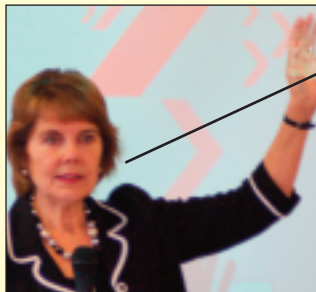


# yourvoice

April 2012

£2.50 when sold



*Hands up all those who want to turn to pages 10 and 11 to read all about the SDN General Meeting?!*

Shropshire girl Katie Edwards tells the story of how she has become a GB and England International football star in the making, now preparing for the World Cup this June and the Deaflympics in the summer of 2013 in Hungary. See page 5



# Council is urged to grasp chance for change

Charities and other groups that work with the disabled are urging Shropshire Council to grasp its current review of Adult Social Change as an opportunity to implement changes that will move away from traditional models of service to more client-based and cost-effective methods. If the council's proposals focus on services rather than on clients they will miss the point, say members of the Shropshire VCS Pan-Disability Forum. If personalisation is to be meaningful it must focus on outcomes rather than means.

One issue of concern is the possibility of charging the disabled and elderly for use of day centres. Whatever the rights and wrongs of charging may be, the Pan-Disability Forum and other groups believe the move will distract attention from more fundamental concerns about "personalisation".

Forum members are encouraging the council take this rare opportunity to be more innovative and widen the discussion. Among other things, they would like to see it include clients and their support services.

They point out that experience in

Policy should focus on people not systems, say charities

pilot schemes in other parts of the country demonstrate that the long-term savings from people living happier, healthier, more fulfilled lives has already proved to be significant, as are the savings made in medical and care demands which are reduced substantially.

They urge a move away from reliance on services, with service users being encouraged to expect

truly outcome-focused holistic care packages that enable them to live a quality life, optimising their personal "wealth" in terms of friends, family, community and activities.

One Pan-Disability Forum member said that to do this there would need to be careful consideration of how to explain to users what the options are and to enable them to understand

continued on page 4



# 'Hearing Dogs': a child's best friend

By **SARAH STARKEY**

**Dogs are often referred to as man's best friend, but they may also be that to a child, specifically if they are one of the 45,000 deaf children in the UK.**

"Hearing dogs" as they are known, can offer companionship, independence and confidence which could transform the lives of many children who may suffer from sleep anxieties, feel isolated and have difficulty socially interacting.

A study carried out by Hearing Dogs for Deaf People has looked at the impact of hearing dogs on the lives of 12 deaf children and their hearing

families in the UK since 2008. The study found that hearing dogs had a positive effect in many ways, such as helping parents get their child's attention, making sleeping easier and providing the child with confidence, especially socially.

Michele Jennings, chief executive of the charity, said "Parents are concerned about dangers around the home but we train dogs to respond to smoke alarms, to alert a child to alarming noises, even things like ambulance sirens when they are out and about.

"The dog is a great conduit between parent and child – it gives the child independence."

Volunteers offer to socialise the dogs when they are puppies and when they are around 10 months old they start their sound skills training.

Hearing dogs are trained to alert children by nudging the child with their nose, or, in the case of an alarm clock, waking the child up by putting two paws on the bed and pulling the duvet off.

The majority of the dogs trained by the charity are Cocker Spaniels, Miniature Poodles, Labradors and Golden Retrievers.

There are currently 750 working hearing dogs in the UK for adults and following the success of the trial the charity want to train many more dogs to work with deaf children.

#### **CAPTION**

Hearing Dogs, above and at left in the care of Hearing Dogs for Deaf People, can be easily recognised by their burgundy jackets



Both the children's families and their teachers noticed improvements, such as happier family times and better behaviour at school. And most importantly the dog becomes the child's "best friend".

## Date set for county 'See and Hear' exhibition

An exhibition of equipment and services for people with sight or hearing loss will be held at Shrewsbury Sports Village, Sundorne, on Wednesday 16 May. 'See and Hear Shropshire' will run from 10am until 4pm.

It has been organised by The See and Hear Shropshire Partnership which includes Shropshire Voluntary Association for the Blind and the Community Council of Shropshire, Vision Technology and Training, and Action for Blind People and Guide Dogs.

Many products and services will be showcased, including information technology, leisure, high and low spec technological

equipment, desktop and portable video magnifiers, computer access software, scanners, and loop systems

Altogether, there will be 26 exhibitors, plus demonstrations and workshops. These include a guide dogs' obstacle course and special interactive presentations throughout the day about the Bionic Ear.

Deafblind Interpreters will be available, as will café and lunch facilities. There will be a free Shuttle Bus every half hour from Shrewsbury train station to the Sports Village, starting at 9.30am. Call Caroline on 01584 871420 (Voice-mail) or email [vtts@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:vtts@shropshire.gov.uk) to book a place.



# The door closes on Abbey Works

Abbey Works in Shrewsbury is to close at the end of March, more or less as this edition of *YourVoice* appears. For more than 20 years it has provided employment and the dignity of work to people with mental health issues, and its closure has been labelled as “despicable” by some disability campaigners.

Some 35 volunteers who are (were?) employed at Abbey Works have spent more than a month wondering about their future.

Attempts by *YourVoice* to talk to management have proved futile. Abbey Works is/was owned and operated by the NHS Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire County Primary Care Trust, which simply withdrew its funding. The works are managed by South Staffordshire and Shropshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

“Downhearted” and “disappointed” were expressions used by workers reported in the local press. Shrewsbury disability rights campaigner Nicky Clark was a bit more outright, calling the closure despicable. NHS Telford &



Wrekin and Shropshire County PCT said that people would “continue to be supported through our alternative services.” No explanation was published as to why funding was withdrawn.

*YourVoice* has spoken to a commercial customer of Abbey Works who finds it difficult to understand why it is closing.

Maureen Bradley took the newsletter of Belle Vue Methodist Church there for printing over a period of four years. She said: “They were always efficient and businesslike. They were also good value, and for all those reasons we stayed with Abbey Works for a long time.

“They were always busy. It’s very sad that all those people will be out of work. It’s tragic for them, what are they going to do?”

“We are by no means the only local organisation that Abbey Works printed for. But now everyone will have to go elsewhere.”

## YourVoice comment

The closure of Abbey Works comes with as much disappointment as it does shock. But money talks louder than almost anything else, so Abbey Works must go.

Never mind the fact that it added quality to the lives of many people – lifting them above the level of mere existence – and that it was an example of “can do” when so much that

impacts on the disabled is written off as “cannot do”.

The jumble of bureaucracy responsible for the ownership and management of Abbey Works makes it easy to see just how vulnerable it was. Let’s hope those vague words that people would “continue to be supported” actually turn out to have some substance behind them

This is a local issue here in Shropshire. We’re not even a gnat in the great scheme of things. But how many local issues are there around the country, where people with disabilities are being shunted out of work? What we are seeing in the fate of Abbey Works is the brutal face of cuts and more cuts in the quality of life of people who need society’s support, not a kick.

## Fuel fairness demanded for Air Ambulance

An email petition has been launched to demand that the Air Ambulance be made exempt from duty on the fuel used by the helicopters. It says in part: “HM Government is urged to exempt Air Ambulance services from duty on the fuel they use, in the same way as the Lifeboats (RNLI) are exempted.” If a total of 100,000 signatures are raised, Parliament is duty bound to debate the issue. Currently there are over 15,000 signatures on what is still a new petition. Organisers are urging everyone who signs to pass on details to their friends and colleagues. To sign, go to <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/29349> [1]





# Matt looks to London Marathon as fund-raiser

**The son of SDN Membership Secretary Trevor Dickenson is to run the London Marathon in aid of Kidney Research UK. Matt Dickenson (pictured) is asking all of us to help him raise vital fund for kidney research.**

Trevor has kidney failure and has to attend dialysis for six hours a day, three days a week. It is his father's illness that has inspired Matt to take up the London challenge.

On his sponsorship page he says: "I have chosen to run for this charity because of my father's on-going problem with kidney failure. My father was rushed into hospital on 1 May 2005, diagnosed with kidney failure and placed on emergency dialysis straight away. He has attended hospital for six hours a day, three times a week for almost the last seven years.



"My dad has yet to receive a kidney transplant and due to the seriousness of the illness, he is deemed to be too unwell to be on the kidney transplant list at the current time, meaning it could be a number of years until (if ever) he receives a transplant."

Kidney Research UK was founded in 1961 and is the leading UK charity dedicated to funding research aimed at finding better treatments and ultimately a cure for kidney disease.

"Finding new treatments and cures for kidney disease will give people like my dad a greater chance for a normal life and hopefully cut time spent on dialysis and waiting for a kidney transplant. I ask that you give generously and very much appreciate your support. Once again thank you."

If anyone who supports Matt is a UK taxpayer, they can Gift Aid their contribution so that Kidney Research UK can claim 25% extra on top of the donation. This makes a big difference to Kidney Research UK's work and doesn't cost the contributor anything extra.

## 'Grasp chance for change'

**continued from page 1**

the wider range of choices that they might make. "Clients should be helped to understand what their rights are, and be able to articulate their views and challenge if they feel they are being under-served with information, or misinformed."

Experience elsewhere in England showed that to do this effectively would include a re-training programme to ensure the social workers doing assessments, and social care staff supporting them, are all working to the same objective - a better life for the individual.

Working in this way would still create opportunities for financial savings and would also lessen the impact of the cuts. Longer-term savings would include fewer demands on the care system and wider engagement with other stakeholders who would support people in their own communities.

### **Individual needs will be met - council**

The report to Shropshire Council's Cabinet says that "the implementation of personalisation will ensure that individual needs are met in a tailored and individual way." It will mean charges for users of council day centres. To make this possible, all users will have to accept Personal Budgets, which are central to personalisation policies.

The council's argument for charging is that Personal Budgets have proved successful and are increasingly popular with service users, that Shropshire is in a minority in not charging day centre users, that charging will be more fair and equitable for all users, that there are currently inconsistencies in charging and contributions, and that the present economic climate makes it necessary.

The report says the extension of the "fairer charging" policy will bring in higher income which will be ploughed back into services. Savings linked to in-house day services are likely to be: next year (2012/13) £250,000; in 2013/14, £750,000; and in 2014/15 £950,000.

SDN believes that if personalisation is implemented in the most holistic way there will be big savings in health and welfare terms, not just cost.

**Don't miss your chance to speak your mind during the consultation. For details of consultation events call the council (0345 678 9000 - local rate) or go to the 'Live Life Your Way' page on its website. The link is <http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/adultcarer.nsf/open/A3AA0661B16CB9748025794B006E8DBE>.**

**Whatever you do, HAVE YOUR SAY!**



# What Katie did next: county girl has two top events in her footballing sights

Shropshire FA are delighted to have a GB and England International star in the making. Currently in preparation for the World Cup this June and the Deaflympics in the summer of 2013 in Hungary, **KATIE EDWARDS** tells the story of how she began her football career.

"I started playing football when I was 11 years old for the local Girls Football Club, Wem Warriors, and later playing for Shawbury United. I played for these clubs until I was 16 when I finished playing girls' football and had to begin my journey into the adult game.

I came across a Ladies team at the time called TGLFC. During the first season we had an away fixture against Reedswoods and the Manager of West Bromwich Albion Deaf Ladies Futsal team, Craig Reiley, happened to be there watching the game.

Craig contacted TGLFC to see if I would like to go for trials for WBA which I was thrilled about. I went along and really enjoyed it and was lucky enough to get into the squad. It was the first time I played football in an environment with other players of similar ability which catered for my hearing impairment.

Craig then put me forward to go for



England trials in Swindon which once again I was delighted with, but during the trial I got struck with an injury and I thought I would never make it. I could not believe it when later on that month Julie Callaghan, the England Deaf Ladies manager, contacted me and asked me to attend Lilleshall for the training week-end. This was my chance!

I progressed through a series of training camps and was incredibly excited when I managed to get selected to represent England in the European Championships in Switzerland back in November 2010. We did really well and I scored a goal on my first international debut.

The following year In November 2011, I went to Sweden with England to take part in the World Championships. We sadly got knocked out in the quarter final against Denmark 3-2! It was a very tight game. We then went on to play for the 5th/6th

place against Norway where I scored a wonder goal straight from a corner and we won 7-4!

With the Great Britain setup there is unfortunately no external funding, therefore players are expected to raise the money themselves and look into potential grants. A special thanks to Shropshire FA for the financial support given to me to help me to continue to develop and progress in my football career, and allowing me to represent my country.

I am currently excited about the future and the preparations that are underway for the World Cup in June 2012 and the Deaflympics for the GB squad which takes place in the Summer of 2013 in Hungary. I am also signed for Allscott Ladies who last season won the Shropshire Women's Challenge Cup Final.

[<http://www.shropshirefa.com/Development/DisabilityFootball/GBandEnglandInternational-StarKatieEdwardsProfile/>]

## Cancer delays 'are most common in the young'

Cancer patients who are young, female or from an ethnic minority face a longer wait to be diagnosed and referred to a specialist, researchers say. Some 77% of people were referred after one or two visits to their GP, according to data from 41,299 cancer patients in England. The analysis, in The Lancet Oncology, showed 16-24 year olds were more than twice as likely to have at least three hospital visits than over-65s, which the researchers speculate may be down to doctors not expecting to find cancer in them.[From Salix Newsflash]



Shrewsbury Round Table No 272 has very generously donated £200 to the work of SDN and committee member Ruby Hartshorn was on hand at the Prince Rupert Hotel to collect it from Chairman Gareth Morgan and ... Father Christmas!

Santa was putting in a late appearance because the money was raised as part of the Tablers' Christmas Sleigh run around the county town in the week before Christmas.

Said Ruby: "I met some lovely people on the evening and we discovered that Round Table work with Victim Support overlaps with some of SDN's work, such as hate crime targeted against people with disabilities."

## Two coach outings planned

Shrewsbury-based charity Omega, which does a lot of work with carers, is organising two coach trips, each of which costs £10. On 14 May there will be an outing to Boundary Mills, leaving the Radbrook Centre, Shrewsbury, at 9.45am. On 25 June a trip to Chester will leave from the same location at the same time. For details call Maureen on 01743 246 013.

# Invitation



Shropshire VCS Assembly

## Shropshire Voluntary and Community Sector Annual Assembly

Thursday 19 April 2012  
9.30 am arrival - 1.00 pm  
at Shrewsbury Town Football Club

Chaired by:  
**Sonia Roberts**  
Chair of the VCS Assembly  
(Charity Manager Landau Ltd)

### The day will include:

Update from Kim Ryley, Chief Executive of Shropshire Council

National VCS guest speaker, Daniel Fluskey of NCVO

**VCS Assembly Project Updates**  
Forum of Interest updates and displays

Launch of Shropshire Self Help Directory

The VCS Assembly Annual report  
A focus on the future of the VCS Assembly

This is a free event and light refreshment will be provided  
Book early to avoid disappointment

I would like to attend the VCS Assembly Conference on Thursday 19 April 2012

Name: ..... Organisation: .....

Telephone: ..... Email: .....

Address: .....

..... Postcode: .....

# 30,000 in Shropshire caring for relatives

**About 30,000 people in Shropshire are caring for a family member, with a further 3,000 being looked after by Shropshire Council.**

The latest report on adult social care in the county, which gives these figures, says that pressure on social care services is expected to grow as Shropshire's population gets older and bigger.

It is expected to rise from the current 291,000 to more than 300,000 by 2020. There were 60,900 people aged over 65 in 2010, and this will expand to nearly 83,000 by 2020.

In a summary of the past 12 months, service managers say there have been a "number of areas in which we feel significant progress has been made," including increased use of "assistive technology" such as medication dispensers and house alarms, to allow people to live at home for longer.

Services for those leaving hospital are also being improved to reduce the problem of bed blocking and to make sure people are given help to recover.

There has also been increased

support for Personal Budgets, which are meant to give people more choice and control over the services they receive.

The percentage of people using Personal Budgets rose from 16% in 2009/10 to 25% in 2010/11. (But see the main story on page 1 of this issue)

Shropshire is also said to be performing better than similar councils when it comes to ensuring that adults with a learning disability are supported to gain paid employment. [From Shropshire Star]





# Disability tops discrimination cases reported to county's Citizens Advice

New figures from Citizens Advice Shropshire show that cases of discrimination reported to them in the first three quarters of their year are higher than in the previous year, with disability being the single biggest cause of complaints.

The total number of cases was 53. Of these, 15 were disability related and three concerned mental health issues. With only a couple of exceptions, the cases brought to Citizens Advice Shropshire concerned employment. There are a total of 10 categories. After Disability, Race and Gender are the next two most prominent, with five and six reports respectively.

For the same period in the preceding year the total number of issues reported was 42, of which disability accounted for 13 and mental health three. Yet again, disability was far and away the greatest cause of discrimination complaints.

The conclusion reached by Citizens Advice Shropshire was: "The number of discrimination issues is up as compared to the same period last year. Again most issues are within employment and overall the biggest category is discrimination because of disability, excluding mental health."

## Safety courses for community groups

Shropshire Infrastructure Partnership has some places left on courses relating to health and safety for community groups. For details contact Lorraine Smart on 01743 237880

## Talk time about mental health

"Its Time to Talk" is a website about the hidden problem of mental health and our reluctance to talk about it. One in four of us will experience mental health problems at some time. Find out how you can do more to make it as acceptable to talk about as it is to discuss a broken leg, visit <http://www.time-to-change.org.uk/timetotalk/>

www.threemeninabowtie.co.uk

**CLASSIC Silly Songs and Manic COMEDY!**

**THREE MEN in a BOWTIE**

A talented musician and story teller, a Radio 4 producer and a madcap farmer

Sally Tonge Chris Eldon Lee Martin Jones

ONK! ONK!

MOO!

Saturday 14 April, 7.30pm

Community Centre, Calverton Way, Radbrook, SY3 6DZ

Tickets £8.50 include a ploughman's supper. Bring your own drinks.

Available via email from [enquiry@shropshire-disability.net](mailto:enquiry@shropshire-disability.net) or by phone from 01743 340832, plus various outlets.

"The funniest thing to come out of Shropshire in a long while" EDINBURGH FESTIVAL REVIEW

## 'All In' finds new way of reaching families

'All In' is a Shropshire Council programme and newsletter run for the benefit of children and young people with disabilities or additional needs. The council has decided that the way information is transmitted needs to change and says that more emphasis will in future be placed on using the internet to communicate with families.

It says that 'All In' will still be produced in time for each school half term so that families are kept up to date with what is available, and that the activity programme can also be viewed on [www.shropshire.gov.uk](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk) (search for 'Short Breaks'). Families will be emailed when copies are available to view. Families without access to the internet will still be able to get an 'All In' activity programme through the post.

But the council says families must say what they want or "this will be the last copy of 'All In' you will receive." Given the vagaries of both snailmail and the Internet, this seems a bit harshly final. So if you are a family which has suddenly stopped hearing from 'All In', you might want to inquire further. Try the phone - 01743 282370.



# Attitudes 'make it harder' for disabled to find work

**Society's attitudes and assumptions can disable people more than health conditions or disability, preventing them from reaching their work-related goals, according to a leading national charity which helps people with disabilities prepare for work.**

Employment statistics show the imbalance between disabled and able-bodied people in employment, says the Shaw Trust, which supports disabled and disadvantaged people in preparing for work and helps them find jobs and live more independently.

"We believe everyone should have the right to work. That's why we're committed to supporting disabled and disadvantaged people into employment and to live more inde-

pendent lives," the trust says. It points out these sobering statistics from the Office for National Statistics Labour Force Survey:

- There are 1.3 million disabled people in the UK who are available for and want to work
- Only 50% of disabled people of working age are in work, compared to 80% of able-bodied people
- Employment rates vary greatly according to the type of impairment a person has; only 20% of people with mental health problems are in employment
- 23% of disabled people have no qualifications compared to 9% of the able-bodied
- Nearly one in five people of working age (7 million, or 18.6%) in the UK have a disability
- The average gross hourly pay for

disabled employees is £11.08 compared to £12.30 for other employees.

Every year the Shaw Trust works with over 75,000 clients who face barriers due to disability, ill health or social circumstance.

Thousands of employers and public sector organisations also benefit from its range of services for business.

The trust is the UK's largest third sector provider and one of the Government's lead partners in the delivery of employment programmes for disabled and disadvantaged people.

Visit the Shaw Trust website at [http://www.shaw-trust.org.uk/disability\\_and\\_employment\\_statistics](http://www.shaw-trust.org.uk/disability_and_employment_statistics)

## New self-help directory

The county's new Self Help Directory will start being promoted by Shropshire Patient Group members in each of their GP practices across Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin on 19 April.

Also on that day the Self Help team will be at the VCS AGM to answer questions and provide information. The directory has already been published online and can be accessed at [www.shropshire.gov.uk/community.nsf](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/community.nsf)

Some special partnerships were formed to create the directory, bringing together staff from different departments in the local authorities, the NHS services of Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin, and the Voluntary Sector.

Only a few months after first becoming available, the directory is proving to be an invaluable resource for people needing continuing support, following an operation or diagnosis

of a condition, or facing a personal crisis, says Kate Ansell, the chairwoman of Shropshire Patients' Group and Patient Representative for NHS West Midlands.

"Self Help Groups enable people to benefit through the exchange of experience with other members of a particular group, all of which can help them to regain and maintain a quality of life," she said.

A member of an Eating Disorders Self Help Group, Claire, said: "I think the main point is just meeting someone who has been through the same thing.

"People who haven't been through just don't understand. A group is somewhere where people know they can say anything."

This is a view that is being endorsed in practice by many GPs, who are finding the directory invaluable in giving special support to their patients.

## Funding lack hits memory services

Memory services crucial to cutting the billion-pound burden of dementia on the NHS are being critically underfunded.

Huge discrepancies in service investment and patient access have been revealed in data provided by 134 primary care organisations. Some 7.5% do not commission dedicated memory assessment services at all and funding for services is patchy throughout the UK. [From Salix Newsflash 09.03.12]





# New studies highlight increase in hate crime

**Two reports have brought the spotlight to bear on hate crime against the disabled.**

A survey by the Muscular Dystrophy Campaign's Trailblazers group - Under Investigation - says two out of three young disabled people questioned had been taunted or verbally abused because they are disabled. The charity's campaign is now calling on all police authorities to treat hate crimes in the same way as other crime, and to make it easier for people with disabilities to report them.

Bobby Ancil, project manager of the Muscular Dystrophy Campaign Trailblazers, said it was disturbing that in 2012 young disabled people were still facing this kind of abuse. "Many of those who tell us about incidents of unprovoked abuse and threatening behaviour have no idea that they have been victims of a hate crime in the eyes of the law," he said.

"People feel that attacks have to be sustained and physical for the police to take them seriously, and that sadly, day to day intimidation and verbal abuse must just be tolerated."

Some police authorities have put a lot of work into making disability hate crime easier to report, including special training for officers to ensure they understand that hate crime against the disabled is exactly that – crime.

The other report comes from the Equality and Human Rights Commission which carried out a disability harassment inquiry in Wales. It says some 100,000 disabled people were victims in 2009/10, and the four police forces in the country all saw rises in reported disability hate crimes in 2010/11.

"People told us they routinely experience different forms of harassment such as name calling, physical violence, bullying and cyber-bullying, sexual harassment, domestic violence and financial exploitation," the report said.

"Some disabled people say they just accept it as inevitable and live with it. Others try to rearrange their lives to avoid abusive situations."

The Welsh Government has identified tackling disability hate crime as

a top equality priority and new equality duties should enable public authorities to prioritise and deliver on the issue.

The inquiry wants leaders to show a determination to eliminate harassment and to create partnerships that prevent and respond to harassment. It also wants to see an increase in reporting of hate crimes.

Simon Green, a member of the Bridgend Coalition of Disabled People and a wheelchair user, said: "Whether it is mimicking and name calling or brutal violence the effect it has on someone already struggling to live with a disability is devastating and if the findings of this campaign help improve or just save one person's life it will be well worthwhile."

South Wales Police figures show there were 379 reported disability hate crimes in 2010/11, an increase of 214 on the previous year. Other forces also showed year-on-year increases but in much smaller numbers with Gwent Police receiving 44, up from 37; Dyfed-Powys doubling from eight to 16; and North Wales Police up from 13 to 14. [BBC News]

## **FLASHBACK TO YOURVOICE OF JULY 2011:** ***Hate crime - Disabled face growing hostility from strangers***

Disabled people have faced greater hostility from the public since the Government launched its controversial benefits reforms, according to a survey.

A majority said that they experienced hostility, discrimination and even physical attacks from strangers every week and more than a third claimed the position had worsened over the previous 12 months.

Victims blame ministers for portraying all people with disabilities as scroungers as they seek to cut the number of people on disability benefits, including the 2.9

million people in receipt of disability living allowance and the 1.9 million deemed physically unable to work currently given incapacity benefit ... Scope, which commissioned the survey, said there was powerful evidence that the "backdrop of negativity" behind the cuts was leading to a rise in hostility and even violence towards some of the most vulnerable in society...

Around two-thirds of the 676 surveyed said that they expected to experience discrimination when trying to find a job, and more than half expected to be discriminated against in the workplace.



# Meeting proves a landmark for SDN in two major ways

**The March quarterly General Meeting of SDN members and supporters was a landmark event for two reasons – first, it set a new record for attendance with almost 60 people present; second, it was the first GM to be held in Telford, at Meeting Point House in Telford Centre to be precise.**

The steady increase in attendance at the GMs reflects the quality of the speakers we attract and the increasing awareness in the disability community that they offer an opportunity to meet, learn and chat. Chairwoman Sonia Roberts commented on the number of new faces in the room and hoped this would set a trend for future meetings.

Like most GMs this one had two guest speakers, but in addition three organisations had stands at the meeting and were given a few minutes to talk about their work.

The two main speakers were Tina Jones, of Listen Not Label, and Liz Holdsworth, a solicitor with Wace Morgan.

Liz Holdsworth spoke about Lasting and Enduring Powers of Attorney, Health and Welfare Power of Attorney, Living Wills, Paying for Care – opening up a complex but very important area of the law about which most of us know nothing but which can dramatically impact on our lives.

Her dictum was “Hope for the best but prepare for the worst”, meaning that we should all take steps to ensure we are prepared if the day comes when others have to start making decisions for us. Her slides, which summarise everything she told the meeting, can be viewed on the SDN website. In addition Liz provided the meeting with copies of useful documents to consider when planning for your future.



**Above, the first main speaker, Tina Jones of Listen Not Label, and below, solicitor Liz Holdsworth, our second speaker.**



The documents she shared with the meeting were: Continuing Healthcare Funding; Third Party Top Up – Should you Pay?; Advance Medical Decisions; What is a Health and Welfare LPA; Lasting Powers of Attorney Information; What the donor needs to know before completing an LPA; Who Carers Who Pays?

Tina Jones explained that Listen not Label is a user-led organisation for disabled people operating in an alliance with statutory bodies such as the PCT, Community Health Trust, and the Local Council in Telford and Wrekin local authority area.

Listen not Label recognises that many people with disabilities have no choice other than to use the services provided around Day Care, GPs, Physio, and so on. Its role is to influence how services

should be designed, implemented and monitored. It is commissioned by Telford and Wrekin Council and the PCT to have a role in ensuring that the voice of disabled people is represented. It has a management board with representatives from all the impairment groups, visual,

continued next page



**Is SDN chairwoman Sonia Roberts helping secretary Dave Hewetson with a crossword clue, or are they discussing important matters of business?**



**Recruitment officer Ruby Hartshorn with John Simcox, branch manager of Shropshire Home Services, who was attending his first SDN general meeting**

**Below: Part of the audience**





# Landmark meeting

Continued from previous page

sensory, older people, learning and physical disability, and mental health. It is an active member of Telford and Wrekin LINKS and works with Rights and Fairness Telford as well as with Shropshire Disability Network.

The three organisations with stands at the meeting were A4U, Adelphi Care and Mini iSMART Massager.

Lindsey Williams of A4U explained the charity's advice and advocacy role. It has bases in Telford and Shrewsbury and spends much of its time supporting people in filling in forms for benefits claims, appeals and tribunals. All these need professional support if they are to be successful and A4U with its core of employed staff and network of trained volunteers attempts to provide this support although capacity is always an issue.

Adelphi Care Services provides a



Standholders at the meeting were (from top) Lindsey Williams of A4U, Joe from Adelphi Care Services, and the Mini iSMART Massager team.

range of care for younger adults with moderate to severe learning difficulties.

Joe from Adelphi talked about their work, and the new centre they are opening in Wem. He made the point that general care provision for people with learning disabilities fails to take into account the specific needs of those with needs on the autistic spectrum, but if you start to create generic services from the perspective of those with autism it encompasses the needs of those with a much wider range of disability - hence the ambition to move services design to the autistic spectrum provision.

The Mini iSMART Massager explained to the audience that the massager works by sending pulses through the targeted area of the body, bringing benefits, such as relaxing and easing discomfort in the neck. The speakers said they would be recruiting distributors for the new product later in the year.

An article  
the council  
would rather  
you did  
not read?

Liz Holdsworth referred to an article on Shropshire Council's website about Third Party Top Up Payments for Long Term Care. These may have been sought from clients/families inappropriately and it suggests that if anyone feels they have been asked to fund inappropriately they should contact the council.

However, it was suggested that the council should actually be approaching these individuals themselves to tell them. Without reading the article they would not know the issue existed.

And that's where it gets interesting. A long and diligent search by an SDN member eventually unearthed the article on the council's website. Her comment was: "People won't go looking for this unless they know there is a problem, and how on earth would they know there was a problem unless they had read the article?"

## Business meeting call for articles

In the business part of the GM, Treasurer Tom Memery said the current balance was £10,133, including the recently awarded Grass Roots grant which will purchase a projector and an amplifier for the hard of hearing.

Tom also told the meeting that he keeps a rough tally of volunteer hours - he believes that SDN volunteers have clocked up hours to the value of £27,000 so far this year!

Tom announced that he is standing down as treasurer and said SDN would welcome more people coming forward with an interest in taking this up.

Val Lewis, the website manager, asked people to consider writing articles, and also suggested that they may like to consider the merits of featuring an aspect of disability each week and perhaps writing about their journey through their challenges.

## Social care concerns

Liz Holdsworth also said Wace Morgan had some concerns about some of the decisions of Shropshire Council relating to Social Care. The firm was often in the situation where it felt that it was acting as a voluntary adviser for the council or picking them up on legal points about care.

It makes you wonder how much confidence we can have in Shropshire Council in this respect. Does it no longer have the number of staff or the experienced staff with the level of knowledge necessary to avoid mistakes being made?

Should we, as members of the public be raising this with councillors and cabinet members and asking questions?





# Patient feedback site wins funding

The not-for-profit website Patient Opinion is to receive government funding to become the official site for patient feedback on social care services.

Care minister Paul Burstow announced the project at the launch of the Department of Health's Voluntary Sector Investment Programme 2012-13, which has allocated £6.8m to 50 organisations.

Patient Opinion will receive £160,000 over two years to become the first official site to accept patients' and carers' stories on social care services such as nursing

homes, residential care homes for the mentally disabled and home care providers.

The website has been operating in the health sector since 2005. The new social care site is due to go live in the summer of 2013.

Co-founder Dr Paul Hodgkin said the Government was looking for an independent platform with a proven track record. Research showed that people preferred to give feedback on services on independent sites. "We know what we are doing in health, and while social care is significantly different, it means we

are not starting from scratch in software development terms or in making it useful to busy staff as well as carers and clients," he said.

The integrated site will enable staff members to directly respond to service users' stories and notify them when changes have been made as a result.

Patient Opinion already receives 15-20% of its feedback through free post fliers and a telephone line, which will be important for elderly people who may not have access to the internet. [From Health Information News March 2012]

## 'Find Me Good Care'

The Social Care Institute for Excellence is developing a website - FindMeGoodCare.co.uk - that will help people make choices about care. It will cover all types of care and support including regulated and unregulated services and will go live this summer.

## DWP to review benefit workers

The DWP has announced a postal review of appointees who look after adults and children in receipt of any benefit it delivers, to ensure they still meet their responsibilities.

Benefits delivered by the DWP include Disability Living Allowance, Attendance Allowance, State Pension, Pension Credit, and Working Age benefits such as Income Support, Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance.

The DWP says the review "will make sure that our customers' well-being and financial affairs are being properly looked after. It will help minimise risk of financial abuse of adults and children, making sure that benefit entitlements are being used in the customer's best interest." [From Social Welfare Training newsletter]



Shropshire Dyslexia  
Association  
Charity No 513065



## Spring Conference

Sat 14th April at the Shirehall, Shrewsbury  
Registration 9.15a.m. Lunch included,  
full day through until 3p.m.

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★  
★ **Neil MacKay** ★  
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★ International Dyslexia Consultant ★  
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Getting it right for dyslexic learners -  
Raising achievement through dyslexia  
friendly best practice

For all SpLD practitioners: teachers, SENCO's and  
LA inclusion teams, (informed parents welcome).



**SEN Marketing**  
Colin Redman will have a  
comprehensive display of books and re-  
sources, available, during Coffee and  
Lunch break, etc.



Latest inclusion strategies  
from New Zealand:  
Making learning visible.



### Conference Fees

On the day £50, SDA members £5 discount. Early bird date extended:  
book and pay by 6th April for a 20% discount: Fee £40.

More details/booking form from: [www.Thesda.org.uk](http://www.Thesda.org.uk)  
01743 231205 or Email: [shropda@hotmail.com](mailto:shropda@hotmail.com)



## Why few tears are shed for Rempoy

The Government's decision to close Rempoy factories, which have provided work for disabled people since World War Two, was not unexpected. But more surprisingly, opposition to the closure was muted, perhaps because the consultation process that preceded it had shown some sort of consensus about how best to provide support in the 21st century.

The Government has pledged to protect the £320 million spent annually on specialist disability employment services, in effect the Rempoy budget. And it has also announced an extra £15m for Access to Work.

It says it believes this will help a further 8,000 disabled people to either enter work or retain their jobs. Now the Government's pious hopes do not always translate into reality, but at least it is being consistent in its stated belief that resources should

be directed towards disabled people themselves, giving them maximum choice and control in the services they receive.

Disabled Rempoy staff are guaranteed an £8m package of tailored support for up 18 months to help with the transition, with around half of this available for Personal Budgets - around £2,500 per person on average.

The Sayce Report, on which the decision to close Rempoy was based, included a series of events around the country, to which 1400 individuals and organisations responded. There seems to have been a consensus that resources for supporting disabled people into employment should be focused on people, giving them maximum choice and control in the services they receive.

Interestingly the Government's PR

machine has at last started telling us what we already know: that people with disabilities find it hard to get a job.

The "fact sheet" that accompanied the ministerial statement on Rempoy said in part: "We need to do more to increase the number of disabled people in work - 48% of disabled people are in work, compared to 77% of non-disabled people."

However, the main purpose of the fact sheet was to undermine any lingering doubts about Rempoy. It did the job thoroughly: Rempoy last year lost £68.3m; it found 20,000 jobs for disabled and disadvantaged people last year but currently has 600-700 vacancies a week; it costs the taxpayer £25,000 each year to support each disabled employee in a Rempoy factory yet the average Access to Work award to support a disabled person in mainstream employment is £2,900.

## Doctors' doubts over online record access

The BMA's General Practitioner Committee is concerned that plans to give patients access to their online record could risk their medical history being used against them, and may create more work for GPs having to explain medical terms to worried patients. The committee did not think giving patients access to their records was a bad idea but did have significant concerns about a number of issues, including security and ensuring patients were not coerced into sharing their records with a third party.



# How a new DWP booklet helps cancer patients feel like idiots

**The DWP has been running a consultation, now closed, about the effects of cancer treatment on whether someone passes the medical test in the Work Capability Assessment.**

Although more people with cancer are placed in the Support Group since amendments to the regulations a year ago, Macmillan Cancer Support argues strongly that it is wrong to exclude patients receiving oral chemotherapy and those receiving radiotherapy. It says: "This differentiation between cancer treatments is unfair, and does not have a clinical justification."

As part of the consultation the DWP produced a booklet which makes it clear that at least some of its civil servants think that having cancer also makes you semi-literate and reduces your IQ to that of a dead fish.

The "easy read" version of the booklet, as they call it, is illustrated with childish drawings of happy smiling people with something wrong with them (strangely it isn't always cancer; the DWP seem to be unaware that having cancer does not mean you will be in a wheelchair or have a guide dog). And it contains gems such as these (we have not changed a word, but there is some editorial comment in brackets):

## **Consultation**

*This is when the government asks what people think about their plans, and for ideas about the best ways of doing things.*

## **Work Capability Assessment**

*This is when people talk to a health expert about their health and how it affects them. This helps us work out if someone should get the Employment and Support Allowance.*

**Just in case you thin we're exaggerating here's the introductory paragraph to the booklet:** "In this easy-read booklet we sometimes explain what words mean. The first time we mention any of these words, it is in bold green writing. Then we write what the words mean in a light blue box. If any of the words are used later in the booklet, we show them in normal green writing."

**And here are just some of the questions:**

- Because some cancer treatments do not badly affect some people, how important do you think it is for some people to be able to work?
- Do you agree that the weakening effects of cancer treatments can be different from person to person?
- Do you think that some people who are being treated or have been treated for cancer are able to keep working or to go back to some kind of work?

## **What we found out**

*Professor Malcolm Harrington and Macmillan Cancer Support looked at how the Work Capability Assessment deals with people who have cancer. They found out that at the moment, some types of treatment for cancer are treated differently to others because they may not make the person as weak as other types of treatment. This means that some people who have cancer do not get the help and support they need.*

*Professor Malcolm Harrington and Macmillan Cancer Support say that people should not be treated differently just because of the type of treatment they are getting. The government wants to make sure that people get the help and support they need. But at the moment some people who get treatment for cancer could be made to look for some kind of work instead of being made part of the Support Group of the Employment and Support Allowance*

[The text above is accompanied by a particularly odious drawing in which a happy smiling JobCentre person is telling a young woman "You need to look for work". The woman is frowning unhappily. The clear implication is that she is using her cancer as an excuse not to work and has been caught out]

## **The Support Group and work**

*For many people, an important part of their treatment and recovery from cancer is seeing that they will be able to carry on in work or that they will be able to go back to work. We do not want to stop people from going back to work. So we have some ideas that could let more people get help from the Support Group of the Employment and Support Allowance and also let those people who can and want to do some work to keep working.*

[The text above is an assault on the English language, as well as being part of the relentless grind to make cancer sufferers feel guilty]

Among the people the DWP was keen to hear from were employers, and just in case employers don't know who they are the booklet offers a helpful definition - "Employers: This is a person or company that pays other people to do work for them."

We would have liked to include some of the cartoons of happy smiling cancer patients and disabled people but the DWP threatens dire reprisals against all who reproduce them without permission. Perhaps we would be made to go for a medical assessment? - PLS





# Dry government statistics tell chilling story of falling living standards among the disabled

**In its recent "Households below average income: Analysis of income distribution", the Department for Work and Pensions says that in the 2009-10 year, 21% of people in families where someone is disabled were living in households with incomes below 60% of average disposable household income.**

That was before housing costs were taken into account – after those costs had been included the figure rose to 25%.

For families without a disabled member the equivalent figures were 16% and 21% respectively.

In other words, families with a disabled member were 5% worse off, and this at a time when the economic situation and Government cuts are pressing increasingly on all

families, able-bodied and disabled. *[For the full report visit [http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/hbai/hbai2010/pdf\\_files/full\\_hbai11.pdf](http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/hbai/hbai2010/pdf_files/full_hbai11.pdf)]*

These figures are borne out by more government statistics, reported last July in *YourVoice*, from the Office for Disability Issues. The ODI says there are more than 10 million people with a limiting long-term illness, impairment or disability in the UK – that's one person in about every five.

About one in 20 children are disabled and one in seven working age adults. Almost half the population over state-pension age are disabled.

Some 23% of families with at least one disabled member live in relative poverty, compared to 16% in other families; 29% of children in families with at least one disabled member

are in poverty, compared with 20% in other families

The employment rates of disabled people are around 48%, compared with around 78% of non-disabled people

About 24% of working age disabled people do not hold any formal educational qualification, compared to 10% of working age non-disabled people.

People with disabilities are significantly more likely to experience unfair treatment at work than others. In 2008, 19% of disabled people experienced unfair treatment at work compared to 13% of non-disabled people

[ Office for Disability Issues - <http://odi.dwp.gov.uk/disabilitystatistics-andresearch/disability-facts-and-figures.php#ds>]

## New 'must know' guide for councils on health services

The Local Government Improvement and Development Agency has published 'Must-knows on Health and Wellbeing'.

Councils can have a tremendous impact on health through sports, open space, housing, planning, social care and a range of other services. However many councillors are unfamiliar with the territory of health services. They will increasingly be required to get involved, particularly through the new Health and Wellbeing Boards. These 20 'must

knows' are designed to provide the key information members need, in bite size chunks.

### Short guide to Health and Wellbeing Boards

The Department of Health has also published 'A short guide to Health and Wellbeing Boards'. This briefing provides an outline on what Health and Wellbeing Boards are; what they will do; when they will be established; the make-up of the boards; and support which is available to the boards.

### You are not alone

Going to our site is all it takes to meet others who understand what you are going through:

[www.shropshire.gov.uk/community.nsf](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/community.nsf)

**Shropshire Self Help Groups**  
**Telephone 01691 656882**

Sponsored by Shropshire Council, Telford & Wrekin Council, and the NHS



## 30,000 cases of vulnerable adult abuse reported in year

Councils identified over 30,000 cases of abuse of vulnerable adults last year in England, official figures show. Of 73,600 completed referrals to adult protection teams, 32% were wholly substantiated and 9% partly substantiated, meaning physical, sexual, emotional, financial, discriminatory or institutional abuse, or neglect, had been found on the balance of probabilities.

Half the referrals were for people classified as physically disabled. Physical abuse was the most common (36%), followed by neglect (28%) and financial abuse (24%).

The vulnerable adult's home was cited as the location of alleged abuse in 42% of cases, care homes in 35% of cases. Of those referred, 39% were aged 18-64 and 61% were over 65. The figures were based on returns from 151 of the 152 councils with adult social services responsibility in England. It is the first year that councils have been required to submit figures on adult protection referrals [from CommunityCare.co.uk]

### Social media charities site

Thousands of charities are aware of social media, but aren't sure what it can do for them. Even more use social networks, but want to develop further. CharityComms has created a 'Guide to Social Media for Charities.' Part One is for those getting started, with Part Two for those wanting to develop. [http://www.charitycomms.org.uk/resources/guidelines/charitycomms\_guide\_to\_social\_media\_for\_charities] [Health Information News]

## Care plans for long term condition

NHS Local is developing an online 'tool' to enable people with mild or moderate long-term conditions (LTCs) to understand them better, to reflect on their conditions, and to create personal action plans to improve their health.

The 'tool' will be available to anyone with an LTC regardless of what stage they're at, whether newly diagnosed or with longer term experience of their condition. It will allow them to record securely information about their health including personal treatment and care plans and health data. It will also help people with LTCs to set goals and plan actions to help enable them to maintain as normal a lifestyle as possible.

# Big rise in 'pauper funerals' among the old and alone

**More than 21,000 older people a year are dying alone without family or friends willing or able to pay for burials and cremations, with some regions seeing a 14% jump in the numbers of "paupers' funerals" in the last five years, foreshadowing a crisis in social care, Grey Pride campaigners for elderly people claim.**

Anchor, the older people's charity, reveals that over-65s account for 54% of all public-health funerals, including 11,900 in the West Midlands in the past five years.

In some areas there has been a dramatic rise in such funerals, underpinned by a rising tide of poverty-stricken pensioners.

The south east has seen a 14% increase in state-funded burials

and cremations since 2006 while the East Midlands saw an 8% rise over the same period. According to official data there are 300,000 people living on state pensions which amount to just £37 per day to cover all expenses.

The figures come as charities representing elderly people come together to lobby the Prime Minister over urgent improvements in social care.

Figures show that real spending on older people will be £250m lower in 2010-15 than 2004-5.

At the same time the number of people over 85 has risen by two thirds to 630,000 people.

[From The Guardian, 28.11.11]



## Disability Arts and Craft Festival 2012

**The Gateway Education & Arts Centre**  
**Tuesday 3 April, 10.00am - 2.00pm**

**Come along for a fun day with lots of activities to try!**

**Jewellery Making**

**Art**

**Sewing**

**Felt Making**

**Cake Decorating**

**Painting**

**Drawing**

**For information contact: Karen Fidler, The Gateway Education and Arts Centre, Chester Street, Shrewsbury, SY1 1NB.**  
**t: 01743 355159 / 07582003233 e: karen.fidler@shropshire.gov.uk**



# From a dream to...

When an architect of a policy damns elements of its implementation, you know the original vision has been lost somewhere along the line. And so it is with personalisation. Simon Duffy, who helped develop the original resource allocation system (RAS) concept, bemoans the "managerial nonsense" that now dogs the process for determining the value of Personal Budgets through assessment.

The results of Community Care's personalisation survey commissioned by Unison suggest his complaints are echoed at the frontline; 73% of respondents (up 7% on the previous year) say personalisation has created more bureaucracy.

Duffy, who developed the concept of personal or individual budgets, says one side of A4 is the ideal length for an assessment questionnaire - but those used by some authorities run to 40 pages. One reason for the increase in bureaucracy is the com-

Community Care online magazine and trade union Unison joined forces to research the state of personalisation in adult social care. You can follow the complex debate in detail at <http://www.communitycare.co.uk/static-pages/articles/The-state-of-personalisation-in-adult-social-care/>

For space reasons all we can offer here is a taste of some of the main themes.

plexity and proliferation of self-assessment forms. Many respondents said they did not have enough time with service users to effectively support self-assessment.

Said one social worker: "A very sound principle has been taken by the organisation and used to manage resources. Assessments agreed by qualified social workers are questioned in funding resource panels and changed ... The ensuing paperwork has increased 40%."

Users see the levels of bureaucracy as a form of control over how they lead their lives, says Sue Bott, chief

executive of the National Council for Independent Living. "People are getting very frustrated ... they are being prescribed as to what they can use their Personal Budget for."

Jeff Jerome, national director for social care transformation, admits the level of bureaucracy is one of his "biggest worries" in the implementation of personalisation. It should be light-touch to allow people to get on with their lives. He believes the problem is endemic within councils, which encourage staff to take a "conservative and cautious approach to process, which they do to protect themselves."

## Are personal budgets improving outcomes?

Research suggests Personal Budgets improve outcomes for users. But social care consultant Colin Slasberg says: "A majority of the 2,000 respondents report better outcomes ... However, more than 80% had a direct payment and they, not the people on council-managed Personal Budgets, are the ones who report the better outcomes. The message could not be clearer - direct payments work, council-managed budgets do not."

Research author Chris Hatton disagrees, arguing that it is not the case that personal budgets are entirely a function of the increased resources received by holders of direct payments. "Costs accounted for, at most, 7% of the variance in people's reports of impact. The weekly amount of the Personal Budget was important for only one of the 14 outcome indicators.

## Users and carers fight restrictions on use of Personal Budgets

Personal budgets were designed to enable service users to have maximum choice and control over how their eligible needs for care were met. Yet Community Care and Unison's survey finds significant restrictions being placed on clients' use of budgets even for seemingly uncontroversial items. Julie Stansfield, chief executive of personalisation charity In Control, says such restrictions are "stifling people's creativity". David Congdon of Mencap blames a failure to recognise eligible needs, which councils have to fund. He says care plans should clearly identify eligible needs. Without these, officials can deny access to money if they do not think a creative service is meeting a need.

## Hard-to-reach groups still face personal budgets barriers

Several client groups, including older people and those with mental health problems, continue to face barriers in gaining Personal Budgets, say social care professionals. A significant minority of respondents said their council was not doing enough to improve access to Personal Budgets. This is despite calls from the Government for councils to provide more targeted support. Figures show 10% of older people had a Personal Budget last year, along with 5% of mental health service users, compared with 23% of adults with learning disabilities.





# Benefit billions untouched as millions fail to claim

The benefits system is very complicated, so much so that a total of £16 billion remains unclaimed every year by people who undoubtedly need the money.

In one example, that of Pension Credit, the Government says that almost £3 billion is not claimed and that as many as 1.6 million people could be entitled to this money.

The Pensions Minister, Steve Webb, has urged people to check. "If anyone thinks a family member, a friend

or neighbour might be entitled to Pension Credit, I'd encourage them to ask them to get in touch and find out," he said.

He also pointed out that Pension Credit can be backdated for up to three months and, very importantly, can trigger cold weather payment of £25 per week. But you must apply for it.

Here is one of the inconsistencies that bedevil the system. While Winter Fuel Payments are a universal bene-

fit, others, such as Pension Credit, are what they call in the jargon "passporting benefits" – in other words they can lead to entitlement to further benefits. Therefore it really is important to know what you are entitled to receive and to apply for it.

Steve Webb pointed out that people can claim Pension Credit with one free phone call to 0800 99 1234 and without any need for a signed form.

[From Social Welfare Training newsletter]

## Blue Eyed Soul says farewell after 18 years

Shropshire-based Blue Eyed Soul Dance Company has closed after 18 years of working with disabled and able-bodied artists "to create a level playing field where people can step over their threshold of perceived possibility."

In a statement announcing that it was impossible to continue, the company says that, with the support of Arts Council England, it had "explored, developed and delivered a highly successful and extensive programme of inclusive dance, locally, nationally and internationally.

"Its core staff team have collaborated with many artists and organisations on a wide range of work from large scale projects to 1:1 sessions: community and professional, touring and one-off performances, education residencies and workshops, film, digital, aerial and site-specific programmes, training and professional development initiatives plus many other creative projects."

Founder and Artistic Director Rachel Freeman and Training & Education Coordinator Rachel Liggitt are continuing their dance work as freelance artists.

A selection of Blue Eyed Soul archive material will be held at the University of Surrey and Digitising Disability project by Filmpro limited.

## GP practice inspections

As many as 10% of GP practices will be inspected in person by the Care Quality Commission because they are at 'significant risk of non-compliance', the regulator has told the Commons Public Accounts Committee.



## Gusto

A new way to get together, do more of the things you love and try new activities

Whether it's learning how to shop online, practicing stylish salsa steps, or taking a historic tour, Gusto makes it happen! Each week our members get together to enjoy a variety of fun activities and to meet new people from across Shrewsbury.

Come along to our **Third Thursday Get Together** to meet fellow Gusto members, have a chat and get involved in the activities we have coming up!

### Third Thursday Get Together

**When:** Thursday 15th March  
1 – 3pm  
**Where:** The Lantern, Meadow Farm Drive, Sundorne, Shrewsbury SY1 4NG

**Get involved!**  
(Free entry & refreshments)

### Think you could run a Gusto activity?

Have you got a skill you could share with Shrewsbury? We need you! We're looking for talented people to join as Gusto Hosts.

If you're interested in getting involved or have more questions contact Jo Killeynne on 07511 139 932 or [jo@giveitsomegusto.org](mailto:jo@giveitsomegusto.org)



# What's going on?

*Here are just some of the events coming up around Shropshire. But the printed page can't compete with the web for providing detailed information, so to find out more about anything and everything check out our web-site [<http://shropshire-disability.net>] and click on the Events tab. While you're there, browse through the whole site, there's a lot to be learned!*

## Consultation events: Personalisation of Adult Social Care Services

Shropshire Council has set some provisional dates for these consultation events, but provisional dates may change – **so please check before turning up!** If you have any interest in the future design of adult social care around personal budgets then you should attend and express a view. For more detail about what is being proposed by the council, visit our website. There are three events, in North, Central and South Shropshire.

**Shirehall Council Chamber, Shrewsbury, Wednesday**  
21 March, 2.30 – 4.00 pm

**Helena Lane Day Centre, Ludlow, Wednesday**  
28 March, 3.30 – 5.00 pm

**Oswestry Council Chamber, Monday 16 April, 10.30-12.00**

## Carers meander

A 'Meres Meander' for carers will take place at Ellesmere on 24 April, starting at 10.00am and lasting about an hour and a half. It is being led by a Meres Ambles walk leader and is suitable for wheelchair users. Tea and coffee will be available afterwards. To book a place call Angela Evans on 01743 341995 or email [angela.evans@shropshire-rcc.org.uk](mailto:angela.evans@shropshire-rcc.org.uk)

This is one of many events for carers in Shropshire – to find out more and to find out what is on in your area visit our website.

## NHS Prescribing: The challenge facing our local NHS

This event on 25 April has been organised by Telford and Shropshire Osteoporosis Support Group. It is open to everyone, with a £1 entrance fee. Jacqui Seton, Head of Medicine Management, Telford and Wrekin PCT, will talk about "The Challenge Facing Our Local NHS." The venue is Wellington Methodist Church Hall, New Street, Wellington, Telford, TF1 1LU, and the event will run from 2.00 – 4.00. There are car parks nearby. For further details contact Gillian Pettit on 01952 433183 or email: [handgpettit@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:handgpettit@tiscali.co.uk)

## Charity ball to raise autism awareness

Jamie Pugh, who appeared in the 2009 series of Britain's Got Talent is helping to raise money and awareness of autism by taking part at this event on 28 April at

the Lion Quays Oswestry, Moreton, Oswestry, SY11 3EN. Organiser Jo Perera, whose daughter Emily was diagnosed with autism at the age of nine, decided to do this event after realising that one in 100 people are affected by autism. Tickets cost £45.

The red carpet evening will take place from 6pm to 1.00am with a glass of wine on arrival, followed by a three-course meal, a harpist and other entertainment. Music will be by Rebel and the Chief. Guest appearances include DJs Jagger & Woody from Real Radio. There will also be a surprise guest as well as Jamie Pugh, plus a raffle and auction. Proceeds will be split between Autism Cymru and The National Autistic Society. Contact Jo Perera on 07769 210919 or email [joperera@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:joperera@hotmail.co.uk)

## DeafSmart Fundraising Ball



This first class black tie gala dinner will be held on Saturday 7 July at Telford International Centre, St Quentin Gate, Telford, TF3 4JH. An award winning menu will be accompanied by dancing, guest speakers, entertainment, raffle (with a first prize of a spa weekend for two), celebrity item auction (Celebre Art) and the award ceremony for the DeafSmart Photographer Of The Year 2012. First prize award is £250, second and third prizes are photographic equipment vouchers. The photography competition is based on the theme of Deaf Culture or deaf community. Deaf and hearing can apply. There is a £5 per photo entry, one photo per person and it can be of any size. The closing date is 1st June.

Tickets for the evening are £50 per person. Cheque made payable to: "Deafsmart" and sent to 1 Drayton Road, Shawbury, Shropshire, SY4 4NZ. Discounted accommodation is available at the Grays Hotel and Holiday Inn (Telford).

Telephone 08444 820166 or email [reservations@south-watereventgroup.com](mailto:reservations@south-watereventgroup.com) quoting Ref Deafsmart0712 for discounted rates. Any enquiries please contact Deafsmart on 01939 251555 or email [info@deafsmart.co.uk](mailto:info@deafsmart.co.uk).

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**Names and numbers that might help**

**This new feature will build up into a directory of all sorts of organisations to do with disability. Help us to make it better month-by-month by letting us know what's missing. Email the editor at [newsletter@shropshire-disability.net](mailto:newsletter@shropshire-disability.net) or write to him: Peter Staples, 8 Gorse Lane, Bayston Hill, Shrewsbury, SY3 0JJ**

Shropshire Council Disability Services  
[www.shropshire.gov.uk/disability.nsf](http://www.shropshire.gov.uk/disability.nsf)

Telford & Wrekin Council Disability Forum  
[www.telford.gov.uk/info/200041/equality\\_and\\_diversity/925/disability\\_forum](http://www.telford.gov.uk/info/200041/equality_and_diversity/925/disability_forum)  
.....  
A4U Disability Advice Centre 01743 251520; email [advice@a4u.org.uk](mailto:advice@a4u.org.uk)

Blue Eyed Soul Dance Company  
01743 210830; email: [admin@blueeyedsouldance.com](mailto:admin@blueeyedsouldance.com)  
[www.blueeyedsouldance.com/](http://www.blueeyedsouldance.com/)

Carers Direct 0808 802 0202  
[www.nhs.uk/carersdirect/Pages/CarersDirectHome.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/carersdirect/Pages/CarersDirectHome.aspx)

Community Council of Shropshire  
[www.shropshire-rcc.org.uk/](http://www.shropshire-rcc.org.uk/)  
4 The Creative Quarter, Shrewsbury Business Park, Shrewsbury, SY2 6LG  
01743 360641 fax: 01743 342179

Disability Arts in Shropshire: 01743 272939/271676; [www.dasharts.org/](http://www.dasharts.org/)

Disability Directory – Information, aids and mobility services  
[www.ableize.com/Disabled-Groups-and-Clubs-by-County/Shropshire/](http://www.ableize.com/Disabled-Groups-and-Clubs-by-County/Shropshire/)

Disability Football Directory 01952 407198  
<http://www.disabilityfootball.co.uk/Madeleysports.html>

Disability-friendly holiday accommodation  
[www.friendly-places.com/categories/disability-friendly/disability-friendly.asp?Location=Shropshire](http://www.friendly-places.com/categories/disability-friendly/disability-friendly.asp?Location=Shropshire)

Disability Resource Centre, Lancaster Road, Shrewsbury, SY1 3NJ  
01743 450 912; email: [robin.durham@shropshire-cc.gov.uk](mailto:robin.durham@shropshire-cc.gov.uk)  
[www.the-svab.org.uk](http://www.the-svab.org.uk). RNIB: [www.info.rnib.org.uk/exe/Agencies/Details.pl?480](http://www.info.rnib.org.uk/exe/Agencies/Details.pl?480)

Disabled and Wheelchair Athletics Directory  
[www.apparelyzed.com/disability-directory/adaptive-sports/disabled-athletics/](http://www.apparelyzed.com/disability-directory/adaptive-sports/disabled-athletics/)

Headway Shropshire (brain injured and families)  
Holsworth Park, Oxon Business Park, Shrewsbury, SY3 5HJ  
01743 365271; [www.headwayshropshire.org.uk/](http://www.headwayshropshire.org.uk/)

Landau Limited - Supported employment services for people with disabilities,  
5 Landau Court, Tan Bank, Wellington. TF1 1HE 01952 245 015, [admin@landau.co.uk](mailto:admin@landau.co.uk)

Listen Not Label - User Led Organisation for disabled people and carers in  
Telford and Wrekin (Tina Jones, Manager)  
Liz Yates Centre, The Poplars, Lightmoor, Telford, TF4 3QN  
01952 458021

Marches Community Enterprise 01584 878402 or 07891094901

ME Connect  
Helpline - 0844 576 5326 - between 10.00-noon, 2.00-4.00 and 7.00-9.00;  
email [meconnect@meassociation.org.uk](mailto:meconnect@meassociation.org.uk)

Motor Neurone Disease Association - MND Connect 08457 62 62 62  
[mndconnect@mndassociation.org](mailto:mndconnect@mndassociation.org)

Multiple Sclerosis Society - 7 Britten Court, Telford, TF1 1YU; 01952 250038

NHS Choices - [www.nhs.uk/Pages/HomePage.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Pages/HomePage.aspx)

## Parent & Carer Council Shropshire

[www.paccshropshire.org.uk/parent-and-carer-groups](http://www.paccshropshire.org.uk/parent-and-carer-groups)  
PACC provides an index of support groups for children with disabilities in Shropshire. The following groups are listed on the PACC site. Where possible we list direct contacts, but refer to the PACC site for full details)

Allsorts (South Shropshire, for behavioural conditions) 07813043841  
[www.paccshropshire.org.uk/parent-and-carer-groups/71-allsorts](http://www.paccshropshire.org.uk/parent-and-carer-groups/71-allsorts)  
Bridgnorth Buddies (Parent-led, Special Needs) 07968 544182 or 07790 780631; email [Buddies20@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:Buddies20@yahoo.co.uk)  
[www.paccshropshire.org.uk/parent-and-carer-groups/72-bridgnorth-buddies](http://www.paccshropshire.org.uk/parent-and-carer-groups/72-bridgnorth-buddies)  
Haughton School, Telford, drop-in for parents of pupils with more complex special needs) 01952 387551 or 01952 387552; [www.paccshropshire.org.uk/parent-and-carer-groups/83-haughton-school-drop-in](http://www.paccshropshire.org.uk/parent-and-carer-groups/83-haughton-school-drop-in)  
Onevision (visual impairment) 01952 385269  
[/www.paccshropshire.org.uk/parent-and-carer-groups/77-onevision](http://www.paccshropshire.org.uk/parent-and-carer-groups/77-onevision)  
STACS (Aspergers, 16+) 01952 254594 or 01939 260273; email [louise.griffiths@carerscontact.org.uk](mailto:louise.griffiths@carerscontact.org.uk)  
[www.paccshropshire.org.uk/parent-and-carer-groups/76-stacs](http://www.paccshropshire.org.uk/parent-and-carer-groups/76-stacs)  
Autistic Supporters (if you suspect your child is autistic, or has recently been diagnosed) 01743 356298  
[www.shropshireautisticsupporters.co.uk/?q=node/2](http://www.shropshireautisticsupporters.co.uk/?q=node/2)  
Deaf Children's Society 01952 770019; email: [nat4sdcs@aol.com](mailto:nat4sdcs@aol.com)  
[www.ndcs.org.uk](http://www.ndcs.org.uk)  
Down's Syndrome 01743 233802, 01948 880110 or 01588 640319  
[www.dsa-shropshire.org.uk](http://www.dsa-shropshire.org.uk)  
Dyslexia Association 01743 231205; [www.thesda.org.uk](http://www.thesda.org.uk)  
Wheelchair Users 01743 350460 or 01952 252243  
SKiD (Shropshire Kids Insulin Dependent, associated with Diabetes UK) 01743 873724 or 01743 364366; email: [home@morkot.go-plus.net](mailto:home@morkot.go-plus.net)  
SPECTRUM (Autistic Support group) email: [netgriffiths@fsmail.net](mailto:netgriffiths@fsmail.net)  
[www.spectrum.t83.net/](http://www.spectrum.t83.net/)  
Telford STAA (supports parents/carers of children with ASD, ADHD, and challenging behaviour) 01952 457439 or 01952 617758; email: [julie@parentpartnership-shropshireandtelford.org.uk](mailto:julie@parentpartnership-shropshireandtelford.org.uk) or [lesley@parentpartnership-shropshireandtelford.org.uk](mailto:lesley@parentpartnership-shropshireandtelford.org.uk)  
Steps (help for parents/carers, lower limb abnormalities) 01743 355363  
PODS (Parents Opening Doors - Telford, forum for views on services) 01952457439; email: [julie@parentpartnership-shropshireandtelford.org.uk](mailto:julie@parentpartnership-shropshireandtelford.org.uk)

Omega (National Association for End of Life Care) - [www.omega.uk.net/](http://www.omega.uk.net/)

Parent Partnership Service - [www.parentpartnership-shropshireandtelford.org.uk/#/useful-links/4551168089](http://www.parentpartnership-shropshireandtelford.org.uk/#/useful-links/4551168089)

PODS (independent forum in Telford for families of children with a disability or additional need). Jayne Stevens 0777 534 2092 or 07824 631 297; [info@podstelford.org](mailto:info@podstelford.org); [www.podstelford.org](http://www.podstelford.org)

Primary Care Trust [www.shropshire.nhs.uk/Get-Involved/](http://www.shropshire.nhs.uk/Get-Involved/)

Scope (Cerebral Palsy) - [www.scope.org.uk/services/shropshire](http://www.scope.org.uk/services/shropshire)

Shrewsbury Dial-a-Ride - Sundorne Trade Park, Featherbed Lane, SY1 4NS. Enquiries 01743 440350; Direct Line 01743 440744; Mobile 07891094901, [linda@shrewsburydialaride.org.uk](mailto:linda@shrewsburydialaride.org.uk)

Shropshire MIND - [www.shropshiremind.org/](http://www.shropshiremind.org/)  
Observer House, Holywell St, Shrewsbury, SY2 6BL 01743 368647

Shropshire Peer Counselling and Advocacy Service  
[www.shropshirepcas.co.uk/default.htm](http://www.shropshirepcas.co.uk/default.htm)

Shropshire Volunteering Team -Promote your volunteering opportunities.  
<http://shropshirevcs.org.uk/site/volunteering/>

Shropshire and Staffordshire Heart and Stroke Network  
Lambda House, Hadley Park East, Telford, TF1 6QJ  
Email: [yuen-ting.cheung@shropshirepct.nhs.uk](mailto:yuen-ting.cheung@shropshirepct.nhs.uk) 01952 228490

Telford & Wrekin LINK - Suite 1, Conwy House, St Georges Court, St Georges Road, Donnington, Telford, TF2 7BF 01952 614180

Voluntary & Community Sector Assembly [www.shrop.net/shropvcsassembly](http://www.shrop.net/shropvcsassembly)

Voluntary Association for the Blind (linked to RNIB)

**Send your details and somehow we'll find space on Page X!**