Disability Essex Newsletter

January/February, 2010

Disability Essex
(Essex Disabled People's Association Ltd)
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Centre for Disability Studies

At long last, the completion of our new HQ is in sight. Providing there are no unexpected delays, we should be moving into the newly-built Centre for Disability Studies in mid March.

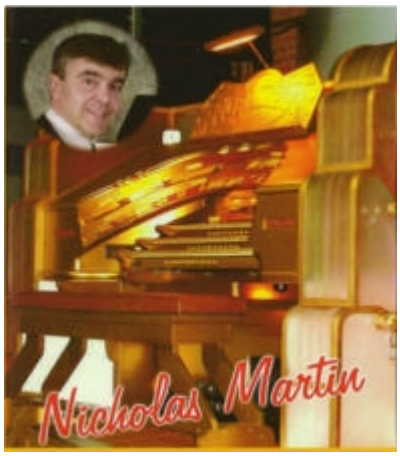
It was just over five years ago, in January 2005, that we moved from 90 Broomfield Road into temporary accommodation – first in a Portakabin at Moulsham Mill, Chelmsford and, for the past two years, in rented classrooms at the Adult Community College, Rochford.

As you can see above, the Centre for Disability Studies is an undeniably beautiful building. "It has taken us a long while to realise this dream," says CEO Richard Boyd. "Without the support of a loyal team of staff and volunteers, it would have been far more difficult. I would like to take this opportunity to say a personal, and very public, thank you to the team – for putting up with discomfort and difficulty along the way and keeping faith with the charity."

Fundraising organ concert on 10 April

The internationally renowned theatre organist, Nicholas Martin is playing to raise funds for Disability Essex at a concert on Saturday 10 April 2010.

Taking place in the Main Hall at the Adult Community College, Rocheway, Rochford, the event will start at 3.00 pm. Tickets cost £10.00 per person, which includes the opportunity to visit our new eco training centre, next door to the college. Refreshments will be available on the day.



Please telephone 01268 757291 or 0844 412 1771 for tickets.

Guide Dogs

Guide Dogs need your help with their recently launched Talking Buses campaign. Public transport plays a vital role in helping disabled people to become more independent.

Many people, including the elderly, disabled and other vulnerable groups, rely heavily on buses to support them in living more independent lives. However, the worry of not being sure if you have got on the right bus, where you are on your journey, or when your stop is coming up, puts many people off using them.

As a result, Guide Dogs is campaigning for a change in the law to ensure audiovisual information - including audible announcements of the next stop and final destination - are available on board every bus and scheduled coach service in the UK.

With the general election coming up this year, it can be really difficult to ensure that politicians recognise important issues. As a result, we need your help. An Early Day Motion has been tabled in Parliament, calling on the government to change the law, which MPs can sign to show their support of the campaign. Follow the link below for more information:

www.guidedogs.org.uk/talkingbuses

Source: email from The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association 13/01/10

Dementia Support

The Mid Essex branch of the Alzheimers Society has recently announced two new services to support people with dementia. With funding from North Essex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, the branch can now provide a full-time support worker to assist the new Memory and Assessment Support Service, based at St John's Hospital.

They will also be providing an individualised befriending service to support people in the early stages of dementia, with the employment of a Leisure and Wellbeing Worker. Please telephone 01245 260911 for further information.

Source: Chelmsford Council for Voluntary Service, Update news letter Winter 2009/10

Digital Switchover

Digital Outreach is providing a Grant programme to enable local organisations and groups, to increase awareness of the switchover from analogue to digital television, by running events or other activities in connection with switchover. The grant programme ranges from £500 to a maximum of £3,000. Any community group or third sector organisation can apply for a Digital Outreach Grant. The fund is only for activities that can demonstrate that they can engage with:

- Older people
- People with sensory, mobility or dexterity impairments
- People with learning difficulties
- People who have experienced mental health problems
- People whose first language is not English
- People who may be socially isolated

Activities cannot involve commercial activities and must focus on digital switchover. All activities must take place in the six months leading up to the switchover in that area-those outside of this time period cannot be funded by the Digital Outreach grant.

To apply, ring Lesley at Digital Outreach on 01457 891912 or email lelliott@digitaloutreach.org.uk.

Source: email from Shaw Trust 24/12/09

Teenage obesity might increase the risk of developing Multiple Sclerosis

The result of recent analysis suggests that obesity between the ages of 18 and 20 may increase the risk of developing MS later in life.

The study found that women who had a BMI of 30 or more at 18 years old were more than twice as likely to develop MS as women with a lower BMI.

Childhood obesity, or obesity in early teenage, did not change the risk of developing MS. Why there might be a link between obesity and the risk of getting MS is unclear.

The authors of the study concluded that more work was needed to pin down the effects of obesity on the risk of developing MS.

Source: msmatters issues88 November/December 2009

Volunteering and neighbourliness – helping out in severe weather

During severe weather, elderly people are especially prone to hypothermia and pneumonia. In the cold weather it's even more important to support older people, so call in regularly on elderly friends, neighbours and relatives to see if they need help staying warm or getting provisions.

Age Concern/Help the Aged say that, in the cold weather, it's more important than ever to eat at least one hot meal and have hot drinks during the day. Include a good range of foods in your diet and aim for five portions of fruit and vegetables each day. Having a hot drink before bed and taking a flask to bed are good ideas too.

Source: email from Community Inclusion Strategic Planning and Commissioning 11/02/10

Living made easy for children

Disabled Living Foundation has added a new section to its website, providing impartial advice and information on wheelchairs and mobility aids.

The Disabled Living Foundation does not sell products, but can signpost parents, carers, or healthcare professionals to the right place.

Use the following link to take you direct to the Living Made Easy page:

www.livingmadeeasy.org.uk/children

Source: Essex mencap news 01/2010

Grants for home insulation

Reduce your carbon footprint—and perhaps save money!

Headway Essex reports that one of their clients received a grant from her energy provider, EON, towards cavity wall insulation. It appears that this grant may be available to anyone aged 70 or over, or who receives DLA or a number of recognised benefits. The grant can also cover loft insulation. To qualify, you must own your own home, or be a private tenant with permission from the landlord. Details can be obtained from EON on 0845 301 4927. A similar scheme is available from British Gas—phone 0845 971 7731, quoting HON, for information. It may be worth contacting other energy providers, to find out if they offer similar help.

Source: Headway Essex, Headlines, February 2010

Sitting Volleyball in Essex and the East of England

Sitting volleyball is a fast and exciting game-to play and to watch. Easy and fun to learn and play at a beginner and recreational level, as players develop more technical and tactical skills, there is the opportunity to play at higher levels.

As part of the volleyball family, the game is a team sport, particularly suited to people with lower limb amputation or disability who can play alongside the able-bodied. It is also played by many who are recovering from injury. Men and women often play in the same team. All this makes it a truly integrated sport. Please visit:

www.volleyball.co.uk or
www.volleyballengland.org for more information.

Source: email from Lead, Essex Sitting Volleyball Centre

Caring with Confidence

Caring with Confidence is a free programme for people who care for someone with an illness, disability or frailty. The programme is designed to provide the right environment and support to develop the carer's skills and knowledge, so that they can improve their own health and wellbeing as well as that of the person they care for.

The programme consists of a series of local group sessions, self study workbooks, and access online. Help may be available with travel and alternative care costs. To find out more, visit:
www.caringwithconfidence.net/local-group-sessions

Caring with Confidence is funded by the Dept of Health, as a result of the renewed National Carers Strategy, called 'New Deal for Carers'.

Source: MSS E Herts & W Essex Dec/Jan '10 Newsletter

Boiler Scrappage Scheme

This scheme provides a voucher towards the cost of replacing an inefficient G-rated boiler with a A-rated boiler or renewable heat technology. The scheme is open to householders in England living in an owned or privately rented home.

The voucher is worth £400 towards an upgrade, with the householder meeting any additional costs.

You can apply any time at www.governmentboiler-scrappagescheme.info.

Source: RRAVS Newsletter, Winter 2010, Issue 31

SMOKEFREE

Better health, save money

Assuming the average smoker has around 20 cigarettes a day, collectively local residents in SE Essex could save over £136 million a year. More than 8.5m people in England still smoke and there are over 80,000 deaths each year due to smoking. It is the main cause of preventable disease and premature death in the UK.

By not smoking 20 cigarettes a day (based on a packet of 20 cigarettes costing £5.50) you could save £167.29 a month and an incredible £2,000+ in one year!

Source: NHS SE Essex, Insidestory, Autumn/Winter 2009

A new range of texture modified meals

Wiltshire Farm Foods, of Basildon, will shortly be launching a new range of texture modified meals. The range is designed specifically for people who have difficulty in chewing, swallowing and digesting their food.

They would be happy to arrange a demonstration and tasting. If you, or your group, would be interested, please contact Danny McCarthy 01268 288887 to arrange an appointment.

Source: email from Wiltshire farm foods , Basildon 19/01/10

Typetalk renamed

Typetalk has been renamed 'Text Relay'. Until April 2009, the two services provided by BT and RNID up to April 2009-Typetalk, the text relay service, and TextDirect, a service for textphone to users of textphone have been joined together in Text Relay to give a 'one stop shop'.

Typetalk users will notice announcements now refer to Text Relay instead of Typetalk, otherwise relay calls will be the same, with the same operators.

BT has launched a new website, that carries information on how to use a textphone, as well as alternatives such as using a computer as a textphone. Visit www.textrelay.org for details.

Source: Hearing Help Newsletter, January 2010, Issue 10

WANTED WANTED WANTED WANTED

Musician/Musicians wanted

If you have any musical experience and would like to help in getting young people with learning difficulties to participate in the art of music-either by using instruments, singing or movement-then please contact Mr David Yallop at BATIAS.

Telephone 01375 389869 or write to him at the Beehive Resource Centre, West Street, Grays CM13 1BA.

Source: email from Disability Essex 13/01/10

FOR SALE FOR SALE FOR SALE

Shop Ryder Red Scooter

6 years old
4 wheels, kept inside
Full yearly service, with charger
Good condition £300

For further details, ring
01268 771154

Please note that all responsibility for adverts within this publication is between the buyer and the seller. Disability Essex can accept no liability for equipment advertised.

We wish to remind all wheelchair users that there is a recommended wheelchair "Highway Code", copies of which we can supply on application. Furthermore, Class 3 Invalid Carriages must be registered with the DVLA.