

ISSUE 64

WINTER 2005

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 Winter edition of Viewpoint. This year has been tinged with personal sadness for all of us at Disability Stockport, (See Page 3). Nevertheless, we have been involved in a number of projects which we hope will bring many dividends in the years to come.

We have been working with the Stockport Disability Forum (See page 12) and hope that all of Stockport's people will benefit as a result.

In October the following people were re-elected to serve on the Executive Committee for another year:

April Alton	Chair
Peter Rowe	Vice Chair
Tony Fitch	Treasurer

Sue Clare
Debbie Cullen
Pam Nield

Leila Sheerin
Peter Wilkins
Ash Wood

Co-opted

Edith Barratt
Mark Shanahan

Un-elected Representatives:

Janet Beer	Adults & Communities Directorate
Cllr Maggie Clay	Stockport MBC
Fran Holmes	Stockport PCT

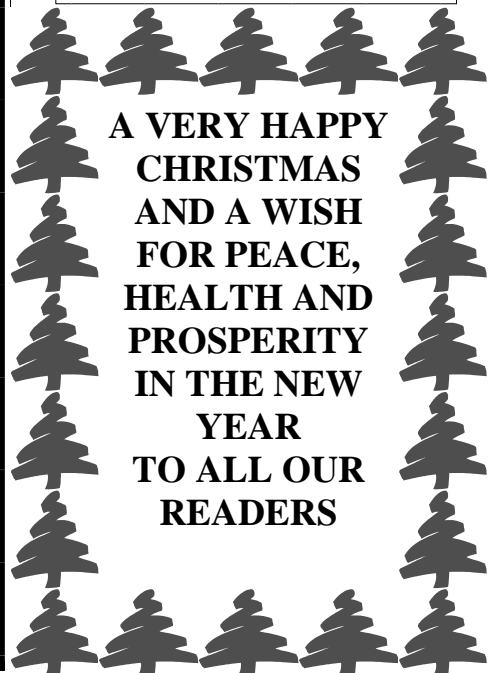
Do continue to support us in any way you can. Tell us about your concerns and help us to change things for the better in Stockport.

Just telephone, write, or email us if you have ideas, problems, solutions, indeed anything which will help to improve life for all disabled people.

**Contact: Kieran McMahon, Director,
Disability Stockport, 16 Meyer Street, Cale Green,
Stockport, SK3 8JE.
Telephone/fax/textphone: 0161 480 7248
Email: disabilitystockport@btinternet.com**

CONTENTS

Editorial	2
Season's Greetings2	
Sad Farewell	3
Disability Living Allowance (DLA)	4
Home Security Package	5
Find Out 2006	6
Holidays	7
Connect Plus News	8
Stockport Parks Survey	9
Blue Badges	
Resentment	10
Health & Trading Standards	11
Transport & Access	12
Stockport Disability Forum	
Help and Support	13
The Garden of Eden	14
Notice Board	16



SAD FAREWELL

I regret to tell you that Rod Simpson, our longest serving Vice Chair, passed away suddenly on Wednesday, 28th September.

Rod joined Disability Stockport in 1999, starting as a disabled awareness trainer and access auditor (independent wheelchair user). I remember Liz Williamson, our previous Director, introducing him. He was friendly and very good at putting his point across. As the rest of the Executive Committee, staff and I got to know him, he opened up even more. He had a witty sense of humour and would take on everything that was asked of him, when his health allowed. He was fiercely independent and didn't take kindly to offers of help, preferring instead to be an example of the ability of disabled people to live independently.

He was voted in as Vice Chair in October 2000, I remember asking him over the telephone if he would like to take the job on and he said he would be "greatly honoured and pleased to take the job on." He thanked me for asking him and expressed a hope that he would fulfil his duties well. I said "I am sure you will," and I wasn't wrong.

He continued to carry on the work at Disability Stockport and was involved in a lot of our projects, some of the most successful were his work with the transport and access forum, where you can see all over Stockport, the dropped kerbs, the new puffin crossings, the adaptations to Stockport Railway Station are just a few of the tasks he, along with the other members of the team were dedicated to.

He was also deeply involved in the work being undertaken at Stepping Hill Hospital's new cardiac and surgery unit presently under construction. Rod represented Disability Stockport on a number of committees of other local voluntary organisations such as, the Stockport Law Centre, Stockport Disability Forum, Stockport Ring & Ride, Stockport Walking Form, Greater Manchester Police, his local IMPACT group and many other exhibitions and conferences. He kept disability firmly on the agenda, trying to ensure that everyone was aware that 'what improves life for disabled people improves life for everyone.

One of his hobbies was computers. He was brilliant at sorting out problems and upgrading our computer systems both at Leyfield Primus and at Meyer Street, setting up our website which is still in use today. He was completely self taught. His other interests were small bore-target shooting and photography, he was also on the management committee of Marple Rifle and pistol Club.

He will be greatly missed by all of us.

**April Alton
Chair
Disability Stockport**

DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE

Disability Living Allowance (DLA) is a tax-free benefit you can get if you need help getting around and/or looking after yourself because you are ill, disabled or terminally ill. You can also claim DLA for an ill or disabled child.

Who is eligible?

You are eligible to claim DLA if:

- You need help caring for yourself or getting around
- You are under 65 when you claim

If you have a life expectancy of less than six months there are special rules to help you get the money quickly and easily.

Eligibility and DLA – some people who make a claim for DLA may be asked to have a medical examination. If you are 65 years old or over you should claim Attendance Allowance instead.

How much do you get?

DLA has two components:

- a care component – if you need help looking after yourself
- a mobility component – if you can't walk or need help getting around

Some people will be entitled to receive just one component, others may receive both.

DLA is paid at different rates depending on how the disability affects you. It is usually paid directly into any account of your choice which accepts Direct Payment of benefits. If necessary, someone else can receive the money on your behalf.

If you need someone who cares for you to collect your money or if you're registered blind, payment can be made by cheque which can be cashed at the post office.

Effect on other benefits

If you start to get DLA it might increase the amount of other benefits you're entitled to, such as Income Support or Housing Benefit. It is ignored as income for working out Income Support and Jobseeker's Allowance.

You can ask for a claim form:

Over the phone on 0845 123 456

By contacting your local benefits office

By downloading the form from www.direct.gov.uk/DisabledPeople/FinancialSupportArticles/fs/

HOME SECURITY PACKAGE

The Council continues to support the Police and other local agencies in Stockport in their efforts to reduce domestic burglary and the fear of crime. One method which has proved very popular is the Council's Home Security Package which has been so successful that funding has been increased to £50,000 this year. The Package is a free grant and is aimed at older homeowners and some younger people who are on a low income. People renting from a private landlord may also be eligible.

The grant is available from the Council for homeowners and private tenants, and can pay for the following items to be installed in your home.

- Door Viewer
- Door Chain Door Viewer Intercom
- Patio Door Locks
- Security Grill for external door panels/glass doors
- Mortice Bolts to external and solid internal doors
- Window Locks to all opening windows
- 5 Lever Mortice Lock to external doors
- Carbon Monoxide Detector
- Smoke Alarm

The Council's Home Security Officer will visit to see which are appropriate for your home and make arrangements for the work to be done. To be eligible for this grant, you must fit the following criteria:

- You are over 60 years of age OR you are under 60 and in receipt of a means tested benefit
- Your property is within Council Tax Bands A to D
- You are a homeowner or a private tenant and have lived in your home for at least 3 years

For more information or to see if you qualify for the grant, please call the Home Security Officer on 0161 474 2663

**Alternatively, you can write to: Home Security Officer,
Independent Living Team
1 St Peters Square, Stockport SK1 1NZ**

find out 2006

By the time you receive this newsletter Disability Stockport will have had the first delivery of our new-look **find out guide**, full to the brim with up-to-date information.

For those of you who have not heard of **the find out guide** – it is a 100 plus page A to Z directory of services available nationally and locally. It is free to members of the public.



To replace your old guide or to be a first-timer, just phone or write to Disability Stockport and we will send you one in the next post.

Contact Disability Stockport:

By Phone/fax/textphone 0161 480 7248

**Write to Disability Stockport, 16 Meyer Street, Cale Green,
Stockport SK3 8JE**

Email: disabilitystockport@btinternet.com

HOLIDAYS

LUXURY CARAVAN IN PRESTATYN



More spacious, sleeps six people, fully equipped

You can get away from everyday pressures, be free to do your own thing and enjoy your surroundings in your own way and in your own time.

You can join in a wide variety of on-the-spot facilities and entertainment or you can explore many accessible venues in Wales.

What holiday-makers say

“Very impressed with the caravan. So spacious”

“Super caravan. Very impressed with all the facilities on the site”

“Caravan well equipped and very spacious”

“Nice caravan, very, very spacious”

“Caravan excellent”

“Enjoyed our stay very much”

“Caravan is lovely and in a very good spot”

For all your caravan enquiries contact:

**Caravan Bookings on 0161 480 7248 (Telephone/fax/textphone)
Or E-mail disabilitystockport@btinternet.com**

**BOOK
NOW!**

ORLANDO FLORIDA

Home with a heart for disabled travellers
adapted bungalow

3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms,
(Mangar bathlift), cable TV,
2 telephones,

Country club membership FREE,
10 minutes from the airport
15 minutes from Disney World

For availability and booking

Contact paraplegic owner

Sue Fisher on 0161 792 3029

Email rita.suefisher@ntlworld.com

TALL SHIP ADVENTURES Winter Voyages 2005 – 2006

The Jubilee Sailing Trust (JST) is one of the UK's largest sailing charities and remains the only organisation in the world that offers tall ship sailing to everyone be they experienced sailors or complete novices, regardless of their physical ability.

**To book contact JST on 0870 443 5783 or
book online at www.jst.org.uk**

CONNECT PLUS NEWS



Disability Stockport is one of just eight organisations taking part in an important research project, run by SCVS Volunteer Centre as part of 2005 - Year of the Volunteer. This will look at the effect volunteering has on staff that work with volunteers, people who receive a service from them and, of course, the volunteers themselves!

The research will involve lots of people being asked their views on how volunteers and volunteering affects them. The results will then be put into a report that will show just how important volunteering is to the Borough of Stockport in general, and to Disability Stockport in particular. It is hoped that through organisations acting on the research and the report, volunteering in Stockport will become an even more enjoyable and valued activity.

Look out for more information on this project coming soon!

You could make a difference to someone's life by becoming a volunteer with Connect Plus or the Leyfield Primus Centre.

The benefits of volunteering include a chance to meet new people and make new friends. Experience new leisure activities, have fun, improve your social life. There's also free training and a chance to learn new skills, experience of working with disabled people and gain a reference.

If you or someone you know would like to volunteer, please call Tony Williams on 0161 474 0048 to volunteer for Connect Plus or to volunteer to Leyfield Primus please call 0161 480 7248.

STOCKPORT PARKS SURVEY

A Message from Stockport Parks and Recreation Service

Many thanks to all readers who returned the questionnaires asking for your views on Stockport's parks, distributed with Viewpoint 63, and congratulations to **Mark Drury** for winning the prize draw.

Here are some of the results from the survey:

Almost 75% of you thought the level of accessibility within Stockport's parks was average to very good. The main reason for visiting parks was for 'fresh air' and you visit a park once a quarter on average, usually visiting your local park.

Not having information, inaccessible paths, lack of disabled parking bays and toilets were cited as the main reasons preventing you from visiting parks and where you would like to see progress made.

Your comments will help determine where and how improvements are made to Stockport's parks and we hope you will begin to see changes within the next 12 months.

For a copy of the report based on your returned questionnaires please contact Julia Burrell on 0161 4744457 or email her at julia.burrell@stockport.gov.uk.

Blue Badges

There have been changes to the law on blue badges. When you display your blue badge on a vehicle, it can now be inspected. The people who are allowed to inspect your badge are police officers, traffic wardens, and people working for the local authority who check that vehicles are parked properly, such as parking attendants, and civil enforcement officers. These people will be able to produce a photographic identity card or warrant card, if requested, to prove that they are authorised officers. If any of these people ask to see your blue badge, you must show it to them. If you do not, you will be breaking the law. These checks are not about whether you are entitled to a badge. That is for the local council who issued it.

When you show your badge nothing will happen to you if your badge is being used correctly. Your badge must be on the dashboard or fascia of the vehicle where it can be seen through the windscreen. You can use the badge if you drive a vehicle or if you are a passenger in a vehicle driven by someone else.

Badge holders may park free of charge and without time limit at parking meters on-street and 'pay & display' on street parking unless there is a sign for a local traffic order, specifying a time limit for holders of disabled parking badges or a ban eg on loading in force. The blue badge must be displayed. The clock must also be displayed where a time limit is in force.

If you would like to apply for a blue badge contact Cheadle area office on 0161 428 3241 or Marple area office on 0161 427 7011 depending on where you live.

RESENTMENT

Resentment is felt
For the lack of what I cannot control.
My legs of steel do not stop me
Intolerance and bigotry do.
You take my dignity
With obstacles previously unaware,
Now part of the day to day.
Your indifference cloaks me in invisibility
Whilst your embarrassment makes you stare
Then turn away...
You pass laws to make yourselves feel better
Yet you created a Paper Tiger.
My body, my life, my being
Cease to be mine
Transformed into a thing
Touched, handled, by those unknown.
I do not need sorrow
I do not require pity
I want what I should have
Dignity, tolerance, respect

by Zita & Peter

Peter Rowe

HEALTH & TRADING STANDARDS

The Environmental Health and Trading Standards Section is divided into six teams. The section offers a wide range of services, details of which can be found on their web pages (www.stockport.gov.uk). A few of the services that may be of use to you are listed below.

Environment

- Investigate and advise on private drainage matters
- Investigate nuisances such as noise, smells and piles of rubbish

Food Safety and Standards

- Investigate complaints about food or food businesses
- Investigate reports of food poisoning
- Offer a wide range of food safety training courses

Health & Safety

- Investigate serious accidents that occur in the workplace
- Offer training courses

Environmental Action

- Offer free treatment to get rid of rats, mice, bed bugs and cockroaches from people's homes and a chargeable service to get rid of fleas, ants, wasps and other insects
- Provide a graffiti removal service
- Investigate any reports of fly-tipping, littering and fly-posting and enforce the rules where necessary

Licensing

- Prevent fraud by bogus charitable collections and door-to-door collections by registering them and investigating bogus cases

Animal Welfare

- Run a dog warden service
- Encourage dog owners to act responsibly to prevent fouling and take action where necessary

Trading Practices

- Provide advice and information on consumer rights through a dedicated help line
- Investigate rogue traders
- Investigate complaints about dangerous products on sale

Underage Sales

- Investigate complaints about businesses selling alcohol, tobacco and other age restricted goods to people under the minimum age

Community

- Consult with those using their service and those who don't to help improve the service
- Attend a range of community meetings to explain their role and give information to help you make the most of their service.

How to contact them:

Write to: Stockport MBC, EED Services, Environmental Health & Trading Standards, Stopford House, Piccadilly, Stockport SK1 3XE

Telephone: 0161 474 4181 Textphone: 0161 474 4240 Fax: 0161 474 4369

TRANSPORT AND ACCESS

Disability Stockport Transport and Access Forum

Your chance to become involved or influence the Transport Strategy

The next meeting is:

Wednesday 11 January at 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm
at
Stockport Town Hall
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

Over the past year the Forum has been campaigning for the correct use of parking bays by distributing 'Please Move' notices. These are intended to be a polite – but firm reminder to drivers.

We have also been gathering information from people with sight impairments about the difficulties they encounter when using or trying to use public transport and also highlighting a 'wayfinder' system for Stockport so that blind and partially sighted people are not disadvantaged.

The Forum is intended mainly for statutory agencies, voluntary organisations and others with an interest in disability to come together and help co-ordinate ideas, information and strategies. Individuals who represent key areas of disability are also encouraged to add a service user perspective.

The meetings are held quarterly at The Quaker (Friends) Meeting House, Cooper Street, Higher Hillgate, Stockport.

The meetings are held on Wednesdays 10.30 am to 12.30 pm.

The dates are 15 March, 14 June, 13 September and 13 December. (Please put the dates in your diary).

Just come along and add your voice to the meeting. You will receive a warm welcome.

If you need some more of the 'Please Move' notices, contact Disability Stockport on 0161 480 7248.

HELP AND SUPPORT

NEED HELP WITH MONEY?

The way in which state pensions and benefits are paid has changed: order books have been phased out in favour of modernised payment methods.

A FREE, confidential and independent scheme run by **Age Concern Stockport's Money Maze Service** is available to all older people aged 50 and over, and their carers, for the payment of their state pensions and benefits.

Age Concern Stockport will help you with any difficulties you may be experiencing

- Advice on your individual options
- Help to open a different account
- Help with budgeting
- Help with letters about your account
- Setting up standing orders and direct debits
- Using cash machines and chip and pin
- Any other money problems

They also offer an **Advocacy Service** for those individuals who may need more practical help in managing an account. Whatever your circumstances, they are there to provide as much help and assistance you may need so you feel confident in using **DIRECT PAYMENT**.

Contact the MONEY MAZE team on 0161 480 1211.

GREATER MANCHESTER ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORT LIMITED (GMATL)

Do you find it difficult to make journeys?

You might find it difficult to make journeys by public transport because you live in an area where there are no regular services, or there may be other reasons preventing you from using the services that do run, such as cost and accessibility.

If this is the case, you may be able to get Travel Support Aid to help towards the cost of paying for your journeys.

**For more information phone GMATL on 0161 242 6724 (between 9.00am – 4.00pm)
Fax 0161 242 6721**

Email: cmu@ringandride.info

**Write to: GMATL, 9 Portland Street,
Piccadilly Gardens,
Manchester M60 1HX**

WINTER WARMTH ADVICE LINE

If you have any questions about keeping warm and well, call the Winter Warmth Advice Line. It is staffed by people who should be able to answer your questions or put you in touch with someone in your area who will be able to help.

Call FREE on 0800 085 7000 (Monday to Friday 8.00am – 8.00pm)



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

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- Continence Care
- Bathing Aids
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- Adjustable Beds
- 100's of Daily living aids
- Hire Service Available
- NHS Vouchers Accepted

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

THE GARDEN OF EDEN

The Eden Project in Cornwall was the brain child of Tim Smit; the man who refound the Lost Gardens of Helligan.

Take a 63 acre worked-out clay pit; add vision, flair, a huge amount of hard work and a lot of money. "Then cook for a few years to create a beautiful site to celebrate our place in nature".

During a holiday to Cornwall in October 2005, I visited Eden twice, I was so impressed. Eden started as a dream in 1995 and opened to the public in 2000, since when there have been over six million visitors.

The first impression is of the size of Eden. Attendants direct traffic to the appropriate car or coach park. Car parking areas reserved for disabled people are located closest to the Visitor Centre. There is a short walk, down a gentle slope, with resting places and seats, from the car park, all correctly marked out, to the Visitor Centre.

By the very nature of Eden, there is a lot of walking. On a first come, first served basis, wheelchairs are available and there is a 'land train' to take people back up to the Visitor Centre and car parks. When I visited there was a concession for disabled people – a carer was admitted free of charge.

The main features of Eden are without doubt, the Biomes. The Humid Tropics and the Warm Temperate Biomes are huge structures. Up to 180 feet in height. Both Biomes offer a feast for the senses.

The Humid Topics Biomes are consistently hot and humid and contain trees and plants from the tropical regions of the world. See coffee growing as well as bananas, figs, rubber trees and far more than I can describe. However, people with breathing difficulties might find the atmosphere in the highest parts oppressive. The route takes about 45 minutes to walk and involves a gentle climb. The last third of the route does involve a more sustained climb and there is an option here for people to leave from a side exit.

The Warm Temperate Biomes contain trees and plants from the Mediterranean, from California and other temperate regions. All of the exhibits are described in detail and at various locations there are guides who will give a more detailed explanation.

There are plenty of seats for you when tired, all made out of wood. The restaurant sells wonderful meals, while for those who want a snack, the café has a comprehensive menu. At intervals there are toilets; the wheelchair accessible toilets and baby changing rooms are well equipped.

Not far away from the biomes is the new Education Centre which is both instructive and fun for all and there is also another very good café.

Parts of the site are a construction site as the Project is further expanded so as to hold even more treasures from around the world. Every where in the Outdoor Biome are flowers, trees and shrubs that will grow in the Cornish climate.

Space does not permit a detailed description of each Biome. So I will boringly include a list of the exhibits to be found.

THE GARDEN OF EDEN

The Outdoor Biome

The Flowerless Garden - Ancient Plants - The Plants that feed the World - The making of garden flowers - Colours and Dyes - Plants for Taste - Plants for Tomorrow's Industries - Lavender - Plants and Pollinators - Plants for Cornish Crops - Beer and Brewing - Tea - Eco-engineering - Hidden crops from the Andes - Steppe and Prairie - Plants in Myth and Folklore.

The Humid Tropics Biome

Introduction to the Humid Tropics - Tropical Islands - Conserving the land - Malaysia - West Africa - Tropical South America - Crops and Cultivation - Cola - Chewing Gum - Rubber - Timber - Cocoa and Chocolate - Palms - Rice - Coffee - Tropical Displays - Sugar - Mangoes - Banana - Tropical Fruits - Bamboo - Pineapples - Pharmaceuticals from the Land - Spices - Cashews - Tropical Dyes.

The Warm Temperate Biome

Introduction to the Warm Temperate Regions - The Mediterranean Basin - South Africa - California - Introduction to Crops and Cultivation - Fruits of the Mediterranean - Cork - Peppers - Alliums - Citrus - Grape vines - Aubergines - Tobacco - Lesser-known grains - Cut flowers - Sunflowers - Olives - Perfume.

Visit and enjoy yourselves.

If your stay in Cornwall permits, why not also visit The Lost Gardens of Heligan. At present, there is not much assistance at Eden for those with visual impairments. By next year it is expected that there will be signs and other information in large print and Braille as well as other means of conveying information. This should help make a visit to Eden a most pleasurable experience.

For more information regarding Eden, the following might be of use.

- 1. The Enquiries telephone number is 01726 811911**
- 2. For those with access to the internet, the web address is:
<http://www.edenproject.com/>**
- 3. And for those without internet access, all of the public libraries have computers with free internet access for the public.**
- 4. Or, try the libraries or Travel Agents and ask if they have leaflets.**

Peter Rowe

NOTICE BOARD

WE NEED YOU!

If you have an hour or two to spare we would like to hear from you.

We depend on volunteers to help us deliver a quality service to disabled people in Stockport.

**Call us on:
0161 480 7248 to find out
how you can help.**

FOR SALE

4-Wheeled electric scooter £2,000 new in 2002

**For quick sale
£650 ono**

**Contact: Linda on
0161 282 2678**

FOR SALE

3-Wheeled scooter, can be folded to fit in car two years old cost £1,300

will sell for £800 ono

**Contact: Terry on
0161 449 8912**

FOR SALE

Self propelled lightweight wheelchair
£300 ono

Contact: Mrs Creed on 0161 430 5622

**Epsom C62 black compatible cartridges @ £4 and colour compatible cartridges @ £5 Unopened and surplus to requirements
Contact:
Shopmobility Stockport on 0161 666 1101**

FOR SALE

4-wheel strider Scooter with basket bought for £1,500 will sell for £900 ono

**Contact: Mr Proudfoot on
0161 486 0121 (evenings and weekends)**

FOR SALE

Massage Cushion brand new, battery operated, ideal for neck/back ache, sports injuries, arthritic pain. batteries included
£25

Standing Frame hardly used, perfect condition.
£35

**Contact:
Rita or Sue Fisher
on 0161 792 3029**

FOR SALE

**Bath Seat now £10
Contact: Mrs Jackson on
0161 477 1932**

OLD FRIENDS

Graham Garner from Hazel Grove attended the Primus Club in the 1980s and would love to hear from you if you were there then.
Ring him on 0161 439 5802

Thank you to all those who contributed to this issue and to Keith Turner, Stockport Talking Newspaper, for copying Viewpoint onto tape. Viewpoint is a **FREE** publication and is available in large print on audio tape or disk. Please let us know if you would prefer either of these to be sent to you.

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 65 of Viewpoint will be circulated end of March. 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 24 February 2005
E-mail disabilitystockport@btinternet.com
Website www.disabilitystockport.org.uk
Telephone/textphone/Fax 0161 480 7248**

NHS DIRECT

For advice on health matters, anytime, call and speak in confidence to a qualified nurse. You don't need to be ill to call the service.

Call: 0845 46 47