

Wokingham  
Learning Disability  
Partnership Board

## Minutes from the Partnership Board's **BIG** Meeting Rose Street Methodist Church, Wokingham Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> April, 2010

### Welcome and Good News!

Luke and David welcomed everyone to today's meeting and asked people to introduce themselves and share some good news. Here's what a few people had to say:



- **David** is looking forward to going to a conference tomorrow in Milton Keynes called "Making It Happen". It will be run by the Regional Forum for People with Learning Disabilities and hopes to get local self advocate groups working with the Valuing People Leads.
- **Jodie** is getting excited about getting married in 6 weeks!
- **Julie** is sad about leaving the Partnership Board and CLASP, but looking forward to her 3 month trip to Scandinavia in her campervan.
  - **Steven** has just got back from a great week's holiday in Spain – he would have been home sooner, but was delayed with the volcano ash!!
  - **Phillip** is looking forward to Julie's leaving party on Friday.
- **Clare** was lucky last weekend - she went ferret racing and won a pound!
- **Val** is pleased that the new Webcas Director, Paul Kirwan will be starting work today.
- **Ivor** just wanted to say that he will miss Julie when she leaves.
- It was **Carolyn's**, 1<sup>st</sup> time at our Big Meeting. Carolyn works for Berkshire West PCT Breast Awareness Team. Her good news is that she's going on holiday to the Scilly Isles next week.
  - It was **Mr and Mrs Bottomley's** 1<sup>st</sup> time at our Big Meeting too! Unfortunately their news wasn't good news... they had to miss their holiday in Spain last week because of the volcano ash!
  - It was **Paula** and **Andrea's** 1<sup>st</sup> time at our Big Meeting too. They work for the Kingwood Trust. Welcome to all our new members!
- **Ann's** son got married on Saturday and it was a beautiful wedding. Congratulations to Ann's son!
- **Karen** is looking forward to **Adult Learning Week** (15<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> May). Karen and the Karten Centre will celebrate by presenting certificates to their students for all their hard work at the Karten Centre last year.



- **Vicky** had 2 pieces of good news – She is looking forward to moving into a bigger flat soon, and next weekend she will be seeing her baby nephew.
- **Patsy** and her sons are getting on really well building a new chicken coop (house for chickens) in her garden!

## Home Fire Safety Checks – Ian Taylor

Ian came to talk to us about the Fire Service's [Home Fire Safety Check](#) for vulnerable people.

**ROYAL BERKSHIRE**  
**FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**



**What is a Home Fire Safety Check?** The Fire Service will visit people's homes, give advice on what to do if there's a fire, and help people make an escape plan to get out of their house to safety. They can also provide and fit free smoke alarms, and check existing ones work. It takes about 30



minutes and involves checking people's homes, to see if there are any hazards (dangers), and giving advice to keep people safe. It is a free service and people can either ask for a check themselves, or get referred, by filling out a form and returning to the Royal Berks Fire & Rescue Service.

### Smoke Alarms:

- The Fire Service will fit 2 smoke alarms – 1 upstairs and 1 downstairs. If you live in a flat or a bungalow, you might only need 1 alarm. But if your flat or bungalow is quite big, you will need 2 alarms.
- Most fires occur at night, so 1 alarm will be fitted outside the main bedroom.
- The new smoke alarms are clever because if the alarm goes off when people are cooking, there is a button to press to stop the alarm. If the smoke hasn't cleared in 10 minutes, the alarm will go off again.
- For people with hearing impairments, the Fire Service fit special gadgets inside pillows that vibrate if the smoke alarm goes off during the night.



### Fire Safety Check Forms:



- There are 2 types of forms – 1 is for asking for a Fire Safety Check for yourself and the other is asking on behalf of someone else (a referral).
- If someone is completing a form on behalf of a vulnerable person, there is room to put extra details like whether the person has mobility problems, hearing or visual impairments, or whether they have difficulty understanding instructions.

- The completed forms are kept on a computer in the Fire Station so that if they get a call, the firemen know a vulnerable person lives there and how best to help them before they get to the house.



Ian reminded everyone of **basic home safety precautions** – things like not leaving the house when the washing machine is running! This is because if there was a electrical problem with the machine and it started a fire, no-one would be home to ring the Fire Service..... and by the time a neighbour reports the fire, it might be too late to save your home!

Also, Ian said having a night-time routine is a good idea. For example, walking round the house, making sure electrical items are turned off (things that run on electricity like kettles and hairdryers), and unplugging or turning the plugs off at the wall. But it's important that you **don't** unplug the fridge and freezer because they need electricity to keep them cold. Finally, Ian said don't let rubbish build up in the house because if there is fire, it'll make it even worse!



To get either of the **referral forms** for a Fire Safety Check, please contact Jodie or Jennie at the Partnership Board on tel: 05600 766 114 or email [admin@partnershipboard.org.uk](mailto:admin@partnershipboard.org.uk)

## **Eye Care – Mary Codling and Stephen Kill**

Mary and Stephen came to talk to us about a joint project between the **Good Health Sub Group** and **SeeAbility** – which is a charity that looks after the eye care needs of people with learning disabilities.



People with learning disabilities have more eyesight problems than the rest of the population (1 in 3 people), but unfortunately they have more difficulty accessing eye care. The Annual Health Checks have identified this as a problem too, so the Good Health Sub Group put in a bid for some LDDF money to work with SeeAbility, to run a pilot project in the Wokingham area to make sure people with learning disabilities get better eye care - more about the project in a minute.

Stephen told us sight problems can make life harder, so it is important that people with learning disabilities get the right support with eye care. Everyone should have regular eye tests, at least every 2 years (even if they don't wear glasses) in case they have a problem they aren't aware of.



Sometimes diseases like cataracts or glaucoma can lead to people losing their eyesight if not treated. Eye care isn't just about vision – the optician can see behind the eyes and see health issues that we can't.

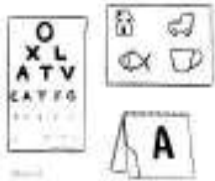


### We thought about some reasons why people with learning disabilities don't get good eye care:

- They might not understand that eye tests are really important.
- Some people don't like medical and health appointments.
- Some of the ways to test people's eyes don't work if the person has difficulty communicating, and the appointment times aren't long enough. They aren't right for people with learning disabilities.
- It can be scary having an optician coming up close and shining a light in your eyes.
- Sometimes opticians don't explain the results of the eye test properly so it doesn't mean anything to the person.

\*\*\*\*\*

### What can help people?



- Opticians need to use **different ways to test people's eyes**. Stephen showed us a board with letters on - Ivor read out all the letters perfectly! For people who don't know their letters, some boards have pictures and shapes in different sizes instead, to make eye tests more accessible. If people can talk, they can say what the picture is, but if they don't use words to communicate, they can point to another picture that matches. Makaton (signing) is also used.

- There are **2 forms** to help people with learning disabilities understand their appointment with the optician – and it will help the optician too! One of the forms is called **“Telling the Optometrist about Me”** and is completed by the person with a learning disability before their 1<sup>st</sup> appointment. This form tells the optician a little bit about the person, with questions like “do you wear glasses” and “have your parents had eye problems”. It also explains what happens in the eye test so that people are prepared for their appointment.

The other form is called **“Feedback from the Optometrist about my eye test”** which the optician completes after the appointment. This form says if you have any eye problems and if so, when you should wear your glasses (like only when reading a book, or all the time). It also says what conditions, like glaucoma you have because if you aren't told, then you won't know what you should be doing about it. This information is put into your personal Health Action Plan so it can be shared with those who look after your health.





- People can watch the “You and Eye” DVD – a film about eye care for people with learning disabilities. It shows what happens when you have an eye test, and also what happens during a cataract operation. People can also download the book that goes with the film from the Look Up website: [www.lookupinfo.org](http://www.lookupinfo.org). This website also gives lots more information about how people with learning disabilities can look after their eyesight.



\*\*\*\*\*

### Eye Care Pilot Project



There are 5 or 6 local opticians who are part of the Good Health Group’s Eye Care pilot project (a pilot is a practice run). If the pilot goes well, they might run the project in other areas, and make it a permanent thing. The project will run for 9 months, and opticians will be trained in giving “Enhanced Eye Tests” (that means a good quality eye test for someone with learning disabilities).

#### Opticians will be shown:

- The best way to communicate with people with learning disabilities
- The different ways to test people (for example using boards with pictures and shapes)
- Why longer appointment times are important.

SeeAbility and the Good Health Group will monitor (keep a note) of how things have gone with the Enhanced Eye Tests. They will see if the project has encouraged more people to have their eyes tested, and whether there have been more cases of eye problems found, and whether people are more relaxed about going to have their eyes tested.



Then it was time for questions and comments. This is what some of our members said:



I had a bad experience where the optician was rude, so now I go to Boots who are very good.

I take the person I support to Scrivens, and I find them really helpful!

Mary said: Scrivens have signed up to this pilot project!



Will the opticians in the pilot project do the test which takes a picture behind the eyes and costs £10?

Stephen said:  
Only some opticians offer this.

When will this happen, and when will we know which opticians are taking part in the project?

Stephen said: Once everything is agreed, we will publicise through the Partnership Board and GP surgeries. We hope to start training opticians by the Summer.

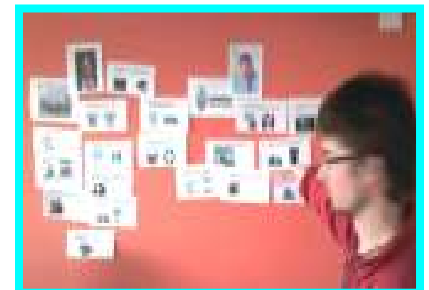


Finally, the Eye Care Project needs a name!! If you have any ideas, please contact either Mary or Stephen! For more information about this project, you can email Stephen at [s.kill@seeability.org](mailto:s.kill@seeability.org), or go to the Look Up website: [www.lookupinfo.org](http://www.lookupinfo.org).

## Self Advocate Workshop – David Chaffe and Frankie Brewer

David and Frankie talked about the recent Self Advocate Workshop called **“Who Gets Your Vote!”** which was all about politics and the general election on 6<sup>th</sup> May.

They started off with an icebreaker and looked at the difference between **Big Government** in **London** and **Local Government** in **Wokingham** (which is the council with main offices at Shute End). For example, deciding who is responsible for local rubbish collections, and who is responsible for keeping the country safe.



Then they looked at some of the difficult words people use when talking about politics and then **why** people should vote:

You have an opinion!

I voted because they were trying to close my club!

It is important to get your voice heard!



Next they talked about how people vote and watched a short video that went through the different stages of voting. And to test their memory, they played a game which had the steps all muddled up and they had to put them in the right order!

Finally, they looked at the 3 main political parties in **Big Government** and some of their policies - the things the leaders of those parties said they would do if they won the General Election.

## Annual Report – Jodie Newman

In November 2009 the Government published 'Getting the best from your Partnership Board' pack which gave new guidance for Partnership Boards, and a template that we had to fill in (which told us what should be included in the Annual Report).



What did the guidance say about Partnership Board reports?

- The annual report should be co-produced (this means, include people with learning disabilities and family carers).  
*Jodie got lots of help from our members.*
- The information needs to be agreed by board members.  
*The core group agreed all the information in the report.*
- A self advocate and family carer should be chosen to sign off the final report. *The report was checked and signed off by 2 self advocates, 3 family carers and our 2 co-chairs.*
- If people do not agree, this should be noted on the report.  
*Nobody disagreed with the information.*



The Annual Report was completed and sent to the Regional Programme Board on **31<sup>st</sup> March**. Jodie is also working on an **Easy Read Report** which should be ready soon. When finished, it will be sent to all our members and also put on our website.



Jodie said we're lucky that Phillip and David are part of the **Regional Programme Board** as we will hear how well we compare to other Partnership Boards in the South East at the next meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> May.

Finally, the core group will be looking through the report in the next few months to look at the gaps and see what plans we can make so that we've got the right information for next year's report. David is keen to see some work done on people with learning disabilities who are also carers (in other words they look after someone).

If anyone would like to see a copy of the Annual Report, please contact the Partnership Board team on tel: 05600 766 114 or email [admin@partnershipboard.org.uk](mailto:admin@partnershipboard.org.uk).



## Goodbye to Julie White!

As we said earlier, it was Julie's last Big Meeting before she leaves her job to go travelling with her husband in their campervan to Scandinavia! We are all really sorry to see her go because she's done such a fantastic job over the last 7 years, supporting people with learning disabilities to speak up for themselves, and start their own self advocacy groups like CLASP.

Jodie, Paul, Frankie, Peter, Phillip, Vicky and David had put together a small presentation called "This is Your Inclusion Work" saying how much Julie meant to them, and the wonderful things she had shared with them.



Then David presented Julie with a card and the present we had bought for her. Here are some of the photos we took ....



All that was left to say was a big **THANK YOU** and **COME BACK AND SEE US SOON!**



## Anything Else?

1. **Wokingham Library** would like to start running story telling sessions in the Autumn and promote all the services they provide. They would like to know if people would be interested in this sort of service. If so, they will hold an open afternoon so that people can find out more. Alan will bring this up with his Steering Group and get their feedback. Lots of people thought this would be a good thing – especially as the library is accessible, and in the community, and now has a coffee shop too!
2. Carolyn Denham works for the Breast Awareness Clinic and is available to do Breast Awareness sessions for people with learning disabilities in a group setting, or will go to people's homes if that's easier and more comfortable.
3. Jodie announced that we've had our Learning Disability Development Fund (LDDF) confirmed for this year, so we will be sending out information about how to apply for this money very soon. We hope to hold a Bidding Round at the end of May to decide which groups and projects should be given some funding, using criteria (rules) that we have used every year. Projects have to help make Valuing People happen, and projects that help people with complex needs (our big campaign for 2010/11) will be seen more favourably.
4. Marlena had to leave early but she left a reminder of the Council's 3 extra information events in May about the changes to social care, and to offer people another opportunity to have their say about these changes. We had an opportunity at our last Big Meeting to listen to the possible changes and think about what we would like to include in our feedback to the Council. At our next Big Meeting in June, we will discuss the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of these proposed changes which is the **Council Trading Services** and give our feedback then. Clive Dove-Dixon from the council will come along and tell us about some of those plans.



Nobody had anything else that they wanted to talk about, so all that was left was to give a special Thank You to Julie White for all the fabulous work she has done for the Partnership Board over the last 7 years!

### **The next Big Meeting will be on...**

**Date:** Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> June  
**Time:** 10am-12noon  
**Where:** Rose Street Methodist Church, Wokingham

