

Welcome to the Somerset Local Involvement Network Newsletter for June & July

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Stewardship Group Term of Office

At the election held amongst LINK participants in February 2009, Stewardship Group nominees were asked to stand with an initial commitment of six months. Having considered current progress at this still formative stage of the Group, the need for continuity, and to build on training, relationships and knowledge, all current members wish to propose an extension to their present term of office up to 31st March 2010.

The Group is consulting the wider LINK on this proposal and therefore would be pleased to receive your comments.

We hope you will support this proposal.

Given the above there are four vacancies for co-option on the Somerset Stewardship Group. If you would like to get involved in the Stewardship Group or join a project group, to look at a specific issue that has been raised, please get in touch.

- Thanks and goodbye to Maureen Lloyd-Williams who has left the Stewardship Group.

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View from the Chair

Hello everyone, I am John Murphy and I was elected Chair of the Somerset Stewardship Group on June 8.

The Stewardship Group has been meeting about twice a month to undertake training and also to develop the advertising of the Somerset LINK. Posters and leaflets with a strong Somerset flavour have all been agreed upon so keep your eyes peeled for our little singing bird!

It would be really helpful if we could have some volunteers to help distribute the advertising material. If you can display a poster or give out some leaflets please let us know. You may be able to advertise the LINK at work or in your community - at schools and nurseries, on notice boards or in community centres. Anywhere your friends, family and colleagues are in Somerset we want the LINK to be too!

The morale of the Stewardship Group is high and we are looking forward to the new challenges ahead.

Kind Regards,

John

Celebrating Carers in Somerset



Carers gathered from across the county for Carers Week

More than one hundred carers from across the county came together to celebrate national Carers Week held in June.

St John Ambulance hosted the fourth annual Carers Reunion at their HQ in Canon Street, Taunton. Carers heard from keynote speaker, Susan Hartnell-Beavis, herself a former carer, who has written the foreword for St. John's directory of essential numbers for carers. 'If only I'd known that' is free to carers from Somerset Direct on 0845 3459133.

Jude Glide, Carer Support Manager for St. John Ambulance, said: "It was a brilliant day and really good to see so many carers who have attended our Carer Support Programmes."

The event was supported by Somerset Skills and Learning, The Expert Patient Programme - 'Looking After Me' - and the County Council Finance and Benefits Team, all of whom were on hand with advice.

Contact Jude on 01823 345920 or visit: www.somerset.sja.org.uk/carersupport.

Entering and Viewing Services -Team Members Wanted

Local Involvement Networks have an important statutory power that entitles authorised representatives of the LINK to be able to enter and view health and social care services as they are being provided.

A visit made by authorised representatives of a LINK to enter and view services should be an activity that forms part of a project or item of work that the LINK is undertaking as a part of their overall work plan. It should enhance work already being undertaken and aim to complete a picture of how services are being provided.

Certain individuals can be authorised to enter, view and observe health and social care activities and the legislation is clear that it is only 'authorised representatives' who can carry out this role on behalf of a LINK.

Being an authorised representative is an important role that requires certain skills and personal qualities, the representatives are accountable to the LINK and the community in which it operates. Team members will be selected through an assessment process that is explained in more detail during the initial training workshop. The first workshop is expected to take place in the autumn.

If you are interested in learning more about this important role and think you have something to offer the LINK, please contact us.



Join us for the LINK one-day special event

Time for Tea?

Welcome to the second Time for Tea feature which focuses on a local community group we've visited.

Members of Bridgwater Senior Citizens Forum had their say on health care when Beth and Trish, from the LINK host team, went along to their meeting.

Health and social care is just one of the issues that members of the Bridgwater Senior Citizens Forum speak out on.

The forum members meet monthly to discuss issues affecting older people and ensure the welfare and interests of older people are represented.

The forum campaigns on many issues of concern to older people including transport, council tax, crime and safety, the environment and, of course, health care services.

The forum is a member of the South West Seniors Network and Somerset Older Citizens Alliance.

The forum meets at 10.30am on the first Thursday of each month at the Baptist Church Hall in Little St Mary Street, Bridgwater and all are welcome. Contact Phil Sealey on 01278 662683 for more information.



Bridgwater Senior Citizens Forum

Calling LINK Participants

The Stewardship Group is inviting as many participants as possible to attend a special event at Lyngford Lyngford House in Taunton on November 26.

The Group will be inviting policy makers to come and tell participants how, over the next few years, they plan to deliver the health and social care services that meet patient and client needs.

The Group also wants to hear from people, who have registered with the LINK, to tell us about their concerns and experiences which will inform future workplans and make sure there are plenty of opportunities to get involved.

Details on the programme to follow



Could you join the Enter & View team?

Host Team Update

The Somerset LINK host team welcomes Steve Letchford to the post of Locality Manager. Steve joined the team on August 3 along with part time Development Officer Julia D'Allen. Steve spent 24 years as a medical professional in the Royal Navy and has recently been supporting homeless young people to return to independent living.

Julia has spent ten years working in Somerset involvement services, encouraging service users to have their say, and currently supports a service user to be part of the Somerset Partnership Foundation Trust Member Council.

Jono Yelland also joined the host team at the start of July and is settling in as part time Development Officer. Jono has worked in Somerset for six years in supported housing and mental health involvement services.

We're also saying goodbye to Communications Officer Beth Jerrett who is joining the Somerset Wildlife Trust. Beth has recently coordinated the production of the LINK leaflets and posters.

- Join the Host Team

The LINK currently has two vacancies - a full time Development Officer and part time Communications and Online Support Officer.

Visit the [Help and Care](#) website for more information or give us a call.

LINKs on the Road

Keep a look out for the LINKs roadshow during October. LINKs members will be hitting the road to get out and find out what really matters to people in Somerset. They will be touring the county and stopping off in towns along the way to gather up people's experiences and ideas about health and social care services in Somerset.

Speak in Parliament

Have your say in parliament by taking part in a national consultation about stroke care.

The National Audit Office (NAO) is asking people with stroke, and their carers, about their experiences and will report its findings to parliament.

Access the survey [online](#) or call Louise on 01547-520-965.

Replies by 28 August.



Eyes Peeled for the LINKs Roadshow

