



# London Autistic Rights Movement UK (LARM UK)

How we use Political Action to  
Benefit Autistic People!

# During this presentation please....

- Ask LARM related questions at the end of each slide.
- Raise your hand (or write on paper your questions) then wait for my signal before asking them.
- Refrain from using flashing items in this presentation.

# About the presenter

- Welcome my name is (last time I looked) [REDACTED]
- 28 years old Aspie. Graduate from Bath Spa Uni (DipHE) in July 2007. Co-author of *“Aspects of Aspergers syndrome”*, founder member of London Autistic Rights Movement (LARM UK) since its founding in 2007.



# History of LARM

- Need identified at Autscope 2007 for autism led political campaign group in the UK.
- Planning meeting held on 12th September “Politics of Autism” at County Hall with the support of Dave Morris, a neurodiverse wheelchair user, and current senior disability advisor to the mayor of London.
- 1<sup>st</sup> meeting held at NAS offices 26<sup>th</sup> Sept 07, where we decided on rules, formed a steering committee and named our group.
- Oct 3<sup>rd</sup> “PoliticsOfAutism” internet group set up, other groups later followed suit.

# Rules for LARM meetings

- These were decided at LARMs 1<sup>st</sup> meeting. All members and attendees must follow these rules.
- LARM rules are:
  - No interruptions
  - Attempt to keep contributions to 3 minutes
  - No loud noises
  - No shouting
  - Stick your hand up if you want to speak
  - Respect people's opinions
  - Please turn mobiles off.
  - We are non-violent and so no violence will be tolerated.



# Aims of LARM

- Our Aims

- Promote autism as a positive thing to have (Links to positive autistic identity).
- Change Government policy to include us fully.
- Change media and public attitude (more realistic and less negative portrayals, as in Waterloo Road, for example).
- In all our dealings, avoid having our agenda co-opted, twisted, or hijacked.
- Seek to form relationships with the wider social movements.
- To increase communication between autistics and to facilitate their involvement.
- Educate ourselves as part of our empowerment.



# Principles of LARM

- Our Principles
  - Destroy stereotypes and anti-autistic bigotry
  - Against discrimination in all its forms
  - Positive autistic identity (including Autscope links)
  - For neuro-diversity and autism and anti-eugenics
  - We are part of the wider disability and social inclusion movements
  - We are inclusive of all autistics
  - We support the social model of disability.
  - For 100% autistic people control (of our movement).
  - We are non-violent.




# Tactics of LARM

- Our Tactics include:
  - Political education events
  - The Slogan: “Nothing about autism without autistics”. [by which is understood our organisations as well]
  - People should be delegated to check on media, public events etc so we can respond to them
  - Committed to non violence
  - Issue press statements on current events
  - Make video for Channel 4 (I believe some people expressed an interest in getting together about that)
  - Put pressure on NAS to include autistics more e.g. autistic authors in recommended book list



# How to set up your own political action group

- You will need in this order:
  1. A group of people determined to make a difference to autistics lives
  2. A room to meet in (you could hire a hall or meet at a members house)
  3. A way of communicating with each other to share ideas e.g. internet chat group (which  runs LARMs version).
  4. A set of agreed rules, aims and principles
  5. A constitution that everyone is prepared to follow (can be constructed at a meeting)
  6. Elected members to chair, write minutes, run membership (this can be done at your 1<sup>st</sup> meeting (best to have a separate list for political business if possible)
  7. To have the place accessible to autistic needs (see slide 10 for details)
  8. If you wish to set up a website please join in Rogers workshop. Details are in your autscape information packs.



# Making meetings accessible for autistic needs

- Our members have various levels of ability to minimise problems we do the following;
  - People are allowed to leave the room at any time they feel
  - Sensory environment is adapted
  - Cue cards;
    - red for “stop talking”,
    - green for “resume talking”,
    - yellow for “I have a question”,
    - blue (or autism alert card) for “I’m leaving (this meeting) as I’m overloaded”.

# LARMs internet groups

- LARMs lists include
  - Politics of Autism
  - Politics of Autism Chat
  - autismcharities\_LARM
  - LARM steering
  - arm\_researchers

# Summary

- London Autistic Rights Movement (LARM) aims to change the way society treats autistic people.
- We aim to do this by campaigning for the rights of autistic people, including the inclusion of autistic people in decision-making about autistic people, and for comprehensive and appropriate services for all autistic people.