



NEW STAFF JOIN THE LINK TEAM

We are delighted to announce the appointment of two new staff members to the LINK Support Team who start with us on 8 December 08, they are :

Marian Courtney – Bedfordshire LINK Support Officer
Nikki Dalrymple – Bedfordshire LINK Marketing and Membership Administrator

Both staff will bring with them skills in outreach, facilitation and marketing that will enhance the work of the Bedfordshire LINK.

PROGRESS WITH ELECTION TO THE LINK BOARD

We are receiving applications back for the Board. The deadline for applications is the 28 November.

Although there has been good interest from groups/organisations in the LINK, not many community groups have expressed an interest in joining the Board. We particularly need community groups from **South Bedfordshire** to consider this role.

If you know of any group that may be interested in serving on the Board from South Bedfordshire, please advise the LINK Support Team at Voluntary Action Luton.

HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE ISSUE LOG

Issues currently logged with the Host organisation :-

- Mount Vernon Cancer Network – the future of services for cancer patients
- Community Nursing – South Bedfordshire
- Autism in Adults – provision for Bedfordshire

For more information about this Bulletin or to include an item in the Bulletin, please contact Charlotte Bonser, Bedfordshire LINK Support Team Lead at Voluntary Action Luton.

Tel: 01582 733418 E-mail: charlotte.bonser@valuton.org.uk or beds-link@valuton.org.uk

- Carers of adults with complex health needs, particularly young people who have moved from children's services to adult services in Bedfordshire

PLEASE CONTINUE TO LET US KNOW ABOUT ANY HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE ISSUES/TRENDS THAT CONCERN YOU.

This information will be passed to the LINK Board to consider when producing the Bedfordshire LINK work programme.

WELL-BEING FESTIVAL – 5 November 08

The Bedfordshire LINK Host organisation and interim LINK members staffed a stall at the recent **Well-Being Festival, organised by the Beds & Luton Partnership Trust, held at the Bedford Corn Exchange.**

The event was beautifully opened by the classical singer Laurence Robinson www.laurencerobinson.com



There were various stalls from across the mental health, social care and community care spectrum of organisations.

Below are details of a few contacts we made :



The Understanding Us project launched on the 1st September and is being hosted by Advocacy Alliance, Bedford. The project is a social inclusion project which aims for people who use services to be given a voice and be heard by the decision



makers so that improvements can be made within those services. Understanding Us aims for users of services to be involved in the planning, delivery and evaluation of the services they receive. The project has been developed by Advocacy Alliance in partnership with the three commissioning areas of Supporting People, Domestic Abuse and Substance Misuse. The project works with people who may be vulnerable, at risk of social exclusion or substance abuse, or people who have experienced Domestic Abuse. Since the 1st September, Barnaby (Manager) and Laura (Development Worker) have met with the lead commissioners from the three areas to learn more about the services and to discuss ways of involving service users. Barnaby and Laura are currently visiting many services in the area and getting involved in existing forums and service user groups to promote the project and establish links. The Understanding Us reference group has had one meeting on 20th August and hopes to hold the next meeting in the near future.

If you would like to become a member of Understanding Us or if you would like more information, please contact **Barnaby or Laura on 01234 328020 or email: enquiries@understandingus.co.uk**

DO YOU HAVE AN IDEA IN MIND FOR AN ACTIVITY OR PROJECT ?

Bedford Museum and the Cecil Higgins Art Gallery want to help communities and groups explore and be inspired by their heritage through working together.

A team of people at the Art Gallery and Museum will work with you to expand your project and celebrate your community. Everyone's heritage is important wherever you come from. This is your chance to participate, especially if you have never taken part in a project in your community or with a museum before. **Contact: Carmela Semeraro, Community Historian and Vina Harvey, Audience Development Officer on 01234 217418 or email: educationservice@bedford.gov.uk**

Mid Bedfordshire Access Group is in the early stages of planning an event in the New Year raising awareness of Hidden Disabilities, e.g. MS, HIV, Cancer, Diabetes. If you or your group/organisation would like to get involved in organising the event, then please contact :

Roy Storey, Chair, Mid Bedfordshire Access Group – e.mail roy.accessgroupmb&btopenworld.com or tel : Roy on 01525 718524

The National Council for Palliative Care is the national umbrella organisation, promoting good palliative and end of life care for all who need it. We are currently running a user involvement project to ensure that the expertise and experience of patients and carers forms part of all our activities. Further information can be located on www.ncpc.org.uk/users. We will be publishing guidance about user involvement in palliative and end of life care in the next few months.

PCT and SHA End of Life Care Leads You may be aware that the Darzi Next Stage Review charged all SHAs and PCTs with creating a vision and pathway for end of life care. We don't have the contact name of the end of life care contact in your PCT but recommend that you contact your PCT in relation to this. Your local Cancer Network may be able to provide this.

Cancer networks are local groups of patient and carers who have experience of cancer. NCPCC works across all conditions and care settings, but the cancer networks provide specific knowledge and experience. Anglia Cancer Network: Nurse Director: Antonia Dawson: tonia.dawson@suffolkpct.nhs.uk