

Diane Gooch - Chair of WSUN

I am very pleased to have this opportunity to introduce myself as the new Chair of WSUN Management Committee. As many of you will already be aware, I have been associated with the Network for some time and also a member of the Management Committee for this past year.

I have taken over the position of Chair from the outgoing co-chairs, Linda Griffiths and Dorothy Roberts. Dorothy has now become one of two vice-chairs along with Kathy Brennan.

I and the Committee would like to thank Linda and Dorothy for all the work, time and effort they have put in over the past years. Other members of the committee have also moved on to take up new challenges and again our thanks go to them all. I would like to give a warm welcome to Martin Fortune and Tim French who joined our Management Committee at the last Annual General Meeting. Rosa Tran who is a current member will also serve another term.

With so many changes going on around us, the year ahead will I am sure, hold many challenges for us all, but with your help I feel confident we can continue going forward. This organisation belongs to you and any views or reactions to our activities or other related matters are of importance, so please let us hear about anything you feel the Committee or others need to know or do something about. In this way we can look forward to another year of successfully fulfilling our core aim to empower users to act as agents of change to bring about services that are more responsive to all users needs.

Best Wishes, Diane Gooch



In this issue:

- * World Mental Health Day 2013
- * Safeguarding Meetings
- * Swindon Mobility Forum
- * Wiltshire Independent Travel Support and more

Page:

3
6
7
9

Louise Rendle - Head of Network Services

Welcome to our Winter Newsletter - where has this year gone?

As always we've had a busy few months at WSUN. Our World Mental Health event was a really enjoyable day. Lots of people took part in creative activities including the 'tree of life' collage which is now brightening our office. You can read more about the event further in the Newsletter.



Nick, Lorraine and Zoe have been out and about over the Summer and Autumn months across Wiltshire and Swindon, recruiting new members; welcome to those of you who have recently joined us.

We have appointed two new members of staff, Neil Bartram who will be working with Nick on the Help to Live at Home project and Richard Conlon who will be exploring innovative and creative ways to involve service users. If anyone has any ideas, please contact us, we'd love to hear from you.



Pictured above: Richard Conlon



With Christmas fast approaching, can I take this opportunity to wish you a happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Development Outreach Wiltshire

Memory Clubs

Just over a year ago a small group of local residents in Royal Wootton Bassett had the idea to set up an informal group in the town for people with memory loss. The very simple idea was that if you suffered from any form of memory loss or cared for someone who did, then you would be very welcome to turn up on a Friday morning, once a fortnight, to meet with other people with the same condition. One year on and the 3Ms group has now become a well established organisation in the town.

It regularly has twelve or more people turning up on a Friday at the Civic Centre to enjoy a cup of coffee, have a chat, perhaps listen to a speaker, gain some information, play some games or plan an outing. WSUN has been very pleased to have supported the 3Ms group from the outset and will continue to give support to the group for the foreseeable future.



WSUN has been impressed with the format of the group and with the way it provides an informal yet caring opportunity for people with memory loss. We have been very keen to help establish other groups in other parts of the county.

Melksham Memory Club met for the very first time at the Riverside Club, Melksham in October. Although the weather that morning was atrocious a small number of people with memory loss, and their carers, braved the elements to come along and find out what the club was all about. Pat Gillespie, who will facilitate the club, brought along lots and lots of photographs of Melksham from days gone by and this generated a great deal of interest and talk, particularly with one gentleman who spent much of his younger days as a freelance photographer for the local paper. The two hour session passed very quickly and was a really good beginning to what is hoped will become a regular event with numbers growing. Posters displayed around Melksham will let people know when the group will meet.

At present WSUN is working on establishing similar groups in Calne, the Cricklade area and possibly Marlborough. If anyone in any of those areas is interested in helping to establish a club or is interested in attending any of our clubs, please contact WSUN on 01380 871800.

World Mental Health Day 2013

On 9th October WSUN, supported by Wiltshire Council Public Health, held a celebration to mark World Mental Health day. The event was a great success with over 60 people attending and some 20 organisations having stands or representatives.

Soundwell Music Therapy hosted a music workshop which proved very popular and an art workshop was run by Ingrid, a Warminster based artist. The outcome of this was a beautiful collage of a 'tree of life and memories' to which everyone contributed.

Public Health provided health checks and over 20 people had cholesterol tests, blood pressure checks, and received helpful information on various services including stopping smoking. Some WSUN staff took advantage of this offer too and we are pleased to report that they are in good shape!



Informative presentations were given by Julie Hankin (Clinical Director) and Simon Hall (Early Intervention Team Lead), both from AWP (Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership). Lively questions and answer sessions followed. Questions were also gathered throughout the day by Our Time to Talk representatives Denise and Samiha. These will be circulated to organisations such as AWP who can provide responses and these will then be circulated to those who took part.



Musical entertainment was provided by Pete who has worked extensively with Soundwell and volunteered to come along and play during the lunch break. The event closed with a raffle and showing of the completed collage. WSUN received excellent feedback about the day. Comments included;

“open floor topics raised interesting questions”
“most useful thing was information given by Julie Hankin”
“great networking opportunity”
“look forward to being with you next year”
“more of it please!”
“gained a better understanding of mental health issues”

We are already thinking about our event for next year, if you have any suggestions please contact us.

Our Time To Talk

Our Time To Talk is a service user group for people who use mental health services in Wiltshire. At a recent meeting, the group had a chance to talk to Nik Munien from the Intensive Community Services, a service that very much focuses on care and what can be done to help someone in their own home. Nurses are available 24 hrs a day to respond to any concerns. Contact can be made directly to the team and after 5pm, calls go to the night reception staff who can put calls through to the Intensive Team. The group also listened to the progress that has been made in developing out of hours support in an individual's home. In North Wiltshire calls are averaging three a night and each team feedback through their monitoring system and via the Care Forum that WSUN attend. Service users also received information regarding a range of Well Being and Recovery Plans.

Denise and Samiha, our Chair and Deputy Chair, continue to attend the AWP Engagement and Service User Panel to take issues forward on behalf of the group. We are pleased to say that a member of Healthwatch will be attending the next meeting in December to talk about the role of Healthwatch and how they will support people with mental health issues.

Are you interested in finding out more about Our Time to Talk, our friendly and welcoming group? If so, please contact Zoë Millington on 01380 871800 or email zoemillington.wsun@btconnect.com.

Wiltshire Voluntary Sector Mental Health Forum

WSUN continues to attend the Wiltshire Voluntary Sector Mental Health Forum which provides an opportunity to work together with other mental health organisations. This is a great Forum to look at more Mental Health opportunities for engagement. We are planning another Mental Health Cafe event in 2014 and would welcome both Service Users and Mental health Colleagues to promote and attend the event.

“The work provided by WSUN is invaluable to the service users and wider community in Wiltshire.

Wiltshire Mind work jointly with WSUN in attending the Wiltshire Community Care Group. Both organisations supported World Mental Health Day in not only running their own events but providing mutual support by attending each other’s events.

WSUN and Wiltshire Mind are very keen to promote Mental Health amongst the Wiltshire Community and both organisations passionately support all voluntary organisations in this goal by attending the WVSMHF and undertake joint working.”

David Mckeigue, CEO Wiltshire Mind

Wiltshire Care Forum

As we look to the future, we welcome the opportunity to support members of WSUN to continue to meet with AWP Staff and to attend the new Wiltshire Care Forum. This has replaced the Acute Care Forum Meeting and provides an opportunity for service users, carers and organisational representatives to meet to keep up to date with AWP’s Engagement Strategy. It is also an opportunity to see how secondary services eg. the Adult Recovery Service, the Complex Intervention Teams and the Memory Service provide a valuable service to service users and people who support them. You can see the terms of reference for this group on the WSUN web site. AWP have also appointed Teresa Bridges as our local Service User Involvement Worker. We look forward to the opportunity to support her work and build on the existing links and forums to increase Service User participation. DK a valued WSUN member who attends the meeting gave the following feedback:

“I have attended two community forum meetings with the support of WSUN, I have taken part in the discussion regarding the draft Terms of Reference for the group. I feel encouraged by my involvement in the forum and hope to continue in the future.”

Safeguarding Meetings

This year we have been working in partnership with the Wiltshire Safeguarding Adults Board, chaired by Margaret Sheather. The board is made up of agencies working together to protect adults who are at risk of abuse.



WSUN is running a service user group who meet regularly and will feed in their views and help to influence the safeguarding process.

Did you know.... safeguarding is the term used to describe all activities necessary to ensure that adults are protected from abuse?

This abuse can be:

- Physical/Sexual Abuse
- Not being looked after
- Having money taken without permission
- Being bullied or humiliated
- Not being allowed contact with friends or family

If you are interested in becoming involved in these meetings please contact us.

Help to Live at Home Customer Reference Group

The four care agencies Enara, Somerset Care, Leonard Cheshire and Mears Group (who provide care to people in their own homes), Medequip (the equipment provider) and Medvivo (the response service for lifelines) make up the providers who operate Wiltshire Council's Help to Live at Home Service. All of these organisations are independently monitored by a group of volunteers, co-ordinated by WSUN and known as the Customer Reference Group (CRG).

The CRG does an invaluable job in providing information to the Council and the providers on the service being given.

As the work grows, the demands on the volunteers grow and new members are always needed. If you feel that you might be interested in becoming part of this group, then call Nick Crane at WSUN 01380 871800.

Have you become a friend of ours on Facebook?

Do you follow us on Twitter?

Join us on:



If not, you can do this by visiting our website www.wsun.co.uk and clicking on the Facebook or Twitter symbol at the top of the page

Development Outreach - Swindon



Swindon Mobility Forum (SMC)

Due to the closure of Clapham Hobbs Day Centre earlier this year, we had to secure new premises and Swindon Borough Council have kindly allowed us to use the Civic Offices in Euclid Street for our future meetings.

Picutred Above: Lisa Chadwick

After a discussion, members agreed that meetings should take place quarterly. Our meetings have become more and more productive and members have been putting pen to paper to resolve some very common issues. This included bus drivers driving off before passengers have been seated. We have written to Thamesdown Transport who have confirmed that they will be including this in their driver training. Also discussed was the need for pavement repairs in Temple Street and at the junction of Regent Street and Fleet Street, Swindon (this is awaiting completion).



Our last meeting was on 26th September and discussions included the inability to access a recently refurbished restaurant, and certain retailers. We also discussed the use of a Tramper mobility scooter in Coate Water Country Park, Swindon. One member recently requested to use this and discovered that it was not fit for purpose ie; flat tyres and not clean. The group plans to write to the Rangers at Coate Water regarding this and we will report back at our next meeting.

If you would like to come and join us, the next meeting is on Thursday 5th December 2013, please contact us on 01380 871800 or email swindon.wsun@virgin.net for more information.

Events attended:

Mobility Event

We were invited to have a stand at a mobility event at New College, Queens Drive, Swindon, in August. The event was well attended and there were many organisations offering help and information on their services, this included electric scooters, The Bobby Van, Shopmobility, Health and eyesight tests. It was encouraging to see some of our members there and we also signed up some new members to WSUN. The Headteacher of Uplands School gave a very inspiring talk regarding the way the school is run and how they can really help the pupils with their futures, at school and beyond.

Autism Awareness Event & Autism Alert Card

Earlier this year WSUN attended an Autism Awareness Event at Uplands School, Swindon. This was a very informative day and there were some very interesting people giving talks.

The police advised that they have, together with the National Autistic Society, devised a card specifically for people with autism.

The autism alert card is available for people with autism to carry with them at all times in case they get into difficulty. This will enable others to help should a difficult situation arise. If you live in the Swindon area and would like to apply for a card you can either telephone: 01793 770079 or email: Swindon@nas.org.uk

There were also presentations from a community nurse who spoke about the kind of support groups there are and how to join them. The National Autistic Society also spoke about the importance of the work they do.

Middi Haines Court

We also visited Middi Haines Court to speak to the residents about the work that WSUN does and it gave them the opportunity to raise any issues they had regarding health and social care. We recorded their concerns, which were then forwarded to the Great Western Hospital (GWH). We received a detailed response to each issue which was then fed back to the Manager and the residents. Some of the issues:

Can GWH look into possibly making appointments for bus pass holders after 10.00am, due to bus pass restrictions?

Booking teams do consider age when arranging appointments with the view of patients getting out early and bus passes. If a patient has a bus pass and would prefer a post 10am appointment, if they could please bring it to our attention and we will endeavour to facilitate their request.

Insufficient disabled parking bays at GWH. Sometimes disabled patients or carers/visitors have to park round the other side to the entrance and have to walk a long way.

We, as a Trust, have looked at all the disabled parking areas to assess their suitability and use and reached a consensus to provide additional spaces specifically at the front of the hospital to reduce waiting times and be more in line with current usage figures. These new spaces will be outside of the current car park barrier system, thus negating the need to pay. This will form part of the next round of adjustments and changes to be implemented in the near future. We have been in consultation with the local Council to discuss the options available to us and we have already made significant inroads into this process and plans are being drawn with contractors to arrange dates for corrective actions to take place.

We have car park wardens who patrol the area daily and they proactively endeavour to ensure the disabled car parking spaces are only used by visitors with the requisite badge. However workload can mean there is some misuse by visitors but please be assured they work hard to ensure this is kept to a minimum. We have requested the company providing this service look into what measures they can take to report individuals misusing the blue badge system.

Wiltshire Independent Travel Support (WITS)

Would you like support to help you to travel independently? Our WITS Service has been running for over six years and we have supported more than 300 people to be able to access public transport or complete a working journey. David is just one of the people we have supported.



David has a visual impairment and short term memory difficulties which has affected his confidence. He wanted to be able to visit his sisters and the local supermarket so he could be more independent, enjoy the outside and be less reliant on others. After several sessions with a travel supporter he had learnt the route to the supermarket where the staff had got to know him and would assist him with his shopping.

When David finished his training he feedback that the WITS team had really helped him to get into a new routine. His new found confidence has led him to catching local buses and he has recently returned from travelling independently to Warwickshire on a coach trip which is a fantastic achievement.

The names have been changed to protect identities.

To find out more about WITS please contact Peter North on 07806 935814 or email peternorth.wsun@btconnect.com.

Do you have some useful information that you would like to share with our members? Or is there something that you would like to know more about and see in future newsletters?

If so, we would love to hear from you. Please contact us on 01380 871800 or info.wsun@btconnect.com.

WSUN received the sad news that one of our longest serving members, Sister Hannah had died in August. She was an enthusiastic campaigner for disabled people's rights and over the years was involved in many of the activities of the Network, including writing articles and poems for our Newsletters and carrying out training for local Taxi drivers around disability awareness. She often described herself as 'Sister Hannah with a banner'. She will be greatly missed.

Pictured right: Sister Hannah, training taxi drivers.



Wiltshire Libraries serving the community - Information Feature

In Wiltshire there are 5 mobile and 30 static libraries, they issue almost 2.5 million items a year, and with nearly 1.9 million visits they are a vital hub of the community. From bestselling authors, to the latest cookery and gardening titles. Books are available free of charge and there are also large collections of talking books, DVDs and music CDs for a small fee.

The 4 public mobile libraries make 264 stops a fortnight, and cover 86,000 miles between them, reaching out to rural communities providing reading and learning opportunities for all.

The other mobile provides a four weekly service to residential homes and sheltered accommodation, bringing books to the homes of older residents who are unable to visit the library themselves.

If you have a disability that means you are unable to visit the library then the Home Library Service may be able to help. There are also various borrower concessions for people with a disability or visual impairment to ensure they receive equal access to library services and facilities.

It's free to join the library so if you've haven't visited recently call in and see what you're missing. For more information about your local library opening times, facilities or the mobile units contact 01225 716700 or visit www.wiltshire.gov.uk/libraries.

healthwatch *Information Feature*

Healthwatch Wiltshire (HWW) formally launched its services as the consumer champion for the people of Wiltshire for health and social care on Thursday 3rd October in Devizes. The event was attended by 96 individuals and representatives from a wide range of organisations from across Wiltshire. Over lunch attendees were able to network and find out more about Healthwatch Wiltshire and its purposes.



Healthwatch Wiltshire's purpose is:

- To promote the voice of the consumer in the development of health and social care strategies (children and adults);
- To provide and promote effective signposting and information systems;
- To promote, monitor and inspect the quality of services commissioned to meet health and social care needs (enter and view); and
- To tell the Wiltshire story.

For more information about Healthwatch Wiltshire, or if you would like to become involved contact Healthwatch Wiltshire by phone - 01225 434218; email - info@healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk; website – www.healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk; or by post – Kingsbury House, Kingsbury Square, Melksham SN12 6HL

Wiltshire People 1st - Information Feature



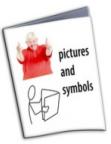
Wiltshire People First (WPF) is a user led Self-Advocacy organisation. All of the Management Committee are people with learning difficulties. They work to promote the rights of people with learning difficulties and autism, to make sure they are included and treated fairly.



WPF support people to speak up for themselves about important things in their lives and to be listened to.



WPF run training workshops and organise meetings and conferences.



WPF also work with other agencies to help them improve their services. WPF train staff and make easy to read information.



WPF run speaking up groups for adults and young people every month. Their meetings are friendly and they talk about things that are happening. WPF sometimes have guest speakers.



Anyone with a learning difficulty in Wiltshire can join - it is free!

Visit their website: www.wiltshirepeoplefirst.org to find out more about the exciting work they are doing including a new history project. Or contact them on: 01380 871900 or admin@wiltshirepeople1st.org.uk

Members of Wiltshire People 1st celebrating the Olympics at their Fun Day, with local torch bearer in 2012.



Develop Information Feature

The DEVELOP equalities service acts as a single source of equality information and support for the community and voluntary sector in Wiltshire. They run a regular cross-sector Wiltshire Equality Network, and areas of interest information and networking meetings. They also run an Equalities Panel, which has been designed to support and facilitate effective signposting of enquiries. Develop provide equalities information; news and resources, including an equalities calendar and also run training sessions in equality and diversity and can provide organisations with an equalities health check. They support individual groups whether you represent a single or multiple equality characteristic/strand(s).

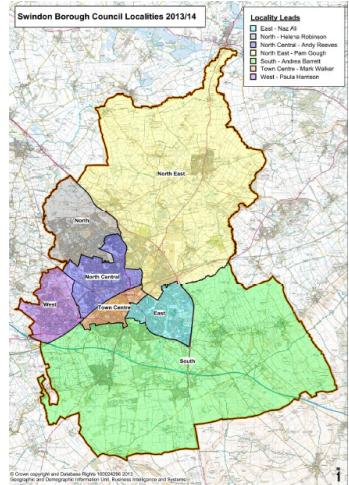
For more information visit their website www.developecs.org.uk, call 0845 034 5250 or email equalities@developecs.org.uk

Dates for your Diary

Every Monday Swindon Borough Council hold a meeting at the Central library between 10am – 12pm.

This meeting gives people an opportunity to discuss any issues that may be concerning them.

The localities team also attend this meeting. There are seven localities within the Borough, each one has a locality Lead Officer to work with the community. These are East, North, North Central, North East, South, Town Centre and West.



We will be holding three Health and Social Care Forums in Wiltshire, the dates of these are:

- **10th February 2014 in Trowbridge**
 - **25th February 2014 in Salisbury**
 - **5th March 2014 in Chippenham**

More information on these will be sent out nearer the time.

For a full list of dates for your diary, please visit www.wsun.co.uk/events/

Wiltshire & Swindon Users' Network's Contact Details

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Wiltshire & Swindon Users' Network is funded by the following Service Providers: