



# livewire

*for everyone with an interest  
in disability in Somerset*



- ◆ **New stroke support in Somerset**
- ◆ **Mendip's homeshare scheme**
- ◆ **DeafPlus van in your area**

**Livewire is a free newsletter for anyone with an interest in disability in Somerset.** It's published four times a year and is funded by Somerset County Council Community Directorate, but edited independently. The content of Livewire does not necessarily represent the views of Somerset County Council.

- **Have you got news or information for Livewire?**
- **Do you want to add or remove your name from the mailing list? Contact the editor, Carla Mercy, at:**

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**Email: [livewire.somerset@btoopenworld.com](mailto:livewire.somerset@btoopenworld.com)**

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**NHS Credit Crunch Stressline : 0300 123 2000**

Worried about the recession? So much that you can't sleep? The stressline is open 8am-10pm every day. Health advisers will spend time talking things over with you. Whatever your problem, they'll offer practical advice or point you to just the right service. Calls cost the same as those to standard landlines. Costs from mobiles vary.

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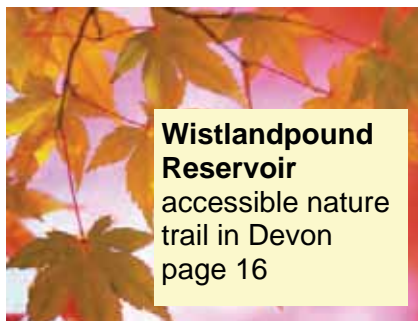
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## Going deaf? Make it work for you

by Pam Eaves

Are you becoming hard of hearing? I began to go deaf in my late forties and since then I've picked up some tips on how to cope which have proved useful.

If you notice your hearing is failing, do ask your doctor sooner, rather than later, to arrange a hearing test for you. Recent research proves that if one has an aid fitted in the early stages of hearing loss, your brain will 'remember' processing sounds and adjust better to using it. Advice given by ENT

consultants is to wear the aid for short periods each day, initially, until your brain becomes accustomed to making sense of the sounds again and adapts. Persevere and don't bury "that dratted thing" in a drawer. Believe me, they do work with practice and you're the one who will benefit.

Make it work for you by avoiding situations you don't enjoy. You can 'go deaf' when volunteers are required for jumble collection, and if the local hypochondriac corners you, don't even make an effort. Just stick a sympathetic smile on your face and plan your menu while they witter on.

Standing in a shrieking aviary

at crowded parties clutching a glass of warm, white wine is not my cup of tea but, if you like it, remember that even people with perfect hearing can't pick up speech against that jabbering so you're not missing much. And those dreadful, stripped-down restaurants with bare walls, floors, tables and screeching chairs, accompanied by the clatter of cutlery! Choose a cosy, carpeted and curtained venue to meet your friends.

The NHS provides digital hearing aids and most halls and churches have the loop system so you can enjoy lectures, services, whatever, by switching your hearing aids to the 'loop' setting which cuts out background noise; and now most theatres furnish amplified ear-phones on request. By using ear-phones for television and radio you can hear clearly without the volume being too high for other people, and I've recently acquired an amplified telephone which is a boon.

Since joining a lip reading class, I've realised everybody

automatically lip reads to an extent. The main skill to learn is concentration. Get the subject of the conversation and the rhythm of the speech, then practise the mental jigsaw puzzle required to fill in details and you'll be surprised how much you can 'hear' when you become adept. It keeps the brain on the hop so the old grey matter is exercised.

Personally, I try to live by a mantra I read years ago in an article on arthritis: "Cultivate an optimistic frame of mind" because you can feel extremely left out when you're deaf and it's easy to retire into a shell and become depressed. That's when people get fed up with you, not because you're deaf.

### **Some useful tips to remember:**

Place yourself in a favourable position so the light shines on other people's faces. That way you can practise the above skills more easily and pick up valuable clues to the conversation.

If you don't catch something,

ask a 'closed' question, e.g. "Did you say fifteen?" instead of "What did you say?" or "Did you say fifty or fifteen?"

Don't be embarrassed if you have to ask someone to speak slowly or repeat what they said. They're not embarrassed. Why should you be?

You can practise these tricks without attending a lip-reading class, but it does help to learn the shape of consonants and vowels on the lips in a constructive way under tuition. Of course you have to work at it and no-one else can do that for you, but the reward is being part of the community instead of sitting alone wondering what you're missing.

There's no need to despair if you discover your hearing is failing. There is life after deaf.

.....  
The RNID website features a free online hearing check. [www.rnid.org.uk](http://www.rnid.org.uk)



**Deaf Plus is a registered charity which provides a Mobile Advisory Service (MAS) van that travels around Somerset. Friendly staff on the van offer will advice on all aspects of hearing loss, including welfare benefits and liaising with social services, as well as hearing aid care and maintenance. You can examine equipment specially designed for deaf and hard of hearing people including: telephone amplifiers; flashing light doorbells; alarm clocks — visual and vibrating; TV loop systems and personal listeners; textphones.**

**If you know of an area that would benefit from a visit from the MAS van or if you live in sheltered accommodation and you think you and your fellow residents would appreciate the chance to visit the MAS van, please get in touch with DeafPlus.**

## Where can I find the MAS van?

Venues with an asterisk are at sheltered accommodation or care homes. If you'd like to attend these venues, please speak to the scheme manager. Venues can be subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances. Please check with DeafPlus before making a special journey.

Kate Harwood Tel/Fax: 01935 415880

Email: [kate.harwood@deafplus.org](mailto:kate.harwood@deafplus.org)



### OCTOBER

- Fri 23 Summerlands car park, Minehead  
10.30am—12.30pm
- Fri 23 Morrisons car park, Bridgwater 1.30pm—3.30pm

### NOVEMBER

- Thur 5 HOH club, Taunton Scout & Guide Centre 2-4pm
- Fri 6: Davies Close, Winsham\* 10.30am-noon
- Fri 6 Kents Lane, Tatsworth\* 1.30pm-3pm
- Tues 10 lip reading class at Frome library 10am-noon
- Tues 10 lip reading class, off Windmill Hill, Glastonbury  
1.30-3pm
- Thurs 12 Chichester Close, Burnham on Sea\*  
10.30am—12.30pm
- Thurs 12 Morrison's car park, Taunton 1.30-3.30pm
- Fri 13 Bovermoor Extra Care, Street\* 10am-noon
- Fri 13 Fletcher House, Wells\* 1.30-3pm
- Mon 16 Tannery and Portway Day Centre, Street\*  
10.30am-noon
- Mon 16 Lahs Place, Beckington\* 1.30-2.15pm
- Fri 20 Wiveliscombe town square 10.30am-12.30pm
- Fri 20 Milverton surgery 1pm-3pm
- Wed 25 Ilminster lip reading class,  
Adult Learning & Leisure 10am-noon
- Wed 25 Christian Centre, Somerton lip reading class  
1.30-3.30pm
- Thurs 26 Lime Close, Street\* 10am-noon
- Thurs 26 The Glen, Evercreech\* 1.30-3pm
- Fri 27 Barton Close, Berrow 10.30am-12.30pm

**NOVEMBER**

**Fri 27** Penn Close, Cheddar\* 1.30-3.30pm

**DECEMBER**

**Wed 2** Wellington lip reading class, Corams Lane  
10am-noon

**Thurs 3** Petters Way car park, Yeovil 10am-noon

**Thurs 3** Riverside, Horton\* 1pm-2.30pm

**Fri 4** Ivy House Day centre, Bridgwater\*  
10.30am—12.30pm

**Fri 4** Tesco's car park, Langport 1.30-3.30pm

**Wed 9** Active Living Centre, Crowshute House, Chard\*  
10.30am-noon

**Wed 9** Pitway Day Centre, South Petherton\* 1.30-3pm

**Thurs 10** Yeovil lip reading class 10am-noon

**Thurs 10** Lipreading class, Ansford Community Hall,  
Castle Cary 1pm-3pm

**Fri 11** Elizabeth Court, Burnham on Sea\*  
10.30am-12.30pm

**Fri 11** Longforth car park, Wellington 1.30-3.30pm

**Fri 18** Silvermead, Alcombe\* 10.30am-noon

**Fri 18** Cox's Yard car park, Somerton 1.30-3.30pm

**Cafe Conversation for arts  
practitioners in Somerset**

What's inspiring or challenging you about your work? A friendly, informal 'conversation' expertly hosted by a disabled artist and experienced facilitator. Both emerging and established Deaf and disabled artists, using all art forms, are welcome to share current creative projects and ideas, and discuss what might be needed for the next steps.

Brewhouse Theatre, Taunton on **Thursday 22nd October** from 10am till noon. Admission is free.

Contact: Christoffer de Graal on 01392 219440  
or email: [development@kaleidoarts.org](mailto:development@kaleidoarts.org)





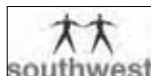
The **Somerset Access and Inclusion Network (SAIN)** is a project managed by **Compass Disability Services**. The purpose of the SAIN project is to bring together disabled people, their carers and organisations that represent disabled people, to access their views on various topics. We are approached by various bodies including the County Council, District Councils, Health Authority and other agencies who would like to understand the wants and needs of disabled people when developing their services or facilities.

We gather the views of our members in various ways including invites to participate in focus groups, disability forums, questionnaires and site visits. We encourage the commissioning body to fund transport, care and communication support so that our events are fully inclusive. The views gathered are fed back to the commissioning body who are then asked for their response to the information they receive. Some groups and forums meet on a regular basis, some of our projects are one-off events.

Membership of the network is free. All members receive a copy of the "Networker" our bi-monthly newsletter, and can be involved in as many or as few of the projects as they wish.

Why not join the network today? Anyone interested in joining should contact us on **0330 333 0089** / 01823 282823 or e mail [sadie@compassdisability.org.uk](mailto:sadie@compassdisability.org.uk) for a membership form.

## First Step (pre-employment training)



In January 2010 **Compass Disability Services** is delighted to be running a pre-employment training course through funding and support from the South West Foundation, Learning Curve and Learning Skills Council and the Community Grants programme.

Do you live in **Taunton Deane** or the **Sedgemoor** area of Somerset? Are you thinking about returning to work after a long break away, starting work for the first time or interested in volunteering, but feel that you lack the confidence? Then this course is for you.

The course will provide learners with the opportunity to take a journey to build their confidence and understand the valuable role disabled people play in society and in the employment market.

Through the course each learner will create their own portfolio of work that will be

unique to them displaying their skills and abilities. Each session will be interactive, educational and informative. Some of the topics will include taking a look at confidence building and assertiveness; the barriers disabled people face and support at work.

We are also planning an activity-based away day that will be a lot of fun and a field trip that will give people the opportunity to speak to other disabled people in the workplace.

At the end of the course there will also be a *What Next?* session that will take a look at what else is available to help learners move closer to fulfilling their work aspirations.

If you are a disabled person and are interested in First Step then please contact Rachel on **0330 333 0089** or email: [rachel@compassdisability.org.uk](mailto:rachel@compassdisability.org.uk)

## Access to Work - practical help at work

Access to Work can help you if your health or disability affects the way you do your job. It gives you and your employer advice and support with extra costs which may arise because of your needs.

Access to Work might pay towards the equipment you need at work, adapting premises to meet your needs, or a support worker. It can also pay towards the cost of getting to work if you cannot use public transport. If you need a communicator at job interviews, Access to Work may be able to help.

You may be able to get Access to Work if you are:

- in a paid job
- unemployed and about to start a job
- unemployed and about to start a Work Trial
- self-employed and your disability or health condition stops you from being able to do parts of your job.

Your disability or health condition may not have a big effect on what you do each day, but may have a long-term effect on how well you can do your job.

If you feel that the type of work you do is affected by a disability or health condition that is likely to last for 12 months or more, contact your regional Access to Work contact centre to check whether you can get help.

Alternatively, ask the Disability Employment Adviser (DEA) at your local Jobcentre about Access to Work.

For south west England, contact:  
Jobcentre Plus,  
Access to Work  
Operational Support Unit  
Alexandra House,  
377 Cowbridge Road East  
Cardiff CF5 1WU

Telephone: **02920 423 291**  
Textphone: 02920 644 886  
Fax: 02920 423 342  
Email: [atw-team-wales@  
jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:atw-team-wales@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk)



Homeshare is a new scheme that benefits older and disabled people, who need some support to carry on living at home, and younger people who need somewhere to live.

The **householder** may be at a stage in their life where they need some support or would appreciate some companionship. The householder can be a single person or a couple.

The **homesharer** needs accommodation and is willing to give some help, up to 10 hours a week, in exchange for somewhere to stay.

The householder benefits:

- Help with daily tasks e.g. cooking and cleaning
- Doesn't have to pay for services

- Alternative to more traditional services
- Companionship
- Security within the home
- Reassurance for family who can't always be there

The homesharer benefits:

- Saves money by not paying rent
- Companionship
- Living in an otherwise unaffordable area
- Safe and secure home environment

It's important to realise that the homesharer isn't a live-in housekeeper or a live-in personal carer. And the scheme isn't a "lodger" arrangement.

Typical householders are Mr and Mrs X, both aged 80 plus. They have concerns about their health and

mobility. Mrs X is still able to drive but has become reluctant to travel long distances or to drive at night. This has limited the social life they previously enjoyed. They would like to be matched with a homesharer who is a careful driver and would be able to give them lifts.

They would also appreciate some help with carrying shopping into the house, lifting heavier items, reaching high places and generally keeping the home neat and tidy. They can offer the homesharer a double bedroom with en-suite facilities in a modern, centrally-heated house.

Homesharers have many different reasons for joining the scheme. These include moving to the area to work or study and not being able to afford to rent a property; needing accommodation because their family is moving away but they wish to remain in the area; enjoying companionship

and not wishing to live alone, or needing somewhere to live while saving for a deposit for their own home.

Mendip Homeshare covers Shepton Mallet, Wells, Glastonbury, Street, Frome and surrounding villages. It offers a safe and secure matching service between those who'd like support and those able to provide it. There is no charge for the service and there is ongoing support once the arrangement is in place.

Mendip Homeshare is part of the age2age initiative of the Housing Associations Charitable Trust.

Contact:

Sue Galpin  
Homeshare Co-ordinator  
Mendip Care & Repair Ltd  
Barley House  
The Old Brewery  
Charlton Estate  
Shepton Mallet  
BA4 5QE

Tel: **01749 345379**

Email: [sue.galpin@mendipcareandrepair.co.uk](mailto:sue.galpin@mendipcareandrepair.co.uk)

## Benefit updates

### **Adult Dependency Increase:**

Pensioners can get an Adult Dependency Increase (ADI) on their state pension for their wife or husband, or someone who looks after their children, if they are considered to be financially dependent on that person. The increase is currently £57.05. This benefit will no longer be available after 6 April 2010. People already receiving this benefit will be able to keep it until they no longer meet the conditions or until 5 April 2020, whichever comes first.

**Work Choice:** The Department of Work and Pensions is pressing ahead with a new programme to replace WORKSTEP, a back-to-work scheme which was aimed at people with learning difficulties and/or learning difficulties and mental health conditions. The scheme will be replaced by *Work Choice*, which will move away from the rigid one-size-fits-all approach. The new programme will offer specialist support and is expected to start in October 2010.

**Jobcentres:** From Autumn 2009, young people aged 18-24 with more than 12 months continuous claim to an incapacity benefit, will be able to access the full range of *Pathways to Work* help and support available e.g. the condition management programme and in-work support. They will also have to attend work focused interviews with a personal adviser.

**Pension Credit:** If you're aged over 60 and on a low income, you might qualify for Pension Credit. This tops up your income to £130 a week (single) and £198.45 a week (couples). To apply for credit, call 0800 991 234.

**NHS and premium rate:** Premium-rate phone numbers that allow surgeries or hospitals to profit from patients' calls are to be banned across the NHS. Charges under which patients pay more than the cost of a local call from a land-line are being scrapped in England. Patients will still dial 0844 or 0845 numbers to get through but tariffs will be adjusted to ensure they pay only for the cost of a local call.

**Prescriptions:** Nearly two thirds of cancer patients are still paying for prescriptions even though they were made exempt in April. Of the 150,000 people in England exempted from the £7.20 fee per item, only about 60,000 have taken up the offer. Ask your GP or oncology clinic for an exemption certificate. The certificate will need to be countersigned by a GP or an oncologist.

**Miners knee injury:**

In July 2009, osteoarthritis of the knee in miners (prescribed disease A14) was added to the list of diseases for which *Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit* can be paid. Any miner or ex-miner with osteoarthritis of the knee, who has worked underground for ten years, before 1986, may be entitled.

Time spent working underground from 1986 onwards may still count in certain circumstances, depending on the type of work done and whether it was carried out in a non-mechanized mine. Claims should be made using the

claim pack B1 100PD. You don't have to pay to make a claim and you don't need to use a solicitor to help you make the claim. Claimants may have to undergo a medical examination. For more information Tel: 0845 758 5433 Textphone: 01977 464144

**National minimum wage:**

This increased on 1 October 2009. Workers aged 22 years and above are now entitled to a minimum of £5.80 per hour. Workers under 21 will get £4.84 per hour. Workers under 21, but above compulsory school leaving age, will get £3.57 per hour. Employers will no longer be able to include customers' tips in the calculation of a worker's hourly rate of pay.

**Voluntary work:** Many people don't realise that jobseekers are allowed to do unlimited volunteering work while claiming benefits, providing they remain available for and actively seeking work.



## Wistlandpound Reservoir

Wistlandpound Reservoir in north Devon is a beauty spot accessible to wheelchair users who can enjoy the 2km lakeside trail. A pioneering project has opened up this secluded spot to all visitors, who can enjoy the tranquillity of the forest and test out the innovative exercise equipment at what is the UK's first all-ability 'trim trail'.

Wistlandpound Reservoir has been carefully developed into a countryside site with wheelchair accessible trails and activity equipment. All interpretation facilities at the reservoir are designed to stimulate the senses. Trails, bird hides and gates are accessible as are the toilets.

Wistlandpound is located just off the A399 near Barnstaple. The woodland walks and car

parks are open daily. There is ample parking but, if you would like to use the disabled car park which is closer to the reservoir, please contact the office on **01598 763706**. You will need to collect a ticket from the local Calvert Trust office.

*Discover Wistlandpound is a*



partnership between Calvert Trust Exmoor, the Forestry Commission and South West Lakes Trust. At time of going to press, Wistlandpound's website says that its Discovery Centre is open to the public but this is, in fact, now closed to the public and will only be used for educational school visits .

The nearby *Old Station Inn* is accessible and can offer refreshment facilities including meals or just a cup of tea. Phone 01598 763520 for details.

[www.discoverwistlandpound.org.uk](http://www.discoverwistlandpound.org.uk)

Discover Wistlandpound  
c/o Calvert Trust Exmoor  
Wistlandpound  
Kentisbury, Barnstaple  
EX31 4SJ



**If you take a multi-vitamin supplement, have it with the largest meal of the day. When you eat a lot of food, your body prepares to absorb more nutrients, so it'll take more from the supplement than at other times. (Always take prescription medicines as instructed by your doctor.)**

**The reciprocal health agreement which Jersey has enjoyed with the UK for 30 years was scrapped in April 2009. If you fall ill or have an accident when visiting the island, you will only be eligible for free healthcare in accident and emergency departments. If you have treatment in any other hospital departments, you will be liable to pay. This includes x-rays, outpatient appointments, treatment on a ward and operations. Travellers should check they have adequate travel insurance.**



**Burnham-on-Sea's Moose Lodge would like to know of a charitable cause that could make use of the foil and plastic milk bottle tops they are collecting. Contact Livewire.**

## **Sedgemoor Disability Forum**

The recent meeting of this group, facilitated by the Somerset Access and Inclusion Network, took place at the Canalside Centre, Bridgwater. The meeting included speakers from Sedgemoor District Council's planning department building control. Somerset County Council's accessible transport team leader, Gail Lanigan, was there, together with Tom Dougall, the transport officer for Sedgemoor. The afternoon session heard from Age Concern and there was a consultation discussion on the current policy concerning access to local taxis. The next meeting will be in October, venue to be confirmed. Please contact SAIN on 0330 3300089 or email [mandy@compassdisability.org.uk](mailto:mandy@compassdisability.org.uk) if you'd like to be kept informed about this group.

## **Dementia Advisers**

The Somerset Dementia Advisor Service will start in November after winning a £200,000 government award. The money will fund two full-time and one part-time

dementia advisors, working across Somerset including GP surgeries and Active Living Centres.

## **Mental health arrests : keeping people out of cells**

Police in Avon and Somerset make arrests under the Mental Health Act about five times a week. Under a new initiative, some people arrested under this Act are no longer being locked up in police cells. About half of them are being taken to special facilities in a psychiatric hospital in Taunton or Yeovil under an agreement between the police and the Somerset Partnership NGS Foundation Trust, which provides mental health services.

This will allow the person to be properly assessed by a doctor and a mental health professional to determine whether they should be admitted to hospital or helped in the community. The move away from taking a person to a police cell is reducing the level of distress ...

*... continued on page 20*



## Stroke Support

A stroke could happen to any member of a family but it will affect them all. The Stroke Association can help.

We have developed local community services now available in Somerset:

- **Community Stroke Support and Family and Carer Support** providing information, advice and long term support to people affected by stroke, their carers and families.
- **Communication Support** for people who are experiencing difficulties with talking, reading and writing.

We also provide a national telephone helpline, for information, non-medical advice, publications and details of our welfare grants scheme.

For more information, contact the National Helpline **0845 3033 100**  
[www.stroke.org.uk](http://www.stroke.org.uk)

Your local Stroke Co-ordinators are:

Carol Clifford or Lynda Chatfield (Williton)  
01984 634276

Rachel Lawrence (Bridgwater)  
01278 789365

Lorna Perry (Taunton)  
01823 276798



*continued from page 18 ...*

experienced by a mentally ill person. Bob Jones, Somerset Partnership legal strategies manger, said: "People in distress may not always fully appreciate the consequences of their actions or their effect on others. Police use their power reluctantly but agreed with us that the majority of those they detain under the Mental Health Act would be better served being held in the caring environment of a hospital".

## **FLUX 2010**

This is a celebration of arts and disability in Somerset. The third FLUX Festival will take place in May next year at venues throughout Somerset. The festival aims to celebrate and promote arts in Somerset and to widen participation for disabled people to enjoy the arts in Somerset. The Somerset Arts Officers Group is funding the festival and there is a small amount of funding available to support eligible groups and individuals. If you're interested in getting involved,

contact Catherine Beedell on: [cbeedell@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:cbeedell@tiscali.co.uk)

## **Bridgwater talking newspaper**

British Lions Club International produces a weekly talking newspaper for blind and partially sighted people, based on main news items, announcements and postbag from the Bridgwater Mercury and the Bridgwater Times. This service is free of charge.

If you'd like to be included, phone Steve on 01278 441227 (morning) or 01278 421407 (afternoon and evening). Or contact him at: [steveanglen@talktalk.net](mailto:steveanglen@talktalk.net)

## **New Yeovil Centre**

A new £1million NHS walk-in health centre has been opened in Yeovil. The new health centre, funded by NHS Somerset, is on the first floor of Boots in Middle Street. It's open every day from 8am until 8pm. Doctors at the centre are able to offer help to people with anything from coughs, colds and flu to emergency contraception and minor injuries.



Expert Patients Programme  
Community Interest Company

Are you a carer or do you live with a long term condition? Following the success of the expert patients programme last year, another series of free courses are planned for Somerset residents.

The courses are:

- **Persistent Pain** — Taunton, Burnham on Sea.
- **Chronic Disease Self Management** — Chard, Wincanton, Wells, Shepton Mallet, Frome.
- **New Beginnings** — (for people with a mental health problem) Yeovil, Minehead.
- **Looking After Me** (for carers) — Wincanton, Yeovil.

The courses run for two-and-a-half hours each week, over a six week period, and are led by trained tutors who also

have a long term condition or are carers. The courses will look at:

- Dealing with pain and extreme tiredness.
- Coping with feelings of depression.
- Relaxation techniques and exercise.
- Healthy eating.
- Communication with family, friends and professionals.



Support tutor, Lindy Gibbons, says: "There is clearly a need for people to learn new ways of coping with their condition and for carers to have some 'me' time. These courses provide an opportunity for people to take charge of their lives, meet new friends, gain some useful and practical skills and ease the isolation."

For more information, phone **0800 988 5520** or email: [enquiries@eppcic.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@eppcic.co.uk)



## Big Care Debate

The government is proposing a radical reform of care services aimed at making sure everyone in England will have access to a national care service that is fair, simple and affordable. Health Secretary, Andy Burnham, has set out these plans in the green paper: *Shaping the Future of Care Together*.

Existing care services are under huge pressure. More people need care because they are living longer. For the first time, there are more people over the age of 65 than there are under the age of 18. The current system

is also unfair. Some people have to pay tens of thousands of pounds or sell their house to pay for care. Someone with Alzheimer's, for example, could have to pay up to £200,000.

There are three proposals for funding a national care service:

### Partnership

The responsibility for paying for care would be shared between the government and the person who has care needs. Under this plan, the government would provide between a quarter and a third of the cost of care (more for people on a low income). Today's 65 year olds will need care costing on average £30,000.

### Insurance

The government would still provide up to a third of the cost of care, but people would be encouraged to take out insurance to cover the rest of their care costs. It is estimated that the cost of insurance could be around £20,000 to £25,000.

## Comprehensive

Everyone who can afford it would pay into a state insurance scheme meaning everyone who needs care will receive it free.

It is estimated that the cost of being in the system could be between £17,000 and £20,000.

A consultation period on the green paper runs until 13 November and whichever scheme is chosen will start to be phased in from 2014.

The government wants to know:

- Which option do you prefer and why?
- Should local government say how much money people get depending on the situation in their area, or should national government decide?

While the proposals have generally been welcomed by charities and other care providers, users have expressed disappointment that, whichever new scheme is adopted, it will not provide a care-on-demand option,

based on a similar model to the NHS which many disabled people favour.

## Giving your opinion

If you would like to read more about this green paper and contribute your own opinion, you can order a copy from:

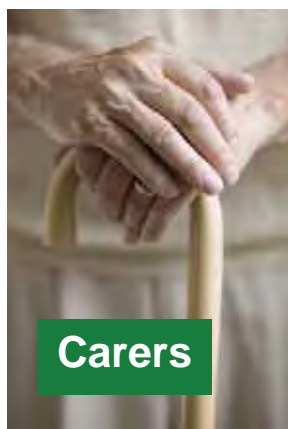
Care & Support Team  
Room 149, Richmond House, 79 Whitehall, London SW1A 2NS

Tel: 0300 123 1002  
Minicom: 0300 123 1003

You can also read, give your opinion or download the green paper online at: [www.careandsupport.direct.gov.uk](http://www.careandsupport.direct.gov.uk)

You can read comments from other people at: <http://careandsupport.direct.gov.uk/greenpaper/execsum/>

**Cancer patients at Musgrove Park Hospital in Taunton can receive either free or reduced price parking tickets, depending upon their circumstances.**



**If Only I'd Known That** is a useful booklet for carers in Somerset. The author, Susan Hartnell-Beavis, shares her experiences of caring for her late husband who had dementia:

“It may not seem obvious, but until one has recognised oneself as a Carer — and I think the capital letter is important in this context — there is little to be done to help you that neighbours or a tot of whisky wouldn't do just as well. For a long time I found the neighbours worked better than the whisky. They were kind, supportive and full of praise. Their words: “we do admire you” or “I don't know how you manage” created a halo that I rather enjoyed polishing. It became a matter of pride not to let their vision of me slip, so I struggled on.... It wasn't until I recognised that I was a Carer that we were measured up and fitted with the full range of support that was available.”

“Our care workers were like angels in white, with yellow belts clipped around their waists. They had all sorts of strategies for dealing with someone whose brain couldn't always process messages correctly. “Time to get up” wasn't necessarily followed by appropriate action, but “Race you to the bathroom!” produced an immediate response. “Shall we go through to the bedroom?” was an invitation often refused, but “Didn't someone give you a lovely new painting of a ship?” resulting in jumping up to give a delighted exhibition. It was a sort of ‘take me to see your etchings’ approach!”

If you'd like a copy of this free booklet, contact Jude Glide on **01823 345920** or email: [jude.glide@somerset.sja.org.uk](mailto:jude.glide@somerset.sja.org.uk) Jude can also give you information about the Carer Support programme run by St John Ambulance. This free programme will help you gain more knowledge and skills in your caring role.

## Odd Jobs?

Do you need any odd-jobs doing, such as electrical work, plumbing, carpentry / joinery, flooring, fitted kitchens, bathrooms, lofts, minor building work and the like?



Call Bill Smart

**Blakeway Services**

Blakeway, Wedmore BS28 4UD

01934 712969 or 07974 793284

**For sale:** Pride Victory mobility scooter.

Four wheels. Approx 5 years old but used only weekly. Sturdy and in good condition. 4mph.

Blue. £295 or very near offer. Tel: 01823 xxxxxx (Bishops Hull) *Contact Livewire for phone no.*



**For sale:** Shoprider Sovereign mobility scooter.

Solidly constructed four wheel model. Basket and bag attachments included. Can be dismantled. Maximum user weight 18 stones. Good condition. £295 Tel: 01823 xxxxxx (Taunton)

**For sale:** MBT shoes (Masai Barefoot Technology) makes all surfaces like walking in sand. The unique action of MBTs challenges the core strengthening muscles to be more active, creating good posture and increasing shock absorption for joints. See

[www.backinaction.co.uk/mbt-info](http://www.backinaction.co.uk/mbt-info) and [www.mbtmidlands.co.uk/mbt\\_shoes\\_womens\\_range.htm](http://www.mbtmidlands.co.uk/mbt_shoes_womens_range.htm) Size 5½. Women's size although unisex design. Used twice briefly. Good condition. Black. £30  
Email: [livewire.somerset@btopenworld.com](mailto:livewire.somerset@btopenworld.com) (Bridgwater)



## Help with continence

by Ruth Butters

Modern technology is providing an ever-increasing selection of incontinence pants and incontinence briefs, along with protective pads, adult cloth diapers, odour removers, and other adult incontinence products and supplies. More choices makes dealing with adult incontinence easier, but it's important to buy the product that really suits your needs.

Millions of adults of all ages suffer from incontinence, which can be a difficult and life-disrupting condition. For most people, incontinence pants used either alone or in combination with pads, diapers, and other incontinence products can provide both security and comfort.

Choose the products that match your needs. Whether incontinence is a minor occasional problem or a severe permanent condition, there are incontinence

products that can help. But getting the maximum benefit from incontinence products depends on selecting the ones that match your needs best. Some of the factors that should be considered include the following:

### **The severity of the problem**

Most incontinence pants and briefs are designed specifically to address the needs of a particular level of incontinence severity. Mobility incontinence can be particularly difficult to manage for people with limited mobility, for whom standing or pulling standard pants up and down is difficult or impossible. If mobility is a problem, look for drop-front incontinence pants that allow for removal and changing of pads with minimum effort.

### **Skin sensitivity**

Keeping the skin as dry as possible is absolutely crucial for people with sensitive skin, who may develop rashes or skin conditions if exposed to

wetness. This may be particularly important for people with limited mobility. Look for products that use removable disposable pads that can be changed frequently and easily.

**Tip: Incontinence is not a symptom of dementia, but people with dementia may experience orientation difficulties if the bathroom facilities are all the same colour. Consider changing the colour of the toilet seat. A black seat and a white pan can make it easier to see.**

### **Time, place, and situation**

For maximum efficiency, protection, and comfort, consider using different products for different situations. For example, many people find pull-up briefs with either a permanent or removable pad best for day wear, while a combination of briefs and waterproof pants provide maximum security overnight or at any time when access to toilet facilities is limited.

Livewire doesn't recommend using incontinence products long term without advice from a doctor or continence adviser but, as a temporary measure, they can improve your quality of life. If you are experiencing problems, you should see your GP. He or she may suggest that you keep a diary of your fluid intake and bladder habits for at least three days, so that you can give them as much information as possible.

Some incontinence products are available on the NHS.

### **Further support and advice**

Continence advice:  
NHS Specialist Nurse  
**01935 848245** (Yeovil)

Continence nurse helpline:  
**0845 345 0165**  
[www.bladderandbowel  
foundation.org](http://www.bladderandbowelfoundation.org)

Help with continence  
(factsheet 23) from Age  
Concern **0800 009966**

Coping with incontinence  
(factsheet 502) from  
Alzheimer's Society  
**020 7423 3500**



### Are you organising an **accessible event**?

Kaleido's website features a range of signs to indicate accessible features or areas. Click on an image to open the associated PDF file. You can then choose to save the PDF to your computer or print it.



<http://www.kaleidoarts.org/content/content.asp?id=4&ids=379>

If you need to **insure your adapted car**, make sure that everything is covered, including the adaptations. Ask if the insurer can supply a car you can drive if yours is damaged and for as long as you need it. Some modifications can take up to six months to supply and fit.



Specialist disability insurers:

Fish: 0800 012 6329

En Route: 0800 783 7245

AJ: 0844 880 6708

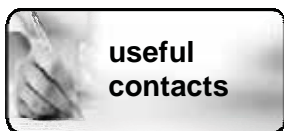
Chartwell: 0800 034 0294

Motability: 0845 456 4566

Following the recent closure of some shopmobility units in Mendip, **Bridgwater shopmobility** is now in danger of closing down. The charity has been in Bridgwater for almost 13 years but is now struggling to pay the £5,000 rent it needs to remain in Eastover's Indoor Shopping Centre. Staff are encouraging local businesses to sponsor its scooters and have their business names displayed on the back of the scooters as mobile adverts. If you can help this vital service to stay open, please email: [livewire.somerset@btopenworld.com](mailto:livewire.somerset@btopenworld.com)

### business sponsors?





**useful contacts**

**Somerset Direct:  
0845 345 9133**

Information, care and support for older people, carers, people with disabilities and other adults with care needs, mobility, hearing and sight, care and support at home, care homes, benefits advice, daytime activities, blue badges, care direct, social care.

For children and younger people and families:  
0845 345 9122

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**A4e** provides help for people 18-65 with physical disabilities  
Tel: 01823 339494  
Fax: 01823 339492

**ADVOCACY** (help with housing, employment issues, benefit appeals, accessing equipment and services).

**DIRECT PAYMENT SUPPORT** to help you with the responsibilities of being an employer and relevant paperwork .

**INDEPENDENT LIVING FUND:** to help people with severe disabilities live independently, in their own home with greater control over their individual care arrangements.

**SHORT BREAKS:** help with arranging self-managed breaks, with Social Services paying all or part of the cost depending on your financial circumstances.  
Email: tauntonenquiries@a4e.co.uk  
A4e, Second Floor, Victoria House, Victoria Street, Taunton TA1 3FA

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**MEDICAL**

**Somerset Out of Hours**  
0845 408 8000 for urgent medical situations out of office hours.

**NHS Direct** 0845 46 47  
Text: 0845 606 4647

**Patient Transport**  
01278 727444

**PALS:** 0800 0851 067  
pals@somersetpct.nhs.uk  
Freepost RRKL-XKSC-ACSG, Patient Advice and Liaison Service, Yeovil BA22 8HR

PALS offers information, advice and support. Responds to concerns, suggestions or questions from patients, their families or carers, helping them to sort out problems.

**Somerset Primary Care Trust:** 01935 384000

**Podiatry Service**  
0845 638 4211

**Bridgwater Hospital**  
01278 451501

**Burnham-on-Sea Hosp**  
01278 773110

**Chard Hospital**  
01460 238220

**Crewkerne Hospital**  
01460 72491

**Dean Barton Unit**  
01823 431939

**Frome Hospital**  
01373 454740

**Minehead Hospital**  
01643 707251

**Musgrove Park Hospital**  
01823 333444

**Shepton Mallet Hospital**  
01749 342931

**South Petherton Hsp**  
01460 243000

**Verrington Hospital**  
01963 822444

**Wellington Hospital**  
01823 662663

**West Mendip Hospital**  
01458 836450

**Weston Hospital**  
01934 636363

**Williton Hospital**  
01984 635600

**Yeovil Hospital**  
01935 475122

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**BENEFITS ADVICE**

**Benefits Enquiry Line**  
0800 882200

**Turn2us** Free advice on welfare benefits and grant applications from professional advisers.  
0808 802 2000  
www.turn2us.org.uk

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**CONSUMER ADVICE**

**Consumer Direct**  
08454 040506  
Minicom: 08451 281384

**DLF** (impartial advice on disability equipment)  
0845 130 9177  
www.dlf.org.uk

**Shopmobility sites**  
0845 644 2446

LOCAL HELP

**Age Concern**

(advice for over 60s)  
The Market House, Fore Street, Taunton TA1 1JD  
*Advocacy:* 0845 643 4701  
*Befriending:* 0845 643 4703  
*Falls Prevention:*  
0845 643 4704  
*Toe Nail Cutting:*  
0845 643 4705  
*Advice (Taunton)*  
0845 643 4657  
*Advice (Weston Super Mare)*  
0845 643 4683  
www.ageconcernsomerset.org.uk

**Somerset Sight**

(visual impairment)  
Northfield House,  
51 Staplegrove Road,  
Taunton TA1 1DG  
01823 333818  
www.somersetsight.org.uk

**Deaf Plus**

(hearing impairment)  
Old Kelway, Somerton  
Road, Langport TA10 9YE  
01935 415880  
www.deafplus.org

**Somerset IMPACT**

(children with special needs)  
The Old School, School  
Road, Westonzoyland,  
Bridgwater TA7 0LN  
01278 691440

**MIND** (mental ill health and emotional distress)

Market Building, Canal  
Road, Taunton TA1 1PN  
01823 334906

Helpline: 01823 276892  
(Wed, Fri, Sat, Sun 8pm-mid)  
www.mindtws.org.uk

**Involve Somerset** (mental health service users) Unit 3,  
East Quay, Wylds Road,  
Bridgwater TA6 4DB  
01278 423033  
www.involvesomerset.org.uk

**Somerset Advocacy**

(advocacy for adults with learning difficulties)  
01823 322900  
somersetadvocacy  
@btconnect.com

**Headway**

(acquired brain injuries)  
Ivy House, Friarn Street,  
Bridgwater TA6 3LH  
01278 434242  
www.headway.org.uk

**Red Cross**

Medical equipment hire:  
01823 273746  
Transport and escort:  
01872 267963  
Home from Hospital:  
01823 273707

**REMAP:** Volunteer engineers/craftspeople who can produce free tailor-made aids.  
01823 xxxxxx  
or 01935 xxxxxx

**Compass Disability Services**

Units 11-12,  
Belvedere Trading Est,  
Taunton TA1 1BH  
0330 3330 089  
www.compassdisability.org.uk

LEARNING AND LEISURE

**Somerset Learning**

Penny: 01984 632024  
Fay: 01935 410555

**Disability Sports**

Gill: 01747 xxxxxx

**Mendip Mallards**

swimming)  
Norman: 01963 xxxxxx

**Sailability Wimblesall**

01823 xxxxxx

**Wheelchair dancing**

Rita: 01823 xxxxxx  
www.highspiritsdance.co.uk

**Church services on audio tape**

Graham: 01884 xxxxxx

**Choir singing** (Bristol)

Blind/partially sighted choir.  
0117 xxx xxxx

**Kaleido** (disability arts)

01392 219440

**Bridgwater Talking Newspaper**

01278 xxxxxx

HANDYPERSON/GARDENING

**Mendip Care & Repair**

01749 341827  
(also remove old stairlifts,  
install new/reconditioned)

**SCHIP Home Improvement Agency** (West Somerset & Sedgemoor)

01278 444815

**Taunton Deane handyman service**

01823 356326

LOCAL GROUPS & FORUMS

**Chard:** Sue

01460 xxxxx

**Cheddar:** Anne

01934 xxxxxx

**Crewkerne:** Sylvia

01460 xxxxx



**CARERS:** [www.nhs.uk/carersdirect](http://www.nhs.uk/carersdirect)

**Helpline:** 0808 802 0202

**Phone Somerset Direct on 0845 345 9133 to be put in touch with your local Carer Support Worker.**

**Caring for someone with a mental health problem?  
Visit [www.somersetcarers.org](http://www.somersetcarers.org)**

**Frome:** Clive  
01373 xxxxx

**Mendip:** Shirley  
01458 xxxxx

**Sedgemoor:**  
Mandy 0330 3330 089  
mandy@sain.org.uk

**South Somerset:**  
Sallie or Cherry  
01935 706766  
ssdf1@hotmail.com

**Taunton Deane:**  
David 01823 xxxxxx  
david-atkinson@  
tiscali.co.uk

**NEW GROUP**  
**Taunton Deane**  
Care4Us

Richard 01823 xxxxxx  
Michael 01823 xxxxxx

**West Somerset**  
**Disability Assoc**  
01643 702021 (Weds)  
wsomersetdisability  
@tiscali.co.uk

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**SUPPORT GROUPS**

*Many of these have support groups in Somerset.*

**Alzheimers Society:**  
020 7554 0000  
[www.alzheimers.org.uk](http://www.alzheimers.org.uk)

**Arthritis Care**  
0808 800 4050  
[www.arthritiscare.org.uk](http://www.arthritiscare.org.uk)

**National Autistic Society**  
0845 070 4004  
[www.nas.org.uk](http://www.nas.org.uk)

**Bikers with a Disability**  
0844 415 4849

**Bipolar Disorder**  
0845 434 9901

**Bladder and Bowel**  
**Foundation**  
0845 345 0165  
[www.bladderandbowel  
foundation.org](http://www.bladderandbowel<br/>foundation.org)

**British Heart Foundation**  
020 7554 0000  
Helpline: 0300 330 3311  
[www.bhf.org.uk](http://www.bhf.org.uk)

**British Lung Foundation**  
0845 850 5020

**Cerebral Palsy**  
Scope: 0808 800 3333  
[www.scope.org.uk](http://www.scope.org.uk)

**CFS/ME local helpline**  
0845 123 2390  
(Tue, Wed, Fri mornings)

**Diabetes UK:**  
020 7424 1000

**Diabetes UK** south west:  
01823 324007  
south.west  
@diabetes.org.uk

**Disabled Parents**  
0300 3300 639  
[disabledparentsnetwork.org.uk](http://disabledparentsnetwork.org.uk)

**Epilepsy Association**  
0808 800 5050  
[www.epilepsy.org.uk](http://www.epilepsy.org.uk)

**Huntingdon's Disease**  
0151 298 3298  
[www.hda.org.uk](http://www.hda.org.uk)

**Macular Disease**  
0845 241 2041  
[www.macular-disease.org](http://www.macular-disease.org)

**Motor Neurone Disease**  
Tel: 08457 626262  
[www.mndassociation.org](http://www.mndassociation.org)

**MS Society**  
Tel: 0808 800 8000  
[www.mssociety.org.uk](http://www.mssociety.org.uk)

**(National)**  
**Osteoporosis Society**  
0845 450 0230  
[www.nos.org.uk](http://www.nos.org.uk)

**Parkinsons Disease Soc**  
0808 800 0303  
[www.parkinsons.org.uk](http://www.parkinsons.org.uk)

**Stroke Association**  
0845 303 3100  
[www.stroke.org.uk](http://www.stroke.org.uk)

**Livewire doesn't publish private phone numbers via the internet. If you wish to contact anyone whose number is obscured here, please contact the editor.**

## **Protect yourself from swine flu this winter**



**For everyone's sake, catch your sneezes in a tissue, place it quickly in a bin and wash your hands and surfaces regularly to kill the virus. A person who is malnourished will be more susceptible to infections, so try to eat well.**

**The membranes in your ears, nose and throat form an internal physical barrier against invading organisms. Protein-rich meat, eggs and fish, dairy foods, nuts, seeds and soya-based foods all supply vital nourishment to these cells. Zinc boosts the immune system. Pumpkin seeds are the best non-meat source, but animal sources are better absorbed.**

**Bright orange fruit and veg (carrots, pumpkins, apricots, mangoes) will keep up your levels of vitamin A, which will benefit your respiratory membranes. Dark green veg like spinach will help too. If you're taking Warfarin, though, spinach and kale are off the menu as they contain a high level of the blood-clotting vitamin K which counteracts Warfarin's blood thinning effect.**

**Vitamin C has anti-viral properties as well as being involved in mobilising bug-eating cells. We can't store vitamin C in our bodies so eat some each day: peppers, citrus fruit, frozen peas, even canned fruit. If you are taking medication, it is best to avoid grapefruit or check with your GP or pharmacist first. Grapefruit can affect the action of some drugs including statin-based cholesterol-lowering drugs.**

**If you are prescribed Tamiflu, make sure your doctor or pharmacist knows which other medicines you are using. Tamiflu can interact with anti-blood clot medication like Warfarin.**