

18th Annual Report

July 2010



Chair's Report – Brian Warwick



In last year's report, I mentioned how it had been a significant year with highs and lows, how the credit crunch had hit our investments and thus our reserves very hard, those problems continue. These issues have not stopped us from carrying through our structural reorganisation to improve the services we provide to service users in Swindon and Wiltshire in spite of the closure of our Swindon office.

We have again been working closely with NHS Wiltshire, Wiltshire Unitary Council, Swindon Borough Council and other partner agencies to counter age and disability discrimination, ensuring that disabled and older people's views are sought in the monitoring and planning of their services.

Our structural re-organisation is enabling us to adopt a far more proactive role on Adult Care and Health issues. Louise Rendle and her new team are engaging more closely with service users in the consultation processes around care and health matters. I am delighted to report that, as a result of our new partnership agreement with Wiltshire Council and NHS Wiltshire, we now have a seat on the Adult Care & Health Joint Commissioning Board and the Adult Safeguarding Board. We have been active partners in helping to define many of the new policies around Disability and Older Peoples' services that have been approved by the Council and the Primary Care Trust (PCT) in the last year. They have listened to our concerns and taken them on board in their deliberations, making changes where desirable, this has also been reflected in the good report of the Care Quality Commission.

One member, to whom our organisation owes a great debt is Mrs Clare Evans MBE. Clare was a founder member of WSUN, she is rightly recognised both locally and nationally for her very robust campaigning and rightly strong views on disability issues. She has remained a strong supporter of our organisation, which she helped to create nearly 20 years ago. Last April, Clare decided to stand down as our President to ensure that there would be no conflict of interest in the new role and career she was taking on. On behalf of all members and staff at the Network, I would like to thank Clare for the many years of service and tremendous dedication she has

given to the work and development of Wiltshire and Swindon Users' Network. Thank you Clare, we owe you a great debt of gratitude.

Once again, I would like to take this opportunity to thank those often-unheard heroes on the Management Committee, who have ably supported the Chair and our organisation over the last twelve months or more. I would also like to link that thanks with those of our staff who have moved on for various reasons and to those new staff members who have joined us during the year. Our thanks are also extended to our funders with whom we work very closely. I would like, on this occasion, to give special mention and thanks to the Portfolio members who have not only supported us in the corridors of power, but have been very active in consulting with us on important decision making issues facing the public sector, most ably supported by various Chief Officers and their staff, here in Wiltshire and in Swindon.

I have recently advised the Management Committee that it is now my intention to stand aside as your chair, after three very hard and busy years and not seek re-election. I shall continue to support the Network and will be actively involved in supporting the work around an Ageing Society at local, regional and national level as befitting a person of my age. I would however, make one last appeal as the present Chair for more younger disabled people and members from minority groups to come forward and take their rightful place on your Management Committee. We really do need young people with enthusiasm and bright ideas to come forward and help to stimulate the work we are doing on behalf of all of you.

As I mentioned last year, no organisation can really exist or continue to improve its services without an active membership and dedicated support from its staff, so a huge thank you to all those who have ably supported the Network. We are a much stronger, healthier and active organisation than when I became your Chair three years ago. A huge thank you to all of you and particularly to our Head of Network Services Louise Rendle and my two Vice Chairs Dorothy Roberts and Linda Griffiths, all have been towers of strength in helping to bring these tremendous improvements about. Our aim is now to go from strength to greater strength over the coming years and continue to raise a strong voice on behalf of disabled and older people.

Regards,

Brian Warwick

Head of Network Services Report - Louise Rendle



So much has happened this year at the Network it is difficult to know where to begin. It has been a period of change. After looking at the way in which the Network can best meet the developing needs of both our service users and our funders, we have undergone some really positive changes regarding our structure both in terms of our membership and our staff.

At the end of 2009, we contacted our membership to ensure that our members still wished to remain on our database and that the details we held were still correct. We also wanted a more detailed record of how people wanted to be involved, whether that be through receiving our newsletters, being invited to consultations or answering questionnaires. Service users were also asked if they needed support through training so that they could be involved, for example, in interviewing and taking part in tendering processes. We now have a much clearer understanding of our current membership. We are now actively looking to find other ways in which service users can be supported to bring about change particularly through younger people who are at present under-represented in our organisation.

For a long time we have realised that people do not fit neatly into specific boxes; some of our members may be an older person but also have a physical disability. With this in mind, we felt it was important to extend the knowledge within our staff team and for people to be supported as individuals with different experiences. Our staff team now has three generic Development Outreach workers Nick, Dot and Denise. Martin will now concentrate on furthering service user involvement within social work courses and he will also be looking at National, Regional and Local policies and initiatives so we can make sure we continue to inform service users and find opportunities to ensure that people have a voice.

These last twelve months have been full of some really exciting initiatives and challenges, you will learn more about these as you read this annual report. There has been so much change within both health and social care, so much so, that sometimes, it is difficult to keep up. However, there is a very real commitment from both the service users and staff that, as we continue to be involved, we can have a very real positive impact on the services that we receive and the policies that are put in place.

Centre for Independent Living - Department of Health Funding

In order to meet with the Government's requirement that all local authorities have a Centre for Independent Living(CIL) in place by 2011, WSUN and Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living(WCIL) have been working in partnership.

A joint bid to the Department of Health for funding was successful.

We have held consultations with the joint memberships in the North and South of the county to explain what a CIL is, how it might work and to seek service user views on how they would want a CIL to function for them. These consultations took place at the end of April and the beginning of May.

We have also worked with Swindon Borough Council to facilitate meetings with service user organisations and providers in Swindon so that Swindon Borough Council can explain how they want a Swindon CIL to be in the borough. As partners we have organised three meetings for Swindon organisations to come and learn about a CIL, how they might take part in it and the process and timeframe that Swindon Borough Council is operating to.

We have also been commissioned by Swindon to hold two large consultations, to inform services users from over 14 organisations to discover their requirements for a CIL. These are taking place in July along with four smaller consultations with individual providers during July and August.

We look forward to working in partnership with WCIL on future projects and initiatives so that service users may have a stronger voice.

Best wishes,

Louise Rendle

Research & Academic Liaison Officer & WIN Support Worker - Martin Fortune

Voice of the Customer Involvement & our Involvement with Recruitment of Senior Staff at Wiltshire Council

Last year I wrote about how service users worked in partnership with Wiltshire Council looking at the brief for “Concept and the Voice of the Customer”. We looked at their care management issues and how we can make sure that people are at the centre of this; in other words, it is less about the way in which you do something; e.g. getting up, getting washed and more about the outcome; how you improve your quality of life. People need to have a service that meets their needs. Wiltshire Council is currently working with all people using the four “areas of Wiltshire” to make sure it works properly. Service users have been involved throughout.

One of the major changes is, regardless of where you live in Wiltshire, there is one new Social Care Help Desk number that will put you through to your local team. The number is **0300 4560111**.



Task & Finish Group developed into “Equal Chances, Better Lives Working Group.”

I have continued our involvement with the Task and Finish Group. As issues moved forward throughout the year, it was decided to change the name to **“Equal Chances, Better Lives Working Group.”** This group continues to look at the needs of the six strands for equality to form one organisation and develop “The Equality Framework”. When it became obvious that it was necessary to set up a new organisation, the Statutory Agencies funded the appointment of an interim manager who, with the help of some members, developed a job description, recruited staff and set up Develop to run Equal Chances Better Lives.

Research & Academic Liaison Officer

I now have a new job and have recently started as Research & Academic Liaison Officer. The post enables the Network to take a more proactive approach to Government, Regional and local policies, where it directly affects users. The other part of my role will be to strengthen our links with Bath University & Wiltshire College and to build our capacity to take Social Work students on placement and involves more service users in social work training.

Bath University & Wiltshire College

We continue our involvement with Bath University with 1st, 2nd and 3rd year students at Bath and Swindon University. Hopefully this work will increase.



Our work with Wiltshire College is going from strength to strength. There were some issues with tutors being required to do more teaching, so they were not able to devote as much time as they would have liked to user/carer involvement; these issues have now been resolved.

Service user representatives on Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership Board - WMHPB

Service users have been very involved this year working with Our Time to Talk (OTTT) and the User Friendly Group (UFG), increasing membership support for the four representatives of the WMHPB. I have been very active in involving and encouraging people to take more than just their own views to the WMHPB. The four representatives have undertaken training on how to be effectively involved.

“I feel that being able to have a say has made a difference to the services and the service users.”

Denise Richardson

Advisory Group

The Advisory Group has supported Daran Bailey (NHS Wiltshire) and Daniel Lyus (Wiltshire Council) in implementing the Mental Health Strategies. Daniel and Daran have involved service users in their decision making and checking their procedures and policies. The group was also involved in the Care Quality Commission inspection, in December, of Wiltshire Council. Other involvements are:

- Day Services Tender
- The recruitment of the Mental Health Commissioning Editor.

Physical & Sensory Impairment Commissioning Structure

I began to support the involvement of service users around Physical Impairment and we now have around six Service User quarterly meetings. We have also been planning groups around visual impairment and hearing impairment and deaf people who will also meet quarterly to discuss Commissioning of Services for Wiltshire Council.



Thank you for all your support and we will continue to support you well in to the future.

Wiltshire Involvement Network (WIN)

We host WIN in partnership with the Health Advocacy Partnership (HAP UK) and Age Concern (Now Age UK), to develop a proper socially included way of working that would include all disabled and older people. Joint projects undertaken to date have been the End of Life Strategy and the Sensory Impairment discussion event.

Development Outreach Worker - Nick Crane



This year the range of tasks and nature of the work has widened considerably.

Swindon

Through July, August and September I was very much involved with the quality survey that WSUN was asked to undertake in Swindon. This involved making a number of visits to Fessey Residential Home and Clapham Hobbs Day Centre, speaking to the residents or members, either in small groups or individually to find out their feelings and views on how the establishment is run and what improvements they would like to see made.

Care Pathway

In October, my involvement with 'The Care Pathway' began. It started with a large, Open Space meeting held in a Marquee at Chippenham Rugby Club. Over 100 people attended made up of Health Service professionals, Wiltshire



"I feel that 'our involvement has made an impact on the services provided by the Council, NHS, and Govt bodies'"

Alfred Webley

Council employees, Care Home providers, Service Users, Carers, and voluntary organisations. The Care Pathway programme was put together so that the future of health and Social Care for older people, in Wiltshire, could be discussed, planned and recommendations made. Following on from the large Open space meeting, five workshop meetings were organised between November and March to develop issues and ideas. A particular emphasis of the five workshops was the involvement of service users and carers with some 20% of each workshop being made up of older people. A coming together meeting was held on the 21st June to hear the results of these workshops and find out what the Council and NHS Wiltshire are going to implement from the recommendations made. Another meeting is planned

for next December when service users and carers will be able to ask the authorities to demonstrate the progress they have made in implementing the recommendations.

I have been involved in the process of electing the new Independent Chair for the Local Safeguarding Adults Board. I was also involved in the tendering process for the Care & Repair contract in Wiltshire."

John Usher



End of Life Care

In October and November of last year, I was involved in a most interesting consultation on End of Life Care. A series of focus groups, using the four district older groups were held to discuss this sensitive issue. They produced some very thoughtful and positive conversations. After the focus groups a large consultation was held at the Civic Hall Trowbridge. This again produced some very interesting discussion around the tables with the general recognition that it is important to bring this subject more into the open to ensure that people's wishes are respected when they reach the end of their lives.

English Heritage – Visitor Centre at Stonehenge

In March, we were approached by English Heritage to run two consultations on the proposed new visitor centre at Stonehenge. Both of these have been



fascinating pieces of work, and it was particularly pleasing to note that a large organisation like English Heritage was taking on board and addressing issues raised by our members at these consultations.

“We are listened to and our views are taken seriously. I have been part of sitting on interview panels for staff.”

Dorothy Roberts

Swindon CIL

Another major piece of work that I am involved with, which is currently ongoing, is the consultations organised on behalf of Swindon Borough Council on the formation of a Swindon CIL. The two main consultations will take place in July, with four smaller consultations with individual Swindon organisations taking place in July and August.

Older People’s Groups

The older peoples groups that I facilitate across the county continue to grow their numbers, and take on board issues from their areas and respond to requests from Wiltshire Council to undertake pieces of work for them.



Age · NO Barrier

Age No Barrier Week took place between the 10th & 16th July. A large number of different organisations from Schools to libraries to Care Homes once again put on events designed to build

bridges across the ages, bring different age groups closer together in a fun and yet informative way.

Police Forum

We have continued our close association with Wiltshire Police and have participated in two police forums in November and March. The November forum concentrated on Hate Crime and consideration of the new Police Hate Crime Reporting packs. The March forum looked at the appropriateness of Government information advertisements concerning home security.

Many of the service users who attended felt that a lot of vulnerable people would take the humour in the advertisements literally and thereby put themselves at a greater risk. The second part of the forum was a



presentation by the police on avoiding distraction burglary and there was a presentation by the Bobby Van.

The police forums continue to be an interesting and beneficial project that the Network engages with Wiltshire Police in.

Ladder of Involvement Consultation

In June, we had a Ladder of Involvement Consultation. This was about Wiltshire Council wanting to get better at the way that it involves people in its Adult Care Services. We have been finding out what you think about involvement and how you would like to be involved.



“I have been involved in two tender processes on an equal basis as the commissioners, I feel that my views and opinions were taken seriously.”

David Harrison

“Being involved is the way to go, working together to make life better for all. Talking to people, finding out their needs.....”

Our New Team

By April of this year, the re-organisation of the Development Workers team had been accomplished, with the team now taking on a more generic role. We are now at full strength with the very welcome arrival of Dot and Denise.



Development Outreach Worker - Dot Kronda



My name is Dot and I am one of the new Development Outreach Workers.

I have recently moved from North Wales and I am new to living in Wiltshire. In North Wales, I worked for the NHS, organising and running a self-management course for people living with long-term health conditions and a separate course for carers.

I am enjoying finding my way around such a beautiful County and it has been a real pleasure and privilege to meet so many people involved with the Network who give of their time so generously and willingly in order to help make a difference.

I have personal experience of being a user and was a member of the North Wales Patient & Carer Liaison group that fed into the North Wales Cancer Network. I am passionate about user involvement and believe that every individual has the right to influence and, where possible, self direct the services that meet their needs. I am looking forward to meeting the rest of the Network members over the next few months.

Best wishes, Dot Kronda

Development Outreach Worker - Denise Cooper

Hello Members,

You may know that I am the newest Development Outreach Worker to join WSUN.

Just so you know a little more about me. I am a Northern lass who has slowly moved further South since 2002. I spent many years balancing my role as a mother, carer and mature student so was thrilled to qualify as a social worker back in 1998. I worked in Children's Services in different social work teams before moving into SureStart and Children's Centre Services in 2003 as an Outreach Worker and then Project Worker. My family and I moved to North Wiltshire in 2006 and I subsequently changed jobs to extend my community development skills by working as a neighbourhood worker for a housing association.

I hope my varied work and personal experiences give you confidence that together, we can influence change and help WSUN go from strength to strength! I look forward to meeting you soon.

Best wishes, Denise



Swindon User Involvement - Lisa Chadwick



The Future for Swindon

Over the next twelve months, Swindon Borough Council (SBC) will be looking at the ongoing development of a Centre for Independent Living in Swindon. As this happens, the way in which organisations are funded and how they work together may change. We will be involved in consultations with service users, throughout the summer, regarding what local people need to help them to live independently.

We are holding two consultation events in Swindon during July, to ensure that any services that are developed are in response to local peoples' needs, which will be focussed on the themes of:

- What services would be most valuable / appropriate for you?
- How would you want to access those services?
- What are the current gaps in services?

Swindon Office

The Swindon office closed with effect from 30 April 2010. However, we are still fully operational and you can contact Lisa Chadwick on **07592034480** Monday and Thursday afternoons and all day Tuesday. Alternatively you can contact the Semington office on **01380 871800**.

As well as working with Swindon Borough Council, WSUN Swindon are involved in other projects this year which include:

- **Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) Health Event**
- **Senior Well Being Day**
- **Stronger Communities Forum**
- **Digital Switchover Event**
- **Transforming Community Services & Personalisation workshop**
- **Police Forums in Devizes**
- **Wheelchair Event Swindon**
- **Wheelchair Focus Groups**
- **Personalisation Providers Workshop**



Digital Switchover Event

If you would like further information regarding any of the above events, please telephone Lisa Chadwick on either of the telephone numbers stated above.

Wiltshire Independent Travel Support (WITS)



Picture: from right to left: Lisa, Sally, Peter, Indie the Dog, Wayne & Christine



Another year has gone already, and the WITS project in that time has secured another years funding from Wiltshire Council, the Learning Disabilities Development Fund and additional funding from the Post 16 partnership funding.

The Post 16 numbers have doubled since the last report, and we were successful in completing 15 students who are travelling independently to college or work projects, one of which successfully has secured permanent employment from it.

Within the three-year period, WITS have successfully completed over 150 users who are now either travelling independently on public transport or completing a walking journey. At the time of printing, we will be nearing 200 successful users and we are looking at promoting that milestone to spread the word within the community.



At the end of last year, WITS were also short listed for the Breakthrough UK Independent Living Awards, in the Public Transport category. Louise Rendle (Head of Network Services) and Peter North (WITS Project Coordinator) went to the awards ceremony in Manchester, and we were runners up in the Accessible Transport Award.

Below is the story of one service user (names have been changed to protect identity).

Diane lives in a flat in West Wiltshire area, and has some support of a few hours a week. She has a physical/sensory impairment and learning difficulties.

WITS were contacted by Diane as she wanted to attend a college course, but was struggling with the taxi fares as they were getting more expensive. She wanted to be

able to travel to Trowbridge College independently, so that she could improve her learning and social skills. After the first initial meeting with WITS, we talked to Diane about the long walk to the nearest bus stop. However, we felt that it would be the most direct and easiest route to remember and also the safest route for her as she has to walk with the aid of a walker, the use of dropped kerbs are required for crossing the road, and also the bus service required would be an accessible service. Diane was given a simplified and enlarged print of the bus timetables that needed to be used for the journey there and back.

Diane has now successfully completed the course, she says that this has improved her quality of life and she is now able to meet new and old friends in town. She has gained confidence and is looking forward to new opportunities that independent travel can bring.

Below are quotes from some of our users who have been travel training:

“When someone told me the instructions and showed me which route from my home to college, and after I had done it a few times and got used to it, people do not bother me as much as they used to, and now I feel confident and Independent”

“It has given me more knowledge and understanding of road safety and awareness”

“It was good this was offered as a service for someone with learning disabilities on a 1 – 1 support”

“Obviously made me more Independent and gave me more confidence, I enjoyed the trips and had a big smile on my face when praised on my efforts”

“It really has made life much less stressful and I now can confidently use both buses and trains to work”

“Very helpful, nice volunteers, very patient”

Vice Chair – Linda Griffiths



I have been asked to write an article about WSUN's involvement with the world of academia. I am sure that I was not the only person to find the words academia and academic scary; it was to me when I began my journey of discovery. I would like to dispel anyone else's fears because having been around for almost three years academia is not scary or daunting in the least bit. I will explain why:



The roles that we service users (SU's) have are many and varied, from reading students work, to more direct contact with students at interview, as part of an interview panel.

Both Bath University and Trowbridge College involve SU's from WSUN and elsewhere from year one, also at interview's when we advise on the suitability or otherwise of a candidate to be given a place on the Social Work Degree course.

A panel is made up of three people at Trowbridge and two at Bath. The third person at Trowbridge is a past student of a professional SW. Both have a tutor and SU (or Carer). The panel is there at the start and through to year three and the students last piece of work before they become a fully-fledged Social Worker. We attend their recall day and ensure that the service users' perspective is high on their agenda for their enormous assignment about their placement. Nothing about us, without us, is our motto, and still is to this day.

Other successes this year for the Academia Sub-group SU's include a letter sent by the Chair of our group to Moira Gibb CBE, Chief Executive, Social Work Task Force, has resulted in national recognition. The letter is to be taken seriously by the Social Work Reform Board, well done to Dorothy Roberts and others who wrote a letter so well it will influence SW Reform in the new corridors of power.

On a personal note, a minor step forward has been addressing individual students rather entrenched views of a service. This has resulted in a rethink and some positive reflections and communication with me. Tomorrow I will travel to Taunton to meet with the Regional Advisory Group (RAG) renamed SUCCESS (Service User and Carers' Co-operative for Education in Social Work, South West), where I hope to hear what roles we can have in supporting SU involvement with Skills for Care, the Government dept that; 'is an independent registered charity working with 35,000 adult social care employers to set the standards and qualifications to equip 1.5 million social care workers with the skills and knowledge needed to deliver high quality care to people who use services and carers'.



http://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/about_us/what_we_do/what_we_do.aspx Accessed: 22-6-10)

Management Committee – 2009/2010

Brian Warwick(Chair), Dorothy Roberts Vice Chair), Linda Griffiths(Vice Chair), Trevor Bailey, Shiena Bowen, Paul Burgess, Martin Eggleton, April Hammond, Elizabeth Moss, John Reilly, Alfred Webley, Debbie Burse, Jim Law

Staff



Louise Rendle
Head of Network
Services

Wiltshire Independent Travel Support



Peter North
WITS
Co-ordinator



Indie



Christine
Keepence
Travel
Supporter

Community Development



Dot Kronda
Development
Outreach
Worker



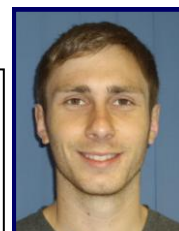
Denise
Cooper
Development
Outreach
Worker



Nick Crane
Development
Outreach
Worker



Lisa
Hawkins
Travel
Supporter

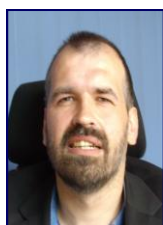


Wayne
Martin
Travel
Supporter



Sally
Cobb
Travel
Supporter

Finance



Martin Fortune
Research &
Academic
Liaison Officer



Claire
Selway
Finance
Officer



Lisa
Chadwick
Admin
Assistant



Caroline
Snow
Personal
Assistant



Gemma
Holdway
Office
Manager



Jessica
Johnston
Admin
Assistant



Sue Sims
Admin
Assistant

Administration