



Newsletter
January/February 2010
Issue no. 67



Happy New Year to all our readers, we look forward to receiving any articles of interest and hearing from you in the forthcoming year ahead. Sue and Keith

Health and Well Being



25 - 29 January 2010 Food Allergy Intolerance Week

Allergy UK is the country's leading medical charity dealing with allergy and they are here to help you.

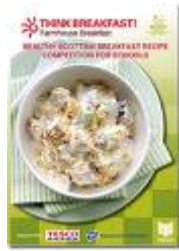
Their dedicated helpline is manned by a team of fully trained allergy advisors. However, it's not just a helpline - in fact, it's a lifeline, providing invaluable support and information for allergy sufferers.

They can give you the time and support that is so important when faced with what can be life changing conditions.

Food Allergy Intolerance Week is

A campaign to raise awareness about the many people who suffer from food intolerance to ingredients such as wheat, dairy, eggs, and gluten. The helpline is 01322 619898 or <http://www.allergyuk.org/>

Farmhouse Breakfast Week 24-30 January 2010



How does breakfast benefit you? The eleventh annual Farmhouse Breakfast Week 24-30 January 2010 is the ideal time to find out! Taking place 24-30 January the week is a real opportunity for everyone to get into the healthy breakfast habit and celebrate the rich wealth of breakfast foods found across the country.

Health professionals all agree we should start the day with a healthy, balanced breakfast. Breakfast really can benefit your energy levels; concentration, mood and can even help you manage your weight.

Get involved and join farmers, producers, schools, retailers, caterers and individuals in celebrating the benefits of breakfast. Hundreds of events of all sizes are expected to take place across the country. For great ideas and tips on organising your own event, be it your first or your eleventh click [here](#). Or to find out what is happening in your area visit the [interactive map](#). Either way, there really is no excuse for not benefiting from the best meal of the day - breakfast!

Act FAST for stroke victims, say NHS

PEOPLE throughout Great Yarmouth and Waveney have been urged to act FAST to prevent lasting

damage if they suspect that someone they know may have suffered a stroke.

The call comes as the national 'act FAST' awareness campaign enters its second year.

Health bosses from NHS Great Yarmouth and Waveney have urged everyone to familiarise themselves with the symptoms and take immediate action if they suspect someone they know has suffered a stroke.

Strokes are caused by clots or bleeds in the brain, and lead to a loss of brain function. The symptoms people should look out for are:

Face weakness - can the person smile? Has their mouth or eye drooped?

Arm weakness - can they raise both arms?

Speech problems - can they speak clearly and understand what you say?

Time to call 999 - if they have any one of these symptoms, call an ambulance immediately.

Dr Jamie Wyllie, chairman of NHS Great Yarmouth and Waveney's Clinical Executive Committee, said: "Research shows that getting emergency treatment as quickly as possible after a stroke can increase the patient's chance of surviving while minimising

long-term disability.

“That is why it is so important for everyone to make sure they're aware of the symptoms and what to do if they notice speech problems or face or arm weakness in anyone they know.

“Stroke is the single biggest cause of severe disability in the UK, and affects around 150,000 people each year. The FAST campaign offers a really simple and effective way to remember the key symptoms - so I'd encourage everyone to familiarise themselves with its messages and act quickly if necessary. Time really is of the essence!”

Dementia Strategy Consultation

Living well with dementia: Transforming the quality and experience of dementia care for the people of Norfolk

Norfolk County Council, NHS Norfolk and NHS Great Yarmouth and Waveney is consulting on the draft joint dementia commissioning strategy, The 12 week consultation period will run from Monday 30 November 2009 – Monday 22 February 2010.

Following the publication of the National Dementia Strategy in May 2009 partners and stakeholders have been working together to shape the joint commissioning dementia strategy for Norfolk. The consultation document and full draft strategy sets

out our priorities for the next five years. We now need to know from you if we have got it right.

How to get involved

During the 12 week consultation we will be holding five public meetings throughout Norfolk to enable people discuss the vision for Norfolk and to share their views on the proposals. The venue date and time of each of the five meetings is listed below or you can find details on page 18 of the consultation document.

Some public meetings have already been held, with others due in the following locations:

The Assembly House, Theatre Street, Norwich,
Norfolk, NR2 1RQ, Tel: 01603 626402,
10 February 2010
4.00 pm – 7.00 pm

The Kings Centre Great Yarmouth
27 January 2010
4.00pm – 7.00pm

You can download a copy of the consultation document and full draft strategy from the Your Norfolk Your Say website by using the links below. If you do not have access to a computer, please telephone 01603 228847 for a copy to be sent in the post.

Disability Issues

Norfolk Council Seeks Resident Views on Disability Equality



Anyone with a disability or long-term health condition is being encouraged to take part in a survey - the results of which will help shape the work being done with residents with disabilities.

The survey, asking disabled people working, living and studying locally about their experience of disability in Norfolk today has been launched by Norfolk County Council and partners - including city and district councils, Norfolk Constabulary and health services. It can be found by visiting www.yournorfolkyoursay.org

Since 2006, Norfolk County Council and other local public bodies have had an important legal duty to produce a Disability Equality Scheme (DES) every three years.

Working with disabled people in drawing it up - the scheme looks to outline plans to promote equality for disabled people and highlight ways of tackling persistent disadvantage.

The second three-year scheme is now being created - with feedback from residents with disabilities, the Norfolk Coalition of Disabled People, and other disability access groups, seeing the creation of a new 'expert group' of disabled people early in 2010.

This expert group will be tasked with undertaking in-depth and ongoing analysis of DES across Norfolk and will independently assess the effectiveness of local action in relation to disability equality.

The survey, running until February 26, will provide further information to this group - helping to set priorities for the coming years.

To find out more about the survey, or for a copy of the survey in an alternative format such as large print, Braille, British Sign Language, audio tape or Easy to Read, contact Jo Argent by email: jo.argent@norfolk.gov.uk, or telephone 0344 800 8020 or minicom 0344 800 8011.

There will also be a one-off focus group for residents, in early 2010. Anyone interested in taking part can either include their details at the end of the survey, or contact jo.argent@norfolk.gov.uk

Benefits

Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

Who is it for? - People disabled before age 65 with care and mobility needs or who are terminally ill. (See AA for those who are aged 65 or over and Carers Allowance.)

Who pays it? - Pensions Disability and Carers Service via regional Disability Benefits Centres. Local rate inquiry line is 0345 12 34 56

Which leaflet? And how is it claimed? - DS 704 - includes a claim coupon (postage paid) which registers claim and leads to despatch of self-assessment claim pack. Information from Benefits Enquiry Line 0800 88 22 00. Textphone 0800 24 33 55 or claim online or by calling 0800 0556688 or text phone 0800 0234888

What are the age limits? - Claimant must be under 65 at time of first claim, but benefit can carry-on past 65 if awarded. No lower limit for care component; from 3 years for mobility component.

National Insurance based? - No.

Means tested? - No.

How long does it last? - Depends on period of award. DLA Care stops after 4 weeks in hospital or

residential care (unless self-funding) but DLA Mobility unaffected by stays in care. DLA Care stops after 12 weeks for under 16s in hospital. Children have DLA reviewed on 16th birthday

What is effect on other benefits? - As for AA above.

Is it taxable? - No.

Increases for dependants? - No, but can trigger Carers Allowance for carer.

Payable if in EU or other? - As for AA above.

Points to watch - Carer only gets CA if cared-for gets either top two care rates. Long application form for self-assessment, and help with completion invaluable. 3 months qualifying period unless terminally ill. Respite care can trigger suspensions of benefit, but DLA Care still paid for any time spent at home. Beware of short time limits on challenging decisions and new reduced time limits for submitting renewal claims. Awards can be superseded (increased) if health deteriorates but super cession request can open whole claim up for revision so theoretical risk of benefit reduction/removal.

You can view details of benefit amounts on the Community Care Inform website

Benefit Example

The client is 62 and is suffering from a serious heart condition, which led to him losing his job.

“He has just had an operation and will be unable to work for around three months afterwards.

His wife also has health problems and suffers from multiple sclerosis.

“Their only income is a small private pension and state pension that his wife is getting, along with the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) that his wife is also getting.

“This meant that they were left with only £194.35 per week to live on.

“They have a £100,000 mortgage which they cannot afford to pay.

“They are also having problems with paying their Council Tax and also have several other debts.

“The benefit situation is quite complex involving benefits based on a national insurance contributions (NIC) record, means tested and non-means tested benefits.

“After carrying out a benefit check the bureau identified that the clients had the following immediate entitlements:

Employment and Support Allowance (ESA). This is a benefit for people with limited capability for work because of ill health and/or disability. This is a complex benefit based on either a NIC record or is means tested – or both. Because the client had a good contribution record he qualified for a fixed amount of £64.30 per week.

State Pension Credit (SPC). This is a means tested benefit for older people. The couple qualify because their income is below a specified amount.

SPC also provides for Support for Mortgage Interest (SMI). This again, is means tested, and a payment is based on the size of their mortgage and a standard interest rate. These two components of SPC brought in an extra £105.82 per week Council Tax Benefit. This is based on a client's means – income, assets, etc. They were eligible for full benefit of £23 per week.

“The first three are administered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the last one by the local council.

“The bureau helped the clients understand the benefits and the conditions.

“It also guided them through the application process and with filling in the various forms.

“The result was an immediate increase in the couple’s weekly income of £193.12 to £387.47.

“The bureau also identified that the client’s wife now met many of the conditions for the middle rate care component of Disability Living Allowance.

“We helped her apply for this which is not means tested and depends solely on her circumstances.

“Assuming this application was successful this would give her an additional £47.10 per week plus it would entitle the couple to an additional premium of £29.50 on their State Pension Credit.

“This further increase of benefits of £76.60 will lift their income to £464.07 per week and will ease their anxiety over financial problems.”

Disabled and long-term ill employees 'need to be considered'

People who are off work for long periods of time due to illness or disability need to be given more support, it has been suggested.

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence made the call as it reminded employers

of its guidance for encouraging people to return to work.

With long-term absence thought to cost the UK economy £100 billion each year, public health excellence centre director Professor Mike Kelly explained that simple measures can be adopted to support employees.

And Dr Fiona Ford of the University of Central Lancashire noted that the guidelines will help GPs in their handling of sick notes.

"GPs have a very important role as the first port of call for people who are unable to work due to sickness or disability," she said.

A recent study by Leonard Cheshire Disability indicated that disabled employees are still experiencing discrimination in the workplace, with more than half stating this has been the case in the last 12 months.

Improvements needed to Pathways to Work scheme

The government has admitted its Pathways to Work programme has been less effective in getting disabled benefit claimants back into work than previously hoped and has launched a consultation on how it can be improved.

The Pathways to Work programme is designed to offer tailored support to those on incapacity benefit and its replacement benefit, employment and support allowance (ESA).

While an evaluation of the initial pilots of Pathways, which began in 2004, showed the scheme significantly increased the probability of claimants finding work, a later study published last year found this was not the case in some Jobcentre areas.

Client base shift The Department for Work and Pensions also said the introduction of ESA in 2008, which applies to new claimants, was changing the Pathways client base, increasing the need for support to be tailored to individuals' needs. It said a review was urgently needed.

RNID's head of policy, Mark Baker, welcomed the review but said the way funding for Pathways was allocated to employment support providers was holding back the provision of more tailored support for individuals.

He said: "The problem may have been that funding structures coupled with the recession meant it was very difficult for small specialist providers to engage with harder-to-help groups." He said specialist providers found it hard to absorb the costs of finding work for individuals who required intensive support.

Concerns also remain over the mooted toughening of the work capability assessment, which determines whether people are eligible for ESA or jobseeker's allowance. Those on JSA are deemed ready to work and receive less support and £25 a week less than those on ESA.

Warning The DWP has commenced a review of the system but disabled people's groups have warned that proposed reforms may make it more difficult for people to claim ESA because assessors would be able to take adaptations to enable people to work into account.

Ian Greaves, the editor of the Disability Rights Handbook, a guide to benefits published by the Disability Alliance, said: "My understanding of the review so far is that it will be far worse and almost nobody will be able to claim employment and support allowance."

A DWP spokesperson said: "The review is considering the impact of any adaptation an individual may make to a disabling condition, and ways to reflect this in the WCA. It is not about making the WCA tougher for people who are unable to work, instead it is about ensuring individuals receive the right benefit and support."

DWP officials are due to meet disabled people's groups tomorrow to discuss the progress of the review.

Fit for work The concerns follow figures published in October which showed 36% of those assessed for ESA from October 2008 to February 2009 were found to be fit for work and therefore not eligible for ESA. This compares with 17% of claimants under the old incapacity benefit system.

Respondents to the Pathways consultation should email their submissions by 28 January to helen.mcdaniel@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

90% OF VOTERS 'DON'T UNDERSTAND POLITICAL JARGON'

Nine out of 10 voters do not understand much of the jargon used in political literature, according to research published today.

The survey, carried out by learning disability charity Mencap, looked at 12 specific phrases that feature in a range of political manifestos, from the three main political parties and others.

The phrases included: progressive consensus, streamline consumer advocacy, affirmative action mechanism and monolithic services.

Some 90% of the 1,207 adults polled did not understand six or more of the phrases and almost one in four (24%) understood none at all.

Mencap carried out the poll to mark the launch of Get My Vote, a campaign calling for politicians to stop using complicated language, as the political parties release their manifestos in the run up to the general election.

Get My Vote aims to make sure people with a learning disability have the same chance as everyone else to vote.

Mencap said it believed that by putting pressure on political parties to make their manifestos easier to understand, more people both with and without a learning disability would go to the polls and vote.

Esther Foreman, campaigns manager at Mencap, said: "Clear language is vital for communicating with voters, whether they have a learning disability or not.

"The fact that even civil servants struggle with political phrases brings home the need to stop jargon being used.

"If politicians are serious about getting the votes from the general public, they must stop using meaningless words and phrases."

Mencap works alongside learning disability charity United Response to campaign for equality for all.

The charity is calling on members of the public to support the campaign by asking their MPs to make politics more accessible. Visit www.mencap.org.uk/edm for further details.

The research was carried out between March and September last year by Opinion Matters

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Carers Extra Employment Help for Carers

Thousands of carers are set to benefit from improved employment support from December 7th 2009, giving them the chance to combine paid work with caring and help reduce financial hardship.

Jobcentre Plus customers with caring responsibilities will also be able to access replacement care funding while they are taking part in employment training.

Yvette Cooper, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions said:

“Many carers really want to work, but find it hard to get the support or flexible work they need, to combine it with caring for relatives.

“We know that one in five carers have left or turned down a job because of their caring responsibilities.

That is why it's so important to give carers extra help, advice, funding for replacement or respite care and easier access to training too."

Imelda Redmond, Chief Executive of Carers UK, said:

"With three in five people caring for an ill or disabled relative at some point in their lives, how to juggle work and care is something we may all need to think about at some point. Replacement care to allow access to training and support, and staff with the expertise to help with the real challenges that face those trying to juggle work and care, are big steps towards giving carers new opportunities to stay in or return to work."

The extra support announced today includes:

- Ensuring carers have access to appropriate employment programmes – including one-to-one work focused support for carers
- Funding for replacement care for participation in approved activities
- A Care Partnership Manager in every Jobcentre Plus district
- Specialist training for advisers who work with carers more information is available by visiting www.direct.gov.uk.

Housing Repairs



**NORWICH HOME
IMPROVEMENT
AGENCY WARNS
DON'T GET**

RIPPED OFF BY COWBOY TRADESMEN

Norwich residents are being called on to avoid cowboy tradesmen and use a council-funded odd job scheme.

The Orbit Home Improvement Agency Handyperson Service is open to anyone who lives in the city. It provides approved and regulated contractors to do odd jobs around the house including putting up shelves, replacing tap washers and changing light bulbs.

The Orbit East-run service is provided in association with Norwich City Council to help avoid vulnerable and older people being ripped off.

Typical jobs include installing smoke detectors, key safes and grab rails, security locks, door chains and door viewers, wiring plugs, replacing fuses and fixing curtain rails.

Mr Goldsmith is just one customer who has taken advantage of the service, he said: "It's an excellent service and good value for money. Jim, the Handyperson is both helpful and kind. I would recommend the service to anyone."

Manager of the Norwich Home Improvement Agency, Norah Coker, said: "It can be quite intimidating having someone you don't know come into your home, so it's important to only use approved contractors. Our handyperson service gives peace of mind and our open pricing system means are no hidden charges."

For residents who qualify for the discounted scheme, the handyperson service costs £10 an hour for labour plus the cost of materials. Residents who do not qualify for the discount can still take advantage of the service at a cost of £20 an hour plus the cost of materials. For more information on the service call 01603 283337.

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Sports

Norwich Disabled Sports Forum

"The Norwich Disability Sports Forum is due to hold its third meeting in March 2010 at the Norman Centre. The group aims to share ideas and support activities happening for disabled people in the area. The club welcomes members from all clubs and organisations who would like to foster and promote

the provision of sport and physical activity opportunities for people with disabilities in and around Norwich.

For further please call 01603 212112 or sport@Norwich.gov.uk"

Active Norfolk Sports Group



Active Norfolk will be launching some Disability Get back into sessions over the next couple of months. Sports being looked at are Golf, Badminton, Tennis and Fencing. Dates and venues to follow.

The second Active Norfolk Adult Disability Games is scheduled for May 2010 at UEA Sportspark. This year there we are looking to do more sports and more sessions so it should be another great couple of days.

For entry forms or more information on either of the above or anything to do with Disability Sport, please contact Ellen Vanlint at Active Norfolk on 01603 697008 or email ellen.vanlint@activenorfolk.org

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Music for the Deaf Event

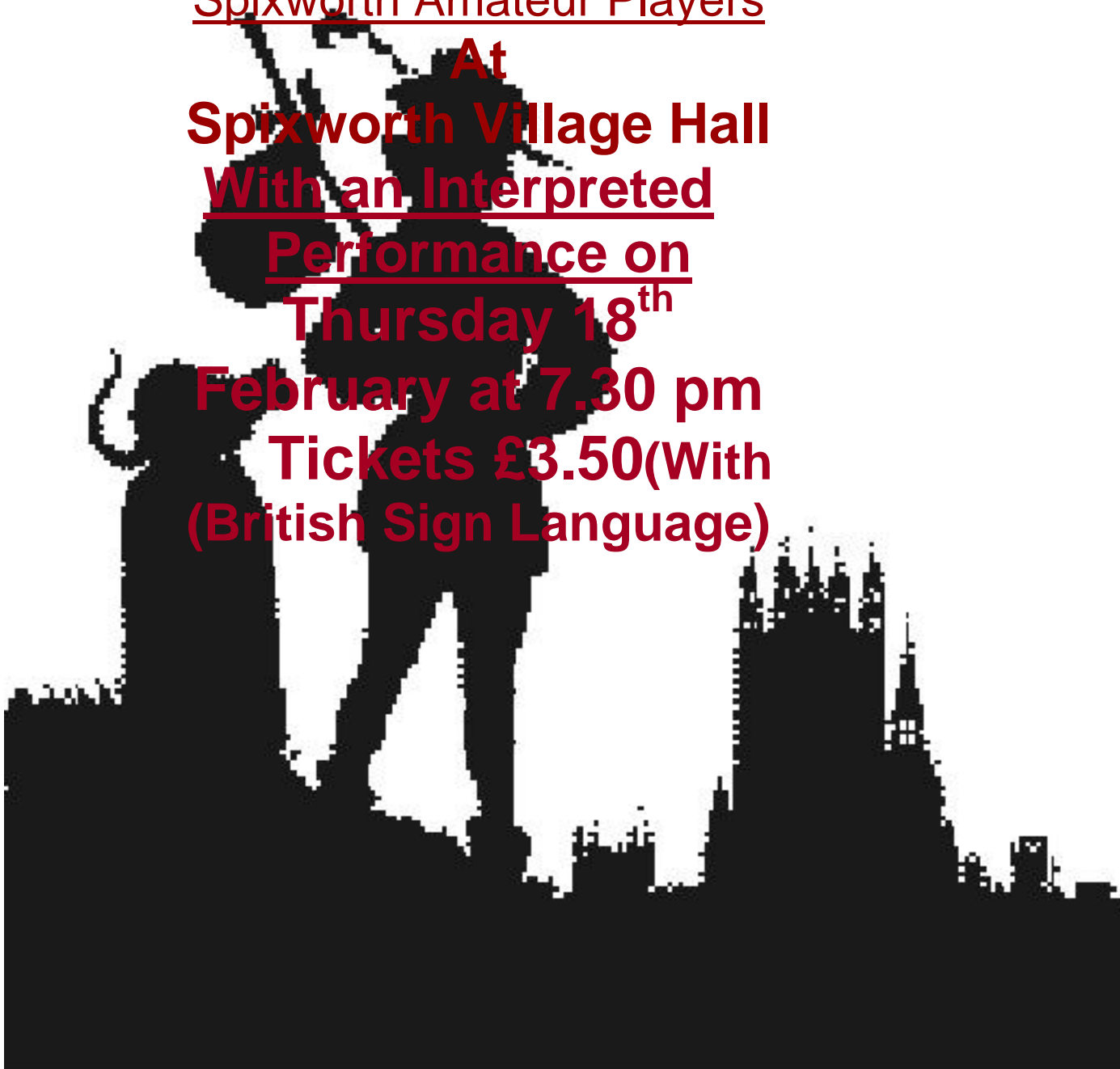
Music and the Deaf will be hosting a number of training events around the country to promote the work that they are doing and help others to do it too! The days will be called 'Sign Up' and in Norwich are at the Colman Junior School, South Park Avenue, Norwich NR4 7AU. Tuesday, February 2nd.

Dr Paul Whittaker OBE studied music at Oxford University and the RNCM. He founded MatD in 1988 and was awarded an OBE for services to music in 2007. Composer Andrew Smith studied at Leeds College of Music and works with a wide range of groups composing with and for deaf musicians. He is currently Composer in Residence at MatD. Vocal Leader Jeff Borradaile is a freelance choral leader working regularly with school choirs, community choirs and a choir of blind singers. Participants do not need to be leading singing to take part; the day is completely inclusive and suitable for all levels of experience.

If you already lead singing or signing and want to develop your existing skills, the day will enrich and extend the activity that you currently deliver. If you feel less confident about using singing and signing at school, the course will give you lots of techniques to integrate songs into your school day. To book your place or for more information please contact: paul@matd.org.uk or ring 01484 483115.

Dick Whittington

Presented By
Spixworth Amateur Players
At
Spixworth Village Hall
With an Interpreted
Performance on
Thursday 18th
February at 7.30 pm
Tickets £3.50(With
(British Sign Language)



Free Cinema Tickets

Under 26

There are 900 Free cinema tickets available until March 2011 if you live in the Norfolk or North/West Suffolk, North or North East Lincolnshire or Somerset areas:

To find out what's on offer and how to claim the FREE TICKETS follow the links as below:

Norfolk: www.creativeartseast.co.uk or call Alice on 01953 713390

Lincs: email gill.Vickers@northlincs.gov.uk or call Gill on 01724 297271

Alternatively visit www.nrta.org.uk/freetickets and follow the links to your local organisation.

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SEX & DRUGS & ROCK & ROLL (15)

courtesy of the Norwich Evening News

The latest indie Brit-flick on the block is the raucous rock-biopic about the life of urban poet and godfather of punk Ian Dury.

The film follows Dury's rise from gigging musician to punk-stardom with The Blockheads, and his descent into drink and drug addiction that came with the territory in the hedonistic 1970s.

But this is more than your standard rockumentary. The film also traces Dury's father-son relationships - his idolisation for his often absent father played by Ray Winstone and his unconventional relationship with his own son Baxter, played with hearty rebellion by Bill Milner.

Layered on top of this is another plot-line about Dury's disability - he famously wore a calliper and walked with a severe gait after the left side of his body was withered by childhood polio. And it is the ambition of cramming this many plotlines into one film that is the failing of an otherwise fascinating biography. It is just too long.

There are lengthy live music scenes for the Dury fans, flashbacks to set up the father-son relationship breakdowns and make-ups, quirky pop art cartoons to add a touch of authentic punk anarchy and, despite its scream from the screen energy, it is all a bit too much.

Andy Serkis as Dury however turns in a perfect character performance. He gets to the heart of Dury's many contradictions, is physically transformed with his lilting gait and maintains the mystery of this anti-hero. Dury fans will no doubt love it, and for everyone else the film is worth seeing for Serkis' performance alone.

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Articles of Interest

The Whitwell & Reepham Railway

We re-opened the station to the public on 28th February 2009 nearly fifty years after BR passenger closure, freight ceased on 1st May 1964 and it took nine months to get it ready to re-open the station site for the general public activities.

Our main intention is to restore the station to its former glory {circa 1940's} which includes relaying the track and sidings, acquiring rolling stock and setting up a museum relating to the station and the M+GN Joint Railway and one day to run along the "Marriott Way".

We currently have a 040T steam engine and a 040 diesel engine both of the locomotives are fully operational. We also have several coaches and other items of rolling stock (a few in need of varying states of repair). If the site gate is open then the site is open to the public and operating a service within the station yard every weekend. For a steam service we run the steam engine on the first Sunday on each month, a bank holidays and special open days (with a diesel service at other times). It is free to come and visit us, with free car park and you can ride in the train or even on the footplate if you wish. We serve light refreshments and we have now an alcohol license, we also have a shop and an ever growing reference library with a growing collection of connected historic railway items.

Whilst you visit us you may decide to sponsor a sleeper or even join our ever growing volunteer base as everyone can bring different knowledge, skills and energies to the project. The site is being made wheelchair friendly as we improve the site people on crutches or in wheelchairs can access the station building, please ring for details 01603 871694, email info@whitwellstation.com; www.whitwellstation.com

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New Talking Scale

Obesity can be fought with the Mandometer, a new talking scale

New technology that monitors portion size and how fast people eat is helping obese adolescents to change their behaviour.

New technology that monitors portion sizes and how fast people eat could be instrumental in fighting obesity a new study reveals today. Obese adolescents who monitor the speed at which they clear their plates learn to lose weight far more effectively, the dietary study has shown.

Tests in which patients were given instant feedback on their eating habits – using a computerised, talking scale known as a Mandometer – enabled

them to modify their behaviour, researchers in Bristol discovered.

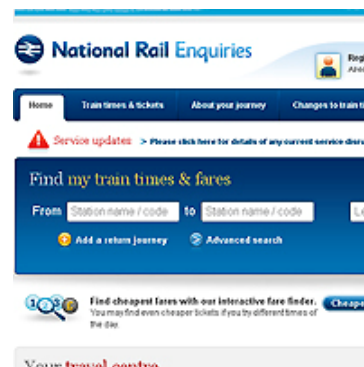
The portable weighing scale, slipped under the plate of food, is connected to a small screen that plots food removal over time – and compares it to a rate of consumption recommended by a food therapist.

By tracking portion size and how fast people eat, the youngsters, aged between nine and 17, managed to lose more pounds than those merely following standard dietary advice, according to the article published on bmj.com today.

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New-Look, Easier to Use National Rail Enquiries Launched

It's nice to be able to report good news about an important service now and then. So I'm glad to say that the new-look National Rail Enquiries website is a great improvement in both appearance and utility.



The website, run by Britain's Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC), enables you to plan a rail journey and find out train times and prices. It has always been useful but, in the past it

was a bit of a dog's dinner to look at, confusing and difficult to use.

But take a look at National Rail Enquires now. Everything is organized to make it easy for you to get details of train journeys, find the cheapest fares and buy your tickets.

There are a lot more functions, including the Stations Made Easy web tool launched last week, which have all been streamlined and made easy to navigate and use. Good show and thanks ATOC

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Answers to Christmas Quiz:

1b; 2c; 3b; 4a; 5c

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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 Adult Social Services Department. If you have something interesting going on that you think readers will be interested in, then please let us know by February 15th 2010

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