



# COALITION NEWS

February 2011

Working together to promote equality of  
opportunity and independent  
living for disabled people in Surrey

Issue 23

## SURREY COALITION OF DISABLED PEOPLE

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## RESPONDING TO GOVERNMENT ON DLA REFORMS

Pictured here are representatives of Surrey Coalition, the Empowerment Boards and Action for Carers Surrey at a recent meeting to agree a joint response to Government on their proposed reforms of Disability Living Allowance (DLA). The group agreed responses to all of the 22 questions posed by the Government, and challenged the need for reform of an allowance which already provides so many disabled people with some money to pay for the extra costs of day to day living with an impairment. The group also included a challenge to the Government against its plan to remove the Mobility element of DLA from disabled young people and adults living in residential care or educational establishments. Our response includes several case studies of the impact of the loss of this DLA benefit, including the loss of access to mobility vehicles.

We have been helped by the adult social care policy team to put our response together, and to understand the potential impact of the planned changes on disabled people in Surrey - for which we are very grateful.



For a copy of our Joint Response, please contact us in the Coalition Office.

See next page for more Campaign Updates →

# MORE CAMPAIGN NEWS

Across the country disabled people and their organisations and champions at both local and national level are continuing their campaign against the Government's cuts, particularly to benefits, which, if implemented will undermine their own policy of promoting "control, personal choice and independence" (their Big Society agenda) Here is a brief update:

## . **LAUNCH OF DISABILITY RIGHTS WATCH UK**

At a meeting in central London, on 25<sup>th</sup> January attended by several Coalition members, the United Kingdom Disabled People's Council (UKDPC), with support from Scope and Disability Lib, launched a website intended to gather evidence on breaches of disability rights.

The website can be found at:

<http://www.disabilityrightswatchuk.org/front/contact-us.php>

On the website, individuals can record instances and situations that they feel have breached their Human Rights. Contact can also be made by post to: Disability Rights Watch UK, c/o UKDPC, 27 Old Gloucester Street, London, WC1N 3AX

Here's how you can join in:

1. Register your details on Disability Rights Watch UK website at the address above, carefully noting all instructions and advice.
2. Develop your case study,
3. Enter your case study to Disability Rights Watch UK.

That's it!

## . **NATIONAL DAY OF PROTEST AGAINST BENEFITS CUTS**

This was held on 24<sup>th</sup> January, and was marked by events all over the country. In the South East, Disabled People's Organisations including Surrey Coalition met to agree plans for working together more closely on common issues including the cuts.

## . **FOR OTHER CAMPAIGN NEWS**

Visit these websites: - [www.disabilityalliance.org.uk](http://www.disabilityalliance.org.uk)  
- [www.ukdpc.net](http://www.ukdpc.net) - [www.mencap.org.uk](http://www.mencap.org.uk)

Join The Surrey Coalition group on Facebook and share your views.

# WHAT COALITION MEMBERS HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN

## INFLUENCING THE COMMISSIONING OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Over recent months many members have continued to shape plans for the future delivery of services to ensure they provide what disabled people say they want and need. People are being involved in a range of ways – through special interest groups, through the Empowerment Boards and by being a member of Adult Social Care Project Teams. Current work includes:

- **Commissioning Strategy for People with Sensory Impairment**

Meetings of Surrey Hard of Hearing Forum and Surrey Vision Action Group were held in January to



- Give final comments on the Commissioning Strategy
- Contribute to the specification for the forthcoming tender for services for people with visual impairment and combined sight and hearing loss, for which a new contract will be let from July for two years.
- Work on the specification for services for people who are hard of hearing or deafened, which will remain provided in house by Adult Social Care for the next two years or so.
- This will be until a new model for providing integrated, user-led services for everyone with a sensory impairment can be developed and set up.

This will provide even more opportunities for disabled people to shape services and even provide them themselves – exciting times ahead!



# WHAT COALITION MEMBERS HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN

- **Surrey Accommodation Strategy**

At the Empowerment Board meetings in November, disabled members gave their views on the Accommodation Strategy being developed by Adult Social Care together with the Borough and District Councils.

- **Commissioning Strategy for Advocacy Services**

NHS Surrey has now agreed to work with Adult Social Care to develop a Joint Commissioning Strategy by the autumn and to tender for more equitable advocacy services across Surrey to start in April 2012. This follows recent decisions to continue to fund existing advocacy services during 2011/12 pending this review. Disabled people and those using current services will be involved during the review and in the procurement of future services.

- **‘Supporting People’ services for people with learning difficulties and physical and sensory impairment**

Work has also started on reviewing the way the Supporting People funds are used to provide housing related support, and plans for involving people who currently use these services are currently being agreed with Surrey Coalition and the Empowerment Boards.

If you want to be involved in any of these activities, contact us in the Coalition office.

- **Joint Commissioning Strategy for people with Neurological Conditions**

Work started last September by NHS Surrey and Surrey County Council on a strategy for people with Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinsons, Motor Neurone Disease, Acquired Brain Injury and Epilepsy. We supported Focus Groups to give people's views on current services and what they felt they needed from health and social care services. A User Reference Group is now being set up to look at the needs analysis and identify priorities for the Action Plan. To find out more please contact us in the Coalition office.

# WHAT COALITION MEMBERS HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN

## • **GIVING VIEWS ON THE PUBLIC HEALTH WHITE PAPER**

Members attended the event run by NHS Surrey and Surrey County Council on 24<sup>th</sup> January, to give their views on the three parts of the Public Health White Paper. You can also give your views through an online survey using this link: [http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/sccwebsite/sccws pages.nsf/LookupWebPagesbyTITLE\\_RTF/Healthy+Lives+Healthy+people+White+Paper+Consultation](http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/sccwebsite/sccws pages.nsf/LookupWebPagesbyTITLE_RTF/Healthy+Lives+Healthy+people+White+Paper+Consultation)

You may be interested in particular in the White Paper “Healthy Lives, Healthy People”. Survey closes on 18<sup>th</sup> February.

## • **TELECARE SUMMIT**

Members of our Telecare and Equipment User and Carer Reference Group attended the Summit on 13<sup>th</sup> January to hear about the latest developments in Assistive Technology to help people remain safe and independent at home. The drive to make better use of such technology is an important part of the Surrey Accommodation Strategy which aims to provide more accessible housing for disabled and vulnerable people instead of residential care. You need to join the Housing Register if you want housing now or in the future.

## • **INTERVIEWING SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS**

Three Coalition members helped Adult Social Care over three whole days to interview applicants for the social work degree course. Our thanks to Anna, Gill and Meena for their hard work on behalf of people using social care services.

## • **TAKING PART IN SURREY LINK'S OUT OF HOURS SURVEY**

We encouraged our members via our email list, website and E-Sight, to complete the survey form from Surrey LINK on ‘Out of Hours’ NHS Services. This closed on 14<sup>th</sup> February and we gather that Surrey LINK have received about 350 responses. They will now analyse the results to inform their Out of Hours project work. Thank you to everyone who completed the survey form.

# WHAT COALITION MEMBERS HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN

## • SURREY ACCESS FORUM

Pictured here are members of Surrey Access Forum at their recent meeting, working together as representatives of local Access Groups to tackle county wide issues to do with access to buildings, highways and the environment.

Some of the things discussed were:

- The County Council's new **Declutter Policy** which will be out for consultation shortly. This recognises the importance of ensuring that pavements and other pedestrian areas enable people to pass freely without risk of injury or obstruction. It also refers to the Council's policy against the use of Portable Advertising (A Boards) where they cause such risks. Surrey Access Forum will be agreeing a response to this Declutter Policy at their next meeting.
- Plans for improving the **Surrey Access Forum Website** ([www.surreyaccessforum.org.uk](http://www.surreyaccessforum.org.uk)) to ensure it has links to Council policies on things such as Traffic Calming, Declutter and Signing. It is also being developed to be more interactive and to encourage people to report concerns about access issues, across the County.



## • PUBLIC SAFETY PLAN CONSULTATION

Surrey Fire & Rescue are consulting on their Public Safety Plan - this is a plan for the next ten years, and includes plans

- to make emergency response more equitable across Surrey
- to focus more on preventative services, and
- to match fire and rescue resources to demand

The Empowerment Board Chairs gave their comments on the Public Safety Plan at their recent meeting, and you can give your views. See Website: [www.surrey-fire.gov.uk/psp](http://www.surrey-fire.gov.uk/psp) or call 03456 009 009 or by SMS: 07527 182 861 (start message Fire PSP) Closing date is 4th March 2011

# UPDATES ON USER LED PROJECTS

## ON THE USER LED ORGANISATION'S PROJECT

A great deal of work continues to be done by everyone involved in this exciting new project.

- **At The Hub, Epsom**

Several new disabled volunteers have joined the Hub since Christmas, and are quickly picking up the job of looking up information and giving advice to people calling in with enquiries. Most of the requests are about benefits, equipment, employment and transport and how to get support and advocacy. Two of the volunteers (Mandy and Colin) are pictured here meeting Tim Parkin from the Department of Health when he visited the Hub recently. Initial funding for the Hub came from the DoH as one of their user led project pilots, so Tim was pleased to see it up and running so well.



- **At The Hub, Redhill**

We are pleased to say that the lease for the shop in Redhill High Street is due to be signed imminently, so now it's full steam ahead to do the shop re-fit in order to open the Hub in April. In the meantime the local User Led Organisation called RaBDA (Reigate and Banstead Disability Action) have met with 15 other disabled people who want to be volunteers at the Hub, and their training will begin shortly.

## ON 'RIGHT TO CONTROL'

The project went live on 13<sup>th</sup> December, and since then people accessing any one of the 6 sources of support and funding included in the project are now being offered information and checks to see if they are eligible for the others. These include:

- Adult Social Care
- Access to Work
- Disabled Facilities Grants
- Supporting People
- Independent Living Fund
- Work Choice

Disabled people have been involved throughout this project and are now involved in monitoring implementation. The Right to Control team are based on the top floor at the Hub, Epsom. On the ground floor volunteers are promoting this new right to visitors and offering them support if needed.

# OPPORTUNITIES TO HAVE YOUR SAY

## ON THE FUTURE OF MOBILE LIBRARIES

Following a Public Value Review of the Surrey Library Service, the County Council proposes to withdraw the mobile libraries and to engage with people to find other ways in which they could obtain library services. We are concerned that this plan would disadvantage people living in smaller communities and want your views, particularly if you currently use a mobile library services. Please come along to your local Empowerment Board meeting in March to give your views, or contact us in the Coalition Office: Tel **01483 456558** or email [info@surreycoalition.org.uk](mailto:info@surreycoalition.org.uk). (See below for dates of Empowerment Board meetings)

## GIVE YOUR VIEWS AT MEETINGS OF YOUR LOCAL EMPOWERMENT BOARD

Issues to be discussed at the March meetings include:

- Public Value Review of Library Services
- Housing related support
- Services for people with sensory impairment
- Advocacy Services

The dates of the meetings are

**North West** - Weds 2<sup>nd</sup> March - Woking Borough Council Offices  
**Mid Surrey** - Mon 7<sup>th</sup> March - Park House, Leatherhead  
**South West** - Weds 16<sup>th</sup> March - Godalming Baptist Church  
**East Surrey** - Mon 21<sup>st</sup> March - White Hart Barn, Godstone  
**North Surrey** - Tues 22<sup>nd</sup> March - Hythe Centre, Staines

**Contact Yasmin Broome for more information.**

**Tel 01483 517294 or email [yasmin.broome@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:yasmin.broome@surreycc.gov.uk)**

## JOIN A SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

If you have personal experience of the following impairments, you may want to join the groups which focus on improving services for you:

- Hearing Impairment or Vision Impairment
- Neurological Conditions
- Experience of Mental Health Services

Contact the Coalition Office and we will arrange for you to get involved.  
Tel **01483 456555** or email [carol.pearson@surreycoalition.org.uk](mailto:carol.pearson@surreycoalition.org.uk)

# OPPORTUNITIES TO HAVE YOUR SAY

## FREE WORKSHOPS FOR PEOPLE RECEIVING DIRECT PAYMENTS

Surrey Independent Living Council (SILC) are running a series of FREE all day workshops around Surrey to help people who get Direct Payments. There will be helpful sessions on managing your direct payment, reconciliation and monitoring, support planning and recruiting and employing PA's.

The first workshop will be held in Guildford on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2011 and will include a session by the Inland Revenue. If you wish to find out more please contact Kate on **01483 458111** or email [kate@surreyilc.org.uk](mailto:kate@surreyilc.org.uk) or look at their website [www.surreyilc.org.uk](http://www.surreyilc.org.uk)

Further workshops are planned for 28<sup>th</sup> June in Leatherhead, 20<sup>th</sup> September in the Redhill/Reigate area and 21<sup>st</sup> February 2012 in Camberley.

## HELP TACKLE HATE CRIME

Hate crime is any incident perceived to have been committed against any person or property on the grounds of a particular person's ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or disability, whether it amounts to a crime or not, it is still referred to as a hate crime. Hate crime can take many forms, including: verbal abuse, physical assault, intimidation and damage to property. Hate crime is WRONG and victims do not have to put up with it.

- **Report it to Surrey Police**

Telephone 0845 125 2222 or call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111

- **Report it when it happens**

There is now a new website giving information about Hate Crime and how you can report it: [www.report-it.org.uk](http://www.report-it.org.uk) You can also find out about organisations which can help you.

- **Get involved in producing a DVD**

Working with Surrey Police and Advocacy Partners, members are working on a DVD and leaflet to help people with learning difficulties understand and be able to report hate crime. If you would like to get involved, Tel Mary Hendrick on **01483 517953** or email [learning.disabilities.org.uk](http://learning.disabilities.org.uk)

# IMPROVING ACCESS TO TRANSPORT

## WORKING WITH SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL

Work to enable disabled people to influence transport and highways services access Surrey is now planned and co-ordinated through regular meetings between Coalition representatives and the County Council Head of Transport. Through this arrangement, disabled people have been more actively involved, for example by:

- Raising concerns about the proposals in the **Surrey Bus Review**, through the local Empowerment Boards.
- Responding to consultations on the **Surrey Transport Plan**
- Co-producing leaflets and the process by which disabled people will apply for or renew their **Bus Pass from April 2011**, to ensure it is easily accessible for everyone.

**PLEASE NOTE** – Everyone whose bus pass is due for renewal after April 2011 will be contacted by the County Council by post and given options on how to renew it – by telephone, post or online.

The Council will be launching a major publicity campaign about all the changes shortly.

## . SURVEY OF DISABLED PERSONS BUS PASS HOLDERS

Last Autumn we suggested that the County Council seek the views of people holding disabled persons bus passes, to inform the Surrey Bus Review. However this proved impossible whilst data on pass holders was held by each Borough and District Councils. However under the new regulations by which the administration of Concessionary Fares transfers to the County Council from April this year, all the data will then be held in one place. The Council therefore plans to send the survey form, which we helped to design, to all holders of disabled persons bus passes in May or June this year.

We hope this will give us and the Council important information on current bus usage, the difficulties people face and the reasons why people use buses. It will also give useful information to inform **Phase 3 of the Surrey Bus Review**, on which Consultation will start in October this year. This phase will mainly cover Waverley, Epsom & Ewell. The local Empowerment Boards will discuss the proposals at their November 2011 meetings.

# **IMPROVING ACCESS TO TRANSPORT**

## **IMPROVING PATIENT TRANSPORT SERVICES**

We have also continued to meet regularly with NHS Surrey to give patient feedback on the patient transport services and to press for higher quality standards. NHS Surrey have decided to extend the current contract with G4S for one year until March 2012, while an open tendering process takes place with Surrey County Council for a new contract for health and social care transport from April 2012 onwards. A Co-design process is starting shortly to involve service users and other stakeholders.

In the meantime, improved performance and quality standards are being required of G4S, including disability awareness training for their staff.

## **IMPROVING BUS SERVICES**

We were invited to attend a meeting of Surrey Bus operators in December, to give a talk about the problems faced by disabled people in using buses. Carol Pearson told them about the difficulties for wheelchair users and people who are deaf or vision impaired, and suggested ways in which bus drivers can help. As a result we have been invited to attend the disability awareness training provided by one operator, Stagecoach, to see how improvements could be made.

We also suggested that Surrey produce a range of "Safe Journey" cards which disabled people could use to indicate their specific needs to the bus driver. We are pleased to say that the County Council and the Bus operators agreed to this suggestion and we hope these will be available soon. (more information in the next Issue of Coalition News).

## **LEAFLET ON PATIENT TRANSPORT**

Through the Patient Transport User Group we have also been helping to produce a new leaflet - A guide on how Patient Transport works, who is eligible, where to go for help if you aren't eligible and information on how to claim help with travel costs for people on low incomes. The leaflet will be printed soon and we will enclose a copy with the next Issue of Coalition News.

# PROMOTING DISABILITY EQUALITY

## • WITH SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL AND NHS SURREY

Pictured here are Coalition representatives with the Equality Leads at the County Council and NHS Surrey at the most recent meeting of the Joint Disability Equality Steering Group discussing plans for removing barriers to disability equality and contributing to their new Equality schemes and objectives.

Recent achievements of this Steering Group include

- The installation of hearing loops at receptions in the Community Hospitals.
- Access visits to Council and NHS Surrey premises to check on accessibility.
- Agreement to widely promote guidance on arranging accessible events to all public bodies in Surrey.



## • THROUGH SCC'S EXTERNAL EQUALITIES ADVISORY GROUP

Disabled people are represented on this Group by Carol Pearson from Surrey Coalition and Nick Markwick from SID. We work alongside representatives of all the other equality 'strands' to advise the County Council on their Equality policies, plans and schemes, and to contribute to Equality Impact Assessments.

Issues discussed at the most recent meeting included:

- The Public Value Review of Library Services - the Advisory Group raised their objection to decisions apparently already made by Cabinet to close mobile libraries without prior consultation. We are awaiting their response.
- The Surrey Fire and Rescue 'Public Safety Plan'. (See Page 9 for more information).

# PROMOTING DISABILITY EQUALITY

## IMPLEMENTING THE EQUALITY ACT

New duties will be placed on public bodies from April 2011 following the passing of the Equality Act last year. These will require them to

- publish key information on equality issues by July 2011, and
- publish their Equality Objectives by April 2012

Arrangements are being made through the Disability Equality Steering Group to ensure that disabled people are involved in developing these Equality Objectives over the coming year.

## NHS SURREY'S SINGLE EQUALITY SCHEME CONSULTATION

**A message from Tina Gull** - NHS Surrey's Equality and Diversity lead.

"Thank you to everyone who took time to complete the questionnaire sent to you all in the December Issue of Coalition News. We received over 40 responses and also had feedback from you at the Coalition's AGM and the Empowerments Board meetings. Your views have shaped our Single Equality Scheme and will form the basis of our Equality Objectives for the future.

The key issues you raised were:

- Access to information in formats that meet your needs
- Communication support - ensuring that you can communicate with us and we can communicate with you
- Staff awareness and training - to ensure they are aware of the barriers people may face when accessing our services
- Equality impact assessment - making sure that service users are fully engaged with in the decision making processes
- Delivery of services - that meet patients needs
- Data collection - improving our recording and data collection processes

The feedback from the consultation shows that although we have made progress, there remains much more work for us to do.

We will keep you informed of how we are doing in tackling these issues - and thank you again for your contributions."

# INFORMATION FOR YOU

## **PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST”**

**Enclosed** with this Issue is a copy of a public information leaflet produced by Adult Social Care (with input from our members) which explains what Personalisation and Self-Directed Support is all about.

## **BULLETINS FROM THE SURREY LEARNING DISABILITY PARTNERSHIP BOARD**

**Enclosed** for members interested in learning disability services are copies of the Bulletins for last September, October and November. We are sorry these are late but we have only recently received them. But, they have lots of interesting information on things like Housing, Health checks, the Autism Strategy and Day Services.

## **RIGHT OF COMPLAINT**

Since October 2010, the right of complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman for people receiving local authority care, has been extended to those who arrange and fund their own adult social care. For more information, call 0300 061 0614 or go to [www.lgo.org.uk/adult-social-care](http://www.lgo.org.uk/adult-social-care).

## **NEW REPORT FROM PASSENGER FOCUS**

Passenger Focus seeks the views of people using trains and buses to give passenger feedback to the operators. They have just published the results of their most recent survey of the Assisted Passenger Reservation System (APRS) obtained from mystery shoppers undertaking 199 journeys to test the quality and efficiency of the assistance service provided for disabled passengers. For a copy of the Report go to [www.passengerfocus.org.uk](http://www.passengerfocus.org.uk) or email [info@passengerfocus.org.uk](mailto:info@passengerfocus.org.uk) for a word version or audio CD.

## **GUIDANCE FOR THE AUTISM STRATEGY**

Statutory Guidance has now been issued by the Department of Health on the Autism Strategy. To obtain the full version or an easy-read one, use this link: [http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH\\_122847](http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_122847) or contact us in the Coalition Office.

## **IN MEMORY OF MICHAEL SELLORS**

We were deeply saddened to hear that Michael passed away on 27<sup>th</sup> December, at home, as a result of a heart attack. A memorial service was held for Michael at St Barnabas Church in Epsom on January 25<sup>th</sup> where many very moving tributes were given by his friends and colleagues particularly those at Leatherhead Club House. Tributes were also given by Surrey Coalition and Kingston University where he had played such an active role to promote user involvement.



Michael will be greatly missed by us all. He played an active role in the Alliance which formed Surrey Coalition of Disabled People and was one of its first Board Directors when the Coalition was launched in October 2007.

Michael had remained on the Board since then, and took the lead on user involvement in mental health services, advocacy and employment in particular, where his real personal interest, knowledge and experience lay. We will always remember Michael with great fondness and with many thanks.

## **IN MEMORY OF JOHN OTTAWAY**

We were also very saddened to hear of the death of John on 8<sup>th</sup> December. John had been an active member of Surrey Coalition for many years and also an active participant on the North Surrey Empowerment Board. John had a special interest in challenging hate crime against disabled people, and did meet to raise awareness of this injustice. His friends and colleagues will long remember him.

# DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

## EMPOWERMENT BOARD'S CONFERENCE 2011

Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> June  
10.30 - 3.30  
Dorking Halls

Keep the date free. Flyer and  
booking forms will be sent out in  
the April Issue of Coalition News

## JOIN THE FIGHT AGAINST CUTS

MENCAPS BIG CUT EVENT  
St Georges Christian Centre  
Ashtead

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March  
10 - 3.30

For people with learning  
difficulties and carers

To book your place call Mencap  
on 01905 740500

Or email

[wendy.mobbs@mencap.org.uk](mailto:wendy.mobbs@mencap.org.uk)

## SURREY LEARNING DISABILITY WEEK

20th to 27th June 2011

On the theme of

### HATE CRIME

More Details later

## FREE FAMILY FUN DAYS

FOR DISABLED YOUNG  
PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

AT HART LEISURE CENTRE  
on 22<sup>nd</sup> February

AT SPELTHORNE LEISURE  
CENTRE  
on 12<sup>th</sup> March

For information and to  
register - contact

Kevin Wallace on  
01252 774138 or email  
[kevin.wallace@hart.gov.uk](mailto:kevin.wallace@hart.gov.uk)  
(for 22<sup>nd</sup> February) or  
Gary on 07576 012756 or email  
[wheelchairlasertag@gmail.com](mailto:wheelchairlasertag@gmail.com)  
(for 12<sup>th</sup> March)

## NHS SURREY CO-DESIGN EVENT ON PLANS FOR COMMUNITY HOSPITAL HUBS

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March  
1 for 1.30 to 4.30

Leatherhead Leisure Centre

For more information contact us in  
the Coalition Office