

NORFOLK DISABILITY INFORMATION SERVICE

ISSUE 29 JAN/FEB 2003

www.getphysical.norfolk.gov.uk

NDIS

NDIS News 2002 Index: If you would like a copy please send a 33p SAE or email heather.davy.socs@Norfolk.gov.uk if you prefer it as a Word attachment.

Updated copies of the Tracks database of local disability information are now available. Please call 01603 763295 or email as above.

ADD/ADHD

New support groups for families of children with attention deficit disorders have been set up in North Norfolk. "Shadds" - (Sheringham Hyperactivity and Attention Deficit Disorder Support) meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month from 9.15am - 11.00am at Sheringham Primary School, Cooper Road. Further information from Dorothy Burns on 01263 825918. Another new group yet to decide on a name meets at the Children's Fund Centre, 19a Mundesley Road, North Walsham on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month from 10.30am - 12 noon. This group is for families with children who have ADD/ADHD or are undiagnosed, but have behaviour problems. The group hopes to have speakers, suggest strategies to manage behaviour and to offer stress and relaxation therapies such as aromatherapy. Contact Sue Woodrow on 01692 405814. Further groups meet at Cromer and Mundesley - contact Pete Barron on 01603 787363.

Holiday Time



◆ Feltwell, Thetford and District Mencap own an 8-berth caravan (with ramps) at Heacham which is available for let to any family who has a member of any age with a learning disability. Very reasonable rates varying between £160 and £210 per week during the holiday season. Telephone Jean Bowles on 01842 811567.

◆ Disability Now's Travel Club is offering members the chance to go on an 8 day group holiday in Mallorca from £360 each, in May and November. For information about membership, complete a form in Disability Now magazine - available from larger newsagents.

◆ Holidays with Help have holidays on offer at Blackpool and Chichester. Blackpool Holiday Centre 14th-20th June costs £199 per person including full board, VAT and insurance (excluding travel) and evening entertainment, daytime activities and local visits are offered. Trained and experienced helpers available if required. South Down Holiday Village, near Chichester 20-26th September - contact for further details. Information from 020 8390 9752.

◆ The 3H Fund are offering 6 group holidays in 2003 for physically disabled people: at the Nancy Oldfield Centre, Norfolk (boating for younger age groups); Southdowns Holiday Village (older age groups); Seacroft Holiday Village, Hemsby (for the young at heart); Savoy Holiday Centre, Isle of Wight (all age groups); Keppleway Centre, Lake District (activity holiday for young disabled people); and Majorca (all age groups). Each disabled guest is paired with a volunteer carer who looks after their needs for the week. Information and prices on 01892 547474 or at www.3hfund.org.uk

◆ Emmets Ville Hotel Portugal has wheelchair accessible bedrooms and ensuite bathrooms, ramps, concrete parking area, and is generally "wheelchair friendly". Contact 01235 521804 for further information.

◆ RADAR's guide to accessible holidays in the UK will be available in March, price £8. Tel: 020 7250 0212 or visit www.radar.org.uk

Carers Coffee break

West Norfolk Carers Coffee Shop has re-opened in a new location - it is now at the Deaf Centre, Railway Road, King's Lynn on Wednesdays 10.0am - 1.00pm. Drop in for coffee and biscuits, a chat with other carers and information and advice. On Mondays at the Hillington

Square Community Centre you can attend the Carers Stress Busters from 10.00am – 1.00pm. Here you can receive reflexology, aromatherapy, hand and heat massage and healing – as well as tea and coffee and a chat. More info from David Hall on 01553 760568.

Disability Equipment

Interested in disability/home nursing equipment issues? Want to help us to improve services? In Norfolk we are committed to improving our equipment services and creating a joint community equipment service between Health and Social Services. We need people who have used equipment services to be part of a reference group. The group will have a role in:

- helping us to design our future services so they can better meet the needs of the users of the service,
- commenting on equipment that we may or may not stock,
- commenting on short term improvements that we could make.

We are interested in hearing from people who use equipment themselves, or who are informal carers of people who use equipment. We will pay any reasonable expenses for attending meetings. We will decide where and how often the meetings need to be when we know how many people are interested and where they live. If you are interested but cannot get out to attend meetings, please contact me anyway as we can also consider telephone or postal consultation. If you are interested, please ring, write or email Sarah Ellis at Social Services, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, on 01603 224216 or sarah.ellis.socs@norfolk.gov.uk

Globaleather

Range of accessories including full-fingered winter wheelchair

gloves, specialist accessories and wheelchair cushions. Contact GLCC Ltd on 01633 216644 or visit www.globaleather.com

Bogus Callers

Norfolk Police and Norfolk Trading Standards have launched a new initiative against bogus callers and rogue traders. Householders countywide are being given special cards to hold up at their window or door when a stranger knocks, asking them to call at a nominated neighbour's house. If the neighbour is happy that the caller is genuine, they telephone their neighbour to reassure them or return with the caller to the house. Householders should only nominate a neighbour who is available most of the time and who is willing to accept callers on their behalf. More information from local crime prevention offices, via 01953 424242.

Changes



Nulife has opened a showroom of disability equipment at Vulcan House, Vulcan Road, Norwich. Tel 01603 484488. The original shop at Grove Road is still open – tel 01603 623200.

Asperger Norfolk has moved to 2 Lower Goat Lane, Norwich NR2 1EL. Phone and Fax remain the same (01603 620500).

The Waveney Valley Dyslexia Association has changed its name to **Norfolk and Norwich Dyslexia Association**. Contact details remain the same: Karen Crawley on 01953 483057 or Barry Whiting on 01379 668430.

The contact for the **Kingfishers Disabled Swimming Club** is now the Chief Coach, Hazel Lindsay, Whitestones, Low Road, South Wootton, King's Lynn PE30 3NW, tel: 01553 671959.

Wheelchair advice

South Norfolk has a new wheelchair services leaflet for carers, patients and surgeries in Southern Norfolk. It includes information about how to decide to borrow or buy a wheelchair, recognised suppliers, and how to make the best decision for yourself and the person you look after. It has been compiled by Social Services with input from the Norwich Wheelchair Assessment Centre, OTs, Practice Nurses, South Norfolk PCT, NDIS and the Carers Forum. For more information or a copy, tel: Sarah Day on 01842 754484 or leave a message on 01603 307422.

Gardening

Gardening with Disabilities, Great Yarmouth and District meets on the 3rd Thursday of every month from 2.00-4.00pm at the Alpha Road Toy Library, Southtown, Great Yarmouth. There are talks and hands-on activities. All are welcome. Further information from the Chairperson, Hilary Evans on 01493 393416.

Parent Partnership

Norfolk Parent Partnership will be at the following venues from 9.30am – 12.30pm: 12th Feb **Dereham** - Function Room, Dereham Town Football Club; 25th Feb **North Walsham** – Children's Fund Centre, 19a Mundesley Road; 26th Feb **Gt. Yarmouth** – Central Library, Tollhouse Street; 4th March **Norwich** – The Forum; 12th March **King's Lynn** – Professional Development Centre, Kilham's Way; 19th March **Fakenham** – Clinic Room, Health Office, Baron's

Close; 26th March **Thetford** – Small Court, Council Offices. The Roadshows will have information displays and also give the chance to find out about free training to become a supporter for parents who have children with special educational needs. More details from 01603 281044.

Norfolk Structure Plan Review Issues: Looking Towards 2025

The Structure Plan is a set of planning policies that provide an overall framework for guiding planning activity in Norfolk. It sets out strategic policies for where new development such as houses, jobs, shops should take place. The Issues Report is a first step in reviewing the Structure Plan and takes a long-term look into the future to see what planning issues are important for Norfolk. The Department of Planning and Transportation would like to know the views of Norfolk people on the questions they are asking and whether any issues have been missed. To view or print off the Issues Report go to www.Norfolk.gov.uk/splan_review.htm Please note that the deadline for comments is 28th February 2003 and that the questionnaire should be completed by hand or in Word (it cannot be filled in on line). Responses should be returned by post or email attachment to Mrs A McErlain, Dept Planning & Transportation, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich NR1 2SG or to structureplan@Norfolk.gov.uk

Switch Project

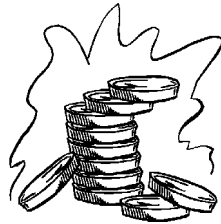
This is a 3-year pilot project funded by the Department for Transport to look at integrating community car transport schemes in Dereham and the surrounding area to provide a more streamlined service. The project has only been running for 3 months and is currently looking at the scope of existing schemes. Future plans include

improving access to wheelchair accessible transport. Contact 01362 696073 for more information.

Information Day

The Parkinson's Disease Society is holding an Information Day on Saturday 12th April 10.00am – 3.00pm at Christchurch, King Street, Great Yarmouth. Information on Parkinson's, local support groups and organisations, carers' needs, holidays and respite care, welfare benefits and employment rights and retirement will be available. Contact Rosie Hayward, Development Worker on 01728 746869 or Rhayward@parkinsons.org.uk

Benefits & Finance



Motability changes

Customers of the Motability Scheme will no longer have to pay for reasonable damage to their car caused unavoidably by a wheelchair or mobility aids. Motability is carrying out trials of protective plastic covers that can be fitted to cars where damage is most likely to occur. Early results are encouraging, and the covers could be available to all customers by the end of 2003. Changes to the mileage limit will help those who exceed the current 36000 miles over the 3-year contract. Flexible payment options will be introduced so that if they wish, they can defer payment until the end of the contract. Contract hire customers who wish to buy their car at the end of the three year contract will be invited to do so. They will be able to find out the exact price three months before

the end of the contract to give them time to decide whether to buy that car or apply for a new one. Warranty and finance terms are being developed to assist customers purchasing under the new arrangements. Interest charges on the Motability hire purchase scheme will be reduced to offer a much more competitive deal. Some changes will apply to all existing customers, but others will only apply to contracts starting after Feb 1st.

Permitted work rules

The Department for Work and Pensions has published an information pack to inform disability organisations of the new permitted work rules for people receiving an incapacity benefit. Visit www.dwp.gov.uk

Missing out

Government figures show that as many as 600,000 low income families (a third of those entitled to it) are missing out on up to £1.4 billion a year from Working Families Tax Credit. Campaigners are calling for better advice and information to improve take-up.

Trust funds

People receiving payments from civil actions or the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board should ensure that they get advice about establishing a trust fund to ensure that the funds do not get treated as capital, thus disqualifying the person from means-tested benefits. Capital in a personal injury trust is always disregarded so that a person could still claim income support and housing benefit. However, one-off payments from the trust fund could have been treated as income and disqualify benefits for the week it was received. Under new rules, all payments from personal injury trusts will be disregarded as a source of income **except** if the payment is intended and used for: food, ordinary clothing or

footwear, household fuel; rent covered by housing benefit or other housing costs covered by income support; residential care or nursing home fees met by income support or under community care arrangements; council tax or water charges. If the income from the trust is used for any of these, all but a £20 disregard will count as income.

Benefit arrears

Formerly, if a person received a large sum following a successful appeal for arrears of benefit, they could have problems if they claimed means tested benefits. The rules changed from 14th October. The following disregards should now be applied: 52 weeks from the date of issue for payments of less than £5,000; for payments of £5,000 or more – for as long as the claimant continues to receive the benefit or 52 weeks, whichever is longer, or until the customer spends that payment if this is less than the duration of the claim.

New tax credits: help with health costs

People who are entitled to full help with health costs are entitled to free NHS prescriptions, NHS dental treatment, NHS wigs and fabric supports and NHS eye tests. Also they are entitled to full value optical vouchers towards glasses or contact lenses and full refund of reasonable travel costs to hospital for NHS treatment. When the new tax credits (Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit) start in April the arrangements will continue much as now. Families who get one of the following

- working tax credit **and** child tax credit, or
- working tax credit with a disability addition, or
- child tax credit but are not eligible for working tax credit (eg do not work 16 hours per week. This will include families whose income support stops when they start to get child tax credit), **and** whose income for tax credits is

below a certain limit will be entitled to full help with health costs. The income limit for the tax year 2003-04 will be an annual income of £14,200 per year. This is based on the family's gross income for tax credits as calculated by the Inland Revenue and shown on tax credit awards. Not everyone getting tax credits will be entitled to help with health costs. Full information on leaflet HC11 available at post offices or at www.doh.gov.uk/nhscharges/taxcredits

Statutory responsibilities

The Department of Health has issued guidance to local authorities that advises that "maximising users' incomes with benefits advice and support ... is consistent with the government's emphasis on providing joined-up services focused on the individual's needs ... and is a requirement to be implemented no later than April 2003". In consequence:

- councils should ensure that appropriate benefits advice is provided to all users of non-residential social services and carers services at the time of a charge assessment;
- the assessment will normally need to be carried out by personal interview in the user's own home by appropriately skilled staff. The service should include advice about entitlement, help with claims forms and follow up action if the user wishes;
- advice should not be limited to benefits directly affecting charges. Councils should ensure that equal commitment is given to benefit applications which have no effect on charge income, or might result in a reduced charge.

Disabled motorists

The government has announced a range of improvements for disabled drivers/passengers:

- £2 million per year funding boost to support mobility centres;

- improvements to the provision of parking concessions through the Blue Badge Scheme;
- cash support for a scheme to protect disabled parking bays at supermarkets from abuse. The government has also:
- accepted that children under 2 should be eligible for a badge if their medical needs require the transport of bulky equipment such as oxygen cylinders;
- agreed to look at the feasibility of a national database of badge holders;
- accepted that temporary badges should be made available to those whose disability may last for periods below three years.

Birdwatching



The Suffolk Ornithologists group has produced a guide to 59 sites in Suffolk suitable for less mobile people. *Easy Birdwatching Again* is easy to read with clear diagrams and photos and a wealth of helpful information. Send a 76p SAE (A5) to Andrew Gregory, 1 Holly road, Ipswich Ip1 3QN. Tel: 01473 253816.

Stressbusters

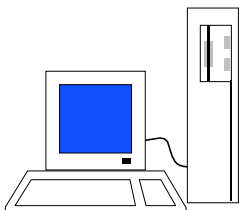
NANSA are holding monthly Stressbuster Days – on Monday 3rd February 10.00am – 12 noon the guest speaker will be David Powell who will be giving a talk on epilepsy. Tel: 01603 414109.

Parents Group at Thetford

The Children's Fund Family project and South Norfolk Family Support Team Parents Group will be held for 12 sessions excluding half term from 27th February, 9.30am – 11.30am. It is for parents who have children aged up to 9 years and will cover: Helping your child learn

through play; teaching co-operation through play; using praise and encouragement to motivate your child; using incentive programmes to teach your child new behaviours; setting limits and rules; decreasing your child's inappropriate behaviours; parents support of each other. More information from Judith Moore on 01842 753294.

Low cost computers



Recycle-IT offers refurbished Internet ready computers (64mb ram, new keyboard, mouse, cables, CD rom, modem and soundcard, 15" monitor) loaded with Windows ME for £299 for community and educational use. Other packages available. Tel: 01553 772524 or email colin@recycle-it.ltd.uk

Correction

Please note that the Norfolk and Norwich Association for the Blind (NNAB) Diss Resource Centre is open 9.30am – 1.00pm on Fridays, and not Mondays as stated in the previous issue. Apologies for any confusion caused.

Toy Library

Dereham Toy Library for children with special needs meets on Tuesdays from 9.30 – 12 noon. Phone Mrs Harris on 01362 690148 for more info.

Your help wanted

◆ The charity Mundesley Community Care is looking to launch a new befriending scheme for people who live alone and struggle to get out and about. Volunteers will call

on them once a week for a chat and to offer a helping hand with tasks like shopping. It has applied for grants from Help the Aged and Norfolk Rural Development and is looking for volunteers. The charity also runs a luncheon club on Mondays and Thursdays. For more information about the scheme or becoming a volunteer, contact Ann Buckle on 01263 720901.

◆ Norwich and District Citizens Advice Bureau is looking for more volunteers to train to become Telephone Advisers. These are vital to help the CAB give advice to people who cannot get into the city office for any reason. Accredited training is available and childcare and travelling expenses are paid. The CAB welcomes people of all ages and from all backgrounds and would love to hear from you. Contact Helen Stoker on 01603 878818.

◆ Female voluntary driver with clean driving licence to drive wheelchair-using lady's minibus. She would like to be taken into Norwich for 9.15am and picked up at 4.00pm on a Friday. Must live in Dereham area. Telephone 01362 696300.

Diss-Ability

A sports club for people with learning disabilities living in and around Diss meets weekly at DC3, Vincennes Road Diss. It is run by a partnership involving Diss Christian Community Church (DC3), Breckland Special Olympics and Norwich Primary Care Trust, and is run by a group of experienced volunteer sports coaches. A wide range of sporting opportunities are available, such as basketball, fitness training, badminton, bowls etc. Participants must complete a registration form which can be obtained from Iain Dawson at Wymondham Health Centre (01953 604637).

TGA Electric Leisure Ltd

This firm is opening an extension to its main showroom at Sudbury which will be dedicated to riser/recliners, orthopaedic chairs, nursing and domestic profiling beds. Other products include manual and electric wheelchairs, walking aids, stairlifts, bathing aides, daily living aids, etc. Free home demonstration service available; also presentations for coffee mornings etc. Visit www.tga-electric.com or tel: 01787 882244.

For sale

◆ Recliner chair electrically operated. Lifting arms for easy transfer. Removable footrest. Perfect condition – very little used. Genuine reason for sale. Cost £984. Offered at £290. Tel: 01603 810812.

◆ Milford Electric Person Lift for Motor Vehicles: Brand new in October 2001, cost just over £2000, now for sale at £1000 and includes a washable medium adult sling. Demonstration at Downham Market can be arranged. Tel: 01487 822517.

◆ Suntech rechargeable wheelchair; joystick control, pannier bags, umbrella and charger: £190. Stannah powerchair, 2 years old and only used about once a day. Indoor use only, with charger: £290. Tel: 01953 453711.

◆ WRK Trike: Hand and/or foot pedalled trike suitable for 3-10 year-old (approx. depending on size and disability). 5 years old but has had light use and is in excellent condition. Very sturdy construction, cannot tip over. Weight 25kg, length 1m, rear wheels 60cm apart. Seat adjustable in height from ground and distance to pedals. Backrest, seatbelt and pull handle included. Cost £750 new, will accept £375 ono.

Available for viewing near Dereham; photo at www.wildeye.co.uk/trike.html
Tel: 01362 637825 or email info@wildeye.co.uk

◆ Sterling 4 wheel scooter with charger and accessories - £1000. Tel: 01328 829305

Carers Strategy 2003-06

Are you a Carer? Looking after a friend, relative or neighbour who is ill or has a disability? If you are supporting someone and not being paid, you may not recognise yourself as a Carer. Over the last three years, a Partnership of Carers and Organisations, working for the first time together, have led on the County agenda, Carers issues. To celebrate this good work and to inspire new ventures we need your help. To make this project successful, and to publicly recognise all the good work that is being done across the County, we need examples of good practice in supporting carers. The Carers Strategy for the people of Norfolk will be launched in Carers Week: 9th-15th June 2002. If you would like to put forward examples of support for Carers, please contact Mary Highe, Planning Officer, County Hall, Norwich 01603 223853 or mary.highe.socs@norfolk.gov.uk
Closing date 14th Feb 2003.

Whizz-Kidz

The Whizz-Kidz No Limits Millennium Award offers teenagers grants for projects to help them and the community. Anyone aged 12-18 years with a permanent disability affecting mobility can apply. Tel: 020 7233 6600 or email nolimitsawards@whizz-kidz.org.uk

Cotton Comfort

This is a company specialising in clothes for adults and children with skin ailments. The range includes underwear with ridge-

free seams to prevent irritation of sensitive skin and men's underwear has a channel with elastic running inside with eyelets so that it can be removed and replaced with cord or ribbon. Tel: 01524 730093.

Legal Issues



Guide Dogs

The Islamic guidance body, the Shariat Council, has clarified religious law by permitting guide dogs to accompany disabled people into restaurants or taxis managed or driven by Muslims.

An amendment to the Disability Discrimination Act means that it will soon be against the law for minicab drivers to refuse to carry guide dogs. Under the DDA only drivers of licensed taxis or black cabs were bound to accept fares from guide dog owners. Legislation has been passed through both Houses so this loophole in the DDA should soon be closed.

Copyright Bill

The Copyright (Visually Impaired Persons) Bill becomes law this year and will allow texts to be copied into accessible formats such as Braille. However campaigners for people with hearing impairments and for those with a learning disability are calling for the bill to be extended to cover their needs too – such as a copy of printed text using pictures or symbols as well.

DRC Publications

The Disability Rights Commission's January 2003 updated publications list is at www.drc-gb.org/drc/Documents/

[DRCpublications_cat.Jan.2003.pdf](#)

Free Internet Awareness Events

Free Internet taster sessions for groups of over 50s in rural Norfolk are available. These are fully funded by the Learning and Skills Council Norfolk and The Forum Trust. Demonstrations using a laptop computer and large screen projector show how to send an email, surf the web, track family history, shop, and much more... All that is needed at the venue is a power socket and standard BT phone line – there are no phone charges. Sessions can be held daytime, evening or weekend, subject to availability. All free sessions must be completed by March 2003. Tel: Mike Hough 01603 455449 or mike@justvanilla.com

Stairlifts

Norfolk Stairlifts is an independent installer of used/reconditioned stairlifts. It also offers a removal service for redundant stairlifts and will purchase most models in good condition. Free estimates given. Contact Steve key on 01953 850559 or 07817 159833.

Arthritis Info

The Arthritis Care Norfolk Information Worker will have a monthly information stand at Sheringham Health Centre from 9.30am – 11.30am on the following days: 29th Jan; 26th Feb; 26th March; 30th April; 28th May; 25th June; 30th July; 24th Sept; 29th Oct; and 26th Nov. Contact Jack on 01263 824478.

Reports and surveys

◆ Nine out of ten families with disabled children have a significant problem with their homes. The main problems were lack of space followed by access. See *Housing Matters*

from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation at www.jrf.org.uk

◆ Almost six out of ten older people say they “dread” winter says a report from Help the Aged and British Gas. Half are afraid of getting ill while a third worry about keeping their homes warm. A British Gas-led programme aims to provide benefits of up to £2,000 per home. See *Winter Matters* at www.britishgasnews.co.uk

◆ According to a Joseph Rowntree study, half of all adults defined as poor are home owners – which challenges the common view that poverty is more of a problem among people who rent their homes. See *Home-Ownership and Poverty in Britain* at www.jrf.org.uk

◆ A survey of 1000 families by the Council of Disabled Children has found that four in five parents of disabled children are in favour of child care based around schools. This supports the government’s “extended schools” concept that involves schools opening outside normal hours to provide activities such as homework and breakfast clubs. Extended schools would provide for co-location of services and allow disabled children to be catered for in the same place as their non-disabled siblings. Equally, special schools could also be opened up to non-disabled children.

◆ Research by the Department for Work and Pensions has found that about one person in three has had contact with the government about benefits in the last six months, and about a third of them found it difficult to get information and make a claim. The government plans to increase access by making all services available online by 2005. However, whilst this will increase access for some (22% of people are “very interested” in using the net for benefits), 27% are “not at all interested”. The

survey found that 30% of adults have never used a computer, and only half the population uses the Internet. Also, interest in using the Internet tends to be lower among older people, those on lower incomes and those with fewer qualifications – many of the people to whom the DWP is providing services.

Happy2Help

Garage Watch will officially launch their Happy2Help scheme in March. Disabled drivers wanting to know where they can get help with refuelling can use the pilot scheme by visiting www.Happy2Help.org or phoning 0870 794 3456. Garage Watch was set up by independent garage owners as a trade association, and have committed themselves to helping customers. Happy2Help offers more than help with petrol, it is also about providing other goods and services at the garage and helping elderly customers.

Publications



Self-employment – why not? is a guide covering support available from the benefits system and from government schemes for disabled people wanting to move into self-employment. Price £4 or £2.50 for individuals on benefit. From Disability Alliance, 88-94 Wentworth Street, London E1 7SA. Tel: 020 7247 8776.

The Stroke Association has published a new resource pack for all those working in social care with responsibility for planning, commissioning and

delivering services. *Stroke – Good Practice in Social Care*. Free from 01604 623933.

Buying a PC is a useful leaflet published by the Office of Fair Trading. It gives much guidance on getting through the jargon and choosing a PC to suit needs. Contents include: Before you buy; where to buy; support and repair services; what about a printer? glossary of terms; checklist. Code OFT615, tel: 0870 6060321.

The ME Tips Collection gives a range of practical advice about living with ME. Copies cost £1 in stamps from ME, P O Box 1302, Wells BA5 1YE or it is available at www.metips.co.uk

How to make a new life in the UK is a 92 page self-help guide for young refugees and asylum seekers (12-25 years) to help them settle into the UK. Revised to take account of impending changes in the asylum process, it is also available in Albanian, Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, French, Kurdish, Romanian, Somali, Tamil and Turkish. Foreign language editions (less than 50 copies) £1.75 for voluntary organisations, £2.50 for statutory organisations; English £1.50 and £2.00. Quantity discounts available. Contact the National Information Forum on 020 7402 6681.

Just Diagnosed: an introduction to MS gives details of what is known about MS, how it affects people in different ways, diagnosis, treatments and how to manage life with MS. *MS Essentials* is a series of 16 page booklets looking at different areas including managing relapses; MS Memory and Thinking, MS and Insurance. Free from the MS Society, 372 Edgware Road, London NW2 6ND.

Ricability’s *Stay in Touch* is an independent guide on telecoms for older and disabled customers. It combines infor-

mation on both mobile and fixed telephones and services. For a single print copy send an A4 sae with 44p stamp to Ricability, 30 Angel Gate, City Road, London EC1V 2PT. Various formats available – tel 020 7427 2460.

Creative Activities at Thetford.

Candy Jepson has been appointed by Age Concern Thetford to identify and set up or help set up creative activity groups in and around the Thetford rural area. These are aimed at people who would love to join a group, to learn new skills, do crafts, poetry, art, visit the theatre/cinema etc., but are unable to do so because of lack of transport, companionship or resources. She is also looking for volunteers who have skills or would like to learn a new skill in order to enhance other people's lives. First she needs your help – to find out what is wanted and by whom. Contact Candy on 01842 750088.

Disability Forums

Next meetings: South Norfolk – Wed 29th January 1.30pm – 3.30pm at South Norfolk Council Offices. Issues to include the service provided by GPs and Community Health Care; the County Council's Strategy for Public Transport and the Future Waste Strategy for South Norfolk. North Norfolk – Mon 10th February 2.30pm – 4.30pm at North Norfolk Council Offices. Topic – Accessible Housing. Breckland: details to be confirmed. Further information from Sandy Griffiths on 01493 722131 or sandygriffiths@makingsense.org.uk

F.r.i.e.n.d.s.

Friends is a self-help group for those affected by someone's drug or alcohol use and meets every Monday at 7.00pm at the Neighbourhood Centre, 168b Motum Road, Norwich. Tel: Paula 07985 774028, Stuart

07986 142948 or Karen 07986 142944.

Smart House



Norwich City Council's Community Alarm Service, in conjunction with Norfolk Social Services and the Mental Health Trust, are to launch a Smart House. The first in East Anglia, it will be a property equipped with all the latest technology, aids and adaptations that support people in their own homes. It will have facilities of particular interest to those supporting individuals with dementia. More information from Julia Wilkin, on 01603 496300 or ncas@norwich.gov.uk

Lavender Project

A service offered by Mind Body and Soul providing six aromatherapy sessions for older people with carers living within the city of Norwich. The sessions will be given in consecutive weeks within the person's home and each will last approx 45 minutes. The service is free although donations are welcomed. For information and a referral form tel: 01603 629432.

Disability events

Safeways at Cromer are hosting a shoppers with disability day on Tuesday 25th February from 10.00am – 4.00pm. All are invited to talk and try out equipment for people living with a disability.

A seminar for elderly people and shoppers with a disability will be held at the West Norfolk Professional Development Centre, King's Lynn on

Thursday 6th March. More info: flounders-ray@supanet.com

Conference time

Norfolk Link – for people interested in the education of pupils with Down Syndrome will host a conference on the development and educational needs of children with Down Syndrome on Saturday 15th March at Easton College, Norwich 9.30am – 4.00pm. Guest speaker will be Professor Sue Buckley, Director of Research, The Down Syndrome Educational Trust. £18.50 including lunch. Tel: 01553 669219.

Every effort is made to ensure that the content of NDIS News is correct, however we cannot be held responsible for errors or omissions. Goods and services featured do not carry any recommendation from NDIS or Norfolk Social Services

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