

## **Louise Rendle - Head of Network Services**



Welcome to our first newsletter of 2013. The first few months of this year have certainly been busy, with many of you taking part in the Vision Ahead: Improving the Care and Support of Blind, Partially Sighted and Visually Impaired People in Wiltshire consultations for Wiltshire Council. We are in the process of completing our final workshops for Vision Ahead. The previous workshops have proved challenging at times but we are confident that the final set of recommendations, to be finalised at the final workshop, will provide a strong action plan which will be adopted by Health and Social Care and other partners to improve the care pathway for people with a vision impairment.

Funding has been confirmed by Wiltshire Council and the new Clinical Commissioning Group for 2013/2014 and we've been working hard to establish an exciting work plan with lots of opportunities for service user involvement, which is really positive. Look out for opportunities throughout the year to become involved.

We have, however learnt that Swindon Borough Council are looking to remove our funding and therefore all independent service user involvement by September this year. Swindon Borough Council will be holding a series of consultations about the decommissioning of our service as well as other areas for service cuts and redesign. I would urge as many Swindon service users, as possible, to attend these consultations to give their views and to ensure that service user involvement continues to be at the heart of all service provision.

On a more positive note we are happy to welcome Zoe Millington to our Outreach Team and Natalie Watts as Trowbridge College Social Work Student joins us to work on a special project. I would also like to congratulate Amber Graham, Development Outreach Worker, on the birth of her son Jake.



Best Wishes, Louise Rendle



*From left to Right:*

*Claire Selway, Nick Crane,  
Jessica Johnston, Lorraine Reeves,  
Lucie Woodruff, Sally Cobb, Martin  
Fortune, Peter North, Zoe Millington,  
Gemma Holdway & Louise Rendle*

# Development Outreach Team

## Welcome from our new member of the Outreach Team:

I'm Zoë Millington and have just joined WSUN as a Development Outreach Worker. Prior to this I worked mainly in Local Government in housing and support services and also as an adviser in a college. I am very much looking forward to learning about and getting involved with the many projects WSUN is working on. As I have not lived in Wiltshire for very long I am also eager to get out and about, meet other organisations and get to know the area more.



**Please find below some of the work we have been doing since our last newsletter:**

## Help to Live at Home Customer Reference Group



This group of volunteers, who undertake quality assurance and monitoring of the care providers of the Wiltshire Council Help to Live at Home service have continued with their programme of visits to Sheltered Accommodation Schemes. They talk to the residents to explain the purpose of the group and offer to take forward any issues the residents might have concerning either their care packages, if they have one, or problems

within the scheme. They have visited a number of Sheltered Accommodation schemes across the county and have had some success in having issues resolved.

In recent months this has included the installation of an extra mobility scooter charging point at a Scheme in Malmesbury, the remedying of leaking gutters and down pipes in a scheme in Pewsey and the recommendation that the entrance systems be modified in schemes in Melksham and Salisbury.

The group have also continued with their one to one telephone conversations with customers of two of the four care providers. This has given the opportunity for customers to speak openly and freely about the care they receive and issues raised have been passed by the group to the provider and to Wiltshire Council.

In the next few weeks the group will be expanding the telephone monitoring to the other two care providers and also to Medequip, the equipment provider, to provide an ongoing impartial quality assurance of their service.

## Home Truths Survey

Wiltshire and Swindon Users' Network through the Help to Live At Home Customer Reference Group have been asked by Wiltshire Council and the NHS to assist with a project called Home Truths. This project will look at improving the understanding and use of alternatives to Residential Care Homes. The project is being carried out in five other local authorities and all the findings will be shared. The Customer Reference group have been asked to distribute and, where needed, assist with the completion of an anonymous survey. The survey asks older people about their experience and opinions on Residential care and the alternatives to it. This work will be completed by the end of February.

## Stonehenge

If anyone has travelled close to Stonehenge recently, and more particularly around 'Airman's Corner,' they will be very aware that there is a lot of building activity going on. This is the construction of the new visitor centre. As has been reported in past newsletters WSUN has been very much involved in consultation on many aspects of the design of the visitor centre to ensure it will be accessible and user friendly for older people and people with disabilities.



So far we have been consulted on the design of the building, the accessible toilet facilities, the layouts of the visitor entrance, the shop and the cafe. We have been consulted on the Land Train that will carry visitors from the centre to Stonehenge itself and we have also been consulted on the exhibition layouts.

English Heritage has now come back to us to ask for our opinions on the signage to be used in the new centre and around the site. This consultation will take place in March and will be followed by on site consultations in the Autumn.

## Introductory visits to Albare House Salisbury, Towpath House Trowbridge and Springer's House Devizes

Lorraine made introductory visits to Albare House Salisbury, Springer's House Devizes and Towpath House Trowbridge all supported accommodation schemes which supports clients with mental health needs. We promoted our newsletter and encouraged more members to join WSUN.

We are keen to promote WSUN to as many Service Users as possible. We know that the welfare reforms and reduction in support services are impacting greatly on individuals and service providers. WSUN is looking to set up forums that enable sign posting, shared learning and opportunities for all.

We always welcome invitations to attend tenants meetings and staff meetings to talk about involvement and how we might all work together to achieve well being and inclusion.

## 3M's Memory Cafe

The 3M's Memory cafe (Magical Memory Moments) which supports people with Dementia and their carers were pleased to welcome members of the Evening Star Quilters to their meeting in January. They were presented with a cheque to assist with the financing of the group. Dave Thompson, chairman of the 3M's said it was a lovely gift to receive and would go towards the cost of an outing for the group in the Summer. In the photo are David Thompson receiving the cheque and Evening Star Quilters; Anne Day, Joy Jansen and Jan Baker along with some of the members who attend the meetings.



WSUN is currently exploring the setting up of other 3M groups around the County. To register an interest or for more information please contact the Outreach Team.



## **Wiltshire Mental Health – Our Time To Talk**

Our Time To Talk is a welcoming and inclusive group of mental health service users who meet on a quarterly basis. The group is a great way for service users to feel empowered and share experiences with each other and representatives of service providers.

At the most recent meeting there was a question and answer session with Jane Salmon, Modern Matron for Green Lane and Fountain Way. Jane discussed with the group a proposal she had in mind for a 'Pre-discharge project'. This project would look at how hospital discharge can be planned with the service user at an early stage. The group expressed that they felt this would be a worthwhile project and would be keen to hear more about it. Group members shared their personal experiences of discharge from hospital which Jane said was very valuable.

Members of this group also attend the Avon & Wiltshire Partnership Community Care Forums and the Service User Steering Group.

## **Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust Service User and Carer Engagement Steering group**

We regularly attend the above group, the purpose of which is to oversee the development, engagement, service changes and improvements within AWP. AWP are keen to involve service users, carers and staff in the future development and improvement of their services.

We currently have service user membership on the board with support from an Outreach Worker. We will be involved in the development and implementation of good practice, dissemination of information, raising awareness of monitoring services, providing advice and making recommendations to the Trust Board. It also gives us the opportunity to continue building networks that promote well being, empowerment and the service user voice.

## **Visual Impairment Workshops**

Final recommendations from our series of workshops will shortly be presented to WC and Health providers to be taken forward. A full report will be available soon and an event will be held later in the year to show the progress made against the recommendations.

Please see below some photos from the workshops:



# Lisa Chadwick - Swindon



## Voluntary and Third Sector Reshaping Consultation

As Louise revealed earlier in this newsletter, Swindon Borough Council (SBC) are reviewing and reshaping voluntary and third sector commissioned services, due to funding issues. Just recently WSUN was invited by SBC to attend a meeting, along with many other service providers who would be affected by the changes. During March, SBC will be holding four consultations in different areas of Swindon and Swindon members will have received notification of these dates from us by now. If you are unable to attend we would urge you to complete the questionnaire which we enclosed. If you need assistance to complete this please call us at the office and we can help. The support we receive from you is vital as this will affect the future of WSUN. Thank you to all who have continued to support us.

## Swindon Mobility Forum

You may remember from our last newsletter, we planned to organise an event which focussed on mobility and getting around. As we are involved in managing the Swindon Mobility Club (SMC) we wanted to be able to share information with both the members of the SMC, WSUN and members of the public.

We organised an event at the Pilgrim Centre, Swindon in November 2012 to share information about getting around and other mobility issues. The morning session was open to members of the SMC and WSUN. We were fortunate enough to have Vince May from Shopmobility who took time out of his busy work schedule to come and give a short presentation about what services they offer. Cindy Carter from the Planning and Access Department at Swindon Borough Council (SBC) also gave a presentation. Cindy spoke about how the development of new buildings are designed and rigorously checked at the planning stage and to ensure they meet all requirements to make them accessible for everyone. Both talks were very interesting and informative and the attendees were very satisfied with the information they received. After lunch, stand holders were available to offer information about the services they offer regarding mobility issues. This was an open event and everyone was welcome.



## Swindon Mobility Club

For the last two years, Swindon Mobility Club (previously known as the Wheelchair Focus Group) has been hosting monthly meetings which take place at Clapham Hobbs, Gorse Hill, Swindon. We will be continuing with these group sessions, so if you would like to come and have a chat and find out more about these informal meetings, it would be great to see as many of you as possible. Members are encouraged to suggest speakers to attend from organisations or services which are of interest and to give ideas and views on any mobility related issue. Please contact me for the next meeting date or for any further information.

## Future Swindon Forums

We have been asked by SBC to organise a forum regarding information and advice. We are still in discussions with SBC at the time of this newsletter going to print, therefore unable to offer any more details. The forum will be in the next few months and will let you know more details as soon as we can.

# Martin Fortune - Research & Academic Liaison Officer



## New funding reforms announced for care and support

The Government has announced new measures for funding care to ensure that older people and those with disabilities get the care they need without facing unlimited costs.

The new measures are based on the recommendations made in 2011 by the Dilnot Commission, an independent panel set up to look at the fairest and most sustainable way to fund care and support in England. The new measures include, from April 2017:



**A cap on care costs** which gives everyone the reassurance that they will have a level of protection, if they have the most serious needs and incur very high care costs.

If someone is assessed by their local authority as having eligible care needs, they will be told how much it will cost the local authority to meet those needs with local services.

These costs count towards their cap. So, however great a person's costs become, once they have reached the cap the state will step in and provide financial support.

The cap will be the equivalent to £75,000 in 2017/18 prices. The DoH, expect up to 16% of older people to face costs of £75,000 or more. People will still need to pay for their bed and the board element of any care, this will not be included in the cap.

**People of working age** who develop care needs before retirement age will benefit from a cap that's lower than £75,000. People who have care needs before they turn 18 will effectively have their cap set at zero.

## New financial protection for those with modest wealth

People with the least will get the most support. Currently only those with assets of less than £23,250 get help with paying for their care costs. The changes will mean that those with property value and savings of £100,000 (in 2010/11 prices) or less will start to receive financial support, with the Government paying a proportion of their residential care costs on a sliding scale. £100,000 was the amount recommended by Andrew Dilnot, and is equivalent to around £123,000 in 2017/18 prices. The most financial support will go to those with the greatest care needs and the least in savings or home value, and the poorest people will continue to have the majority of their care costs paid.





## **From April 2015:**

- No-one will have to sell their home in their lifetime to pay for residential care. If people cannot afford their fees without selling their home, they will have the right to defer paying during their lifetime.
- People will have clearer entitlements. A national minimum eligibility will make access to care more consistent around the country, and carers will have a legal right to an assessment for care for the first time.

Subject to the legislation, the changes above will take effect from April 2017 and will provide people with a new legal right to financial protection from very high care costs, from the state, which has not existed previously. The 2017 timing will ensure that these changes are affordable and sustainable for the long term.

## **Updates on Universal Credit - local authority-led pilots**

### **A look at how the pilot has been working in Birmingham**

Birmingham City Council was one of the 12 successful local authorities announced in August 2012 by the Minister for Welfare Reform, Lord Freud, to carry out one of the Universal Credit local authority-led pilots.

The 12 authorities are looking at how they can help get Universal Credit claimants ready for October 2013, by identifying and supporting people who need help with: Getting online, Managing and maintaining their finances and Finding and staying in work.

Birmingham City Council has introduced changes to make their services digitally accessible by developing a digital logbook and the Birmingham One account. Claimants can access everything they need in one place. This is being piloted with around 5,000 new tenants who have housing requirements in Birmingham.

All new tenants will have their own personalised digital log book to access and manage every aspect of their tenancy online. The logbook will also help tenants with budgeting, employment, skills and education, and be a channel for communication with them.

To support the introduction, four letting suites have been set up in the Birmingham area and new tenants are given a 90 minute appointment with an Assistant Housing Officer.

Initial feedback has been very positive. All claimants think that the 12 week support is a good idea. Many suggested that longer would be better, and 99 per cent of people agreed with the concept of the letting suites. Staff have also found the experience fulfilling.

The pilots will run until September 2013 and the Department for Work and Pensions are capturing lessons learned on an ongoing basis. A full evaluation of the pilots' effectiveness will take place in October 2013 so that DWP can use the information for future claimant delivery.

**Please be aware all the above information was correct at time of going to Print!**

To keep updated or to find out more about the pilots, or if you have a question about the work that is being undertaken in the pilot authorities, email the DWP Local Authority-led Pilots Team [LALED.PILOTS@DWP.GSI.GOV.UK](mailto:LALED.PILOTS@DWP.GSI.GOV.UK), or visit the DWP Local Authority website <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/local-authority-staff/universal-credit-information/>.

## Welfare Reform In Wiltshire

WSUN would like to invite you to join us at our:

### Welfare Reform Update Forum

On: Wednesday, 20th March 2013

At the: Corn Exchange, Devizes

From 10.30am – 2.30pm

(with tea and coffee available from 10.15 and later, a light lunch)

This forum is aimed at 'the working age group' to let members know about some of the proposed changes in the Welfare Reform Bill, which will be fully implemented by 2016. Some changes have already been made but the Personal Independence Payment (PIP) (which replaces Disability Living Allowance) won't be introduced until April 2013.

We are very pleased that the following speakers will be attending: Ian Brown, Head of Revenue & Benefits of Wiltshire Council - Under Occupancy and Council Tax Reform; Hazel Brown, Department of Works and Pensions - PIP; Kim Francome, Jobcentre Plus – Transition to Work – Work Capability Assessment and Employment Support Allowance

**If you would like to attend, please contact WSUN by no later than 12th March.**

## Natalie Watts - Student Social Worker



I have recently joined the Wiltshire and Swindon User's Network team for an 85 day placement as part of my Social Work Course.

I am currently in my second year studying a BSc Social Work degree at Wiltshire College, Trowbridge, and have joined WSUN to gain some experience in the voluntary sector which will essentially guide my social work development and future practice. I joined the team at the beginning of February and have begun working on a BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) project. This project aims to engage with service users from minority ethnic groups and marginalised communities, within Wiltshire, in order to establish gaps and needs within health and social care services, and to identify and facilitate the awareness of service delivery.

I will be working closely with equality infrastructure groups ('Equal Chances Better Lives' & 'Wiltshire Racial Equality Council') and community team leaders to host some small focus groups to obtain the feedback of BAME communities on current service provision in Wiltshire. This will then form the basis of the continued work to be done with the BAME communities to enable people to feel empowered to have their say about the services they receive.



# Wiltshire Independent Travel Support (WITS)



Paul has recently moved from the Borough of Swindon to live in supported living in the South Wiltshire area. He has Learning Difficulties. WITS were contacted by Paul's new Social Worker who explained that Paul was very keen to attend two existing work placements, one in Swindon and one in Salisbury and wanted to be able to travel independently to both.

After the first initial meeting we decided that the best way forward was to complete the shorter less complicated journey first. This was explained to Paul and he was very happy with this arrangement as he was already completing this journey with a member of his support staff, and would only need to be accompanied once or twice to be independent.

Paul was very confident with this journey, we let him show us how he travelled to his place of employment and he showed very good road safety and good communication skills with the bus driver.

As his first part of training was so successful, we explained that we would move on to the next journey, but that this journey would be more challenging. Paul was travelling by taxi, which was expensive and which meant he only spent a couple of hours at his work place. Paul already knew he would have to catch the Swindon bus from a different bus stop and then it was a two hour journey before changing buses to get him to his place of work.

It became apparent that there was a lot more anxiety with this journey as it was very long. Paul could remember the bus services he required but to start with, he was a little confused.

We will continue to work with Paul as we understand how important it is to him that he continues to make a positive contribution by volunteering at two different charity shops. He has family and friends in the Borough of Swindon he also wishes to visit, when he has completed his training.

Paul has gained confidence and he is looking forward to new opportunities that further independent travel can bring.



# Wiltshire Involvement Network (WIN)



## Pilot PLACE Inspection Salisbury District Hospital

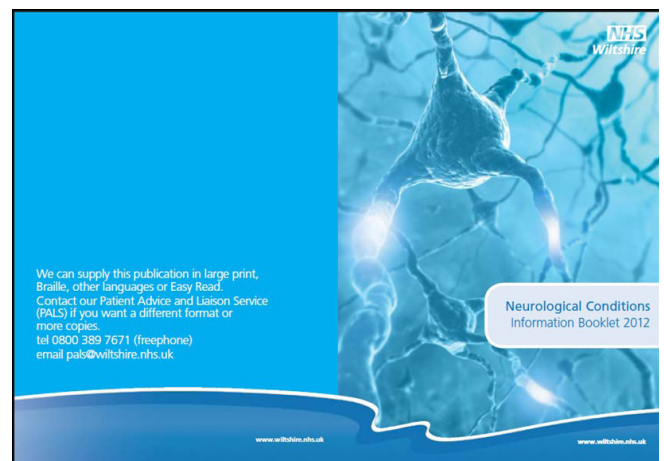
WIN was asked to join a team comprising of members of Salisbury District Hospital (SDH) staff, governors and patient representatives to trial the pilot Patient-Led Assessment of the Care Environment (PLACE) inspection, which will replace the current Patient Environment Action Team (PEAT) inspections in April 2013. It is intended that PLACE will be an annual assessment of all hospitals providing NHS-funded care and will “put patient wishes at the centre of the assessment process”. It will focus on the quality of non-clinical services and the condition of hospital buildings.

The pilot inspection was an all-day event and involved visiting ten wards and ten support areas. The team also observed lunch being served in four wards, and tasted the meals available. Overall, the impressions of the Salisbury District Hospital environment and its staff were very favourable. However, the team unanimously concluded that the PLACE process was too broad in scope and too detailed to be completed in one day (9 am – 4 pm), as this did not allow sufficient time to visit and observe the many wards and support areas required, and to complete the comprehensive PLACE paper work.

It was agreed that to do this would require 2 full days or a revised, less detailed audit form. These conclusions have been fed back to the Department of Health. The final PLACE process may change, subject to the responses received. However, the results of the pilot will not be made public, although they will be available via Freedom of Information requests.

## Engaging with groups of people with long term Neurological Conditions

The Wiltshire Primary Care Trust’s Long Term Neurological Conditions Steering Group (LTNCSG), led by Darrell Gale, produced an information booklet for patients with long term neurological conditions who live in Wiltshire. Darrell worked as a Consultant in Public Health for NHS Wiltshire, who will transfer with Public Health to Wiltshire Council under the new arrangements brought about by the NHS reforms.



The group, of which I am a part representing WIN, produced the booklet which was launched in August 2012 at a Neurological Event - Stakeholder day, jointly organised by Wiltshire Council and NHS Wiltshire. It provides a comprehensive guide to living with a neurological condition. Sections include Where to Start, Your Care which includes support for the carer, Finances and Work and Getting About. Copies of the Neurological Conditions Information Booklet are available from the Wiltshire and Swindon Users' Network. I am also trying to get them into chemists and GP surgeries. It is hoped that the Long Term Neurological Conditions Steering Group will continue to meet and perhaps expand its membership.

Rodney Haverson—WIN Core Group member and member of the LTNCSSG

## **Hospital Food is given a revamp**

Back in June 2011 the Great Western Hospital NHS Foundation Trust made the decision to reduce the opening times and hot food option at Chippenham Hospital's restaurant. Customers, members of the public and WIN members were unhappy with this decision so WIN took the decision to raise this with the Trust directly. A representative from the Trust was invited to attend one of WIN's public meetings to update members of the public about the decision and take questions and concerns directly from the public. Managers at the Trust took this public feedback on board and decided to visit the restaurant to try it out for themselves.

Early this year the Trust decided that there was a need for the restaurant, which is also used by the local community and not just patients and visitors at the hospital.

Opening times at The Grapevine have been extended from four to six hours a day, from 8.30 to 3.30 Monday to Friday. The Trust may extend the opening hours again if there is enough demand from visitors and residents.

On 24th January 150 people and staff across the Trust were invited to receive a free lunch to sample the new menu. As Chair of WIN, Phil Matthews was invited along to see the new improvements. Whilst there he was given the honour of cutting the ribbon on the new x-ray machine, which had been refurbished at a cost of £130,000, after the old equipment broke down back in February 2011.



This is a big investment by the local NHS in the service and a sign of commitment to local communities. WIN is happy that its concerns have been listened to.



# Information Feature from the Wiltshire Police

## DID YOU KNOW.....

There is an emergency text service for deaf people and speech impaired people

For more information please contact Wiltshire Police on 101 or a link is available through our website <http://wsun.co.uk/useful-information/>



POLICE FIRE AMBULANCE COASTGUARD RESCUE

**80999**

**Emergency contact**



**WILTSHIRE POLICE**  
Delivering safe and satisfied communities  
[www.wiltshire.police.uk](http://www.wiltshire.police.uk)

## Dates for your Diary

For information on upcoming events please visit <http://wsun.co.uk/events/>

## Wiltshire & Swindon Users' Network's Contact Details

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Address:      | Wiltshire & Swindon Users' Network,<br>The Independent Living Centre,<br>St George's Road,<br>Semington, BA14 6JQ |
| Phone Number: | 01380 871800  |
| Fax Number:   | 01380 871507  |
| Email:        | <a href="mailto:info.wsun@btconnect.com">info.wsun@btconnect.com</a>  |
| Website:      | <a href="http://www.wsun.co.uk">www.wsun.co.uk</a>  |

The Wiltshire & Swindon Users' Network is not responsible for information which is provided by third party organisations or agencies.

Wiltshire & Swindon Users' Network is funded by the following Service Providers:

