

ISSUE 72

SPRING 2008

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

A Message from the Vice Chair

The cover of *Viewpoint* is as follows...

“Viewpoint – A quarterly newsletter providing information for and about people who have a physical or sensory disability.”

It is your newsletter, just as Disability Stockport is your organisation. Information is provided that we think will be of interest to you. However, if you let us know what you want and do not want, we will then be able to provide a better service.

Not only what you want Disability Stockport to do but what you want and expect from the local council, the health service, shopping, leisure and everything that you want in your everyday life. Your contributions are vital since they can be aired in these pages and a dialogue might well start leading to improvements in all of our lives. So why not put pen to paper.

It has been suggested to me that I should write my story. A story about what has happened to me as a disabled person and, more importantly, as a person. That is how it must be. A person first and foremost, a disabled person second. At first writing was difficult. Then I became more interested, phoned family to check on this point and that; searched long forgotten photograph albums and now what had been difficult has become very therapeutic.

I am sure that you also have a story to tell. To tell to yourself or to share with others – half a page, a page or more. I am finding out more about myself and feel better for it. If sufficient stories were told we might even have a book in the offing!

I hope to read your contribution in the next **Viewpoint**.

Peter Rowe

CONTENTS

A Message from the Vice Chair	2
Mailing Lists	
The Director's Cut	3
Turn 2 Us Employment Advocacy	4
Self-Advocacy Forum	5
New Service	6
Letter to Readers	7
Connect Plus	8
Carers' Breaks	9
An Inspiring Tale	10 & 11
Transport & Access Stockport Disability Forum	12
Help and Support	13
Trustee Recruitment	14
Notice Board	15 & 16

MAILING LISTS

We work very hard to maintain up-to-date and accurate lists.

Please help us by completing and returning the enclosed **Membership Form** (at page 7) or contacting us, with the relevant details, on

Tel/Fax: 0161 480 7248

E-mail: disabilitystockport@btinternet.com

THE DIRECTOR'S CUT

Information Day Thanks

Thanks to everyone who participated in our Information Day in April. The day was a big success with over 100 people attending and 40 display stands on view.

Feedback was excellent (apart from one complaint regarding the accessible toilet, which we have taken up) and everyone seemed to enjoy the range of delegates from near and far. It was particularly pleasing to have representatives from our twin towns, Béziers and Heilbronn. Sue Shore, the International Liaison Officer from the Council helped with arrangements for the six overseas delegates.

I was very pleased on that day to announce that our funding bid for a new Resource Centre had been successful and we are currently busy arranging the final details.

Future Plans

Disability Stockport will be purchasing a building in the town centre, located at 23 High Street – just above Underbank. This building will then house all our services as well as a number of other agency workers. Refurbishment will take a few months and we hope to move in before the end of this year. Our hopes are to develop this into an Independent Living Centre and get as close to a one-stop service as possible.

The building will be designed to be fully accessible and an example of good practice. Planning permission has now been approved and we will be installing a new ramp, accessible toilets, hearing loops and other aids. Plans include a craft room, two therapy rooms and a kitchen designed for disabled people to improve their skills. There will also be a training room on the ground floor. Upstairs will be a mix of open-plan and offices with plenty of interview-style rooms. The name being considered for the building is 'ABILITY HOUSE'.

Although the majority of the funding will be in the form of loans which will have to be repaid, there is a great expectation that in the long-term owning the building will be a big step towards sustainability for Disability Stockport. If it is half the success we hope it will be it will mean a big step forward towards new initiatives and partnerships in the future.

Kieran McMahon
Director

TURN 2 US

Turn 2 Us is a new charity helping people to find out about the charitable grants and state benefits they may be entitled to. Many people in financial need don't know what help is available, or where to look for it.

Turn 2 Us, founded by Elizabeth Finn Care, aims to address this problem by increasing awareness and improving access to help available. As well as obtaining information through their website, people can also apply directly to charities for financial help.

Alice Johnson knows how difficult it can be, she explains:

"When I lost my job and then my home due to ill health, I didn't know what to do. Eventually I found out I could get some help from a charity, on top of the benefits I was claiming. The extra help made such a difference to my life, I just wish I'd been able to find it sooner."

For further information about Turn 2 Us, in the first instance, check their

Website: www.turn2us.org.uk

E-mail: info@turn2us.org.uk

Telephone 0207 396 6700 (during office hours)

Registered charity number: 1120672

EMPLOYMENT ADVOCACY

BREAKTHROUGH UK Including Disabled People

Do you have employment barriers or issues that need resolving?

Then speak to an Outreach Advocate or Information Worker about any employment barriers at one of Breakthrough UK's regular outreach sessions

Sessions are held in Stockport on the **third Thursday of each month** at the Stockport Wellbeing Centre, Graylaw House, Chestergate, Stockport SK1 1LZ from 12.30 pm – 2.30 pm

If you would like to talk to them on any issues around employment and training, please drop-in to one of the sessions or contact them at the

Independent Employment Advocacy Centre, Breakthrough UK Ltd, BEVC, Aked Close, Ardwick, Manchester M12 4AN

Telephone: 0161 273 5412 Minicom: 0161 273 5727 Fax: 0161 274 4053

E-mail: advocacy@breakthrough-uk.co.uk

Website: www.breakthrough-uk.com

SELF ADVOCACY FORUM

DISABLED AND LIVING IN STOCKPORT?

**HAVING PROBLEMS WITH
TRANSPORT, HEALTHCARE, SOCIAL CARE,
LEISURE ACTIVITIES, BENEFITS?**

Then Share your experiences AND GET
SOME ANSWERS with information from a
host of reliable sources

Every third Monday of the month

16 June

21 July

18 August

7.00 pm - 9.00 pm

At Eycline

Walthew House 112 Shaw Heath

For more information contact:
Disability Stockport on 0161 480 7248
E-mail: disabilitystockport@btinternet.com

NEW SERVICE

The New Pension, Disability and Carers Service

From 1st April 2008, The Pension Service and Disability and Carers Service joined together to form a new agency, known as The Pension, Disability and Carers Service. It has a single Chief Executive and leadership team but, for the time being, continues to operate as two brands.

Why have the agencies merged?

The main reasons for the decision is that, increasingly, the agencies share a common customer base. More than 50 per cent of disability and carers service customers are also customers of The Pension Service. As more and more people are living longer, this figure will continue to rise.

The new agency will allow the team to deliver more seamless products and services designed around their customers' needs. This is at the heart of their ambition for change.

While this is a significant administrative change, it will not make any difference to the way customers interact with them in the long term. They are proud of the progress they have made in customer service, and want the new agency to build on that.

As they bring the two agencies together it will be very much business as usual. They will continue to up-date customers and their representatives, and provide more details as they become available - through their website and other channels.

STOCKPORT'S Ring and Ride service has expanded to allow people with disabilities and other difficulties to travel to Manchester and Tameside.

Staff were visited by Stockport MP Ann Coffey who came to see a new minibus which features an on-board computer so drivers can respond to bookings for the door-to-door service.

She said, "It's ideal for people who can't manage public transport and who might become socially isolated if they couldn't get out to their weekly lunch club, do their shopping or just to visit a friend."

The service, free with a GMPTE free travel pass, can be ordered from seven days up to an hour before travel by ringing 0845 688 3989, with lines open Monday – Friday from 8.00 am to 4.00 pm.

LETTER TO READERS



May 2008

Dear Reader

You are currently on our mailing list to receive our newsletter **Viewpoint**. You may also be listed as a member of Disability Stockport.

I am writing on behalf of the Trustees of Disability Stockport **to invite you to re-apply for membership, and to ask those of you who have not applied for membership before, to do so now.** We are using this tool to maintain and update our mailing list and **we will not renew your membership unless you respond. Membership is FREE.**

We want to encourage disabled people, those people who work or have an interest in working towards ensuring equality of opportunity for disabled people to become a member. You will be eligible to stand for election as trustees and vote at the Annual General Meeting

Please fill in the form included in this newsletter and return it to us. You may also telephone or e-mail us with the details asked for on the form

We look forward to hearing from and working with you.

Yours sincerely

Kieran McMahon

Kieran McMahon
Director



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**.

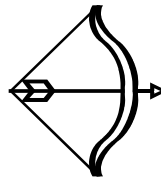
We are always looking for new volunteers, to accompany or assist, our disabled members on a variety of leisure activities, and if you are over 16 years old, you could become a Volunteer Leisure Companion with Connect Plus or Leyfield Primus. Some of our volunteers are disabled, so don't think that having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

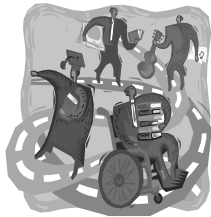
Tony Williams on 0161 474 0048



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.

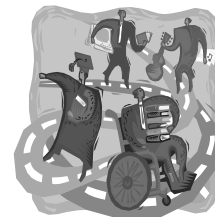


Date	Morning	Afternoon
7th June	Hanging Baskets	Film Club
14th June	Clay Modelling	
21st June	Clay Painting	Film Club
28th June	Crafts	Film Club
5th July	Cookery	Film Club
12th July	Drama	Film Club
19th July	French Day and Film	
26th July	Hanging Baskets	Film Club
2nd August	Crafts + BBQ	Film Club
9th 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.

AN INSPIRING TALE

While working on secondment with Disability Stockport, Elaine Mounter from Stockport Disability Database met with Dorothy Birch, Chair of the Phoenix Club. Dorothy also happens to be a former vice chair of Disability Stockport.

Dorothy was born without sight due to congenital cataracts. Her mother had contracted German measles while pregnant and the effects were severe on her unborn child. She was brought up in a sunshine home in Ainsdale, Southport. She had been less than a year old when sent there and stayed until she was seven years old. She was then sent to Liverpool to a boarding school, it was a very sheltered environment, she didn't realise she was being wrapped in cotton wool, but segregated from the rest of society she was unaware of the outside world.

She eventually went to live at home with her parents when she was 15 and all the outside world came as a shock to Dorothy, she found she didn't have the confidence to meet people, travel or mix in crowds. Her father was helping to rebuild Germany after the war, so she lived in Germany for a short while with her parents. She studied music, especially the piano; and would spend all her time playing it, if she could.

Eventually the family returned to Britain from Germany and later Dorothy married the boy next door. She has three children, eight grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Dorothy was the second person in Stockport to have a guide dog, called Sally, and she found there was much work to do to get the guide dogs accepted in shops etc. In those days, guide dogs did not have the publicity, people didn't know what to expect from them. The publicity paved the way for the dogs for the hearing impaired.

People using a guide dog would have to go upstairs on buses, they were not allowed downstairs unless permitted by the conductor, so dogs were trained to go upstairs on buses automatically. It wasn't until she had her first guide dog in her 30s that she began to gain the confidence to walk out again. She said guide dogs have a psychological and mobility benefit, but much more of a psychological effect.

At one time she was waiting for a bus and when she could sense a large vehicle had stopped in front of her she ordered the dog to board the bus, he refused, She tried several times until a passer-by told her it was a dustcart, another time, another dog took her into the undertakers instead of a dress shop.

Dorothy's children were very quick to talk, they had to make her understand their needs, as visual clues were no use. Children of parents who are blind usually do develop quicker communication skills.

AN INSPIRING TALE

Dorothy used to leave messages around the house in Braille and this was a quick way of teaching the children and a way of passing on messages that others couldn't read.

But as Dorothy says, not every one has sensitive fingers for reading Braille. People with diabetes for instance, could lose the sensitivity in their fingers. She used to go to Walthew House, where she preferred the sequence dancing as she could guess where people were, until the day she thought they were doing the Conga and they weren't. She was not very popular that day! She used to go climbing and walking in the Lake District and enjoys gardening.

She can recognise plants by their leaves. One day she decided to plant marigolds, though she could not see them she thought they would give others pleasure. Months later, she was disappointed, as they had not grown. She realised after touching marigolds in a shop that she had weeded them out as they had sprouted, thinking they were weeds.

While her children were still young, her husband became ill, so in between bringing up the children and caring for him she decided to get a job to help out with the finances. The trouble was, she had not been trained for a career, she had been taught to answer the phone or make baskets but that was it, she wasn't expected to work.

Dorothy worked for the National Library for the blind for 38 years, proof reading, copying and transcribing old Braille into the new version of Braille until she retired aged 70, she didn't just stick to this job though.

She and other colleagues broadcast a phone-in radio programme with Radio Manchester called Signpost. There were question and answer sessions, Braille reading competitions to encourage the use of Braille, there were contenders from all over the country as well as many other items. The programme gave information to people with disabilities and was also a campaigning programme to challenge attitudes towards people with disabilities.

The BBC also sponsored a late night programme where Dorothy and others would interview celebrities and cover all sorts of topics that were of interest to people with disabilities.

Signpost was started for visually impaired people but Dorothy didn't think it was fair that it was only for those with a visual impairment so opened it up to all those who had any disability. It ran for many years and she pushed the learning and using of Braille a great deal, she said it makes blind people literate and independent. She has her bank statements sent to her in Braille, this means you have your privacy too, no one having to read them for you.

Elaine Mounter

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	11 June 2008
Wednesday	13 August 2008
Wednesday	10 September 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 remaining meetings of the Stockport Disability Forum
will be held on

Wednesday	11 June 2008
Wednesday	10 September 2008
Wednesday	10 December 2008

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

New Inclusive Services Co-ordinator Appointed

Some people may be aware that I was appointed to the newly created post of 'inclusive services co-ordinator' with Stockport Council, and I took up my post in mid-January.

The role is a strategic post, which will aim to link with providers, services, and users in order to ensure that disabled children and young people are able to access fully inclusive opportunities in the fields of childcare, play, leisure and culture. This role aims to identify and remove the barriers to the presence, participation and achievement of disabled children and young people.

I would be delighted to hear from any disabled children and young people, or their parents/carers, who would like to discuss any issues they have had in the past with a lack of inclusive opportunities, or any issues they feel should be considered when developing inclusive childcare, leisure, play and culture opportunities for disabled children and young people in Stockport.

If anyone should wish to contact me, I can be contacted on:

180020161 474 3329 (via typetalk, a telephone translation service for deaf and hard of hearing people, please wait a few seconds for the typetalk operator to come into the call).

0161 474 3329 (via textphone) or via paul.jamieson@stockport.gov.uk

I look forward to hearing from you.

Stockport Stroke Support Group

They meet on the second Thursday of the month at the Torkington Centre
Torkington Road Hazel Grove

7.30 pm to 9.30 pm

there is a varied programme of events and the group will make you welcome

They look forward to seeing you at Stockport Stroke Support Group.

If you are interested contact
Jean Johnson 0161 434 1934

Natterjacks Club

Supported by the **Cheadle Heath Community Association** and **Edgeley Care Scheme**

Are you caring for someone? Or Living Alone? 40+? Looking for company? Like a chat?

If you would like to make new friends and enjoy some entertainment then join the new group at the Cheadle Heath Pavilion, Essex Avenue

On the second Thursday in the month
1.30 pm – 4.00 pm
£2 admission including refreshments
Transport provided if required

Phone Rose on 0161 429 0490 (Wednesday or Friday) to book

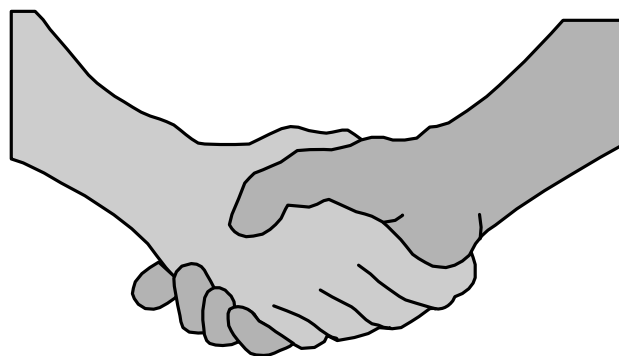
Or Denise on 0161 477 0207 for more information

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

Do You Need Cavity Wall and Loft Insulation?

Weatherseal Insulation have approval to receive grant funding for the installation of both cavity wall and loft insulation.

Both are offered FREE OF CHARGE to those on a number of benefits (including War Disablement Benefit, Disability Pension, Disability Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance, State Pension Credits) and at significantly reduced rates to everyone else. They could reduce the cost to those who do not qualify for a full grant by 25% - £150.

All work is subject to survey and all work is issued with an independent 25 year guarantee. You could also win £10 for your organisation.

**Call Simon Kerkham on
07794 219 050 for more information**

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

Signpost Stockport for Carers

Carers Information Day

Tuesday 10 June 2008

10.00 am – 3.00 pm

Stockport Town Hall

For information: 0161 456 2808

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

Stirling Little Gem Scooter

With basket and charger
holds up to 18 stone weight
Hardly used
£400

**Contact: Steven Cassidy
On 0161 480 7393**

FOR SALE

Scooter £200
**Contact: Mr Williams
on 0161 291 0296**

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**
£995
**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**

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 73 of Viewpoint will be circulated end of July 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 9 June 2008
E-mail disabilitystockport@btinternet.com
Website www.disabilitystockport.org.uk
Telephone/Textphone/fax 0161 480 7248**

FOR SALE

Stannah stairlift
£1000 ono
**Contact:
Nigel Gainsford
on 01663 742 079**

FOR SALE

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