

Information and news for disabled and older people and family carers

Independent Living News



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Edition 136 - March 2020

#partofthesolution - Supporting disabled people for over twenty years

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If you would like a regular copy of the SIL newsletter, and to help us adhere to our environmental policy to reduce production and postage costs, please forward your email address details to shelagh.callaghan@s4il.co.uk

Deadline for article contributions in the Summer newsletter is Friday, 30th April 2020. Email to shelagh.callaghan@s4il.co.uk or post to the address on the back of this newsletter. Don't forget the prize for every star letter/article printed is £25.



Caveat: Please note we print articles provided by third party organisations in good faith. SIL takes no responsibility for the accuracy of the information or content. Dates and times of events and activities are correct at the time of going to print.

Welcome to the latest edition of the SIL newsletter.

As we move further into 2020 and the new decade there have been some significant changes politically, with a new Prime Minister and the UK leaving the EU. On a more local level we have also seen significant changes with the Conservatives losing control of Herefordshire Council.

These changes are important to SIL and to disabled people across the county as they do impact upon the way funding is allocated. We are still waiting to hear what the government intends to do regarding the future funding of social care services, which will impact upon the rates Herefordshire Council can afford to pay providers of support services like SIL, and indeed how much support they can give people across the county.

Many organisations involved in the voluntary and community sector are finding ongoing funding a real challenge and whilst we are expecting another tough year, I am pleased to be able to say that SIL has thus far managed the financial pressures well and is seeking to expand further this year as a result.

We are looking forward to the new decade with optimism and a hope that these changes, locally and nationally, will bring positive benefits to the individuals we support.

I hope you all enjoy the longer days that spring will bring and find the milder weather and lighter nights uplifting.

Euan McPherson

SIL Was Wheely Ready



When the winter floods and bad weather hit Herefordshire SIL's staff were able to meet the challenge of reaching service user's houses thanks to the SIL Board's decision to buy a vehicle, which is ideal for poor road conditions and off-roading.

In the past there have been many situations where support workers have had to make very difficult journeys in order to get to our service users. Naturally, SIL doesn't want to put its support workers at risk, but more importantly we don't want our service users to be left without the support they need. Buying a vehicle which can be borrowed by staff who need to get to the more inaccessible homes, has made a huge difference and we are confident that we really can meet our commitment of providing up to 24 hours a day support, 7 days a week for 365 days a year.

The jeep has been branded in SIL's new eye-catching colours, which will be integrated into its marketing materials over the Spring. If you see us out and about please give us a wave!



Demystifying Assessments



Herefordshire Disability United (HDU) are hosting an event on Wednesday, 18th March to help people understand the process around assessments, both for an individual's support and for carers. The guest speaker is Mandy Appleby who has a long career in overseeing assessments and managing teams of social workers.

The event takes place at the Hinton Community Centre, Hereford between 10.30am – 1.00pm. As well as speakers there is the chance to see a "live assessment" and to find out about the new stroke support group in the county. After there is a free networking lunch. Booking is essential. Please call Sylvia Nicholls on 07817 473813 or email: sylvia.nicholls@btinternet.com to reserve your place.



SIL's Charity of the Year



Regular readers of this newsletter will know that SIL chooses a charity annually which benefits from funds raised at its events throughout the year. Staff and trustees have chosen Megan Baker House (MBH) as the charity for 2020.

MBH provides conductive education (CE) sessions for children and adults with motor disorders such as cerebral palsy, dyspraxia, Parkinson's disease, stroke and acquired brain injury.

Through conductive education participants learn how to manage and deal with the difficulties caused by their condition to enable them to lead a more independent life. CE is a holistic movement approach, providing techniques which allow individuals to learn to manage difficulties caused by their disability. Prior to attending sessions MBH carry out a thorough movement based assessment to ensure that CE is suitable for the individual.

The charity has a centre in Ledbury and another near Leominster, but this year it is moving into an exciting period of its development by offering more outreach sessions across the county.

As well as making a donation at the end of the year, our commitment to the chosen charity is to promote its services and events on its behalf. The first big fundraising event for MBH this year is an evening with Jo Brand, one of MBH's patrons.

"Born Lippy" takes place at the Courtyard, Hereford on Thursday, 2nd April at 7pm. Jo will be in conversation with Hay Festival Director Peter Florence CBE, talking about her career. The event is a joint fundraiser for MBH and the Courtyard, which is a fully accessible venue. Tickets cost £25 and can be purchased from the Courtyard's Box Office: 01432 340555 or at www.courtyard.org.uk.

For more information about MBH visit: www.meganbakerhouse.org.uk



Woodland Wonders



Keen photographer Luke had a treat at the end of last year when SIL support worker Kristina took him for a day out to Westonbirt National Arboretum. Luke said that he had heard how stunning the colours were in the woods during the Autumn and knowing how much Luke likes nature scenery coupled with his love of photography Kristina and Luke decided to make a day of it.



Not having a camera anymore didn't mean Luke couldn't make the most of the Autumn scenery, as Kristina lent Luke her little camera, which fitted nicely in Luke's hand meaning he could take photos himself.

On arrival they had lunch before setting off to explore the vast forest. As well as the stunning scenery Luke saw squirrels and a variety of birds. Talking to some other visitors Luke was given directions to a fascinating tree which smelt of candy floss! Luke and Kristina thoroughly enjoyed their visit and would recommend the Arboretum to others. However, Luke's top tip – bring an electric chair or book one in advance as it can be hard going for a manual chair.

Holiday Time



Hereford Lions Club has a seaside holiday caravan in Porthmadoc, North Wales, which is specially designed and built to provide holidays for people with disabilities and their carers / families. The caravan is ideally situated to explore North Wales and is on a site with a range of amenities, including a heated indoor pool, an entertainment venue, three food and drink venues, mini market, launderette, nature trails and a club house. The accommodation has two bedrooms, one with a double bed, the other two singles; bathroom; kitchen with fridge and cooker; gas and electricity; and a living area with couch that can make a further double bed.



If you or anyone you know might like a seaside holiday please share this information. Applications for use of the caravan should be made to Kath Brace: 01432 850336 or email: kathsmail@yahoo.co.uk

Service User Snapshots



SIL would be nothing without its wonderful service users who we support through our various services. We often get sent lovely stories, such as Luke's on Page 5, as well as all sorts of photographs from families, friends and support workers. We thought that the Spring newsletter is a great place to share some of these.

We welcome stories and photographs from all our service users so if you have news you would like to share with us, and which you are happy for us to share in this newsletter, please email them to shelagh.callaghan@s4il.co.uk or post to our office in Leominster.



Service User Alan making a bird box



Ian auditions as Santa's helper



Sylvie and support worker Naomi attend 50th anniversary of MS Society



Service User Alan, 5th from right, in a football line up



Service User Sheila enjoys a Derbyshire Christmas thanks to her support worker who drove her there on Christmas Eve



Trustee and service user Dave meets the cast of Cinderella



BULLRING
BIRMINGHAM

Service User Luke on a recent trip to Birmingham

party time!

Side by Side Service



The Alzheimer's Society is appealing for volunteers across Herefordshire who can help the 3,000 people living with dementia in the county to stay active and continue enjoying the hobbies and activities they love. The Side by Side service matches individuals with dementia with volunteers who offer one to one support to help them remain active and feel part of their local community.



The service could not run without the amazing volunteers who are crucial to its success. By staying connected people with dementia can feel less lonely, something that often happens after a diagnosis. It can be simple things like going for a walk, visiting a café, watching a football match or joining a local class together, all of which can make a huge difference to someone's life. What they do together is entirely based on what the person with dementia wants, which is why matching people with similar interests or hobbies is important.

Anyone can volunteer, but patience is a key quality. Often those who have had experience of a family member or friend with dementia are well suited to the role. Full training and expenses are provided. If you are interested contact Janet Neate on: 07885 228890 or email: janet.neate@alzheimers.org.uk

Long term Sickness



Groundwork Wales runs a health and well-being programme called Nurture, Equip, Thrive which supports employees on long term sick leave (minimum 4 weeks), who live or work in Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil or Bridgend. The programme can help individuals to manage their weight and become fitter through group training sessions, build confidence, increase motivation and provide tools for improving mental health.



Improving health and wellbeing may be the first step back into employment, so if you are interested in the programme contact Groundwork Wales on 01495 222605 or email: NET@groundwork.org.uk

You can also register your interest for the programme by following the link: <http://bit.ly/2XpPP9N>

Age of Creativity Festival, May 2020



Rejuvenate!'s 'Reaching Out' project, part of the Age of Creativity Festival, is to make papercraft and needlework kits to 'reach out' to carers who find it difficult to come into Hereford and join Rejuvenate! If this idea is successful it is something that the group hopes to continue and develop. At the May session of Rejuvenate! attendees will be putting the kits together and will be joined by Yvonne Richards of the Herefordshire Healthy Living campaign who will provide some nutritious samples to help the morning along.



Rejuvenate! is also pleased to confirm that it has received a grant from the 'Go and See' strand of the 'HEREFORDSHIRE'S A GREAT PLACE' project. The funding will be used to make two visits to Birmingham Creative Carers' Group, one in February and one in April. These fact-finding visits will enable representatives from Rejuvenate! to chat with organiser Rosie Barker, and find out from carers how they benefit from the Birmingham group. The findings will be showcased with the eight Carers' Groups in Herefordshire during the second half of the year and bring some new ideas to Rejuvenate!

For more information about either of the above, or if you would like to join the group, contact Maggie Sanderson, rejuvenate@creativecarergroup.co.uk

Citizens Advice Torfaen



On the 30th March, Citizens Advice Torfaen will be moving premises. From this date they will be in Cwmbran Library and also in Portland Buildings, Commercial Street Pontypool. Both just a few hundred yards from the existing offices. They will continue to provide the same services. For updated opening hours visit: www.citizensadvice.org.uk



Advice is also available from www.citizensadvice.org.uk/wales or on one of their telephone lines: Universal Credit Help to Claim 0800 0241 220; Consumer Help Line 03454 04 05 06; Pensionwise 0800 138 3944

For advice about anything else call Adviceline Wales on 03444 77 20 20

Building Better Opportunities



Building Better Opportunities (BBO) is funded by the National Lottery Community Fund and offers supported volunteering, training, work placements and assistance finding employment to people, especially those who may have the most difficulty finding work.



In Herefordshire, this project is delivered through the work of eight partner organisations all located in Herefordshire. The project, which is jointly funded by the European Social Fund and the National Lottery Community Fund, helps people 19 years of age or older who are not currently working. Since the start of the project 762 people have been supported and 126 have secured employment. The average time of unemployment within this group was 2.5 years.

If you are interested in finding out more or joining the BBO project please call 01432 530041 and speak to one of our project team or email: bboherefordshire@landau.co.uk

Hereford Men's Mental Health (HMMH)



The newly formed HMMH group which meets monthly in Hereford, has joined up with a new website for creative writing and men's mental health.



FurtherBeyond is especially for men in the county who have experienced mental health problems and may find creative writing a useful tool for helping manage their illness or as a means to recovery. FurtherBeyond invites men to submit stories, poems or any other writing - it's fine to be anonymous or use a nickname. If you are interested in finding out more email: further.beyond@outlook.com

Free writing coaching is also on offer for anyone who would like to try writing but needs some tips on how to start. To find out more about this contact Leonie at www.furtherbeyond.net @furtherbeyond01

For more information about the HMMH group, dates and times of the next meeting, call Euan McPherson: 01568 616653



Marches Family Network will be celebrating its 25th anniversary this year.

They are planning a 'birthday' event/family fun day on Monday 6th April to celebrate in Withington Village Hall, from 10:00am – 2:00pm. If you would like to attend, provide an information stand, help or entertain email: marketing@marchesfamilynetwork.org.uk

Cwmbran Diabetic Support Group - Anyone affected by diabetes, whether newly diagnosed or longer term, along with carers, friends and visitors are welcome to attend. The meetings and occasional trips take place on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at Cwmbran R.A.F.A. Club, Greenhill Road, Forge Hammer, Cwmbran, NP44 3DQ @ 7-30pm. Light refreshments are provided. For more information contact Mrs Val Carnegie, 01633 872553, E: slasher45@btinternet.com

The Courtyard, Hereford – is pleased to host a Herefordshire Life Through A Lens exhibition: The Derek Evans Studio Photographs until the 21st March. Evans was considered to be one of the top freelance photographers in the country and through his extensive body of work, created a visual chronicle of life across Herefordshire from the late 1940s onwards. The Herefordshire Life Through a Lens project is bringing many of the images from his vast archive of photographs and negatives to light again, thanks to the work of Catcher Media and Herefordshire Council's Archive and Library service. For more information visit: www.courtyard.org.uk or call 01432 340555.

Carers Trust 4all - Carers Trust 4all and Crossroads Together have recently merged, but wish to assure people that this will not affect the CarerLinks service. The merger has led to a rebranding of the organisation and a new logo has been developed along with slight changes to the colours used. The team remain the same and look forward to supporting individuals with the usual endeavour, quality and commitment. If you have any concerns or require further information regarding the organisation and local services, please do not hesitate to contact them on 01432 663057 or via email to herefordshire@carerstrust4all.org.uk

Disability Golf Course - Do you fancy trying something new? A new disability friendly golf course opened last year at The Grove in Leominster. The course has been built to test the putting skills of all abilities, with slopes and obstacles to challenge even the most accomplished player. It has been designed to be wheelchair friendly and enables all ages and abilities to join in the fun, with all equipment provided. A beer garden with a central oak framed barn and al fresco seating area has been constructed to complement the course.

Our Events

SIL's annual Christmas Jumper Day, raising money for Save the Children, was held in the office on the 13th December. The event was a great success and raised £102 for the charity. Staff and service users dressed for the occasion with Charlie Poolton stealing the show and winning first prize for the jazziest Christmas Jumper.

We were also delighted to welcome Beth Hudson from Yeleni Cancer Therapy and Support to the event as they were SIL's charity of the year for 2019. Beth had brought along a certificate of thanks to SIL for their fundraising efforts during the year.

Looking ahead for 2020, our first big event takes place in our Leominster office on Wednesday 6th May to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the end of WW2. The VE Day Celebrations start at 12 noon and run until 3pm. The event will include songs, games and a cream tea. There will be bunting, balloons and streamers and a raffle on the day with proceeds to be divided between Megan Baker House, our charity for 2020, and the Royal British Legion, so please come along and support this celebratory event. So that we can cater for guests please let us know if you will be attending, by phoning the office, 01568 6126653, or emailing: reception@s4il.co.uk

Other 2020 events. Times and details to be finalised:

Thursday 9th July (not the 2nd as previously stated) – SIL's Summer BBQ. We will be hosting a Festival BBQ, marking the 50th anniversary of Glastonbury. Proceeds going to Megan Baker House.

Friday 25th September - Macmillan Coffee Morning, competitions and sweet treats all for a good cause.

Thursday, 1st October – AGM, Saxon Hall, Hereford

Friday 11th December – Save the Children Christmas Jumper Day.



Charlie Poolton in his prize winning jumper



SIL's Business Support Officer, Chib Alexander receiving the certificate from Beth Hudson

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