

## New chair and vice chair

Following the AGM in May Middlesbrough LINK now have a new Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer. We would like to welcome them into post and wish them success for the upcoming year.

### Catherine Haigh Chair

This is Middlesbrough LINK's third year and time to build on our successes to date. As newly elected Chair I have been very busy catching up with what has gone before and what we must achieve in the future.



The prime focus of Middlesbrough LINK is to represent the voices of the people of Middlesbrough to ensure that they receive the health and social care services they need. We will continue to develop our programme of consultation events and working groups, aiming to involve all communities and all ages.

The LINK has built excellent relationships with Middlesbrough Council and local NHS Trusts in order to best represent the public. This year I look forward to further developing our partnership working with third sector and voluntary organisations. We can achieve far more than we can alone if we work together on issues important to the public.

I am looking forward to working with the people of Middlesbrough, the LINK core group, the host team and our partners in order to ensure Middlesbrough LINK's success and the improvement of local health and social care services.



### Carl Cummings Vice Chair

I am an investor in health and social care, my main area of interest is in the Learning Disabilities sector. I feel

we need to make the right changes to support people in the community the best way I can, that is how I became part of Middlesbrough LINKs. I am happy to be part of a link that take real pleasure of making the right changes and have the communities' best interests at heart.

I have recently founded Carers' Corner™; it began as a common interest, a website made by carers for carers. It is there to serve as a social link network for various care organisations across the health and social care spectrum.

I have just been given the role of vice chair at Middlesbrough LINK which I am happy to be involved in such a project to promote "supporting the community needs". I will bring my skills and knowledge to support the rest of the members of Middlesbrough LINK.

## Is it easy to get to see your doctor if you are profoundly deaf?

Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland LINKs were asked to look into the problems of people who are deaf in getting health services. From our investigation so far we have discovered that the answer to the question is that it is not as easy as for hearing people.

Deaf people have no equivalent to NHS direct and so have to use the primary health services more. The LINK has heard that some health service practitioners still think they can use relatives to interpret (hearing people would not expect to learn about their medical conditions through a relative).

There is progress – NHS Middlesbrough is working with the deaf people to ensure that NHS Middlesbrough and NHS Redcar and Cleveland have commissioned Deaf Awareness Training for NHS staff and funded 500 free annual memberships from the RNID for use across South of Tees.

If you would like to join us in our investigation into how people who are deaf access services please contact the office on 01642 230434 or text 0752 523 7741.

Alternatively if you or someone you know has sight difficulties and have had problems with getting services needed because of this please also get in touch as the LINKs would like to explore this area as well.

## Falls

Did You Know?

- Falls represent over half of hospital admissions for accidental injury?
- Half of those with hip fractures never regain their former level of function and one in five dies within three months. (Help the Aged 2005)



**Have you fallen in the last year? Did you feel less confident after a fall? Are you more careful walking? Are you worried about falling again?**

Middlesbrough LINK's working group is finding out which people are most at risk and what action is being taken to prevent falls or reduce their affect. We will let you know all our findings in the autumn 2010 newsletter but if you would like to join us please call the LINK office on 01642 230434.

**Are older people more at risk of falling?**

Some risk factors affect people of all ages – for example slippery floors, icy pavements, or poor lighting. There is more concern about older people because the consequences of a fall tend to be more serious. Also older people are more likely to have balance problems because of diseases such as arthritis, stroke or Parkinson's disease. They could also have problems with their sight or have brittle bones. Older people also tend to take more prescribed medication and research has shown that older people taking 4 or more medication are at increased risk of falls. (South Tees Falls Service)

**What has been the effect of this year's winter weather?**

Middlesbrough LINK's falls group will be finding out. What has been the consequence of the ice and snow on the number of falls? How has the NHS coped? What lessons can we learn?

Join the working group and help us find the answers.

# Middlesbrough LINK AGM Summary

**Middlesbrough LINK held its AGM on the 13th May at the Trinity Centre in North Ormesby. The AGM was publicised throughout various newsletters and networks in Middlesbrough and it was a great success with over 70 people attending. We even had a few people attend who had seen it on Facebook.**



The evening began with a presentation from Jenny Shepherd which showed the LINKs achievements over the last year. We then had a presentation from Anne Frizell on the proposed changes to the LINKs governing document, all of which were agreed by the LINK members.

Then it was time for the LINK members to celebrate the LINKs achievements. Various organisations brought along information to share including NHS

Tees, Independent Complaints Advocacy Services (ICAS), Middlesbrough and Stockton Minds Diverse Minds Project and the Retired and Senior Volunteers Programme (RSVP).

There was also a magician who kept all of the children and adults entertained with some amazing tricks. There was a chance to chill and relax with ladies doing head and hand massages and a chance to be creative and have a henna tattoo or try on some of the beautiful Sari's.

One of the most popular things at the event was NHS Tees carrying out blood pressure checks. Many people have their blood pressures checked and one lady discovered she had high blood pressure and had no previous symptoms. She has since been in contact to say how grateful she was for us inviting NHS Tees along to do this as she may



never have known she had high blood pressure and it could have had serious consequences.

The AGM was a great success and we look forward to the next year ahead. We are also in the process of planning our next two events which are on the 29th of July at 2pm at Middlesbrough Teaching and Learning Centre (MTLC) which is looking into South Tees Trust and the 16th of September which is looking into Personalisation. Please contact the office for more details.



# Dates for your diary

## Middlesbrough LINK Open Event Meeting

**Thursday July 29 2010**

Middlesbrough Teaching & Learning  
Centre 2-4pm

**Open Event – Discussing South Tees Trust**

### Topics

**Cancelled operations**

**Discharge procedure**

**Falls in hospitals**

If you would like to attend this event please fill  
out the application slip below  
and return it to  
Middlesbrough LINK  
302/3 Vanguard Suite, Broadcasting House,  
Newport Road, Middlesbrough TS1 5JA  
For further information please telephone  
Freephone number 0800 141 2642

Name

Address

Post code

Tel.

Email address

## Middlesbrough LINK Coffee Mornings

**Wednesday 21st July from  
1pm - 3pm**

Park End Community Centre  
Overdale Road  
Park End  
Middlesbrough  
TS3 7EA

**Monday 9th August 10am -  
12pm**

Breckon Hill Community Centre  
Breckon Hill Road  
Middlesbrough  
TS4 2DS

If you would like to attend any of  
the coffee mornings then please  
contact us on:

Freephone  
0800 141 2642  
Textphone  
0752 523 7741

Email –  
enquiries@middlesbroughlink.org.uk



## Middlesbrough LINK

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