

Newsletter - February 2009 - Issue 6

Disability Backup reaches 100!

Disability Backup has reached its 100th Forum member! Congratulations to all of our Members for making the Forum so successful.

Remember, you don't have to attend the Forum to have your say, contact Catherine on 0207 275 0088 ext 209 to share your views.

We have booked our next Forum Meeting on:
Friday 27th March 11-1pm
at City Edge, 125 Mare Street E8 3RG

The topic will be 'Housing benefits'. We have invited Jennifer Wynter, Performance Manager from the Housing Benefits Service, she will talk to the group about Housing Benefits, what they are and if you're eligible.

This Forum will also be an opportunity to explore what other Housing issues we would like to cover in a future Forum. Let Catherine know which issues (if any) you have experienced with Housing, it could be regarding:

- Aids and Adaptations
- Allocation- Housing needs
- Repairs
- Tenancy Issues
- Resident Participation

Do you have any items for the agenda? Let us know.
Transport available, contact Catherine.

Do you find it difficult to vote?

Have your say to the council about what would make voting easier.
See below for more details.

Feedback from the Last Meeting

The last meeting was very lively and our biggest meeting so far. The topic was Transport and we had Ben Kennedy (Transport Planner-Streetscene) and Tracey Sinclair (Service Manager-Mobility team).

We have agreed that future meetings will have 1 speaker instead of 2, this should allow us more time to include questions and a break. If we do need to invite 2 speakers we will add an extra 1/2 hour to the meeting.

Also, we will be introducing a 'grapevine' slot at the end of every Forum meeting where members can share information and raise ideas for the Forum. Thanks to everyone for their contributions/feedback.

Important numbers

Ben Kennedy gave us the number for Street Scene. Should you have any issues regarding highway and transport, e.g reporting any damage or hazards: Report it to: 020 8356 2897

For any issues with Blue badges or freedom passes call the Mobility Team on 020 8356 6825

If contacting the above numbers does not rectify the situation, tell Disability Backup!

Health and Social Care Project update

With the last newsletter you received a leaflet asking for participation in sharing your experiences of health and social care services for adults (18-64 years) in Hackney. We had fantastic response. Sebastian met with 12 people (2 more soon). Thanks for your participation!

There is a need to represent the voice of disabled people in shaping and developing health and social care services in Hackney. Most of the people we spoke to were interested in staying involved in this via Disability Backup. We will feed this back to the joint commissioner.

Next, we will consult people who are not members of Disability Backup. We will ask them how they would like to get involved. We will combine this with your opinions as Disability Backup members and propose strategies for the long-term representation of disabled adults in the Borough. Expect another focus group on the service user representation in the near future. Those not able to attend will be consulted as well (e.g. via phone or in person).

Any questions or comments? Contact Sebastian on 0207 275 0088 ext 210

Information from Hackney Council

Electoral Services Office

Introduction

Voting at elections is a cornerstone of our democracy. Therefore it is vital that everybody who is eligible to vote is able to do so. We aim to consult with all the community groups in Hackney and feel it is especially important to consult Hackney's disabled residents. Below is some information about registering to vote and voting at elections.

Please can you read through this information and answer our [attached questionnaire](#). We value all feedback we receive and will use it to improve our service. Return the questionnaire to Catherine@hfbu.org.uk

Electoral Facts

Did you know...

- You must register to vote every year, during the annual canvass
- Every household is sent a form during the annual canvass, in September
- You must register to vote every time you move or change your name
- Anyone is now entitled to vote by post
- Voting by post requires you to provide a signature and date of birth
- If you are unable to sign your postal vote you may apply for a waiver
- All polling stations must be DDA compliant

- The electoral register is used by Credit Reference companies to verify your address - not registered = no credit
- Other Council departments such as Parking and Housing use the register to verify your address Not everyone is eligible to register to vote. Eligibility is based on 3 factors: age, residence, nationality.
- You must be 18 or over to vote, but 16 or over to register to vote. You must be resident in the UK for at least 6 months, and you must be a citizen of the UK, or Commonwealth, British dependent territory or of an EU member state. There are special rules for registration for homeless people, British people living overseas and members of the Armed Forces and Crown Services.

Elections

There are many types of election in the UK:

- Local Authority (e.g. Hackney Council)
- Parliamentary
- European Parliament
- London Assembly
- Mayor of London
- Mayor of Hackney
- Referendum
- Welsh Assembly
- Scottish Parliament

How to vote

The council will send a poll card to all registered electors at least 2 weeks prior to every election. They inform you of the deadlines to change your method of voting from the polling station to postal or proxy. The opening times and location of your polling station are on your polling card, and if you are a postal voter it will tell you when they're posting it out to you and when the deadline is to get it back to them.

If you are not registered to vote, please email Jamie.baker@hackney.gov.uk and supply your name and address. He will send you a registration form which you need to complete and return to them.

You can also download an electoral registration form at www.hackney.gov.uk/electoral-registration-form.doc

Are you deaf?

Deafroots are holding a Writing English for Work Course
 Every Saturday 7th-28th March 11-1pm
 CLR James Library Dalston Lane, Hackney, E8 3AZ
 Help with:

- Completing application forms
- Interview Coaching
- CV writing
- DLA forms
- Deaf Disability Rights

Contact: deafrootsoutreach@hotmail.co.uk
 07505 771753 or 0208 534 7111

Rush Hour

An evening of UK and international deaf performers including DJ's, signed songs, poems.

28th March 8pm-late

R+D Nightclub

Lion and Key Pub

475 High road

Leyton

E10 5EL

Tickets available at www.deafrave.com

Disability Backup's website

Please take a look at www.dbu.org.uk (this website) for information and minutes of previous meetings.

Polite reminder for Professionals: Please note that the Forum Meetings and Focus groups are for disabled people to air their views. Those representing organisations are asked not to attend the Forum unless disabled themselves or having been invited first. Please contact Catherine to give your views on any topic raised.

All outcomes of the Forums will be made available on the website and newsletter!
Many thanks!

Contact us

Disability Backup

Hackney Family Backup

The Print House

18 Ashwin Street

London

E8 3DL

Phone: 020 7275 0088

Fax: 020 7241 0088

Text: 07593 508 288 07593 508 288

Text Phone: 18001 020 7275 0088

Email: catherine@hfbu.org.uk