

April 2004

The Executive Committee

Cathy Magill - Chair
Derek Kennedy - Vice Chair
Hughie Bollan - Secretary
John Beadman - Treasurer

Richard Pitman - Development Worker
Michelle Edwards - Office Support



The Executive Committee

Joe Magill
Carolynne Beadman
Dave Abbot
Marwood Davidson
Richard Lees

Welcome to the April edition of the Networker.

The past few months seem to have flown by with Christmas now a dark and distant memory. As always, SAIN have been busy representing members within various groups and organisations.

One piece of work that SAIN has been heavily involved in, has been the Wheelchair Service. SAIN compiled a piece of research last year around peoples experience of the service. As those of you who have a wheelchair supplied by Exeter mobility will know, the service has now been tendered, with the contract going to Medequip. Having spoken to many disabled people, I am aware that there is some apprehension about the new service, as having your wheelchair in a good state of repair is essential to your independence. So hopefully there will not be too many problems during the change over, but if you do find yourself dissatisfied with the service you receive then please let us know at SAIN.

SAIN has also been heavily involved with the "Somerset Pathways to Work Network". This project brings together organisations, from business and voluntary sectors, involved with employment and learning. The objective was to produce a plan, which would enable the different organisations to work together in providing appropriate support and encouragement for those Disabled People, who were able, to engage in employment. The project is now looking for a Project Manager to take the network forward. SAIN will be employing the worker on behalf of the network and will keep you informed of progress.

New Office Support Worker

SAIN would like to introduce Michelle Edwards who has joined the team in the role of Office Support Worker. Michelle is keen to ensure that all members are kept informed of developments and given the opportunity to become involved in the growing work of SAIN, she will assist the executive committee with office administration and is working on getting the website up and running to further enhance SAIN's profile. Having Michelle on board means that the office is now open on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 9am - 5pm and on Friday from 10am - 12 noon.



Do you have something to say?

Are you one of those people who has conversations with the newsreader on the television, vigorously debating the current political issue, putting the worlds wrongs to right, getting it off of your chest?

Why not have your say for real. Become a SAIN representative, we won't throw you in at the deep end. We will find out what you're passionate about, be that education, employment, access or any other issue that affects disabled people, and then we will team you up with an experienced rep who will show you the ropes. You will only become independent when you are ready and even then we will invite you to regular group meetings to find out how you're getting on and resolve any problems.

Being a SAIN rep need only take a few hours a month and we can help arrange transport and pay for travel expenses, you will get to meet like minded people and make a real difference in how our community works.

Please contact Michelle at the office if you would like to get involved or email info@sain.org.uk



Your Voice In Our Health

Everyone has a view on how our health could be improved.

Now's your chance to put the public at the heart of health as never before. The Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health are setting up a large network of local health forums all over England. With legal powers, Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) Forums will be able to speak up for the public on Health. The commission are now seeking members for the new forums, you may be young or old, from any section of the community and most importantly you will want to check and challenge when it comes to health. Richard Pitman has been accepted on to the Taunton and NHS trust Forum.

For an application form please contact Michelle at the SAIN office or visit www.maketimeforhealth.org

Musgrove Park Hospital, Taunton, wants to become an NHS Foundation Trust

This would mean the hospital would be owned by members and not the government. Members can be anyone who lives in the area served by the hospital or a member of staff of the hospital. Members will be the eyes and ears of the hospital in the community and can stand and vote in elections to become governors of the trust. Foundation trusts will still be part of the NHS, but set free from central government control, will be able to manage their own budgets and shape services to meet local demand. If you would like to give your views on the future of Musgrove Park Hospital or would consider becoming a member of the Foundation Trust contact Michelle at the SAIN office for more details or visit www.tst.nhs.uk

Education project nears completion

SAIN was recently awarded funding from the Learning & Skills Council and Awards for All. The funding totalled £8,000 and enabled us to undertake a piece of consultation work to look at the experiences of disabled people when attending, or choosing not to attend academic, vocational or leisure courses throughout Somerset.

The piece of work involved 15 individual interviews. Ann England, Consultation coordinator, has now gathered all the information from these interviews and is in the process of analysing the work to put it into a report which we are hoping to be ready early May 2004.

We are hoping that this piece of work will help local learning establishments, when they are planning courses targeted towards disabled people, to identify what facilities, equipment and considerations need to be taken in order to attract disabled people on to courses.



Executive committee requirements

Would you like to help make decisions in how SAIN operates? Would you like to become a member of the executive committee? Do you have skills and experience that can help drive SAIN forward?

If you are interested please contact Michelle at the office or send in written details.

As an inclusive organisation it is particularly important to us that all sectors of the disabled community are represented, we would therefore particularly like to hear from people from ethnic backgrounds, youth representatives and female representatives, although ALL applicants will be given full consideration.

WHAT'S ON

7th & 8th May 2004

“Thinking Deaf, Building Bridges Conference” at the Broomhouse, Taunton. Organised by The Council of Deaf People. For tickets call Claire Crowley on 01749 670777 Minicom 01749 675034.

Direct Payments Workshops for Parents

Monday 14 June-Yeovil,

Thursday 17 June-Bridgwater

Parents, Carers, support workers or anyone working with families are welcome.

For more details contact IMPACT on 01278 444794

Conference cancelled

Unfortunately the “Make the Most of your Day” conference, planned for May 2004, has been cancelled. We were unable to gain sufficient interest from activity and education based organisations who we felt would appeal to our membership. The Executive Committee decided that funds, earmarked for the conference, would be better spend on other activities that could promote SAIN as an organisation, giving it greater standing in the community in future. Details of future events will be available soon.