

WEST BERKSHIRE DISABILITY ALLIANCE (WBDA) NEWSLETTER

December 2005, Edition 4

Website: www.wbda.org

Charity No. 1108112

REACT

Phase one of REACT (an audio system to help visually impaired people orientate themselves) has now been installed in Newbury Town Centre. So far 11 speakers are up and running and the WBDA will be supporting the REACT committee as it strives to raise more funds and sponsors to roll the scheme out across the rest of the town centre. If you would like to support the scheme, require more details about it, or wish to hire or purchase a trigger module to activate it, the call Alison Clarke on 01635 44042

Royal Berkshire Hospital (RBH)

The RBH is seeking Foundation Trust Status, which in effect means that it will have autonomy over the services it delivers. This will almost certainly have a bearing on the lives of disabled people in West Berkshire, as the RBH provides many services at the West Berkshire Community Hospital, a Wheelchair Service, Neurological Rehabilitation and takes a big proportion of referrals from Local GP Practices. On Thursday, 12th January, 2006, at St Joseph's Church Hall, Newbury, the West Berkshire Neurological Alliance will be welcoming, Nigel Davies (Chief Nurse & Director of Patient Public Affairs at the RBH), to discuss the hospital's move to foundation status.

Tea and coffee will be available at 13.45 hrs and the meeting starts at 14.00 hrs, WBDA members and those with an interest in Neurological Conditions are welcome to attend.

The Newbury Vision

During the coming years many parts of Newbury will either be refurbished or rebuild. This 'improvement' programme is part of the Newbury Vision. The WBDA is against the proposed Market Place refurbishment, but in principal supports improvements to Northbrook Street and redevelopment of Parkway and Market Street, while awaiting plans for the Wharf. The WBDA will be working closely with the planners and developers to minimise the effects of the various projects on disabled people and maximise the opportunities presented by them.

New film brings disabled workers into the limelight

A short film released recently aims to encourage workers to 'come out' about their long-term health condition so they can continue to work effectively. The film – The Appointment - follows the journey of Alan, a hotel manager as he finds out he has diabetes. The Appointment also aims to dispel the myth that disability is just about wheelchairs and white sticks. The film, made by the Disability Rights Commission (DRC), will give details on where to get help and advice about managing a disability in the workplace. The Appointment is being screened in

Vue cinemas across the country until Thursday 5th January 2005. It is also available on DVD from the DRC Helpline.

Merry Christmas

The WBDA would like to take the opportunity to wish all its Members, Partners, Supporters and Associates a very Merry Christmas and Prosperous 2006!

Snippets

The Disability Information West Berkshire website has been up graded. It is packed with useful information relating to disability and can be found on the web at www.diwb.org

The new pelican crossing in the A4 Western Avenue (next to Speenhamland School) has now been completed and is operational. After discussions between the WBDA and WBC Highways a disabled friendly control box is being used, and it is hoped that this control box will be used at all future controlled crossings.

Would you like to contribute to the improved health care of your community? Your local patient and public involvement in health forum (PPI) has been set up to give you a greater input into the decisions that affect your local health-care provision. Are you prepared to spend a few minutes 3/4 times a year to fill in a simple questionnaire about your local health service? Then please ring 01189814279 or e-mail infoperks@oaccppih.org

WBDA CONTACT DETAILS: Tel: 01635 49701
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WBDA Diary - 2006

Monday 23rd January 2006

WBDA Open Meeting,
18.45 hrs – 20.45 hrs
United Reform Church,
Cromwell Place, Newbury

Monday, 3rd April 2006

Disability Forum
'Access to the
Countryside'
18.45 hrs – 20.30 hrs
Nature Discovery Centre,
Thatcham

Monday, 15th May 2006

WBDA Open Meeting
18.45 hrs – 20.45 hrs
Greenfield House, Calcot

Monday, 17th July 2006

WBDA AGM
18.45 hrs – 20.30 hrs
(Venue TBA)

Monday, 4th Sept 2006

WBDA Open Meeting

Specialist Nurse for Rare and Complex Neurological Conditions

Carol Allen has been appointed into the novel post of Specialist Nurse for Rare and Complex Neurological conditions, covering the Western half of Berkshire. She is part of the Neurorehabilitation team, based at Royal Berks Hospital site under Professor Collin. The team already includes specialist nurses for people affected by MS and Parkinson's Disease. Carol will be mainly community based and cover patients affected by Motor Neurone Disease, Huntington's Disease, Severe Late effects of Polio, Myasthenia Gravis, PSP, Multiple System Atrophy and Ataxia. The post is funded for 2 years by a consortium led by West Berkshire Neurological Alliance and an independent impact study will be made to report on the effectiveness of this new approach to specialised service provision. First referrals are via Dr Collin or the GP service.

This newsletter has a distribution list of 1200. If you or your organisation would like to sponsor an edition of this newsletter, please contact Mick at the WBDA.