

Somerset Access and
Inclusion Network
(of disabled people)

September 2005

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As we move in to autumn it would appear that the summer has flown by, when you last heard from us in June we were telling you to keep your eyes open for our Quality of Life Survey. We have been absolutely astounded by the volume of responses, with 1500 people returning their surveys. We would like to say a sincere thank you to all those who took part and we will be bringing you our findings in the near future. As a result of the Quality of

Life Survey we have also more than doubled our number of members, with the "Networker" now being distributed to over 1000 individual disabled people or organisations that represent disabled people in Somerset. We would like to welcome on board all of our new members and hope they you find belonging to the network an interesting and valuable past time, we welcome your input.

Our Annual General meeting will

soon be upon us, planned for Wednesday 30th November 2005 in Bridgwater. Please keep your eyes out for details, it would be good to see as many of you as possible there.

If you have any comments to make on this edition of the "Networker", please call Michelle at the SAIN office.

Regards

Richard Pitman

Project Manager

Somerset County Council award Somerset Care Ltd a Five year Strategic Service Partnership to Deliver Short Break services at Halcon House.

You may remember back in February, a group of users coming together to evaluate those who had tendered to deliver the Short Break Services at Halcon House in Taunton.

Following a rigorous tendering process, of which the user Evaluation Panel formed a part, Somerset County Council (SCC) have decided to award a 5 year

Strategic Service Partnership to Somerset Care Ltd to deliver the service as from April 2006. We are pleased to say that this was reflective of the opinion of the User Evaluation Panel and it is hoped that through this partnership they will be able to recognise and realise the potential for development and opportunities for service users, staff and the Halcon Short Break Service.

SCC staff currently employed within the service will continue to be employed by SCC but seconded over to Somerset Care Ltd, this means that user will con-

tinue to see familiar faces during their visits and the service will benefit by drawing upon the residential expertise of the team to review the current service model and consider development ideas to enhance the service.

We would again like to thank those who participated in the User Evaluation Panel as we believe that there input has been very valuable in the decision making process.

For more information please contact Lewis Janes on 01823 329916



Introducing Pavla Poksteflova

We are pleased to welcome on board Pavla who has joined SAIN as an Office Support Worker, manning the office on Friday and taking specific

responsibility for the production of the Somerset Pathways to Work Network Newsletter. (See page 2)



New and improved website www.sain.org.uk

Please remember to let us know if you change address, telephone number or email so that we can stay in touch.



Positive Action on Cancer

The South West is fortunate to have Positive Action on

Cancer, a cancer counselling and cancer bereavement charity. It is based in Frome, it serves people in the surrounding area, Bristol, Bath and North East Somerset and Wiltshire. This year the charity is celebrating its tenth anniversary with an art auction at Rook Lane Chapel, Frome, on the evening of Friday

28 October.

P.A.C. offers free counselling to anyone directly or indirectly affected by cancer or a bereavement by cancer. Telephone counselling is available and home visits within a 15 mile radius of Frome can be arranged if cancer treatment makes travelling difficult.

All of the counselling staff are highly qualified, have a three year diploma qualification, at least a year's experience in the field and adhere to the BACP

code of ethics.

Positive Action on Cancer is pleased to be able to offer this free service to cancer patients, their carers and families in Frome and the South West.

If you or someone you know is affected by cancer P.A.C. is there to help and can be contacted on 10373 455255, email info@positiveactiononcancer.co.uk. For more information about P.A.C and its activities visit its website: www.positiveactiononcancer.co.

Inclusive fitness initiative

This new initiative has recently been launched at the Castle Sports Centre, Taunton, with the gym now equipped with accredited inclusive fitness equipment that will enable the majority of disabled people to achieve a full, independent work out. Fitness staff have received training that includes disability awareness, and marketing has been developed to ensure that disabled

people are aware of the project The Taunton launch was very well received and future launches are planned as follows:

- * Bridgwater Splash, 8th
- * Shepton Mallett Sport centre, 15th Oct
- * Yeovil College, 29th Oct.

Why not turn up and have a look around and take the opportunity to try out the equipment.

For more information please

contact Jenny Slade on 0796 939 7093 or e-mail jen_slade@hotmail.co.uk

If you know of any groups who may like someone to come along and talk to them about the Inclusive Fitness Initiative, please contact Jenny Slade who will be happy to come out and talk to your group.



Somerset Pathways to Work Network

SAIN have secured funding to maintain the network of the Somerset Pathways to Work. The purpose of this network is to bring together disabled people who are actively seeking employment and agencies that can either support them or provide training to achieve this.

Network meetings are planned where, Paul Collins, from the St Loye's Foundation will be speaking. St Loye's are a national provider of specialist residential vocational training. The Foundation

seeks to work in partnership with a wide range of professionals and organisations to enhance the life experience of individuals by an holistic and multi-skilled approach to their Vocational Rehabilitation. There will be an opportunity for professionals to update on what is happening in their area and an opportunity for disabled people, interested in securing employment, to source information on the various support networks available .

Bridgwater, 7th October
10:00 - 12:00
Bridgwater Sports and Social Club

Street, 4th October
10:30-12:30
Walton Village Hall, near Street

Yeovil, 21st October
10:00-12:00
Yeovil Baptist Church, South Street, Yeovil

Taunton, 4th November
10:00-12:00
Taunton library

For more details on these meetings or anything connected to the Somerset Pathways to Work Network please contact Richard Pitman at the SAIN office

A worthwhile challenge!

The South Somerset Disability Forum put on a Mobility Challenge at the Yeovil Quedam Shopping Centre on Saturday, 30th July. The challenge aimed to raise awareness of the day-to-day hazards faced by wheelchair users and by people with various sight impairments. The Mobility Challenge was basically an obstacle course, with

a variety of everyday obstacles, traffic bollards, narrow sharp corners, angled threshold strips, carpets etc. Members of the public were invited to take either a manual or an electric wheelchair around the course and were offered spectacles that reproduce a sight impairment. The day's event was opened by David Laws MP who was the first to try the course. He was

followed by the Mayor of Yeovil, the Chair of the District Council, the Manager of the Quedam and about 50 members of the general public. They commented particularly on how much they had learnt, sometimes using quite colourful language! Thanks go to SCOPE and to those local businesses who so generously supported the event.



Somerset Total Communication New STC Signing CD

STC believes that communication is a basic human right for everyone!

It is a process which helps all of us in Somerset (children, young people and adults) to understand and express ourselves to our maximum potential.

STC provides training and resources to support a variety of ways of communicating using objects, photos, gesture, facial expression, signing, symbols with speaking and writing. Somerset Total Communication has produced a new STC signing CD for anyone, including parents, carers and staff who are wishing to extend their STC signing skills.

This CD is based on British Signing Language.

STC supports naturally spoken language, it does not replace it.

For more information please contact

Louise Lisle,
Manager, Somerset Total Communication,
c/o Resources for Learning,
Parkway, Bridgwater, Somerset
TA6 4RL. Tel: 01278 444949

EQUATA

Dance Feast!

A Landmark for Disability and Integrated Dance

October 4 & 5 2005

The Landmark Theatre
Ilfracombe, Devon

The South West's first showcase of Disabled dance practice takes place at the Landmark Theatre in Ilfracombe. Entitled Dance Feast, You are invited to join us on Tuesday 4th Oct, to meet, watch and hear from contributing practitioners and professional from the field of Disabled dance practice.

4.45pm Coffee on arrival

5.00pm Guest speakers

· Caroline Bowditch

Disability Arts practitioner and activist based with Northern Disability Arts Forum

· Emily Horwood
Development Officer, Potential, Foundation for Community Dance

· Aislinn Lewis

· Michael Mitchell
Recipients of Potential Co-mentoring awards

6.00pm

Networking and time for a pre-show supper

7.30pm

Public performance

StopGAP Dance Company,
Velcro, Shallal, Aislinn Lewis
Alicia Grace.

To book your place email
admin@dancesouthwest.org.uk

There is no charge for this event.

Dance Feast has been developed by the South West Dance and Disability Forum jointly con-

vened by Dance South West and Equata, with generous support from the Landmark Theatre.

For more information on the sharing, platform and workshop programme please contact
jane.webster@dancesouthwest.org.uk

A detailed programme of Dance Feast can be downloaded from
www.dancesouthwest.org.uk

For more information about Equata, the South West Disability Arts Agency or this event, please contact Kim Wide on 01392 219440 or e-mail kimw@equata.co.uk.

Equata, Bradninch Place, Gandy Street, Exeter, EX4 3LS
tel. 01392 219440
fax. 01392 219441
info@equata.co.uk



Whose risk is it anyway?

Many disabled people find their opportunities and independence severely limited because of other people's fears concerning their vulnerability to harm or exploitation or because it is believed supporting disabled people's opportunities and independence poses a risk to others.

This is an issue that affects disabled people in almost every area of their lives. It affects their ability to get a job, access services, seek personal assistance and support, and have the right to take decisions or make choices. It is seen in society's fears about the risk they think is posed by mental health service users. Many disabled children are not given the opportunity to take the risks which help us to

develop the skills and competencies to grow up as effective adults. Risk – or rather the perception is risk - is an ever-present issue.

Is the balance currently right between protecting disabled people from risks and giving them independence to take risks in their own lives? If not, how should it be changed?

Who is really being protected by risk management - professionals or disabled people?

Is risk sometimes little more than an excuse for discrimination?

What examples do you have of this?

The time has come to ask 'Whose risk is it anyway?'

The Disability Debate is the opportunity to play an active part in shaping a new forward looking

agenda for action, towards a society in which disabled people can genuinely expect to participate and contribute as equal citizens.

Take part in the Disability Debate's online poll:

Should all disabled people have the right to choose to take risks in their own lives?

You can vote by visiting the Disability Debate website at www.drc.org.uk/disabilitydebate You can also vote by sending a text message from your mobile phone.

Yes = A, No = B, Don't know = C To vote, simply text the word 'ANSWER', followed by a space, and then 'A', 'B' or 'C' to: 07797 882 888 (your normal tariff for text messages will apply).

Patient and Public Involvement in Health Forums (PPI)

What can a PPI forum do?

- Encourage local people to get involved in health matters
- Find out what people really think about health care locally and take action
- Independently watch over the quality of local health care
- Monitor, visit and report on NHS services from a patients viewpoint
- Shape decisions which impact upon our health
- Work with local groups and developing partnerships to influence local and national health decisions.
- Make reports and recommendations about trust services,

based on the views of patients and the community.

- Be a force for fairness and change
- Monitor the effectiveness of local patient advice and liaison services (PALS) and complaint support services such as ICAS

If you would like to know more then following is a list of public meetings where any member of the public can go along and raise any health related issue or concern with a member of the forum. Meeting are subject to change, if you have special needs for accessing a meeting please contact James or Luisa at the Health Advocacy Partnership on 0845 6015849

Somerset Coast PPI Forum Thursday 27th October 2005

Bridgwater and Albion RFC, Bridgwater. Starting at 1.30pm

Royal United Hospital, Bath PPI Wednesday 26th October 2005

Adult Learning and Leisure Centre, Wells. Starting at : 1.30pm

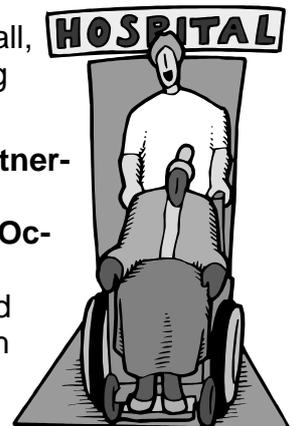
Mendip PPI Forum Wednesday 5th October 2005

Adult Learning and Leisure Hall, Wells. Starting at : 10.00am

Somerset Partnership PPI

Monday 10th October 2005

Taunton United Reform Church Starting at : 2pm



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• Other Formats available

- This publication is available in other formats including Large Print, Tape and
- Braille. Please let us know if you would like to receive it in another format.

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