doris practicing using money by buying her own drink at the bar



Figure 8: Nicola trying something new at the Sealife Centre



Figure 9: Ummair taking charge of the tickets at Lords Cricket ground





Figure 10: Chris Wilkinson spending his money on the Wembley tour

This year we increased the amount of spaces we provided on trips to 317, and 50% of our members explored a place outside of London. Our membership increased to 87 adults with learning disabilities - 27% also have a physical disability and 34% have autism.

We ran 69 trips and welcomed 14 new members. This year 50% of members explored places outside of London. We anticipate that by the end of year 3, we'll have reached the 70% target.

We now have 35 volunteers, and they gave approximately 1480 hours over the year. 69% of all trips were run solely by volunteers (i.e. no staff member present). We provided approximately 80 hours of volunteer support and supervision, in the form of training evenings, catch up calls and on-trip support.

	<u><b>Year 1</b></u> <b>June 2014 – May 2015</b>	<u><b>Year 2</b></u> <b>June 2015 – May 2016</b>	<u><b>Year 3</b></u> <b>June 2016 – May 2017</b>	<u><b>Year 4</b></u> <b>June 2017 – May 2018</b>	<u><b>Year 5</b></u> <b>June 2018 – May 2019</b>
Members	47	47	57	79	87
New members	N/A	10	15	30	14
Spaces provided	202	187	297	312	317
Trips	34	43	62	65	69
Volunteer hours	429	665	1200	1456	1480



"It helps people understand people like me"- Member

## Happy volunteers

We had a response rate of 81% in our most recent social buddy survey (May 2019). 95% said they would recommend volunteering at Share, whilst 5% said they'd 'maybe' recommend it. 95% also said they were happy volunteering with us (68% very happy and 27% happy). 100% of social buddies said they looked forward to attending GADA trips.



## Staying out late

35% of the trips we've run have been in the evenings, with 20% of these finishing after 11pm. One trip even went on until 3am! Not everyone is so keen on staying out late, but for those who want to, we support them to make it happen. For trips that can go on late in to the night, we don't set a finishing time, and instead it's up to the member to decide when they want to go home. Social buddies support members in a taxi home at the end of the night.



Figure 11: Spending time with friends at the Bubble Club in Hackney



Figure 12: Dancing and singing the night away at the Clapham Grand nightclub

"I liked it, staying out with a glass of wine made it a really good night" - Member



# What have been the challenges?

## Meeting demand

Our biggest challenge has been meeting demand from our members. Share has 114 students and a high proportion of these students have learning disabilities and autism, which means they are automatically eligible to access GADA. We have not capped our membership, as we do not want any of our students to miss the opportunity to access the project, as it can be so transformative and life changing for people. We also think it would be unfair as how could we possibly choose who does and doesn't get to take part?

With having 87 members access the project over the year, it has proved impossible to be able to offer all these people regular trips (at least bi-monthly). 18 members attended 6 or more trips, 14 attended 5 trips, 8 attended 4 trips, 13 attended 3 trips, 10 attended 2 trips and 24 attended 1 trip. To offer each of our 87 members a trip bi-monthly, we'd need to organise 130 + trips a year. We are hopeful with the introduction of Buddyship, we'll be able to offer around 20 additional trips a year, which will help to meet some of the demand, and allow us to offer those who didn't get as many trips, more.

## More complex needs

We have also found that the new students who have joined Share this year have more complex needs. This has meant that the team have had to put more time and resources into getting to know each person's needs, their support network, their likes and dislikes, their communication style, health concerns and their goals for taking part. Risk assessing and making sure our members and volunteers are safe, is our biggest priority. As part of our risk assessing for inviting those with complex needs on trips, it has been a requirement that a staff member from the GADA team has been present on the trip to support people's first trip going well.



## Mystery shopper

Unfortunately we have not managed to roll out mystery shopper feedback to venues in the way we'd originally planned. We anticipated when writing the funding bid that we would be able to use the Community Map facility on our website to rate venues for accessibility, both in terms of physical access and also with regard to positive attitude and welcome towards disabled people. This functionality was discontinued as it wasn't working as well as expected and was going to cost a lot of money to re-design. Instead we have been providing feedback to venues in a more ad-hoc nature i.e. by giving them feedback in person whilst on trips, completing the email

feedback forms we often receive, and writing reviews on Trip Advisor. Where organisations have failed in their disability friendliness we have contacted them directly via phone or email to give feedback and make suggestions for improvement.

## Challenging services: the good, the bad and the ugly

We find that we often have to challenge services to be more 'disability friendly' and 'accessible'. Some examples of bad practice we've challenged include: SEE Tickets offering a re-sale service (FantoFan) for unwanted tickets, however this service is not available on accessible tickets. When challenged, SEE Tickets did offer GADA a refund, but sadly never got back to us about how they might change their policy to address the unequal service to their disabled customers. Similarly, Bluebell Railway have failed to respond to our emails regarding any amendments to their policies that seemingly have a less favourable attitude to disabled customers.

There is some good news though! We have been to The Clapham Grand a few times despite a rocky start: we struggled with no ramp for wheelchair access; not being able to gain access to a pre-booked area; blank faces looking back at us when asking to queue jump to avoid (drunk) crowds. The Grand got there in the end and this is what we said about our last visit on Trip Adviser:

*"...wanted to share how FANTASTIC the staff were at supporting our group; from the friendly faces when arriving at the door, to the gents being temporarily closed, so one of our group could safely go the toilet. Thanks guys, we will be seeing you again soon!"* Just goes to show what a bit of 'exposure' can do.

## Steering groups

We have found that running large focus groups has not been the most successful method of ensuring everyone's voice is heard. Instead we have continued to offer daily drop in sessions between 3 – 4pm where members can come and talk to a member of the GADA team about their ideas. We also arrange meetings with members who don't readily approach us, so we can help them set their goals and suggest some trips. This works far better as we can be more person centred in our approach. At a recent event we held, we initiated 'big brother style' feedback pods where members gave their ideas for future trips.

"It was fun. It was nice being in a group and I liked the people we went with. Looking at the trains was great - I've always wanted to go on one" - Member



# What have we learnt?

## Members love to bowl

We have also learnt that some of the more ordinary and run-of-the-mill trips have proved to be the most popular. For example, a member suggested that we go out for pizza and to play bowling – and we had 38 members sign up for this trip! We find that because our members don't often get to go out with their friends, when they do, they opt to pick activities that they have done before and they've enjoyed, and want to try again. People can sometimes be less inclined to pick things that are unfamiliar and new.



## Getting outside London is more challenging

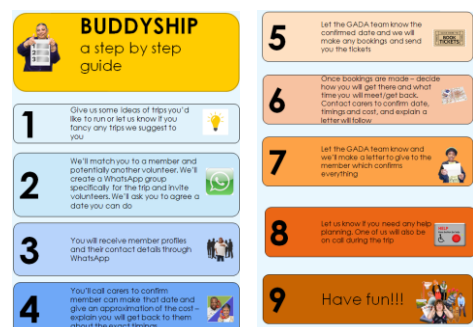
Last year we ran several trips outside of London; however this year those trips haven't been as popular with our members and volunteers. Last year 20% of our trips were out of London, this year 17%. We've continued to do these trips as some members have suggested them, but in general there has been less interest from both volunteers and members. People felt that these trips were a lot more tiring and difficult logistically, so the fact these trips haven't been as popular could be a result of that. Moving forward we'll continue to respond to member demand if trip ideas outside of London arise; however we will think carefully about how best to make them work for everyone.

## Overnight trips aren't for GADA

We ran a couple of overnight trips – one to Alton Towers and one to Butlin's. These were successful in the sense that the members loved them; however the feedback we received from volunteers was that these trips were very intense and tiring, and involved a lot more responsibility – a lot of which was outside our volunteers' remit i.e. personal care. Whilst these overnight trips could work with paid staff support, to ask volunteers to run them wouldn't be ideal, especially as it was difficult for everyone to take regular breaks. We think overnight trips will not be something that falls under GADA's remit moving forward, unless we can resource them better.

## Taking a different approach to buddyship

We launched the pilot of Buddyship last summer and encouraged our social buddies at the time, to get





involved. We managed to make 5 trips happen within 7 months, although for some trips we did more of the organising than we had anticipated and several trips had staff members present. We realised we were asking volunteers to change their remit slightly (i.e. getting more involved in organising), something we hadn't recruited and trained these volunteers for. The pilot helped us to see that this was not a fair ask. We therefore decided to take a different approach and recruited specifically for volunteers to work on Buddyship, setting clear expectations and guidelines from induction. We recruited 5 volunteers in April, and so far two trips have happened in a month, so we are feeling positive that this will be a great initiative moving forward.



"It was an interesting and historical place, I got to see the crown jewels and we got to go in the gift shops. It was a nice place to go" - Member

## **If we were starting this project again, what would we do differently?**

### **Different staff responsibilities and/or more admin support**

If we were to start the project again, we may look in to re-designing the job posts on the project. We are lucky enough to have a registered Learning Disability Nurse and Advocate (Joe) and registered Occupational Therapist (Elise) working on the project. Both have great skills and are fantastic at ensuring trips are accessible, risk assessed and well managed. They are able to communicate with our members effectively and support them to make choices and have their voice heard. However a big part of both of their roles is also administration – producing letters, making calls, updating databases, chasing payments etc. – not something that necessarily plays to their strengths and experience. We may consider having two different staff roles in the project – one that deals with the admin side of things, and the other that is a specialist in working with adults with learning disabilities. Alternatively, we could consider re-distributing the resources and employing a part time admin assistant to support the project, or try to find a volunteer help.

### **More time to work 1-1 with members and their circle of support**

We would love to have more time to work with our members more closely. We feel that developing more focus groups (sessions to prep members for trips) and 1 to 1 meetings (to set goals, discuss trip ideas etc.) has been really positive over the last year. It's essential that we



understand our members' support needs as well as what make them happy and what is important to them.

If we were to start the project again we would love to be able to spend much more time focusing on our members' circles of support and building richer member profiles; it would be great if we could have person centred meetings with our members' circles of support on an annual basis. We would love to be able to spend more time planning trips with our members, capturing their thoughts about previous trips and generally being much more user led. Being user led can drastically slow things down, but with the right admin support this could be possible.

## Case Studies

### Charles

Charles is studying digital skills at Share. To incorporate Charles' skill development, the GADA team email him to let him know about up and coming trips. This has worked really well - Charles always promptly and eloquently replies.

When Charles first accessed GADA he told us he likes music, art, animals and going shopping. He also let us know that he doesn't like to be out too late. His first introduction to GADA was at one of our parties.

Charles' first trip was visiting the Royal Albert Hall for a showcase of Hollywood blockbuster sound tracks, performed by the Royal Philharmonic. This is what he wrote about the day:

*"I like the Albert hall it so big and lovely; I went there for the first time with the staff and friends on Sunday with Michael and Lizi and Gada thank you very much we sat and listen to Great music it was also so big and colourful I had a good time. I liked the journey there as well."*

Charles has also attended a GADA trip to The London International Horse Show.

What was it like at the Horse show?

*"It was very big lots of people; I liked horse jumping and watching the children riding Shetland ponies. There was a trophy for the winner"*

Did you have a good time at the Horse Show? What was the best bit?

*"Yes, I had a great time. My favourite bit was Father Christmas riding a sleigh and the carol singing"*

We also interviewed Bill, Charles' brother to get his thoughts on any positive effects from GADA

Has Charles spoken much about trips?



*"Yes, Charles has had a brilliant time on trips. He really enjoyed the Royal Albert Hall and thought the Horse Show was fantastic. Charles used to ride horses and is getting back into riding this summer!"*

Do you think GADA has had a positive effect on Charles?

*"Before attending Share Charles was quite isolated. Most of his social opportunities were with people a lot older than himself. Going on trips, and attending Share in general, has given Charles many opportunities to socialise with people of his own age, and younger!"*

Has GADA been able to provide new experiences for Charles?

*"It's been great – there have been lots of new things on offer. Meeting lots of new people at the (GADA) party was great... the food was really good too!"*



## Chris

When Chris first joined Share Community it became quite clear that he didn't have much of a social life away from the previous day centre he used to attend in Lambeth.

Chris has an extremely close relationship with his mum, Sue. The two of them support each other with all aspects of home life and it became apparent they could both do with some 'me time' away from each other.

Sue has lots of anxieties about Chris accessing the community as she knows his support needs better than anyone. She was worried about him coming out later in the evenings and worried about his medical conditions not being supported properly on our GADA trips.

Over time, Joe (one of our GADA project officers) and the staff team at Share worked on building up trust and supporting Sue to feel more at ease with the idea of Chris going out without her.

The GADA team made adjustments to their trip planning to include staff being present on the trip and for Chris to be picked up and dropped off from his home.

Chris isn't alone in needing extra support to access a GADA trip, and so the project developed what we now call a Harder To Reach (HTR) trip plan – which focuses on student/members like Chris and works to break down any barriers which might be stopping them from enjoying a healthy more inclusive social life.

Chris' first GADA trip was a day out to what is billed as the UK's





scariest attraction – the London Tombs. He had a fantastic time, showed no signs of the problems his mum was worried about, and furthermore really enjoyed hanging out in a Thames River side pub after the tour. It was a rare opportunity for Chris and some of the other members in attendance to hang out with peers and feel like part of society.

He keeps asking when we can go back – so we are planning a trip to the London Dungeons this coming Halloween.

As part of our HTR project Chris was invited on a trip to sing Karaoke with various other GADA members.

This trip served to build on the growing sense of trust between his mum Sue and Share Community.

Chris loves socialising and getting out and about – for weeks in the run up to this trip he would be excited: asking about plans, requesting information and planning his song choices. He kept saying he wanted to sing Rock DJ by Robbie Williams!

More recently Chris joined us on another trip, this time to a tour of Wembley Stadium. Again, extra support was provided by our staff

team and he was picked up from and dropped home. These small adaptations have proven to make a big difference to Chris and Sue and he couldn't be happier about Going Anywhere and Doing Anything more often! Sue's still not keen on Chris being out during the evening, and she worries about him possibly having an epileptic seizure if

he's too far from home, but she's said that he enjoys the trips, and she thinks the best trip we could arrange for him would be a football match with Chelsea playing.



## Chris interview (film):

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/45Ey7vkpPg3u1yq77>

## Claire

Claire loves to party! Since becoming a GADA member she has always said she want to go out clubbing. She had a bit of a rocky start due to illness and some anxieties from her mum Claire didn't turn up to trips or dropped out the day before. Because of this she was of the first member we thought of to put on our 'header to reach' list. Since then Claire has come to the GADA Christmas party, lunch at Pizza Express and clubbing.



What has been your favourite trip?

"I had really good time clubbing we stayed out to really late. We went to cocktail bar first then a club. I danced with the girls [Gifty, Gabrielle and Karen]. I danced with a guy too..."

Had you been clubbing before?

"No, this was my first time. I will go again"

Click here for a [Film of Claire clubbing](#)

You love a party, why haven't you been clubbing before?

"I didn't have anyone to one to go with."

We asked Janice, Claire's mum about clubbing;

"She [Claire] was over the moon. She raved on about it for days; every time family came over she told them all about it. Yeah, she really had a great time"

When Claire joined GADA she dropped out quite a bit. What has changes?

She has some trouble walking, she'll be in pain - so I don't think it is fair to her, or you, to let her go out. When someone came to pick and drop her home in a taxi that was great. We can do that again. During the day is ok too, because she is already at Share.

Before GADA did go Claire go out much with friends?

"No, not at all... She will come out with family and socialise with us, not her friends though. She is used to being indoors; sometimes it can be hard to get her out and about."

If could pick a trip for Claire to go Anywhere or Do Anything, what would it be?

"... I think she would love to go to Butlins"



## The year ahead

We are excited about taking GADA in to our next year. We have an exciting schedule of trips coming up, and members are looking forward to getting their dose of vitamin D this summer. We will be aiming to run at least 75 trips over the coming year, and continuing to work with those who are harder to reach. We will be working on a GADA promotional film which will promote what the project has achieved over the last three years. We'll also be getting more digital and will have a facility on our website that allows members to suggest trips via an online web form.

We will be having a GADA team away day in June where will be reviewing the past year in detail, and planning for the year ahead. We'll think more about how we can grow GADA so more people can benefit, as well as considering what things we could do better moving forward.



We will be looking in to potential funders who may be able to support the project from June 2020 so that we can continue to offer people with learning disabilities and autism the chance to “Go Anywhere” and “Do Anything”.

Thank you for your funding and continued support. Do let us know if you'd ever like to come along on one of our trips!

