

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Editors letter	2
LINK visits	2
Member Development Day	3
Meet a LINK member	4
Swine Flu	4
St Thomas's engagement event	5
Twitter makeover	5
LINK events	6
New Carers Services	7
We respond to Stockport Express article	7
Binge Drinking	8
LINK Work Programmes	9
The Digital Switchover	10
Enter & View	10
Upcoming Events	11
Contact Us	12



Greater Manchester LINKs Meet-up

Local Involvement Networks (LINKs) from the Greater Manchester area met up for a Member Development Day on 23rd July. LINK members from Stockport, Oldham, Rochdale, Bolton, Bury and Tameside were invited to take part in a networking event to identify training & development opportunities for the wider LINK.

The day was facilitated by Cath Broderick, who has a background in working in the NHS and in community development. The event was an opportunity for LINK members to meet their counterparts from other boroughs and share ideas about being part of a LINK.

(continued on page 3)

Letter from the editor



Joyce Drummond
Editor and lead on
Publicity & Promotion
Subgroup

Hello here we are again, our August issue of LINK News, the Newsletter for Stockport LINK (Local Involvement Network).

I am Joyce Drummond, a core group member and the lead of the Publicity and Promotion subgroup.

Well, there has been a lot going on.

I have been to two fun days the first at Brinnington and second at Adswold School. We spoke to lots of people and now many more people are aware of the LINK. You can read more about what we were up to on page 6.

Our main story is that members from the LINK went to Ardwick to meet up with other LINK groups in our Member Development Day on the 23rd July.

We've been very busy here at the LINK, visiting places to let them know about the LINK and attending events on behalf of the wider community. On page 5 we have LINK member Gerry Wright's report on our visit to the St Thomas engagement event.

We helped Age Concern host a Listening Event about Age Discrimination (page 6), went to Stockport People's Panel where the subject was alcohol misuse in Stockport (page 10) and we've been looking into press reports on lack of communication in Stepping Hill Hospital (page 7).

We've also got articles about our most recent Work Programmes (page 9), a guide to the digital switchover (page 10) and how to avoid Swine Flu (page 4).

And there is even more! Have a look through for our Carers services article, our member profile on tireless volunteer David and much more!

As you can see, we've been very busy at the LINK recently and we hope we'll get even busier! Please do get in contact if you would like a LINK member to visit your group or if you'd like more details about the LINK on **0161 477 8479**.

Joyce Drummond
Editor and lead on Publicity
& Promotion Sub-group

Stockport LINK is getting out and about

On the 25th June our LINK Chair, John Leach and LINK Development Officer, Kirsty Bagnall visited the Evergreens Over 50's Group in Adswold.

The visit was very successful and the LINK representatives were made to feel very welcome by the group, who listened to a presentation given by John.

The LINK are continuing to visit groups around the Stockport area and if you'd like a member to come and talk to your group please call the LINK Support Office on **0161 477 8479**.



Member Development day a success

(continued from front page)

There were many discussions and activities during the day which encompassed a variety of subjects. The first session was on LINK members' roles & contributing to the LINK asking "How was it for you?".



The second session focussed on increasing the LINKs influence in the community.

This included addressing commissioning and the impact the LINK has influencing health and social care & working with communities.

The final subject of the day asked LINK members what they felt had been successful so far and asked for ideas on progressing LINKs further.



After lunch, the discussion moved onto what makes an effective LINK

member. Members worked on personal skills questionnaires and discussed how they like to develop. Members also looked at future needs for support as individuals & group members.

The event was a huge success, LINK members and support teams were able to discuss the future of LINKs and ways of moving the organisations forward. Members felt that the best part about the entire event was getting to meet and network with other LINK members to share experiences and thoughts. Everybody who attended felt that they learnt a lot and are looking forward to putting what they have learnt into practice.



Member Profile: David Atkinson

David Atkinson is a volunteer at the Stockport LINK Support Office. He is also a Core Group member and trained to participate in *Enter & Viewing*.



I am a family man, married to Lynn with two sons and four granddaughters. I spent 40 years in industry and retired as divisional managing director of supplier of product for the growth and care of grass in sport and recreation.

I joined the Stockport LINK as a volunteer to help in the LINK Support Office during the initial setting up of the LINK, going to meetings with various organisations with the Development Officer to help in the publicity and awareness of the LINK and its aims. During this process as a lifelong citizen of Stockport I felt I could further help the people of Stockport by using what experience I had in business.

I became a member of the Core Group and an *Enter & View* representative for the LINK. I continue to work in the LINK Support Office and as a Link Core Group Member with the hope of improving the health and care in Stockport for everybody. Being a volunteer has so far been a positive experience.

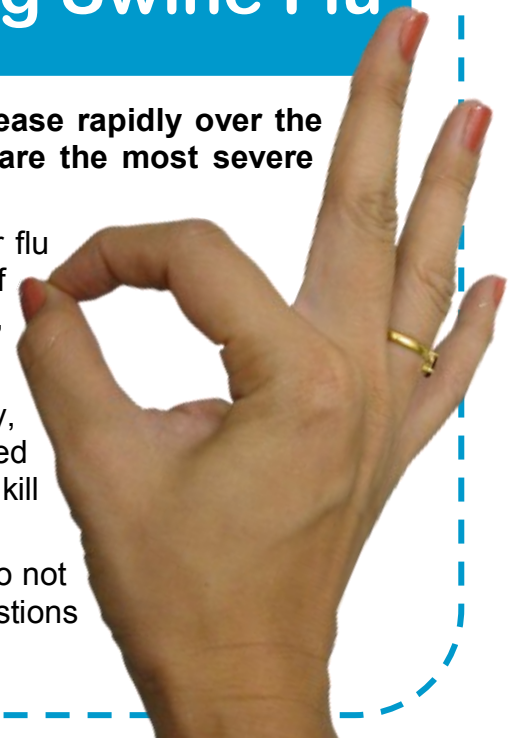
The LINKs guide to avoiding Swine Flu

The numbers affected by Swine Flu are expected to increase rapidly over the coming weeks, but much of what the media reports on are the most severe cases of swine flu.

The majority of people who have had it have had mild cold or flu like symptoms: sudden onset of fever, cough or shortness of breath, headache, sore throat, tiredness, aching muscles, chills, sneezing, runny nose or loss of appetite.

Remember: Catch it, Bin it, Kills it. Wash your hands regularly, catch any sneezes or coughs in a tissue, dispose of used tissues quickly and safely in the bin and wash your hands to kill the germs every time.

If you think you have the flu, stay at home and call your GP. Do not go into the GPs surgery. For other general, non clinical questions Stockport has a general line **0161 426 5678**.



Developing the Site of St Thomas's Community Hospital

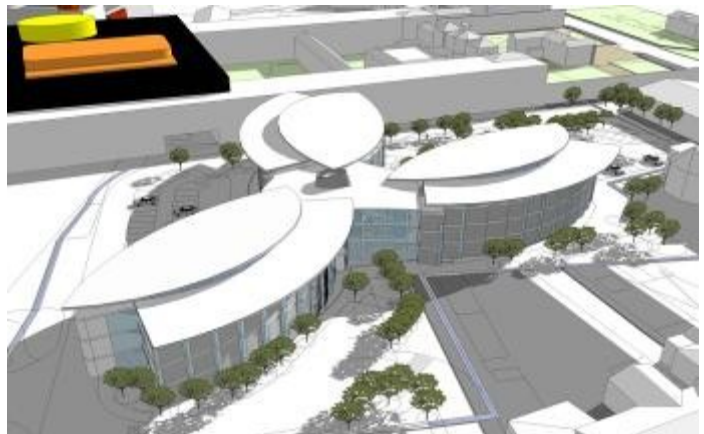
Members of the LINK were invited to an event held at Walthew House on the 18th May for members of the public to incorporate their views into the development of the site of St Thomas's Community Hospital as part of their Equality Impact Assessment.

The meeting was opened by Ray Goodier, Project Director, who outlined some specifications of the building. Its shape in plan will be similar to a ship's three bladed propeller with a centre boss with the three blades radiating out. The building will be three storeys high and be built out of glass, steel and concrete. Its specifications will comply with current regulations to include requirements for people with disabilities.

There is a proposed 2-year completion date for the building.

The building is to have many uses. It will act as an Accident and Emergency looking after minor injuries. It will also house other facilities such as ambulance, police, college training, leisure (ie. gym, restaurant). An interesting item was that it will not have any beds.

Helen Bingley from the University of Lancashire hosted the rest of the meeting. She outlined how attendees would be divided into groups which would be headed by facilitators. The groups were given the six equality strands of Race, Gender, Religion & Belief, Disability, Sexual Orientation and Age to discuss.



Participants worked in groups on these issues, their views and outcomes were collated to form a final equality impact assessment.

A LINK report has been published on this event and will be available on our website.

| Gerry Wright

Stockport LINK twitter gets a makeover

Stockport LINK

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SK1 3AQ

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Fax: 0161 480 3735
Web: www.stockportlink.co.uk
links@pebbleenterprises.co.uk
or @StockportLINK on twitter

StockportLink

Brinnington Fun Day, St Thomas' Hospital, our Listening Event, heavy drinking & more all in LINK News - due out the beginning of August.

less than 20 seconds ago from web

Looking forward to our Listening Event with Age Concern Stockport. Friday 17th July, 11-2pm. [http://stockportlink.co.uk/...](http://stockportlink.co.uk/)

9:23 AM Jul 14th from web

The Stockport LINK twitter has had its first makeover.

The twitter, which was set up in March of this year, has had its first makeover since it was created. The twitter is frequently updated and you can contact the LINK via the site's @ function.

You can visit the twitter and start following us at www.twitter.com/StockportLINK

The LINK has some fun in the Sun in Adswood & Brinnington

Over the summer months, the LINK has been joining in at Fun Days over the Stockport area. In July, the LINK visited both Brinnington Fun Day and Adswood and Bridgehall's Fun Day.

During Brinnington Fun Day on 11th July, the LINK provided a parachute which was very kindly loaned to us by Stockport's Play Development Scheme. The parachute was brought out once an hour and was a huge success. Other stalls at the Fun Day included facepainting, temporary tattoos, a jumble sale, name the teddy, badgemaking, a policeman with a car, a fruit salad stall, a book sale, cake decoration, storytelling, grow your own vegetables and much more. Entertainment was provided by a wandering balloon artist and displays by several youth community groups from Brinnington including judo demonstrations and dancing. The day was a massive success and was a real credit to the Brinnington community.



On 18th July the LINK had a stall at the Fun Day in Adswood and Bridgehall. We spoke to many people about getting involved and gave out our branded notebooks as well as pens, pencils and balloons. Music was provided by a DJ and the brilliant Adswood and Brinnington Samba band. Entertainment in the main hall came in the form of a magician and local youth groups put on a dance show. The event was fun and busy despite the rain and the LINK is looking forward to their Christmas event.

The LINK Co-hosts Listening Event With Age Concern Stockport

On 17th July, the LINK and Age Concern Stockport held a joint Listening Event to hear the experiences of Stockport residents of age discrimination in health and social care.

The event started with a presentation on the new Equality Bill passing through Parliament and was followed by a discussion with attendees. The law already protects discrimination against gender, disability and race. The new bill will also include people of different ages, gay, lesbian and bisexual people, people who are transsexual, people of different religions or beliefs, pregnant women and mothers who have just had a baby.

The event gave local people the chance to share their experiences of age discrimination with Age Concern Stockport and The LINK. MP Ann Coffey will fully support the bill as it goes through parliament. Participants were also able to feed into Age Concern's 'Just Equal' national campaign which is working on developing the bill further to cover outlawing the national default retirement age and laying these regulations before the next election. The day went very well and the subject provoked much discussion. The LINK will be publishing a report on the event. If you would like a copy, please contact the LINK Office on **0161 477 8479**.



Two New Services for Carers

Do you regularly look after someone who could not manage on their own? Then you are a carer! Signpost Stockport for Carers have just announced two new free services that they can offer carers.



The first is called 'Back Me Up'. Do you find it difficult to keep your own medical appointments because you cannot leave the person you care for? If so, this could be just the service for you. For a few hours, a care professional could take over your caring role to enable you to keep your appointment and look after your own health. If the person you care for receives support through Social Services, then contact Adult Social Care on **0845 644 4314**. If not, contact Signpost on **0161 456 4276** and ask about '*Back Me Up*'.

Shelter The second new service, provided in partnership with Shelter, offers free, impartial, confidential legal advice surrounding community care issues. The service is currently available to people in receipt of means-tested benefits such as Income Support or Pension Credit. So, for example, if you are struggling to get the help you need as a carer or you are not happy with your Carers Assessment or you have issues about care being provided at home, in day care or in respite care then this could be just the thing for you. In addition to trained advisors, the service has access to solicitors with a track record in dealing with such matters. For more information, please contact Anne-Marie at Signpost on **0161 456 4276**.
| Helen Ogilvy

Lack of communication in local hospital

We would be negligent if we did not make some reference to the tragic circumstances surrounding the death of Mrs. Lesley Cahill in Stepping Hill Hospital due to what appears to be a lack of communication between care staff. Details of a hospital coroner's comments were published in the Stockport Express very recently.

The Stockport LINK have invited the Foundation Trust (Stepping Hill) to give us a statement about its actions to prevent such a situation with the serious adverse coroners comments being repeated.



Until the LINK receives a response from the Foundation Trust, we do not feel in a position to make any further comment.

We hope to make our observations and give the details of any response we get from the Foundation Trust in our next issue.

To read the article, go to: <http://tinyurl.com/kmcovs>

| Alan Watt

Alcohol Misuse a Problem in Stockport

On 21st May LINK members attended the Stockport People's Panel where the subject of Alcohol and Health in Stockport was discussed.

Simon Amour from Stockport NHS was the first speaker taking the panel through statistics relating to Alcohol consumption in the UK and in the Stockport area. He explained the effects on mental health and wellbeing due to excessive drinking. There was much discussion about binge drinking, its definitions and help available prompted by LINK members.

Simon then went on to discuss the Stockport Alcohol Misuse Strategy 2008-11 which focuses on protecting communities, health and well-being and young people & families. The Stockport Alcohol Strategy can be seen in place around the area in the "No Street Drinking" signs.

Simon then handed over to Richard Kubilius who discussed the issues and the measures in place to help people with alcohol problems and how the NHS can make referrals to help people reduce their drinking before it becomes a major health problem.

It's amazing how events unfold in differing ways. The other day I attended the above not knowing that I would find myself involved with the contents discussed.

About three days after the talk I was in a Manchester pub for the afternoon when I was approached by a man to watch his beer whilst he went to the toilet. On his return he started to talk to me about what was happening to him and how his life had disintegrated. His story was that for the past few years he was verbally and physically abused by and hurt by his father. He was trying to talk to his father but to no avail. The situation descended into an almighty row so he felt no alternative but to leave home.

He went to Manchester where he started to drink heavily. This went on for seven days, with no idea how to sort out his problems. He was sleeping rough around Manchester, had very little food and no hope.

After listening to his story it was quite clear he was asking for help. Not really sure of the procedure or services to help him, I said if you want to get your life back on track, contact your GP or one of the agencies that support homeless people in Manchester. They can help people who have fallen on hard times.

After our chat he said he realised that he cannot carry on with his recent lifestyle because ultimately he could do some serious damage to his health. We think of an excess of alcohol as binge drinking, but that is not necessarily the case as highlighted here. Many people enjoy drinking, but you have to be sensible. I did not have all the answers to his problems, but I tried to help to the best of my ability and I hope he has been able to receive the support he needs and can get his life back to some sense of normality.

Les Pattison



The LINK is currently working on creating a task group to look into the support available for alcohol misuse. If you have experience in this area, or are interested in joining the task group, then contact the LINK Support Team on **0161 477 8479** and we will let you know when the group are undertaking activities. All calls will be treated with the strictest confidence.

Stockport LINK Work programmes

The LINK have been working very hard at developing our Work Programmes, issues we have identified that need looking into. The Core Group have identified many opportunities for Wider Members to get involved in the LINK in a variety of subjects. Please get in contact if you would like to be involved by calling the LINK Support Office on **0161 477 8479**.

Long Term conditions: A Long Term Condition is any condition with which a person has to live for the remainder of their life. The Long Term Conditions project is now progressing and the Primary Care Trust are keen to involve a small group of LINK members both in the short term and in the long term reviewing its patient information and future development. Interested members who would like to be part of this project contact the LINK Support office.

Bowel Cancer Screening: Bowel Cancer Screening will soon be available in Stockport and The LINK along with the Primary Care Trust are carrying out research in what might be the barriers for older men in coming forward for screening. If you are male, aged 60-69 and would like to take part in our discussion groups please see events page for times and dates.

Reading group: The LINK are still looking to recruit people to the reading group - a group where members take part from home, reading and providing feedback to Health & Social Care organisations about leaflets, posters & other material available to the public.

Feedback: Please use the feedback form to tell anything good or not so good about Health & Social Care in Stockport.



Mental Health: The LINK have set up a sub-group of carers of people with mental health problems and they have come up with their own action plan which is being presented to the Primary Care Trust and local authority in August. However the LINK is keen to include others carers and people with mental health problems to tell us about their experiences when accessing services. Please contact us or use the enclosed feedback form with three points in which your experience could be improved.

Quality standards in care home sector: All LINK members will receive a comment document on the quality in care home sector. This was created by a new group in Stockport, to look at improving the quality and experience for Stockport residents receiving services in the residential and nursing care sector. If you are not a member but would like to comment on this agreement please contact the LINK office.

Homecare: Over the next few months the LINK will be looking into the quality of care received at home. If you receive care at home and would like to tell us your experience and suggestions then please contact us.

Did not attend Clinic: The LINK set up a time limited task group in April to look at why people do not turn up for community clinic appointments. A report was compiled and presented to the Director of Community Health in the Primary Care Trust. Further action will be taken to target the specific areas where people do not turn up which might include different age groups, geographical areas & ethnic groups.



Get set for digital TV

Digital Switchover is coming to the Granada television area! If your television only has four or five channels, it is time to go digital. On 4th November BBC2 will be switched off, then on 2nd December the other terrestrial channels (BBC1, ITV1, Channel 4 & Five) will go. After this time if you don't have digital you will not be able to watch television. Good news is that it's easy to switch and no new equipment should be needed.



What should I do? Almost any television can be converted (even black and white ones). Also, you shouldn't need a new aerial - if you have a clear picture now, your aerial should be fine after switchover. You can check your aerial reception on teletext page 284.

I'm ready - do I need to know anything else? All televisions need to be ready, so if you've got Sky, Cable or Freeview already think about your other televisions - are they switched? Remember ALL must be ready on 4th November. For those with a digibox you will need to 'retune' on the two switchover dates - but it's not complicated. Your instruction manual can guide you, or visit the Digital UK website for more help - www.digitaluk.co.uk/retuning

Can I get help? Anyone age 75 or over, registered blind, or disabled should have received a letter about the Help Scheme. If you haven't got your letter and think you might be eligible contact them on **0800 40 85 900** or at www.helpscheme.co.uk

Where can I get more information? If you aren't eligible for the Help Scheme, there is a helpline - 08456 505050. Age Concern are working closely with Digital UK, by giving information and support. Contact Age Concern Stockport on **0161 480 1211**.

Local societies, charities and community groups

There is a Digital Outreach Co-ordinator for Stockport, responsible for making sure local organisations are ready to assist clients with switchover, and administering a small grants scheme to help spread the message. Training is available for staff/volunteers, or if you would like a speaker - please contact Sarah Cole via Age Concern Stockport **0161 480 1211**.

The LINK visit local care organisations

LINK members who have undergone training have now got the power to visit local care organisations.

The *Enter & View* Training, which includes two courses and a Criminal Record Bureau check was participated in by several LINK members and a team has now been established. The team have already visited two establishments with more in their sights. The aim of *Enter & Viewing* is to ensure that those providing care are providing acceptable care to the public.

This includes visiting sites of good practice as well as those that need improving. In these cases, the *Enter & View* team will find out why they are not as good and suggest improvements to be put into place.

If you know of anywhere that the LINK should visit or are a LINK member interested in joining the *Enter & View* team, then call the LINK Support Team on **0161 477 8479**.

Upcoming Events

16th August - Offerton Parish Summer Festival

- About:** Come along to the Summer Festival for local residents. Including; Bouncy Castle, Clown, Juggler, Balloon Modeller, Fire Engine, Singing Competition, Cheerleading Display, Burgers, Ice Cream, etc.
- Time:** 11.00 am - 5.00 pm on Sunday 16th August
- Place:** Offerton Park Playing Fields, Half Moon Lane, Offerton, Stockport



10th September - People's Panel Question time on dentistry

- About:** Come along to this open forum about the provision of dental health services in Stockport. Light refreshments provided. Free. No need to book.
- Time:** 5.30 - 7.30pm on Thursday 10th September
- Place:** Hatworks, Wellington Mill, Wellington Rd South, Stockport SK3 0EU
- Contact:** Stockport LINK Office on **0161 477 8479**

15th September - Carers Structured Counselling Group

- About:** An event to help Carers learn new skills and ways of coping with the emotional demands of caring, and empower them to overcome isolation. Promote a greater sense of control in their life and improve awareness into their personal circumstances and ultimately improve their quality of life and emotional wellbeing.
- Time:** 10.00 - 12.00 pm on Tuesday 15th September
- Place:** St Peters Church, Green Lane, Hazel Grove
- Contact:** Gaynor Hannon on **0161 419 4222**



Late September - Bowel Cancer Screening Discussion Groups

- About:** The LINK and the Primary Care Trust are carrying out some research in what might be the barriers for men in coming forward for screening. If you are male aged 60-69 and would like to take part in our discussion groups then get in contact.
- Time:** 24th September, 10.30 am -12.00 pm - Wellbeing Centre, Stockport
24th September, 1.30 - 3.00 pm - Age Concern Stockport
29th September, 5.30 - 7.00 pm - Dialstone Centre, Offerton
30th September, 10.30 am -12.00 pm - Walthew House, Shaw Heath
30th September, 1.30 - 3.00 pm - Central Library, Stockport
- Contact:** The LINK Support Office on **0161 477 8479**

Contact the LINK

Stockport LINK Support Team

Labyrinth House, 45 Middle Hillgate,
Stockport SK1 3DG

Phone: 0161 477 8479

Email: links@pebbleenterprises.co.uk

Web: www.stockportlink.co.uk



Maria Kildunne: LINK Development Manager

Kirsty Bagnall: LINK Development Officer

If you would like to find out more information about joining the LINK, please get in contact and we will send you information or a membership pack.

If you are a LINK member and would like more information about writing an article for the next LINK News then let us know.

If you need this Newsletter in large print, audio tape/CD, braille or .pdf format please contact the LINK Support Team on 0161 477 8479.

如果你需要他人為你解釋這小冊子/單張的內容，我們可以提供免費的傳譯服務，請致電 0161 477 9000 史托波特傳譯部。

If you need this newsletter in another language, a free interpreting service is available from Stockport Council. Please telephone Stockport Interpreting Unit on **0161 477 9000** or email eds.admin@stockport.gov.uk

W przypadku gdybyś potrzebował pomocy odnośnie tej broszurki/ulotki, dostępne są usługi tłumaczeniowe. Prosimy dzwonić do Interpreting Unit pod numer 0161 477 9000.

যদি এই পুস্তিকা/প্রচার পত্রটি সম্পর্কে আপনার কোন সাহায্য দরকার হয় তবে বিনা খরচে আপনার জন্য দোভাষীর ব্যবস্থা করা হতে পারে। মোহেরবানী করে স্টকপোর্ট ইন্টারপ্রিটিং ইউনিটে ফোন করুন টেলিফোন নম্বর, 0161 477 9000.

اگر آپ کو اس کتابچے/الفلٹ کے بارے میں مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو مفت ترجمانی کی سروس دستیاب ہے۔ براہ مہربانی انٹرپرائزنگ یونٹ کو 0161 477 9000 پر فون کریں۔

خدمات ترجمہ رایگان این نشریہ/کتابچہ در صورت نیاز موجود میباشد. لطفاً با شماره تلفن 0161 477 9000 با واحد ترجمہ (اینترپرائزینگ یونیت) ما تماس بگیرید.

تنوفر خدمة ترجمة شفوية انا تطلب مساعدة في فهم هذا الكتيب/النشرة. نرجو الاتصال اربن رينيول على رقم الهاتف: 0161 477 9000