



# **Disability Backup** FEBRUARY 2013

**Welcome to Disability Backup's Newsletter**

**Empowering, consulting and informing disabled people**

## **Changes to welfare benefits**

Our February Forum will be about welfare benefits. Our speaker Odette Messiah, Information and Advice Team Leader for Age UK East London, will talk to members about these issues and the options available to assist you in your applications, if necessary.

The welfare benefits system is about to receive a major shake up which will drastically change arrangements. The government is now bringing in severe cuts which will affect the poorest and most vulnerable people in the country. Many changes to welfare benefits will come into effect from April 2013.

For many people who receive benefits there will be cuts that will leave them vulnerable: often the financial risks of moving into work will be hazardous. For some groups the gains of going into work, particularly on low hours, are small and any gain may easily be wiped out altogether by in-work costs such as transport. For some people the changes will be difficult and many people may experience frustration and inconvenience.

We anticipate an increase of anxiety and problems amongst DBU members.

We therefore want to remind members that the Hackney Information & Advice Consortium (HIAC) operates a service in 25 GP surgeries in Hackney dealing with issues such as Welfare Benefits, Housing and Debt for patients in their local practice on a weekly or fortnightly basis.

If you find yourself in difficulty you may want to contact your GP surgery to see whether they offer HIAC advice sessions.

If your surgery is not registered with HIAC you can contact other agencies such as Age UK Hackney, CAB, Hoxton Legal Trust, Hackney Law Centre etc... who may be able to help.

For more information please call Age UK Hackney (on 0800-9179820) and they will give you the contact numbers of the nearest Agency to your home

## **February Forum Meeting**

**February 25th 2013**

### **Disability Backup Forum**

1.30pm – 3.30pm

#### **Speakers**

Odette Messiah Age UK Hackney  
Dave Monaghan—Warm Homes Project  
Andrea Ensiouh—Hackney Unites

#### **Venue**

Our Lady and St Joseph Kingsland  
Hall

100a Balls Pond Road,  
London  
N1 4AG

Buses: 30, 38, 56, 277

***Help with transport on request for people with mobility difficulties.***

## Hackney Unites: Dalston People's Festival

Andrea Enisuoh from Hackney Unites will be coming to talk to members at our February forum.

Hackney Unites, is a diverse coalition of Hackney based groups and individuals that have come together to challenge social exclusion and promote social justice. The members of Hackney Unites include trade unionists, faith groups, BME community and migrant support groups as well as peace activists.

With the many changes that are going on around the borough the aim is to bring together the new and established communities in Dalston. The plan is to display what is good about Dalston over a period of a week of activities. Hackney Unites hope to be able to make the most of existing community venues, spaces and networks and encourage all areas of the community; and include arts, literature, film, cultural, local history workshops and community events.

The festival, although based in Dalston. is open to the wider community. Andrea will inform members about the development of the festival and ways that you can involve yourselves.

Hackney Unites wants to hear from you and is keen to encourage more people to get involved so if you inspired by what they do you and you want to get involved you can email: [info@hackneyunites.org.uk](mailto:info@hackneyunites.org.uk) or visit their website: [www.hackneyunites.org.uk](http://www.hackneyunites.org.uk) or blog at [hackneyunites.blogspot.co.uk](http://hackneyunites.blogspot.co.uk)

## Warm Homes Project

Dave Monaghan from the Warm Home Project will come and talk to members about a programme available in Hackney. The programme is available to any older, vulnerable resident living in Tower Hamlets, Hackney and Newham. Warm Homes Project is funded to make 125 home visits in each borough.

The project started in early December and ends March 2013. The aim of the Warm Homes project is to enable older people to:

- Change energy use behaviour
- Benefit from small practical measures
- Reduce energy bills

The project includes:

Carrying out a home energy check;  
Installing simple and practical energy efficiency measures - draught proofing, night lights, low energy bulbs, radiator reflector panels, socket timers.

All labour and materials are provided free. If you are interested in having simple changes made to your home that will help reduce your bills for example, then Dave will be available to take your details and book an appointment with you.

If you are unable to attend the February Forum and want to know more about Warm Homes Project please call: 020 8981 7124

---

## **Hackney Young People for Inclusion (YPFI)**

YPFI will hold a launch meeting on Thursday, March 7th, 5pm-7pm. We would like young disabled people to come and join in this exciting new venture that helps them have a say on the big issues affecting their lives.

We believe that this is a great opportunity for young disabled people in Hackney to find a voice of their own.

If you are a young disabled person living in Hackney or if you know of a young disabled person living in Hackney tell them about YPFI !

YPFI seeks to empower young people to talk about issues affecting daily life and helps young people learn new skills

If you want to know more about what we are doing you can either come along on March 7th at Hackney CVS, 84 Springfield House, 5 Tyssen Street, London E8 2LY or you can contact Rob by email: [rob@elfridacamden.org.uk](mailto:rob@elfridacamden.org.uk)

---

## **Social Care Assessments Survey**

Do you receive a service from adult social care?

Are you happy with the service that you receive?

Disability Backup would like to know what your experiences with assessments for social care have been like: good – and bad!

We want to know what your experience of an assessment of your needs by a social worker was like. Please answer the questions asked and give us any

relevant information about problems, if the questions do not uncover them.

The Social Care Assessment Survey will be sent out to members with a freepost reply address - no stamp needed. Members are asked to complete the survey and return it by March 18<sup>th</sup> allowing sufficient time for us to analyse the results of the survey before a special meeting with managers to discuss the results.

---

## **Mears Home Improvement**

Mears Home Improvements Hackney works in partnership with Hackney Council and helps disabled and older people in Hackney to remain living independently.

Mears provide a free confidential advice, support and assistance to people aged 55 and over, people with diagnosed disabilities and their carers who are homeowners, private sector or social housing tenants.

The service is quite extensive and includes home safety checks, welfare benefits review, support in making grant application if you are eligible and inform of any financial help that may be available. Mears also provide a service which helps make your home fit your needs by providing adaptations such as ramps, stair lifts, hoists, external rails, specialist toileting facilities or level access showers.

If you would like to know more about the service provided by Mears call: 0845 266 8948 or contact Age UK Hackney (0800 9179820) where Mears run a surgery fortnightly on a Thursday morning.

## Disability Cricket

Middlesex County Cricket Club is keen to increase opportunities for disabled people to participate in cricket in their local area. They are currently involved in a consultation process to look at Cricket offers we can provide in conjunction with disabled people's organisations which will generate the greatest uptake and benefits for those involved. They would be really keen to hear your thoughts on what service could be provided which would enable you to get involved in the game. If you have any suggestions around organisations they could co-operate with, location, timing or playing opportunities (i.e. competitions/ coaching) please get in touch - email: [khushali.patel@middlesexccc.com](mailto:khushali.patel@middlesexccc.com) or 07965285378.



## End Street Clutter!

Following pressure from DBU, the Council is now considering a zero tolerance policy towards shop and restaurants' 'A' boards and similar street clutter, which pose a constant danger to people with visual impairments and obstacles to many disabled people with mobility or other impairments. The Council's Regulatory Committee has recommended such a policy and the Mayor and Cabinet will consider it shortly.

If you see examples of unnecessary clutter of this kind, please let us, or a local councillor, know, to lend force to the pressure to make our streets friendlier for disabled people to use.

## Queen Elizabeth Park

The Olympic Park in Stratford, East London will be transformed into Queen Elizabeth Park and will open later this year.

The public will be able to take a behind-the-scenes tour and witness how the Olympic Park is being transformed. The tour is a chance to find out about the evolution of the Park's iconic sporting venues and parklands into London's newest destination.

Tours run from 29 March 2013 to 6 May 2013. Tours must be booked. To enquire about a tour mail [parktours@springboard-marketing.co.uk](mailto:parktours@springboard-marketing.co.uk) or call 0800 023 2030. If you would prefer to book over the telephone or have special requirements please call: 0844 581 4995. If you have any questions you can visit the link <http://noordinarypark.co.uk/events/faq/>

## Disability Backup

c/o Age UK Hackney

22 Dalston Lane, E8 3AZ

E-mail: [caroldavis@ageukhackney.org.uk](mailto:caroldavis@ageukhackney.org.uk)

Web: [www.disabilitybackup.org.uk](http://www.disabilitybackup.org.uk)

Tel: 020 7241 5908

Mob: 07779 501178

Text: 07779 501178



Mon: 1.30pm—5.30pm

Wed: 9.30am—5.30pm

Thurs: 9.30am—5.30pm