

news and information for carers and the people they care for

bettercare

Issue Number 2

in Islington

That's My Boy!

Carer Josie talks about life with her son John

focus on carers

Where Can I Park?

Useful advice for carers

Clive in the Community

Supporting Islington's black carers

Money Matters

The benefits maze explained



bettercare

in Islington

Welcome...

to the second edition of *Better Care in Islington*, the new magazine from Islington Council that brings you news about health, housing, social care and mental health services.

The feedback and comments that we received about the first edition that was published last autumn were very positive. We hope that you enjoy this second edition just as much!

With this 'focus on carers' edition a lot of effort has gone into getting ideas from carers around the borough to ensure that the contents of *Better Care in Islington* are useful and informative for carers, and helps to make carers' lives just that little bit easier.

We still want to know what you think about *Better Care in Islington* and your ideas for future editions. Either give us a call on 020 7527 8153/6/7 or, if you prefer, send us an e-mail to ssconsultation@islington.gov.uk.

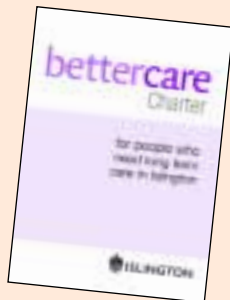


The Charter

The Better Care Charter explains the standards that people in long term care should expect to receive from housing, social services, health and mental health services.

The charter is currently available on the Islington Council website, just go to www.islington.gov.uk click 'health and social care' click 'social services publications' click 'Better Care Charter'.

You can find online versions of issue one of *Better Care in Islington* and this edition using the same route. To get a printed copy of the Charter ring 020 7527 8153/6/7



Our Commitment to Carers

from Councillor Meral Ece, Executive Member for Health & Social Care for Adults

A carer is someone who looks after a relative or friend who needs support because of age, physical or learning disability or illness, including mental illness.

The 2001 Census showed that there are 5.2 million people providing informal care in England and Wales, one in ten of the population. There are an estimated 18,000 carers living in Islington, 19,500 if you include young carers.

We know that many carers are not always aware of the range of services on offer from health, housing, social services and mental health services. By working with carer organisations like Islington Carers Forum and Centre 404 we are taking steps to improve this situation. Publications such as *Better Care in Islington* also help to promote services and support for carers.

Carers play a vital role in supporting people to live independently in the community. I am sure that this 'Focus on Carers' edition of *Better Care in Islington* will make a valuable contribution to the commitment that Islington Council and its partner organisations have shown towards carers across the borough.

Better Care In Islington – Direct To You

We are compiling a mailing list for future editions of *Better Care in Islington*. If you would like us to include you on the list please contact us by phone: 020 7527 8153/6/7 or by e-mail: ssconsultation@islington.gov.uk. To help us improve the distribution of *Better Care in Islington* it would also be useful if you could let us know how you got your copy.

We've moved

Islington Social Services and Islington Primary Care Trust are now based at 338-346 Goswell Road, EC1V 7LQ, close to Angel tube.



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bettercare
in Islington

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www.islington.gov.uk
click 'Health and Social Care'
click 'Social Services
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Can I park here?

AS ISLINGTON IS such a built up area the demand for parking always outstrips the supply. Parking is controlled on council estates and on most roads too. When you are caring for someone or someone visits you, it can be tricky finding a place to park. Here we give you some advice to make parking in Islington a bit easier.

Everything you wanted to know about blue badges...



The Blue Badge is a central government scheme that provides parking concessions for people with severe walking difficulties who travel either as drivers or passengers. The badge is valid across the European Union allowing you to park with ease in over twenty countries.

When you need a new Blue Badge you should contact the council's Parking Services section. If someone is registered blind, receives a 'higher rate mobility' Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or fulfils other criteria they are automatically entitled to a Blue Badge.

Your application should include: two recent photos, proof of residence and receipt of DLA or that you are registered as a blind person. This will ensure you get a new badge within one to two working days. Sometimes a letter from your GP may be required, Parking Services will advise you if this is necessary.

Blue Badges are issued to the person who has the disability, however, the badge can be used in any vehicle regardless of whether the disabled person is the driver or passenger. The badges are not specific to a certain vehicle so it can be transferred from car to car depending on whom you are travelling with.

Protect your blue badge

If your Blue Badge is stolen contact Parking Services immediately and they will issue a new one. They will also make a note of the missing badge and look out for fraudulent use.

If you live in a Control Parking Zone you can get a substitute for your Blue Badge, this is a new deterrent against theft of the badge.

For all Blue Badge enquiries ring 020 7527 6108

Disabled parking bays

The council may also be able to provide a designated parking bay for a disabled driver, close to your home. You will need to meet the same criteria as outlined above in order to qualify – this will also depend on a space being available on your street. More information and application forms are available on 020 7527 6182.

Visitor vouchers

Residents with carers can buy visitors vouchers for their carers to use. Residents who qualify for Attendance

Allowance or DLA are entitled to a 50% discount on visitor vouchers. Books of 20 half-hour vouchers are £3 per book or 10 three-hour vouchers for £9 per book. For any permit enquiry ring 020 7527 1338.

Parking on council estates

Parking on council estates around Islington is not totally straightforward – there are a few things you need to consider.

- Some estates have disabled parking bays – any Blue Badge holder can use these bays.
- Certain estates have visitor bays. If you already rent a bay you can get a second permit for these bays.
- Temporary permits are available on some estates. The area housing offices can provide permits that are valid for 24 hours – they must be booked in advance.

If you have any enquiries about parking on council estates please contact the Homes For Islington Estate Parking Public Enquiry Line on 020 7527 8669.



Know your rights part 1 (carers)

CARERS UK
the voice of carers

DID YOU KNOW that as of 1 April 2005 carers have more rights? That's when the Carers (Equal Opportunities Act) came into force, thanks to Dr Hywel Francis MP. The Bill had strong cross party support, and was probably successful thanks to massive support from carers and local carers groups. The act means:

- If you are a carer you must be informed of your right to a carer's assessment. You must also be given a range of appropriate information even if you do not opt for a carer's assessment.
- Your life and interests outside of caring, like work, life-long learning and leisure activities must be taken into account when a carer's assessment is undertaken
- Councils have new powers to enlist the help of housing, health and education services as well as other councils in providing support to carers.

Carers UK, a national carers led organisation which campaigns for carers' rights, has published a new booklet, 'Balancing Life and Caring', which gives an introduction to how carers can get help, and what the Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act will mean for you if you are a carer.

Go to www.carersuk.org for local information, contact Rosemary Lamport on 020 7527 8153 or one of the local carers organisations listed on the back page.



Human rights training for carers



CARERS RECENTLY RECEIVED training on 'Human Rights and Older People' courtesy of the British Institute of Human Rights. The course covered an overview of European human rights legislation and how this could be relevant for carers. Human rights trainer, Carolina Gottardo, expertly blended definitions of the law with lively discussions about human rights.

Whilst Carolina provided intellectual stimulation, Community Kitchen, based close by at the Manor Gardens Café stimulated taste buds with their healthy organic lunch during the break.

The BIHR can carry out training for other community organisations. If you are interested contact them on 020 7848 1818.

Silver surfers welcome

THE 55PLUS website is available on the Islington Council website. Just visit www.islington.gov.uk click 'Community and Living' click 'Life Events' click '55Plus'.



Getting carers back to work



CARERS HAVE BENEFITED from Islington Carers Forum's 'Back to Work' courses.

The fourth set of students completed this course that gives carers the confidence and skills to get back into the workplace.

The training covered assertiveness, time and stress management, recognition of skills, completing CVs and application forms and interview techniques. It also introduced students to local organisations that can advise carers on job or further education opportunities.

Comments about the training were very positive: 'The course, I felt, increased my confidence, knowledge, and made me more assertive' said one happy carer.

For more information about training for carers contact the Islington Carers Forum on 020 7263 9080.

Over 55s info

'SIGNPOST' PROVIDES useful up-to-date information for the over 55s and is available from Islington's libraries. Alternatively go to the 55Plus webpages, click 'General Information' click 'Signpost'.

Free cinema passes

The Cinema Exhibitor's Association Card entitles the holder to one free ticket for a person accompanying them to the cinema. To apply for a card you must:

- be in receipt of Disability Living Allowance; or
- be a registered blind person; or
- hold a disabled persons rail card.

Cards are valid for three years and cost £5. Application forms are available at Odeon, UCI or UGC cinemas or visit

www.yourlocalcinema.com/cea.card.html or phone 0151 348 8020



Changing views

A SERIES OF consultation meetings for people with a visual impairment have been organised by Islington Council.

The **Changing Views** meetings give people with a visual impairment who live in Islington, the opportunity to discuss how services can be improved with key people from health, housing and social services.

One of the aims of the meetings is to ensure information and services provided by health, housing and social services are fully accessible to visually impaired people and to consider whether new services could be developed.

The next **Changing Views** meeting is about social services and takes place on Thursday 14th July 6.30pm at Islington Town Hall. A 'What Next' meeting will be held on Thursday 15th September.

Contact Ian Christie on 020 7527 8157 for more information.



Rena of Islington Carers Forum is co-ordinating Carers Week events

Carers Week 2005 helps you work, rest and play

CARERS WEEK is 13-19 June this year. The theme is 'Work, Rest and Play', nothing to do with the sugary chocolate bar, but the improved rights and potential benefits stemming from the new legislation for carers.



Islington Carers Forum have planned a number of events:

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| Monday 13th June | Trip to Pontins at Blackpool
Day trip to Clacton-on-Sea |
| Tuesday 14th June | Open Morning for social services professionals |
| Wednesday 15th June | Relaxation day
Reunion for carers who have attended training sessions |
| Thursday 16th June | Information stall at Holloway Shopping Complex |
| Friday 17th June | Information stall at Angel Shopping Complex |

Contact the Islington Carers Forum on 020 7263 9080 to find out more about Carers Week.



People with visual impairments can have their say about services at the Changing Views meetings

DID YOU KNOW?...

...an estimated 6,000 people in Islington have diabetes.



Diabetes UK in Islington

AFTER THE DIABETES Day held in Islington last year Diabetes UK, the leading national charity working for people with Diabetes are opening one of their voluntary groups in Islington. You can find out more about the work of Diabetes UK by logging onto www.diabetes.org.uk

Diabetes UK run a national Careline on (lo-call) 0845 120 2960 and you can speak to experienced counsellors who are trained to answer any question you may have about living with diabetes.

For more information about the Islington voluntary branch of Diabetes UK please contact Jenny Singleton on 020 7527 1089.



Speaker at Islington Diabetes UK meeting



Arts interest group

THE ARTS INTEREST GROUP (AIG) provides access to exhibitions across London for people with a disability or vulnerable people who need some support in attending museums and galleries. They have been active for over 10 years south of the river and are now operating in Islington.

For a small charge, you get a safe and comfortable journey in an accessible minibus from doorstep to gallery – an escort provides extra support on the minibus. Trained AIG volunteers give one-to-one help at the gallery such as handling a wheelchair or lending a supportive arm. Members can bring their own carers if they prefer, or meet a friend at the gallery.

The group are visiting Museum of Docklands in July and going to the Frida Kahlo exhibition at Tate Modern in September. Log onto www.artsinterestgroup.org.uk, call 020 8761 4898 or email aig-camden@tiscali.co.uk.

73 Mildmay Street



JOHN KENNEDY LODGE is now known as 73 Mildmay Street. This ex-older people's home is now 'extra care' accommodation – an

initiative supported wholeheartedly by the government. 'Extra care' means greater independence and participation for the people who live there – they determine the type of services they would like to receive. They also decide when they want services and who they want to purchase them from.

After careful planning and consultation 73 Mildmay Street was completed on Valentine's Day this year. It allows for greater independent living with en suite facilities, bedroom, lounge, kitchen and separate toilet and shower facility.

Unlike traditional older people's homes, residents have a tenancy agreement similar to someone living in council property and are able to carry on living independently.

Know your rights part 2 (older people)

AGE CONCERN ISLINGTON recently hosted a 'Your Rights Day' for people aged 55 and over to find out more about their entitlements. Too often older people miss out on services and benefits because they don't know about them – Age Concern want to make sure this does not happen.

The day covered a variety of subjects: consumer rights, benefits rights, health services and home improvement grants too. The local computer-recycling firm Maxitech.biz gave ten free computers away.

The 'Have Your Say! Guide' on speaking up to improve services and the 'Listening to Older People: Best Practice Guide' for organisations working with older people is available from Islington Age Concern.

Contact Kate Tansley on 020 7281 6018 or by e-mail: kate.tansley@acislington.org.uk.

Low vision, high tech

VISIT THE LOW Vision Centre (LVC) on Judd Street, just a stone's throw from the British Library, and you will be transported to a contemporary building designed for people with visual impairment very much in mind. The LVC is a relaxing, colour-contrasted building that provides a 'person-centred' service that combines a social care assessment with a comprehensive vision test.

Sheila Coles, one of the optometrists working at the centre told *Better Care in Islington*: 'This is one of the best low vision schemes I have worked in. All the equipment is here, so as soon as an assessment is completed we can provide everything that is needed'.

On Wednesdays Islington users can be assessed at the centre. Sheila works with one of the Rehabilitation Workers from Islington Social Services' sensory impairment team. Both carry out their respective assessments and then reach a final decision based on level of vision and lifestyle. On Mondays the team assess people with learning difficulties.

Often the Rehab Worker visits the visually impaired person's home prior to the assessment at the LVC in order to see first hand how they are coping day-to-day. At the LVC's Rehab Room they can show users that simply changing the colour of a cup, place mat or cutlery can make a real difference to everyday tasks.

For more information about the LVC contact Laura Holloway on 020 7391 2071.



Rehabilitation work is a priority at the Low Vision Centre

DID YOU KNOW?...

One in four people over 75 and one in eight people over 65 have a visual impairment

More **bettercare** news on page 22

Get Involved! – Carers Special

Carers support group

THE CARERS SUPPORT GROUP is for relatives and carers of people in Camden and Islington who live with or have significant contact with people who have mental health problems. It offers support for carers experiencing stress and helps to reduce the isolation often felt by people in this situation. The group meets fortnightly on Tuesdays from 4.30 to 6pm.

If you work in central London it's a handy location – contact Shirley Koay at Tottenham Mews Resource Centre on 020 7530 4400 for more information.

Carers for change

THE CARERS FOR CHANGE group is aimed at carers of people with mental health problems living in Camden and Islington. It aims to bring carers and providers of mental health services together to discuss and bring about service improvement.

The group has not been very active recently, but now a relaunch has been organised. The first meeting will include an interactive question and answer session and will give carers the opportunity to speak to a director and senior managers of the Camden & Islington Mental Health and Social Care Trust.

The meeting will be taking place on Wednesday 6th July 4pm at the Carnegie Centre, 1 Carnegie St, N1, and on a two-monthly basis from then on.

For more information about Carers for Change contact Robert Jones on 020 7445 8554.



Mental health carers group

THIS SUPPORT GROUP for carers of people with mental health problems started April 2005, meets every month and is an integral part of the Islington Carers Forum's (ICF) Mental Health Carers Project.

The group gives carers of people with mental health problems the opportunity to share their experiences and identify steps they can take to support the person they care for.

The Mental Health Carers Project ensures that carers are linked into the Mental Health Care of Older People teams or the Mental Health Crisis teams and, by working closely with carers, help to ensure that more preventative action is taken.

Bill Hare (pictured left) from ICF told *Better Care in Islington*: 'Caring for someone with mental health problems can often mean 'concern'. Carers may worry about where someone is or constantly think about whether they are OK; so talking to other people in the same situation at the group can be a big help.'

For more information about the group or the project contact Bill Hare at the Islington Carers Forum on 020 7263 9080.

Making it happen day

A MAKING IT HAPPEN DAY takes place every month at the Islington Carers Forum (ICF). Speakers are invited along to talk about practical issues for carers. In the past topics have included: disabled carers' access, parking permits, benefit and welfare advice and an explanation of how the services on offer from ICF, and other carers' organisations can support carers.

Contact the ICF on 020 7263 9080 for more information.

Protecting vulnerable adults

THE ADULT PROTECTION MULTI-AGENCY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE are on the look out for carers who are interested in participating, providing ideas and receiving information about adult protection. You may like to do a presentation to the committee or help them to make decisions about the adult protection service.

This is a new, challenging and highly sensitive service that welcomes views from as wide a range of people as possible. The committee is meeting on September 28th 9.30 to 12pm at Goswell Road, London EC1.

If you would like to attend or find out more about the work of the group please contact Jan Boorman on 020 7527 8160.



Q: What is the Family Carers Reference Group?

A: A sub-group of the Islington Learning Disabilities Partnership Board, the body that commissions learning disability services.



THIS GROUP IS RUN by Centre 404, a parent-led organisation that provides services to people with learning difficulties, children with disabilities and their parents and carers. It meets every six weeks and gives parents of people with learning difficulties the opportunity to discuss services with council officers and organisations that provide services.

The group is open to any carer who wishes to attend and gives carers a voice on the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board.

Contact Bob Dowd (pictured left) of Centre 404 on 020 7697 1325 for more information.

CENTRE 404

Parents expect

A list of expectations from Centre 404's Parent Participation Group:

1. When arranging consultation, the consultation lead should agree two dates: one for the initial consultation and a provisional date to return and give feedback. The leads must recognise the demands that exist on parent's time and so be flexible in arranging dates
2. Honesty: the consultation lead must be honest – if things cannot be done parents want to know why. Parents must be consulted in a way that allows them to answer in an unconstrained and honest way.
3. A commitment from the consultation leads to give feedback. This can be via Centre 404 in the interim period and then in person once the process is complete. Parents want to know that their involvement was worthwhile and this means seeing what has happened as a direct result of their involvement.
4. Information must be provided about both what has been done and what has not been done.
5. All reports should be jargon free, in plain English and available in a variety of formats if necessary – this could include audio tape, other language or large print
6. Parents want to know what they can expect from the consultation and what the consultation lead expects from them

From each other, parents expect: 'That every parent will try and see the bigger picture and avoid becoming too focussed on individual cases when participating in consultations.'

Parent participation group

LAUREN ROBERTS of Centre 404 (pictured below) works with a group for parents or carers of children with special needs to discuss service development.

The membership has grown steadily to 65 and now includes 20 'very active' parents. 'As the family support service is well and truly in place the group is growing in confidence. Before they are consulted we organise information sessions so that everyone is fully informed. This makes for much higher quality consultation.' Lauren told *Better Care in Islington*.

Lauren believes that expectations are shifting, the group knows how it wants to be consulted and they are starting to make things happen. She was particularly pleased when one of the less confident members of the group told Lauren she was looking forward to a forthcoming consultation session. 'I said to her "You told me earlier that you weren't going to go". 'That was before I knew what to say' came the cocky response!'

Contact Lauren Roberts at Centre 404 on 020 7697 1325.



Recognising your needs

Nurses, social workers and 'therapists' unite

OVER THE LAST YEAR Islington Social Services and Islington Primary Care Trust have been working hard to make sure that care and health professionals work more closely together in providing services to adults living at home.

Nurses, social workers, physiotherapists and occupational therapists are now using the same assessment forms as part of the single assessment process. This year, new improvements to computer systems will allow them to see each other's reports at the touch of a button. The biggest difference for people who receive a service is that they should not have to repeat their story to everyone who is involved in their care.

Health and social care staff are training and learning together about this new process and how they can work together more effectively to improve care. Longer term, the plan is to link up social services and district nursing computers with those in local hospitals and GP practices. So no matter where a person is being cared for, all staff involved can access their most recent and important information leading to better communication and better care.

For more information contact Howard Smith on 020 7527 8161 or e-mail him at howard.smith@islington.gov.uk.



Adult care – the future

A GREEN PAPER entitled 'Independence, Well-Being and Choice' was launched in March at Centre 404 by Stephen Ladyman, (then) Community Minister at the Department of Health. It sets out the government's vision for adult social care for the next 10 to 15 years.

The paper recognises the UK's ageing population (by 2050 there will be four times as many 85 year olds as there are now) and that progress in health and medical care mean that people generally and people with disabilities are living longer too. Changes in society also mean that family support networks are getting weaker.

The paper talks about the balance between protecting vulnerable adults and allowing people to take risks that they are used to taking on a day-to-day basis such as buying a house and managing finances. This will mean giving people the opportunity to self assess and increasing the uptake of direct payments. In some cases a 'care navigator' (don't you just love these new terms?!) will help you find a care package that best suits your needs.

The biggest emphasis is on prevention, and keeping people active so that they do not require social care until much later in life.

The Green Paper is out for consultation until 28 July 2005 and is expected to become policy later in the year. An easy-read version is available at www.dh.gov.uk/socialcare or contact the Planning & Partnerships team on 020 7527 4153/6/7. Alternatively e-mail them at ssconsultation@islington.gov.uk.



Got a complaint? We want to put things right

IF SOMETHING GOES WRONG with a service you receive from social services, get in touch with the Customer Services Unit (CSU). Ali Bird, head of the unit explains: 'We want to hear from you if you have a complaint – as soon as you contact the team we will do our level best to put things right and, if possible, make things better too'.

The CSU will deal with your complaint quickly and efficiently – if it is going to take time to investigate they will let you know straight away. You can ring them on 020 7527 8046 or 8047, alternatively you can make a complaint online at www.islington.gov.uk click 'Do it' click 'online forms' click 'complaints form' or by e-mail to socialservices.complaints@islington.gov.uk.



Vulnerable Adults Officer

JAN BOORMAN, Adult Protection Co-ordinator joined Islington Social Services only a few months ago. Already she is starting to break down barriers between health, housing and the police to ensure that information is shared across the organisations on a 'need-to-know' basis.

A 'Responding to abuse, inadequate care of vulnerable adults' policy and practice document is available for staff across the council, the police, housing, health and mental health services. This is backed up by two leaflets entitled 'Working together to protect vulnerable adults' – one version for staff and one version for the public.

'Abuse can come from a variety of people and can show itself in a number of ways,' Jan told *Better Care in Islington*, 'it could range from someone who has 'lost' their purse, is a victim of fraud to something far more serious like physical or sexual abuse.'

'If you are a carer, you need to be comfortable that the person you are looking after is being treated with respect by paid workers or professionals. With this new service you can call a Helpline if you think someone is being neglected or abused. The line is managed by the charity, Action on Elder Abuse, and is completely confidential', explained Jan.

'If you ring the Helpline, always let the person you care for know that you are making the call. The policy and procedures are designed so the person making the allegations is completely involved and nothing will happen without their say so.'

Call 020 7527 8160 for more information about the adult protection service. Helpline number 0808 8088141 is available Monday to Friday 10am – 4.30pm.



Drop-in for deaf people

THE ISLINGTON PRIMARY CARE TRUST'S Patient, Advice & Liaison Services (PALS) is offering regular drop-in sessions for deaf people who need advice and information about Islington's health services on the first Tuesday of every month at 338/346 Goswell Road, EC1V 8LQ.

This service was introduced after consultation with deaf people at the Hands Up! consultation meetings held last year.

Contact PALS on 020 7527 1087 or 1086. Minicom 020 7527 1085.

First call...

THE INFORMATION and access team are the people to call if you are 60 plus or if you have a physical disability and you are 18 plus. They can advise you about the right organisation or person to contact and can even carry out a 'contact assessment' over the phone. When it is possible they will carry out an assessment for the sensory impairment team.

They are now the first point of call for the Protecting Vulnerable Adults service, explained in the 'Vulnerable Adults Officer' article on this page.

Call the team on 020 7527 2299 Minicom 020 7527 6475 Mondays to Fridays between 9am and 5pm or e-mail information.accessteam@islington.gov.uk.

Disability Discrimination Act 2005

DISABLED PEOPLE are to have more powers to challenge discrimination, the government has pledged. The Act will introduce tough powers to protect disabled people by building on and extending the DDA 1995. It places a duty on most public authorities to publish a Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan.

This plan will outline how they will: combat unlawful discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, eliminate disability related harassment, promote positive attitudes towards disabled people and encourage participation of disabled people in public life.

The Act will also:

- widen the definition of disability to include people with cancer, HIV and Multiple Sclerosis from the point of diagnosis
- extend the Act to cover most functions of public authorities
- extend duties to include private landlords and premises managers
- widen the Act to include forms of transport including taxis, private car hire, buses, trams, trains and vehicle rental
- include any club with more than 25 members under the DDA
- include Councillors under the DDA.

For more information contact Christian Legerheim on 020 7527 3142.



Supported housing in Islington

ISLINGTON COUNCIL is working closely with local housing associations to develop new supported housing for local residents.

Mosaic Homes recently finished six new self-contained flats for people with mental health problems. The flats are in a beautifully restored Georgian terrace in one of the most sought after areas in Islington. New residents can take advantage of all the benefits of living in a great location and receive the support they require.

Presentation Housing Association have just completed 24 new flats at Central Point. Twelve of these flats are set aside for 'move on accommodation' – suitable for people moving from supported accommodation to independent living. The development combines properties for outright sale, affordable rent and supported housing.

Other supported schemes in the pipeline include twelve flats for single homeless people with support needs to be developed by Community Housing Association on a redundant playground site. They should be ready by spring 2006.

Nine new single person flats are being developed by Mosaic Homes for vulnerable single people with support needs.

Ring 020 7527 4348 for more information about supported housing.



One hundred and counting...



improving housing through partnership

HOMES FOR ISLINGTON has installed its 100th new kitchen and bathroom at the home of Ms. Pauline Byrne. The major refurbishment programme is

part of the first round of works to meet the Decent Homes Standard in council homes across the borough.

The £2m modernisation programme for eligible homes includes installing upgraded fuse boards and in some homes, new boilers. For their kitchen, residents have a choice of door fronts, worktops, drawer and door handles and taps. Bathrooms can be fitted with new bath, toilet and sink, as well as taps, including spray attachments. Both rooms get new flooring, and the walls are painted. In addition, all residents are given energy-saving light bulbs.

Ms. Byrne says she first learned of the programme by reading the Homes for Islington newsletter. 'I saw it, but I never thought it would be for me. The work has transformed my home. I want to do more cooking now and I never have to feel embarrassed for people to be in my kitchen any more. It's great. But the best part of the scheme is that we can choose what we want.'

Contact your area housing office to find out more about kitchen and bathroom installations or visit www.homesforislington.org.uk.

Millions available for Islington homes

A MUCH-NEEDED £157m boost for Islington's housing stock is now on tap. Homes for Islington, the organisation that manages Islington's council housing, recently received a two-star rating from the Audit Commission with 'excellent prospects for improvement'.

The money will be used for vital home improvements such as new kitchens and bathrooms. Other improvements planned include central heating, new windows and roofs, damp proofing, insulation and improved home security.

Tenancy issues

IF YOU ARE A COUNCIL TENANT and would like to speak to someone about your council tenancy contact the Tenant Management Advisor at your area housing office.

If you do not know the number of your housing office then ring Contact Islington on 020 7527 2000.

Homes for Islington promotes equality and diversity

HOMES FOR ISLINGTON (HFI) are seeking your views on its new Equality & Diversity Strategy. This document explains how HFI intend to promote equal access to services and tackle discrimination and harassment for all their 30,000 plus tenants.

Contact Janice Markey on 020 7527 4079 or by e-mail janice.markey@homesforislington.org.uk to get your copy.

Elderly and disabled homeowners benefit from Houseproud grants

ELDERLY HOMEOWNERS' living conditions can be greatly improved with Islington Council grants and Houseproud loans. Homeowners aged 60 and above, living in poor housing can make improvements through a scheme set up by the council and St Pancras and Humanist Care and Repair.

Local homeowner Mrs Burke had extensive building works funded by a Houseproud loan, which does not have to be repaid until the house is sold. In addition the Council awarded her a grant of £15,000.

Mrs Burke, said: 'My house was in such poor condition with rain coming through the roof and dangerous electrical wiring. I felt so much better knowing that a reliable builder carried out the repairs. The Houseproud scheme has helped me stay in my home and remain independent.'

One hundred and ninety-nine grants were awarded to home-owners in 2004/5. Forty-three disabled people who were owner-occupiers or private tenants received stair-lifts,



Local homeowner, Mrs Burke, got her home renovated through Houseproud grants – could you?

ramps and showers to replace baths free of charge. Whatsmore Care and Repair co-ordinated many of the adaptations.

Could you benefit?

Grants are available to private homeowners who are over 60, disabled or on benefits to improve heating and insulation and security to their home. Those on low income can receive a grant for repairs and adaptations if they are disabled.

For more information contact the Grants Team on 020 7527 3104.

On the net or over the phone...

...is how you can bid for a council property in Islington (apart from wheelchair, mobility or sheltered housing). You need to have more than 30 points in the council's new letting scheme before you can bid. This is now the only way it is possible to obtain council housing and some housing association properties – currently 5000 Islington households are eligible.

Vacant properties are advertised each week on the council's website, in the Islington Gazette and on a property sheet available at council housing offices. You can bid for a property from Thursday until midnight on the following Monday. The five applicants with the highest points are invited to view the property and there is no restriction on the number of properties that you can view or refuse. Once you have registered you have three options to bid:

1. **On the internet:** log onto www.islington.gov.uk/homeconnections, and click on 'I'm already registered.'
2. **By phone:** ring 020 7974 5581 and follow the instructions
3. **By text:** sms 07800 140 724

If you or someone you know cannot use the scheme easily because of a disability or you want to know more about the scheme contact the Rehousing team on 020 7527 4140.



Islington Disability Network launches new campaign



ISLINGTON DISABILITY NETWORK (IDN) is a campaign group with a membership of about 40 local disabled people. There are about 28,000 disabled people in Islington, the third highest number in London so IDN is extremely active at the moment.

Disabled people are more than twice as likely as the rest of us to have no qualifications, seven times more likely to be out of work. The Disability Rights Commission estimate that approximately 70% of services are inaccessible.

IDN want to make sure they are consulted when the Council, Islington Primary Care Trust and

City and Islington College draw up Disability Equality Strategies (mandatory under the new amended Disability Discrimination Bill 05) and want to see their members on key consultative forums across the borough. They have come up with an action plan which highlights the need for disability equality training for front line staff and information in accessible formats, such as Braille, large print and sign language.

The IDN are organising events on issues such as employment, transport, health and education so that disabled people can find out about new opportunities and organisations that provide services can understand what disabled people want and the barriers they are facing.

Contact Wendy Haslam tel 020 7354 8925, fax 020 7359 1855, fax mobile on 07949 577 347 (text messages only) or email wendy@daii.org. Log onto DAI's new website at www.daii.org later this year to find out more!

Deaf people in Islington get organised!

DISABILITY ACTION in Islington (DAII) has just started hosting monthly Deaf committee meetings. The Deaf committee came out of a big Deaf meeting in December, run by DAII and the Hands Up! consultation meetings held last year.

The group has been given funding and some administrative support from the Islington Disability Network Co-ordinator. They can also call on the advice of all the other staff at DAII. This year the group will be getting advice and training on campaigning, fundraising, planning and targeting.

At the moment the group is closed to new members but if you would like to find out more, contact Ailsa Mc Gilp at ailsa@daii.org or Wendy Haslam, email wendy@daii.org, fax 020 7359 1855 or mobile 07949 577 347 (text messages only).



Take control with direct payments

MINDA AND DEE are happy to spread the word about direct payments. It lets them arrange their own care instead of social services organising it for them.

Direct payments mean that Dee Davidson (pictured below), who needs 24-hour assistance, can have the cash to choose her own care workers, instead of agency staff.

Dee, who has Multiple Sclerosis said: 'I like being on direct payments because I like to have some control. I really didn't like it when support workers came in and assumed they were in charge. Your house then becomes their house, not your own. Using direct payments it feels like my own home again.'

Minda Walshe, who receives direct payments as a carer of her mother and daughter, said: 'I find it very helpful because I can make my own arrangements and use direct payments to help with respite care.'

Social services can give direct payments for all community care services they arrange or provide, including:

- Personal care eg help with washing, dressing and eating meals
- Help with domestic tasks including shopping and housework
- Short-term breaks (respite care)
- Day time activities
- Occupational therapy equipment (available from summer 2005)

You may be able to get direct payments if you are 16 or over and have been assessed as needing a community care service.

Contact your local social services office or the Information and Access Team on 020 7527 2299. Carers interested in direct payments should contact Mary Keats on 020 7527 8164.



Money matters

IN *BETTER CARE IN ISLINGTON*, you will find information about the rights of carers to be assessed for services to support them in their vital role, but what about money? Becoming a carer may mean stopping work or working part time, so money really matters.

The main responsibility for financial support of carers lies with the Department of Work and Pensions, but local councils also have a part to play by administering housing and council tax benefits.

The main benefit for carers is Carer's Allowance. You must be at least 16 years old and, if you are working, your net weekly earnings must be less than £82.00 to be eligible. You must also be looking after someone who is being paid either Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance (care component). The latter must be paid at either the middle or highest rate (£40.55 or £60.60 a week in 2005/06). The care you provide must be at least 35 hours a week, but you do not need to be living with the person you look after.

...you can get extra income support, pension credit, housing benefit or council tax benefit as 'carer's premium'...

Carer's Allowance is £45.70 a week, less than Jobseeker's Allowance, retirement pension or Incapacity Benefit. However, if you receive a benefit that pays more than Carer's Allowance, it can still be worth making a claim. You will be paid whichever benefit is worth more, but you will have an underlying entitlement to Carer's Allowance. That means you can get extra income support, pension credit, Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit through the 'carer's premium' which can be worth up to £25.80 extra a week.

Your claim for Carer's Allowance may reduce the money paid to the person you look after. If the person you care for gets a Severe Disability Premium as part of any means-tested benefit listed above, that will be taken away if you are paid Carer's Allowance. This will not happen if you simply have an underlying entitlement to Carer's Allowance. So if the person you care for gets the Severe Disability Premium, you need to check whether your claim for Carer's Allowance will lead to payment, or just give rise to an underlying entitlement.

It's a bit of a minefield so make sure you seek advice first to find out if you would be better off.

For independent welfare advice contact:

Islington Citizens' Advice Bureau
86 Durham Road
N7 7DU
Tel: 0870 751 0925
Fax: 020 7561 7475

Islington Peoples' Rights
2 St Paul's Road
N1 2QN
Tel: 020 7359 7627 or
020 7359 2010



People who use services will be looking at how their services can be improved

Users know the score!

ISLINGTON SOCIAL SERVICES thinks the best people to look at its services are the people who use them. A 'user led monitoring' scheme is currently being launched for people using learning disabilities services.

The scheme involves people who use services, such as day centres or care homes, visiting other services around Islington to see what they think of them. Everyone taking part in the monitoring will receive training before they visit a service and expenses for their time.

Visits will be planned and will involve interviews with staff and users. The person carrying out the monitoring will also include their perceptions of the service. This information is combined to build a picture of the individual service from a user's point of view. A report is prepared and combined with other performance information when the service is next reviewed.

This scheme is being lead by the First Choice Trainers (pictured above), a group of people with learning difficulties who are based at Siren Arts & Advocacy.

If you would like to know more about user led monitoring contact Ian Christie on 020 7527 8157.

DID YOU KNOW?...

Intermediate Care is defined by the Department of Health in a number of documents and guidance notes but the simple definition is...

'A TIME-LIMITED INTENSIVE rehabilitation service, normally lasting for 6 weeks, which is provided free of charge to avoid admission to hospital, facilitate discharge from hospital and maximise independence.'

The service, which might be delivered in a person's own home, within a hospital or in a residential setting is provided by a range of staff, depending on the person's needs and circumstances. Those involved in providing the service might include any combination of occupational therapists, physiotherapists, speech and language therapists, nurses, psychologists, dieticians, doctors, home carers or social workers.

Intermediate Care services across Islington are constantly under review to ensure that they grow and develop to best meet the needs of the residents of Islington.

For more information about Intermediate Care contact Carol Gillen on 020 7527 1174.

Identifying carers



HILARY AYLING (pictured left), Primary Care Development Officer at Islington Carers Forum (ICF) has been raising awareness of carers' issues in local primary care services. She developed a protocol to identify patients who are carers whenever they register or have a new health check. Once identified they are sent information about ICF services and their right to a carers' assessment. The protocol not only leads to a better service for carers, but under the new GP contract, means that practices adopting this approach can increase their budget. Since developing the protocol carer referrals to ICF from Islington practices have almost doubled.

Since 1998 the government has encouraged practices to set up carers' registers. A few years ago Corinne Murphy, administrator at the City Road Medical Centre, did just that. Corinne explained to *Better Care in Islington*: 'My work includes making sure that patents get the checks they are entitled to, such as diabetes and asthma. Setting up the carers' register was the next step on from this work.'

With the patient's permission, Corrine can match carers and the people they care for. 'This can be very useful. Recently one of our patients, a carer, was out shopping as part of their caring duties when they were taken ill. Thanks to the carers' register we were able to let the person they cared for know why the shopping was held up.'

The register makes it easier for local GPs Dr Joe Sauvage and Dr Katie Coleman to pay attention to the needs of carers and gives them additional insights into their health. Steve Colman, the Practice Manager at City Road put it very simply: 'It improves the quality of care and is a better service for our patients. As soon as we identify a carer we send them information about local carers' services.'

ICF and the City Road Medical Centre have been working with Liz Mercer and Simon Jones (ICT Manager) from Islington Primary Care Trust to organise training for practices who want to adopt a similar system. Twenty four staff from 15 practices attended the first session in April. Feedback was very positive and a similar course is planned in the near future.

For more information about the training contact Liz Mercer on 020 7527 1294. Hilary Ayling can be contacted at ICF on 020 7263 9080.



Steve Colman and Corinne Murphy at the City Road Medical Centre



Jane Wilson, Islington dietician

Keep fit and healthy Eat yourself fitter

IF YOU'RE SPENDING lots of time looking after someone else, you may not take the time out to think about your own health. Jane Wilson, a dietician working in Islington, explains that getting your five a day doesn't have to be a chore...

'Eating plenty of fruit and vegetables can significantly reduce the risk of many diseases. In fact, eating at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables a day could reduce the risk of death from diseases like heart disease, stroke, and cancer. Cut down on fatty foods and supersize your portions of fruit and veg – you may find yourself losing weight and feeling fitter!

Many people don't realise, but tinned fruit or vegetables count towards your 5 a day. Tinned fruit makes a great snack if you don't have time to prepare anything else.

Frozen veg is processed straight after picking, locking the vitamins in – a portion of peas contains a quarter of the vitamin C your body needs every day. For a quick snack, raw veg is tasty and nutritious, and a glass of pure fruit juice counts as one portion of fruit.

Another way to improve your daily fruit and veg intake is dried fruit. A small handful of raisins, apricots or sultanas all count towards your 5 a day, and can be bought cheaply from supermarkets.

You can introduce fruit and veg into your normal daily meals without even noticing. Chop some dried fruit onto your cereals in the morning, replace that mid morning chocolate bar with a banana and cram some salad into your sandwich at lunch. Have a glass of fruit juice with your dinner and a portion of veg and you're there.'

If you want more information and tips on healthy eating visit www.5aday.nhs.uk.



Walk yourself fitter

EMMA CHARLTON, Islington's Walking Co-ordinator, wants Islington residents to leave their TV remotes on the armchair and their lazy hat at the door!

The Countryside Agency and the British Heart Foundation have partly funded Emma's post to improve the health of local people, particularly those at risk of coronary heart disease and other related illnesses (such as Type 2 Diabetes), by encouraging us all to walk more regularly.

'Doctors are always telling us to exercise more and walking is great exercise! It can be gentle, it doesn't require any special equipment or clothing, it can be done anywhere and is free!' Emma told *Better Care in Islington*. Joining an organised walk is also a great way of meeting people – Camden & Islington Health Walks are gentle and suitable for everyone, regardless of age or how fit you are.

Find out more about walks around Islington by calling Emma on 020 7527 2626 or by email at emma.charlton@islington.co.uk

Get your breath back

THE BREATH EASY SUPPORT GROUP meets at the New Orleans Estate Hall, Archway, N19 on the third Tuesday of every month between 2 and 4pm. It has been running for about a year and is open to anyone who lives in Islington and has Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). COPD is a combination of asthma and bronchitis or emphysema. Sixty to seventy percent of people with COPD are ex-smokers.

Just turn up at one of their sessions – you don't need to book!

Contact Jim Mann on 020 7281 3221 for more information.

Keep active, get 'EverActive'!



AQUATERRA, the company who manage Islington leisure services have a variety of services on offer for disabled people and older people too.

For example, they run a Disabled Swim Club on Fridays and Sundays and trampolining sessions on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

A variety of tailored memberships are on offer to give you unlimited free use or discounts on gym sessions, exercise classes, sauna, swimming and tennis.

Aquaterra publish 'EverActive' which explains all the different services available to older people in Islington. If you are 60 and above you can obtain a free 60 + Izz Card.

There are lots of activities on offer – for more information contact Tina Kramer on 020 7686 8814.



about health issues in Islington?

THERE WERE LIVELY DISCUSSIONS about developments in local primary care services at the Social Services Forum in April. The forum brings user groups and voluntary organisations together with leading councillors and senior Social Services managers.

Each session started with a couple of questions to test the audience's knowledge and whet their appetites for the presentation that followed. Not everyone got the right answers. Have a go at the questions in the box, and see how you would have fared.

Q1. What percentage of GP consultations relate to a long term condition?

- a) 30% b) 60% c) 80%

Q2. How many disabled people are there in Islington?

- a) 15,000 b) 28,000 c) 35,000

Q3. How many people have used Islington's Stop Smoking Service since April 2004?

- a) 219 b) 1219 c) 2219

(Answers at bottom of page)

Helen Pettersen, Director of Services for Social Services and the Primary Care Trust (PCT) shared news about new developments across the borough. She spoke about improved accessibility to GP practices and other primary care services, as well as work being done to address the care of people living in the community with long term conditions.

The meeting also heard from the PCT's Liz Mercer about the Accessible Services Project and the health sub group of the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board about the ways in which they are helping to improve local health services for people with learning difficulties.

For more information about the Social Services Forum contact Rosemary Lamport on 020 7527 8153.

Answers: Q1 c) Q2 b) Q3 c)

Carers grant

EVERY YEAR, local Councils receive a special grant from the Government, which is set aside for carers. The grant pays for services, which allow carers to take a break from caring, and for carers themselves.

The Islington Carers Strategy Group, which includes local organisations, which work with carers, like Centre 404, and Islington Carers Forum, plays a key part in developing the programme of projects and services, funded by the grant. The projects reflect not just national priorities for carers, but also issues important to carers in Islington. They cover services for both children and adults.

Initiatives to be funded from the grant this year include:

- ✓ The Flexible Breaks Fund which enables carers to take holidays or other breaks;
- ✓ More direct payments for carers and for parents of and children with disabilities;
- ✓ Extra home care provision;
- ✓ Continuing support to the Young Carers Project;
- ✓ Carer evaluation of services for people with learning disabilities;
- ✓ Local carers groups and the services and activities they offer.

For more information about the range of services funded from the Carers Grant, contact Rosemary Lampont on 020 7527 8153.



Islington Carers Forum are supporting and involving carers across Islington

That's my boy!



CARING FOR A PERSON with learning difficulties is usually a job for life, just ask Josie who has been a carer for her son John, for the last 45 years.

'Life has got a bit easier as John has got older' Josie told *Better Care in Islington*, 'he is not as much of a handful as he used to be'. However, disturbed nights are a daily occurrence – Josie has to get up about four times every night to look after John.

Fortunately Josie gets plenty of support from her family: her three sons and particularly her daughter, Mary are all nearby to help out. She feeds, washes and puts John to bed every night but her duties continue right around the clock.

During the day John attends the Highbury Resource Centre, then once a month he goes to the Leigh Road Respite Centre to give Josie a well-earned weekend break. Recently Josie had a carer's assessment. 'It was useful because it gave me a chance to discuss how I could be supported and it was good to have someone listen to me, usually they just want to know about John,' Josie told *Better Care in Islington*.

One of the issues that came out of the assessment was to give John support when he goes to hospital. 'It can be quite stressful taking John to hospital and though he usually only goes once a year, this will be a big help.' Josie explained.

Despite the support she gets from her family and from social services Josie finds that caring for John can be very frustrating. For that extra emotional support Josie attends a number of the support groups organised by Centre 404.

To find out more about the work of Centre 404 give them a call on 020 7697 1325.

New carers assessment leaflet

AFTER THE SUCCESSFUL carers assessment leaflet 'Looking after someone else?' comes 'Looking after someone with a mental health problem?' The leaflet has been jointly produced by Camden and Islington Councils and explains what a carer's assessment is, how you can get assessed and lists relevant carers' services in Camden and Islington.

If you would like a copy please contact Ian Christie on 020 7527 8157 or Islington Carers Forum on 020 7263 9080



Carers have the right to be assessed...

IF YOU PROVIDE a regular and substantial amount of care for someone aged 18 or over, you have the right to ask your local social services department for a carer's assessment.

The assessment will determine if you can receive support and to see if your needs as a carer can be met by social services or other services. Social services can provide help and support directly to you or to the person you are looking after.

Social services will identify the impact of you caring for someone by taking into account your age and health, employment status, other commitments and so on.

The assessment will look into the effect that caring has on your general well-being. For example, whether you can continue to work or study, or take part in other activities outside your caring role. It should also look at your ability and willingness to continue caring.

If there is more than one carer providing regular care in your household, you are both entitled to an assessment.

Get a carer's assessment by contacting your local social services office or the Information and Access Team on 020 7527 2299.



Family support worker for older carers

ISABELLA ZANNE works for Centre 404 as their Family Support Worker for Older Carers. She offers support, information and advocacy to family carers living in Islington who care for an adult with learning difficulties.

Older carers often feel isolated so Isabella can help to reduce this isolation by keeping them involved. She provides advice on benefits, information about social activities and ensures that carers get support from council and health services across Islington.

Older carers can attend the well-established monthly coffee mornings held at Centre 404 to share information and discuss relevant issues. They have been running for 18 years and counting!

Contact Isabella on 020 7697 1325.

People in control

CENTRE 404'S SUE MCHUGH is putting people with learning difficulties first through her 'People Centred Planning' Project. The government's 2001 White Paper 'Valuing People' has recognised that this approach is the best way for people with learning difficulties to get on with their lives.

It's a straightforward concept that our cousins across the pond have been developing for the last 20-30 years. Essentially, you can make the most difference to someone's life by looking at their strengths and their aspirations. It is light years from the traditional assessment approach as it involves working with family, relatives and friends arriving at realistic and helpful solutions.

Staff, parents and families of people with learning difficulties will receive training under this project. It is linked to People First – a self-

advocacy group, the Power and Control Group run by the Elfrida Society and the carers at Centre 404 Family Support.

'When you train people with learning difficulties about People Centred Planning (PCP) it is essential that you carry out the planning too.' Sue told *Better Care in Islington*. 'Otherwise the approach will not have the same impact. I have seen people gain self-confidence, become more articulate and better at problem solving after the training.'

Sue recently used PCP with someone who does not use words. By working closely with his friends and relatives she was able to ensure that everyone understood his personal signs by developing a 'communication passport'.

Find out how People Centred Planning can open doors by calling Sue on 020 7697 1325.



Star performance by Islington Social Services

BIG IMPROVEMENTS in social services in 2004 led to a two star rating from government inspectors, up from the previous year's one star ranking. They also said that Islington Social Services has 'promising prospects for improvement'.

More people are now in receipt of direct payments, which means they are given the money to choose the services they want to fit their needs. This can include help with their shopping, cleaning or cooking meals.

Government inspectors also noted the MORI poll showing that Islington has the highest percentage of satisfied users in London with adult services 'serving people well' and children services 'serving most people well'.



An Inspector Called



THE FIELDWORK INSPECTION of older peoples' services consisted of two inspectors and a lay person, spending nine working days in Islington from 13 to 24 September 2004. They interviewed staff, partner agencies, service users and carers and read a range of documents and plans.

Overall, the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) found that significant progress had been made in services for older people, with strong and well-established partnership arrangements with Islington Primary Care Trust and organisations providing services.

They thought that the council was investing in services to deliver better outcomes for people who use services, and the range of services for older people and their carers was improving.

CSCI noted that some good work had begun to modernise day services, but felt that more could be done to move away from 'traditional' services. They identified that a culture promoting independence, offering more choice and maximising abilities was developing – but could be further improved.

The Council is now working on an Action Plan to ensure that all the improvements identified by the Inspectors are put in place as soon as possible.

Islington is a 'good' authority



ISLINGTON COUNCIL is the fastest improving local authority in the country according to the government watchdogs the Audit Commission. Making the announcement in December 2004, Islington Council was rated as 'good' only two years after it received a 'poor' rating.

Council leader Steve Hitchins commented: 'Islington Council has

spent five years improving its services to local people and we are delighted that our Comprehensive Performance Assessment rating reflects that and highlights our improvement across the board. This is an important milestone on our journey and we are determined to keep on getting better.'

Islington has moved up to 'good' because of significant improvements in all key services including housing benefits and education. Support services and management and leadership were also highly rated.

DID YOU KNOW?...

Health facts

- Approximately 5,817 people in Islington (3.3%) are estimated to have diabetes.
- About 217,800 patients are registered with the 44 GP practices in Islington (March 2004). The registered population is 17.4% bigger than the resident population.
- Around 29,000 Islington residents per year are admitted to hospitals as inpatients or day-cases.

Source: Islington Primary Care Trust (PCT) Local Delivery Plan. Copies available from the PCT.



Do you have dementia or care for someone with dementia?

IF THE ANSWER IS 'YES', the Alzheimer's Society Islington Branch may be able to help. They provide support to people with dementia and their carers living in Islington. Information and advice on all types of dementia and related services are on offer. They can help you access local services and give you the opportunity to meet others in similar situations.

Meetings and events include support groups and counselling, educational and social activities. Grants are available to help fund breaks or other activities.

For more information call Neeru on 020 7837 8723.



Training for carers of people with mental health problems

A SERIES OF TRAINING COURSES for carers of people with mental health problems have been jointly organised by the Islington Carers Forum and Rethink, a Camden-based organisation who support mental health carers.

The workshops have covered topics such as: Understanding mental illnesses, Hearing voices, The Mental Health Act and how it affects the person you care for, Coping with challenging behaviour, Medications: How they work and their side effects and Your rights as a carer.

If you are interested in attending future courses please contact Mary Evans from the Islington Carers Forum on 020 7263 9080.



Dual diagnosis service



'DUAL DIAGNOSIS' is one of those jargon-y terms that sounds meaningless but suddenly makes sense once you know what it means! The term 'dual diagnosis' refers to people with mental health problems and drug or alcohol misuse.

Mary Evans (pictured above) from Islington Carers Forum has been running a dual diagnosis service for the last year. Mary's role as a dual diagnosis support worker includes one-to-one sessions with carers, giving emotional support, providing information about illnesses and their side effects and the effects of drugs and alcohol, benefits advice and advice on housing and transport issues. She acts as an advocate, gives advice on how to access suitable services and is willing to accompany carers to CPA meetings.

She liaises with benefit agencies and raises money from charities for household necessities and other items. She also helps people to apply to the Flexible Breaks Fund, which gives carers and their family an occasional well-earned break.

Contact Mary to find out more about the dual diagnosis service on 020 7263 9080.

Clive in the community



CLIVE BROWN is a busy man – for the last year he has been a carers support worker and spends most of his time visiting black carers across the borough. Clive explained to *Better Care in Islington* 'I offer support to black carers such as welfare advice, culturally sensitive advice and advocacy. Sometimes

people just want to have a chat, so I take the time to listen.' If any of Clive's clients want a carer's assessment he acts as an advocate for them. 'As I have a good understanding of the carer's situation and about local services I can make sure they get the support they need,' Clive added.

Based at the Lambo Day Centre, Clive also organises the popular Black Carers Group every Thursday, a support group for black carers. 'Lambo have been really supportive towards the Black Carers Project and to local black carers by maintaining the carers group – it's an important resource for local carers,' he explained.

The Lambo Day Centre is a culturally sensitive organisation for black people with mental health problems and black carers. They organise workshops, leisure activities and social events that incorporate events like Black History Month. The centre also does excellent African and Caribbean food!

Clive gets referrals from organisations such as Islington Carers Forum, Community Mental Health Teams and the Young Carers Project. He has recently started a surgery at the Highgate Mental Health Centre and has received a number of referrals from them too.

Contact Clive at the Lambo Day Centre on 020 7263 3046.

More **bettercare** news

We've got the power!

THAT WAS THE message, loud and clear at the Jackson's Lane Community Theatre, Highgate in April. **The Power**, was an evening of theatre, music and film performed by and for people with learning difficulties and produced by Siren Arts and Advocacy with funding from Healthy Islington. The aim of the event was to get everyone thinking about the forthcoming General Election and to encourage people with learning difficulties to exercise their right to vote.

It kicked off with a round-the-table discussion with local parliamentary candidates, ably chaired by June Patterson and assisted by Jackie Ryan. A rousing set from beat combo, the Flexitones, ensued. After the interval a film about The Wild Bunch and their clubby antics had a joint bill with a report from BBC Network South East about people with disabilities taking part in the General Election this year.

The highlight of the night was the drama **The Power** produced and performed by the Siren Drama Group. Ideas in the performance had been developed at discussion groups. In the play three candidates from the Biscuit, Liquorice Allsort and Lottery parties vied for votes from their reluctant constituents.

It all ended happily with Richard Travi cunningly disguised as Mrs T extolling everyone to party. Performers encouraged everyone to get up on stage and strut their stuff including the real life candidates!

For more information about the work of the Elfrida Society contact Frank Hutson on 020 7359 7443.

The new home care contract – now with added carer support

THERE ARE NOW EIGHT local agencies that provide homecare – seven are locally based in the community care areas: Calshot, Drayton and Archway. This means they operate in a smaller geographical areas, so care workers spends less time between jobs. Islington's specialist homecare service for people with dementia operates across the borough.

The new contracts started in October 2004 with completely new arrangements based on comments from people currently receiving services. From now on one agency will provide all the homecare services and will operate between 7am and 11pm every day of the year.

A new rapid response service and enabling service has been introduced across the borough to provide short-term packages of care. These are intensive services that either help to prevent people going into hospital or support them when they have left hospital and are recovering.

Carers can also access respite services offered by the agencies through a carer's assessment (see article on page 19). Remember, getting a carer's assessment doesn't affect Carers Allowance.

If you have any queries about the homecare service contact Josie Inzani on 020 7527 8127.

Publication Corner

An up-to-date list of useful guides and leaflets

When can we help?

A guide to eligibility for care and support for adults from Islington Council's Social Services. This leaflet explains how we prioritise who can get help from social services



How to comment or complain about a council service

Explains how to use the Council's complaints service



Looking after someone with a mental health problem?



Charges for community care & supporting people services

Information about paying for services to help you live at home



Direct payments

Find out more about the new Direct Payments scheme



PALS leaflet

Services provided by the Patient, Advice & Liaison Service



Your Life!

Lively health news magazine from the NHS



When can occupational therapists help?

Information about the occupational therapy service



Looking after someone else?

A guide to carers assessments in Islington



Your guide to local health services



If you require copies of any of the publications listed above or other Islington Social Services or Islington Primary Care Trust leaflets in large print, Braille, audio tape or CD ring 020 7527 8196.

What do you think?

If you want to know more about a *Better Care in Islington* article, have a story for the next edition or just want to tell us what you think of the magazine, contact the Planning & Partnership Team on 020 7527 8153/6/7 or by e-mail at ssconsultation@islington.gov.uk.

Need **bettercare** in a different format?

in Islington

Would you like a copy of all or part of *Better Care in Islington* in a different format? Please indicate on the form below, with your details and return to

Social Services Information, 338-346 Goswell Road, EC1V 7LQ

দীর্ঘ-মেয়াদী সেবা-স্বতন্ত্রে আছেন এমন লোকদের জন্য ইসলিংটনে সেসব সেবা (সার্ভিস) রয়েছে সেসব সেবা সম্পর্কে এই সংবাদপত্রটিতে (নিউজলেটারে) বলা হয়েছে। যদি আপনি আপনার নিজ ভাষায় আরো তথ্য পেতে চান, তাহলে 020 7527 8155 নম্বরে ট্রান্সলেশন অ্যান্ড ইন্টারপ্রিটিং সার্ভিসের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।

Bengali

這份通訊是有關為依士宜頓區內接受長期照料人士提供的服務。如果你想獲得以中文提供的更詳細資料，請聯絡翻譯及傳譯服務，電話 020 7527 8155。

Chinese

Το ενημερωτικό αυτό δελτίο αναφέρεται στις υπηρεσίες για άτομα που βρίσκονται υπό μακροχρόνια φροντίδα στο Ίσλινγκτον. Εάν θα θέλατε περισσότερες πληροφορίες στη γλώσσα σας, σας παρακαλούμε να επικοινωνήσετε με την Υπηρεσία Μετάφρασης και Διερμηνείας στο 020 7527 8155.

Greek

Warsidahani wuxuu ku saabsanyahay adeegyada loo fidiyo dadka deggan Islington ee loo fidiyo daryeelka muddada dheer. Haddii aad rabto macluumaadka oo ku qoran luqaddaada, fadlan kala xidhiidh adeegga tarjamadda iyo afcelinta telefoonka ah 020 7527 8155.

Somali

Bu bültende Islington'da uzun süreli bakım ihtiyacı olan kimselere verilen hizmetler yer almaktadır. İsterseniz 020 7527 8155 numaraya telefon edip Yazılı ve Sözlü Çeviri Bölümü'nden bu konuda daha geniş bilgi alabilirsiniz.

Turkish

Name

Address

Complete Copy Article(s) (write in)

Braille Large print

Audio format e.g. CD, cassette

Another Language (please indicate)

Bengali

Chinese

Greek

Somali

Turkish

Other (write in)

bettercare contacts

Contact Islington

020 7527 2000

www.islington.gov.uk

Social Services

First point of contact:

Information & Access Team 020 7527 2299
Minicom 020 7527 6475

e-mail: information.accessteam@islington.gov.uk

Out of Hours (5pm to 9am) 020 7226 0992

www.islington.gov.uk click
'health and social care' click 'services for adults'

Housing

Housing Aid Centre 020 7527 6316
(housing advice and homelessness service)

Housing and Council Tax Benefit 020 7527 4990

Finding a council home 020 7527 4140

Repairs Freephone: 0800 694 3344

Sheltered Housing
Circle 33 Housing Trust 020 7288 4184

www.islington.gov.uk click 'housing'

Camden & Islington Mental Health & Social Care Trust

PALS (Patient Advice & Liaison Service)

020 7530 3765
e-mail: pals@camdenpct.nhs.uk
www.candi.nhs.uk

Health Services

NHS Direct Lo Call 0845 46 47
24-hour nursing advice and health information service

PALS (Patient Advice & Liaison Service)

On the spot information, advice and help to resolve problems with health services, for patients, families and carers:

Islington Primary Care Trust 020 7527 1086
or 1087
Minicom 020 7527 1085
e-mail: pals@islingtonpct.nhs.uk
www.islingtonpct.nhs.uk

Whittington Hospital 020 7288 5551
e-mail: pals@whittington.nhs.uk

University College London Hospital 020 7380 9975
e-mail: pals@uclh.nhs.uk

Moorfields Eye Hospital 020 7566 2324
or 2325
e-mail: pals@moorfields.nhs.uk

Benefits

Benefits Enquiry Line (for people with disabilities)

0800 882200
Minicom: 0800 243355

Attendance Allowance and Disability

Living Allowance 020 8795 8400

Working Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit

Inland Revenue 0845 300 3900
www.dwp.gov.uk/contact

Help with health costs 0845 850 1166

www.dwp.gov.uk/contact
for useful information about allowances and helplines

Comments and Complaints

Social Services 020 7527 8047
e-mail: socialservices.complaints@islington.gov.uk

Housing 020 7527 4278
e-mail: housing.complaints@islington.gov.uk

Family Health and GP Services 020 7445 8567
or 8566 or 8565

Hospital and Community Health Services
020 7530 3099
or 3090

Other Useful Contacts

Age Concern 020 7281 6018
e-mail: admin@acislington.org.uk
www.ageconcern.org.uk

Alzheimer's Society 020 7837 8723

Centre 404 Family Support 020 7697 1325

Disability Action in Islington (DAII) 020 7226 0137
e-mail: daii@compuserve.com

Islington Carers Forum 020 7263 9080
www.carer.org/islington

Linkline Community Alarm Service 020 7527 5456

For information about voluntary organisations in Islington go to www.islington.gov.uk click 'community and living' click 'voluntary work' click 'voluntary groups'