



Section 6 Building a Programme

The Foundations

Aims & Objectives

The overall aims of the group should be the link between all the activities you undertake.

Phab's aim of inclusion and main objective of providing equality of opportunity for disabled and non-disabled people, are especially important and should be common to all clubs, projects and affiliated groups. Both Phab's and your own aims and objectives should help you in choosing programme ideas and offer guidance as to how you run any and every activity within the group.

While all Phab groups and clubs should share the common aim and objectives of participation and inclusion, each group is different. As a group, you may have specific aims that are important to you. Talk about them to all those involved in your club so everyone knows in which direction you are heading.

Whichever activities you choose to do with your club or group – and the choices are virtually limitless – there should be a common basis for everything that goes on. All your activities should be working towards the aims that you have for the group.

An important factor, which affects what you do in your own club or group, is the age range of the people with whom you work. It is important to be clear about who you are aiming to work with and ensure that your activities are appropriate for that age range.

Inclusion:

Phab's central aim is concerned with creating shared experiences for physically disabled and non-disabled people. There is an emphasis on a wider sharing of these objectives within the community.

In furthering these objectives it is useful to remember that there may be activities going on locally which members may want to get involved in. Phab group members may be best served by gaining access to what already exists.

Participation:

Participation means members share in the decision-making process in their club and have a high level of input into its programme of activities. Members are encouraged to organise activities/events and take responsibility for themselves.

For members to participate, they must first feel a sense of belonging and ownership within a club/project. This means making sure that particular individuals are not excluded by a particular club venue or its working practices.

It is important to strive to be as open as possible, and to accept that there are some groups you may not be reaching, or may not reach, with the formation of a new club (with the exception of those people outside the specified age range for participants).

To ensure that you build strong foundations some of the questions you should consider are:

- ❖ What will be the purpose of a specific activity?
- ❖ Who wants the activity to happen?
- ❖ How will club members be involved in planning and running the activity?
- ❖ What do we need to do to ensure that people are not excluded from future activities?

Deciding your own criteria for good practice:

The following exercise is designed for use by a group – it could be the club committee, the team or club members – to facilitate discussion on what they think their club is all about and what is defined as 'good practice' within the group.

1. Individual Reflection:

Spend some time on your own, or in groups, thinking about the characteristics or qualities of a good piece of work in your club or project.

Use your own experience to help you. Think back on some of the work you have been involved in that you feel good about – ask yourself what happened to create that good feeling.

2. Identifying Themes:

Everyone contributes their first thoughts/reflections on good practice. This can be done orally, through the written word, individually, via a group spokesperson etc. The group can then begin to identify common themes and discuss any points that are not clear or which may appear contradictory. The main themes are then discussed and a consensus aimed for.

3. Listing the Criteria:

The next stage is to turn to the key themes, which are likely to be listed as one or two word phrases, into questions you could use to test out whether a particular idea would be worthwhile for your team. Write these questions up where everyone can see them and ensure that everyone agrees with the wording.

For example, you may come up with questions similar to the following: -

- ❖ Does the activity encourage inclusion?
- ❖ Does the activity build links with the community?
- ❖ Does the idea avoid excluding particular people or groups?
- ❖ Does the activity involve the membership in planning and running it?

You might also want to ask questions like: -

- ❖ Are the aims clear and relevant to members?
- ❖ Is the activity fun?

4. Choosing Priorities:

Having some sense of what the team sees as priorities amongst these criteria will make it easier for you to assess any new programme ideas. One way to do this is for each person to have a number of points or votes (say 10) which they can allocate in any way they like to the various questions, depending on how they see their relative importance. After everyone has voted, the 'scores' are totalled up. The result will give a broad indication of priorities.

Experience has shown that, rather than following a strict 1,2,3 priority, this voting suggests 'priority bands' where the groups of criteria with similar scores can be given A, B, C priorities.

5. Risk Assessments:

Risk assessments are something that are part of our everyday lives. We do them all the time, often without even realising that is what we are doing!

Something as simple as crossing a road involves us making a risk assessment. The following example is not designed to teach you how to cross the road safely, it is to demonstrate in a simple way, how we assess risk all the time.

- ❖ We look for the safest, easiest place to cross.
We assess the situation by asking ourselves: –
'Is there a crossing nearby?'
'Are there any obstacles in our way?' E.g. parked vehicles, road works
'Where are the dropped kerbs and tactile paving?'
'Can we see and/or hear oncoming traffic?'

- ❖ We then decide when it is the safest time to cross, for the purpose of this example, we will assume there is a pelican crossing available: -
Have the lights changed to instruct the traffic to stop?
Has the traffic slowed down or stopped?
Has the green man lit up and/or the beepers going to tell us it should be safe to cross?
Do we have items to carry that will make us slower?
Do we have time to cross or should we wait for the next change in the Lights?

- ❖ We continue to assess whether or not we are safe as we make our journey across the road: –
Are there other people using the crossing?
Are the drivers of on-coming traffic slowing down and stopping?
If we are with other people, are they managing to cross safely too?
Can we get up the kerb at the far side of the crossing?

If we have assessed the risk properly, we will have reached the other side of the road safely. We will have recognised any dangers or risks and minimised them. This principle can be applied to any situation in which we make a risk assessment.

You may find the sample Risk Assessment Form on the next page useful when making your own risk assessments.

Once you have worked out your own 'Criteria for Good Practice', you will be more able to assess practical ideas.

Risk Assessment – Sample Form

Phab Club/Project:	Venue/Location:
Date(s) of Activity/Event:	Activity/Event:
Date of Assessment:	Assessed by:

Hazards Potential for Harm	Risks Who might be harmed	Precautions To reduce the level of risk	Level of Risk		Note (Multiply A by B) - if more than or equal to 4 then comment here
			Consequence Category (A) Major - 3 Serious - 2 Slight - 1	Likelihood (B) 4= V High 3=High 2=Medium 1= Low 0=V Unlikely	

Designing a Programme

A Balanced Programme

Within your overall programme, aim for a range of activities, so that people don't feel excluded because only one particular type of activity is on offer. As well as trying different types of activities, it is also worth making sure that your programme includes a mix of both short-term ideas and long-term projects which require more involvement and commitment from members. A varied programme of activities can help keep people interested and involved.

The framework included here presents a way of describing what could be the elements that make up a rounded or balanced programme of activities.

You might want to consider including the following ideas and themes:

Games

Games are a good way of getting started in building relationships amongst members as they can be fun and don't always need to be competitive. The choice of game must however be handled carefully to ensure that an overly competitive element doesn't enter into the activity as this may exclude some people and make it harder to build relationships. Introducing a new game to a group can be difficult, but start small and ask for volunteers when trying something new – the reaction may be surprising!

Member Involvement

Because the idea of participation is central to the Phab philosophy, most programme ideas should have an element of member involvement. However, some activities will have the achievement of this as their main purpose.

There are many ways of involving members in taking decisions about the club. The value of making sure members do have a say in things is that it can:

- ❖ Develop enthusiasm
- ❖ Allow skills to be shared and developed
- ❖ Add another dimension to what the club means to its members
- ❖ Give members the opportunity to express their views and be heard
- ❖ Help in retaining members as they feel a greater sense of ownership of the club/project and of their value to the club

Going Places

Some of the most enjoyable and exciting moments for members and for workers happen away from the club base. Getting out and about should be a regular feature of the club programme where this is possible.

Even short or local trips can be used to get people talking and thinking about themselves as well as the needs of others may also play an important role in building members' own 'survival' skills. Longer trips and overnight stays will have a bigger impact on members' personal development.

Breaking Down Barriers

Many types of barriers exist between people – prejudice and misinformation affect our judgements of people, places and things. Phab's aim of inclusion underlies planned activities enabling members to enjoy themselves whilst at the same time recognising, challenging and overcoming these barriers.

Food & Drink

In every culture in the world preparing and eating food together is a fundamental way of bringing people together and can add an extra dimension to an activity as well as being an activity itself. The coming together of adults in the informal setting of a public house can also provide a very relaxed setting in which members can get to know each other.

Whether it means organising a refreshment area, doing some cookery on-site or going out to eat, people have found food to be an excellent focus for getting to know each other and for starting off conversations.

Arts

The arts in general provide an excellent medium for people to work together or individually. While the 'end product' – for example, an exhibition, show or display – can be valuable, it is the experience of creating something together that people are most likely to value.

The various art forms can offer a way of looking at and discussing issues and topics that are relevant to members in a way that is important to them and over which they have control.

Health & the Environment

Personal health and the health of the world in which we live are increasingly being seen as linked. Health Education is more than the purely negative messages of 'don't drink, don't smoke' etc. The approach is more about finding out things for yourself and making the learning fun. The decision about what to do is up to the members.

Concern for the environment is, generally, taken via two complementary approaches; looking at global issues and the action that can be taken locally to affect them; and looking at how our own environment can be made more attractive and stimulating through care and conservation.

The Club Setting

A club and what happens there will be affected by its appearance, atmosphere and environment. Working on the appearance of the meeting place can help change what goes on and people's sense of belonging.

As well as considering physical changes to the building, also look at how your club is run and how your team is organised. How a team works together can have a fundamental effect on how people feel about the place.

Planning and Reviewing

Reviewing your overall Programme

A review can be done by individuals or by members working together as a group. You can then look at each area of work or activity and ask:

- ❖ What is happening at our club?
- ❖ Which area(s) of work do we need to concentrate on?
- ❖ What specific ideas could be introduced to build up relevant area(s)?
- ❖ Are there any areas of work on which we will have to cut down?

Reviewing a Particular Activity/Project

Whilst reviewing and planning your programme, you might want to:

- ❖ Review newly implemented programme ideas, to see if they are achieving their aims.
- ❖ Evaluate projects to assess what their benefits are.
- ❖ Assess the relevance of the traditional activities of the membership.
- ❖ Remember that the benefit of reviewing any activity/project is to keep it up to date.
- ❖ An evaluation of current activities/projects can aid the planning of future programmes.

You may find the following Activity Review Checklist useful.

Activity Review Checklist

Complete the following checklist after all new activities. The result(s) of your review(s) can then be used when planning new activities.

- ❖ **Name of the activity**
- ❖ **Date(s) of activity(ies)**
- ❖ **What were the aims?**

- ❖ **Who was the activity aimed at?** (Age range, special skills, gender, those with specific interests)

- ❖ **What resources were needed?** (Including human resources)

- ❖ **Were any elements of the project intended to ensure inclusion and/or participation?** (Any modifications necessary or adaptations of rules needed)

- ❖ **What happened – any incidents?** (A chance remark or incident can tell you a lot about the value of the activity)

- ❖ **What indications are there that the aims were achieved?** (You can ask participants as well as leaders what the best/worst parts of the activity were)

- ❖ **Any practical tips for using the activity again in the future?** (This will help you and future staff when planning activities)

Residential Courses & Holidays

Trips, residentials and visits are an important part of most Phab programmes - they are also activities which need careful planning. Health and safety factors are of course paramount, as are adequate child and vulnerable adult protection procedures.

The success of any holiday, trip or course is therefore likely to be reflected by the quality of the preparation. These notes are intended to offer some guidance on the planning of courses and holidays in this country and abroad.

N.B. The following guidelines are based on the planning and running of a week-long course, you should adapt them to your own choice of course/holiday.

Start Early!

You can never start too early in the planning of a project. Accommodation or travel for some venues has to be booked 18 months in advance and if you are thinking of going abroad, you may need to plan 2 or 3 years ahead in order to raise the necessary finances.

What are the aims of the project?

Before decisions can be made on where to go, it is important to decide the aim of the project, whether it is a holiday or course. A course will probably involve activity sessions for all participants, whereas a holiday will offer more optional activities. Perhaps the main reason is simply to have a good time. You might wish to visit people in another country. Most clubs agree that members have the chance to know each other much better and, as a result, **inclusion is much improved.**

Whatever the activity/project, planning is essential to ensure the needs of the group can be met during their stay. It is **vital** to involve participants and staff in the planning and decision making right from the start. You should meet as a working group to make decisions and gather information.

First Steps - Time and Venue

First, you should consider generally what is possible and what members want. You need to decide if the holiday will be in the UK or abroad and whether it will be for a weekend, week or fortnight. This will give you some idea of how to proceed and how you are going to budget for it.

If you use a Travel Agent, make sure they are **bonded** by a reputable agency such as ABTA.

Having decided the aim of your visit, you will have to consider whether it is best achieved by camping under canvas, staying in a youth hostel, in residential accommodation, or - if money stretches - in a hotel. Whichever you choose it will be important to look at **access** and **cost**, and then work out the details together to achieve your aim.

When deciding your destination and venue, you will also need to look at the programme for the duration of the holiday. The choice of venue must fully meet the needs of all the participants and take into account ability, age and interests.

On any residential, the aim will be to create an experience which encourages **full participation**.

Who will organise everything?

Such a large project will require an **Organiser** or **Director** who is there to provide a general oversight of proceedings. Their role is to ensure the smooth running of the programme, make changes where required and deal with the inevitable crisis. The Director will probably call regular staff/volunteer meetings to examine how the project is doing and should make themselves available to the participants.

Other team members will take responsibility for arrangements such as the programme, transport, activities, finance, meal arrangements and medical needs where required. You might also consider briefing the centre where the project is being run about the aims of the week and encouraging them to be involved if this is appropriate. If you are using instructors you must check that they are appropriately qualified.

Have regular discussions

The initial period of a residential can be a new and difficult experience for some people, and the leader/organisational team should endeavour to be **sensitive** to any issues that arise. Your aim is to build up the **self-confidence** of each individual to enable everybody to benefit from the experience.

Part of the preparation, and the fun later on, will also benefit if everyone involved is encouraged to talk through the practicalities of the trip from an early stage. The trip will also benefit if everyone is encouraged to talk about their feelings regarding the holiday. These sessions can play an important part in the success of the trip and in the promotion of **inclusion**.

It is important that all participants have an opportunity to express their fears, uncertainties and requirements throughout (in the preparation stage, during the project and afterwards) and that the group agree on a set of ground rules which they all have responsibility over.

Topics for discussion when setting ground rules may include: Participation, Time-keeping, Alcohol, Support, Language, Co-operation etc. Bear in mind that the intimate contact of a shared holiday for one to three weeks may highlight problems that will never occur when people only meet up for a few hours, once a week.

The Practicalities

The following factors should all be looked at closely.

Budget

The **key** to any successful project is making certain that someone has got the arithmetic right. If you stretch resources too far, you will find yourselves spending the great majority of your pre-planning period concentrating on fund-raising with the result that the project itself is spoiled by financial worries.

Agree a **realistic** budget from the outset and during pre-planning check that money is coming in to offset part of the cost. Make sure you always collect a **substantial deposit** from participants (sufficient to ensure they are seriously intending to go on the project).

A good fund-raising plan is a great bonus, but it must be timely and you should plan your approaches to potential donors early. You can always refund people's money should fund-raising go better than expected, it is much more difficult to raise the cost of a holiday a week prior to departure date. Any group discount should benefit the whole group.

You should decide early on in the planning stage whether subsidies will be offered and on what grounds.

Catering

Wherever you choose to stay, you will need to make some decisions about catering arrangements. You might choose self-catering or to have meals provided, but do consider how the choice will affect your programme. Will you require additional staff? Who is going to cook? Can you provide for special diets?

Medical

Whenever you take a group away, you have to be aware of providing for people's medical needs. Don't forget that **anyone** can be taken ill suddenly and require urgent attention.

All members, or their Parents/Guardians, should be asked to complete a medical form with some basic information about themselves outlined, including the name, address and contact phone number(s) of Parents/Guardians, if they are under 18, their GP and/or hospital if they are attending one. The Welfare Notes (see Section 5 **Background Work – Keeping Records**) will include most of the relevant details. In some cases you may need to have a letter signed by the participant's doctor (for insurance reasons) although this is not always necessary.

It is important that any information is kept in the confidence of only those people who need to know.

It is essential that you keep a record of any accidents, however minor, during your period away. Any incidents should be reported to your insurance company, even if it seems unlikely a claim will be made. Where applicable ensure adequate individual medication is taken for the duration of the holiday, and where appropriate that it is safely kept by the designated person.

It is the law that medical advice should always be obtained if **any** treatment is required - drugs should not be administered to anyone nor treatment provided unless you have some authority from the parents, GP or hospital. If ever you are in doubt ask for proper advice - it is better to be safe than sorry.

N.B. REMEMBER THAT FIRST AID KIT

Transport

At some time in your planning you will need to look at alternative ways of reaching your venue. What are the most appropriate forms of transport? Think seriously about the potential problems that may arise.

The first problem that will occur with an inclusive group in relation to travel is that of time; extra time is needed at every point. You will need to start planning earlier, give travel companies more notice, allow more time for the journey and arrive early at airports and stations.

Those little details: You and the participants should also make a list of extra items that may be needed e.g.

- Puncture repair outfit and Pump
- Spare spectacles
- Dentures
- Personal Hygiene items etc.

Each person should make their own personal list to ensure that nothing "**small but vital**" gets left behind.

The programme

Your programme will vary according to the aims of the project/course. It is likely to include both formal and informal activity. The most essential factor is to be **flexible** within the structure, which is determined to a large extent by the aim of the project, allowing everybody a certain amount of freedom and choice. The weather can be notoriously unpredictable, especially in Britain, so remember to make alternative arrangements for good and bad weather. Ensure that the programme is flexible enough to deal with any other contingencies that may arise.

Creative activity can be varied and exciting and individuals may want to try out several activities during the week. If this is financially and logistically possible this should be encouraged. Social events can include films, barbecues, treasure hunts, discos, club visits and many others depending on the nature of the group. Think about the order of the events. It is not advisable to have disco the night before an early morning activity or trip.

A prior visit to locations in the UK is desirable, though not always possible. It is of course advantageous in that this means that someone will know the building/centre, at least in outline, which can be very helpful on the first day and for planning in general.

In conclusion - some basic guidelines

- ❖ Share information
- ❖ Check out who is doing what
- ❖ Remember to delegate
- ❖ Keep an eye on your finances
- ❖ Gather the information you need

Finally, when it is all over, bring the group together to talk about how it went. Afterwards why not share information about the accommodation that you stayed in, or the venues that you visited with other Phab club members by writing up the trip for Phab's website – www.phabengland.org.uk - or appropriate publications. Make notes for next year, as with any project there are always things you can learn and improve upon.

Phab Holidays Abroad and Exchanges

The past few years have seen a great increase in travel opportunities for disabled people. In addition to the previous guidelines you need to consider the following for trips abroad.

The people factor

There are two sets of relationships to consider; the relationships amongst members within your group and the relationships which will be formed with the people from your host country.

A situation has to be created in which disabled and non-disabled people can meet and explore their relationship to one another. Some may be experiencing such contact for the first time when they meet for your planned holiday, or you may be taking a group in which many of the participants already know each other.

People can actually change over a two-week holiday, especially abroad; a crisis can bring the group closer together, or cause it to disintegrate. Many of the problems that do occur have much more to do with people than disability, but extra stress is involved in an inclusive group. Therefore an **awareness** (especially among staff or volunteer organisers) of what is happening is essential.

Relations with your Hosts

Prior discussions about the programme, your reasons for the visit and the **expectations** of both sides are vital. If you want a sightseeing holiday, say so. If they are arranging a conference, be aware of times involved. If, while using home stays, you also want to meet together, make sure your hosts understand your plans so they do not make other arrangements.

The particular emphasis of Phab's aim around social inclusion is still unique and almost unknown in some countries. There, the emphasis may still be on provision. Think about what **you** want from the holiday and make it clear before you set-off to prevent misunderstandings at a later date.

Pre-briefing your host group about Phab (where appropriate) and about the situation and philosophy in the host country will help.

Medical Considerations

Although you do not want medical care to dominate the holiday, it must not be overlooked. At least one qualified nurse/first-aider should accompany the group, but as a participant with extra responsibility rather than as an informed medical attendant.

Prior to leaving the UK, ensure that everyone travelling with you has completed a **medical form**.

An adequate supply of necessary drugs is essential as they may not be available abroad, or may carry a different name. Check, if necessary, before departure. Drugs may be kept by the nurse/first-aider or by an appointed individual, this should be arranged collectively prior to the trip.

It is worthwhile reminding everyone that travel and strange places can affect everyone differently. Certainly, it will create extra tiredness, and non-disabled members are just as likely to be in need of help after strange food and water.

An important aspect of medical care is insurance cover. Contact Phab for information on appropriate **insurance packages** that groups can buy.

Travel

It may well be worth involving an understanding travel agent to steer you through any problems. Remember to tell your travel agent you will need extra time for disabled people to transfer to and from various modes of transport.

The general principle is to familiarise yourself with the special conditions that may arise due to travelling with disabled people and work within them. We all agree that disabled people should be able to travel with the same ease as everyone else, but while we work towards that end, we have to use the system as it exists if travel is to take place.

The venue

Choosing the right venue is vital when going on a trip or arranging an exchange, even more so for an inclusive group. A prior visit is desirable however it is highly improbable if you are travelling overseas. You should still endeavour to find out about the area in which you will be staying, local conditions, accessibility etc. You may do this via your local contact, through information from other Phab groups who have visited the area, travel books, the internet etc.

Various types of accommodation are available and again, as long as you keep the group informed, you need not be restricted to accessible buildings. If home stays are to be used, careful briefing of both host and visitor is vital. Your host will need to know of any dietary or other special requirements.

Cultural differences can be just as important and someone who is normally independent may well require extra help in a strange setting. Where possible, the home stays should be arranged in pairs with a disabled and non-disabled person staying together.

Knowledge of the language by at least one person in the group is a must, unless you have made arrangements for a local English-speaking guide to accompany you. Sign Language may also enable you to deal with the basics but complicated medical descriptions, requests for treatment or other crisis action, demand rather more.

To visit some countries, you will need a visa for each person, and in others a group visa may be required so early contact with the embassy of the host country is important.

The involvement of disabled people may complicate visa arrangements so ensure that you make early contact with the embassy of the host country. Explain the nature and purpose of the group and your visit so that difficulties can be resolved in good time.

The embassy or other local contact(s) will also provide you with information about medical care. Prior contact with a doctor/clinic will make later requests easier. None of these special arrangements may be needed when the holiday actually takes place, but everyone will enjoy the experience much more if they know they are available.