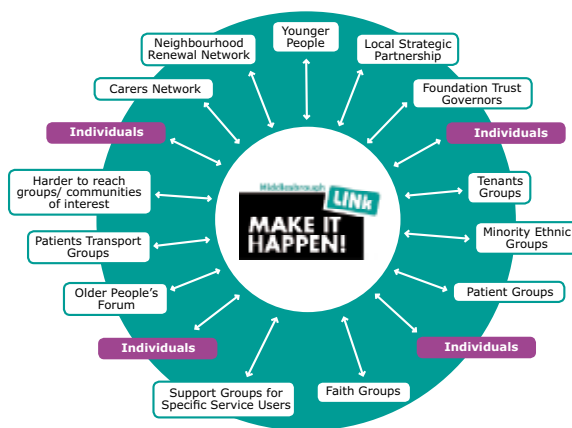


Changes to the LINK Governing Documents

On the 11th and 26th January 2010 Middlesbrough LINKs Core Group met to discuss where they want the Core Group to be in the future. From the sessions a number of changes to the

- To take a strategic overview of the work plan and developments in health and social care to ensure there are no gaps
- Developing the future direction and plans
- To communicate effectively between groups
- Authorise any enter and view activities in line with guidance from the host organisation



Membership of the Core Group:

12 members, currently 15 (10 organisations and 5 individuals) meeting every other month (individuals and / or those representing Voluntary and Community Groups operating within Middlesbrough) nominated at least 10 working days before the meeting by Voluntary and Community Groups operating within Middlesbrough and who are either working for or volunteering with those groups.

Frequency of meetings:

Meetings of the LINK Core Group will normally be held bi-monthly with the provision for an extra meeting in the alternative month as necessary. This arrangement will be reviewed in six months (November 2010)

Governing Document were suggested.

Function of the Core Group:

- Promoting the work of Middlesbrough LINK at every opportunity
- The operational management and governance of the LINK
- To keep a strategic overview of the work streams and agree any proposals for projects
- To take ultimate responsibility for the finances and budgets of the LINK, signing off any finances

CONTENTS

About ICAS
- Page 2

It's election time
- Page 3

Blue Badge summary
- Pages 4 - 5

Care Quality Commission
- Page 6

Have you seen this somewhere before?
- Page 7

Diary dates
- Page 8



About ICAS

The National Health Service (NHS) works hard to treat everyone properly and promptly and most people using the health service are happy with their treatment. But sometimes things can go wrong.

If you are unhappy with the service you or others have received from a hospital, doctor, dentist, local surgery or any other NHS service, you can complain about it.

You have a right to have your concerns investigated and to receive a full reply.

A complaint can be about any aspect of a NHS funded treatment or care. Typically, this can involve:

- Access to medication
- Access to treatment
- Attitude of NHS staff
- Poor communication
- Waiting times
- Lack of information
- Failure to diagnose a condition

What is ICAS?

ICAS stands for the Independent

Complaints Advocacy Service. It is a free and confidential service that is independent of the NHS and tailored to individual client need.

Patients who want and are able to raise their concerns are empowered to do so. Patients with more complex needs have access to specialist advocates who can support them through the official complaints process.

How can ICAS help you?

An experienced worker, known as an Advocate, can

- help you to write letters to the right people
- prepare you for and go to meetings with you
- help you explore your options at every stage of the complaint
- answer questions to help you make decisions

If you would like the support of an ICAS advocate, please contact us on

Telephone 0300 456 8348



It's Election Time!



Do you want to be more involved in your LINK?

Why not join the Core Group?

On 13th May 2010 the Core Group will stand for election. All LINK members have the opportunity to put themselves forward as a nominee.

What are the responsibilities of being a Core Group member?

- Promote the work of Middlesbrough LINK at every opportunity
- The operational management and governance of Middlesbrough LINK
- To keep a strategic overview of the work streams and agree any proposals for projects
- To take ultimate responsibility for the finances and budgets of the LINK, signing off any finances
- To take a strategic overview of the work plan and developments in health and social care to ensure there are no gaps
- Developing the future direction and plans
- To communicate effectively between groups
- Authorise any enter and view activities in line with guidance from the Host organisation

The Core Group is made up of 12 people which is a mixture of organisations and individual members and they meet every other month. The alternate month will be a topic based event in which different organisations will have the opportunity to come and speak to the LINK on specific issues.

If you are interested in joining the Core Group then please contact the Middlesbrough LINK office for a nomination form which must be returned by 7th May.



Who we are

Kevin McConnell

Core Group Member

I work for the Hanover Housing Association which involves a variety of services to suit the needs of different support living requirements for retirement living. My client's ages range from 60 to 97, most are fit and active, but as an organisation we try to ensure that everyone is encouraged to be active and get involved. I am currently in my second year of a degree with the University of Plymouth in Housing with Support.

Catherine Haigh

Core Group Member

My name is Catherine Haigh and I have used mental health services for many years. Getting involved in improving services for people with mental health problems has helped my recovery and has made a difference for myself and other people. I attend a number of action groups for people with mental health problems and I am a public governor for Tees, Esk & Wear Valleys NHS Trust. I am a member of the LINK because I believe it can help to bring people and groups together so that their voices are heard and listened to by health and social care organisations.



Middlesbrough LINK Blue

'The suggestion that I could use my badge at my GP's surgery is a joke – cannot get anywhere near the doctors'

'I do not drive. I use my blue badge when my daughter or friend takes me out. I am very pleased and grateful for my Blue Badge'

'I have complained to security staff at James Cook about inappropriate blue badge parking – they seem powerless to do anything saying it is a matter for the police'

'The badge should have photo on the front and back and the design should be changed every 4 years'

'Our surgery has three disabled spaces regularly used by nursery attendees dropping off children'

On the 3rd December 2009 Middlesbrough LINK hosted an event to launch their findings from the LINKs investigation into the uses and abuses of Blue Badges in Middlesbrough.

The LINK invited key people from Middlesbrough Council, NHS Tees and South Tees NHS Foundation Trust to come and speak about their response to the recommendations that the LINK included in their report. Various other organisations were also invited to the event and those who attended and brought along information were The Parkinson's Society, Independent Complaints Advocacy Service (ICAS), Changing Places and Independent Living for Older People (ILOP).

Jenny Shepherd (Middlesbrough LINK Chair) talked about Middlesbrough LINKs investigation and its findings. Jenny explained that the LINK had put together a questionnaire and distributed it various locations around the town. Jenny then went on to

discuss some of the results of the questionnaire.

Michele Fearon was first up to give the response from NHS Tees. Michele stated that she had contacted all GP practices and asked them to publicise the need not to abuse disabled spaces. She provided the LINK with the amount of disabled spaces and took on board the LINKs concern that there weren't enough spaces. Michele also suggested a good way forward was to ask GP practices to flag up electronically those people who have Blue Badges so that receptionists and health professional can make sure that they are able to easily access practice buildings.

Paul Birch from South Tees NHS Foundation trust spoke next about disabled parking at James Cook University Hospital. Paul told us that it is a legal requirement for South Tees NHS Foundation Trust to have 6% of parking spaces to be disabled spaces and they have 12%. He informed us that there has been a recent increase of disabled bays outside outpatients from 4



Badge Event Summary

to 20+ in recognition of the number of people with Blue Badges who attend outpatients. Paul discussed the red zone which is now in place and is aware that it is being abused. In time a fixed penalty fine will be introduced but discretion will be used and consideration of circumstances will be taken into account. Finally Paul asked if the LINK could make people aware that parking outside the Spinal Injuries Unit is for patients of that unit only.

Steve Webster from Parking Solutions responded on behalf of Middlesbrough Council. Steve began by stating that when enforcement is undertaken requests are made to see badges to check that the right person is using it. Enforcement officers make no judgement on whether people are eligible. He went on to explain that just under 6000 Blue Badges are in use in Middlesbrough but there are 30,000 in the Tees Authorities and people from other boroughs use badges in the town.

Steve explained that Blue Badge misuse came into

three different categories which were use by people without badges, use by people other than the badge holder and badge holders not using badges in valid areas. He also informed the group that all details of spaces are on the Middlesbrough Council website. Steve wanted to point out that Middlesbrough Council has no jurisdiction in supermarkets but understands there have been some complaints.

Finally Steve acknowledged that there were problems for Blue Badge holders to find a space close to their GP surgery and said that the Council would like to work with NHS Middlesbrough to see if spaces could be found to designate for Blue Badge holders near GP practices.

Everyone who attended said that they found the day very useful and informative. If you would like a copy of Middlesbrough LINKs Blue Badge Report then please contact the LINK office and we would be happy to send you a copy.

'In James Cook's car parks, people park anywhere as blue badge holders have to take the badge with the ticket to get it stamped. I seldom manage to get in a bay'

'The use of the blue badge has enabled access, mainly by wheelchair, to many things that would not otherwise have been possible'

'I had problems obtaining the blue badge – the original and renewals were collected by my wife/ daughter as there are no disabled parking areas at Middlesbrough House'

'Please help to make conditions better for the disabled and also push for the restoration of blue badge parking status at Middlesbrough Cleveland Centre'

'I complained about the lack of spaces at Hemlington Initiative Centre and they kindly had 7 more disabled bays built'



Care Quality Commission (CQC) is the independent regulator of health care and adult social care services in England. We also protect the interests of people whose rights are restricted under the Mental Health Act.

Whether services are provided by the NHS, local authorities or by private or voluntary organisations, we make sure that people get better care by:

- Driving improvement across health and adult social care
- Putting people first and championing their rights
- Acting swiftly to remedy bad practice
- Gathering and using knowledge and expertise and working with others.

People who use health and social care services are at the heart of our work so we want to make sure that their voices are heard.

From April 2010 new essential standards of quality and safety are being introduced gradually across all health and adult social care services in England.

New Powers: New Focus

- All providers of health and adult social care are required to register with us
- There will be a single way of judging quality across Adult Social Care, the NHS and Independent Health Care

- People can expect services to meet essential standards
- We have been given stronger enforcement powers

The Health and Social Care Act 2008 says that we must listen to and work with LINKs.

We promise to:

- Give more weight to peoples views and experiences of care
- Try to make sure people are involved in decisions about their own care
- Find new ways of involving people in our work, including governance and inspection

For more information go to www.cqc.org.uk

How CQC will go about their work



MAKE IT HAPPEN!

Have you seen this somewhere before?

Since the last newsletter Middlesbrough LINK has carried out various publicity campaigns to raise awareness.

The first campaign was with Google where Middlesbrough LINK was a sponsored link. Every time anyone typed in Middlesbrough Health Care or Middlesbrough Social Care the Middlesbrough LINK website was highlighted at the side as being a recommended link. This generated 77 new visitors to the website.

Over November and December Middlesbrough LINK had an exciting bus campaign which saw 15 buses around the town advertising the LINK. In conjunction with that there were also posters in Middlesbrough Train Station. This also generated a lot of awareness.

The LINK are currently having a series of posters printed to raise awareness. These will be distributed around the town in various locations so watch out for those too!

If you would like a copy of one of the posters to display then please contact the LINK office.



You & your community

Let your voice be heard. Be part of the Middlesbrough LINK

Middlesbrough Local Involvement Network (LINK) is a network of local people, organisations and groups who want to improve the quality of local health and social care.

Write to us at:
 FREEPOST
 Middlesbrough LINK
 Call us on:
 Freephone: 0800 141 2642
 Textphone: 0752 523 7741
 www.middlesbroughlink.org.uk

MAKE IT HAPPEN!

Health and Social Care

Be part of the LINK

MAKE IT HAPPEN!

We're keen to know what matters to people in our community, about the quality of local health and social care, so that together we can act on concerns, ideas or suggestions

If you'd like your voice to be heard, get in touch and get involved!

Write to us at:
 FREEPOST
 Middlesbrough LINK
 Call us on:
 Freephone: 0800 141 2642
 Textphone: 0752 523 7741

Middlesbrough LINK
 302/3 Vanguard Suite
 Broadmead House, Heppert Road
 Middlesbrough, TS1 3JA
 Tel: 01462 226244
 Email: enquiries@middlesbroughlink.org.uk
 www.middlesbroughlink.org.uk

Let your voice be heard

MAKE IT HAPPEN!

Middlesbrough Local Involvement Network (LINK) is a network of local people, organisations and groups who want to strengthen the quality of local health and social care.

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MAKE IT HAPPEN!

Dates for your diary

Middlesbrough LINK AGM

Trinity Centre,
North Ormesby

13th May 2010

5.30pm – 6pm Buffet

6pm- 8pm Elections
and Workshops

If you would like to
attend the event then
please contact the LINK
office on:

Freephone:
0800 141 2642

Textphone:
0752 523 7741

Email: [enquiries@
middlesbroughlink.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@middlesbroughlink.org.uk)

Middlesbrough LINK – Core Group Meeting Dates 2010

Date	Day	Time
March 11th	Thursday	2pm
April 13th	Tuesday	2pm
May 13th	Thursday	5.30pm - 8pm AGM
June 8th	Tuesday	2pm

Middlesbrough LINK Coffee Mornings

Monday 8th March
1pm – 3pm

Where at: Thorntree
Community Centre
Birkhall Road
Middlesbrough
TS3 9JW

Wednesday 24th
March 12pm – 2pm

Breckon Hill Community
Centre
Breckon Hill Road
Middlesbrough
TS4 2DS

Tuesday 27th April
10am -12pm

Marton Community
Centre
(Cypress Road
Community Centre)
Marton
Middlesbrough

Wednesday 5th May
10am – 12pm

Brambles Farm
Community Centre
Marshall Avenue
Brambles Farm
Middlesbrough
TS3 9AY

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](mailto:enquiries@middlesbroughlink.org.uk)

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.

Middlesbrough LINK

302/3 Vanguard Suite
Broadcasting House, Newport Road
Middlesbrough, TS1 5JA
Tel: 01642 230434

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