

Focus on...

inspiration

inclusion

impact

Focus on... partnerships priorities potential

Ability Bow gym works with people who may have long-term health conditions or disabilities to bring about positive change, and maximise health and well-being in the communities of East London.



Ability Bow offers inclusive fitness facilities and expert help from our friendly and highly-qualified instructors. We strive to attract people to the fitness facility who have never used a gym before, or who would not normally take part in exercise. We focus particularly on people who have disabilities or those who would not be able

to afford to use a gym.

Our small team has much to be proud of and rose to the challenges posed during the year. Like many organisations, we dealt with in-year statutory cuts, yet we also managed to support 373 people and started up five innovative new projects.

Our Family Fun and Fitness project came to an end, but we started up Reach Ability, Young @ Heart, MS Group Hackney, Bow Bengali Men and Junior Gym in addition to our core Specialist Exercise Referral Service. The London Masonic Charitable Trust generously gave us £4,500 for a Moto-Med machine, particularly useful for stroke patients and people with MS. Local supporters raised an amazing £5,584 towards a Power Plate machine for the gym, beneficial to many people with health conditions and disabilities, including spinal injuries.

We were delighted by the tremendous achievement of 25 people who raised £31,885 by running the London Marathon for us. Our fundraising efforts were successful with two key London charitable trusts, London Catalyst and the City Bridge Trust. City Bridge Trust gave us our first ever three-year grant.

None of this would have been possible without the toil, focus and determination of our staff and growing group of volunteers. Incredibly, in a difficult year, they have pulled off a 135% increase to our activities.

Victoria Kent *Director*

We want to thank the following partners for their support in 2010–11:

Accenture

Action for Bow

Big Lottery Fund

**The Bromley By Bow Centre
Health Trainers**

The City Bridge Trust

Department of Health

**East London and the City
Alliance**

The Goldsmiths' Company

**London Borough of
Hackney**

**London Borough of Tower
Hamlets**

London Catalyst

**London Masonic Charitable
Trust**

**The Mercers' Charitable
Foundation**

Sport England

**The Wakefield and Tetley
Trust**

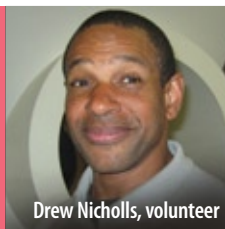
Focus on...
expertise
enthusiasm
empowerment

Meet our staff and volunteers – a team of dedicated and enthusiastic professionals who really care about helping our gym members to achieve results and meet their goals.



Victoria Kent, staff

"I've got the best possible job. I love the new challenges every day and seeing people discover their potential. Our work has such a positive impact on people's lives – who could fail to get excited about that?"



Drew Nicholls, volunteer

"This is a great place. I like being part of a positive organisation that gives back to the community. The joy I get from the impact, the results and the look on members' faces is the reward."

"It is very satisfying working with gym members who put so much effort into their exercise. The people I support are keen and I like seeing them achieve their goals. I feel good doing it."



Patrick Trotman, volunteer

"I was here at the very beginning – I believed in the project then and still do now. No two days are ever the same and I get to work with some lovely people in the gym."



Joanne Roche, staff



Lorna Dorrell, staff

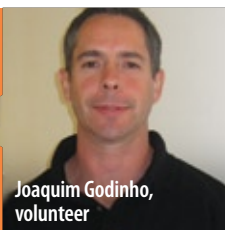
"I love working here. The work our team does is invaluable, and the positive effect felt by our members on their health is hugely important. This makes for a fantastic atmosphere where every member matters."



Chantelle Marcel-Clement, volunteer

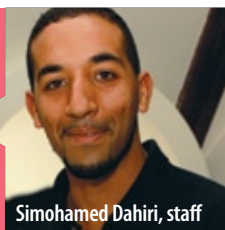
"This is a very relaxed gym with lots of smiling faces. I'm so happy I decided to volunteer. I feel part of the furniture and love meeting all the lovely different types of people who come here."

"This is a great opportunity to work with people who have different health conditions and an amazing experience seeing their improvements and health benefits. It's also a great team to work with."



Joaquim Godinho, volunteer

"The team creates a really relaxing and professional environment for members to come and exercise. And it's extra special when you see members improving because it benefits their daily life and health in such positive ways."

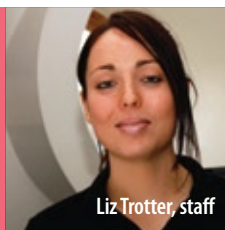


Simohamed Dahiri, staff



Rita Kingdon, staff

"I started as a volunteer – now I just can't get enough of the gym! Everyone is so down to earth and helpful, I can't imagine a more rewarding job. The positive atmosphere just rubs off on you!"



Liz Trotter, staff

"I really enjoy working at Ability Bow because every day is unique and challenging. Above all, it's the people who make the gym such an enjoyable place to be."

Focus on...
alliances
abilities
achievements

Here, some of our gym users talk about their experiences of using Ability Bow, and the positive impact it has had on their health and lives.

“Ability Bow has given me more confidence. I’m more outgoing and chatty, and less shy. Since coming here I cope with things a lot better in general.”

Brian Coombes, gym user



James Poole, gym user

“I am a very driven individual who works and plays hard. After breaking my neck, collarbone and 10 ribs in a paragliding accident, I was referred to Ability Bow. I had rehabilitated to the point where I could walk 100 metres but would be so exhausted that I had to sleep for the afternoon.

The atmosphere in the gym just normalised everything for me. It gave me the confidence I needed to raise my expectations and work hard to recover. Being in such a secure and friendly environment has

a massive impact when you’re at that very early stage of recovery. Being at the gym, and making progress, gave me the confidence to push myself, and the confidence I needed to go back to work. I’m back to enjoying the thrill of being able to push myself and getting that endorphin rush.

I had no idea this sort of gym existed. Socially, you feel normal and get to achieve stuff. It’s fun and they are nice people. I feel very privileged to have had access to Ability Bow.”

“I had a stroke in October 2009. It was a bad stroke and I was unable to move afterwards. I was referred to Ability Bow by the Disability Options Team at Mile End Hospital and I have been coming here once or twice a week. Now I am getting about and I have even got my driving licence back!

I was given exercises to do after the stroke but you’re not so motivated to do them at home. I really like Ability Bow as it means that I can exercise at my own leisure. I feel much fitter; I don’t get out of breath as quickly as I used to on the bike and my left arm is also much stronger.

The other good thing about the gym is its social side – everyone is really friendly. It’s terrific!”



Albert Stratton, gym user

We work with any disability or health condition and we welcome referrals from GPs, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and other health professionals.

“I would say to anyone that Ability Bow is definitely the way forward. Coming here after struggling with a painful shoulder injury for three years was a turning point for me. Everyone should come to somewhere like this – it really is the best thing!”

Marc Lechemere, gym user



Louise Coleman, gym user

“I am 26 years old. I have cerebral palsy and curvature of the spine.

Ability Bow staff are welcoming and the general feel of the gym is very laid back. My instructor is extremely supportive and has helped me massively.

I now have a stretching routine that I also do at home. I am noticeably more supple and energised, especially in the mornings.”

Volkmar Mueller, Senior Physiotherapist, Stroke Team, Mile End Hospital

“We regularly offer our patients a referral to Ability Bow to continue their exercise programme. As therapists, we place a huge value on the opportunity given to our patients to maintain and even progress their level of physical activity. Feedback from clients shows that they value the social aspect of the gym extremely highly as well as the exercise component of individual and group sessions. Having visited Ability Bow I have observed that clients engage very well with the environment, staff and other gym members. It also highlighted how well equipped the gym is to accommodate clients with various disabilities.”

“Beginning my programme of regular exercise at Ability Bow for the first time in my life at 55, following a bout of depression and ill-health, has helped me a great deal. It is probably a life saver!”

David Taggart, gym user

Focus on...
independence
inclusion
impact

Ability Bow strives to be a centre of excellence, particularly for people who have disabilities and people on low incomes, to maximise the impact on their health and well-being.

254

Number of people with disabilities who we supported this year

156

Number of people still exercising after six months

Increase in donations from charitable trusts

111%

The amount of statutory income cuts for the year to come – maintaining full statutory funding for 2011–12 is a huge achievement

0%

84%

Percentage of service users who improved their fitness levels

55%

Percentage of Ability Bow users who have never used a gym before

Percentage of gym users who report a social benefit by coming to Ability Bow

45%

Percentage of people who started at Ability Bow via the Specialist Exercise Referral Service and who now continue to use the gym independently

40%

40%

Percentage of gym users over 50 years old

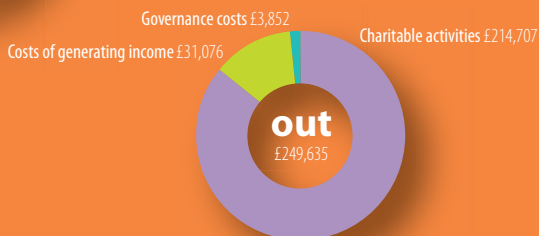
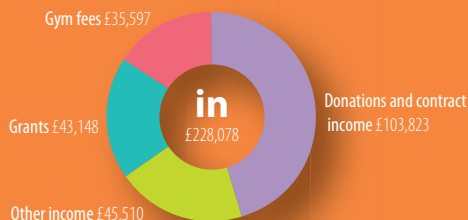
6,510

Number of one-to-one gym sessions our team did this year

Focus on... finance forecasting future

Ability Bow specialises in creating exercise programmes for people who haven't exercised for a long time or who are in rehab after an illness or injury.

Income and expenditure in 2010



Ability Bow Board of Trustees

Nicola Morris (Chair)
Siobhán Lanigan (Treasurer)
Sharron Currie
Charlotte Grosvenor
Nigel Newton Sawyerr
Sadie Roberts
Graham Watson Brown

Notes to the accounts

As for many charities, it was a particularly challenging 12 months financially as public spending cuts were felt across the sector. Ability Bow worked hard to diversify and increase its charitable income by 19% on the previous year and we were able to sustain a healthy 92% of our statutory funding. We have robust forecasting in place for 2011–12 and are working towards achieving a small surplus to build up reserves as further cuts in public spending are anticipated next year.

This financial snapshot has been extracted from the full audited accounts of Ability Bow for the year ended 31 March 2011. It may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the charity. For further information, copies of the full audited accounts can be obtained from Ability Bow, St Paul's Church, St Stephen's Road, London E3 5JL or by telephoning 020 8980 7778. The full audited accounts were approved by the Trustees on 8 September 2011 and

have been submitted to the Charity Commission and Registrar of Companies. The audit report thereon was unqualified.

Independent auditors' report to the members of Ability Bow We have examined the summarised accounts, which have been extracted from the full audited accounts for the year ended 31 March 2011. In our opinion the summarised accounts are consistent with the full audited accounts.

Registered Auditors and Chartered Accountants

Ramon Lee & Partners
Kemp House
152–160 City Road
London EC1V 2DW

8 September 2011

Focus on...

awareness aims aspirations

Ability Bow is passionate about people. Even if people have never used a gym before, there's no better place to start than Ability Bow gym.

Our five aims

1. We'll continue to be an independent community organisation with diverse income.
2. We'll offer a coherent range of fitness and health-related services for as long as participants need them.
3. We'll be a well-known centre of excellence and leader in our field.
4. We'll reach all communities and have a large and involved membership.
5. We'll operate from various sites including in partnership with other organisations.

Our focus

We work with people with all disabilities to help them get stronger and more independent through exercise, both at our gym based in Bow and other East London locations. We provide one-to-one exercise training with instructors who have specialist qualifications and a wealth of experience of working with people of all abilities.

Our sustainability plan

We will ensure that we are well positioned for changes to statutory commissioning, provide a meaningful and focused service to local people with disabilities, and continue to develop a diversity of funding and partnerships to ensure the sustainability of our service into the future.



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www.abilitybow.co.uk

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