

Enabling SOLIHULL PEOPLE to lead the fullest possible life whatever their personal health or physical difficulties

CONTENTS



PAGE 2
Age UK Solihull receives Big Lottery funding



PAGE 3
Solihull Winter Warmth campaign launches



PAGE 4
Kim's personal budget story

ABOUT ENABLE-SOLIHULL

Enable-Solihull provides information and guidance for disabled people, carers and organisations in Solihull. We represent disability at a strategic level through membership of Partnership Boards involving Solihull Care Trust, Solihull Council and other organisations. We are a registered charity, user-led by disabled people.

The Service User Reference Committee (SURC) is a group of people with a wide range of disabilities and health problems and also people who care for someone with a disability. Their aim is to improve the quality of life of disabled people in Solihull, by encouraging businesses and services to become more accessible and responsive to disabled people's needs. SURC works very closely with other organisations and groups throughout the region.

For example, SURC members attend the Passengers with Reduced Mobility meeting at Birmingham Airport, where they are able to draw upon personal experiences to ensure that the airport is suitable for a wide range of disabilities. If you would like to be involved in the Service User Committee, please get in touch.

We also involve volunteers who have disabilities in various areas of our work, depending on their interests. For example, volunteers are involved in tasks such as undertaking surveys and writing articles for this newsletter. We are always keen to hear from anyone who would like to be involved in these activities.

You can telephone us on **0121 788 1544** or email

DISABILITY AND AIR TRAVEL

On Friday November 26th, the first Passengers with Reduced Mobility (PRM) Road Show was held at Birmingham Airport. The all day event was aimed at airport staff and several organisations attended to raise awareness on how travellers with disabilities are assisted. In addition to Birmingham Airport, there were stands from the Equality and Human Rights Commission and others.

The show was organised by national governing bodies, and I spoke to an executive from the Civil Aviation Organisation. He emphasised how the views of disabled passengers can help improve services.



Enable-Solihull were in attendance and our stand included a touch screen survey which contained a series of questions on disability awareness. For instance, delegates were asked which authority assists travellers with disabilities at Birmingham Airport. The answer is of course OCS (Telephone **0121 767 7878**). The event proved a success and will hopefully be repeated in the future.

Steve Coulter

BIG LOTTERY FUNDING FOR AGE UK SOLIHULL

Age UK Solihull (the new name for Age Concern Solihull) has been awarded funding by the Big Lottery to provide a new project 'Community Spirit' in North Solihull. This project will aim to enhance older people's lives through a number of different strands including health and well being activities, computer and confidence building skills, information, advice and advocacy. The project will also seek to empower older people to have a voice and a say in local issues.

Lucy Coton, Age UK Solihull's Head of Services states, 'We are extremely pleased to be able to announce this new funding which will directly benefit older people living in North Solihull. We are very happy to be continuing our existing information and advice services and offering further support in terms of activities and community participation. The Community Spirit Team are looking forward to working with many older people over the next five years'.



From left to right Trish Kelly, Information, Advice and Advocacy Officer; Lisa Godfrey, Project Administrator; Kate Baldwyn-Millington, Project Coordinator and Vicky Chapple, Activities Officer.

If you would like to contact Age UK Solihull please telephone 0121 779 1972 or call into the You+ Shop in Chelmsley Wood Shopping Centre Monday - Friday 10.00am - 1.00pm.

CHANGE IN DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION LAW

The Equality Act 2010 replaces the previous statute law on matters to do with Disability Discrimination. Although the Act covers various forms of discrimination, this very brief article focuses purely on Disability concerns.

Like all laws Parliament puts together, the words are complex and do need looking at, you can visit www.equalities.gov.uk to find out more.

Essentially this new Act which came into force 01.10.2010, contains thinking borrowed from the previous Law plus NEW changes. See the chart to check what the range of coverage extends to.

It is possible that the new coalition government may further 'tweak' certain provisions in the Act, including the fact that one of the major enforcement government bodies - is/could be subjected to a major review.

- CHANGES**
- Direct discrimination**
- Harassment**
- Victimisation**
- Positive action**
- Reasonable adjustments**
- Charities**

- NEW**
- Discrimination arising from disability**
- Discrimination by association**
- Discrimination by perception**
- Indirect discrimination**

- NO CHANGES**
- Associations and private members clubs**

This article was written and researched by one of our volunteers at Enable-Solihull

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES



I have been a volunteer for Enable for around ten months, I have really enjoyed meeting new people and getting involved in the local community. It has given me the opportunity to write articles for Enable-Solihull's newsletter. I love writing and I find it a great way of occupying my mind.

The only negative aspect of finishing university has been a decline in my social life. I loved my time in Stoke-On-Trent and I was a regular at several Potteries pubs. These visits enabled me to make new friends. However, since returning to Solihull I have found it difficult to meet new people.

It would appear that my age is the biggest stumbling block, I am 39 and I seem to be in an age group which has the fewest social opportunities. This has been borne out during my attempts to join several local social clubs. The bulk of the membership seemed to consist of teenagers or people approaching retirement age. I want to stress that I have

met many nice people from both age brackets. On a couple of occasions the pitiful membership has also put me off, a large sports hall playing host to five people can be a depressing environment.

I was talking to my colleagues at Enable about these experiences, They felt that the lack of social activities would make a good feature for the forthcoming newsletter. We started by searching the Internet for local social groups. Unfortunately our search was largely unsuccessful. A few swimming clubs looked promising but organisations aimed at my age group were none existent. Our research also revealed that many of the clubs were for adults with learning disabilities. It must be said that it is wonderful that this section of society is given the chance to lead enjoyable lives. But I would like to see adults with physical disabilities of my age provided with a similar choice.

With these findings in mind we at Enable wondered if people would be interested in participating in social activities. Such groups would receive active support from Enable-Solihull. If you are interested please contact using the details on page 4.

Steve Coulter

SOLIHULL WINTER WARMTH CAMPAIGN

The Solihull Winter Warmth Campaign launched in 2008 and has quickly established itself into an important part of getting Solihull's residents prepared for winter.

The campaign aims to:

- reduce Excess Winter Mortality rates in Solihull
- reduce the number of households in Fuel Poverty
- provide information, support and practical assistance to residents.

This year over 300 organisations, offering services across Solihull, are identified as working with one of the main target groups:



- Older People
- Families with Young Children
- People with disabilities
- People on low incomes

To find out more contact the Winter Warmth Helpline on 0121 704 8080.

KIM'S PERSONAL BUDGET STORY

My name is Kim Whitehouse and I have recently started using direct payments. I used to go to Bacons End Centre three days a week and to The Body Shop two days a week on a work placement which I have done for many years. But now I go to the Centre two days a week and The Body Shop two days a week and the other day I have my own personal assistant, just for me.

My PA is someone I chose myself, someone I know and feel very happy to be with. She likes lots of things the same as I do, like Carry On films. I can now choose for myself where I would like to go or what activities I would like to get involved in.

One of the things I have done is ten pin bowling, this I love and I always beat my PA. I also love to go to the airport and while there, have a meal then get the train back home. These are all things that I like doing and could not do on my own. I can now choose where I go and when. I enjoy doing this.

I feel I now have choice and control over what I want to do in my life and when I want to do it. I enjoy myself so much and find having the one to one help and support so very nice that I am thinking about maybe seeking to add another day to my Direct Payments.



Kim on a day out at West Midlands Safari Park.

It opens up so much more for me to get involved with now. I would say to anyone who was thinking about Direct Payments or Personalisation to say yes, it is a good way of being able to enjoy yourself and enjoy life. I still have lots of activities to get involved in and places to go and meals to have because I go out and do what I want to do.

I get to go out to places like the airport, Solihull for shopping and to have some food. I have been to Coventry on the train and also bowling. I have many other trips I want to go on because I really enjoy myself and I'm very happy I can do what I want.

Kim Whitehouse

Enable-Solihull
St Andrew's Church Centre
Pike Drive
Chelmsley Wood
Solihull
B37 7US

Telephone:
0121 788 1544

Email:
info@enable-solihull.org.uk

Enable-Solihull would like to hear from you about any difficulties you have getting to or around places, such as shops, cafes and public buildings. For example you may experience difficulties entering buildings in a wheelchair or with heavy doors or uneven paths. We can take up these issues on your behalf and encourage businesses to improve their facilities. Please call us on **0121 788 1544** or email us at **info@enable-solihull.org.uk** to let us know how we can help you.

Registered Charity No: 109556 **Company No:** 4465116