

WEST BERKSHIRE DISABILITY ALLIANCE NEWSLETTER

December 2004 Issue No1



WHO ARE WE? The West Berkshire Disability Alliance (WBDA) was formed in 2003, to fill a void identified at a series of Disability Forums. It was realised that an umbrella organisation, to work with and on behalf of disabled people and representative disability groups, was needed in the West Berkshire area. To that end, the WBDA was formed and five key aims set to improve the lives of people with a disability: **ACCESS, AWARENESS & EDUCATION, CARE, EMPLOYMENT & LEISURE AND TRANSPORT.**

Since its formation, the WBDA has undertaken a number of projects. It has worked in partnership with West Berkshire Council on several matters, including the production of an Access Guide and attainable Disability Facilities Grants. It has undertaken transport audits and surveys. In partnership with the Ormonde Resource Centre and Newbury College, it has launched a website. The recognition of the WBDA, has brought invitations to become members of a number of influential groups and committees. These include the Transport Action group, Pathways to Employment, Supporting people in Housing, the Access Panel and the Newbury & Community PCT Patients Panel, all of which give a voice to disabled people to enable improvements to be made.

ACCESS GUIDE:

If you have not got your copy contact **01635 49701** or e-mail

mloyalroyal@aol.com

Hurry they are going fast.

TRANSPORT: Currently the WBDA is formulating a Transport Policy. It has jointly hosted a forum on transport issues. An audit of the local rail network and a survey at the West Berkshire Community Hospital has been carried out. If you would like to share your experience of travel in West Berkshire, especially since the reduction in tokens! Please

REACT SYSTEM FOR NEWBURY:

The WBDA has supported the Newbury Blind Club and West Berkshire Council, in their efforts to install this system in Newbury. It will aid the visually impaired. The system consists of boxes sited on buildings or lampposts, these are activated by 'Smart Cards', which the person has with them. The system informs the user of their location and surroundings. West Berkshire Council donated £10,000 to start the project; further donations have been received from the Orange Foundation and Kennet School.

INFORMATION

For information on Disability Issues visit the 'Disability Information West Berkshire' website on: **www.diwb.org**

WEST BERKSHIRE NEUROLOGICAL ALLIANCE: The West Berkshire Neurological Alliance, together with local branches of the Polio Fellowship, Huntington's Disease Association and the Motor Neurone Disease Association, are on the brink of signing over £90k to fund a community based specialist nurse for rare and complex neurological conditions. This will be to the benefit of West Berkshire patients. The impact will be monitored, to define a model for others to follow.

What a brilliant example of charities working together with the NHS, identifying a gap in services and do something about it!

NEWBURY STROKE CLUB

The WBDA recently visited the Newbury Stroke Club. A presentation explained the Alliance and its aims. The opportunity was taken to listen to the member's problems.

If any group or organisation would appreciate more information about the WBDA please contact us, we are able to visit and talk with members.

We would particularly need to hear from groups in the rural areas and those in the east of the district.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Monday 13th December 2004
WBDA OPEN MEETING
2:00pm- 4:0pm at AFC Newbury,
Football Club, Faraday Road.

Monday 17th January 2005
WBDA OPEN MEETING
6:45pm – 8:45pm United Reform
Church Hall, Cromwell Road,
Newbury.

Monday 21st March 2005
WBDA OPEN MEETING
6:45pm – 8:45pm United Reform
Church Hall, Cromwell Road,
Newbury.

Monday 4th April 2005
DISABILITY FORUM
6:45pm- 8:45pm Frank Hutchins
Community Hall, Thatcham.

MEETINGS: Anyone can attend a WBDA Open Meeting; the agenda is disability matters and information. At Disability Forums, invited speakers explain specific items and respond to questions. During 2005, the WBDA want to hold a Forum and an Open meeting in the east of the district, if you know of a suitable venue, ideally with a hearing loop system, please contact us.

WHY NOT BECOME A MEMBER OF THE WBDA

The strength of any Voluntary Organisation is in its membership. The WBDA is no different and membership is free. Please join either as a full member, with voting rights or as an associate member, which avoids compromising any professional position. Groups and Organisations are encouraged to join as Associate members. To join, either visit the WBDA website or contact the Chairman Mick Hutchins (see below

CONTACT DETAILS:

WBDA Website: www.wbda.org
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FEEDBACK:

This is first WBDA Newsletter – if you have any comments or articles of interest for future editions, please contact the Editor.

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