

YOUR CHANCE TO BE HEARD

Ever wanted to speak up about a health or social care service in your area but not known how? It might have been to offer an opinion on how things could be improved, or talk about an experience – good or bad.

Well, now you have the opportunity.

HOW DOES A LINK WORK?

A LINK (Local Involvement Network) is a network of local people and groups. It listens to what people like you have to say about health and social care services in your area, and tells councils and the NHS what it has discovered. They are legally obliged to give the LINK any information it asks for and to respond to any recommendations the LINK makes. Joining together in LINKs, we can be more effective than we could be on our own.

YOUR LINK HOST ORGANISATION

Every Council has a responsibility to contract a Host Organisation to establish and support the LINK in its area, Somerset has appointed Help and Care to this role.

Help and Care has been carrying out a programme of events in Somerset, where people have been able to learn more about the LINK and talk about how it might work. People who attended have said:

- The LINK membership needs to be diverse
- It is a great way for people share experiences and knowledge
- An opportunity for a wider group of people to be involved
- There needs to be an elected decision making group which will take into consideration the needs of the 5 district council areas

Watch the website and the next newsletter for a full report

HOW TO CONTACT US:

Call us on **0300 111 0102**

.Monday-Thursday 9-5

Friday 10-4.30

03 numbers cost no more than 01 and 02 numbers and are included in all mobile bundle packages

Write to us at:

Freepost Business Reply Service
Licence No. BH1902
LINKs
896 Christchurch Road
Bournemouth
BH7 6BR

Somerset Office Opening December 2008!

Email us:

somersetLINK@makesachange.org.uk



**MAKES
A CHANGE!**

WHAT'S NEXT?

The next step for the Somerset LINK is to elect a "Stewardship Group", the role of which will be to steer the work of the LINK and to support and enable the groups and individuals to carry out the work of the LINK through:

- Ensuring key local stakeholders are represented and their views considered
- Allocating resources for the work of the LINK, recognising that there are limited resources within the LINK
- Communicating with the wider community
- Planning work and allocating resources to support that work
- Supporting groups to undertake work and take up issues as necessary
- Supporting groups to produce credible reports which commissioners and providers can use to improve services
- Approving reports produced by groups on behalf of the LINK

It is important that as many people in Somerset have the chance to have a say in the election of this group therefore, if you haven't already done so, please take this opportunity to register your interest in the LINK to ensure that you are:

Kept up to date with what's happening in the Somerset LINK

Able to vote in the election

Given the opportunity to be a candidate for election

FOR GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS

LINK Development Officers are keen to come out to your group to talk about the LINK, listen to your views and experiences of health and social care and discuss ways in which your group might like to be involved in the LINK.



WEBSITE

For those of you who have not yet registered with the LINKs website, this is how simple and effective it can be!

Make a Change to your local health & social care services in 3 easy steps:

- 1) Register online at www.makesachange.org.uk
You can register as an Individual or as an organisation
- 2) When you have registered you will receive a confirmation email. Activate your account by following the link in the email
- 3) You are now ready to Make a Change! Simply log in and start joining in the online discussions to have your say.

Here are some *great benefits* to signing up:

- Discuss issues online and share views with other people
- Add Blogs (online commentaries like a diary/journal)
- View news and information for your local area and other areas
- Take part in opinion polls
- Read national news stories
- Find out about national campaigns
- Look at the latest newsletters for Somerset
- Find events in your area

If you have any questions or need help with registering online please contact us:

contact@makesachange.org.uk
or call **0300 111 0102** (local rate)

If you would like to achieve change in your area, start expressing your views today!

To register your interest in the LINK by post, complete this form and send to:

Freepost Business Reply Service
Licence No. BH1902
LINKs
896 Christchurch Road
Bournemouth
BH7 6BR

Registration of Interest in Somerset LINK.

Your Name & Organisation (if applicable):

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Address:

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Phone Number:

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Email:

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If you have e-mail, please tick this box to confirm you are happy to be contacted by this method.

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Data Protection

Help and Care is a host organisation for LINKs. We will process the personal information you give us for administrative and statistical purposes. We will not disclose personal information about you to any other person or organisation without your permission.

Or register by phone on:

0300 111 0102



GOOD OR BAD? YOU TELL US

Is there anything you would like to tell us about your experience of health or social care services in Somerset, good or bad?

What worked well?

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What didn't work well?

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What could have happened to make it work better?

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Please send separately from your registration of interest if you prefer this information to remain anonymous.



Your voice on local health and social care

The Vision

- LINKs will be known 'on the High Street'
- LINKs will join people's voices to tackle broader issues than they could on their own
- LINKs is truly inclusive; everyone has a voice and LINKs will help people be heard in ways that suit them
- LINKs will change things and be able to prove it
- LINKs will deal with real issues not just the high profile ones
- LINKs will spend ALL its money on achieving change for local people
- LINKs are progressive not obstructive



WORKING ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN THE SOMERSET LINK AND SOMERSET HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE.

Help and Care, as Host to the Somerset LINK has the responsibility of ensuring that the people of Somerset have a voice in the shaping of their LINK and the methods by which it will work. The LINK presents opportunities for different ways of engaging with people and communities and the potential for developing new and innovative ways of working with partners.

We are therefore seeking views on options for working arrangements between the LINK and the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC). Our findings will be presented to Somerset Council for consideration in February 2009. If you have an interest in making comment on this, please see the website or contact us for further information.



Your voice on local health and social care

