

ISSUE 73

SUMMER 2008

VIEWPOINT

A quarterly Newsletter providing information for and about people who have a physical or sensory disability



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Registered Charity No 1006025

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the Summer edition of Viewpoint.

Whose Job Is It?

This is a story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody.

There was an important job to be done, and Everybody was asked to do it

Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it.

Somebody got angry about that, because it was Everybody's job.

Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realised that Everybody wouldn't do it.

It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done!

The above cannot be said about Lord Alf Morris. He was Somebody who saw a job which needed doing and he got on with it despite many set-backs. 2008 is thirty years since the Chronically Sick and Disabled People's Act came into being.

Introduced by Alf Morris MP, the first Minister for Disabled People, at a time when conditions such as dyslexia and autism did not exist, according to the powers that be!

He fought a long and difficult battle to get this Act into the statute books and still fights today to educate everyone that it is society which disables people.

Some things have improved since 1978, with the introduction of the Disability Discrimination Act. We are slowly getting there **BUT THERE IS STILL A VERY LONG WAY TO GO.**

What will **you** do?

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SELF-ADVOCACY FORUM

You are invited to come and share your experiences and get some answers from a host of reliable sources

**Every third Monday
of the month**

**Next meeting is 18 August
7.00 pm – 9.00 pm at
Eyeline, 112 Shaw Heath**

**For more information
Contact: Disability
Stockport on
0161 480 7248**

BENEFITS

Simpler Claims for Older People

From October 2008, people phoning The Pension Service to claim Pension Credit will be able to claim Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit (HB/CTB) at the same time. The Pension Service will take the claim information and pass it directly to the appropriate local authority for assessment.

The advantages:

A simple, easy process – one phone call to claim four benefits

No claim forms to complete and return

No supplementary forms for children or non-dependants – this information will be gathered during the phone call

No need to forward a claim to the local authority – The Pension Service will do it automatically, even if Pension Credit is not awarded

Customers only need to provide information and evidence once

Help with Rent and Council Tax bills

Backdating Rules:

Changes to Housing Benefits and Council Tax Benefits (HB/CTB) backdating rules also come into effect in October. Currently, working age people can have their entitlement backdated by up to 52 weeks, if they can show they had good cause for not applying earlier. Older people can receive a backdated payment of up to 12 months, provided they have reached the qualifying age for Pension Credit.

The Government plans to reduce the backdating of claims for all customers, to three months, bringing HB/CTB broadly into line with other income-related benefits.

The change should simplify the claims process and make it easier for both customers and staff.

Customers who think they are entitled to more than three months backdated payment must put in their claim **before October 2008**. After October, customers must claim within the three-month period to ensure they don't lose any entitlement.

NEWS

CAUTIOUS INTEREST IN U.S. ALZHEIMER'S THERAPY

A new Californian treatment for Alzheimer's disease – which appears to produce significant improvements in some patients – should be investigated further, according to British experts. Researchers at the Institute for Neurological Research believe that injecting a widely used anti-arthritis drug called Etanercept into the neck and then tilting the patient to encourage blood flow to the brain, can rapidly improve brain cell communication.

“On the surface these results are exciting but we need to treat the study with caution,” says Dr. Susanne Sorensen, head of research at the Alzheimer's Society.

“There are large gaps in the research, which only involved a small pilot group and we cannot draw any conclusions until a controlled trial is carried out.”

TOUCH THE PAST

Westminster Abbey has launched a unique Braille-guided Touch Tour allowing blind and visually impaired people to guide themselves round one of the UK's most historic landmarks. Endorsed by the 'Royal National Institute for the Blind', the tour allows people to touch and feel parts of the Abbey that date back nearly 1,000 years. A copy of the tour is also available in large print.

“This tour allows our blind and partially sighted visitors to really experience the Abbey in a unique and fulfilling way,” said Reverend Dr Jane Hedges, Canon Of Westminster. “We know Westminster Abbey is visually awe-inspiring, but it also has many areas which are brought alive by touch and we are sure this experience will be very memorable for blind and partially-sighted people. The audio tour, Braille Touch Tour and the help of our vergers, marshals and volunteers combine to give blind and partially sighted visitors an unforgettable and unique experience alongside our other visitors.”

THE ROUGH GUIDE TO ACCESSIBLE BRITAIN

Travel experts at Rough Guides have teamed up with Motability to publish the first ever Rough Guide to Accessible Britain. Packed with more than 100 inspirational and accessible visitor destinations, each listed destination has been thoroughly checked for access and facilities. The publication also includes regional maps and details of useful organisations that offer more assistance.

“The Rough Guide to Accessible Britain spells out all the opportunities, and addresses any barriers, to ensure that people can be clear about what to expect,” says Rough Guide's Martin Dunford. “With fair and honest reviews, the Rough Guide to Accessible Britain is a refreshing and inspiring tool for anyone looking to embrace their leisure time with confidence and a sense of fun, regardless of any mobility considerations.” It costs £6.99. Blue Badge holders can obtain a copy free, simply paying £1.99 for postage and packing.

To order call 0800 953 7070 or visit www.accessibleguide.co.uk

LOCAL INVOLVEMENT NETWORKS



YOUR OPPORTUNITY, YOUR VOICE – STOCKPORT LINK

A new social enterprise - **Pebble Enterprises** has been contracted by Stockport Council to set up an exciting new network service, promoted and funded by the Department of Health, called "LINKs". LINKs stands for **Local Involvement Networks** and are being set up in local authorities across the country to give communities a stronger voice in how their health & social care services are delivered. LINKs will be independent networks of local people and groups such as charities, faith groups, tenant organisations, youth councils, BME organisations, business federations, carers, users of services, community leaders, patient representatives, you, me; everyone's views matter. The LINK will find out what people want, investigate issues and use their powers to hold services to account.

LINKs will:

- Ask citizens what they think about local health and social care services
- Provide a chance to suggest ideas to help improve services
- Investigate specific issues of concern to the community
- Convey people's views to organisations responsible for commissioning, providing, managing and scrutinising local care services
- Carry out spot checks, when necessary, to see if services are working well (carried out under safeguards)

We are keen to attract interest and hear your experiences, including individuals and groups who feel that they have not been able to comment in the past. LINKs will be designed in a flexible way providing many opportunities and different ways in which you can participate – (register & send for your Participation Pack today).

Involvement in the LINK will be fully supported by Pebble Staff and training based on individual/group needs will be provided.

If you would like to receive further information about this exciting work then please contact the staff below, who will be pleased to send you a Participation Pack: -

Maria Kildunne or Alan Darnell Telephone number 0161 477 8479
Email: links@pebbleenterprises.co.uk

TRADING STANDARDS

Rogue traders

The team at Stockport Trading Standards service has been busy with a number of initiatives to protect local residents from rogue traders. Here is their news.

Roofers and 'Tarmac' gangs:

We have been dealing with rogue traders who cold call at homes offering to do roofing or driveway work. As readers will be well aware we give regular warnings against employing anyone that calls out of the blue, claiming that work needs doing on your home. If anyone in Stockport reports this sort of rogue trader to the national consumer helpline (details below), the information is passed to us at Stockport Trading Standards. We can respond very quickly to support local consumers, giving advice over the phone or if the trader is still at the home we can visit to deal with the matter. We can also offer advice on whether a householder is legally required to pay for any work done.

However, the number of complaints about 'tarmac gangs' and the like have got so bad that we are now making regular patrols with the support of the Police, to try to catch these rogues in the act. We check documentation and insurance and tax details. We also check with the householder that they have been given all the correct paperwork and that the price quoted has been kept to.

Of course the best way to avoid the stress of having someone demanding cash for this type of work at your doorstep is to turn away cold callers, get your facts straight if you think work may need doing, get recommendations from neighbours and friends, and get several quotes to compare prices.

Remember, having just a telephone number as your only contact for a business leaves you up the creek if they take your money but don't do the work properly. You have no chance of contacting the trader and getting him to come back and no way to sue him if you have no name and address. Even if the uninvited trader offers to do the job at a very cheap price it will be a false economy if the work is unfinished, (or worse, never started) and they may be fiddling the taxman and the Benefits Agency, as well as you.

Illegal sales of alcohol:

In an attempt to reduce some of the causes of anti-social behaviour Trading Standards has conducted a significant number of operations to see if shops are selling alcohol to children under 18. These evening visits are made with Police assistance. Any individual who sold alcohol to children was given a fixed penalty notice of £80 and the owners of the shops are now subject to prosecution. We also reported all incidents to the Licensing Committee so they are aware of the public nuisance and child harm issues that we uncovered. Any shops who persist in selling alcohol to children are in danger of losing their liquor licence.

To report any sales of alcohol to under 18's or to get advice on any consumer issues, ring **'Consumer Direct' on 08454 04 05 06**. This is a Government funded service offering clear, practical consumer advice. They have a website with lots of useful information, too - www.consumerdirect.gov.uk

CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL

These Greater Manchester only concessionary travel passes will NOT be valid after 30th September 2008



- ◆ If you still have a GMPTE concessionary pass, you need to act quickly to replace it with a National Concessionary Travel Pass, even if your existing GMPTE pass shows 'Valid for Life' and you only want to use it in Greater Manchester.
- ◆ If you have applied and not received your new pass, you may need to re-apply. Please ask at a GMPTE Travelshop, or visit www.gmppte.com for more information.
- ◆ If you do not have a National Concessionary Travel Pass after 30th September 2008, you will have to pay the full adult fare on all buses, trains and trams.

Make sure you get your new pass before 30th September by giving GMPTE plenty of time to process your application.

Application forms are available from GMPTE Travelshops at main bus stations in Greater Manchester.

Or an application form can be sent to you if you email GMPTE at passes2008@gmppte.gov.uk or phone us on 0161 244 1050.



CONNECT PLUS

Can you spare a couple of hours a week?

You could make a difference to people's lives, by becoming a volunteer with **Connect Plus** or **Leyfield Primus**.

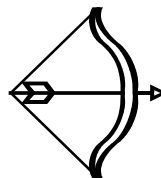
We are always looking for new volunteers, to accompany or assist, our disabled members on a variety of leisure activities, and if you are over 16 years old, you could become a Volunteer Leisure Companion with Connect Plus or Leyfield Primus. Some of our volunteers are disabled, so don't think that having a disability stops you from volunteering!

The benefits of volunteering include a chance to meet new people and make new friends. Experiencing new leisure activities, having fun, and improving your social life. Also, free training and a chance to learn new skills, experience of working with disabled people and to gain a reference.

We are always on the look-out for accessible leisure venues such as pubs, clubs and restaurants, so let us know if you come across any you would recommend.

If you, or someone you know, would like to volunteer or would like to hear more please call

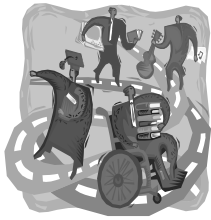
Tony Williams on 0161 474 0048



CARERS' BREAKS

At the Leyfield Centre

2008 Summer Saturdays is a Free Service to adults with a disability who are cared for by an unpaid carer. This is courtesy of a **Carers' Grant**. Disabled Adults spend the day between 10.00 am and 3.30 pm at the Leyfield Centre, Leyfield Avenue, Romiley. The day is inclusive of lunch and transport. Places may also be available to those with a disability who wish to pay with a Voucher or privately.

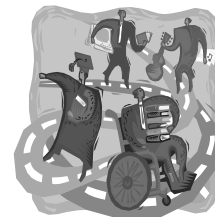


Date	Morning	Afternoon
2nd August	Crafts + BBQ	Film Club
9th August	Clay Modelling	
16th August	Clay Painting	Film Club
23rd August	Musical Fun	
30th August	Indian Day and film	

To check eligibility, availability and to book

Ring Tony Williams

at **Disability Stockport** on **0161 474 0048**



In addition, **Holistic Therapies, access to IT** and the opportunity just to relax in the friendly atmosphere will be available each Saturday.

JOURNEY TO NEPAL

When Jane Wilson-Howarth was told her newborn baby required major surgery, she was concerned that it would only make his life worse. So she and her husband decided to spare David the pain of the operation, and took him and his brother, Alexander, to live in distant Nepal.

Within minutes of arriving at our new home on Rajapur Island, Simon, my husband, was whisked away to meet local farmers. As the incoming water expert, he was expected to offer wise solutions to problems that landowners had been squabbling over for generations. He was busy, but the boys and I had the luxury of time. Alexander took rides with his friend the Tractor Man and learned how to feed a new calf, while I sat with David, soaking up the winter sunshine. He was more peaceful than I had ever known. He was content, and for now, at least, away from life-support machines and probes and drips.

David was born by emergency caesarean section in Cambridge. I had returned from Nepal, where we had been living, for what I had hoped would be a quick delivery. The first thing I registered as they pulled him into the world was a gaping black hole in the middle of his face. Strangely, I wasn't shocked by his appearance. I was besotted. We later told his older brother Alexander that elves had done the miraculously fine stitching to repair the harelip. It looked good, but David struggled to feed. He choked and he slept a lot. I could no longer bury my intuitions. I knew that he was ill. We were back in hospital before he was a month old. There we saw specialists of every flavour, who catalogued a long list of abnormalities. Although each new doctor had clever ideas, none convinced us that anything could be done to improve David's quality of life.

He had blood test after blood test. Food supplements were squirted into a tube that passed up his nose and into his stomach. These made him vomit, and each time he puked – several times a day – he panicked as if drowning. It tore me apart watching the terror in his eyes. He twitched at the slightest sound. He was five weeks old and he was turning into a nervous wreck. His crying – because of twice-daily blood tests – and his struggling with the nasogastric tube made me feel sick. I couldn't bear his suffering. After days of tests and opinions, the consultant paediatrician arrived at David's cot and sat us down. "We've identified several problems," he said. "Your baby has holes in the heart, only one kidney, low sodium, spinal abnormalities, and the fibres connecting the two hemispheres of the brain are missing.

Despite being a GP, I found it hard to question these experts who were in charge of my son's life. I knew that surgery meant cutting my baby's skin from collarbone to belly-button; bone-cutters crunching through each rib; his rib cage being forced open, spring back; his blood being mixed with the blood of six strangers while on the by-pass machine; his heart being sliced open. When people break a rib they are in pain – with every breath – for weeks. How bad must it be to have 12 broken ribs? And with all operations, there is the risk of death.

JOURNEY TO NEPAL

I could articulate none of this. The consultant continued, "These days, cardiac surgery is routine." There was no mention of quality of life. "Will he ever be independent? Will David walk, or even talk?" I asked. "If he is going to be terribly disabled, should we put him through surgery?" The consultant shook his head. Maybe he thought we were in denial.

The next time he came to see us, he asked, "How's the baby?" "David is all right." I took a deep breath. "But he's so much more at ease away from here. We don't want any more invasive investigations. No more needles or tests unless you can prove they will improve his quality of life." "All right. We'll arrange the other investigations as an out-patient then." "No," I said, "No more tests." He began to explain, but I said nothing. I had won this first skirmish. But were we condemning David to death or giving him a chance of life? We had left the hospital feeling drained and guilty, struggling to exorcise the doctors' unspoken accusations. Only David's neurologist understood that we did this out of love, and encouraged us to de-medicalise him.

On the day of our flight back to Kathmandu, we must have looked haggard. I felt as if I had aged ten years. As soon as we were on board, though, my spirits began to soar. I chatted to the Royal Nepal cabin crew as they smiled indulgently at David. Simon, too, was happy and I could see his mood lift as we got further from Cambridge. Smiling, he leaned across to me and whispered, "You know what those two air hostesses were saying to each other? 'How is it that such ugly parents have managed to have such beautiful children!'"

David was beautiful, despite the tube in his nose, his harelip and his "defects". The Nepalis saw his unblemished complexion and blue eyes. On the plane, we had already re-entered sane, baby-loving Asia. Back in Nepal, we ventured out every weekend and some evenings. One stroll took us into a squatter settlement by the river where young mothers surrounded us, giggling – wanting to compare babies. "How old?" "Son or daughter?" "How did you make such a beautiful baby?" I took him out of his papoose to show him off, and they said, "He is so handsome, so white, so clean!" Their admiration was a forgotten delight of having a new baby. No one in England had dared talk about him. One of the women said, "Look at those dimples in his ears – these are a gift from heaven." Doctors in England included these ear pits among the list of David's abnormalities. In Nepal, they made him special.

When David was five months old, we turned ourselves in at the hospital in Cambridge, dreading the prospect of consenting to his heart operation. The staff were amazed at how well David had done. They were also astonished that – against their prognostications – his heart had repaired the holes. He no longer needed the medicines. And he never had that open heart surgery.

David developed an untreatable aspiration pneumonia a little before his third birthday and slipped peacefully out of this world. We buried him in the British cemetery in Kathmandu. In Nepal we savoured our times with David, talked about him and even thought of our bereavement as a period of good grief – a time that strengthened our family bonds through all the highs and lows we had experienced together.

TRANSPORT AND ACCESS

Disability Stockport Transport and Access Forum Incorporating the DisabledGo Steering Group

Your chance to become involved or influence the Transport and Access Strategy

The next three meetings will be held on

Wednesday	13 August 2008
Wednesday	10 September 2008
Wednesday	08 October 2008

at 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm

at

Stockport Town Hall, Committee Room 1, Edward Street
Stockport SK1 3XE

Telephone/fax/textphone us on 0161 480 7248
E-mail disabilitystockport@btinternet.com

or Richard Barnes on 0161 474 4394

STOCKPORT DISABILITY FORUM

The next three meetings of the Stockport Disability Forum
will be held on

Wednesday	10 September 2008
Wednesday	10 December 2008
Wednesday	11 March 2009

at 10.30 am – 12.30 pm

at

The Quaker (Friends') Meeting House
Cooper Street
Higher Hillgate
Stockport

For information about the forum please contact
Kieran McMahon or Barbara Bowden at Disability Stockport on
Telephone/textphone/fax: 0161 480 7248
E-mail: disabilitystockport@btinternet.com

HELP AND SUPPORT

WELL BEING CENTRE

The Well Being Centre in Stockport promotes health, happiness and well being for local people. The centre workers and volunteers are striving to provide a wide range of services and resources in the centre for everyone including:

- Information and advice on local services
- Complementary therapies
- Counselling
- Self help groups and social events
- Music, creative writing and art and craft workshops
- Free internet access
- Self help library
- Volunteering opportunities
- And much, much more!

Call in to the Well Being Centre to find out what they can do to help you and your health, happiness and well being.

Tuesday	11.00am – 4.30pm
Wednesday	10.00am – 3.00pm
Thursday	12.00noon – 7.00pm
Friday	11.00am – 4.30pm

Address: Graylaw House
Chestergate, Stockport SK1 1LZ
Telephone: 0161 474 7713
Email:
stockport.wellbeing@thebiglifecomp.any.com

CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY (CAP)

CAP is a debt counselling charity. You do not have to be a christian to access their services. They also offer help with budgeting.

If you have financial problems contact them on:

0161 975 0182

STOCKPORT DISTRICT CAB

Free, independent, confidential and impartial advice, on debt and money matters, welfare benefits, employment, housing and consumer issues, and more

Call in for advice:

Stockport CAB at 39 Greek Street
Monday – Friday 9.30 am – 1.00 pm

Cheadle CAB at Cheadle Library,
Ashfield Road
Monday – Friday 10.00 am – 3.30 pm

Marple CAB at Hollins House,
Memorial Park
Monday – Friday 10.00 am – 3.30 pm

For telephone advice:

0844 826 9800

Monday – Thursday

2.00 pm – 7.00 pm

Friday 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm

Visit the CAB National website:

www.adviceguide.org.uk

ROYAL SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF & COMMUNICATION DISORDERS

Adult Festival
21st & 22nd August
£3.50 per person, per day

To book please contact Stuart
Roscoe, Inclusive Community Sports
Coach, Royal School for the Deaf and
Communication Disorders, Stanley
Road, Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire SK8
6RQ

Email:
stuart.roscoe@rsdmanchester.org

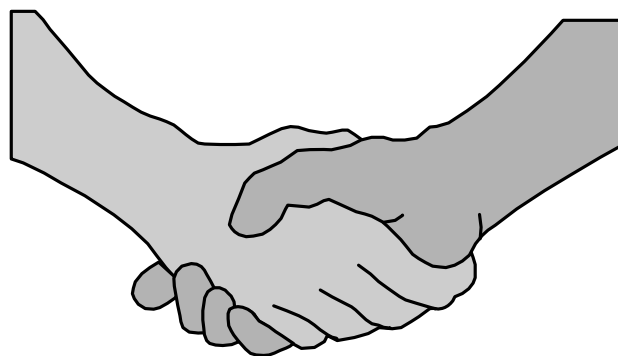
Tel: 0161 610 0121
www.rsdmanchester.org

Are you someone with experience of working in the public, private or voluntary sectors and would like to pass on your expertise?

Disability Stockport is looking for people

who have some spare time and would like to offer their skills as trustees, or participate in working groups

**For more information please call
Kieran McMahon on 0161 480 7248 for a chat or you can
E-mail disabilitystockport@btinternet.com**



NOTICE BOARD

BLUE BADGE MAPS EXPAND

The government's online Blue Badge map service, which makes it easier for disabled people to find parking places, is being extended to cover more towns and cities across the UK.

Originally featuring 64 locations, the total has nearly doubled to 119 – meaning the site now covers locations from Basingstoke and Scunthorpe to London, Manchester and Glasgow.

You can search for designated Blue Badge parking bays information by postcode or location, as well as get information on accessible stations, toilets and petrol stations. The website also includes details on the rules for street parking, time restrictions and any special notices.

Anne McGuire, Minister for Disabled People, said: "Providing clear, up to date information improves disabled people's ability to travel as they wish. I am very pleased that this valuable service has now been extended."

The Blue Badge map can be viewed at:
www.direct.gov.uk/bluebadgemap

AW Cabs

**Luxury 8 seater Mercedes Vito
Wheelchair adapted**

Contact 0780 243 0022

Fully Licensed

LUXURY London Taxi

Licensed to carry 5 people

Contact 07885 666 616



For information about access to shops, restaurants, pubs, and cinemas in Stockport

Contact: www.disabledgo.info
Email: info@disabledgo.info

Tameside Healthcare Ltd

Approved repairers for Department of Health

Mark Loughlin

Mobile 07773 427049

Email: mark@tamesidehealthcare.co.uk



Everything you need to live a confident carefree life

for 100s of mobility and healthcare products

- visit our store
- call us for a free 96 page catalogue
- or call us for a free no obligation home assessment

- Scooters
- Wheelchairs
- Stairlifts
- Walking Aids
- Continence Care
- Bathing Aids
- Rise / Recline Armchairs
- Adjustable Beds
- 100's of Daily living aids
- Hire Service Available
- NHS Vouchers Accepted

0161 480 4999 136-140 Shaw Heath Stockport SK2 6QS

NOTICE BOARD

FOR SALE

1600cc Red Citroen Berlingo multispace forte
1 careful owner
good condition FSH 9K miles reg 2001,
fully adapted for a wheelchair user
£4,500 ono

**Contact: Sue Thomas on
0161 282 0758**

FOR SALE

Ztec manual folding wheelchair
£200 ono
Lightweight 4-wheeled aluminium walker
£30 ono
Raised toilet seat with surround
£20 ono
**Contact: Mrs Wilshaw on
0161 283 7531**

FOR SALE

Green winged **Chair** in very good
condition **£70 ono**
**Contact: Mrs Chapman
on 0161 282 2244**

FOR SALE

Lightweight Quickie rigid frame wheelchair, 3
years old in excellent condition with new tyres. 16"
seat. **£350 Contact Jane on : 0161 419 5070**
(work) or 07811 097076

FOR SALE

**Brand new 4-wheeled
Scooter with accessories**
£500
**Contact Mrs Taylor on
0161 456 5459**

FOR SALE

4-wheeled electric motor
scooter excellent condition
£450 ono
**Contact Derek Etchells on
0161 431 3256**

FOR SALE

**Huntlea Bath Lift
Seat** 3 years old
hardly used
£200 ono
**Contact:
Anita Harries
0161 456 9201**

FOR SALE

4-legged **Tripod**
almost new **£10**
**Contact: Helen Bird
0778 934 0966**

Wanted

Electric wheelchair
**Contact Mr Pampilon on
0161 485 7415**

FOR SALE

Rise/Recline Chair
**Contact: Ms Wallis
on 0161 427 7244**

FOR SALE

Enigma power chair
(would suit weight 11
stones or under) **£450**
**Mrs Cressey
0161 221 3677**

FOR SALE

Scooter
Shoprider deluxe
excellent condition
£500
**Contact:
Janet Loughhead on
0161 427 3174**

Thank you to all those who contributed to this issue. Viewpoint is a **FREE** publication and is available in large print, on audio tape, disk or e-mail. Please let us know which format you prefer.

If you do not wish to receive further copies of Viewpoint, if you have changed address or if your address label is wrong, please contact the office on **0161 480 7248**.

Opinions expressed in this issue do not necessarily reflect the views of members, staff or committee nor have holidays or other services been vetted by Disability Stockport members. All factual information checked and correct at the time of printing.

Issue 74 of Viewpoint will be circulated end September 2008. Information to be included in the next issue should be sent to:

**Barbara Bowden, Disability Stockport, 16 Meyer Street, Cale Green,
STOCKPORT SK3 8JE by 5 September 2008**
E-mail disabilitystockport@btinternet.com
Website www.disabilitystockport.org.uk
Telephone/Textphone/fax 0161 480 7248