

Deaflink North East Newsletter Issue 14~Spring 2013



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CHAIR'S REPORT - Jo Nicolls

As the Chair of the new Deaflink North East I would like to welcome you to our 2013 newsletter.

We are nearly at the end of our first year as an independent registered charity. After 12 years working under Newcastle Healthy City, we decided as we approach our 'teenage years' it was time to go out alone into the big wide world. So taking a big deep breath and a massive jump we moved to Jesmond on 2nd April 2012, taking with us one member of staff from Newcastle Healthy City, Heidi Jobling who is responsible for the business side of Deaflink NE.



Now we have the huge responsibility of looking after our staff, the finances and legal obligations, previously done by Healthy City. With a newly established Board of Trustees working alongside our Community Action Group (CAG); we have spent time developing a new way forward while making sure all our groups still continue as normal.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank Newcastle Healthy City for giving D/deaf people in Newcastle (plus Gateshead, North Tyneside and Northumberland) the chance to be better informed on health issues and to have an understanding of organisations as well as challenging services to be more accessible for D/deaf people.

One of the things Deaflink NE has worked hard on is our new website www.deaflink.org.uk plus embarking on even more modern technology with the twitter world. If you have a twitter account, why not follow us @Deaflink_NE

I would also like to thank all our volunteers who support Deaflink NE for all their continued involvement and look forward to many more joining us in the future.



I'm sure you will agree this is an exciting time (if not a little scary) for us as we attempt to broaden out into the region, with so much more to offer. So although we are in our 13th year, we can celebrate our 1st year as a registered charity and I am happy to tell you that we have confirmation of funding through the Council and Health Services for 2013-14.

Our thanks for all your support

Jo Nicolls - Chair

Deaflink Campaigning

We took part in two Hardest Hit marches since 2011 and many thanks to all members who took part in the campaigning against the benefits cuts.



Look at the next page to see more information on the cuts.



Deaf Awareness Week

We held two events in May 2012, one in Boots with an information and equipment demonstration stall to raise awareness. And one in Grainger Market with a cooking demonstration in BSL! Our partners - the Fire Service, Sensory Support Team - got involved with their information for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing communities.



We will do some events in Deaf Awareness Week this year during 6th - 12th May - watch out for our posters soon and join us!

'Keep in the Loop' Conference

On the 24th November 2012 nearly 100 Hard of Hearing and Deafened people attended this regional event organised by Hearing Link in partnership with Deaflink and HoHo at the Assembly Rooms in Newcastle. This gave people a great chance to talk and mix.

We learnt a lot about Hearing Link campaign to ensure that loop systems in public venues and spaces are working properly. Deaflink and HoHo will be involved in the campaign over this next year.



The Hardest Hit And then hit again!

Despite the amount of snow during the bad weather over 90 D/deaf, deafblind and hard-of-hearing people came to the January Health Forum to listen to Andrew Young from Citizens Advice tell us about the changes. Some things may change in the future as people put pressure on the government. Please note that, at the time of printing this, that most people over the age of 65 will not be affected.

These are the big changes:

- **PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE PAYMENT (PIP)** will replace Disability Living Allowance (DLA). This will start in April. There will be new assessment points.. No longer a right to DLA for life - even if you were told you would get it. DLA will gradually finish over the next few years.
- **HOUSING BENEFIT and UNDER OCCUPANCY** - (the bedroom tax). This will affect people living in council or housing association properties who have empty bedrooms.
- **COUNCIL TAX** - everyone will have to pay at least 20% of their Council tax bill, even those on benefits.
- **CHILD BENEFIT** - reduced or cut to people who earn £50,000 per year or more.
- **UNIVERSAL CREDIT** (from October 2013) will replace the following benefits - Income Based Jobseekers Allowance; Income Related Employment and Support Allowance; Income Support; Housing Benefit; Child Tax Credit; Working Tax Credit. There will be one payment to you. The maximum benefit payment per year will be £26,000
- In the future you cannot be paid an amount for being a carer if you are receiving a benefit or amount for being ill or disabled - you cannot have both.

As we know it is worrying time for everyone. We are planning more forums on the latest benefits changes when they happen. Also we are doing some research into how these changes are affecting deaf people and if you would like to fill in the questionnaire please let us know. It will be confidential. You can fill it in from our website and email it in.

If you have access to a computer you can see a 'quick guide to PIP for support organisations' in BSL by DWP can be found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0QNiZ5k7Q2M>

Council Cuts - Important News

North Tyneside Council - proposed cut of their BSL Interpreting Service will be discussed at the North Tyneside Council meeting in March. This will mean changes to interpreting in North Tyneside. The council will no longer provide any interpreting services and Deaf people will have to use one of the councils approved providers. The council hope this will be in place by July.

Newcastle Council are reviewing all their services through March and April, including their BSL interpreting services. Please see back page for event.

Part of the cuts at Newcastle Council will affect the Sensory Support Team. Several staff will be leaving, including Pam Satterthwaite's retirement, we will also lose 3 Deaf specialist social workers. Social Services will no longer provide low level support to Deaf people and will stop the Duty Sessions from the end of March. Within the proposed new structure we understand that Social Workers at Newcastle are being given intensive level 1 or 2 BSL training. We wish she was leaving in better circumstances but we would like to wish Pam the happiest retirement and hope to see her around.

Good or bad Deaf Awareness or loop system?

When you are out and about shopping or using services for example; buses trains, hospitals, leisure places like the cinema or pubs. Please let us know if you have had a good or bad experience.

Contact us and we can use your story to tell the service "Well done we can recommend you to other Deaf and Deafblind people" or if you had a poor experience we can advise them on how to improve their accessibility.

Would you like to do some Drama?

Join us to have fun learning and practicing Drama! No experience necessary as the group aims to build confidence and drama skills. This group uses drama to highlight Health and lifestyle topics in our every day lives.

Please contact Katie for information and dates.

Deaflink Groups and Forums



Deaf Men's Health Forum

We have up to 10 men attend our monthly forum and cover topics linking to men's health. The group decides which areas they would like to know more about.

This forum is on a Monday afternoon at 2-4pm at St. Andrew's Church (Deaf Mission), Newgate Street, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 5SS. The leader is Alex Redpath and more new D/deaf, Hard-of-Hearing and Deafened men are welcome to join.



See our event sheet for dates of future forums.



SHHH! Self-Help for Hard-of-Hearing Group

Anyone who is Hard-of-Hearing, Deafened or Deafblind is welcome to join our monthly group meeting with invited speakers talking about hearing loss, health issues and lifestyle. Loop system, BSL interpreters and speech-to-text screen are provided.

We have up to 30 members all keen to chat, share information and experiences, talk about issues and support one another.

This Group meets the first Tuesday at 1:30-3:30pm of every month (unless stated) in Room 5-6, 5th Floor, Mea House, Ellison Place, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 8XS.



See our event sheet for our meetings.

Saturday Deaf Forum

Everybody is welcome to come to our forum on a Saturday morning at 10am - 12.30pm every 2 months in Brunswick Methodist Church main hall, Brunswick Place, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE1 7BJ (Behind Fenwick's). Two British Sign Language interpreters, loop system and speech-to-text screen are provided.

Our forums in the future will focus on the 'whole person' linking in with important issues that will affect you and other D/deaf people in Newcastle and the North East. For example we have had presentations on benefit changes, health services and other interesting topics.

If you have any ideas of what would be discussed in the future, our details are at the back of this newsletter.

Healthy Eating Cooking Class - NEW DEAF CHEF in a NEW PLACE!!



We would like to welcome our NEW Deaf Chef Nichola Barcoe!

Nicola shows us how to follow a recipe and our D/deaf, deafblind and hard-of-hearing members follow her cooking. This is a great chance for the members to learn how to cook healthily on a budget.

Our cooking class is now based in what was the old Deaf school, Northern Counties School and is on a Tuesday evening 6 - 8pm once a month.



We would love to welcome new D/deaf, deafblind and hard-of-hearing people to our fun sessions.

If you would like to join our cooking class and receive our ingredient list to buy and bring to our future cooking class, please let Katie know (contact details on the back of this newsletter).

Deaflink North East's NEW Contact Details...

Minicom/phone: (0191) 281 2314
SMS/Text only: 07897 329 359
Fax: (0191) 212 0300

Email: admin@deaflink.org.uk

Website: www.deaflink.org.uk

Twitter: [Deaflink_NE](https://twitter.com/Deaflink_NE)

**Key House, 11 Tankerville Place, Jesmond,
Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE2 3AT**

**(Over the road from Northern Counties School and 5/10 minutes
walk from Jesmond / West Jesmond Metro Station)**



Date for your diary

IMPORTANT

**Newcastle City Council Sensory Team Changes
Saturday 9th March, 10.00am to 12.30pm
at the Leazes Meeting room, Newcastle Civic Centre.**

Important big changes to social services and equipment loan provision, presented by Jonathan Jamison, Service Manager for Adult Services. Come along and find out how these changes will affect you and your family.

BSL interpreter, loop system and Speech to Text screen provided.



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newsletter by e-mail to save our trees!**