



Learning Disability Community Support Service Newsletter

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Customer Council News

The customer council has been up and running for 2 years now and has 46 representatives from across all our services.

The customer council is a great opportunity for people to influence how services are delivered. This year the representatives have provided feedback on Learning Disability Week and Safe Places. They have given their opinions on the new Easy Read Employment Booklet for customers who work for Leeds City Council and are updating a customer Health and Safety Checklist for the new day service community bases.



If there are any matters you wish to have raised at a meeting, please contact your local Customer Council representative who will speak out on your behalf.

Free Cinema Tickets

The Cinema Exhibitors' Association Card entitles the card holder to one free ticket for a person accompanying them to the cinema, provided a full price ticket is purchased for the card holder. The card, which is issued to the person who requires assistance to enjoy the cinema, costs £5.50 and is valid for one year. There is no restriction on how many times the card may be used. For more information and to download an application form, go to the Card Network site at www.ceacard.co.uk



Remember

The Christmas Card competition will be launched again soon. It's never too early to start thinking about your entry!!



Imagine 2012

Following the success two years ago of our art exhibition, *Imagine 2012* was held at Leeds City Library throughout June. A wide variety of work produced by customers across our service was displayed in the fantastic gallery space, including paintings, collages, pottery, photographs, sculptures, drawings and spinning art.



Workshops were run every day during the week so that people attending the exhibition had an opportunity to produce their own works of art. A lot of people visited the exhibition and we plan to hold the event again in the future.

Calendar

- September:**
17th Rosh Hashanah (Judaism)
26th Yom Kippur (Judaism)
- October:**
1st Sukkot (Judaism)
26th Eid-UI-Adha (Islam)
31st Halloween (Pagan)
- November:**
11th Remembrance Sunday
13th Divali (Hinduism/Sikhism)
- December:**
9-16th Hanukah (Judaism)
25th Christmas Day (Christian)

Leeds Learning Disability Week Round Up

Lots of events took place during Learning Disability Week in June this year.

'Include Me In' Conference

After three years of research on the Independent Living Project, Leeds Metropolitan University hosted a conference to share its findings. Called 'Include Me In', the research found that many tenants of the ILP properties had gained more independence, confidence and self-esteem since moving into their new homes. The research found an increase in people using local services and gaining employment, though it was recognised that some people felt they needed



more support in their new homes. Whilst some support staff found it difficult at first to adjust to their new role of 'supporting' rather 'doing' things for people, they are working in a more empowering and person-centred way. The research team included eight customers and carers who were employed as co-researchers to work with the professional researchers throughout the project. The One in Four Theatre Company gave performances of real-life situations for the audience to challenge and two films were also shown, one about how the research was done, and the other about social inclusion. You can find the full research findings and watch both films at:

www.progressgroup.org.uk/include-me-in

Council Take Over

This was a repeat of the very popular council chamber take over event which happened last year. Called 'Take 2', around 70 people with a learning disability took over councillors' seats in the chamber where full council meetings take place.



The Lord Mayor of Leeds, Councillor Ann Castle, even invited Susan Hanley, who has a learning disability, to swap seats with her so that Susan could find out what it was like to be Lord Mayor! Councillors and officers from the police, fire, local authority and health services were there to listen to the speeches given by people with a learning disability about the issues that are important to them such as feeling safe and having a job.

Midsummer Magic

Midsummer Magic Night held at Meanwood Valley Urban Farm was a great success.

There was a lovely BBQ, fabulous magician and music provided by Philip Coates who played his accordion.

The weather stayed good so, following the food, everyone headed up to the epicentre where they danced the night away.

In fact, it was such a magical evening that the organisers are planning to hold the event again next year.



Safe Places Scheme Launch

A Safe Places Scheme for Leeds was launched in June. Metro was delighted that the central bus station was chosen as the first Safe Place to be registered. Since then we have met with many organisations across Leeds to tell them about the scheme and most of them want to become Safe Places too.



Customers, supported by the Customer Involvement Co-ordinators, are training staff at each Safe Place and we are planning these sessions for Wednesday mornings and Thursday afternoons. Already over 80 people have signed up to be members of the scheme. If you would like to join the scheme too or are interested in becoming a Safe Place, you can download a form from Leeds City Council's website on:

www.leeds.gov.uk/residents/Pages/safe-places.aspx

Rugby Skills with the Rhinos

The terrible weather also caused the rugby skills workshop to be rescheduled to a new date in August. Richard and Sam - who are both very big rugby fans - had a great time. Not many people were able to make the new date, so Richard and Sam had lots of attention from the Rhinos players and loved the experience!



Picnic in the Park

Sadly the weather let us down when torrential rain forced us to cancel Picnic in the Park. In fact the rain has continued to pour throughout July and August which means we have not been able to re-arrange this event until now.



We're delighted to announce that the Picnic in the Park has been re-arranged for Friday, 21st September – weather permitting of course! So, get your sandwiches, drinks and chairs ready to take to the Wedding Garden at Temple Newsam on the 21st between 11am and 2pm.

Partnership Board AGM



Over 70 people attended this year's Annual General Meeting where the Board sub-groups talked about the Safe Places

Scheme, Autism Partnership Board, person-centred thinking and health.

Olympic Torch Party

The Olympic torch made its way through East End Park where Mencap hosted a huge party, complete with a DJ, BBQ, bunting, circus performers.

There were performances from musicians and the inclusive dance

group, M2. Party-goers were joined by Phil Marshall, one of the Olympic torch bearers.



Day Services Modernisation

The new Pudsey Leisure Centre community base has opened which provides up to 20 places each day. A Changing Place toilet has also been installed at the centre which will open in September. All customers from both Horsforth and Rothwell Fulfilling Lives services have now moved to their new bases and/or day opportunities. Refurbishment work is almost complete on the new community bases at Strawberry Lane Community Centre, Armley and Blackgates Community Centre, Tingley, and refurbishment work is scheduled to begin at Bramley Fulfilling Lives Service soon, as is work to upgrade the toilet facilities at Ramshead Wood. Design proposals for the Rothwell building are in development.



News Roundup

Mark and Stephie Collins recently decided they would like to try rock climbing, so booked a session at the Depot in Pudsey. They seemed to get the hang of it straight away and had such a great time that they can't wait to go again.



There were jubilee celebrations held throughout the service with bunting, games and lots of nice food. Three customers from Moorland Drive were invited to a street party by their neighbours. They contributed some party food ... and their table and chairs!!

Pat Scott from Audby Lane fulfilled her long-term dream to fly in a helicopter. Pat set off from Leeds/Bradford airport and flew over Adel and Harewood. She can't wait for her next helicopter ride!



Meanwhile Kim Hudson went on her first group holiday recently with 'Avalon'. She was nervous about going with people she did not know, but Kim was full of beans when she got back home!! Kim said she had a brilliant time and that she would like to go on holiday with Avalon again.

More Dates for your Diary

The Get Me? campaign will be launched with a video screening of a new film at the Royal Armouries cinema on Wednesday, **12 Sept** 3.30-5pm. Get me? is about raising awareness and to encourage understanding of people who have learning disabilities. Places must be booked so check out the Tenfold website at www.tenfold.org.uk.

The next Beautiful Octopus Club night will take place on Thursday, **13 Sept** 7pm-11pm. The theme this time is: **Going for Gold**. The Olympic Torch will be making a special appearance and party-goers will celebrate the Paralympic and Olympic games. Tickets are on sale at West Yorkshire Playhouse Box Office. on **0113 213 7700** or buy online at www.wyp.org.uk.



National Disability Tag Rugby Festival will take place on Tuesday, 25 September 10am-2pm at Headingley Carnegie Stadium. The event is aimed at ambulant players with a learning disability and entry costs £20 per team. For a registration form contact the Disability Sports Officer at ross.bibby@leeds.gov.uk

Tickets are on sale for *The Baker*, a new piece of music and movement theatre, about a baker who has a magic recipe book. The show will be performed by adults with learning disabilities at Otley Courthouse on Friday, 28 September 1:30-2:30pm. Contact Courthouse box office on 01943 467466.

Letter from MP

Tim Cook and Paul Williams met with their local MP Greg Mulholland to explain what happens throughout learning disability week and how important it is for people with a learning disability to have a chance to talk to him about issues that affect their lives. Both Tim and Paul were thrilled when they received a thank you letter from Greg Mulholland on house of Common's paper to say how much he had enjoyed meeting and talking to them.

