

ISSUE 71

WINTER 2007

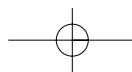
VIEWPOINT

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



0161 480 7248

Disability Stockport, 16 Meyer Street, Cale Green, STOCKPORT SK3 8JE
Website: www.disabilitystockport.org.uk E-mail: disabilitystockport@btinternet.com
Registered Charity No 1006025



Editorial

Welcome to the Winter edition of Viewpoint!
We wish all our readers a very happy, healthy
and prosperous New Year.

At our last Annual General Meeting we said
goodbye Leila Sheerin, one of our trustees, who
has decided to stand down because of health
reasons. We thank Lee for her work for
Disability Stockport and look forward to
welcoming her back again when she feels fit,
after what we hope will be a refreshing break for
her.

The following people have been elected for the
year 2007/2008.

April Alton	Chair
Peter Rowe	Vice Chair
Tony Fitch	Treasurer
Jean Bexley	
Sue Clare	
Maggie Waker	
Peter Wilkins	
Liz Williamson	
Ash Wood	

We are always on the look-out for people to help
with the work of Disability Stockport, be it as a
member of the Trustee Board, volunteering with
Connect Plus, at the Leyfield Primus Centre, or
with our Advocacy project.

If you are interested in working more closely with
Disability Stockport in 2008, please call us, in the
first instance, to let us know which area of our
work you would like to volunteer in.

Contact: Disability Stockport
16 Meyer Street
Cale Green
Stockport
SK3 8JE

Telephone/textphone/fax 0161 480 7248
E-mail: disabilitystockport@btinternet.com
Website: www.disabilitystockport.org.uk

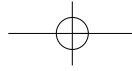
CONTENTS

Editorial	2
New Year Greetings	
Information Day	3
Disabled Motorists Speak Out	4
Self-Advocacy Forum	5
Trading Standards	6
Holidays	7
Connect Plus	8
Leyfield Primus	9
Letter to the Director	10
STARS	11
Transport & Access Stockport Disability Forum	12
Help and Support	13
Employment Opportunities	14
Notice Board	15 & 16

HAPPY

NEW

YEAR



You are cordially invited to an
Information Day

Come, meet, listen to, question
and share your information with

Disabled People, the Infoline Partners*
and Representatives from
Local, National and International Organisations
at

The Cheshire Conference Centre
Stockport County FC
Edgeley Park
Stockport

on

Friday 11 April 2008

10.00 am – 4.00 pm

All are welcome

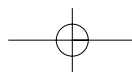
R S V P

Please contact Kieran McMahon or Barbara Bowden to let us know if
you require a display space and to register your interest.

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Stockport SK3 8JE

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E-mail: disabilitystockpor@btinternet.com

* Disability Stockport, Age Concern, Gaddum Centre and Stockport MIND



DISABLED MOTORISTS SPEAK OUT

Motor manufacturers have been challenged, along with Government, to do more to recognise and meet the needs of the growing number of older and disabled motorists, at the first European Mobility Debate.

Delegates from as far afield as the USA, Japan and across Europe met in London with representatives from The Forum of Mobility Centres, the Department for Transport and the Department for Work and Pensions. Political speakers included Anne McGuire, Minister for Disabled People and Richard Howitt, MEP, President of the All Party Disability Intergroup of the European Parliament.

Delegates heard that there are 50 million disabled people in Europe today. This number will increase with an ageing population because of the close correlation between age and disability (some two-thirds of disabled people are over retirement age).

The views of disabled people were forcefully expressed by Sir Bert Massie, CBE, former Chair of the Disability Rights Commission and Bas Treffers, Vice President of the European Disability Forum. Both highlighted that access into and out of a vehicle remained a major challenge for many disabled people and severely limited their choice as motorists.

Bas Treffers emphasised the need for a level playing field across Europe in standards of adapted vehicles and for the availability of independent assessments to enable disabled people to make informed choices. He highlighted the need for licence conditions not to restrict the vehicles disabled motorists were able to drive, for driving schools to have adapted cars available for tuition and for facilities at service stations to be improved.

Other Key Challenges made included a call for:

- ◆ Improved communication between the motor industry and the adaptation and conversion industries.
- ◆ The engagement of disability organisations at European level.
- ◆ Political support at national and European levels.

The Chairman of Motability, Lord Sterling GCVO, CBE highlighted the need for political commitment to move the agenda forward and pledged the support of Motability in working to that end.

He also announced that a second European Mobility Debate will be staged in the Autumn of 2008 in Brussels.

SELF ADVOCACY FORUM

Would you like the chance to meet up with other disabled people in Stockport?
Would you like the chance to share experiences and get information about issues affecting disabled people?

Would you like to know more about subjects such as Access to work, Care Assessments, how to access services, the Independent Living Fund and the Disability Discrimination Act?

Would you like to understand more about the public equality duty and its impact on you as a Stockport resident?

Do you think having this knowledge would help you to deal with problems relating to your disability more effectively?

Through our work over the years, we have developed lots of ways for disabled people to access and share information: such as infoline, the Find Out Guide and the Advocacy Service. We know there are many people out there who have lots of experience and information to share.

Many people phone the office, not for information, but to inform us of things that are happening to them and how they cope. They come up with all sorts of solutions and we want to give this information to as many people as possible. So you will be pleased to know that we are setting up a **Self Advocacy Sub Group** of the Stockport Disability Forum.

We will meet every three months initially, in the evening. The Forum will be officially launched in April. We want it to be informal but with a theme and speaker. Informal time at the beginning and end of the meeting, for people to meet and chat. There is a wealth of knowledge within Disability Stockport staff, members, trustees and committees.

We would also invite people from other services to come and talk with the group. We want the meetings to be interactive and maybe even develop workshops. The idea is that this is a social event with a purpose. Most support groups are specific to your medical condition or impairment. This is **not**. This is about issues relevant to all disabled people, it is for you!

We are looking for volunteers to help establish the Forum; we would need to meet up from January, once a month for a couple of hours, before the launch in April. The Advocacy Service would facilitate it so you would be working with the Advocacy staff.

**If you are interested please contact
Michelle Dutton, Advocacy Worker, Disability Stockport on 0161 480 7248 or
E-mail: disabilitystockport@btinternet.com**

TRADING STANDARDS ADVICE

Buying and Servicing a Car

Buying

If the car is second-hand, ask the dealer to confirm that they have checked that the car has no outstanding finance and has not been a write-off. You may want to get an independent inspection of the vehicle.

Always test drive the car before you agree to buy and take someone with you to help look over it – they may spot things you missed in the excitement.

Make sure you are clear about what is included in the price (road tax, optional extras, any delivery charges) and if you are part-exchanging your old car, make sure you know exactly how much allowance the trader is giving you for this.

Always check the paperwork (including any credit or HP agreement) thoroughly before signing. Don't let anyone rush you. You are spending a lot of money and you're entitled to take your time.

Servicing and Repairs

Make sure it is clear what is included in the cost of the service (labour, parts, VAT). Ask the garage to ring you to get permission before they do any other work. The work should be carried out with reasonable care and skill.

If a fault has not been correctly diagnosed or not repaired, you should allow the garage the opportunity to rectify it. If the garage fails to do so, you may be entitled to get the work done elsewhere and recover the cost from the garage.

How do I check if the garage is reputable?

To help you decide, **Stockport Council's Trading Standards Department** runs a scheme called **the Fair Play Charter** which local car sales and servicing garages can sign up to if they meet the required standards and comply with the relevant legislation. For a list of garages signed up to the Fair Play Charter, check the Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council's website.

**For all consumer advice ring 'Consumer Direct'
on 08454 04 05 06**

HOLIDAYS

Vitalise is a national charity providing services for disabled people, visually impaired people, and carers. They believe that everyone deserves a break, and freedom and choice are the essence of their breaks.

UK

They offer short breaks at five accessible centres in the UK: in Nottingham, Southport, Southampton, Chigwell and Cornwall. Centres have restaurants, bars and other leisure facilities. Some have swimming pools and all have lovely gardens. All centres offer 24-hour personal care on-call.

All centres offer a range of activities and excursions, on theme weeks and non-theme weeks alike. Travel on their specially adapted coaches or relax at the centres – the choice is yours. Whatever you choose, their trained staff and volunteers will make for a smooth stay.

Europe

Vitalise Europe offers accessible hotels in Spain and Germany. Their proposed partnership with Sanyres in Spain will mean that they will be able to offer care support for guests.

Vitalise guests come from all over the UK and further afield. They care for people with over 150 different health conditions, including cerebral palsy, cardiovascular diseases, Alzheimer's, multiple sclerosis (MS), head and spinal injuries. Vitalise welcomes carers who want to accompany guests.

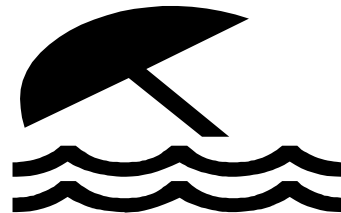
Other Vitalise Services

Outdoor Adventure Breaks in Cornwall – for children and adults, from schools, colleges or groups.

Telephone: 0845 345 1970 for a brochure.

Vitalise Holidays sun, sightseeing, activity and special interest breaks in the UK and abroad for visually impaired people and sighted guides.

Telephone: 0845 330 0149 for a brochure.



CONNECT PLUS

WHAT DOES CONNECT PLUS REALLY DO?

Apart from the Christmas Party our Members and Volunteers enjoyed a wide variety of Connect Plus activities. There were regular monthly events like Ten Pin Bowling, Movement to Music and Games evenings. During the year we introduced some new activities such as Boccia, Bingo and Video evenings. We had day trips to places like the National Coal Mining Museum, Southport Norton Priory plus many others.

As well as the group activities, we supported our members on one-to-one activities. These were quite varied and included watching sport, going to the cinema or theatre, shopping, Buxton, pub quizzes and introduced short weekend activities.

What next?

This year we hope to include Archery, Complementary Therapies such as Reiki, short courses with Life Long Learning, visits to the Museums, and many more.

To enable our Members to enjoy these activities Connect Plus relies on Volunteers

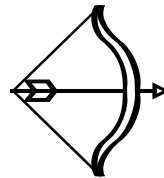
Volunteering

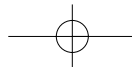
If you or anyone you know would like to become a Volunteer and gain the opportunity to meet new people and take part in interesting and enjoyable activities please contact:

Tony on 0161 474 0048

Please note that having a disability does not prevent you from becoming a Volunteer with Connect Plus.

We look forward to hearing from you!





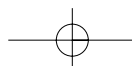
Leyfield Primus

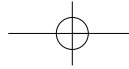


**A Day Centre in Romiley for Adults with Physical
Disabilities and/or Sensory Impairments**

**To find out more about becoming a member
or a volunteer**

Telephone 0161 430 2891





A LETTER TO THE DIRECTOR

Dear Kieran

I was wondering if it would be possible for you to write to me, and tell me in more detail, how you feel disabled people and their carers can work together towards a common objective.

I am concerned because in the history of the disabled people's movements, carers are often seen to have different views and opinions to disabled people's organisations.

I, and other disabled people, share the concerns about whether disabled people and carers can work together on the same group, and can work together to achieve the same aims and objectives, as all too often disabled people and carers do not seem to work together and we have different aims and objectives.

This is not to say that carers do not have legitimate needs but I think that they should be dealt with in separate groups. All too often in the past, disabled people have been oppressed by some carers and it is difficult to see how we can work together.

Maybe you could also publish your answer in Viewpoint? Would it be possible for this to become more a place where disabled people can air their views and opinions rather than being used as something of an information sheet.

Of course, there is room for both information and advice, and to be able to air views about issues of concern to disabled people. It is just that I cannot see much room in the magazine for biting social and political comment.

Paul Mittler

OoooOoooOoooOooo

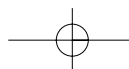
Dear Paul

Like most issues, the one you describe is far from clear cut. I agree that there are many past examples of carers and disabled people's organisations being at odds with each other. There are also many instances of directly conflicting views and approaches between the two.

For me, this is all the more reason to try and work together where this is possible. However, I would not see any reason to force people into this and accept that work can also be done with two distinct groups.

I will take up your suggestion of raising the issue in Viewpoint. I do accept your point that the publication does not contain much social and political comment. It is not without it entirely, but is as you say, mainly an information sheet. However, readers have always been encouraged to contribute to Viewpoint.

**Kieran McMahon
Director**



STARS

What is STARS?

STARS is the School Transfer Advisory Service. This is a service set up in the Autumn of 2007 as part of a government initiative called Choice Advice; in Stockport it is called STARS. STARS is independent of Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC).

What does STARS do?

STARS can:

- ◆ Give impartial information and advice on applying for a secondary school place.
- ◆ Give impartial information and advice on secondary schools in Stockport and the surrounding areas.
- ◆ Help parents/carers to fill in their secondary school application form.
- ◆ Help parents choose another secondary school when children are moving schools.
- ◆ Help families moving into the Stockport area to choose a secondary school.

How can you contact STARS?

Julie Lowe: based at Family Info Link (the Information Service for Children and Young people in Stockport).

9.00 am – 1.00 pm Monday – Friday

Telephone: 0808 800 0606

Textphone: 0161 476 4380

E-mail: julie.lowe@familyinfolink.co.uk

Website: www.familyinfolink.co.uk

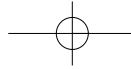
Rita Long: based at the Parent partnership Service

9.00 am – 4.00 pm Wednesdays

Telephone: 0161 477 6648

Email: senstar@togethertrust.org

**For children with special educational needs: www.togethertrust.org.uk
(education tap)**



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

Wednesday	13 February 2008
Wednesday	12 March 2008
Wednesday	09 April 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 2008 meetings of the Stockport Disability Forum
will be held on

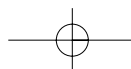
Wednesday	12 March
Wednesday	11 June
Wednesday	10 September
Wednesday	10 December

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

Choice at your Libraries

Patients can now find out information about their choice of hospitals and also book their hospital appointments at their local public libraries. If a patient needs a procedure undertaking in a hospital they should be offered a choice of which hospital they would like to attend. Stockport PCT and Stockport Libraries launched a new project to help patients make this choice in November 2007.

Library staff have been trained to help patients extract and compare information from the NHS choices website about the different hospitals they have been offered once their referral has been done. Patients can compare amongst other things, information on:

- ◆ how long they will have to wait to see a hospital doctor
- ◆ how long they are likely to spend in hospital
- ◆ how clean and comfortable the hospital is

The site can also be used for patients to feedback their experiences

Once patients have made their choice they have free access to use the internet at the libraries to book their appointments on line.

If patients have more in-depth or specific enquiries they can be referred to the Patient Advice Liaison Service (PALS)

**For more information:
Contact PALS on
0161 426 5888 or
E-mail: pals@stockport-pct.nhs.uk**

Debt Advice

Debt Advice has moved!

The Debt Advisers who were at the Stockport Law Centre are now based at Ponsonby House, Lacy Street, off Edward Street (behind the Town Hall).

Still the same friendly, **FREE** and independent debt advice service for people who are struggling to balance the bills.

Telephone: 0161 474 3093
Minicom: 0161 474 3093
Fax: 0161 474 3095
SMS Text: 07624 805624

**E-mail:
welfare.rights@stockport.gov.uk**

Assisted Refuse Collections

The Council is changing the way it collects refuse from households which have a bag collection service. It has already started in some parts of the borough and everyone should have had notification by April.

If you are **unable** to put your refuse sack or recycling box/garden waste bin at the edge of your property for collection because of your disability **an assisted collection** can be arranged.

**Please contact the council's hotline:
0845 833 4444 for more information.**
Website: www.stockport.gov.uk/waste
**E-mail:
stockportdirect@stockport.gov.uk**
Or text: 07797 806 626

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Claiming Incapacity or Sickness Benefits? Want to work but need extra support?

Work Solutions supports thousands of local people every year into training and employment opportunities. Working in partnership with Jobcentre Plus, Work Solutions is delivering Pathways to Work, an innovative government-funded service, designed to provide greater support to people with a health condition or disability, in their move from benefits and back into work.

Pathways to Work offers you support from a highly skilled Employment Adviser, who through regular work focused interviews, will work with you to develop a personalised work action plan and help you achieve your employment goals.

Mark's Story

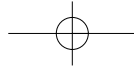
Mark from Wigan had been out of work through illness and was desperately keen to find employment. He found work as an assistant engineer after being referred to Work Solutions' services.

Mark says "They offered advice about my benefits, about which jobs to go for and encouraged me and gave me the confidence to find work again."

Work Solutions and Pathways to Work will offer you all the support and guidance you will need. They will:

- Provide financial and benefits advice to help you.
- Assess the financial benefits of being in work through a 'Better off in Work Calculation'.
- Fully understand your tax credit and benefit protection options. You may be eligible for a Return to Work Credit. This is an extra £40 per week for one year paid by Jobcentre Plus (conditions apply).
- Provide you with access to employment-related training courses, to develop your skills and enhance your employability.
- Support you with a range of pre-employment and job search activities
- Provide help and guidance to access suitable job vacancies
- Provide access to a Condition Management Programme (CMP). Delivered by health professionals, the CMP will help you to understand how you can manage your conditions of work.
- Continue to provide support and advice to you and your employer even after you have started work, ensuring your move into employment is successful.

The Pathways to Work programme will be launched in Stockport at 2.30 pm – 5.00 pm on Thursday 31 January 2008 at the Sapphire Suite, Stockport County FC, Edgeley Park, Hardcastle Road, Edgeley, Stockport
Interested? Then go along to the launch or call 07912 773 899 for more details.



NOTICE BOARD

PREVENTING PROTECTING RESPONDING

FIRE
Don't worry about it
Do something about it

The Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service Target Fire home Safety Initiative has Home Fire Risk Assessment Teams on call to offer free home checks, free fitted smoke alarms (where appropriate) and advice on fire safety to anyone who might be at risk.

Why worry when they can put your mind at rest?

Contact them on: 0800 555 815 and quote reference number HF/047

or visit their website
www.manchesterfire.gov.uk



GREATER MANCHESTER
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

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
E-mail: info@disabledgo.info

Two Recent Library Information Services

1. The **SMS Text Service** where people can text a short query and a team of experts will find the information and text back. Text them on: **07624 805 621**
2. The **People's Network Enquiry Service** which instantly connects you to trained library staff to help you find answers to your questions.

Website: www.stockport.gov.uk/libraries



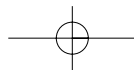
for 100s of mobility and healthcare products

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

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

Everything you need to live a confident carefree life

- 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



NOTICE BOARD

KEEP STOCKPORT SAFE AND SOUND

The Stockport Community Pride campaign is an initiative by the Council, which aims to strengthen civic pride in the community. The Council and its partners are working hard to make Stockport an even safer place to live, work and visit. Here's how you can be involved in the 'Safe and Sound' phase of the campaign.

Now the nights are dark, you can take simple precautions to help stay safe. For safety tips for yourself and your home visit www.stockport.gov.uk/pride.

To register for a FREE personal safety alarm text your name and Stockport address to **07797 806 539** (limited availability).

Report anti-social behaviour by calling the non-emergency hotline: **0845 833 4444**

FREE
Wheelchair and commode
Contact Roxy on
07971 339 9969

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 09706

FOR SALE
Brand new 4-wheeled
Scooter with accessories
£995
Contact Mrs Taylor on
0161 456 5459

FOR SALE
4-wheeled electric motor
scooter excellent condition
£450 ono
Contact Derek Etchells on
0161431 3256

FOR SALE
4-wheeled 6.5 mph
Electric Scooter
(Rascal 388XL)
under 18 months old
cost £1,300 new,
will

£300 ono

Contact: Mike on
0161 429 6053

Message in a Bottle
 Information for the
 emergency services. Items
 supplied by the Lions
Call 0161 480 7248

Wanted
 Electric wheelchair
Contact Mr Pampilon on
0161 485 7415

FOR SALE

Scooter

Contact: Mr Williams
on 0161 291 0296

FREE

Churchill Stairlift
Straight run

Contact:
Mr Burgess on
0161 442 9923

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 72 of Viewpoint will be circulated end of March 2008. Information to be included in the next issue should be sent to:

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STOCKPORT SK3 8JE by 29 February 2008
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Website www.disabilitystockport.org.uk
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