



Annual Report Summary

April 2008

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Introduction

SAIF aims to improve the accessibility of information to disabled people, carers and everyone who needs it. SAIF supports the right of disabled people to have access to information directly and in their preferred format.

SAIF was set up as a result of the *Enabling Information* report, published by the Scottish Office in 1995. SAIF is funded by the Scottish Government, employs two part-time project workers, and is based in the Scottish Consumer Council (SCC). The SAIF advisory body is made up of 21 people drawn from disability-led organisations and information providers.

SAIF has:

- Produced the SAIF Standards for Disability Information and Advice Provision in Scotland, and a range of supplements to that publication.
- Established Update, the new national disability information service.

SAIF is:

- Supporting and developing the SAIF Standards.
- Working with local authorities and others to encourage the development of accessible information policies and practices.
- Producing guidance material to promote accessible information and accessible e-communication.
- Providing support and training to organisations and agencies interested in improving the accessibility of its information services.
- Acting as an advisory body to the Scottish Government.



Significant issues and developments in 2007

Funding

Our application for Section 10 funding for the period 2008-2011 went to the Scottish Government at the end of September. Whilst we did not receive the amount we applied for, we were awarded £80,000 per year. This is the same level as our funding since 2002. It does mean some reduction in our development plan over the next three years.

SAIF Standards

The revised and updated Standards were published and sent out in June. The language and accessibility has been greatly improved and the two new developments – the interactive double CD and the BSL DVD – have increased accessibility again. Feedback has been very positive and demand has been unprecedented.

Standards A5 booklet

We developed and published the revised and updated Standards booklet which is aimed at disabled people. For the first time this has been produced in a BSL version on DVD. The initial mailing has been followed by an unprecedented number of requests for bulk copies.

Training

The programme of seminars and training events which began in 2006 continued with the Beyond the School Gate training day in March and the Beyond the Web training day in November. Both were fully booked and very successful. The training has raised the profile of SAIF considerably and reached the intended audiences. Half day e-communication accessibility training events are planned for June 2008 and a brochure promoting our services and which targets the health sector has been distributed. Income generated from our training covers costs only.

Guide to User-Led Reviews pilot project

We are indebted to FAIR who carried out the first pilot of the Guide to User-Led Reviews and produced a detailed report which is now on our website. Other pilots are now in the pipeline and will be carried out in 2008.

Research projects

With SCC funding we were able in 2007 to commission consultants to carry out for us three small pieces of research to:

- assess the progress of local authorities and health boards in implementing accessible information strategies
- assess appropriate quality assurance systems for the inclusion of the SAIF Standards
- assess work being done in England and Europe which is similar to the work of SAIF.

The research work is now complete and an action plan is in place to follow-up on the outcomes and recommendations.

Scottish Consumer Council

Our £80,000 budget was barely adequate so for 2007-08 in particular we are indebted to the SCC for:

- funding the recruitment and salary costs of staff maternity cover
- funding the research projects.

The result is that our expenditure this year is expected to be over £100,000. In addition the SCC took no management fee or overhead charges.

Summary

SAIF held all its scheduled meetings and the working groups met regularly throughout the year to pursue the objectives. We are again grateful to all those SAIF advisory board members who chair the meetings and serve on the working groups. These members put in a lot of work during and between meetings. This ensures that we meet our annual targets and inspires the development of new SAIF initiatives.

SAIF currently has four key strategic objectives. Each has its own work plan. Three are managed by working groups of SAIF members and other invited people; the other is managed directly by SAIF staff and the SAIF advisory body.

Strategic objective 1

SAIF Standards for Disability Information and Advice Provision in Scotland

To develop, publish, promote and support the SAIF Standards for Disability Information and Advice Provision in Scotland, monitor implementation, and develop accreditation mechanisms.

To develop, publish, promote and support the Scottish Formats Resource.

Working Group 2008

Grant Carson
Jean Dunlop
Mary Evans – Dyslexia Scotland
Charlie MacIntyre – DeafBlind Scotland
Marilyn Slavin
Sandra Wilson
Carolyn Wyper
Marie Burns (for research project follow-up work)

Background

The *SAIF Standards* were initially developed in 1999. A first updated and revised edition was published in 2004 and a second in 2007. A range of support publications has been produced to support the Standards.

SAIF aims to get key elements of the *SAIF Standards* incorporated into mainstream quality assurance systems. This approach, along with initiatives such as the publication of the *Guide to User-Led Reviews*, has replaced the development of any separate accreditation system for the Standards which SAIF agreed would be likely to marginalise rather than integrate the needs, rights and aspirations of disabled people.

The development of the second revised edition of the *SAIF Standards* was completed in 2007. As well as being written in plain language, the new edition has been edited significantly, is now accompanied by a double CD containing both the Standards and an electronic checklist, and a BSL version on DVD. The checklist is also available on-line.

SAIF commissioned and supervised a consultant to develop the first formats directory and it was published in early 2001 on CD Rom. In all 1500 copies were produced and distributed.

In 2002 SAIF agreed to work in partnership with UPDATE to develop, publish, promote, support and distribute a new edition. It was published in September 2003 as the *Scottish Formats Resource* and the lead format was print. In 2006 the second edition of the *Scottish Formats Resource* was published in CD Rom format.

Standards Work Plan 2007

In 2007 the key targets met were the:

- Completion and distribution of the new edition of the SAIF Standards.
- Development and publishing of the new edition of the A5 Standards booklet *Information and Advice Services – What disabled people should expect and receive*.
- Commissioning of a pilot user-led service review using the SAIF guide.
- Commissioning of the research into quality assurance systems which may incorporate elements of the SAIF Standards.

Standards Work Plan 2008

In 2008 the key targets are to:

- Promote and meet ongoing demand for the SAIF Standards and other publications.
- Follow up on the 2007 research project and negotiate with key quality assurance systems for inclusion of SAIF Standards.
- Send out Standards questionnaires. Produce report of the results and respond to resulting support requests.
- Carry out further user-led service review pilots, publish on the website and further promote issue.
- Publish the new easy-to-understand version of the A5 Standards booklet.
- Publish social model of disability booklet, and press launch.

Strategic objective 2

Local Accessible Information Strategies

To encourage the development of accessible information strategies by local authorities.

Working Group 2008

Margaret Hurcombe (chair)

Jean Alcock

David Armstrong

Claire Brennan

Nikki Cameron

Jean Dunlop

Ben Forsyth

Lionel Long

Lucie McAnespie

Linda Miller

Carolyn Wyper

Background

SAIF initially sent questionnaires to local authorities in 1998 and followed up with a well attended conference in 1999. Promotional materials were then produced, and the issue was embedded within the SAIF Standards. In 2002 and 2006 SAIF again issued questionnaires and the results were collated and reported to the Scottish Executive.

Whilst the issue of local strategies was key to the SAIF Standards, in 2004 SAIF produced a separate publication called *Barrier Free Information* to help promote the issue. It is written as a practical guide for local authorities and others on how to develop a local accessible information strategy.

Very successful seminars and training events were developed and delivered during 2006 and 2007, with more planned for 2008 and beyond. They have all been well attended with very positive feedback. They have increased our contacts and profile considerably in local authorities, health boards and other public sector bodies.

Local Strategies Work Plan 2007

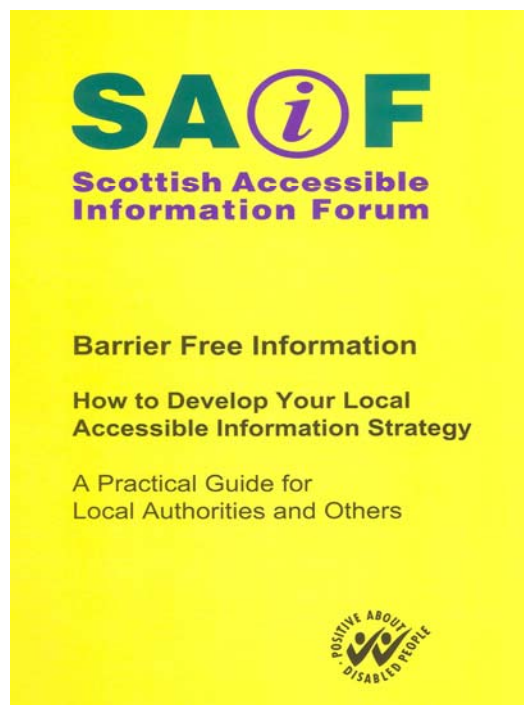
In 2007 the key targets met were the:

- Development and delivery of further seminars and training events.
- Report to the Scottish Government about the training initiatives and the responses to the questionnaires sent to local authorities and health boards.
- Commissioning of research into the progress of local authorities and health boards in developing accessible information strategies.

Local Strategies Work Plan 2008

In 2008 the key targets are to:

- Develop a strategy for training, to include a marketing strategy, targeted training and a varied training programme.
- Continue to deliver training on varied accessible information issues and to appropriate target audiences.
- Follow up on the 2007 SCC funded research project looking at the progress of local authorities in implementing local accessible information strategies, produce report, offer appropriate support and promote good practice.
- Increase promotion of SAIF within the NHS.
- Review, re-write and re-name the *Barrier-Free Information* publication.



Strategic objective 3

E-Communication

To develop the SAIF website and promote good practice in the use of IT as a means of improving the provision of accessible information.

Working group 2008

Sandra Wilson (chair)
Jean Alcock
David Armstrong
Eva Bolander – Website consultant to SAIF
Marie Burns
Jim Byrne – Independent IT consultant
Mary Evans
Nicola Noon
Marilyn Slavin

Background

SAIF established a website in 1999 with the help of the Making Connections Unit at Caledonian University. In 2002 we began funding a consultant, Eva Bolander, to help rebuild and update the website. Ongoing development of its content and accessibility has made it an excellent example of good practice. The development of new features on the website is ongoing.

In 2002 SAIF published *Making Websites Accessible* and it proved very popular. A new updated version, *Making E-communication Accessible*, written by Jim Byrne and Eva Bolander, was published at the end of 2006. A series of A4 posters on key accessibility issues is also being developed which can stand alone or accompany the publication.

Use of the website has increased significantly. From around 3,500 per month in 2005 visits to the website increased to an estimated 12,000 per month in 2007, and in some cases the download of publications exceeded the amount of hard copies being distributed.

E-communication Work Plan 2007

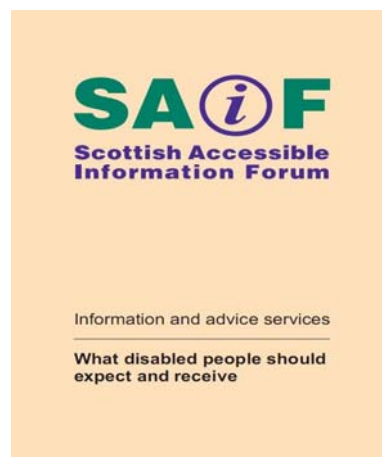
In 2007 the key targets met were the:

- Maintenance and development of the website in both content and accessibility.
- Increase in use of the website.
- Production of a range of A4 posters about e-communication accessibility.
- Production of regular e-newsletters.

E-communication Work Plan 2008

In 2008 the key targets are to:

- Maintain the website as an example of good practice and keep it up-to-date.
- Redesign and expand the website and add new functions.
- Increase visits and links to the website and maintain detailed website statistics.
- Complete development of pack of A4 posters to accompany publication *Making E-communication Accessible*.
- Produce regular e-newsletters.
- Provide training in e-communication accessibility.



Strategic objective 4

Promotional Strategy

To promote accessible information generally.

Promotional Strategy Work Plan 2007

In 2007 the key targets met were the:

- Commissioning of research into work being done in England and Europe to promote accessible information.
- Ongoing liaison with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and HMRC (Inland Revenue).

Promotional Strategy Work Plan 2008

In 2008 the key targets are to:

- Work with the SCC press officer to gain press coverage for SAIF publications and other initiatives.
- Continue liaison work with key national agencies, the DWP and HMRC.
- Follow up on the research into organisations promoting accessible information in England and Europe, to establish links and promote good practice.

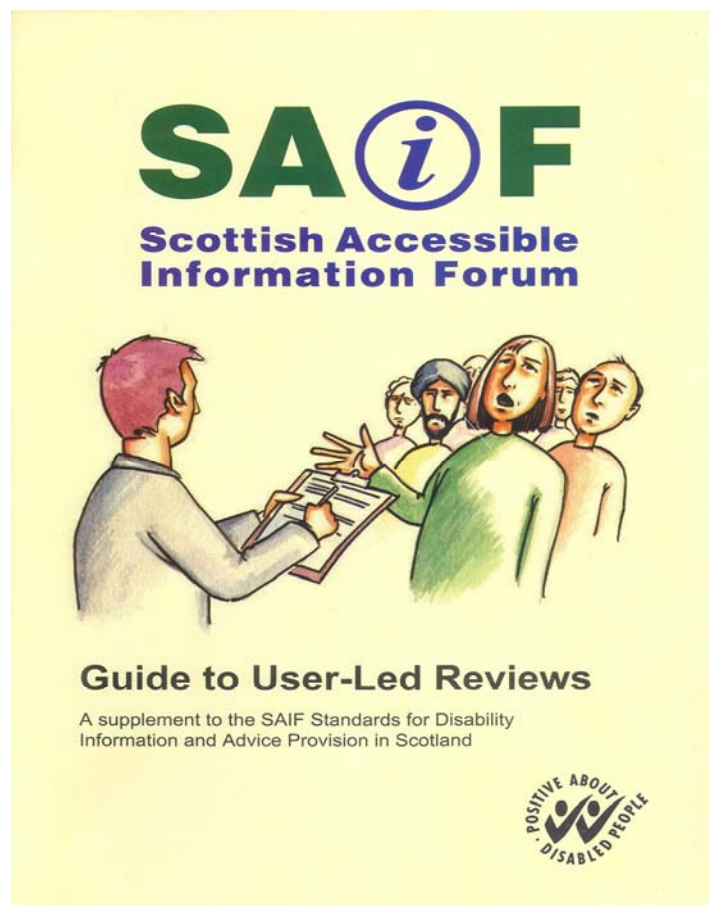
Other SAIF Objectives

Feedback to the Scottish Government about matters to which accessible information is relevant.

Represent the interests of disabled people and carers in the promotion of accessible information & user-led services.

SAIF:

- responds regularly to Scottish Government and other consultations
- reports to the Scottish Government and the Scottish Consumer Council as requested or appropriate
- works in partnership with Update, Scotland's National Disability Information Service
- responds frequently to requests for assistance or guidance on accessible information issues
- makes presentations, runs workshops or has information stalls at national or local events
- meets regularly with key national organisations or local forums which are trying to push forward accessible information.



Current SAIF publications

- ❑ **SAIF Standards for Disability Information and Advice Provision in Scotland** (Third edition 2007 with accompanying CD Rom)
(A4 82 pages)
- ❑ **Barrier Free Information – How To Develop Your Local Accessible Information Strategy – A practical Guide for Local Authorities and Others** (2004) (A4 16 pages)
- ❑ **Scottish Formats Resource** (Second edition 2006, CD Rom)
- ❑ **Making Information Accessible** (A3 poster, 2004)
- ❑ **Making Websites Accessible** (A4 poster, 2006)
- ❑ **Making Word Documents Accessible** (A4 poster, 2006)
- ❑ **Making Email Accessible** (A4 poster, 2007)
- ❑ **Converting Word documents into accessible PDFs**
(A4 poster, 2008)
- ❑ **Making E-communication Accessible** (2006) (A4 64 pages)
- ❑ **Guide To User-Led Reviews** (Second edition 2007) (A4 20 pages)
- ❑ **Is Your Business Attractive to Potential Customers and Employees Who Are Disabled People?** (2004) (A4 4 pages)
- ❑ **An Opportunity for National and Specialist Organisations to Distribute and Share Information More Effectively**
(2004) (A4 4 pages)
- ❑ **Information And Advice Services - What Disabled People Should Expect and Receive** (Second edition 2007) (A5 8 page booklet)
- ❑ **Using An Information Or Advice Service** (2000)
(Easy-to-understand, incorporating graphics, A5 12 page booklet)

SAIF members – April 2008

Name	Work place and/or area based
Jean Alcock	Various (Glasgow)
David Armstrong	Student Loans Company
Claire Brennan	Staff governance, Scottish Executive Health Department
Marie Burns	Glasgow Planning Partnership
Nikki Cameron	Argyle and Bute Council
Grant Carson	Disabled Persons Housing Service Centre for Inclusive Living in Glasgow
Jean Dunlop (vice-chair)	Various (Kilmarnock)
Mary Evans	Dyslexia Scotland
Ben Forsyth (chair)	Welfare Rights Officer Midlothian Council, Edinburgh
Andy Groves	Grapevine Information Service, Centre for Independent Living, Edinburgh
Margaret Hurcombe	Family Advice & Information Resource, Edinburgh
Lionel Long	UPDATE, Edinburgh
Lucie McAnespie	Speech & language therapist, East and Midlothian
Linda Miller	Grampian Accessible Information Taskforce
Nicola Noon	Scottish Council on Deafness, Glasgow
Marilyn Slavin	Common Knowledge, Glasgow
Robert Sneddon	Wigtownshire Coalition of Disabled People
Sandra Wilson	Fife Employability Network
Carolyn Wyper	NHS Ayrshire and Arran
Total = 19 (2 vacancies)	