



**North West Surrey Association
of Disabled People**

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2010



Woking Railway Lifts out of order for 12 Weeks!

Some of you may already be aware, that refurbishment work is due to start on the lifts at Woking Station. This will mean that there will be no step free access to platforms 2, 3 and 4 at the station, as of April 7th for 12 weeks.

This will mean that those who need step free access will not be able to access some train services through Woking and may have to change at Basingstoke or West Byfleet to join trains that come in to Woking on platforms that do not require lifts for step free access.

South West Trains have strongly advised those who usually require the use of the lifts to plan their journey in advance. The South West Trains Assisted Travel team can be contacted by telephone: 0800 52 82 100 Textphone: 0800 69 20 792

Clive Wood, director of NWSADP says 'I appreciate that the refurbishment of these lifts are important and will benefit many disabled people and other passengers, however, we have made it clear to South West Trains that proper measures need to be put in place to ensure that those who need lifts are given reasonable alternatives while travelling through Woking'.

Clive went on to say 'I was disappointed to hear from South West Trains that some passengers who require step free access will have to change at either West Byfleet or Basingstoke, which could cause inconvenience to many.'

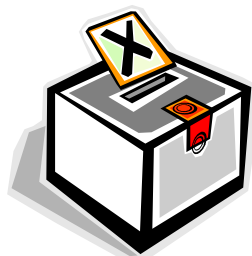
South West Trains have assured NWSADP that additional staff will be available at Woking station to give assistance when required.

Please let us know if you experience any problems so that we can feed these back to South West Trains.

Contact NWSADP on Tel/Text 01483 750973

Or Write to: NWSADP

Provincial House
26 Commercial Way
Woking
Surrey
GU21 6EN



Polls Apart

At every election, thousands of disabled voters are denied the chance to play an equal part in our democracy. Scope's Polls Apart campaign aims to end this exclusion. At the last General Election Scope surveyed over 2,000 polling stations and found that 68% could be inaccessible to a disabled person.

Local authorities now have a duty to review polling station access. Woking Borough Council has done this and have assured us that all polling stations within Woking are accessible.

You can review accessibility for polling stations in your ward at www.pollsapart.org.uk. You can also add your own comments and give feedback about individual polling stations.



Hello to Wendy Storr

NWSADP have asked one of their newest recruit Wendy some questions.

1. X Factor or Strictly Come Dancing?

Has to be X factor especially the auditions and of course Simon Cowell.

2. Dogs or cats?

Cats, I love their independent nature.

3. Night in or night out?

Depends who the night in is with! Most probably night out to have a boogie.

4. Watching or playing sport?

Playing, always up for exercise.

5. Charlie and the Chocolate Factory or Nightmare on Elm Street?

Charlie wins hands down, anything to do with chocolate.

6. Indoors or outdoors?

Outdoors, fresh air and sunshine you can't beat it.

7. Are you an early or late person?

Early, a cup of tea and I'm there.

8. Rock, pop or classical?

All of them any music at all especially live.

9. Cultural or beach holiday?

Beach, a good book a cocktail and peace and quiet , bliss!

10. High tech or low tech?

Low tech, talking is always good ;-)



Advocacy Success

Brian is a 48 year old gentleman who had a below knee amputation in November 1994. This was following a chronic infection.

Since his amputation Brian's lifestyle changed dramatically. Not only did he have to make personal physical adjustments but lifestyle adjustments and adaptations to his house. He lives alone, has two dogs and family and friends who live in Surrey.

Brian initially sought support from our Advocacy Service with his application for Disability Living Allowance. On meeting Brian and hearing about how his impairment was impacting on both his independence and inclusion within the community, he also felt a mobility scooter could improve his quality of life. Brian has lived on Incapacity benefit for many years, due to his impairment and has no disposable income. He was thrilled at the prospect of applying for funding for something that could potentially change his life for the better.

Brian found the best scooter for his needs with endorsement from his GP and Occupational Therapist and the funding process began. We needed to raise £4300 for his Quingo. Brian was very excited at the thought of new found freedom to access local amenities, visit friends more easily and be able to take his dogs out on long walks – all things that most people take for granted, but that were constant challenges for Brian.

Whilst waiting for offers from the charitable trusts, Brian unfortunately had to undergo further surgery in December 2009, resulting in an above knee amputation – making his request for funding and the need for a mobility scooter even more critical as he became reliant on help from others, daily.

Following the surgery Brian started to become very down due to the increasing difficulties imposed by his impairment. Thankfully it was

only a matter of weeks before two charitable trusts offered funds to purchase the scooter.

The improvements to Brian's day to day quality of life are immeasurable. He is spending quality time with his two dogs – able to take them out for nice, long walks. He is able to access his local shops and pop round to his friend's house when he wants to. He has regained his independence and no longer has to rely on help from other people every day.

This is just one example of the difference the support from an Advocate can make to a clients quality of life. Brian has his DLA secured, a new mobility scooter and no longer needs help to ensure he is independent ,active and equal member of his community.



Vicki Atherton
Operations Director NWSADP

NWSADP Advocacy Service is now available across the whole of Surrey

Providing professional advocacy support to people with a physical or sensory impairment who are 16 and over

If you feel that an advocate may be able to support you with a specific issue, please contact our office **Tel/Text: 01483 750973** or find out more on our website: www.nwsadp.org.uk

The Cinema Exhibitors' Association Card



The Cinema Exhibitors' Association Card is a national card that can be used to verify that the holder is entitled to one free ticket for a person accompanying them to the cinema.

The CEA Card allows the cardholder to obtain ONE free ticket for a person to provide assistance required as a result of the cardholder's disability during their visit to the cinema, provided that a full price ticket is purchased by the cardholder for the same film. In providing a free ticket for another person to assist them during their visit, the cinema is offering one way of meeting its duty to make 'reasonable adjustments' for the cardholder under the 1995 Disability Discrimination Act.

The free ticket will be provided on the assumption that the person accompanying the cardholder is able to provide appropriate assistance. Illustrative examples of such as assistance might include the ability to assist the cardholder in an emergency evacuation of the cinema, accompany and/or assist the cardholder in using the cinema's washrooms and so on. For that reason the presumption will be that the person accompanying the cardholder should be aged 16 years or over. However the cinema operator reserves the right to make a judgement on the ability of any person to assist the cardholder during their visit to the cinema, and to refuse the provision of a free ticket where it deems it appropriate.

Use of the card is not limited during its period of validity, provided that on each occasion the cardholder observes the terms and conditions set out in this document.

To apply for the card, you will need to meet one or more of the following criteria:

- a) Be in receipt of the disability living allowance or attendance allowance.
- b) Be a registered blind person



Free Phone Calls from Mobiles to DWP 0800 Numbers

Free phone calls for most people using their mobiles to claim benefits and pensions have been put into place by the Department of Work and Pensions. Six of the biggest mobile phone network companies will no longer charge their customers for calls to the Department's 0800 Benefit Claim lines. Currently 12% of UK households use only mobile phones and do not have a land line.

Calls to claim benefits and state pension use 0800 numbers which are already free to customers using BT land lines and mobiles. But currently people calling 0800 numbers from other mobile phone providers are charged for these calls.

The Department has now reached agreement with O2, Orange, Tesco Mobile, T-Mobile, Virgin Mobile and Vodafone to end charges to their customers for mobile calls to around seventy of its 0800 numbers. These numbers are used by people making initial claims for benefit and pensions and to request emergency payments, such as crisis loans.

Together the six companies with whom the Department has now signed agreements cover over 90% of the mobile market in the UK.

Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Yvette Cooper, said:

"We don't want people who lose their jobs or the poorest pensioners to be penalised when they need to claim benefits just because they call from a mobile phone. Lots of people need to use mobiles rather than landlines.

"That's why we've been working hard to get this deal to make sure people don't lose out."

The DWP estimate that there are around 60 million phone calls to its 0800 numbers each year, and around 15% (9 million) are from mobile phones.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED! WE NEED YOU!

Do you have a few spare hours?
Do you like talking to people?
Are you interested in helping others?
Do you enjoy researching - using computers, files etc.



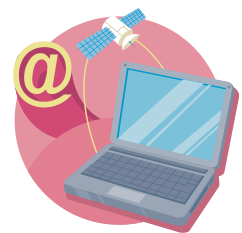
WIDE requires volunteers to work as Information Officers at our accessible offices in Woking. The role of Information Officer is **never** boring! You should have an interest in disability, be flexible and willing to learn new skills. If this sounds like you, give us a call.

We would also like to find a volunteer who would prepare our newsletter 4 times a year.

Tel/Text: 01483 750973
E-mail: home@nwsadp.org.uk
Website: www.nwsadp.org.uk

Don't Forget!

To Visit our Website at:
www.nwsadp.org.uk
**You can also register for our
newsletter**



Changes to Carers Allowance

From April, anyone looking after someone for more than 20 hours a week unpaid can qualify for the new carer's credit, which will count towards their entitlement for the basic and second state pension. To get it call 0800 678 1132.

The Department for Work and Pensions estimates up to 4.7 million could benefit from the scheme (see the [State Pension Boosting guide](#)).

Angela Eagle, Minister for Pensions and Ageing Society, says: "We want people to tell us if they, or people they know, are looking after somebody for more than 20 hours a week so they benefit from this change. It's only right that caring for others should be counted towards the state pension."

Your eligibility for the state pension is determined by the number of years you've worked and paid national insurance (NI). One year's carer's credit will be worth the same as paying NI for a year.

Imelda Redmond, chief executive of Carers UK, said: "We know saving for your retirement years won't be your priority when you suddenly find yourself caring for a loved one.

"But there are simple steps you can take to secure your state pension that will protect your long-term future as you care for others."

Find out if you qualify by visiting the [DirectGov website](#).

If you are of Pensionable age.

It is still worth being assessed for Carers Allowance if you receive a pension because it may increase your chances of receiving pension Credits.

Pension Credit

Pension Credit is an entitlement for people aged 60 and over who are living in Great Britain. It could top up your weekly income to a guaranteed minimum level. If you are aged 65 or over and have saved towards your retirement you could receive extra money on top of this.

You may also get extra money if you or your partner - if you have one - have caring responsibilities, are severely disabled or have housing costs, like a mortgage for example.

From 6 April 2010, the State Pension age for women will gradually start to increase from the current State Pension age of 60. The age from which people can get Pension Credit will increase in line with this.

Currently you cannot claim Carers allowance if:

Education

You cannot get Carer's Allowance if you are on a course of full-time education or you are on holiday from a course of full-time education. Full-time education means 21 hours or more of supervised study each week undertaken through a school, college, university or similar educational establishment. This includes time spent on related exercises, experiments, projects or examinations.

Work and earnings

You cannot get Carer's Allowance if you earn more than £95 a week after money has been taken off to allow for your expenses.

Expenses that are allowed are for things like:

- some National Insurance (NI) contributions
- Income Tax
- half of any money you pay towards personal or occupational pension schemes
- other expenses you have to pay because they are a necessary part of your job

After allowing for these things, you are allowed up to half the rest of the money you earn to help meet the cost of paying someone else (but not a close relative) to look after a child or children, or the person you look after, while you are at work.

5 Rings and Your Out!



It's probably happened to many of us at some time or another. The phone rings and just as you get to it, the ringing stops!

Our advocacy service was recently contact by a visually and hearing impaired gentleman who was having problems reaching the phone in his house before the phone stopped ringing. He contacted Virgin Media and explained that because he had limited vision, it would take him longer to get to the phone so could he have more rings added? He was told by the Virgin Media call centre person, that this wouldn't be a problem and would be arranged immediately. But just as he thought this had been an easy problem to resolve, the customer service person finished by saying that it would cost him an extra £2 per month. The gentleman tried to explain again why he needed the extra rings and that he felt there should not be an additional charge for this. The response he got was that there could be no exceptions, but he could write to Virgin Media if he wanted.

The slightly frustrated gentleman did write to Virgin Media, with the help of his daughter, and explained again why he needed the extra rings. He received a very polite letter back saying sorry but no change unless he pays the extra £2 per month.

At this point the gentleman's frustration was growing and he contacted NWSADP. One of our Advocates visited him at his home and took down some details about his phone issue. The Advocate wrote to the Customer Service Director at Virgin Media (as well as sending a copy to their Chief Executive) explaining the gentleman's circumstances and that the phone provider should make a

reasonable adjustment in this case, as the request is being made on the grounds of the man's disability.

A couple of weeks after the letters were sent, our client received a call from Virgin Media to say that they would increase the rings to 10 at no extra charge. There was a happy outcome on this occasion and Virgin Media made the change.

If you have a physical or sensory impairment and feel the advocacy service may be able to support you with an issue, please get in touch. We now provide advocacy across Surrey.

If you feel that an advocate may be able to support you with a specific issue, please contact our office Tel/Text: 01483 750973 or find out more on our website: www.nwsadp.org.uk

Hello to Alison Lancaster

NWSADP have asked Alison, another new recruit at NWSADP some questions.

1. X Factor or Strictly Come Dancing?

X Factor for me.

2. Dogs or cats?

Dogs more than Cats, well my sister and her 4 Labradors are living with me at the moment so it's got to be dogs hasn't it. They are lovely but very large!

3. Night in or night out?

A meal with friends whether in or out for the evening is what I like to do.

4. Watching in playing sport?

Unfortunately it's watching more than playing. When I am in the mood for sport it's swimming or if I'm feeling adventurous and rich then it's a Ski-ing holiday.

5. Charlie and the Chocolate Factory or Nightmare on Elm Street?

No horror movies for me, I'm far too much of a wimp. Give me a good Adventure, thriller, romance any day.

6. Indoors or outdoors?

Outdoors, roll on the summer!

7. Are you an early or late person?

Both

8. Rock, pop or classical?

Anything from Take That to Snow Patrol, Classical, no not really.

9. Cultural or beach holiday?

Beach with some chill out time is super and a little Culture mixed in is just perfect.

10. High tech or low tech?

Well I'd like to say I'm high tech, the reality though is that I'm pretty low tech when I compare myself to my 12 year old son!

Employment Support Service at White Lodge Centre

The employment support service at White Lodge Centre has been running for four years supporting people who have a physical or sensory disability, who would like to investigate employment opportunities or take steps towards it.

Ella Findlay has been our Employment Advisor since the revitalised Adults Centre 'Rendezvous' was opened in 2008. She is able to offer one to one support and advice to people living in North and North West Surrey. In her role she encourages people to identify their own goals and aspirations for employment, then works with them to develop a plan of action aiming to achieve those identified targets. This can include training, work experience and volunteering. She also advises and supports prospective employers giving them the confidence to embrace diversity in the workplace.

If you would like to contact Ella to find out more please call to speak to her on 01932 577996 or drop her an e mail efindlay@whitelodgecentre.co.uk



Guide Dogs 'Talking Buses' Campaign

Having equal access to goods and services is only part of the story; most important is the ability to travel safely and independently. While trains have become more user-friendly, with audible announcements, most buses do not have the same standard of information on board. Having to depend on the driver or fellow passengers to tell you when you've reached your stop can make people anxious and vulnerable, and put some off using the bus altogether.



Guide Dogs has launched its '**Talking Buses**' campaign to push for a change in the law to ensure that every bus and scheduled coach service in the UK provides both audio and visual information for passengers.

It's very encouraging that Transport for London has successfully introduced audio-visual information systems on buses across the capital – and we hope the campaign will encourage politicians to make sure this happens throughout the UK.

We are lobbying the government to change the regulations, and encouraging supporters to ask their national politician to write to the Transport Minister about it. We are also working with bus and coach operators, councils and local authorities to raise awareness of the benefits and gain their support.

You can also support the campaign by posting your thoughts about bus travel and your experiences – good and bad – on our Facebook site, which is <http://en-gb.facebook.com/guidedogsUK>. And if you're campaigning for Talking Buses in your local area, please tell us about it by posting on our Facebook page, emailing campaigns@guidedogs.org.uk or call Caroline Weston on 0118 983 8388.



Trading Standards

Loan Sharks In Surrey To Meet Their Match



The Trading Standards South East Illegal Money Lending Team will investigate and prosecute loan sharks across the county in partnership with Surrey County Council. This new service was launched in Surrey in February 2010.

Nationally, the Stop Loan Sharks project has so far helped more than 10,000 victims, written off more than £30 million of illegal debt, secured more than 50 years in prison sentences and is pursuing criminal assets worth more than £10 million through the courts.

Surrey County Council's Cabinet Member for Community Safety Kay Hammond said: "The Loan Sharks project has been very successful in other parts of the country and we welcome it to Surrey. The team will identify how big a problem this is in the county, deal with loan sharks unearthed and provide support and expert advice to the people who have been their victims."

People often start borrowing a small amount but have to pay excessive interest rates and end up paying back far more than they imagined. In fact, they are often not aware of how much they pay as loan sharks rarely provide paperwork or repayment plans or explain what interest rates they are charging.

The team also works closely with partner organisations such as housing associations, credit unions, voluntary groups and health services to raise awareness and ensure people know the warning signs that someone may be involved with a loan shark. Regionally – based financial inclusion partnership officers provide victim support and help people regain control of their finances by helping them access proper forms of credit and financial advice and encouraging people to start saving.

They are asking people across Surrey to join them in saying 'no' to loan sharks. These are the signs to look out for:

- Have you, or anyone you know, been offered a cash loan?
- Have you been threatened when you couldn't pay?
- Has your benefit card been taken from you?
- Does what you owe keep growing even though you are making payments?
- Do you know the total amount owed, the APR or how to cancel?

To report a loan shark:

- Call the 24/7 confidential hotline 0300 555 2222
 - Text 'loan shark + your message' to 60003
 - Email reportaloanshark@stoploansharks.gov.uk
 - Log on to www.direct.gov
-



NWSADP Foot Care Home Visiting Service

Affordable, home visit Foot Care Service for adults aged 17 and over with a physical, Cognitive or sensory impairment.

First Initial visit:

£18.00 (this price includes a one off payment for a foot care kit for you to keep)

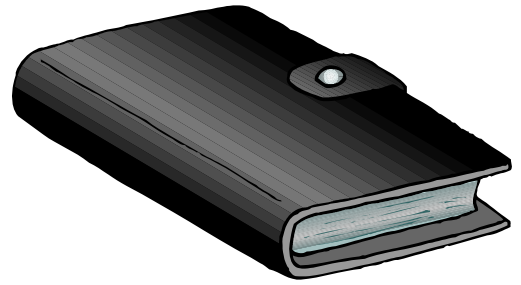
Per Visit:

£12.00

The service includes: Nail cutting, Filing of hard skin and corns, foot health advice.

To make an appointment please Tel/Text 01483 541688

Dates for your Diaries



Bringing It Together Programme

Wednesday 12th May 2010

11.30am – 2.30pm

At: Rendezvous
White Lodge
Holloway Hill
Chertsey
KT16 0AE

The theme for this event is Equipment.

The 'Bringing It Together' program offers people the opportunity to drop-in to Rendezvous to access a range of advice from a number of different organisations. For more information, please call 01932 577996 or email sbrooker@whitelodgecentre.co.uk

'Delivering Empowerment' Board Conference

Thursday 17th June 2010

10am – 4pm

At: Dorking Halls
Reigate Road
Dorking
Surrey
RH4 1SG

To register please contact Yasmin Broome on 01483 517294 or email yasmin.broome@surreycc.gov.uk



**NORTH WEST SURREY
Association of Disabled People**
Registered Charity No: 1058774

Head Office: Provincial House, 26 Commercial Way, Woking, Surrey
GU21 6EN

Tel/Text: 01483 750973 Email: home@nwsadp.org.uk
www.nwsadp.org.uk

Our services include

ADVOCACY

A FREE independent, confidential
advice and support service to empower people with physical and/or
sensory impairments between the ages of 17 – 64
in Woking, Spelthorne, Elmbridge, Runnymede and Surrey Heath
Tel/Text: 01483 750973 Email: home@nwsadp.org.uk

W I D E

Free information service for disabled people, carers and others
We can find out what you want to know about
support, equipment, benefits, transport, groups, leisure, holidays,
education and lots more

Tel/Text: 01483 747400: Fax: 01483 761932: Email:
info@askwide.org.uk

Surrey Heath Office: Tel: 01276 707294

Foot Care

Affordable home visit Foot Care
for adults aged 17 and over with a physical, cognitive or
sensory impairment
The service includes



Nail cutting



Filing hard skin and corns



Foot health advice

For information or appointments Tel/Text: 01483 541688

Other Disability Organisations in Our Area

DAISE: Disability Advice and Information Service Elmbridge

Tel: 01932 248660: Fax: 01932 221680

Disability Counselling Service

Sue Cable: Tel: 01483 715911 Ext. 6334

Surrey Coalition of Disabled People

Tel: 01483 456558: Fax: 01483 456561

www.surreycoalition.org.uk

SILC: (Surrey Independent Living Council)

Tel: 01483 458111: Fax: 01483 459976: Minicom: 01483 459977

SAVI Surrey Association for Visual Impairment

Tel: 01372 377701 Minicom: 01372 361517

www.savi.org.uk

Surrey Deaf Services

Voice/minicom: 01372 376558

Minicom answer phone: 01372 362509

Video phone: 01372 363981

Surrey LINK

The voice of health & social care service users in Surrey

Tel: 0845 0949497

www.communityvoicesonline.org/LINKs

For Problems with Access

Please contact WIDE for advice

Tel/Text: 01483 747400 Email: info@askwide.org.uk