

## Shaping the future of Care

The Government finished its consultation on the much delayed Green Paper on Adult Social Care on November 13th 2009. Too late in the day to ensure implementing legislation before the next election, but nevertheless presenting us with a vital opportunity to revive the battle for real rights to independent living. If ever there is an opportunity here it is. However, disabled people are concerned that the Green Paper that had many radical views to be commended fell short of allaying fears. This, of course, is the ill-conceived proposal to cut vital disability benefits such as Attendance Allowance and possibly Disability Living Allowance Care Component for future claimants, and transfer the money into the social care budgets.

Disabled people see this as yet another cynical, cost-cutting exercise that has nothing to do with promoting independent living. The Government expect disabled people to give up vital benefits with no guarantee of free independent living support for all those who need it. We all know what that will mean. Many disabled people who are receiving these benefits now will no longer get any support at all.



Well, we will not let them do that without a fight. The Department of Health has forgotten the point of the Disabled Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance. Both are intended as a contribution towards a vast range of extra costs, not just care and support, and act as a passport to other benefits. And they are UK wide.

ESDA has clearly said 'leave our Disabled Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance alone'. Let's hope the Government sees sense and abandons this proposal.

As we have said there is a lot in the Green Paper that we welcome. 'Shaping the future of care together' highlights the challenges faced by the current system and the radical reform needed to develop an actual care service that is fair, simple and affordable for everyone.



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When I joined ESDA I took on a 3 year contract. My job was to improve the services that ESDA provide as well as being value for money. We have come a long way down that road and now, in my opinion, we have a first rate staff team who work hard for ESDA members and other disabled people, who need advice and help to live independently and have a real quality of life. As announced at our AGM in October, I will be leaving ESDA at the end of March 2010 having fulfilled my 3 year contract as CEO. What I can say is that I will leave ESDA in the very good hands of Nick Tapp who has worked for ESDA for the last 18 years.

This issue's headline article is about Shaping the future of Care. We have consulted many disabled people on this issue and the conclusion we have come to is that disabled people need services that enable them to live their lives to the full the same as their non-disabled peers. They want the same services to meet these needs wherever they live. This means doing away with the post code lottery. However what is very clear they want to be in control of their benefits and not to have these paid to the Local Authority. So to be very clear to the Government: if you read this newsletter, hands off our benefits as we won't give them up without a fight.

I hope you enjoy this issue of Aware and if there are any articles you would like included in the future then please let us know. The next deadline will be the end of April 2010, ready for print in May 2010. So any local groups who have events they wish to tell us about, please send in a jpeg photo and a few words and we will try our best to have it included. ■



**Editorial**  
**Reg**  
**McLaughlin**  
**CEO**

I hope you all had a good festive break and did not over do the eating and drinking (I know I did). Now is the time of year we all tend to tighten our money belts because of the cost of Christmas. This does not mean you have to suffer cold. If you have a problem affording heating for your home then please contact our Information Officer Julia Plowman (contact number at the back of this newsletter) she has information on grants you may be eligible to apply for.



## View from the Chair

Tony  
Powell

Firstly I have to tell you that our Chief Executive Officer Reg McLaughlin will be leaving us at the end of March 2010.

In the three years Reg has been with us he has been instrumental in helping to produce the financial stability the Association enjoys at the present time.

During his time with us he has worked tirelessly to improve the Association's profile. With such success that we are highly regarded today as a leading user led organisation, one of only three such organisations in the county who have been accredited with partner status by East Sussex County Council.

On behalf of the Association I thank you, Reg, for all you have achieved for ESDA during your time with us.

As far as his successor is concerned, I am very pleased to tell you that Nick Tapp has accepted an invitation to be the Chief Executive Officer of the Association from the 1st April 2010, working even more closely with Reg from now until that date to prepare for a smooth take over of that position. On that date, due to the difficulties facing all charities at this time, the position of Deputy Chief Executive will become redundant, leading to changes in the management and staff structure of the Association. One of these changes will be

to appoint a well experienced person to manage the Finance and Administration responsibilities of the Association, thereby enabling Nick to concentrate more on maintaining and expanding the activities of ESDA.

The past year has been a rewarding one with the greatest reward of all being the financial security that the association enjoys at the present time. Due to the Treasurer and the CEO working closely with staff to secure funding and cut costs they have produced a leaner more efficient run charity. The fruits of their labour are obvious when you look at the annual accounts. I strongly urge you to read the annual report to get a better picture of the impact of what has been achieved to make it such a rewarding year.

In addition, this change around, involving the whole of the organisation, has only been achieved because the board of directors, staff, volunteers and members of our user led association, have had a strong and passionate sense of purpose; showing in practice a clear and committed, sense of the aims, values and principles that have brought about continued growth in a wide variety of our existing, expanding and new services.

Finally, I once again pay a special tribute to all those people in the local groups who have given of their time and expertise during the year, for it is very important the local groups continue to organise all these activities which benefit disabled people. Staff changes in the future will recognise this fact and make certain all disabled people continue to receive the support they deserve to live lives of their choice.

Tony Powell ■

# News

Continued from front page

The direction Government wants to take social care in is sound. Indeed they have plagiarised all the disability movement's best ideas proposing; a system founded on access to prevention services, a national assessment, joined up service, appropriate information and advice, fair funding, personalised care and support.

There is nothing wrong with the vision. But the Green Paper is short on real detail about delivering it's aim's, at least there is more scope for us to step in and tell them exactly how to deliver the one-stop empowerment shop we know is needed to enable disabled people to live full independent lives.

We want to enhance the value of preventative services. We think prevention should mean:

- people categorised as having needs which are moderate or low being entitled to state support to maintain independence and have a quality of life.
- people with mental health issues having a right to early support and treatment.
- removing the means test for disabled facilities grants.
- making better use of adapted or accessible properties with disability housing registers, and speeding up the introduction of lifetime homes standards across the private house building industry.

Disabled people must have one assessment for independent living support that leads to an individual budget covering all the funding available to them. Currently we waste millions on fragmented services and endless assessments of different

agencies. Although the right to control legislation will allow for individual budgets it does not address the overkill of eligibility criteria and assessments for different support services. These have to go.

The Green Paper proposes that people will be able to take their needs assessment with them wherever they go with a right to have the same proportion of care and support costs paid for wherever they live. We think this is a good idea.

The Green Paper says everyone would get a personal budget rather than being told what services they should receive. But personal budgets need to be designed to cover all the things we need to live a full life, whether it's working, being parents, socialising or going to religious services. If we employ support workers we must be able to give them decent rates of pay, training, holidays and pensions.

For people to be really empowered we need strong Centres for Independent Living (like ESDA) we can turn to for practical support and guidance about how to manage direct payments and support for being an employer. We need independent advocacy and quality advice about support options including peer advice.

Everyone agrees we need a new deal on social care funding.

So what now?

Change cannot come soon enough; too many disabled people are facing hardship, deprivation and exclusion now. We have to use this opportunity to tell Government about the kind of support system we want and need in the future.

For more info log onto [www.esda.org.uk](http://www.esda.org.uk) ■

## ESDA takes a ride on the Ahoy Power Cat.



Based on a catamaran hull, the specification of this craft has been arrived at through consultation with various parties, including a disabled sailor and RYA Sailability, to create a boat which can not only provide activities and training in boat handling skills for those with disabilities, but also has the capability of being handled exclusively by a disabled crew without the need for non disabled assistance. The main features of this boat, which not only make it unique, but the first of its kind, are:

- Based on a broad catamaran hull, forty feet long and sixteen feet wide, this stable boat carries up to eleven wheelchair users with 'anchorage' points.
- A hoist located at the point of entry allows wheelchair access from different levels of pontoons.
- The helmsman's position has a lift platform to achieve optimum positioning from which to navigate.
- Fingertip controls make it operable by those with limited movements.
- CCTV cameras, strategically placed, enable all round vision from the helm position.

- Fold down benches, convertible to berths, allows up to five sailors to participate in overnight trips.
- Toilet and shower facilities meet standards for disabled usage.
- Control of mooring lines from the central entry point.
- Full safety equipment including life raft, life jackets, flares etc.
- Hard top cover to afterdeck with roll down canvas sides provide all weather protection.
- Fitted with twin jet drives for maximum manoeuvrability and ease of control.

In addition to these features, the specification includes a full range of all the types of equipment and fittings expected of a boat of high quality, including: radar, GPS, VHF radio, full offshore safety equipment, etc



Built in Newhaven, having been funded by The Variety Club, and starting at Falmouth, the craft visited nine ports on its way back to London, crewed and skippered by volunteers. ESDA were lucky enough to secure three places on the boat when it came into Eastbourne. Shirley Kite was allowed to skipper the boat around Eastbourne Harbour. ■

# ESDA Services

## Disabled Living Centre

Product Session: 2nd December 2009

We held the first of a planned series of product days on 2nd December. We invited reps from Biobidet, Geberit and Total Hygiene (Closomat) to demonstrate their wash/dry toilets and the rep from Bakare demonstrated some of their range of profiling beds including their new turning bed.

The event was very well attended and we received some good feedback.

We are now planning another product demonstration event early next year and will let you know more details in the New Year.



We are giving away the following equipment, donated to the DLC on a first come first served basis. If you are interested in any of these items please ring Sharon on 01323 514515 for more information or to arrange to view/collect.

\*4 x Savannah® Raised Toilet Seats  
(Height 50mm/2")

\*13 x Kingfisher Bath boards (Dimensions  
69x26cm/27"x10")

\*1 x Walking (Zimmer) frame with front  
wheels. ■

## Inclusion Enterprise

The last few months has been a very busy time for Inclusion Enterprise. In July we ran a one-day disability equality training course for 14 representatives of voluntary and statutory sector organisations. As usual, everyone found this very useful as they felt they gained a better understanding of some of the issues that they need to be considering, when providing their services in order to meet disabled people's needs.

We have also continued to work with East Sussex County Council and the Primary Care Trust on helping them to engage with disabled people through the Disabled People's Participation Group. Members of this group and others had the opportunity to tell senior people providing health and social care services about their experiences and how services should be delivered in the future. Through the Improving Life Chances consultation, health and social care staff are keen to involve disabled people in focus groups in the future, to help them with developing and planning future services.

On 17 November ESDA held a very successful conference called 'Putting Service Users in Control'. It was well attended by both disabled people and representatives from organisations which provide services to disabled people and their carers. Delegates discussed the benefits of organisations being led by their service users and the support needs of organisations wishing to become more user-led. They also had the opportunity to consider how disabled people can be more in control of social care services provided to them through the Putting People First Programme and to look at how user-led organisations might be involved in providing some of those services.

For further information about Inclusion Enterprise and it's work, please contact ESDA's office on 01323 514500 ■

## ESDA Coach Services

ESDA Coach Services Ltd welcomes 2010 by ringing in the new!

We are pleased to have successfully completed our first year as ESDA Coach Services Ltd, operating from ESDA Headquarters in Eastbourne.

During our first year we fitted new more comfortable seats to one of our coaches, repainted another and applied new sign writing. All three now proudly fly the ESDA flag logo, together with information about coach hire and contact details.

Having secured reservations for 2010 from our ESDA Member Groups, we are now able to offer bookings to other eligible 'not-for-profit' disability and community groups\* on a first come, first served basis.

With three fully accessible coaches and a team of highly trained driver attendants our ESDA 'door to door' Coach Services are regularly used for group outings, helping older and disabled people to enjoy social events and trips out to venues they might not normally be able to manage without ESDA Coach Services.



Photo kindly supplied by Edwina Morris

Our unique service is competitively priced and we are happy to help plan outings and provide estimates of the likely cost. For advice and information call Wendy Hiscox on 01323 514512 9am - 3pm Tuesday to Friday, or email [wendy.hiscox@esda.org.uk](mailto:wendy.hiscox@esda.org.uk)

\* ESDA Coach Services Ltd is available to 'not-for-profit' disability and community groups in East Sussex, whose membership includes passengers who have difficulty travelling on conventional transport. ■

## Information Service

ESDA's Information Service has a new Volunteer. Leanne Evans has joined us from the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), Leanne spent 4 years volunteering at the Hastings branch of CAB and so has lots of experience with many different types of enquiry. She has also worked as a support worker for those with learning and physical disabilities and also as a housing support officer for a social housing association.

Leanne is covering the days that I am not at ESDA, which means that the Information Service is now covered Tuesday/ Wednesday/ Thursday and Fridays from 10am to 4pm with a break in the middle 1pm-2pm for lunch. You are more than welcome to make enquiries on Mondays, but this is a time when I update the Website, manage the Databases, create the leaflets and edit the Aware magazine, so it might take a little longer for me to respond to any enquiries.

We had a successful day at the Eastbourne Arndale Centre on the 3rd December celebrating 'International Day of Disabled People'. We had a stand near the Sainsbury's entrance and had lots of visitors who came and asked many questions and who took away lots of information about ESDA.

Julia Plowman Information Officer. 



# ESDA Services

## Fundraising for 2010

### UK events:

#### April: ESDA Skydive

Jump for ESDA from 10,000ft - £70 Deposit £325 minimum sponsorship.

#### June 6th: Super Heroes 5km Run/Walk - London

Dress as a Super Hero and run or walk to raise money for ESDA, Mark will run in the costume chosen by Aware readers - majority vote wins! All suggestions to 01323 514500. £20 Deposit £60 minimum sponsorship.

#### October: Great South Run (10 Miles)

Walk/Run for ESDA around Portsmouth Harbour 25 places available.

#### December 5th: Santa 5km Run/Walk - London

Dress as Santa and run or walk to raise funds for ESDA, £20 Deposit £60 min sponsorship.

### Overseas events:

#### August 14th - 22nd: Iceland Trek

Discover an amazing country and culture on our trekking experience to Iceland. From Reykjavik to the volcanic lava fields, Iceland is a truly extraordinary place and this is your chance to discover it.

£300 Deposit £2700 minimum sponsorship.

#### September 8th - 12th: London to Paris Cycle Ride

Connect two of the world's most chic capital cities as you embark on the charity bike ride challenge of a lifetime.

£100 Deposit £1300 minimum sponsorship.

#### October 15th - 24th: Kilimanjaro Trek

Join us as we trek towards the picturesque snow capped peaks and observe the natural beauty of the Tanzanian landscape.

£449 Deposit £3600 minimum sponsorship

#### November 6th - 14th: Sahara Trek

Trekking the Sahara Desert will provide you with an unbelievable experience which you will never forget.

£299 Deposit £2000 minimum sponsorship.

For further details on the above events please contact Mark on 01323 514528 or email [mark.bond@esda.org.uk](mailto:mark.bond@esda.org.uk) Web details at [www.esda.org.uk/fundraising](http://www.esda.org.uk/fundraising) ■

## The Great South Run



On October 25th 25 brave runners took part in the Great South Run for ESDA over 10 miles in Portsmouth. It was an excellent day with everyone getting around the track in very good times despite the very windy conditions!!

I would like to thank everyone who made donations to our runners, they were greatly appreciated and we are on course to beat our target of £7000.

## Skydiving

In April this year I along with 10-15 others will be leaping out of a plane from 10,000ft to raise money for ESDA, if you would like to sponsor me; then please either send your sponsorship money to ESDA at the usual address with Mark Skydive on the envelope or by visiting our donation page at :[www.justgiving.com/esdaskydiver](http://www.justgiving.com/esdaskydiver)

We still have a limited number of spaces available so if you fancy throwing yourself out of a plane then contact Mark.

## ESDA 70th Raffle

Many thanks to all those who entered the raffle, it raised in excess of £1000, The winners are listed here.

## ESDA 70th AGM Raffle Prizes

- |   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| 1st Prize - Lenovo Notebook Computer                                |                  |
| Audrey Mitchell   | Ticket No. 5307  |
| 2nd Prize - Nintendo Wii and Wii Sports game                        |                  |
| Vera Petchey  | Ticket No. 6255  |
| 3rd Prize - Doro big Button Mobile Phone                            |                  |
| Robert Benfield   | Ticket No. 18951 |
| 4th Ploughman's Choice Hamper                                       |                  |
| J Puttock   | Ticket No. 16940 |
| 5th Chocolate Hamper  |                  |
| Cliff Kent  | Ticket No. 16168 |
| 6th Gourmet Christmas Treats Hamper                                 |                  |
| Roy Neeve   | Ticket No. 5490  |
| 7th £50 voucher for Star Inn Alfriston                              |                  |
| Mrs J Bolt  | Ticket No. 6521  |
| 8th £5 Sainsbury's voucher  |                  |
| J Thorburn  | Ticket No. 5340  |
| 9th £5 Tesco voucher  |                  |
| Theresa Gandey  | Ticket No. 18934 |
| 10th £5 HMV voucher   |                  |
| Tony Powell   | Ticket No. 3687  |
| 11th Tennis racket  |                  |
| D Hooper  | Ticket           |
| 12th Alf Morris' book   |                  |
| Liz Lash  | Ticket No. 2033  |
| 13th Alf Morris' book   |                  |
| Reg McLaughlin  | Ticket No. 12438 |
| 14th ESDA History Book  |                  |
| Dennis Yates  | Ticket No. 16892 |
| 15th ESDA History Book  |                  |
| Mrs D Lawsson   | Ticket No. 2066  |
| Contact Sara on 01323 514500 to arrange collection of your prize. ■ |                  |

# News from local groups

## Seaford Kurlers celebrate

August saw the Seaford Kurlers celebrate their second successful year of sport. The Four Courts Kurlers and the Pulse School of Movement joined us from Bexhill and together we had a good day of play together. On arrival we had a little practice time to get the feel of a new pitch, then we broke for a buffet lunch together. After lunch the matches began in earnest with plenty of cheers, groans and laughter thrown in. At half time we broke for a well earned break to cut the birthday cake to noisy singing. At that point Seaford led by one point. The final score was in Seaford's favour 12 - 5 but the score was secondary to the enjoyment that we all had in playing together.

New Age Kurling is a form of the game of Curling but instead of playing on ice it is played on any smooth flooring. Resin Kurling stones are used which have three ball bearings on the bottom to allow the stones to whizz along the floor towards the target - as in the traditional game. The sport is played by disabled people and non disabled people on equal terms. Suitable aids are provided for everyone that needs them. This is one of the fastest growing sports and is now played in 47 countries around the world. It has become a Women's Institute sport, the first for any sport. Age Concern are also benefitting from a large grant to encourage over 60's sport.



Kurling was introduced in Seaford as a means of fund raising for the Seaford District Committee of ESDA. The equipment was obtained by a generous allocation of a lottery grant. When the grant was used up we continued to produce a steady income. This is in addition to the enjoyment of meeting together and playing a sport we enjoy.

We meet at the Downs Leisure Centre, Seaford every Tuesday from 2 - 4. The cost is £2.50 per session with the first session free. Do join us if you would like to try it. You would be very welcome.

Enquiries: Sheila Matthews

Tel: 01323 892647 ■

## Hailsham District Group visit Aylesford Priory

We recently visited Aylsford Priory and enjoyed the visit. It is set in the heart of Kent. It is an ancient house of the Order of Carmalites dating back to the 13th Century. It is open 365 days of the year and there is no entrance charge, however they do appreciate you leaving donations. Apparently 25,000 pilgrims visit each year. They also welcome groups such as disability groups. It is quite accessible, with several accessible toilets, a good smallish restaurant that serves simple menus of baked potatoes, soup, toasted sandwiches, cakes etc. hot drinks. There is also a well stocked gift shop and a pottery where pots are made, they also sell jams, honey and preserves. Well worth a visit - the coach ride through Kent is always lovely.

Vin Tapp Hailsham District Committee ■

## Newhaven ESDA help a family in need

Newhaven Local Group were approached by a family in Newhaven who's son started having seizures at 5 months old and was diagnosed as having Infantile Spasms, a form of Epilepsy. Ethan was having between 6-8 seizures a day lasting anywhere from 5 to 40 minutes. He was unresponsive to medication and it took longer for his seizures to be controlled. Mum had another baby and needed a specialist buggy to carry the new baby and Ethan together. Social Services could not help so Newhaven group offered to provide a sum of money to help towards the cost of the buggy.



Ethan and Piper in their new buggy

The buggy purchased was the Phil and Ted Vibe buggy, which is bigger than others so Ethan is a lot more comfortable in it with ample room for him to grow, it will also withstand more weight thereby allowing the family to continue to use it until Ethan is over 4 years old should they need to. Ethan's parents were ever so grateful for the donation and agreed that we could write about Ethan in Aware.

Heather Walters    Newhaven Group. ■

## Pevensey & Westham ESDA

Our group recently paid a visit to Kent & East Sussex Railway, travelling aboard "Petros", their specially designed coach for the disabled.

As a group of 25, including 5 wheelchair users, we had exclusive use of this coach, which was very pleasant. We left Tenterden on the 1.15pm train, taking a very leisurely ride through pretty countryside to Bodiam, returning by 3.05pm. The return fare was £11.80, (with carers travelling free) but all our members seemed to consider it worth the money, enjoying going back to a leisurely bygone era.

We took with us and enjoyed a lovely picnic on the train, prepared by Fiona, a local caterer, and were able to purchase hot drinks from the trolley service.

Railway staff and volunteers were all very welcoming and helpful, assisting us with access on to the train, which was via a wide ramp, and although a little steep, was quite negotiable with a little help.

The coach had been able to offload our members in the yard area, easily accessible to the station entrance. There is an accessible café, where refreshments are reasonably priced. The disabled toilet was found to be clean and accessible.

This is a venue to be recommended, and as usual our thanks go to our driver for the day, David Allen, who not only gave us an excellent coach service, but also assisted our members on and off the train.

Marianne Gunther

Pevensey and Westham Group ■

# LINK

The LINK has been holding a series of meetings in public across the county, covering two themes, Mental Health and Putting People First. So far meetings have been held in Hastings, Lewes and currently in Eastbourne. Future meetings will be held on 19th January 2010 - Rother area and 11th March - West Wealden (venues to be confirmed). Questionnaires have been distributed in advance of these meetings and feedback on concerns and comments of the community will be discussed at these meetings.

## Update on Core Group Election

Nominations were invited for three individuals to join the Core Group, one individual from Hastings District, one from Eastbourne District and one countywide. Twenty-two nomination packs were requested but only three returned. Therefore, following an uncontested election process, Tony Moore and Margaret Stanton will now be re-elected and we would like to welcome Brian Rockell to the Core Group.



## Brief summary of some of the work the LINK is looking into:

- As part of the East Sussex Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) review of Nutrition, Hydration and Feeding in Acute Hospitals, the Review Board is commissioning the East Sussex LINK (working in partnership with Brighton & Hove LINK) to undertake observation visits around meal times at acute hospitals serving East Sussex residents.
- We are also planning pilot visits with Health & Social Care partners to enter and view Older People's Day services.
- HOSC Rural Health Event – 27th November. This event focused on how health services are planned, commissioned and delivered in East Sussex and as part of feedback from local people, the LINK was invited to contribute. A presentation was given capturing concerns and experiences of the community on the delivery and provision of health services in rural areas.

To register an interest in the LINK, you can contact us at:

1 Faraday Close, Eastbourne, BN22 9BH

Tel: (01323) 514510

Text : 07968 119806

Email : [info@thecountylink.net](mailto:info@thecountylink.net)

Visit us at: [www.thecountylink.net](http://www.thecountylink.net) or you can now follow us on Facebook or Twitter

You can also view our Work Programme at [www.thecountylink.net](http://www.thecountylink.net) or request an easy read version from 01323 514510 ■

# Volunteering at ESDA



I have now volunteered for ESDA for the last 8 months and am enjoying my time. I first became interested in helping out when I read a piece in the

Aware magazine that volunteers were needed to help with reception and/or the garden. After speaking with Nick Tapp (a person who had assisted my brother and my late Nan in the past) and not being much of a gardener I opted to help with reception duties.

After a few weeks of getting used to the telephone system and getting to know who was who within the organisation, the role became a lot easier. I firstly spent several weeks trying to shred and recycle the backlog of paperwork that has built up over the organisations previous years of operation. Now that both paper shredders have given up working I went on to updating the 'Take a trip' guide, a useful tool to help disabled people get out and about. Now I am currently working on a contact list for ESDA with useful contact numbers and references in it, which has taken quite some time to put together.

I really feel ESDA is a good hard working organisation looking out for the interests of disabled people and I am always pleased when I have answered someone's query over the phone or posted out information after receiving a request, using DissBASE (the ESDA contact database).

This in turn gives me a sense of that you have done your part to help. The staff are also friendly at ESDA and it's always nice to get a warm greeting from Vin Tapp

when I am in on a Friday. I and all the other members of staff also enjoy her home baking as well, when she brings in fresh home baked cakes for all.

I have been involved with several disability related consultations since volunteering at ESDA and now I sit on the Disabled Peoples Participation Group as a disabled person, consulting with ESCC Adult Social Care Team and the NHS Trust on disability related issues, which I also find very rewarding, mainly because it shows a willingness by major authorities to listen to the views of disabled people. Being a part of this group meant I had to undertake Disability Equality training and this I found very interesting and quite in-depth and now I attend roughly 2 meetings a month.

After attending the ESDA 70th Annual General Meeting recently, I am even keener to take on a more active role with ESDA in the long term, although currently I am enjoying my role as a receptionist and the rewards and experience it is providing.

Alan Hill ■



Congratulations to Andrew Muddell on receiving his Silver ESDA badge. Andrew earned this badge through his hard work and dedication to ESDA.

He was awarded the Merit Award at the ESDA Annual General Meeting, however as he was unable to attend the AGM he was presented the badge and certificate at a small ceremony at the ESDA offices in Eastbourne where Andrew volunteers with the Information Service. ■

# Community engagement

## New access guide launched

The Seaford and Newhaven Access Guide was launched at the Hillcrest Centre in Newhaven by the Access in Seaford and Newhaven Committee. This guide provides details of shops, restaurants, cafes, pubs and other services in the two towns.

The launch was attended by up to 80 guests including the Mayor of Newhaven, Councillor Carla Butler, and the Deputy Mayor of Seaford, Councillor Bob Allen.

The guide indicates the suitability for disabled people - both those with mobility problems including those using wheelchairs or mobility scooters and people with sight or hearing problems.

The guide will be of use to residents and visitors alike who find it difficult to find accessible services such as hairdressers with ramped access or a restaurant with a Braille menu.



At the launch, Zena Gibbs, Chair of the Access in Seaford and Newhaven Committee, said: "It is hoped that the Guide as well as helping disabled people will also be a wake-up call to businesses in the area in relation to disabled access. "The Disability Discrimination Act requires that shops and public buildings take reasonable steps to make their premises and services accessible to disabled people." ■

## Emergency Text Service



A new mobile phone Text Service for Deaf People and Speech impaired People and those who cannot use a voice telephone has been launched by Sussex Police.

Those using the new 65999 number simply need to state whether the emergency service required is 'police', 'fire', 'ambulance' or 'coastguard' by typing the relevant word. They then type details of the nature of the emergency, along with the exact location, and send the message to **65999**.

The message is then sent to Sussex Police Control, who deal with the request on behalf of the emergency services. As soon as they receive the text, Police Control reply to confirm that they've received the message and may ask more questions.

When texting the Emergency Controller, REMEMBER:

**What?** What is the problem

**Which?** Need Police/Fire Rescue/  
Ambulance/Coastguard

**Where?** Give name of road and town  
Plus more information like:

- house number
- outside Post Office
- near Bus Station

**IMPORTANT:** Also try other ways to contact the emergency services as no text messages are guaranteed to arrive quickly. ■

## Letters



Hello all,

I would like to say a big 'thank you' to you all for the award that I received today regarding my volunteering here at ESDA. I very much appreciate it.

I now take this opportunity to thank all who were involved in getting me started here at the very beginning, and would also thank all who have helped me all the way through.

I enjoy it here, and the working environment is very friendly, welcoming and relaxed - along with the staff and volunteers.

I enjoy being able to help ESDA as it's very rewarding for me personally.

Many thanks,

Andrew Muddell ■



Dear ESDA,

Following my visit to ESDA's Disabled Living Centre

I just wanted to let you know that I was looked after extremely well and given clear explanations and help. I certainly changed my mind as to what was required as we spoke. What an impressive set up you have there and what a help it must be to so many people. And it was so different to the way I was treated in a shop that I visited after visiting you.

With kindest regards and warm thanks,

Bill Shelford, High Sheriff of East Sussex ■

## Thanks

### ESDA stalwarts retire.

Earlier this year two stalwarts of ESDA's local groups retired. We are very sorry to have lost such active and involved volunteers.

Mary Plucknett of Bexhill stepped down at a lunch meeting of the group. Mary has undertaken most of the roles on the committee at some time but most recently was Joint Chair and Social Secretary. She had organised the outings and transport for the club's outings for a number of years - no easy task as they sometimes used 6 buses and took out nearly 80 people. Mary roped others in to ensure that the group could continue after her retirement and she will be greatly missed by members and other committee members.

May Jones has been with the Eastbourne District Committee for many years - indeed she was with them before they became part of the Association. Following their long-time Chair's retirement, May stepped into the breach to ensure the group continued. She organised fundraising events and was a great supporter of events organised by the office. Everyone will miss May greatly.

We wish both May and Mary all the best in their retirement and express our thanks for everything they have done for members over the years. ■



May



Mary

# Events and contacts

## Dates for your diaries

### [LINK Introduction Workshop](#)

11th Jan 2010 10am -1pm @ESDA contact East Sussex LINK 01323 514510

Opportunity to learn more about the LINK and how to become involved with your LINK

### [LINK Meeting in Public – Rural Rother](#)

19th Jan 2010 contact East Sussex LINK 01323 514510 or [info@thecountylink.net](mailto:info@thecountylink.net)

The morning session will look at rural Mental Health Services and in the afternoon there will be a chance to hear from the rural community about 'Putting People First'. As well as all the news from your LINK.

Venue to be confirmed

### [LINK Meeting in Public - Rural Wealden](#)

11th March 2010 contact East Sussex LINK 01323 514510 or [info@thecountylink.net](mailto:info@thecountylink.net)

The morning session will look at rural Mental Health Services and in the afternoon there will be a chance to hear from the rural community about 'Putting People First'. As well as all the news from your LINK.

Venue to be confirmed

### [ESDA Skydive](#)

April 2010

Jump for ESDA from 10,000ft - £70 Deposit required and a £325 minimum sponsorship.

Contact Mark Bond our fundraiser for further details: 01323 514528 or email

[mark.bond@esda.org.uk](mailto:mark.bond@esda.org.uk)

## **East Sussex Disability Association**

1 Faraday Close, Eastbourne BN22 9BH

Tel: 01323 514500

Fax: 01323 514501

Text: 07768 18916

Email: [info@esda.org.uk](mailto:info@esda.org.uk)

Website: [www.esda.org.uk](http://www.esda.org.uk)

Form Filling Service

[info@esda.org.uk](mailto:info@esda.org.uk) - 01323 514500

Disabled Living Centre

[dlc@esda.org.uk](mailto:dlc@esda.org.uk) - 01323 514515

Information Service

[information@esda.org.uk](mailto:information@esda.org.uk) - 01323 514521

Meeting Room Hire

[info@esda.org.uk](mailto:info@esda.org.uk) - 01323 514500

Local Services

[localservices@esda.org.uk](mailto:localservices@esda.org.uk) - 01323 514500

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