

Who we are

Eric Chambers

Core Group member

I am Eric Chambers and I have been physically disabled for some 12 years now and I have had to use a wheelchair for around 8 years. I have found that there are numerous disability action groups for each disablement and with the assistance of some of them I have managed to improve my lifestyle over the years. I believe that with the help of Middlesbrough LINK bringing these groups together will improve the lives of many people throughout the town.

Christine Brown

Core Group member

I work for Tees Valley Care Alliance as a Social Care Coordinator. My back ground is general nursing and I have worked for a number of years in training and development in the social care sector.

In my current position I am involved with employer engagement - supporting the contracts which the alliance has with the sector skills council (Skills for Care). I am also involved in the development and delivery of training programmes which the alliance is now able to deliver

Membership

Middlesbrough LINK now has around 300 members. The LINK aims to reach all areas of the community.

In order for us to ensure that we are doing this we have put together a map of our members. From this we will be able to see which areas of Middlesbrough we need to involve more along with being able to see our membership grow.



Facebook and Twitter



Middlesbrough LINK now has a Facebook and Twitter page. Get instant updates on issues and events and join us by logging on to www.facebook.com and searching for Middlesbrough LINK or www.twitter.com/borolink.

They have a growing membership and are some of the many ways in which Middlesbrough LINK are trying to reach everyone in the community.



Correction:

The frequency for Community Voice FM was not included in the article 'Community takes to the air'.

It is 104.5fm

Middlesbrough LINK

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Middlesbrough

LINK News

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MAKE IT HAPPEN!

Issue 2 • November 2009

Where we are now

Since the last newsletter in August, Middlesbrough LINK has come along a great deal. We have completed our first project on uses and abuses of Blue Badges and disabled car parking spaces. The report is due to be launched in November and the summary and recommendations from the report are in this issue of Middlesbrough LINK News. Also an event will take place on 3rd December 2009 from 10am-1pm at the Trinity Centre in North Ormesby.

We have started to tackle more issues and begin working on our next projects. We are looking into:

- Disability training for health and social care workers in dementia services
- Access to services for those who are deaf or visually impaired
- Alcohol services for young people
- Falls in hospitals and care homes
- Personalisation agenda.



If any of these areas are of interest to you or you know of any other work around these areas that is taking place then please get in touch and join our working groups.

Freephone: 0800 141 2642

Landline: 01642 230 434

Text Phone: 0752 523 7741

Email us on: enquiries@middlesbroughlink.org.uk

Blue Badge Event

Thursday 3rd December from 10am- 1pm

at The Trinity Centre in North Ormesby

Come along and find out the results of our investigation

plus discussions with Middlesbrough Council,

James Cook University Hospital and

NHS Middlesbrough at our Blue Badge Event.

Please contact Middlesbrough LINK if you would like to attend the event.

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Middlesbrough LINK Health and Social Care Event - Raising awareness on accessing services

On the 24th September 2009 we held an event at the Trinity Centre in North Ormesby to raise awareness of how health and social care services work and how people can access the services.

Over 30 people attended the event. There were four organisations, along with LINK, that had a stall at the event who were The Junction, The Stroke Association, Tees Valley Social Care Alliance and Independent Living for Older People (ILOP).

The morning began with an introduction from our Chair, Jenny Shepherd, who explained what a LINK is, what issues that the LINK is looking into and what the purpose of the day was. People also had an opportunity to join our working groups.

Sarah Scott from NHS Middlesbrough came to

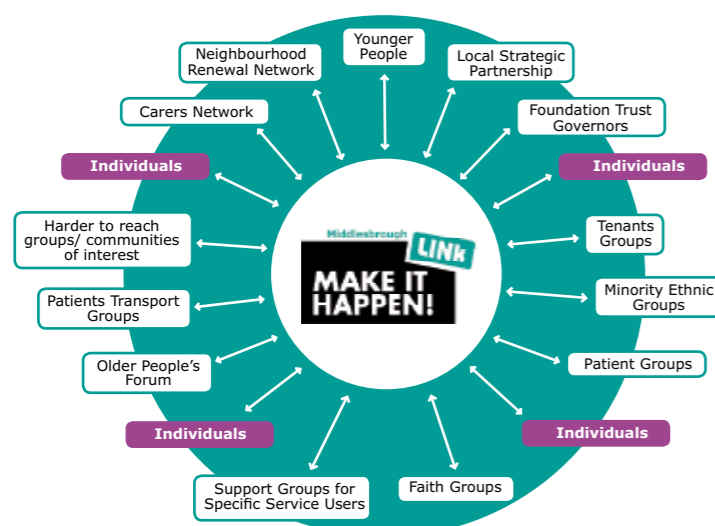
speak about the NHS structure and World Class Commissioning, which is the National framework designed to enable Primary Care Trusts to develop their commissioning skills. Sarah spoke about the structure of the NHS, priorities and targets of NHS Middlesbrough and World Class Commissions competencies.

Simon Wall from Middlesbrough Council came to speak about social care structures. Simon spoke about how to access social care services and what to expect when you access them along with the different types of care.

Everyone who came on the day said that they really enjoyed it and found that the talks from NHS Middlesbrough and Middlesbrough Council were of great interest.



All pictures are of the the Health and Social Care Event



Blue Badge Project Update

As mentioned in issue 1 of Middlesbrough LINK news, the LINK were told of problems with the Blue Badge Scheme in the town and investigated by asking Middlesbrough Council for information on its use and enforcement.

We also asked for information on how the scheme worked in Health services (GP's, Hospitals) and at supermarkets. We distributed questionnaires throughout GP surgeries, The James Cook University Hospital, Life Store and many other places around the town to understand not only the views of those who run the scheme but also those who use it.

We found that just under 6000 badges were in use in Middlesbrough in 2008. Whilst enforcement is undertaken, badge holders feel that there continues to be significant abuse. They want better monitoring and enforcement especially at James Cook University Hospital and at supermarkets. GP practices were also identified as places where access for Blue Badge holders was poor. Of the 98 questionnaires returned only 7.2% reported they were aware of the Department for Transport strategy for improvement of the Blue Badge Scheme.

Recommendations

- The PCT should make a greater effort to ensure that GP practices enable disabled patients have as much access to medical services as non-disabled people and should actively seek to improve the disabled parking facilities at their own offices and at primary health care facilities, particularly at the Cleveland Centre in the Mall.
- Middlesbrough Council should ensure that disabled users can access its own offices
- South Tees NHS Foundation Trust should revise their procedure and ensure better monitoring of the blue badge usage.
- South Tees NHS Foundation Trust should not institute Red Zones unless more disabled bays are provided and dropping off places are available. Consideration should be made for disabled people who are not accompanied to hospital and appropriate disabled bays provided.
- The LINK to publicise the problems highlighted in accessing supermarkets, the lack of monitoring of disabled bays and the lack of response to complaints.