

# Disability *NEWS*

ISSUE 6 FEBRUARY 2008



*Catch-up from  
the October Forum*

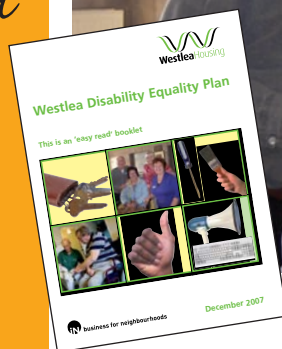
Well what a day it was this time. We were in the lovely Kington Langley village hall – for once I was warm enough! After coffee and meeting some new friends, Rod introduced some of us – himself, Bev and me and we put out our usual appeal for more helpers on the steering group. Then it was down to business.

Ann Cornelius gave a talk on the Disability Equality Scheme accompanied by an overview. It lets us know how far Westlea are along in understanding how we may need help. Ann was followed by Helen Gough who came from Carers' Support and seemed to be able to reassure us about the amount of help there is for carers and hidden carers. Then Alison Cross-Jones told us about the 250 club, where you can buy numbers for £6 and stand a greater chance of winning some money from them than the lottery. Alison would like to see this expand into the 500 club if possible next year.

I then gave a quick explanation about European Disability Day on December 3rd (see 'No Barriers Day'). Next it was our turn to do some work and we filled in questionnaires about the things we would like to ask Social Services if they can come to our next Forum. Then a super lunch of sandwiches and fruit with a quick fun game of bingo to end it all.

*Sue Simmons*  
Residents Steering Group Member

## Disability Equality Scheme



We will be launching the Westlea Disability Equality Scheme (DES) at the Forum in February. This explains how Westlea will make sure we treat everybody fairly, what we already do for people with disabilities and what we plan to do. You will have received a summary version of the Disability Equality Plan with this newsletter.

## Your questions for social services

When we met in October we asked you to think of questions you would ask Social Services. You came back with a lot of questions. These were:

- general questions about the resources available in this area – e.g. length of time to get an assessment; need for more occupational therapists; and need for more funding from central government.
- questions about your particular

circumstance – mainly about not getting the things you feel you need, whether that is heating, parking or a walk in shower.

We want to start talking about these issues at the meeting in February by looking at Disabled Facilities Grants; applying for a grant is the route most of you will take in order to get any major work or adaptation done in your home.

*You are invited to our next*

## Disability Forum

Tuesday 26th February, 2008

Corsham Community Centre, Beechfield Road, SN13 9DN  
10.30am to 1.45pm including a light lunch and Bingo

Find out about: The Social Care Helpdesk • MoneyFriend • Helping Hand service • Disabled Facilities Grants - "How Bev got a stairlift" (a personal experience of the grant system) and representatives from Westlea and North Wiltshire District Council and Westlea to answer your questions.  
**Plus official launch of Westlea's Disability Equality Scheme**

Please return the enclosed booking form as soon as possible to let us know you'd like to come - return in the postage paid envelope provided!

## New 'Money Friend' service

Elizabeth Payne has just started work as a 'Money Friend' – a new post at the Citizens Advice Bureau, funded by Westlea. She can offer a wide range of support, including help with debt problems, general budgeting and finding affordable credit (loans). Some of the help she can offer is of special interest to disabled people, for example:

**citizens advice bureau**

- Opening a basic bank account – useful for benefit payments now that Post Offices are closing in some areas.
- Applying for charitable help for one-off payments, e.g. disability aids not otherwise funded.
- Reducing energy costs – especially helpful for disabled people who are housebound and may need to use their heating more than most.



You can contact her at North Wiltshire Citizens Advice Bureau on 01249 445115 ext 4. Email: [moneyfriend@northwiltscab.org.uk](mailto:moneyfriend@northwiltscab.org.uk) or write to: Elizabeth Payne Money Friend, North Wilts CAB, 3 Avon Reach, Chippenham SN15 1EE

Elizabeth will be coming to the Forum in February.

## 'No Barriers' on International Disability Awareness Day

The 'No Barriers' event



On 3rd December, events took place to celebrate International Disability Awareness Day. We joined forces with North Wiltshire District Council, Care and Repair, Citizens Advice, the Independent Living Centre and other groups to hold an awareness and information day at the Neeld Hall in Chippenham. About 50 people

called in throughout the day. The steering group would like to see this annual event get bigger and better every year.

- Sue Simmons' poetry reading at Chippenham library also went well and she has secured a booking for next year.

## Are you caring for a child with disabilities?



### Family Fund

The Family Fund works to help families caring at home for a severely disabled or seriously ill child under the age of 16. This includes children whose disabilities mean they need a lot of personal attention, help with getting around, support with communication, special help because of behavioural difficulties or because of a life-threatening illness. They help by providing grants and information related to the care of the child. Their role is to focus on families in greatest need. This means

that they can help where the household income is less than £23,000 gross per annum and where savings do not exceed £18,000. Grants have helped families by paying for:

- appliances like washing machines;
- clothing and bedding;
- driving lessons;
- outings; and
- transport expenses, moving home or hospital visiting costs.

Contact Diana Davis on 01258 821425 or email [did@familyfund.org.uk](mailto:did@familyfund.org.uk)

## Useful contacts

### Social Care Helpdesk - phone 01225 713001

First point of contact for adults, older people, people with disabilities and their carers who need:

- advice and/or information about

social services

- signposting to social care provided in the community
- a referral to social care teams in Wiltshire for an assessment of need.

### Carers Support North Wiltshire - phone 01249 444110 or email [office@carersnw.co.uk](mailto:office@carersnw.co.uk)

Providing information, advice and

support to carers.

### Young Carers (Youth Action Wiltshire) - phone 01380 729813 or email [enquiries@youthactionwiltshire.org](mailto:enquiries@youthactionwiltshire.org)

Support and activities for young people with caring responsibilities.