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Oxfordshire



Your Voice on Health & Social Care

Oxfordshire LINK Newsletter

August 2011

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the first edition of our new-look newsletter. You are receiving this as you are one of over a thousand participants in Oxfordshire LINK. You may recall from previous news that the LINK team have now transferred to a new Host organisation, Oxfordshire Rural Community Council. Our contact details can be found on the back of this newsletter. We hope you enjoy reading about Oxfordshire LINK and how we are working to improve the health and social care services that you, your family, friends and colleagues use.



Message from the Chair of Oxfordshire LINK

Welcome to the latest edition of the LINK newsletter. Firstly, as the newly elected Chair of Oxfordshire LINK, I would like to thank the former members of the Stewardship Group and in particular Dermot Roaf for their unstinting efforts and commitment in guiding LINK so ably into position ready for the transition to HealthWatch in 2012.

The staff too have worked hard to deliver key projects which include the highly successful Hearsay! events as part of innovative consultation in the local Community. Inevitably, as part of change and shifting budgets we have sadly had to say 'goodbye' to Man Lui

Clark and Nancy Darke and we thank them too for their hard work and influence on projects and marketing.

The LINK is now working closely with Oxfordshire Rural Community Council as the new host and we have restructured the decision-making process with Priority and Finance Groups, together with an overarching 'Core Group'.

In recognising the success of certain project work completed during the year by LINK volunteers, the aim is to be more proactive within the network and to look for creative partnerships with others in the community.

We are mindful of the Government's guidance to the NHS for Health and Social Care and will continue to work hard to talk with and listen to individuals in the community putting people central to the commissioning process. With this in mind I urge you to join LINK to help with this massive task and make use of the opportunity to shape services in the future.

Sue Butterworth



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Contact Details

Oxfordshire LINK host team

[Adrian Chant](#)
[Locality Manager](#)

[Nicky Robinson](#)
[Development Officer](#)

[Sue Marshall](#)
[Development Officer](#)

Update on the work of the LINK

LINK Core Group – what is it? What does it do?

The first meeting of the new 'Core Group' was a great success, with people who have been a part of LINK projects coming along to hear how they can become more involved.

Core Group members are participants in a project group, working in partnership with the LINK or representing other organisations in the LINK network. The purpose of the

Group is to oversee and support the work of the wider LINK. From within the Core Group have been drawn Priorities and Finance Groups which will take responsibility for a part of the LINK budget and help to determine which project proposals are taken forward.

As a focal point for LINK members, the Core Group acts

as the channel for communications between the various project activities and provides networking opportunities for LINK participants.



LINK Core Group – Meeting in Public

If you actively participate in the work of the LINK, we are inviting you to attend the next Core Group meeting, on the **21st September**, where you can share information with others and hear about new or ongoing projects which are being taken forward this year.

This will be a 'meeting in

public' where you are welcome to come along to observe the meeting and find out more about the work of the LINK and perhaps join a project group, if we are looking at something of interest to you and the services which you receive. Please phone the LINK office for more information and directions to the venue.

**LINK Core Group Meeting:
Wednesday 21st September
at Witney Methodist Church
High Street, Witney
Oxon OX28 6HG
6.30pm (networking &
refreshments) for 7.00pm
start, to 9.00pm**

Annual Report 2010–11

The LINK Annual Report for 2010-11 has been recently published.

It contains articles on the work carried out over the past year to help improve *your* Health and Social Care services. Inside, you will find information and the results of LINK project work;

how we involved the Community, all our HEARSAY! engagement events; 'Have a Say' Fund Awards and much more.

The report can be read on the [LINK website](#), or for a hard copy, please contact the LINK office.



Do you have an idea for a LINK project?

We want local people to have a voice and make a change. The main remit of the LINK is to gather information about local health and social care services - ideas, suggestions for improvement, what is working well and what isn't - and to feed this information back to the people who are providing the services.

We want to enable local groups and individuals to carry out Projects to make changes to their

health and social care. You may wish to canvas young mothers in a particular area about access to children's health services. You may want to do some work looking at signage in your local hospital for people with a visual impairment. The ideas are endless!

With the support of our experienced Development Team, you will be guided through the process. If you would like to put a proposal to the LINK to carry out a

project, please contact [Nicky](#) or [Sue](#) for more information and to obtain a Project Pack.



Social Care Hearsay! 2011

The second annual 'Hearsay!' engagement event for those who use adult social care services, was held earlier this year to find out if things had changed for the better and to ask guests what they wanted Social & Community Services to improve or change during the year.

Everything that was said at the

event and brought to our attention beforehand, was examined in detail and 5 key priorities were drawn up. These were: information & communications; standard of care at home; funding for care; standards in care homes & individual needs with regard to Personal Budgets. All are outlined in the 2011 Hearsay! Report, together with an action plan from

the Council on how they will implement the recommendations made by our guests for the forthcoming year. The report is available to read on our [website](#) or to receive a copy by post please contact [Sue](#) at the LINK office.

"I got a lot more that I expected to get out of coming today"
- Hearsay! guest

Personal Budgets

Following a LINK project from last year to understand people's experience of the new system of Personal Budgets, the LINK agreed to conduct a follow-up piece of research with the aim of understanding the experience of

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) clients in receipt of a Personal Budget. Alongside in-depth interviews with BME clients, this new project contacted many of the participants in the 2010 study to

find out how things have changed over the past year. The research is shortly to be submitted to the Director of Social and Community Services for a response to the recommendations contained within the report.

Podiatry Booklet – Out Now!

HELP! Where can I go if I've got a corn?

Do you need to access foot care services in Oxfordshire?

Following public comments regarding a lack of knowledge about services and alternative treatments available, the 'Standing Firm' booklet has been created by Oxfordshire LINK to provide advice on every aspect of foot care, helping you to get the right care at the right time.

It contains specific information about where you can go to access the services you need. For a copy of the booklet please contact [Nicky](#)



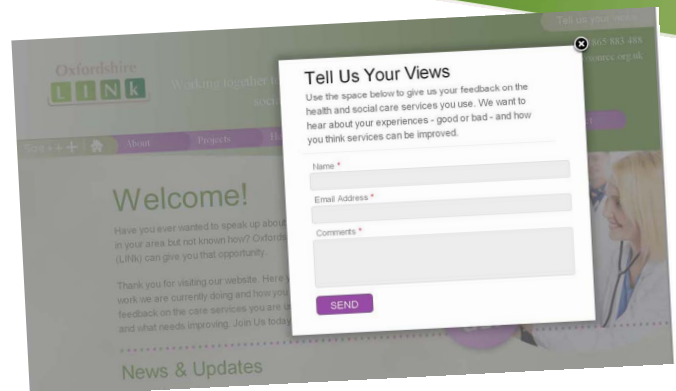
Launch of new LINK website

Following the move to Oxfordshire Rural Community Council, the LINK Host team have been working to produce a new website, in collaboration with local designers **onthelevel interactive**

Please do have a look around the new site - there is a wealth of reports and information being added about your local LINK and services, together with straightforward means of joining the local LINK community, becoming more involved with LINK projects and

'Having Your Say' about the health and social care you receive. Any comments submitted will be recorded and can provide evidence for future project proposals.

The new site will be launched towards the end of August - let us know what you think.



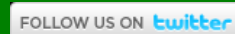
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For further information about the work of Oxfordshire LINK, or anything mentioned in this newsletter, please do not hesitate to [contact us](mailto:LINK@oxonrcc.org.uk):

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We're on the Web



Look out for our next Newsletter coming in December!