



## Why do I get this newsletter?

We send the newsletter out to every resident household where we have a record that someone has a disability or a long-term illness. At the moment this is currently over 2,500 households. We know from our last general survey that 49% of residents have a disability or long-term illness.

As the majority of Westlea residents with disabilities are over 55 we tend to focus on issues that may have more relevance to people in that age group. However, we want the Forum and newsletters to have something that will appeal to all residents, whatever your age or disability, so please complete the survey and tell us if there is something you would like to talk about or find out more about.

## Feedback from our last Forum

The Disability Forum in April attracted 62 residents to discuss a range of issues. Below are some contact details and feedback from residents about the topics discussed.

### Managing Condensation

Pete Knight, Westlea Maintenance Surveyor, talked about the practical ways that condensation could be managed, for example, by keeping lids on saucepans when cooking and mopping up condensation daily. Pete pointed out that mould resulting from condensation needs to be treated and Westlea can supply treatment packs where necessary. Residents felt that it was a problem that was shared. 60% felt Westlea could do more but the same percentage saying that residents could also do more to improve the problem.

### Electrical testing

Simon Watson, Westlea Customer Repairs Manager, wanted residents' views about getting the electrical contractors to offer additional options when carrying out electrical tests.

75% of residents at the meeting thought that it would be helpful to receive energy saving advice. The majority of people would also like more sockets.

**UPDATE** Contractors will give energy advice on use of equipment and tariffs.

### Wiltshire Mind

Sally Scott told us about the variety of services provided by Mind as well as the number of social and

small support groups. Wiltshire Mind also has a team of trained counsellors who can provide one to one counselling for those who need it. There is also befriending services aimed to bring support to those isolated or housebound, providing a friendly, regular contact.

**For more information contact Sally on 01225 775770 or email [info@wiltshiremind.co.uk](mailto:info@wiltshiremind.co.uk).**



### How accessible is your town?

John and Sue from the residents' steering group gave a presentation using photographs to show what access was like around Chippenham, looking at shops, cafes and leisure facilities.



## What did you think about the forum?

### YOU SAID

Generally people enjoyed the event with 75% feeling that they learned something new. We also asked people to put forward ideas and topics for future forums as we try to look at subjects that are relevant to you.

Some people were not happy to have talks from Westlea staff about things that concerned all residents and not just those with disabilities.

### OUR REPLY

Westlea do need to consult with you about different kinds of services and so we will try to get the balance right in the future. The residents on the steering group use your feedback to plan events so do let us know what you think.

## Interested in taking part in other social activities?

Fill in the survey that has been included with this issue of Disability News and let us know if you would like to receive information about trips or other social activities.

## Our next Westlea

# Disability Forum

*Wednesday 27 October 2010*

**Neeld Hall, Chippenham • 10am–1.30pm**

- First showing of DVD prepared by the steering group
- Information available from: Occupational Therapists, CAB, Link, Carers Support, Wiltshire Involvement Network and the new Helping Hand Gardening Service
- Try arts and crafts – painting, card making, poetry
- Invitation – find out more about computers, aids to help disabled users and book a lesson
- You can even give indoor curling or wheelchair slalom a go!

**To book your place please fill out the separate booking / survey form – postage paid reply card.**

Lunch and refreshments provided and **BINGO**

## Are you moving into a Westlea property to care for someone?

If you are moving in to support a friend or relative, then you do need to let Westlea know – there may well be things you will need to plan for when your role as a carer of a Westlea tenant ends, especially if you might be in need of accommodation in the future to take on the tenancy.

### Here at Carers Support North Wilts we can help you:

- > Are you getting all the benefits you are entitled to as a carer?
- > Do you know what support, money, respite and social activities are available to you as a carer?
- > Do you want opportunities to influence local / national carers' strategies?
- > Who else can help carers?

A carer is someone, who without payment, provides help and support to a relative, friend or neighbour who cannot manage alone, because of frailty, ill health or disability.

Being a carer may mean doing someone's shopping, cleaning, making sure they are safe or being at the other end of the phone in the middle of the night when the sad moments in life mount up and you need someone to talk to.

If you are supporting a family member or friend then you could be deemed a carer and be entitled to certain benefits, free training or social events from Carers Support North Wilts

**For support, advice, information or someone to talk to please contact Sandi Wilson (Westlea Support Worker) at Carers Support North Wilts on 01249 444110 or email [office@carersnw.co.uk](mailto:office@carersnw.co.uk)**

Sue Simmons would like to say thank you to 'Cycology' bike shop in Chippenham, for repairing the wheels on her wheelchair. They did a very good job.

If you would like to have any part of this document explained or translated, or in a different format such as larger print or on audio tape, please contact Westlea on 01249 465465 to discuss your needs.



For further information please contact Julie Bielby Westlea Housing, Methuen Park, Chippenham SN14 0GU Phone 01249 466054 or email [julie.bielby@westlea.co.uk](mailto:julie.bielby@westlea.co.uk).

## Did you know?

### Minor adaptations without delay

Westlea has a small budget to install or alter hand rails and grab rails. **For further information please phone 01249 466100.**

### Exercise class

The Olympiad in Chippenham runs an exercise class on Monday afternoons, 2pm to 2.45pm for people with learning disabilities. **For further information please phone 01249 444 144.**



### Thursday morning swimming

At Bath Leisure Centre, North Parade, 9am to 12 noon for people with disabilities. The pool is heated to 30°C. Good disabled access and dedicated disabled changing rooms and toilets. **For further information please phone 01225 486905.**

## Getting out and about Local theatres

**We are very lucky in this area to have some great, accessible theatres. I love the theatre and go regularly to Bristol, Bath and Swindon.**

The theatre I use most is the Hippodrome in Bristol. They have a side entrance for people in wheelchairs to use. Along this road there are parking bays for blue badge holders. When you get into the theatre there is a wheelchair lift to get up to a platform where four wheelchair users and their helpers can sit without transferring. This platform provides a great view to the stage. I have found that if they have the air conditioning on or a door open it can become quite chilly. The size and weight of your wheelchair may be a factor in deciding where you sit and it is advisable to discuss options when booking.

There are two types of assisted hearing systems,

infra red and loop. They also have assisted performances where signing is used and an audio description.

Contact Trish on 0117 3023222, she is in charge of all matters concerning disability. Staff are helpful and make booking tickets through to attending the performance as smooth and enjoyable as possible. The theatre offers concessions to those with restricted mobility, visually impaired, the hard of hearing and people with learning disabilities which allows you to have your ticket at the cheapest rate which I thought was a very kind gesture.

Contact the Bath Theatre Royal on 01225 823476, minicom 01225 329689. Swindon Wyvern offer similar support and concessions phone 01793 524481 for further information.

Bath has recently been refurbished and will have improved access from September

**Vicky Cornish  
Disability Steering Group**

## Aids and adaptations

There is a new Westlea leaflet now available outlining our approach to aids and adaptations. The leaflet explains how tenants can go about obtaining a Disabled Facilities Grant and gives some advice about what to do if they don't qualify for grant aid.

It also provides some information about small adaptations such as grab rails, scooter stores, and dropped kerbs etc.

**The leaflet is available from our Chippenham office reception or you can download it from the Westlea website at [westlea.co.uk](http://westlea.co.uk). If you would like a copy sent to you in the post please phone Jo Taylor or Shirley Davis on 01249 466061.**

