

## Tenants Disability Network

### October 2019 Minutes

21<sup>st</sup> October 2019

Hampshire Lodge, Hampshire Court, Brighton

**Attendees:** Alison Gray, Muriel Briault, Ann Packham, Martin Cunningham

Sue Fever – East Sussex Association for Blind and Partially Sighted People

**Council officers:** Emma McDermott (Head of Community, Equalities and Third Sector),

Sarah Potter (Operations), Rebecca Mann (Community Engagement Officer)

### Introduction and Apologies

**Apologies:** Chris El Shabba and Jason Williams

Minutes of last meeting and matters arising agreed.

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### Disability Transport

Alison explained that Victoria Garcia formerly of Brighton and Hove Buses is now working with Disability Transport working for government to change accessibility for buses. This was welcomed by members of the meeting as they remembered her attending a previous TDN meeting many years ago.

Buses now publicise that you must move for priority users and driver will ask people to move. New buses will be more wheelchair accessible.

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#### 1) Disability Pride

Disability Pride – buddy system for people with learning disabilities.

Yes there is. (Tom confirms can invite – Jenny Skelton (Founder of Disability Pride)

Action invite to future meetings once agreed by TDN

**Action: 2.1** Contact Possibility People – project for people different disabilities

Action invite officers for specific items rather than a commitment to attend each meeting.

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### **3) Sea Lanes**

**Action:** 3 RM to ask where the application has got to? Tom to get update.

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### **4) Deaf Services Forum**

Emma McDermott explained there is a Deaf Services Forum which she facilitates. Some police officer trained on deaf awareness/ sign language, just waiting on funding.

**Action:** We would require a Deaf Services Liaison Forum co-ordinator – who could interpret. Agenda send invite in advance/discuss on phone.

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### **5) Dementia Awareness**

(Martin) raised that there is a lack of support from NHS – users eg. Not reminded of appointments and loses appointments. Working with Dementia Care/Alzheimers to change legislation. Technology now allows residents to be traced if they appear missing or have a fall – alerts 999/ Carelink.

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### **6) Sue Fever B&H Care Co-ordinator**

**Head Office – Hailsham and East Sussex but based in Hove Park Villas**

Share with other sight loss organisations, guide dogs, support vision impaired up to 30, RNIB. Their office building is set up for people with sight loss and majority who work there fall under this remit and have sight loss. Works well for those who work there and meetings.

#### **Resource Centre Kitchen**

It is set up for high technology – talking clocks, a hot drinks water machine which beeps to alert the user once cup is filled, it's accessible for all These items are for sale and people can buy and try before they buy help those sight los.

**Referrals eye hospital, self referrals, GP's Social Services.**

**Can do visits** – check how managing around own homes – kitchen and other areas, also need emotional support , financial issues – benefits and advice, form filling, refer on to other agencies if more complicated. Varies. Isolation. Rehab Officers for Visually Impaired (ROVI's) help people negotiate the streets, struggling to read, low vision clinic in B&H area – Somerset Street. ROVI's based there as well. – magnification aids –

**Isolated** – home visiting volunteer service -38 who visit same clients on weekly basis. Befriending Volunteers so can't do 'jobs' round the house as volunteers. Bespoke – if someone wanted to run – would find volunteer to match. Ongoing recruitment and training. There is usually a waiting list. They are police checked, thoroughly interviewed and trained to deal with sight loss.

**Vision awareness training** – staff and volunteers, relatives.

Social activities first Friday in month (50-100 people) carpet bowls, creative activities, games, quizzes.

## **Evening**

- Opp Somerset Point. Exercise groups for those who are less active
- Generally people over a certain age.
- Falls and trips over – common occurrence.
- Funding is at a premium.

**Deaf/blind group** meet at Sue's office – 12 members – average 80 year olds. Most active, cooking, exercise – 10 pin bowling.

**Sound tennis group** – various places. Travel all over the world, have tournament – average age 50s and 60s – run by members itself

**Out and About Group** – regularly monthly – murder mystery, pub night quiz, walk, sports (various) Active for Life – King Alfred Leisure Centre. Lose sight lose independence – access to sports when lose sight important.

Contact Sue:

Email: [sue@eastsussexblind.org](mailto:sue@eastsussexblind.org)

Train guide dogs at the office in Hove – change in training – rewards instead of being told 'no'.

**Head Office 01323 8332252 – referrals .**

**Case study of tenant** – could we ask a resident to speak about the issues faced around the home – digital awareness (accessible technology)

(If it is deemed that there is a need for this in the future Sue can facilitate she will. Also enable groups but also support where needed. Also if huge need for digital awareness this can be set up)

**Living Well Plus** – sensory equipment – assisted technology – Sarah Potter raised. Funding to provide equipment – Sarah asked Sue if working with

**Grant Finder** – free search for volunteer and organisation – Becca to email Sue with Donna’s details for applying for grants. Social groups. Action Done.

**Newsletter** – Volunteers for Sue’s Group. Peers – those with disabilities included. Volunteer drivers required. Volunteer office assistants, social groups.

**Sue will provide article for newsletter. Action Sue provided and Rebecca forwarded to Alison.**

**Digital Inclusion – on next meeting agenda. Action** Request resident to attend to speak about experiences.

**Equalities** – Look out how the council can offer help so not left behind. How do we support them? Basics, accessibility **RM to contact Digital Design Team**

**Could the group do Peer-Peer training** eg Martin is very skilled in IT.

**Have Seniors Housing talked about Digital Inclusion? RM to contact Seniors Housing Peter Huntbach**

**Action:** Becca to invite Sam to discuss what we can offer around digital inclusion for funding.

## **Adaptations**

- 📄 Adaptations completed – on track to complete as many major housing adaptations in council homes as last year and within the budget £1.15m
- 📄 Staffing – we have recruited an extra Housing Customer Support Officer on the Adaptations side, Michael Malone, to help with the volume of work in the team, and in the process of recruiting an additional Home Improvement Officer ( HIO) for a fixed term 12 months and an Occupational Therapist (OT) for 6 months, to help speed up the assessments and delivery of adaptations, particularly for council tenants
- 📄 Local Energy Advisory Partnership ( LEAP ) – the council is working with LEAP to offer eligible residents, including council tenants, a free energy and money saving service; LEAP advisors can install free simple energy

saving measures such as LED light bulbs and draught-proofing, check the best energy tariff for you, arrange a free money advice consultation and help find funding for further energy-saving home improvements. Sarah offered to draft a piece for the next TDN newsletter and submit to [tdnbhcc@gmail](mailto:tdnbhcc@gmail.com) – *done 23/10*

- 🌈 Looking ahead – the guide to getting housing adaptations done, originally written with the help of TDN, needs updating and TDN's help again! Sarah asked if this piece of work could be included on TDN's work plan going ahead

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## Newsletter

- Don't spend your own money get an assessment by OT's – need proper assessment as health needs can change.
- Sue's article
- Things more light hearted Travel Diary – Alison to provide. Coach trip, igloo – overcoming barriers.
- Martin two articles
- Bring draft of articles to next meeting.
- Sarah to bring article

